

Pizza Hut Partners with Karamo to Increase Access to Diverse Children's Books
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Holiday fundraiser encourages pizza lovers to join in support by donating on Pizza Hut orders this giving season

PLANO, Texas, Dec. 3, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- In its 35th year advocating for childhood literacy, Pizza Hut and literacy partner First Book are partnering with Karamo, Culture Expert on Netflix's *Queer Eye* and author of the new children's book "[I Am Perfectly Designed](#)," to introduce a new holiday fundraiser aimed at increasing access to culturally relevant children's books in communities across the country.

To shine a spotlight on the need for diverse representation in children's literature, Karamo will host a reading event at a Los Angeles elementary school this Giving Tuesday and discuss the importance of providing children with inclusive books and that every child is "perfectly designed."

"Literacy is one of the most fundamental things we can teach children, but the importance falls flat when underrepresented kids aren't seeing themselves in the characters on the pages," said Karamo. "As someone deeply committed to spreading a message of acceptance and inclusion, I'm proud to join Pizza Hut and First Book in their mission to increase access to books that represent - and celebrate - all children."

Pizza lovers nationwide can help support this cause beginning today through Dec. 31 by adding a First Book donation to their Pizza Hut orders, which will help provide grants to educators to purchase culturally relevant titles on the First Book Marketplace and allow First Book to work with publishers to bring new *Stories For All* titles to life in paperback. Customers can also purchase the First Book Bundle at Pizza Hut, where \$1 from every bundle purchased will be donated to First Book.

Pizza Hut has been working closely with First Book to raise funds annually since 2016, and this Giving Tuesday the pizza company is announcing its newly expanded support of First Book's [Stories for All Project™](#), a curated collection of new, diverse books and resources that reflect myriad experiences, cultures, and communities.

In addition, Pizza Hut is also supporting the First Book Accelerator, which is designed to provide educators and parents with helpful resources to navigate conversations around diversity and inclusion. Together, Pizza Hut and First Book are elevating the message that representation in books matters. The two-year campaign will help make even more books focused on diversity and inclusion, as well as educator resources, available to those serving kids in need.

"For 35 years we have fostered a passion for reading. From BOOK IT! kids who feel that sense of achievement earning their first Personal Pan Pizza to students who feel a sense of pride when they receive their very first book to call their own, the emotional connection to reading runs deep," said Artie Starrs, Global CEO, Pizza Hut. "But we fear that love for reading is being stunted because of the lack of representation in books offered to children. Joining forces with Karamo and investing in our partnership with First Book is a powerful opportunity to successfully increase access to diverse children's books."

Karamo's "I Am Perfectly Designed" - which celebrates accepting and loving who you are, exactly as you are - is now available for educators to purchase with grant on the First Book Marketplace, along with thousands of other books 50-90% off retail price.

"The ability to appreciate and learn from different perspectives has never been more important," said Kyle Zimmer, president, CEO, and co-founder of First Book. "We have to actively provide kids with windows into other worlds and mirrors that reflect their own so they understand that they, and everyone around them, have value. We are so grateful to Pizza Hut and Karamo; this effort could not come at a more pivotal moment."

Pizza Hut has built a legacy of nurturing a love of reading through its BOOK IT! Program, which has impacted more than 65 million students in 35 years. The pizza company strengthened its commitment in 2016 when it launched [Pizza Hut: The Literacy Project](#), a global commitment to impacting 100 million lives by enabling access to books and educational resources, empowering teachers and inspiring readers. Since 2016, Pizza Hut has impacted over 22 million lives through its literacy initiatives and programs.

About Pizza Hut®

Pizza Hut, a subsidiary of Yum! Brands, Inc. (NYSE: YUM), has more restaurant locations in the world than any other pizza company. Founded in 1958 in Wichita, Kan., Pizza Hut operates over 18,000 restaurants in more than 100 countries.

With easy order options including the Pizza Hut app, mobile site, and Amazon and Google devices, Pizza Hut is committed to providing an easy pizza experience – from order to delivery – and has Hut Rewards, the Pizza Hut loyalty program that offers points for every dollar spent on food any way you order.

Pizza Hut is also the proprietor of The Literacy Project, an initiative designed to enable access, empower teachers and inspire a lifelong love of reading. The program is rooted in the foundation set by the Pizza Hut BOOK IT! Program, which is the longest-running corporate supported literacy program, impacting more than 14 million students each year. For more information, visit www.pizzahut.com. Pizza Hut is the Official and Only Pizza Sponsor of the NFL and NCAA®.

About First Book

Founded in Washington, D.C., in 1992 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit social enterprise, First Book is a leader in the educational equity field. Over its 27-year history, First Book has distributed more than 185 million books and educational resources, with a value of more than \$1.5 billion. First Book believes education offers children in need the best path out of poverty. First Book breaks down barriers to quality education by providing its network of more than 450,000 registered teachers, librarians, after school program leaders, and others serving children in need with millions of free and affordable new, high-quality books, educational resources, and basic needs items through the award-winning First Book Marketplace nonprofit eCommerce site. The First Book Network comprises the largest and fastest-growing community of formal and informal educators serving children in need.

First Book also expands the breadth and depth of the education field through a family of social enterprises, including First Book Research & Insights, its proprietary research initiative, and the First Book Accelerator, which brings best-in-class research to the classroom via relevant, usable educator resources. First Book Impact Funds target support to areas of particular need, such as rural communities or increasing diversity in children's books.

For more information, visit firstbook.org or follow the latest news on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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