



**HOWARD COUNTY
LIBRARY SYSTEM**
Public Education for All

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Howard County Library System
Glascok Challenge Seeks to Inspire Reluctant Teen Readers
**Inspirational Author Jason Reynolds to Speak to Teens
at HCLS East Columbia Branch October 9**

ELLCOTT CITY, MD— Howard County Library System (HCLS) will host *New York Times* bestselling author Jason Reynolds on October 9 at 4:30 pm at HCLS East Columbia Branch. The highly popular author is a favorite among young adult readers. To further inspire teens in HCLS East Columbia's Homework Club, a \$600 challenge match from the Kathleen S. Glascok Tribute Fund has been designated to help raise funds to purchase 100 copies of Reynold's new book, *For Every One*, for the students.

Both Reynolds' personal story and those he writes are especially relatable and inspirational to his young adult audiences. He speaks openly about his transformation from a nonreader living on the edge in Oxon Hill, Maryland to becoming a literary celebrity whose promise to his young audience is "not to write boring books." Reynold's writing reflects his understanding of the fears and challenges that all young people experience.

For Every One is a free-verse book that provides hope and reassurance to teens as they try to make sense of their own dreams for the future. A self-professed dreamer, Reynolds wants kids to know that dreams take time and they involve countless struggles. In the poem, which he originally presented at the 2011 opening of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, he writes frankly about his own self-doubt, as he became a successful writer.

The Glascok Challenge has been issued in honor of Kathleen S. Glascok who worked for the Howard County Public School System as a media specialist at Clarksville Middle School. According to her husband Robert, "Kathy was an avid reader her entire life who found joy in sharing her love of books with her students and encouraging their growth through reading." In

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Inspirational Author Jason Reynolds to Speak to Teens at HCLS East Columbia Branch October 9 *(continued)*

2016 Mr. Glascock established the tribute fund in her name for children/youth literacy and education at Howard County Library System.

Free tickets for Jason Reynolds' October 9 appearance at HCLS East Columbia Branch will be available at 10am on September 25 at hclsreynolds.eventbrite.com. Quantities are limited and demand is expected to be high. Those interested in hearing a preview of Reynolds inspirational approach to writing can listen to HCLS' HiJinx podcast Episode 14: Teen Seen at hclibrary.org/hijinx.

Reynolds appearance is presented in partnership with Books With A Past and sponsored by Kathleen S. Glascock Fund and HoCoPoLitSo

Donations toward the Glascock Challenge match campaign can be made online at jointhefriends.org or by calling Rita Hamlet 410-313-7799

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More About Jason Reynolds

Reynolds, who writes novels and poetry for young adult and middle-grade audiences, was born in Washington, DC and raised in neighboring Oxon Hill, Maryland. He found inspiration in rap and began writing poetry at nine years old. He readily admits he didn't read a book completely from cover to cover until he was 17 years old. In his own words Reynolds states, "I graduated from the University of Maryland (where I spent about 65% of my time writing and reciting poetry all over campus...yeah, that was me) with a B.A. in English, then packed my bags and moved to Brooklyn because somebody told me they were giving away dream-come-true vouchers."

He now strives to write books that appeal to those kids, both boys and girls, who think they don't like to read. He addresses today's issues in fresh, bold voices, telling exciting stories - the opposite of the boring books he remembers being told to read in school. His novels include the Track series (*Ghost*, *Patina*, *Sunny*, and *Lu*), and *Long Way Down*, a story told in verse that received a Newbery Honor, a Coretta Scott King Honor, and a Printz Honor.

"Reynolds writes about what's happening in his neighborhood. "Ghost" tells the story of a boy who joins a track team as an escape from the violence in his past. "The Boy in the Black Suit" tells the story of a city kid grieving the death of his mother. "When I Was the Greatest," tells the story of a group of friends navigating the streets of non-gentrified Bed-Stuy in Brooklyn. The voices are those Reynolds heard around him in the 1980s and 90s, in a neighborhood where drugs and violence were on his doorstep, but inside was a loving family — aunties and close friends, one of whom taught Reynolds how to crochet (which he still does)." -- The Washington Post.