



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

***WNBA Ohio Hall of Famer Helen Darling Returns Home to Launch “Let’s STAY L.I.T. Reading Circuit” Across Columbus Community Centers***

Columbus, Ohio — May 11, 2026 — Helen Darling, Ohio Basketball Hall of Famer and Columbus native, is returning to her hometown to launch her signature literacy initiative, the Let’s STAY L.I.T. Reading Circuit, across community centers throughout Columbus. The multi-week program engages youth through a powerful combination of reading, movement, and mentorship—bringing professional athlete influence directly into local communities.

***A Homegrown Vision for Literacy and Opportunity***

The Let’s STAY L.I.T. Reading Circuit is a structured, multi-week literacy experience designed to make reading interactive, consistent, and empowering. Students participate in athlete-led sessions, track reading goals, and engage in movement-based activities that connect literacy to confidence, discipline, and

leadership.

“This is personal for me,” said Darling. “Columbus is where my journey began, and I know firsthand the talent and potential that exists here. I launched the Let’s STAY L.I.T. Reading Circuit in my hometown because I want young people to see that reading can open doors—and that their dreams are possible right here. This is just the beginning of what I plan to build for our community.”

***More Than a Program—A Pathway:*** Darling’s return to Columbus marks the first of many planned initiatives aimed at uplifting local youth. In addition to literacy engagement, she is committed to creating a long-term pathway for Columbus high school girls basketball players to gain exposure, mentorship, and opportunities beyond the court.

By connecting literacy with athletics, the program reinforces a core message: success in sports and life begins with education.

***Community Impact*** Through partnerships with local community centers, the Reading Circuit program:

- Increases student engagement in reading
- Builds consistent literacy habits
- Provides direct access to athlete role models
- Creates safe, inspiring spaces for youth development

Each participating site will receive books, progress tracking tools, athlete video messages, and in-person sessions led by Darling, culminating in a celebration of student achievement.

***A Growing National Movement:*** The Columbus activation is part of a broader national effort led by Helen Darling to transform how students experience literacy. By aligning with athlete voices and culturally relevant programming, the initiative continues to expand its reach across cities nationwide.

***About Helen Darling:*** Helen Darling is a former WNBA player, Ohio Basketball Hall of Fame inductee, and Columbus native dedicated to advancing youth literacy and leadership. Through her Courtside platform and other national programming, she endeavors to inspire youth to get reading, build confidence, ultimately resulting in their long-term success.

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**About KayMatCa, Inc.** KayMatCa, Inc. is a leading education and cultural organization focused on developing innovative literacy programs, curriculum, and youth engagement initiatives that connect education, culture, and athlete impact.