

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Megan Kuntz
214-360-0833
Mkuntz@halfpricebooks.com

**Half Price Books Tackles Illiteracy Problem with
A,E,I,O & You Volunteer Recruitment Program**
Bookseller kicking off effort during National Literacy Month in September

FT. WAYNE, Ind. (August, 2009) —While the declining economy has forced many people from their jobs, it has pushed them into the door of literacy organizations nationwide looking for help to boost literacy and job skills. While the call for help is a good thing, it has left many literacy groups in need of additional volunteers to make sure students get the help they need. Half Price Books, a longtime supporter of literacy causes, is hoping to solve this problem with “A,E,I,O & You,” an effort to help local literacy groups recruit volunteers.

A,E,I,O & You is an awareness and incentive campaign launched by Half Price Books to encourage voluntarism in the literacy field. In Fort Wayne, potential volunteers will be referred to The Literacy Alliance, an organization that helps hundreds fight illiteracy every year. Half Price Books has pledged to donate \$100 to The Literacy Alliance for each volunteer that signs up through the A,E,I,O & You program during National Literacy Month and completes the required training. Additionally, trained volunteers will receive a \$25 gift card to Half Price Books.

“Our goal during National Literacy Month is to help give every American the opportunity to enjoy a book or share a story with their family, and more volunteers will create more readers,” said Kathy Doyle Thomas, executive director for Half Price Books. “For those who don’t have time to volunteer, we hope at the very least this program serves as a reminder of the importance of literacy to our country.”

The Literacy Alliance has seen the importance of education increase significantly in the past year with the declining economy. They saw a 35% increase in students this year over the previous year. The majority of the students are those working towards a GED.

“Today, high school diplomas are required for jobs that previously never needed them. This has led to a dramatic increase in adults looking for classes at The Literacy Alliance which, in turn, leads to a need for more volunteers,” said Judith Stabelli, executive director of The Literacy Alliance. “We’re thrilled about working with Half Price Books and to be a part of the A, E, I, O and You campaign.”

September became recognized throughout the United States as National Literacy Month following the declaration of September 8 as International Literacy Day. The first International Literacy Day was declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific,

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1965. Every city celebrates in their own way, all with the same goal of encouraging adults and children to read.

About Half Price Books

Half Price Books is the largest family-owned new and used bookstore chain with more than 100 retail locations in 16 states. Stores are open seven days a week and buy and sell new and used books, magazines, comics, records, CDs, DVDs and collectible items. Half Price Books has been dedicated to environmental and literacy efforts for 36 years and supports hundreds of local, national and international programs. Each year the company sponsors the Half Pint Library Book Drive at each of its stores, donating thousands of books to hospitals and clinics throughout the United States. Half Price Books is a founding contributor to Laura Bush's National Book Festival, a continuing supporter of the National Center for Family Literacy, and the founder of the environmental website BecomeGreen.org. For more information about Half Price Books, its store locations and corporate initiatives, please visit www.halfpricebooks.com.

About The Literacy Alliance

Since 1988, the nonprofit Literacy Alliance has been dedicated to ending illiteracy in Allen County. Learning centers, literacy programs, and tutoring services empower adults to succeed at work, at home, and in the community.

###