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News Release

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School of Education donates books for area children

KOKOMO, Ind. — Renovations to Indiana University Kokomo’s curriculum lab puts the latest educational technology in the hands of its students — and also puts books in the hands of Kokomo-area children.

The School of Education donated thousands of volumes, from board books for babies to high school literature, to Kokomo Urban Outreach, the Family Service Association domestic violence shelter, and other organizations that can give them to children who otherwise are not likely to have books in their homes.

Dean Paul Paese said in place of the books, the lab will be a “classroom of the future,” containing iPads, interactive smart boards, and other technology tools future teachers must be prepared to use in their classrooms.

“Leaders from area schools have told us they need teachers who know how to teach with technology,” Paese said. “With this lab, we can expose them to as wide a variety of technology as possible. This is going to make a huge difference for our students.”

Last week, Paese and Marilyn Skinner, director of the Early Childhood Education Center, delivered a pick up truck and van full of books to Kokomo Urban Outreach, where Director Jeff Newton and volunteers gladly accepted them.

They will come in handy during Christmas break when the local organization, which serves people living in low-income neighborhoods, hosts free meals for children.

“We have a library where kids can take books, and trade books with each other,” Newton said. “We encourage reading. Having good books in the hands of children is important.”

The organization hosts an Easter basket program in the spring, allowing parents to create gifts for their children with donated supplies, and Newton plans to provide a book for each basket as well.

“These will be well used, and we will have them all given away by spring,” he added.

Skinner is working with the United Way to give books to children whose families lost their belongings in the November tornado as well.

Paese is pleased the ongoing renovations are having an immediate impact in the community.

“We expect a longer-term benefit, when our students graduate and are ready to use the latest tools to provide excellent education in local classrooms,” he said. “By giving away these books we are not using, we can also have an immediate benefit, giving them to the children who need them most.”

He expects the renovated lab to open during the spring 2014 semester.

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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