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**El Paso Nonprofit BOOKS ARE GEMS Receives \$10,000 Donation from El Paso Electric
Funds to help recover from damages caused by devastating flood**

Links to Interviews and B-Roll

(English) <https://vimeo.com/elpasoelectric/review/471565673/66ef1b4129>

(Spanish) <https://vimeo.com/elpasoelectric/review/471566348/78858c5895>

EL PASO, Texas – Books are Gems, a local nonprofit bookstore that provides free books to children, suffered damages to over 8,000 new books overnight back in August of this year caused by a broken water heater. Days after learning about this devastating news, El Paso Electric (EPE) made a commitment to donate \$10,000 to the El Paso nonprofit to help recover from the damages, and presented the funds to Books are Gems today during one of their book drives.

“We had just purchased new books to give away to children and had the boxes on the floor the night of the flood, so needless to say everything was completely damaged,” said Emma Acosta, Books are Gems grant manager. “We were unable to accept book donations due to the lack of space so we had just put a call out for financial donations and were completely elated with EPE’s generous support.”

EPE officially presented a check for \$10,000 to Books are Gems as families with their young children began to line up around the building ready to receive their books. The funds will go toward purchasing new books, especially those lost due to the flood, and to construct more bookshelves. Due to the pandemic, Books are Gems only had enough budget to sustain their services through the end of October but will now be able to extend through the end of the year with the help of the EPE donation.

“Now more than ever, as we power through this pandemic together, access to books is incredibly vital to our children’s education journey,” shares EPE Vice President of Community Engagement Eddie Gutierrez. “Books are Gems has been with the families of our community from the onset of the pandemic, so it was only natural that we help see them through this challenging time as they continue to support literacy for thousands of children.”

Families and children were welcomed safely by EPE’s Power Pack, the Company’s mascots, and El Paso Chihuahua’s Chico made a surprise visit. Families and children walked away with a bag of books, plus an additional Halloween-inspired goodie bag filled with school supplies, healthy snacks and an EPE drawstring backpack.

The \$10,000 donation was made possible by EPE’s Community Partner Program, a long-standing initiative by the Company that supports more than 170 nonprofits within the region that donates more than \$1.2 Million each year.

Books are Gems

Books are Gems is a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in El Paso, TX that is known for giving out free books, from toddlers to 18-year-olds, with a mission to help improve literacy rates among El Paso's youth. Since July 2020, in response to the pandemic, Books are Gems has gifted children over 6,000 books.

About El Paso Electric Company

El Paso Electric Company is a regional electric utility providing generation, transmission and distribution service to approximately 437,000 retail and wholesale customers in a 10,000 square-mile area of the Rio Grande valley in west Texas and southern New Mexico.

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