

Marquette University: Maya Smart book, “Reading for Our Lives,” to benefit Bo and Candy Ellis Student Success Fund

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MILWAUKEE — Proceeds from sales of “Reading for Our Lives: A Literacy Action Plan from Birth to Six” by [Maya Payne Smart](#), affiliated faculty of educational policy and leadership in Marquette University’s College of Education, will benefit the Bo and Candy Ellis Student Success Fund.

- *“Reading for Our Lives” will be released Tuesday, Aug. 2. Book orders can be placed through the [Marquette Office of University Advancement.](#)*

“Reading for Our Lives” challenges the bath-book-bed mantra and the idea that reading aloud to our kids is enough to ensure school readiness. Instead, it gives parents easy, immediate and accessible ways to nurture language and literacy development from the start. Through personal stories, historical accounts, scholarly research and practical tips, this book presents the life-and-death urgency of literacy, investigates inequity in reading achievement, and illuminates a path to a true, transformative education for all.

“I hope ‘Reading for Our Lives’ will equip parents to nurture their children’s reading from the start and inspire them to advocate for major public investment in families, too,” said Smart. “The mission of this book dovetails nicely with that of the Bo and Candy Ellis Student Success Fund — which provides foundational support for our children and young people to succeed academically and have a brighter future.

Partnering with Bo and Candy has been a great opportunity for my husband and I to make a difference in ways large and small at Marquette.”

[MayaSmart.com](#), provides [free resources for families](#) to nurture, teach and advocate for kids on the road to reading.

All proceeds of books sales made through the [Marquette Office of University Advancement](#) will benefit the Bo and Candy Ellis Student Success Fund to help students at Marquette cover emergency expenses.

The Bo and Candy Ellis Student Success Fund will help support students who experience unanticipated loss or travel emergencies as well as food and safety needs. The fund will mirror the university’s [Bridge to the Future Fund](#), which has provided immediate support to hundreds of students experiencing financial strain.

Smart and her husband, head men’s basketball coach Shaka Smart, [made a major gift to the fund](#) in February 2022.