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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WESTERN MA ORGS JOIN FORCES FOR READ ACROSS AMERICA MONTH

**Eric Carle Museum and Five Colleges America Reads Tutor Program join forces to
provide storytime training to college students**

Amherst, Mass. (January 31, 2005) - The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Five Colleges America Reads Tutor program. The picture book, with its strong connections to visual and verbal literacy, will be the focus of training for college students from this program who are already engaged in tutoring and other academic enrichment activities in area public schools. In February of 2005, they will attend a workshop at the Museum led by Literature and Outreach Coordinator Megan Lambert, in which they will learn how to incorporate an appreciation for the art of the picture book into storytime sessions. Following this training, students will lead outreach storytime programming in area public schools during Read Across America Month, March 2005.

The Five College America Reads Tutor Program trains and supports area college students to work with local children to improve their reading and math skills. Founded in 1997, the program enlists students from Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst in order to provide area schools and agencies with tutors for math and reading at no cost.

In recent years, the Five College America Reads Tutor program has placed more than 200 tutors at some 30 different local sites, including elementary schools, after-school programs, libraries, community agencies, and child care services. The response from both the tutors and the work sites has been overwhelmingly positive.

America Reads was begun under a federal work-study effort during the Clinton administration that aimed to insure that all children would be reading independently by the end of the third grade. The program is supported by federal work-study and the five campuses. It is led by a collaborative effort of college administrators, college- and K-12

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education faculty, graduate students, and Five Colleges, Incorporated.

For more information, please contact Megan Lambert, Literature and Outreach Coordinator at 413.658.1123 or email meganl@picturebookart.org.

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is the first full-scale museum in America devoted to national and international picture book art. It was conceived and built with the aim of celebrating the art that we are first exposed to as children. Through the exploration of images that are familiar and beloved, it the Museum's goal to foster connections between visual and verbal literacy and to provide visitors of all ages and backgrounds with the confidence to appreciate and enjoy art of every kind.

The Museum—which houses three galleries dedicated to rotating exhibitions of picture book art, a hands-on Art Studio, a Reading Library, an Auditorium, and a popular Café and Museum Shop—is located at 125 West Bay Road, Amherst, MA. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 12 noon to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children under 18, and \$12 for a family of six. For further in formation and directions, call 413-658-1100 or visit the Museum's website at www.picturebookart.org.

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