Don’t think for a second that your donations don’t have an impact, because they do. Even small donations help because I’m living proof that one book can change someone’s life forever.

JAMES POLLARD
FIRST BOOK DONOR SPOTLIGHT

WHEN DID YOU FIRST LEARN ABOUT FIRST BOOK?
I don’t remember exactly when, but I think it was around 2014. I remember doing research on a popular nonprofit ranking site and seeing that First Book got great grades. I started doing more research about First Book and realized its mission was exactly what I wanted to support.

WHAT ABOUT FIRST BOOK’S MISSION SPEAKS TO YOU?
I’m a firm believer that nothing is more important to your success than the information you feed your brain. Unfortunately, many children don’t have access to the books and educational resources necessary to stimulate their growing minds. I’ve always been an avid reader, and I clearly see the connection between my current success and the books I’ve read throughout my life. I want to help other people make that same connection.
HOW DID READING IMPACT YOU AS A CHILD?
Well, because I read a lot of R.L. Stine, reading terrified me. This is difficult for me to explain but reading helped me connect the dots in a lot of my school classes. For example, I began to see how math was used throughout history, or how science could help build our future. I ended up reading many different books across a wide variety of subjects, so it gave me a broader scope of knowledge.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF A GOOD BOOK TO YOU?
Today, I read a lot of nonfiction. As such, I enjoy books that get straight to the point, without a lot of fluff about the author’s backstory or a longwinded explanation about why I should care. As a child, I read a lot of fiction and enjoyed books with a strong hook. If a good plot point reveals itself in the first few pages, I can’t stop reading.

YOU LOVE TO CO-ORDINATE YOUR READING PICKS WITH YOUR TRAVEL. WHAT’S THE BEST TRIP YOU’VE HAD AND BOOK YOU TOOK ALONG?
This summer, I took a road trip up the New England coast, and it was beautiful. Along the way, I read Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less by Alex Soojung-Kim Pang. I took the book because I wanted to make sure I was resting correctly, I suppose. It was a great read and it helped me realize that true rest isn’t sitting around and doing nothing. True rest is typically doing something stimulating outside of your work.

IF YOU COULD SPEND THE DAY WITH A POPULAR AUTHOR, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHY?
That’s an easy question. R.L. Stine, hands down. He’s my favorite author. As a kid, I read every single Goosebumps book and, as a teen, every Fear Street book. A few years ago, I took a Masterclass course from R.L. Stine about writing where he revealed a few of his secrets. He made me a better writer overnight and gave me a deep appreciation for the systems that made his empire possible. I owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Stine.
WHAT ARE YOU READING RIGHT NOW?
I’m one of those people who read multiple books at the same time. If I get bored of one book, I switch to the next one. So, I’m currently reading *You Can Retire Sooner Than You Think* by Wes Moss, *Results Leader: The Only Thing Valuable Clients Want* by Jonathan Rivera (who produces my “Financial Advisor Marketing” podcast), and *The Allocator’s Edge: A Modern Guide To Alternative Investments and the Future of Diversification* by Phil Huber.

YOU MENTIONED THAT ALMOST EVERY FINANCIAL ADVISOR YOU KNOW LOVES TO READ. HOW HAS THAT SHAPED OR CHANGED THE WAY YOU READ?
Almost every SUCCESSFUL financial advisor loves to read. I’ve noticed that the most successful ones read methodically. They have a purpose behind what they read. If they want to learn how to make their systems better, they will read a book about systems. If they want to develop a referral marketing strategy, they will read a book about referrals. They don’t read haphazardly. Observing that has taught me to have a reason for what I’m reading.

I DONATE BECAUSE...
...books have made a huge positive impact on my life. Books are a gateway to another world. They allow readers to imagine new experiences, consider new opinions, and break limiting beliefs.
AS A BUSINESS OWNER, MARKETER, AND READER EXTRAORDINAIRE, DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE BOOK THAT YOU ALWAYS GO BACK TO OR LOVE TO RECOMMEND?

My all-time favorite book is *Think And Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill. To say that book changed my life is an understatement. I’ve recommended it to thousands of people through my emails, newsletters, and podcast episodes.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START YOUR BUSINESS, THE ADVISOR COACH?

Long story short, I became a very skilled marketer and realized my skills worked well in the financial services field. I started doing one-on-one coaching showing financial advisors how to get more clients (which is why my business is named The Advisor Coach). Eventually, that morphed into a publishing model with various information-based products and services.

IT’S INSPIRING TO SEE THE WORK YOU DO, AND FOR US TO WATCH YOUR SUCCESS OVER THE YEARS. IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

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225 MILLION books and resources distributed to date.

5 MILLION children reached annually.
WHAT IS ONE THING ABOUT YOU THAT WOULD SURPRISE PEOPLE?
I’m a big pro-wrestling fan. While I don’t watch as much as I used to, I try to catch the shows when I can.

YOU GENEROUSLY DONATE TO FIRST BOOK. WHY?
I donate because books have made a huge positive impact on my life. Books are a gateway to another world. They allow readers to imagine new experiences, consider new opinions, and break limiting beliefs. If someone is thinking about supporting First Book’s work, I would let them know that a lack of education is a root cause for many of the problems we face in the world. First Book’s mission is all about building a path out of poverty through educational quality. If millions of children are lifted out of poverty through their education, don’t you think the world will be a better place?

MORE DONOR UPDATES
Visit our Support Us page to learn more about how your support impacts educators and the families we serve. Download even more Donor Spotlights.

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