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Noted Children's Author Reads for INMED

STERLING, VA (March 26, 2018): Could a wise tortoise in Niger hold the secret to surviving a devastating drought? Children who attended the Barnes & Noble Book Fair at One Loudoun last Saturday learned the answer from noted children's book author/illustrator Nelda LaTeef, who read and signed her latest work, *Animal Village*, to benefit INMED's Family & Youth Opportunity Center in Sterling, VA. She also read an earlier work titled *The Hunter and the Ebony Tree*.

Barnes & Noble regularly holds book fairs to benefit local nonprofits. A percentage of all eligible online sales, as well as in-store purchases at its One Loudoun store last Saturday afternoon, were donated to INMED's programs for at-risk children and low-income families.

LaTeef, who spent a lot of time in Western Africa while studying anthropology at Harvard, was inspired to write *Animal Village* after hearing a griot (storyteller) in the Republic of Niger share an enchanting folk tale about a tenacious tortoise, who toils night and day to find water for her thirsty village. LaTeef's vivid illustrations in acrylic, India ink, colored paper and collage on art board capture the richness and vibrancy of sub-Saharan culture. The story is especially relevant to today's sub-Saharan Africa, as it focuses on the peril of drought and the importance of working together to find sustainable solutions.

“The warm reception experienced at Barnes & Noble during the book fair was further enhanced by having Nelda share her stories with the children,” noted Cecilia A. Capece, Executive Director, INMED Family & Youth Opportunity Center. “She not only gave them insight into her writing, but also conveyed the importance of teamwork and perseverance in everyday life.”

In addition to its transformational programs in Loudoun County, INMED facilitates adaptive agriculture programs in climate-change-affected regions of Southern Africa, Jamaica and Latin America to improve food security, health and economic opportunities for vulnerable children and families.

For more information about programs at INMED’s Family & Youth Opportunity Center, visit <https://opportunitycenter.us>. To learn more about Nelda LaTeef, follow her on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nelda.lateef>