



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

From Prison Cell to 500 Libraries: Planet Word Hosts Reginald Dwayne Betts for a Freedom Reads Milestone

*Event marks the launch of the 500th Freedom Library, created by poet and lawyer
Reginald Dwayne Betts*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Planet Word will host 500 and Counting! A Freedom Reads Celebration on Saturday, September 13, 2025, at 4:00 p.m., featuring poet, lawyer, and MacArthur Fellow Reginald Dwayne Betts. The free event will celebrate the launch of the 500th Freedom Library, a milestone in Betts's nonprofit initiative Freedom Reads.

The program will include a reading by Betts, an overview of the work of Freedom Reads, an exhibition of the Freedom Library, and a community reception. The event is free and open to the public, with advance registration encouraged at <https://planetwordmuseum.org/events/500-and-counting-a-freedom-reads-celebration/>.

Founded in 2020, [Freedom Reads](#) opens handcrafted libraries containing a curated 500-book collection in prison cellblocks across the United States, creating greater access to literature for incarcerated individuals.

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“Freedom Reads began with the belief that books could create freedom, even when you’re behind bars,” said Reginald Dwayne Betts. “The 500th library is a testament to the power of literature to change lives even in the unlikeliest of places.”

Event Details

500 and Counting! A Freedom Reads Celebration

Saturday, September 13, 2025 | 4:00–6:00 p.m.

Planet Word | 925 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

About Freedom Reads

Founded by Reginald Dwayne Betts in 2020, Freedom Reads builds handcrafted Freedom Libraries containing a curated 500-book collection and opens them in prison cellblocks across the country. Learn more at freedomreads.org.

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Planet Word is the only museum in the country dedicated to renewing and inspiring a love of words and language. Located in the historic Franklin School on the corner of 13th and K Streets in downtown D.C., Planet Word opened in 2020 as a new kind of interactive and self-guided museum. Using the museum’s state-of-the-art technology, visitors determine their experience through their own words and choices. Planet Word is a bold and imaginative response to the life-long importance of literacy and to the challenge of growing a love of language. As a private, non-governmental museum, Planet Word is free for visitors and supported primarily by the generosity of donors.