

DATE: August 5, 2021

TO: Library Board, Pima County Public Library

Pima County Board of Supervisors
Pima County Administration
Friends of the Pima County Public Library, Board of Directors
Friends of the Arivaca Library, Board of Directors
Friends of the Esmond Station Library, Board of Directors
Friends of the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, Board of Directors
Friends of the Oro Valley Public Library, Board of Directors
Friends of the Pima-Green Valley Library, Board of Directors
Pima Library Foundation, Board of Directors

FROM: Karyn Prechtel-Altman
Deputy Library Director

SUBJECT: Public Services and Community Engagement Report – June and July 2021

Pima County Public Library's Latinx Program Manager Anna Sanchez, retired from the Library at the end of July. She and I worked closely together and I attended the bi-monthly Nuestras Raíces meeting to discuss the plan to open the position as a temporary Detail opportunity, which will keep the work flowing until we can hire a permanent person.

I visited the Richard Elías-Mission, Nanini, and W. Ann Gibson-Esmond Station Libraries in the months of June and July. Libraries are transitioning to full-service this summer and staff at each of these libraries are eager to get back to normal library services.

I was honored to be able to share insights about PCPL's Anti-Racism journey at an Urban Library's Council convening on July 14 titled *Finding Our Way Forward Together: Advancing Libraries as Anti-Racist Leaders*. The convening, open to all ULC members as well as all North American Public Libraries also highlighted the work of Prince George County Public Library and Austin Public Library. <https://www.urbanlibraries.org/initiatives/going-forward-from-the-pandemic/action-team-anti-racism>

Library Services Manager - Kate DeMeester

The focus of much of my work in June and July has been preparation for the opening of the Sahuarita Library. While we are not quite ready to open yet, we are definitely in the home stretch! Staff is very excited to debut this freshly built library for the Sahuarita community, and they are looking forward to seeing everyone enjoy the gorgeous space and new materials.

Library Services Manager - Sharla Ronstadt

During this period, I continued to manage staffing information spreadsheets and collecting updates from managers. I worked on data projects pertaining to branch hours. I did several branch visits this month and worked at the branches where staffing support was needed. I also completed several orientations with returning Substitute Librarians and met with several substitutes in person to check in on their work assignments. I also facilitated manager group meetings and assisted with Public Service Managers meeting facilitation to collaborate and share information pertaining to current services.

Library Services Manager - Amy Rusk

Flexibility has been the word for June and July. Library managers constantly have to figure out ways to work smarter in an ever-changing environment, so meeting with them has been a priority.

As a PCPL representative on the Tucson Festival Books steering committee, I am working with the PCPL Literary Arts Office staff to hire two BIPOC community members to serve as Program Collaborators in Residence to help promote the Festival and other large cultural programs and alleviate pressure on BIPOC staff who have been disproportionately responsible for these events.

Ongoing meetings with the Tohono O'odham Legislative Cultural Preservation Committee and the Pascua Yaqui Language and Culture Department are helping us move closer to adopting a land acknowledgment statement for the system.

Program Manager for Literacy and Connected Learning – Kendra Davey

The literacy Initiatives team has been busy supporting PCPL's Summer Learning Program which includes a book giveaway, reading trackers, grab and go activities, and virtual summer learning programs. We have also continued to offer an online reading program in addition to the traditional reading program our families know and love. We have distributed 13,000 (paper) reading trackers to library branches and 269 kids have signed up for the online reading tracker. We have offered six virtual programs for kids and parents with approximately 200 attendees. And virtual volunteering for teens has continued through the summer. The virtual volunteers have been interviewing each other after a training from Arizona Public Media. The interviews will be posted on PCPL's YouTube channel.

Program Manager for Workforce and Economic Development – Ken Zambos

During the months of June and July, Pima County Public Library noticed a marked increase in attendance at our virtual job help programs, which included assistance with resume writing, interview preparation, and applying for jobs online. The patrons attending these programs were primarily unemployed or dislocated workers though some were individuals interested in career changes. Job Help staff provided assistance to help attendees obtain the knowledge and practical skills required to obtain gainful employment, helping to mitigate financial challenges. Through end of program surveys and direct communication from attendees, patrons stated that they were grateful for what they learned, that they were more confident in searching, applying, and interviewing for jobs, and that they learned what constitutes a good resume and cover letter. Furthermore, patrons also specifically stated their appreciation for Pima County Public Library's Job Help Programs.

Biblio Lotus – Xuan Zhou

On June 2, Biblio Lotus partnered with the Welcome to America team and Arizona Public Media and presented the Global Arts Showcase to highlight local artists for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Three groups of artists, Purple Bamboo Ensemble, Duo Chinoiserie and Tucson Sino Dance performed for this event. More than 800 people registered for this event and more than 400 joined this event live.

Biblio Lotus also continued to partner with local AAPI community organizations, including presenting the interview series – Community Spotlight. So far, we've conducted two interviews, with Yume Japanese Gardens of Tucson and Asian Pacific American Studies Faculty. Biblio Lotus also made effort in highlighting our growing AAPI collection by introducing new books in our monthly lists.

Kindred – Tenecia Phillips

Kindred continues to host Read Black each month. Last month's conversation was facilitated by Tenecia Phillips. The focus of the conversation was *Read Black – Pride* and attendees were able to share the books they had read round-robin style. A master list of books shared was posted on the library's website after the program had taken place. Read Black for July will take place on Saturday, July 24 and those in attendance will be discussing *Thick and Other Essays* by Tressie McMillan Cottom.

Team members are also very excited that NCAAL (National Conference for African American Librarians) is finally here! The conference will take place virtually July 27 – August 1 and will offer the opportunity to attend a wide range of sessions including *Revisiting Our Entrepreneurial Roots: Libraries as a Renaissance of Black Invention*, *Engaging Spaces through the Lens of African American Young Minds*, and *Library Collaborations and Community Partnerships: Enhancing Health and Quality of Life*. Kindred will be a first time presenter at the conference and will be presenting *The 4% Matter: Why Reaching the Black Community in Pima County is a Critical Need* session on July 30.

LGBTQ+ – Kaitlyn Sparks

In April, we provided over 200 donated and discarded books to the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) for their LGBTQ+ Youth Shelter, Bread & Roses and their teen safe space, EON Youth Lounge. LGBTQ+ Services Committee staff has requested books on LGBTQ+ topics and reviews the books we send to SAAF to insure they are of high quality and content requested by the youth.

Rainbow Reads: A positively queer book club for adults continues to be well attended with high engagement. One member recently moved out of state and stated how grateful they were to still be able to join us. The book club has become a safe space for many members; a place they feel comfortable sharing their difficult past with people that can relate or at least empathize.

For Pride Month in June, committee members made over 30 LGBTQ+ book lists to be featured on our website every day of the month. Our Instagram account continues to have very positive engagement and we reached our goal of 1000 followers on our Instagram account before the end of Pride Month with the help of the *Meet the LGBTQ+ Service Committee* email, which went out to library customers on June 8. The committee was also featured on the Urban Libraries Council website during Pride Month:

<https://www.urbanlibraries.org/blog/were-here-for-everyone-is-a-guiding-principle>

Nuestras Raíces – Marissa Alcorta

The team has been in transition as the Latinx Program Manager, Anna Sanchez, has recently retired. We are hoping to have a detail appointment of a staff member placed soon, with a permanent hire in that position in the near future.

Team members are currently continuing to work on translations of system wide publicity and marketing materials. Our social media presence has been gaining traction, with new followers to our Facebook and Instagram profiles. We are also working on identifying and inviting authors for the next TFOB to present in PCPL's Nuestras Raíces space. Our Frank De La Cruz book collection continues to grow, with new books being added to the physical collection in a regular capacity by team member Lu Guerrero working with CDO. And many team members are working on planning the *Mes de la Cultura* virtual program that will be highlighted in the next Global Showcase with AZPM and the Welcome to America team. We are hoping to highlight a local Latinx tile artist, local Mariachi and Folklorico group performance and a highlight piece in the Frank De La Cruz collection. We are aiming for September 15 for the program to air.

Welcome to America – Tara Foxx-Lupo

After the success of our first Global Arts Showcase, a virtual program offered in partnership with Arizona Public Media (AZPM,) the Welcome to America team immediately began planning for the second installment. This virtual event was planned and presented in partnership with PCPL's newest affinity team, Bibliolotus. The event was just after the conclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month, demonstrating PCPL's ongoing year-round commitment to celebrating and highlighting the diversity of cultures and perspectives in Tucson and Pima County. The performers included Purple Bamboo-the University of Arizona's Asian Music Appreciation Ensemble, Duo Chinoiserie-a couple who are professional musicians combining far eastern and western instruments, and Tucson Sino Dance-a cultural dance group devoted to celebrating and sharing Chinese traditional dance with the wider community. The team considered the event a huge success, as did our partner organization, AZPM. While we felt the first event had great attendance, this one set the record at almost twice as many attendees. The event served as a great reminder that our public relies on us for so much more than traditional library services, including accessible, no cost programming around the humanities and the arts.

District 1 – Supervisor Rex Scott

Dewhirst-Catalina Library – Christine Dykgraaf

Dewhirst-Catalina Library expanded its services to patrons as well as the amount of time they can be in the building over June and July. In July, libraries also stopped taking temperatures and required masks only of non-vaccinated persons. These changes were received well by our patrons who felt comfortable entering the library and using our services in whatever way they felt was safe or sufficient for them personally. We have handed out dozens of summer reading trackers and free books for the Summer Learning Program and kids are already in July bringing back the tracker showing they have read for a lot of time so far. Dewhirst-Catalina Library was also able to establish an outreach arrangement with the Catalina Food Bank to deliver to them 30+ of our craft kits every other week to add to their boxed food pickups by local families.

Dusenberry-River Library – Matías Torres

Dusenberry-River continued to expand access to our library throughout June and July. Public and staff welcome the ability to spend more time in the library and take a seat and relax. The serendipity of *Summer Reading* book giveaways and community-wide projects alongside expanded reopening compliments library efforts at progressive engagement. *Summer Code Club*, developed in concert with Teen Advisory Board member, proved to be an online transformative way for teens to spend their summer. *Virtual Art in Afternoon* series with Tucson Museum of Art docent led presentations set for late July with an expectation of an eventual transition to original in-person format later this year.

Nanini Library – Caitlin Burns

Nanini has seen an increase in circulation and customer use throughout the day as services continue to expand. We are happy to be offering lockers for customers to pick up their materials during hours and days the library is closed and we expect these to get more popular as word spreads.

Despite Summer Learning looking different this year, families have been thrilled to come back into the building to sign up for SLP, grab a free book, and complete the activities in the Children's area like the desert scavenger hunts or the word games.

The end of May brought the end of the Amphi-sponsored snack program, which was entirely packed, for eight libraries by Nanini's amazing staff members. Between December 2020 and

May 2021, we are proud to have packed 25,000 meals for kids throughout Tucson provided by Amphi USD and many of our libraries.

Oro Valley Public Library – Pam Park

Summertime has seen many families coming to the library to hang out, check out and find out about the Summer Learning Program. Every day there has been a steady flow of parents and children coming in to the library to pick up their reading trackers, pick out their free book and head to the children's room to browse the shelves. Summer has also seen the return of furniture into the building after the pandemic shutdowns and customers have been enjoying the ability to once again sit at a table to read, work or study in the cool and quiet library environment. The first week in July, the Friends Book Shoppe, located inside the library, opened for business much to the delight of new and old customers. This well-curated bookstore offers used books at reasonable prices and the proceeds go directly to the library. The Oro Valley telescope continues to be in high demand and in June, it received a thorough cleaning and tune-up by Jim Knowles of the Amateur Astronomy Association.

Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr. Library – Meggin Kitterman

It was fortuitous that increased occupancy coincided with the SLP kick off June 1. Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr. Library's door count doubled that day and customers lined the walkway at opening. Increased occupancy was a needed change and an uplifting sight for staff. Summer Learning excitement continued to draw crowds even after opening day. Busy library staff passed out more than 2100 free books and 600 meals to kids and teens. Senior Children's Librarian Cat Strong continues to bolster learning and brain development by supplying families with new, interesting learning activities every week.

In July, Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr. library and staff started reconnecting with community partners. The Town of Marana used the community meeting room July 2-4 for a community Fourth of July Spectacular celebration, stocking of the deposit collection at Picture Rocks Community Center resumed and Friends of the Library volunteers started to return. The Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation River of Words Art Exhibit is on display until the end of July. At the library, we have distributed participant packets and awards, and staff have had several wonderful interactions with the youth and their families. The participants have been so proud to see their work displayed – many selfies and family pictures!

Excited, grateful library staff welcomed two new Library Technical Assistants to the team and three summer youth interns from the Pima County Youth Experience program, a huge help now that more customers are visiting the library and circulation continues to increase.

District 2 – Supervisor Matt Heinz

Eckstrom-Columbus Library – Lu Guerrero

The months of June and July at Eckstrom-Columbus Library have been consistently busy. Staff gradually expanded the number of public computers available for use. TUSD has been present in our lobby twice to guide interested job seekers through their recruitment process. The library continues to serve the community this summer with seasonal programs, such as the Summer Learning Program, TUSD lunch packs and the Community Food Bank of Southern AZ's snack program. Community members also continue to receive fresh produce biweekly through the food bank.

UA nursing students contacted staff at the library to learn about the service area and any observations our staff could provide them regarding health related patterns present the immediate community.

Quincie Douglas Library – Marissa Alcorta

We have continued to participate in the Community Food Bank snack and breakfast programs, and have been giving out snacks and larger breakfast packs to youth in our community. It is much needed and appreciated.

Our Children's Services LA has worked to promote the Summer Learning program in the area. We have been very successful in having youth participate in the program and have given away many free books to children and teens!

Our YA librarian has been working with our Teen Youth Intern. Analise began working at Quincie Douglas Branch at the beginning of July. She was our Summer Youth Intern two years ago and enjoyed it so much she requested to come back. We are hoping her work will give her some useful skills she can use in the future!

In addition, the teens participating in the last Teen Virtual Volunteer Program created bookmarks based on their original artwork and they will be available in all branches. This summer the program was a more casual Virtual Volunteer program. Teens were shown how to make contributions to the website including making lists and submitting book reviews.

Sam Lena–South Tucson Library – Kelly Wilson

Sam Lena South Tucson Library expanded our computer use to the children's and teen rooms to allow for unaccompanied youth coming back to our libraries. We have welcomed back youth coming in for Summer Learning books as well as computer use.

We moved our seed library collection out to the public area for patrons to browse. We have been delighted to share our seed collection with brand new seed patrons as well as those who have purposely ventured out to find our selection of seeds. We offered up our aged out seeds to community members through our Face Book page, and were thrilled to share with Iskashitaa Refugee Network.

We have been hosting our *Activitree* passive programming table all summer, where many of our neighbors have created community puzzle pieces to contribute to our growing puzzle. The artwork from all ages and talents has really brightened our space. We also offer popular grab-n-go activities for busy families to take home and keep kids engaged and entertained during the summer months.

Santa Rosa Library – Ivonne Ramirez

June and July have been active months for Santa Rosa Library. Curbside services for our community pantry continue in partnership with the Community Food Bank and continued to be well used by the community.

District 3 – Supervisor Sharon Bronson, Chair

Caviglia-Arivaca Library – Jodi Ohlson

Summer Learning with a twist has been the theme for June and July at the Caviglia Arivaca Library. We started the summer making sure the students at The San Fernando School in Sasabe had plenty of books and Grab 'n Go kits to get their summer off to a great start. The front patio of the Caviglia Arivaca Library has hosted two ongoing *Scavenger Hunts*, and an *Obstacle Course* that offered the opportunity to avoid hungry sharks, several angry hippos, and one long 'Swirl with the Squirrel.' And with each visit, free books, reading trackers and Grab 'n Go kits were given away. A Summer Learning table has also been set up at the Arivaca Community Center, which is hosting a half day Parks & Recreation camp, with plenty of books to share and/or keep and writing/drawing supplies sponsored by PCPL. It has been a joy to have children return to the library, and once again see families sharing the space and reading

together. In addition, our WIFI availability continues to be a major draw, with folks sitting in their cars or on the porch in the rain as they sign on to the internet. As monsoon season knocks out electricity, cell towers and internet throughout the valley, we are often the last bastion of WIFI access.

The *Arivaca Kindness Puzzle: We are not Us without You* Community Art Project will continue into the fall. Puzzle pieces continue to be distributed throughout the community, and the front wall of the building is the site for the growing display that honors Arivacan's acts of kindness both big and small.

Flowing Wells Library – Ingrid Trebisky

Flowing Wells Library went to 100% occupancy, no time limits, and all the furniture put back in place for customers to use. It was very timely with temperatures soaring over 110 degrees in the middle of June. We noticed more homeless hanging out in the library to escape the high temperatures. The Community Food Bank Breakfast Program and Tucson Unified School District Lunch Program is very popular with 424 breakfast and lunches given away in June. Youth and families are very excited to participate in the Summer Reading Program *Imagine Our Story*. It has been very gratifying to take parents and children to the Summer Reading Program table in the children's area that has a banner, a table full of trackers, crafts, and giveaways, and the story time room next to the table with free books on display. Children can also sign their names on puzzle pieces to make a giant puzzle on the window.

The highlight for July is fully vaccinated customers don't have to wear masks, and the Friends of the Pima County Public Library Book Sale is back in business at Flowing Wells Library.

Woods Memorial Library – Em Lane

Thursdays in June, Woods Librarian Matt Landon coordinated four art and writing workshops for middle and high school-age youth as part of PCPL's summer learning program, *Imagine Our Story*. Twenty-four young people showed up and participated in local artist Catherine Eyde's *Ignite your Creative Spark* workshop on June 10. Catherine presented them with a 30-day visual art challenge where participants draw every day for 30 days using a different prompt every day. We invited the participants to submit their art to the library to be published on: library.pima.gov/storiesandart/

District 4 – Supervisor Steve Christy

W. Anne Gibson Esmond Station – Mary McKinney

As soon as school ended, the Vail community was ready to read! It was a very busy first week of summer reading, and parents and kids alike were excited about choosing a book they could keep. The Grab N Go activities were very popular as was the I Spy board with a new list of items to find each week. Staff registered many families for their first library cards, and several patrons (and staff too) remarked that they eagerly await the return of Storytime.

Joyner-Green Valley Library – Victoria Salajko

The summer months brought new joy into the Joyner-Green Valley Library, care of the Summer Learning Program. Due to continued concerns about the pandemic in the first half of 2021, visits were brief, and visits from children and youth were few. Now we are able to have our book giveaways, grab – and – go activities, library scavenger hunts, and community puzzle project in full swing, and we see our youngest patrons come and visit us every day.

Staff have also had the opportunity to go out and visit young people in our service area. Following each school's safety guidelines, our library staff have visited summer school classrooms to spread the word about summer learning at the library, and to give out free books to jump start each

student's summer reading. They have also made visits to the temporary meeting location of the Amado Youth Center, where they introduced attending youth to the basics of podcasting and audio recording, using the library's Spire Connected Learning Kit.

Kirk-Bear Canyon Library – Linde Furman

Kirk-Bear Canyon has been bustling with activity over the summer! As soon as our Summer Learning Program began, we saw a great increase in the number of families and children visiting our branch. All staff here have been delighted to be interacting with and serving our community's youth again. In addition, we are pleased to have moved furniture back out for public use so our customers may have extended cozy visits.

Starting in July, we also added two new permanent staff members to our fantastic team: our Library Technical Assistant, John, who is new to the system and our Adult Services Librarian, Deborah Brown, who has transferred to us from another location. Welcome to our wonderful new team members!

As we re-open more fully and expand services to our community, we look forward to seeing more and more faces and continuing to welcome everyone back to the library.

Miller-Golf Links Library – Kassy Rodeheaver

The Summer Learning Program has been a great draw for our families who brought their kids in to pick up their free books and our Grab and Go Learn at Home activities. The kids have especially loved the opportunity to pick out their own books right away. During a visit to get her young son enrolled in the Summer Learning Program, a woman thanked the desk staff so much for their help in finding and reserving a nursing exam study guide book for her. She let us know that "I just found out that I passed my nursing test!"

Pat, a seasonal resident of Pima County, told our staff who helped him solve a technology issue that "I love the Pima County Public Library best out of all of the public libraries I've used throughout my life and that the Miller-Golf Links Library is my favorite branch to visit!"

Murphy-Wilmot Library – Kathy Konecny

A customer emailed to express her deep gratitude to the Murphy-Wilmot staff for all the assistance they provided her while she pursued her college degree. She stated that the "best place" for her to complete her college work was at her public library. She was especially grateful that staff assisted her in locating articles to support her research. She stated, "The pleasure in working with reliable and pleasant professionals eased many of my concerns." She concluded by saying, "I am a grateful patron and will continue to utilize and sing the praises of the library staff at the Murphy-Wilmot Library."

The Summer Learning Program looked a bit due to COVID19 modifications. However, over 575 children and their families participated in the *Imagine Our Story* program. Children picked up reading trackers, contributed their original artwork to our community puzzle, and selected about 2,500 books to add to their personal libraries. Excited voices and giggles punctuated the *good old summertime* of learning at the Murphy-Wilmot Library.

District 5 – Supervisor Adelita Grijalva

Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library – Irina Delone

Since El Pueblo Library re-opened its doors on July 6, patrons are grateful to be back and we are glad to see many regulars again. The greatest needs in our location are food security and job help. For the month of June and July, Frank De La Cruz- El Pueblo Library distributed over 500 breakfast packs, over 450 lunch packs, and over 100 weekend packs to individuals and

families. The Library staff helps patrons with computer and Internet access to apply for jobs and social security benefits.

Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library's partnership with the Mulcahy YMCA has continued into the summer months. For the month of June and July, 88 items were checked out to Mulcahy YMCA and 350 *Grab-N-Go Activities* were provided for preschool to sixth grade children. The Summer Learning Program is popular among families with kids, as well. They are happy to come for a free book and *Grab-N-Go Learn at Home* activities pack.

Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library contributes to the *Many Nations, Spread the Wealth* initiative of getting books out to the community and markets the library as a whole through PCPL branded giveaways. Community partners include the El Pueblo Senior Center, New Pascua, and Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Parish. During the last two months, we disseminated a total of 1,066 books and gave away 1,396 Pima County Public Library branded items.

Himmel Park Library – Heather Ross

On Monday night, May 31, a pipe burst inside Himmel Park Library and flooded the interior, forcing us to close for the first week in June. We are grateful that only a small number of books were damaged and that the carpets and walls dried quickly, and that the site of leak was a pipe inside a small, mostly empty room. After customers learned what had happened on Facebook, they offered an outpouring of concern and support, with comments like these: "Be strong, everybody! We love you and this library!"; "Glad all the treasures are okay!"; and "This is one of my most beloved local libraries." When we reopened on June 8, we had an eager crowd waiting outside, excited to come back in to check out materials, use computers, and just say hi. Later in the month, Himmel Park Library celebrated its 60th anniversary. It is an honor to continue serving this wonderful community!

Joel D. Valdez Main Library – Tenecia Phillips

The Main Library is excited to welcome four new staff to our circulation team. We now have three full-time and one part-time Library Technical Associates and they are in the process of being trained by Leland Murray, our Library Technical Assistant Supervisor. We have placed 600+ free books into the hands of young readers since the start of Summer Learning and have enjoyed sharing the community's excitement about the program and adding new books to their personal libraries. This past year has been particularly challenging for people experiencing homelessness because many community resources closed or had very reduced services. Our branch put out a call to other library staff for donations such as hygiene products, water bottles, and clothing. PCPL staff responded enthusiastically and we have been able to place these items in the hands of those who need them the most.

Martha Cooper Library – Tara Foxx-Lupo

Martha Cooper library staff have been happy to see many of our regular customers coming back for things like computer access, copies, personal laptop use, newspapers and more. The summer learning program has brought in many kids and families, eager to choose a free book and reconnect with library staff they may not have seen for a while. Kids love the other activities that accompany summer learning, such as our branch scavenger hunt. Kids who complete the scavenger hunt are able to pick another book out to keep, making this a popular activity.

Martha Cooper library is once again hosting a summer youth intern through the Pima County Onestop and Arizona@Work programs. The intern is able to help with delivery of food programming, summer learning engagement and regular library duties. This invaluable experience gives young adults experience in a work environment similar to what they will likely encounter in adulthood. Not only is this helping to prepare them for employer expectations, it helps them to build skills they can use in a variety of ways throughout their lives

Richard Elías-Mission Library – Alina Rowe

In June, Librarian Taylor participated in a Zoom visit at Lynn/Urquides Elementary School for their summer program. She held a short storytime, talked about our Summer Learning Program, snacks, online resources, and what it is like to work in a library. The students were engaged and had fun! Later in the month, Taylor recognized a few faces from the outreach. They were so excited to come in and pick out a free book and activities!

In July, the Richard Elías-Mission library was able to expand capacity to 100%. Furniture is now out and patrons are able to sit and enjoy the library. The Richard Elías-Mission library has been successful in providing children with breakfast and lunches all day everyday while the library is open. The summer learning program has been in full effect and many children have been able to take a new book to add to their home libraries. Our community puzzle continues to grow with the puzzle pieces that community members create and display on our bulletin board at the entrance.

Southwest Library – Angie Grischkowsky

June saw Southwest staff preparing to reopen the building to the public for the first time since December. We had a lot of work to make sure we could greet our patrons with a cheerful space and a collection in good shape.

On July 6th we reopened our doors and have been focused on welcoming the public back to their library.

“You’ve been closed for so long, I’m so happy you’re here!”

“I can’t tell you how glad I am that you’re open again!”

“Hooray! I can come inside!”

Our patrons have not been shy in telling us how much they missed their library, and we assure them all that the feeling is mutual!

Valencia Library – Paulina Aguirre-Clinch

Summer Learning Program has arrived at Valencia Library and the youth services team has been hard at work preparing for it. They also have had some help; there is a rattlesnake in the children’s area! But not to worry, it’s friendly and our rattlesnake is hard at work advertising our Summer Learning program. Children and teens can select a giveaway book from one of the carts and help themselves to crayons, pencils, erasers, stickers, coloring books, etc. from the table. There are also some bags available for them to carry all their awesome loot.

Children’s Librarian Sara and Library Associate Thania are busy at work providing virtual storytimes via Zoom to Mission Manor Head Start home based families. Library Associate Thania was also able to offer virtual class visits via Zoom to Ocotillo Early Learning Center for their summer program. Library Associate Thania commented about how it has been awesome that we are starting to reconnect with families and community partners and offer virtual programs in the best way that we can.

We have expanded our food program here at Valencia Library. We have started to provide breakfast packets in the morning as well as weekend packets to give out during the weekend to the community. The Community Food Bank has provided both the breakfast and weekend packets. We have also been providing lunch packets in the afternoon, which Tucson Unified School District have been providing. Staff have received multiple comments on how grateful the community is for these food services that the library has provided.

Additional services included a visit from the Red Cross’s Bloodmobile and COVID testing by the County’s Health Department.