

DATE: August 4, 2022

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: Community Engagement Report – July 2022

Several staff and I attended the virtual Library 2.022 Mini-Conference sponsored by the San Jose State School of Information and the Urban Libraries Council titled *Urban Librarianship: Embracing Challenges and Opportunities through Innovation, Leadership, and Best Practices*. Library leaders Michael Lambert (San Francisco), Chris Brown (Chicago), Dr. Rhea Lawson (Houston), Kelvin Watson (Las Vegas) and Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada (ALA President) opened the conference with a discussion on the notable increase in our communities' needs for social services and the innovative ways libraries are trying to meet those needs. Whether it's housing, food assistance, substance abuse, or coping with mental health crises – the challenges of cities instantly become challenges in Libraries. A couple of new ideas surfaced – Las Vegas is circulating smart phones to help keep people connected to services and loved ones. Houston is hosting mental health fairs with *Coffee with a Therapist* sessions.

Latinx Program Manager – Hassael Cazesuz

The second quarter has proven to be a busy one during my interim position as Latinx Program Manager. However, the efforts during these months will be for lasting changes in PCPL. For example, most of April, I was involved in the large recruitment process for the Library Associate position. Today I am happy and relieved to see new faces and positions filled across our branches in PCPL. Especially during the Service U tours in which Main staff has been very welcoming to our new staff with a tour and a time to mingle with support staff in the 4th floor.

During May, discussions were had amongst Nuestras Raíces affinity team members and the TSV department about implementing Bilingual labels on our collection to help our communities as well as staff to more easily identify this material. This was a huge change for the Pima County Public Library and its efforts to provide a more equitable and dedicated service to our diverse communities. Our goal is to have an increase in circulation in this material as well as help it grow, with the help of the CSO department, to further provide more culturally appropriate material for our communities.

Alongside that change, late May and much of June, I was supporting the newly implemented translation request process that involves branch and system wide projects to spot-check and review. This process has been created available to all staff members through the Pima County

Public Library's Intranet and the content then is sent to the CSO office and myself and we will work together to create a quick turnaround for this service. The CDO team and I are pleased with the new process and it seems to be sustainable since its inception.

Lastly, the program managers are part of the Pima County vendor procurement process with phase one incorporating evaluating applicants and I am pleased to have finished with the first phase of this project. I am excited for the potential programs that soon will be available for our communities for them to enjoy and take advantage of relevant programming. I in particular have been taking note of the vendor procurement process for future opportunities to encourage more diverse and culturally appropriate presenters to satisfy diversity not only in presenters but also in content for our communities.

Program Manager for Literacy and Connected Learning – Kendra Davey

The second quarter was busy for the literacy initiatives staff. Storytimes and in-person homework help started, we had an increase in school visits and we launched The Oceans of Possibilities Summer Learning program. During this quarter, we gave away 3700 books to children and teens in the community through community partnerships and at community events, we supported over 1500 students, and we connected with more than 1,000 community members. We were excited to receive several Story Sketches submissions again this summer. Story Sketches are stories written and illustrate by children and teens. Library staff record audio for the story and turn the stories into short videos posted on PCPL's YouTube page. Five stories have been submitted this summer. This has been a fun way to showcase the creativity of Pima County kids.

Quarterly Reports for Cultural Affinity Teams and Seed Library

Biblio Lotus – Sharon Yang-McNeil

In May, Biblio lotus hosted a virtual Author Event with Dan Santat, the Caldecott Medal-winning and New York Times–bestselling author and illustrator of *The Adventures of Beekle*. Three members were trained to use the Zoom webinar to organize the event. Dan was interviewed by answering previously submitted questions from children. The event went well and the recording of the event was put on YouTube for one month receiving 91 views. The team is expecting to bring more author talks to the library in the future.

Biblio Lotus worked with the Technical Services Department to catalog donated Chinese books into library collections. Some of these books have already circulated.

The team collaborated with the LGBTQ Team and worked on the *Pride Packs* for Pride Month in June, which sends a message of caring for the LGBTQ community.

One team member visited and interviewed at the Japanese Language School in Tucson, wrote a Blog and published as one of the community series. The series is to highlight the culture and values of Asian communities.

LGBTQ+ - Kaitlyn Sparks and Ray Baca

The LGBTQ+ Services Committee has continued its 25th Anniversary Author Talk Series with two new author talks this quarter! Carlos Valenzuela, author of *Letters To Young Carlos*, joined us on May 21. The event had 28 attendees and its recording on the library's YouTube channel has been viewed over 120 times! On June 18, Tee Franklin, author of *Bingo Love*, joined us for a very memorable talk. The event garnered 35 attendees and its recording has been views over 112 times.

For Pride Month, the committee created and distributed over 3,000 bookmarks to our 27 branches. The bookmarks highlighted the variety of flags that make up the LGBTQ+ community. The LGBTQ+ Services Committee also collaborated with PCPL's Biblio Lotus team to create

over 1500 *Pride Packs* for the month of June. These Grab n' Go kits consisted of paper, string, beads and directions (in English and Spanish) for creating a rainbow assortment of paper cranes, perfect for stringing together to show your Pride.

Rainbow Reads: A positively queer book club is still virtual and continues to bring in new and returning members every month. Rainbow Reads accumulated 28 participants from May to July! June's discussion centered around *On a Sunbeam* by Tillie Walden and the other two were focused on any recent books with LGBTQ+ themes enjoyed by the book club.

The LGBTQ+ Services Committee's Instagram page is also holding steady. Over the past three months, the page has reached over 18.5k accounts, engaged with 1,169 accounts, and has garnered over 1,464 followers.

Kindred – Jessica Pryde

Kindred continues to work inside and outside of the library to bring together members of the Black community—whether members of the greater community or library staff. We have continued to see steady attendance at our Read Black Book Clubs, including online zoom meetings to discuss *You Don't Know Us Negroes* in May and a round-robin book share discussing books by Black members of the LGBTQ+ community in June for Pride month. The team, with the support of other offices in the library, continues to amass the correct tools, training, and materials for the project on oral storytelling and memory preservation.

We are now looking forwards toward the coming year, in which we hope to not only continue outreach for our community goals, but revisit our goals for action within the library system.

Nuestras Raíces – Hassael Cazesuz

Second quarter presented itself with opportunities for the Nuestras Raíces affinity team to honor our culture and celebrate our Latinx culture with our diverse community. In April, the Nuestras Raíces team also collaborated with community partners including REFORMA-Tucson Chapter (an ALA Affiliate), as well as Galeria Mitotera and the Arizona Center for the Book for a Día de lxs Niñxs event on April 30. In addition, collaborating with the Many Nations affinity team as well as PCPL's Seed Library, Nuestras coordinated and distributed seeds, a cultural Grab n Go kit and books to giveaway to all branches at PCPL. Additionally, Grab n Go kits, with seeds, were distributed to our local Tribal communities in honor of Día de lxs Niñxs/Día de los libros. Thank you to all of the help Nuestras received during these efforts including the Community Engagement Office colleagues.

Alongside programming, the Nuestras Raíces affinity team has been involved in passionate and inspiring conversations in our monthly meetings regarding identifying unequitable promotion opportunities for library staff in regards to minimum qualifications. Proposals for change have been brought forward by the Staffing Taskforce team and have been discussed with our team for feedback. In addition, a Multilingual Pay Proposal was also drafted by the Staffing Taskforce team, reviewed by our team, and pushed forward for advancement to be reviewed by appointing authorities in the hopes for change. I am hopeful that with the comments and feedback I am collecting from this discussion, the Staffing Taskforce can continue with their efforts for a more equitable compensation for those using multiple languages as part of their work responsibilities.

Moving forward, our team is dedicated to planning for Mes de la cultura, which is fast approaching as well as opening discussions for role responsibilities for the incoming Tucson Festival of Books.

Many Nations – Amy Rusk

In recent months, the Many Nations team helped to organize an intergovernmental agreement between the Pima County Public Library and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. The joint agreement was

signed by Sharon Bronson, the Chair of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, Peter S. Yucupicio, the Chairman of the Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council, and Amber Mathewson, the Director of the Pima County Public Library. The purpose of the agreement is to establish a cooperative relationship between the public library and the Tribe's Education Department, which includes the Dr. Fernando Escalante Community Library and Resource Center, the tribal library. The goal of this collaborative effort is to improve delivery of library services, increase literacy enrichment opportunities, increase resource and programming awareness, and increase reciprocal professional development and training opportunities.

The Many Nations team expanded the Spread the Wealth Program by taking the Culturally-Relevant Book Giveaway Program to the San Xavier community. They gave away 130 copies of *A Tohono O'odham Grammar* by Ofelia Zepeda to community members. The team also distributed a grab and go kit that included a children's craft project for making a felt bookmark featuring an O'odham woman picking the fruit from a saguaro cactus.

The team partnered with Arizona Humanities to host two events by Native American presenters at the Richard Elias-Mission Library. The first was *Plants of the Mojave Desert and the Traditional Tribal Uses*, a lecture on desert plants and ethnobotany by Carrie Cannon, who is a member of the Kiowa tribe of Oklahoma and is also of Oglala Lakota descent. The second was *More than Pocahontas and Squaws: Indigenous Women Coming into Visibility*, a presentation on Native American women's history and indigenous visibility by Laura Tohe, who is Diné and the current Navajo Nation Poet Laureate.

Lastly, the team elected new leadership this month. Sila Gonzales was elected as the Many Nation team's new chair. Danielle Martinez, an enrolled member of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, was elected as the co-chair.

Seed Library – Susannah Connor

The Seed Library recently connected with a *Parents as Teachers* group in the Amphitheater School District. The Seed Library supplied them with a variety of seeds from the Second Chance Seeds program and One Seed Marigolds for 30 of their families. The group has a monthly home visit outreach to support *group connection* and the coordinator of that effort was very excited to share planting as one of the learning and connecting activities.

The Joel D. Valdez, Main Library has been growing vegetables, flowers and native plants in 17 planters for many years. Over the last few years, we have been focusing on plants that are native to Southern Arizona. Seed Library staff recently refreshed the planters with the help of the Pima County Native Plant Nursery and the University of Arizona's Ecological Restoration Club.

Justine Hernandez participated in Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance hosted webinar about Seed Libraries and presented on PCPL's Seed Library from start-up to where we are now 10 years later. The webinar was broadcast free to attendees nationally via Zoom and Facebook live.

Betsy Langley was interviewed by Vice about the role of Seed Libraries in improving accessibility to healthy food in areas considered to be food deserts. Pima County Public Library remains a national leader in the Seed Library movement. You can read the article here: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/epxyqn/food-is-getting-more-expensive-libraries-are-helping-people-grow-their-own>

Additionally, Jeff McWhorter was interviewed by KGUN 9 in a television news segment about native plants.

Welcome to America – Tara Foxx-Lupo

In late spring the Welcome to America team provided outreach at the Refugee Health and Wellness Fair hosted by Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSSSW.) This outdoor event was a great opportunity to meet and connect with the community. About 125 people came by to discover what the Pima County Public Library has to offer. Beyond the Health and Wellness resources and Citizenship Corner information, there was also information about the Summer Learning Program, Culture Passes, the Seed Library and much more. A terrific selection of multilingual books were given away, along with lots of other promotional items. With the button maker and Welcome to America logo cutouts, children, teens and adults enjoyed making their own buttons.

In celebration of International World Refugee Day, the PCPL Welcome to America Team was a participating partner at the local celebration, hosted by Amphi High School, in mid-June. Staff provided free books in a range of languages including Arabic, Dari, English, French, Pashto, Spanish, Somali and Swahili. The books were a great success, as were the other giveaways provided. Participants could also make a button, take a craft kit and take home seeds from the Seed Library. Many organizations were present including Child and Family Resources, ELFA Empowerment, ICNA Relief, International Rescue Committee, Iskashitaa, Literacy Connects, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Muslim Community Alliance, Pima County Sheriffs and Tucson Police Department, Tucson Afghan Community, Tucson Unified School District, the YMCA, Literacy Connects and We Are All America.

The Welcome to America team has been working on multiple collections projects in recent months, including expanding multi-lingual offerings. The collection development team has been involved and have worked to acquire e-books and e-audiobooks in the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Ukrainian and Urdu. These collections are linked directly to the Welcome to America page on the PCPL website and are available to all library users. Marketing efforts for these collections are underway and we hope to see the community taking advantage of these electronic materials.

Our partnership with Make Way for Books (MWFB) has resumed after a long hiatus. Welcome Team members work with MWFB to provide materials that augment their early literacy programs. PCPL provides MWFB with materials that are bilingual in the children's home language and English. This gives parents a chance to read with their child in their own language and fosters English language learning for the adult at the same time. The requested languages were Dari, Pashto, Arabic, Somali, Swahili and French. The books are given out as a kit that has bookmarks, Welcome to America stickers and Summer Learning materials inside. One goal of the program is to encourage families to engage with the library and all it has to offer.