
DATE: June 6, 2024

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 and Outreach Report – April 2024

Latinx Community Engagement Manager – Hassael Cazesuz

April has brought great weather and outreach opportunities for our Community Engagement and Outreach office. Our team has had the opportunity to participate in six events including Día events as well as several collaborations for the Feria de Recursos Caninos with Pima County Communications department, Pima Animal Care Center, and others. We are thrilled and thankful for the collaborations and opportunity to reach our communities. We are estimating an over 1,000 books were distributed to our communities, including a sizeable amount in Spanish as well as bilingual options for our Spanish-speaking communities. I could not be more thankful and proud of our team including Samantha Neville, Jesús Castañeda, Izchel Quintero, as well as staff from PCPL and our Nuestras Raíces team who have supported these outreach requests and have contributed their Spanish language skills to connect with our community and remind or introduce them to library resources and programming. With their help, we are making our mark in our community. ¡Gracias team!

Workforce and Economic Development – Matthew Landon

On April 18, the Community Engagement and Outreach office, with help from library staff set up computers and helped over 30 people with resumes and online applications at the DREAM Job Fair for people with disabilities.

Three new library teams formed and met for the first time. The Building Community Team, the Learning Resources Team, and the Specialized Information Team. Each focus on some aspects of what the Adult Services Team used to cover, enabling our work to be more efficient and effective.

Quarterly Reports for Cultural Affinity Teams and Seed Library

Biblio Lotus – Sharon Yang-McNeil

Biblio Lotus celebrated the Lunar New Year with a blog post about the Year of the Dragon along with recipes and crafts. A few libraries also hosted a special bilingual storytime with Mandarin Chinese and Korean languages. Oro Valley Library invited a youth music group-Desert Virtuoso

to perform for a family event that gathered 54 people, they really enjoyed the diverse music. Jasmine Asian Music Ensemble from the local community put on a special Lunar New Year performance as well.

Biblio Lotus continues the Community Spotlight to interview community members. Author Dominic Lim was interviewed about his debut novel *All the Right Notes* and we posted excerpts of the interview in a Biblio Lotus blog post. Biblio Lotus member facilitated his author talk at Eckstrom-Columbus right before the Tucson Festival of Books in March. Two Biblio Lotus members did outreach to the 2024 Tucson Japanese Festival on March 15, where they met local community members and introduced library programs and the Biblio Lotus team.

Kindred – Jessica Pryde

Kindred continues to support members of the Black community in Pima County through connections made online and in person. We have been able to sponsor regular programming featuring Estrella from *Estrella Creates*, bringing crafts and history to various libraries. We have also seen success in our new format for the Read Black Book Club, which now alternates between a facilitated book discussion and a round-robin style book share. We have had great discussions about *Black AF History* by Michael Harriot and *The Monsters We Defy* by Leslye Penelope, and look forward to continuing the discussion throughout the year.

Nuestras Raíces – Hassael Cazesuz

Our team has been supporting outreach requests this month. With April celebrating Día, many Nuestras members were able to attend and distribute free books as well as engage with our Spanish speaking community. These events include the Día event on April 7 at Galeria Mitotera. This collaboration presented an opportunity to work with Galeria Mitotera and invite PCPL's Many Nations team to include a cultural craft to distribute amongst participants. Our team once again collaborated with Galeria Mitotera on the Pueblos de Maíz event on April 13. We are thankful and honored to continue to collaborate with Galeria Mitotera on these culturally significant community events and engage with our communities about library resources and programming, as well as promote literacy with books in English, Spanish and bilingual.

PRIDE – Casey Short

The Rainbow Reads Book Club has been going strong, with an enthusiastic group of regulars. Over the last couple months, we have enjoyed discussing *Hijab Butch Blues* by Lamya H and *Vagabonds* by Eloghosa Ohsunde, as well as getting a ton of great queer literature recommendations from the group.

In other news, Pride is currently in the midst of planning for Pride Month in June, preparing bookmarks, educational coloring pages, and resource events.

Seed Library- Lu Guerrero

The Seed Library wrapped up its monthly outreach visits to the Santa Cruz Farmer's Market in May. Future outreach visits will resume later this year, in the month of October. Staff interacted with community members curious about library services and were able to select seeds appropriate for the current sowing season.

Team members were invited to attend a Self-Watering Container training offered by the Community Food Bank of Southern AZ. Staff will implement the skills in library demonstration gardens and some may hold public programming to pass on the skills to the community. The teams' Second Chance Seeds collection was utilized by two community groups this season to support larger community gardening efforts.

Mission Gardens and Peter Howell Elementary representatives visited Sam Lena-South Tucson Library to select a variety of seeds from the collection to provide community members and

students with seed supplies for spring sowing activities.

Finally, latest statistics show that in 2023, PCPL's Seed Library circulated 74, 375 seed packets to the Pima County community. This quantity is up from 56,346 in 2022!

Synapse – Jana Bonfield, Jurdina Nolin-Brown, Katie Westfall

Spring tends to be a busier time for Synapse, our library system's Mental Health Team, as May is our national Mental Health Awareness Month. In the past few months, we have launched our Facebook page to bring greater awareness to our team's efforts. As Synapse is a relatively new affinity team, we hope that this method of communication will help to garner more attention to this important topic of information.

We continue to develop our partnership with the Southern Arizona Psychological Association (SAPA), with whom we have recently created a series of blog posts. The first blog post describes what therapy is, what to expect from therapy sessions, and the benefits of therapy. The goal is that patrons who may be considering going to therapy can walk away from the blog post and feel more comfortable about what to expect.

As for in-person events, we organized a special kid-friendly program with The Center for Neurosciences Foundation that will take place in two different regions of the county, one at the Murphy-Wilmot branch and one at the Flowing Wells branch. The programs entail a mobile laboratory and a presentation that demonstrate how the brain functions. Lastly, we have worked with our library system's Collection Development department to add more mental health-focused materials to our ebook collection and have a special featured section to properly highlight these new titles.

Welcome to America – Tara Foxx-Lupo

This spring the Welcome to America team kicked off a series of author talks with local immigrant author Dr. Nooshie Motaref. Dr. Motaref has written several award-winning books that feature themes from her upbringing in Persia, now called Iran. Her most recent book, *The Girl Raised in Bull Blood* is a fast-moving, far-reaching story that explores time, power, and the pursuit of peace amongst empires. Dr. Motaref's books are woven with strong female characters and cultural touchpoints that will engage readers of all backgrounds. This is our second author talk with Dr. Motaref, who will be presenting at Bear Canyon library later in the year. Attendees who bring their own copy of her work can take advantage of the opportunity to have the author's signature as a souvenir of the experience.

The Welcome to America team has seen a notable increase in requests from refugee resettlement agencies in recent months. This is a great sign that organizational capacity is recovering in our local network of providers. Our team has been working to connect these partner agencies with the resources, access, and information they need to ensure that newly arrived immigrant clientele can benefit from library services. Librarians at multiple locations have hosted tours for groups with origins in various countries, including Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Tours are coordinated in partnership with branch staff, to guarantee that new members are aware of the services provided at locations close to where they live.

Literacy Reads, our collection meant for adults working on their English Language literacy, continues to gain traction through cross promotion and partnership with Literacy Connects and their English Language tutors. A customer of Murphy-Wilmot library recently shared with our librarians there that he loves the collection and has been working his way through the books. The team is always thrilled to hear these real-life success stories and can't wait to hear more.