
DATE: October 2, 2025

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: Marissa Alcorta
Deputy Library Director

SUBJECT: Community Engagement and Support Services Report – September 2025

This month we have welcomed two Library Services Managers to the Community Engagement Team. Ken Zambos and Monique Perez have transferred over from Public Services onto the CEO team. Ken had worked in CEO previously and will return to work on supporting staff in Workforces and Economic Development initiatives and programming as well as Adult Services. Monique will be overseeing Youth Services (Birth to 8 to Young Adult) initiatives and services. Alina Rowe, who has been helping support CEO as a whole this past year will switch her focus to helping support Affinity Team work, including our Latinx Services. All will be helping staff on larger systemwide programs and events and helping support staff with resources and training so they can implement these services at a branch level. We are excited to have this level of leadership and expertise in our Community Engagement office.

Another focus of mine this month is working with Beth Matthias-Loghry and Renee Bibby to get our LSTA grant in motion for our community engagement process. We received this LSTA grant to work with a consultant to provide a process that will engage community members and key stakeholders through forums, focus groups, and interviews. We are in the initial stages of planning the steps for this but will share as the process moves along. We have identified a local consultant that has strong ties to the community in Tucson and Pima County and has worked extensively with other organizations doing this type of work. We see this grant to collect key community-focused data that will inform a larger strategic planning process in the near future.

Affinity Teams – Alina Rowe

Latinx Services- Community Engagement Office

This month, we celebrated the beginning of Mes de la Cultura, widely known as Hispanic Heritage Month. The celebration runs from September 15th to October 15th. It is an important time to honor the achievements, contributions, and impact Latino/x/e people have made in the United States. It is also a time to observe the Independence Days of several Latin American countries.

The Latinx Services team initiated this time of celebration with El Grito on September 12. Our team and the El Pueblo Senior Center worked collaboratively to deliver a vibrant event featuring

El Consulado de México and music from the Davis Mariachi students. There were more than 100 participants registered for the event, and our team distributed more than 250 books. On September 15th, our team tabled at the Fiesta Mexicana and El Grito event at the Linda Ronstadt Music Hall, hosted by El Consulado de México en Tucson. There were over 1,200 attendees, and we distributed over 250 books. On September 24th, our team participated in the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration at the Pima County Courthouse. On September 25th, we spoke with families from the Elvira community about the library's resources during the Elvira Elementary Multilingual Learner Night. Our team also partnered with the Tucson Unified School District's Mexican American Student Services at the ¡Adelante! Mexican American Parent and Youth Conference at the University of Arizona.

As part of Nuestras Raíces and members of Reforma, several members from PCPL attended the Reforma National Conference this month in Long Beach, California. Reforma is the national association that promotes library and information services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking. Among the attendees representing Pima County Public Libraries are the president of the Reforma Tucson Chapter, Alina Rowe, and Central Chapter Representative on the Executive Committee, Mary Pastrana.

We continue to prepare for the Tucson Festival of Books by inviting authors and meeting with the Book and Author Committee monthly.

The Latinx Services Manager, Mary Pastrana, was interviewed by Bill Finley this month for the Arizona Daily Star. You can read about her and Nuestras Raíces here: [Tucson libraries celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

To learn more about Mes de la Cultura, read this blog post by our Latinx Librarian, Samantha Neville: [It's Mes de la Cultura! | Pima County Public Library](#)

Read more by Latino/x/e authors here: [Explore | Pima County Public Library](#)

Six members of our Nuestras Raíces team attended the REFORMA National conference that was held in Long Beach, CA.

Workforce and Economic Development – Ken Zambos

In mid-September, I transitioned back into the Community Engagement Office and will be working in support of business and nonprofit services, digital literacy initiatives, job help, and a few other systemwide programs. I am incredibly excited to reengage public service work related workforce and economic development, and I appreciate the opportunity I have had over the last three years working directly with library branches as a Library Services Manager in public services.

As part of our service to small businesses in southern Arizona, Workforce and Economic Development staff continue to schedule online and in-person programs from our partner Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) Southern Arizona, despite cuts to federal funding for their national organization. In September, CEO staff attended a SCORE presentation at Columbus Library about using Artificial Intelligence to help with job search and resume building. Information from this three-hour workshop will be incorporated into new staff training in job help and tech help at libraries, scheduled to be developed later this fall.

Workforce and Economic Development staff met with Pima County Justice Services administration and Transition Center staff. The Transition Center is the drop-off point for folks leaving Pima County Jail that provides comprehensive support to individuals

transitioning back into the community. The Transition Center has navigators with lived experience who help folks coming out of the jail with their housing, food, rehab, work, medical care, and transportation needs. These are the same needs many of our patrons have and it sparked a conversation where the Transition Center director offered to help gather community service providers who could table at multiple library locations.

In September, Workforce and Economic Development staff joined the Arizona Digital Inclusion Network (ADIN). We shared our success at expanding our computer class offerings through partnerships with Literacy Connects and Pima Community College, as well as our success with PCPL's loanable technology program. ADIN is planning activities for Digital Inclusion Week, October 6th through the 10th this year.

Career Online High School (COHS) has 58 students currently enrolled with 21 graduates so far this year. 200 people expressed interest in COHS in July and August by filling out the readiness form on the website. This demonstrates the value adults aged 22 and over see in obtaining a high school diploma and the community need for this scholarship-based program. One recent graduate said, "Since I finished Career Online High School, I was able to get a job at an after-school childcare program. I quickly realized I love working with preschoolers. I worked my way to having the preschool group, then was hired on as a preschool aide during normal school hours. I'm now working full-time at a job I love. Everything happened so quickly and fell into place so perfectly. I could never have done this without everything that COHS offers. I'm so grateful."

Collection Development/Support Services – Kate DeMeester-Lane

This month our Collection Development Team began in-person visits to each of our libraries through Pima County. We will use this opportunity to engage in hands-on training with staff, and to continue building relationships across the system.

We are also working on setting up comprehensive training for our Technical Services (TSV) and Library Technology staff regarding our Integrated Library System (Sierra). This database is where all our information about our collections is stored. Many of our TSV staff are new within the last year or two, and this training will be helpful to them as they level up their skills.

Youth Services - Monique Perez

In early September, I transitioned from Public Services to the Community Engagement and Outreach Office. I am thrilled to be part of this team, providing leadership and support for Youth Services (Birth – 8, Tweens, and Teens/YA) programming and systemwide initiatives.

As Community Engagement & Outreach (CEO) is reimagining our Youth Services team, moving with more intentionality around our Service Level meetings is one of our goals. This month, we transitioned to in-person meetings which include various forms of staff-led discussions and activities. Our department possesses diverse strengths and expertise, and we are hoping that returning to in-person meetings will help elevate the voices of our colleagues and continue to inspire creativity throughout the PCPL system.

In the Birth-8 Service Level meeting, which kicked off these in-person meetings for September, Lindsey Curley (Birth-8 Librarian, CEO) said, "Knowing that our patrons across Pima County are coming out of the pandemic, we as Librarians must move with them, too." Shifting to in-person meetings in this way will allow us to be in-community with each other, to shake hands and hug one another, and continue learning from each other during these sessions.