

DATE: March 5, 2026

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 – February 2026

This month has been busy with coordination with our partners from other Pima County Departments. We are partnering with Elections and Records office for the upcoming election cycle. Some of our branches are providing meeting room space for the community to come and exercise their right to vote. Primary is in July and General in November. Spaces are also being provided for Elections workers to receive training, with some of our branches providing meeting space for this as well. We are also partnering once again with the Health Department in their Cooling Center initiative this summer. We are already in the planning phases for that. We are happy to partner with and support other county departments in providing services and helping the community in terms of being accessible.

Affinity Teams – Alina Rowe

❖ Biblio Lotus:

Lunar New Year events held at ORO on Feb 7th and at MAI on Feb 18th with the Lion Dancers from Tucson Chinese Association and Jasmine Asian Music.

Lunar New Year themed story times with lantern craft kit.

Sarah shared the library system suggestions for book displays, which included Lunar New Year info sheet that explains 5 different countries of origin cultural and food traditions

Biblio Lotus and Synapse are planning a collaboration for the month of May, which is Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Month and Mental Health Awareness month

Planning programs that incorporate local AANHPI artists and musicians for activities where art and music sessions are stress and anxiety-reducing activities may have a Yoga program as well.

❖ Nuestras Raíces and Latinx Services:

On February 2, our team attended a monthly book and author committee meeting. Our authors and panels are finalized, and we are excited to meet them in person next month. Our team has

been busy introducing our authors to moderators, delivering books to moderators, and creating an engaging social media campaign for our community members.

The team has finalized marketing materials with CSO. We have also written about our panels for publication in Arizona Bilingual and the Arizona Daily Star. This month, we were interviewed in Spanish by AZ Luminaria.

On February 3, we met with ASU Bilingual Press. The Press will be donating giveaway books to our stage for the festival weekend. We are very thrilled about this new partnership.

We are currently working on logistics to ensure a smooth and joyful festival weekend. We are working diligently with the festival committees and PCPL staff to make sure the most up-to-date information is shared.

Our team interviewed Jennifer Givhan, who will present on our stage on Sunday at 1 pm. Her panel is titled, La Lucha Sigue: Resistance in Fiction. She will be joining the stage with Fernando Flores and Ruben Reyes Jr. Her interview will be available in early March on the PCPL website.

On February 7, our team attended Closing Peña for El Pueblo 50! Event. We shared information on services and resources at the library and about our affinity team. On February 17, our team attended Love of Reading at White Elementary. We read books in two classrooms and talked about library joy with the students. We also offered giveaway books as well.

On February 27, the Nuestras Raíces team also held a membership meeting on Teams.

To kick off festival weekend, Nuestras Raíces and Pride affinity teams will host author Jonny Garza Villa at the Martha Cooper Library on March 13 at 3 pm. Here is more about the event: [Author Talk With Jonny Garza Villa](#). We are excited that Vicki Lazaro, Library Services Manager, will moderate the panel!

Here is a booklist featuring our TFOB 2026 authors: [Nuestras Raíces @ TFOB 2026 — a staff-created list from Pima County Public Library | Pima County Public Library | BiblioCommons](#)

❖ **Pride:**

On February 7th, the Pride team collaborated with the Kindred team to present the music event - "Sean Avery Medlin and the Driftwood Quintet presented ECHOES EP" at Murphy-Wilmot Library, its debut performance in Tucson. The collaboration came about after Medlin's highly successful poetry workshop last June, and the Pride Team was excited to work with them again alongside the Driftwood Quintet. The performance opened with the Driftwood Quintet playing music by Black American composers, followed by Medlin sharing new poems. Then the group performed ECHOES EP, a fusion of spoken words and chamber music focusing on themes of the Black experience, youth, love, and identity. A Q&A section and book/album signing followed the performance. A quote from an audience member: "Please bring them back!"

Pride co-chair Sarah E. also interviewed Sean Avery Medlin and Driftwood Quintet Director Dominique Holley about ECHOES EP. They shared more about the history of the project, the relationship between words and music, rehearsing and performing as a group, and album themes.

The interview can be found as a blog on the library's website, a full video on the library's YouTube, and will soon be posted alongside performance clips on the Pride Team's Instagram. Blog: <https://www.library.pima.gov/blogs/post/sean-avery-medlin-and-the-driftwood-quintet-on-echoes-ep/>

In addition to the event, February activities included finalizing details for the commissioned art for the Pride teams section of the Affinity Teams coloring book, another wonderful edition of our monthly virtual book club, Rainbow Reads (2/21), as well as another outreach opportunity with Queerd Science (2/28), whose organizers continue to be a huge supporter of the Pride Team and welcome the team to do outreach at all of their events. Additionally, the Pride Team has been invited to present for the Library's Service U training program and at the Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce's monthly meeting in April.

On a community note, Tucson Pride, the organization that hosted the annual Pride in the Park event (which the Pride Team was scheduled to attend this month), canceled February's Pride event and officially dissolved after nearly 50 years. While this leaves a gap in community Pride events, the Pride Team discussed ways the library can continue supporting the community through programming and outreach and will further develop ideas to foster connection and engagement.

❖ **Many Nations:**

Leadership has been decided for 2026. These will be replacing the chair/co-chair system. LSM for Many Nations is Alina Rowe, Lindsey Curley: President, Maria Esparza: Vice President, Alexis Ellsworth-Kopkowski: Secretary, Genesis Florendo: Treasurer.

Lindsey from the team helped facilitate the creation of the Affinity Teams Coloring Page to be used for the Tucson Festival of Books.

Kristen in AJO helped plan the opening reception for the Lorraine Eiler Collection. This is a collection of books available to the community in AJO that was collected and curated by Lorraine Eiler, a member of the Hia C-eḍ O'odham community. The reception was well attended by 74 community members, who were able to hear about Ms. Eiler's experiences growing up in Darby Wells, outside of Ajo. There was a Q&A, Lindsey Curley talked about the work she did cataloging 197 books. Refreshments followed and free books and resources were available for participants.

Some outreach events the team attended were Stem Night on February 11th, with 92 people in attendance. Alina, Lindsey, Mylo, and Genesis attended as staff and gave out 40 3D printed hummingbird fidget toys, free books, Valentine's Many Nations cards, and other swag.

❖ **Kindred:**

The Kindred Team held their monthly meeting at the beginning of the month, in which they began planning their goals for the next calendar year and for the team's future in general. With the coordination of the Communications & Systems Office, they were able to send 1500 copies of their *Books Invited to the Cookout* publication to bookstores and libraries across Arizona. Their regular ongoing book club, Read Black, meets on the fourth Saturday of the month. The meeting on the 25th will be a book share, in which attendees will offer recommendations of their recent reads by Black authors that center the Black community.

❖ **Synapse Mental Health:**

Our postcard project debuted at the beginning of the month with a system-wide rollout in collaboration with CSO, who printed 2,700 postcards and distributed them to our 24 open branches! Branches were encouraged to set up a display with our postcards, a sign providing information on the project and the Synapse team, and coloring supplies. The program was also promoted on the PCPL website via a blog post written by Synapse team member Morgen. So far, multiple locations have reported already having run out of their first batch of postcards, so we have requested a second run of printing from CSO!

URL for blog post: library.pima.gov/blogs/post/spread-the-love-this-season-with-synapse

For May 2026, which marks Mental Health Awareness Month as well as AANHPI Month, the Synapse team will be teaming up with Biblio Lotus to host 2 joint programs and create 2 joint pieces of website content- 1 blog post, and 1 book list- uniting mental health and AANHPI themes on top of our individual programming plans. We had our first joint meeting and began a Teams chat to facilitate planning for our collaboration. Through this joint initiative, we aim to cross-promote our teams' impactful work and raise awareness among our audiences about these two co-occurring occasions.

❖ **Welcome to America:**

The organization responsible for convening the Refugee Integrated Service Providers Network recently made the difficult decision to end their support due to funding and capacity issues. Pima County Public Library has had representation on this coalition for over a decade through the Welcome to America Team. Another local coalition, convened by Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services (ALWAYS) has welcomed those from the RISP net community into their Pima County Immigrant Children and Communities Coalition. Welcome to America Team staff attended their February meeting and were able to collaborate around community concerns related to ICE actions in public spaces and conversations about county wide responses to the many concerns immigrants in our community are facing due to local and national events. The group was very excited to see the Pima County Public library represented in this community of practice.

❖ **Adult Services/Workforce and Economic Development-Ken Zambos**

February was a busy month for Community Engagement/Adult Services. We prepared an online Learning Path for 'Adult Services at Pima County Public Library' and hosted two Service U discussions on the practical application of what was learned in the Learning Path. We onboarded our latest Writer-in-Resident, Margo Steines, who started her residency at Flowing Wells with one-on-one consultations two days a week and a workshop on February 28. We started planning the next DREAM Workshop and Job Fair with the coordinating committee. We met with representatives of the Pima Community College to talk about their Fast Track programs and with representatives of the UA Cybersecurity Clinic to talk about internet safety and scam prevention for the public. We attended a DES Information Session to learn about DES programs and how the public can access their many services.

A big portion of our month was preparing for the Career Online High School Graduation Ceremony, which was held at Flowing Wells Library on Saturday, February 21st. 15 of the 32 graduates from 2025 attended the event. The event included guest speakers like Deputy County Administrator Steve Holmes and cake, refreshments, and photos. It was great to see the adult students recognized for their accomplishments. We are actively building enrollment in the Career Online High School program after funding was approved last month to purchase additional scholarships.

❖ **Youth Services - Monique Perez**

We celebrated Love of Reading this month with a joyful whirlwind of literacy nights and community outreach events, bringing the magic of reading to children of all ages—from our littlest toddlers to our enthusiastic middle schoolers. Our team presented to a group of educators during Tucson Unified School District's Professional Development Day on February 4, sharing the vast variety of resources available to educators, students, and families. We have also been solidifying details for the PCPL Teen Activities Tent and Golden Hour: A Showcase of Youth Poets at the Tucson Festival of Books taking place on Sunday, March 15 from 4-5pm. It has been a busy month indeed, but seeing readers of every age light up with curiosity and confidence has made every moment worthwhile.

❖ **Collection Development/Tech Services – Kate DeMeester-Lane**

We are making progress in having more materials available to library customers, thanks to our new contract with Ingram! We experienced some delays in shipping thanks to winter weather in much of the country but began receiving pallets of materials in February. These materials are still unprocessed, which means our Technical Services staff will need to complete the cataloging, stickering and processing before the materials are ready to circulate. However, there is good news, which is that we are in line with Ingram for getting our materials shipped to us fully processed. We will first work with them to share our processing specifications and other various aspects of our account set up, and this will take a little more time. We hope that we will be receiving processed materials by summer, and once we are, that should get us back to normal in terms of the varied and timely selection everyone has come to expect.

We truly appreciate all our customers for their patience!