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**DATE:** May 7, 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 – April 2026**

This month we celebrated Library Worker’s Day with lots of cake and goodies for the staff across the system in appreciation for all their wonderful work throughout the year. Library administration drove far and wide across the county to all the branches to deliver some treats and spend some time checking in with staff. It’s a small gesture but something we hope will bring some fun and joy to the day for staff. Library staff are the best!

This month was also filled with finalizing coordination of the Library Cooling Spaces in partnership with PCHD. It takes coordination with our branch staff and our delivery team to get supplies out to the branches and make sure everything is in place for the official start of the Heat Season on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Library branches make up the largest portion of “Cooling Spaces/Centers” across Pima County.

**Affinity Teams – Alina Rowe**

❖ **Biblio Lotus:**

Biblio Lotus is collaborating with Synapse to promote mental health awareness for May. In preparation for the May collaboration, Biblio Lotus has booked a local Filipina illustrator/artist, Milani Hunt, who will do a relaxing style watercolor program at Joel D Valdez Main Library on Friday, May 8th and at Kirk Bear-Canyon Library on Saturday, May 16th. Synapse will be present at each program with mental health resources and materials as well. Synapse and Biblio Lotus are also finalizing a blog post that highlight the memoirs of and previous blog post interviews with authors whose books relate to mental health issues: Michelle Yang, who wrote Phoenix Girl, A Memoir: How a Fat Asian with Bipolar Found Love and Courtney Gustafson, who wrote Poet’s Square.

The team has been busy finalizing other Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific programs that will be presented in May such as:

To Climb a Gold Mountain which will explore the immigrant experience through the inspirational stories of four women of Asian descent living in America from the 1850s to the present day. Through their distinct journeys of struggle and triumph, the documentary sheds a vital historical light on the legacy of immigrant perseverance—topics that remain incredibly relevant today. This community screening will be held on May 9th at the Martha Cooper Branch.

On May 14th, calligrapher Ping Situ, will be at Martha Cooper and will write patrons' names in calligraphy for them. There will also be one or two craft stations for patrons who are waiting their turn.

We hope to see you at one of these programs!

❖ **Nuestras Raíces and Latinx Services:**

On April 2, we attended the Affinity Team Lead meeting. It gave us a chance to meet other team leads, discuss our current and upcoming programs, and talk about ways we can connect at future events.

On April 2, our team attended the Love of Lectura event hosted by District 5 and Andrés Cano. We provided giveaway books and had an opportunity to talk with community members about the abundant resources and services offered at the library.

On April 6, our team attended the Tucson Festival of Books, Book and Author Committee meeting at Literacy Connects. This meeting allowed all committee chairs to talk about the event, ways in which it succeeded, and ways in which we can improve. Our team was among a select few awarded a “Bubbly” for our innovative and collaborative service this year.

On April 9, our graduate assistant hosted their first program at El Pueblo Senior Center. The program was titled “Boogie Bingo.” It is a musical twist on the original bingo game. We had 10 winners, and all participants walked away with free books and information about library resources.

On April 11, Nuestras Raíces partnered with CEO Youth Services, Valencia Library, Sketching the Senses, and Sunnyside Foundation to bring a Día event at the Peace Garden. The event had a multitude of activities for children and families, including storytime, watercolors, mini piñata-making, and more.

On April 24, Nuestras Raíces held their monthly membership meeting.

On April 25, our team tabled at the Día event hosted by Wards 1 and 5 at Mission Manor Park. We gave away books to children and families and talked with community members about our affinity team and the library's resources.

This month, our team has been meeting with the Literacy Connects Reading Seed program. We will host a workshop in May for volunteers. We hope to empower them with skills they can use during their reading sessions with children in Tucson.

**❖ Pride:**

The Pride Committee has begun a recruitment campaign to encourage library staff to join the team. We've also created a "Welcome packet" to onboard new members and teach all members new skills specific to the Pride Team. The Pride Team will also be restructured by adding a secretary and treasurer to our leadership team to strengthen communication, organization, and budgeting.

On April 2nd, Pride Team leadership attended an Affinity Team Leads meeting, sharing team updates and brainstorming ways to collaborate. After debriefing on last year's first Affinity Team space at the library's MegaMania convention, team leads discussed joint participation and programming for this year's upcoming MegaMania event.

The Pride Team's virtual book club, Rainbow Reads, has a new lead representing the Pride Team, Breanna Rodriguez. With training provided by former lead Jessica Pryde, Breanna is learning the ropes and continuing the legacy of Rainbow Reads for a dedicated set of regular attendees.

The Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce invited the Pride Team to their monthly event, "Breakfast with the Gaymber," a long-standing monthly networking event that brings together LGBTQIA+ and allied businesses, professionals, and community partners. On April 16th, Tess Mayer (library director), Tito Lopez (Pride Team administrative liaison), and Sarah Evins (Pride Team co-chair) spoke about the ways our library and Pride Team support information access, resource-sharing, community-connection, and inclusion for LGBTQIA+ and wider communities.

In preparation for Pride Month, the team is leading a submission contest this April for our next zine. In the spirit of last year's zine that focused on "Queer Joy," this year's theme will be "Queer Action." The team will vote on zine submissions in early May, allowing our Pride Team co-editors to prepare the zine in time for Pride Month. The zines will be distributed to branches to be used for their Pride Month book displays and the Pride team will hand out the zines at outreach events.

**❖ Many Nations:**

Many Nations released their new "2 Mini-Zine Poetry Prompts Inspired by Native American Poets" for April 2026, featuring Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O'odham) and Steven Charleston (Choctaw). These materials will be handed out to our PCPL communities throughout the year until April 2027.

On April 10th, Many Nations President facilitated her 3rd annual Poetry Workshop with the St. Cyril of Alexandria School. This workshop is a continuation from the teacher's Language Arts Classes during their academic school year, utilizing Indigenous poetry through Many Nations' "10 Poetry Prompts Inspired by Native American Poets" workbook. The mini-zine was used to facilitate the workshop focused on healthy expression and self-care, with 50 students in attendance with the 12-13 age range.

On April 11th, our team supported the Nuestras Raíces Affinity Team in their collaboration with the Valencia Library, Sketching the Senses, Sunnyside Foundation and PCPL's Youth Services team at the Children's Peace Garden to celebrate Children's Day. Outreach materials from the Many Nations team were distributed to 70 people in attendance, an all-intergenerational crowd.

On April 15th, the team was invited to participate at the San Xavier STEM Night on the Tohono O'odham Nation. Many Nations Treasurer brought a 3D Printing activity to focus on mathematics, creating connections to geometry and graphing. The team distributed 202 books through the Spread the Wealth program, as well as Many Nations branded materials.

On April 22nd, the team participated at the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's "Ili Uusim Taewaim" event to celebrate Children's Day. Five team members distributed books through the Spread the Wealth program and the Community Engagement Office (CEO), as well as Many Nations branded materials and activities, to over 1,000 attendees, an all-intergenerational crowd.

The Many Nations team is in the process of preparing library content, activities and materials for Mega Mania 2026.

❖ **Kindred:**

Kindred has been focusing on meaningful annotations for this year's "Books Invited to the Cookout". In addition, two members of the Kindred team were able to attend a Building Utopia Workshop hosted at the Dunbar Pavillion where they discussed the history of Dunbar and intriguing ideas of how to build a better world with accessible resources for all. Some of which included using seeds from the library and teaching classes for in-house planting as well as community gardening that would have free food in exchange for time spent helping in the garden. While it may seem like a dream, we do have multiple existing local community gardens in Tucson. We were able to discuss various other topics that required solutions in a guided card game using the Building Utopia deck with prompts that challenged attendees to think of realistic impactful ways to reach our community. I highly recommend utilizing these decks in professional and personal development.

❖ **Synapse Mental Health:**

On April 11, Synapse team members Melissa and Kaitlynn tabled at the 2026 NAMIWalk at Reid Park, organized by NAMI Southern Arizona. Approximately 1,000 community members participated in the walk, and the Synapse team connected with 250-300 individual participants at our station. Furthermore, 7 Synapse team members and their loved ones joined the walk as participants.

Melissa says: "I felt like the event was a big success as so many folks attended the walk as a whole, stopped by our booth and engaged with us and the materials/swag we handed out (all of it!). I was particularly happy to see so many families in attendance with parents and youth sharing in the importance of mental health awareness & reducing stigma. Our squishy brains were quite popular (especially the green ones) as well as the art bookmarks that were created a while back by the Youth Health Action Team~ people liked that there were blurbs from the creators on the backs. We also had the opportunity to connect with other organizations that were tabling and I let folks know that we are planning some QPR Youth Suicide Prevention workshops for this summer, which many attendees resonated with."

We submitted a request to CSO in March and received our official Spanish translation of our web content “disclaimer” back on April 13, which will be included with every Synapse book list going forward. This will allow Spanish-speaking viewers to read information on recommended crisis support providers and Pima County mental health resources in their preferred language.

Work continues on our May collaboration with Biblio Lotus! Team leads Niki (Biblio Lotus) and Morgen (Synapse) are working on a blogpost for our website, which will

revisit our most recent author talks with Michelle Yang and Courtney Gustafson, who both wrote memoirs in which they discuss their mental health, and include updates and photos from both authors, who met at the Tucson Festival of Books this year. Synapse team members will also collaborate on book lists with colleagues on Biblio Lotus. We have finalized details for our two collaborative in-person events (“Synapse and Biblio Lotus Present: Watercolor Wellness”), during which local Filipina-American artist and children's book illustrator, Milani Hunt will guide tween, teen, and adult participants through a relaxing and restorative watercolor class. Painters will be encouraged to think of calming breezes, stunning scenery, relaxing views of paradise and breath-taking landscapes as they create an image of Mount Mayon in the Philippines and enjoy a mindful creative experience.

Looking ahead, Synapse team leads Jurdina and Morgen are working with former PCPL colleague Heather Severson, now at Pima County Health Department, and Branch Managers to put together a suicide prevention workshop series (5 events total) for teens, to take place across the system from June through August. We aim to offer both English and bilingual workshops.

#### ❖ **Welcome to America:**

This April the Welcome to America team was honored to be invited to “The Places We Carry,” a concert offered by the University of Arizona Community Chorus. This concert is part of an interdisciplinary project that brings choral music into conversation with other fields of study. The music and intent of this event align with the work of the Welcome to America Team and those of Pima County Public Library overall. This collaborative concert series celebrates the themes of journey, identity and compassion while honoring the weight of memory, resettlement and becoming. Team staff provided a resource table and were present to promote library services and programs while enjoying and participating in the event.

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

In April, the Community Engagement Office’s workforce and economic development team attended a Library 2.0 presentation to learn about trending (national and international) public library perspectives on AI. Staff assisted at a Transition Aged Youth Block Party, where we helped young people with resumes and job searches, attended a digital literacy event organized by the Office of Digital Inclusion, and assisted at the annual Fiesta Sahuarita, connecting with hundreds of patrons of all ages, allowing us to promote library services, programs, and access. We also hosted the UA Cybersecurity Clinic at our quarterly in-person Adult Services meeting and made plans for the Summer Writer-in-Residence, Jennifer J Stewart, to start her residency in May.

We created a sixty minute online interactive training for staff working in Adult Services as a step toward developing a sustainable, scalable training that sets the foundation for consistent, public-centered service delivery.

With the recent retirement of our Grants Librarian, we leveraged the experience of current library staff to continue our monthly nonprofit newsletter and are currently developing workshops to highlight two of our business and nonprofit electronic databases. These resources will be the focus of upcoming monthly programming taking place at various libraries across the system beginning in September and are designed to assist business and nonprofit community members with market analysis, identifying potential customers and donors, and more.

The lead librarian in Adult Services, several adult service staff, and our marketing team are working together to plan and arrange the launch of our Summer Reading Program for Adults. In collaboration with Tucson Spotlight and Tucson Tome Gnome, Pima County Public Library will launch the adult summer reading program on June 1, 2026. Patrons will be able to pick up reading trackers and bingo cards at their local library and select bookstores. Three community events are also being planned to take place in June, July, and August, and will help raise awareness of and celebrate the event.

Staff also worked with one of our branch managers to create an all-new submission form for use with the community Call-to-Artists. This allows local artists to submit an artist statement and examples of their work, which can then be considered for exhibition at libraries across the system.

The Career Online High School program provides Pima County residents aged 22 and older a pathway to earn a fully accredited high school diploma at no cost to them. In early 2026, we received funding to purchase additional scholarships to allow new students to participate in the program, and staff have been hard at work answering inquiries, reviewing readiness surveys, and onboarding new students throughout the month. Additionally, staff have also continued to support our loanable technology service, which provides hotspots and Chromebooks to patrons that otherwise do not have digital access.

### **Collection Development/Tech Services – Lorenia Diaz**

The collection development office and the technical services department are working closely with our primary book vendor to increase the services and products we can obtain from them, this could include Shelf-ready material (fully catalogued and processed) and directly shipped to all branch locations, greater copies of high in-demand titles, options for “Lucky day” titles, opening day collections, and more.

As the end of the fiscal year approaches both departments are focusing on sending and receiving orders for our collections, revising and updating expiring contracts and researching possibilities for new products.