

Final Report - Ideas to Action 2022

Kimberly Public Library: Celebrate Native American Heritage

Did your project encourage partnerships and collaborations with any community partners or other WiLS members? Who did you connect with during this process and how might you sustain those connections?

The library worked with local Indigenous storytellers, artists, and a chef as a part of our Native American Heritage and Awareness Month programs. To connect with artists, we contacted artists from a list created by the owner of Turtle Island Gifts, a small business on the Oneida Nation that sells Indigenous art. The owner supplied a list of artists who she thought might be a good fit for our project. We also relied heavily on the guidance of the Oneida Nation to find Arlie Doxtator, who demonstrated how to cook white corn mush in a traditional claypot. The library also connected with the Oneida Cannery who expressed interest in partnering on a future program.

After a few of the initial programs ran, we also heard from a local church group who has made it their focus to read more Indigenous authors. A member from this group has been in contact with the library to get a list of suggested purchases for their church library and to discuss different ways to promote readership. This was an unexpected partnership. In future years, we would share our marketing materials with more groups like this one.

Thinking about your project, what was the most innovative part? What can you, or your community, do now that it couldn't before?

The Kimberly Library has always had a strong gardening focus, but our Native American Heritage Month programs unexpectedly started a conversation about native plants and food. (A great example of this was when a patron commented on fry bread being associated with Native peoples, and Chef Arlie gently explained that fry bread was a food created from necessity. That is, it was created because tribes were given rations that were inadequate and unhealthy. The result is fry bread, but he is a strong advocate for getting back to native foods and plants.) In response, the library added books to the collection about native gardening and foods. In future years, we are talking about ways to incorporate some of these ideas into our growing season.

Another important part of the grant support was the ability to pay artists to display their work. In the spring of 2022, the library contacted a number of artists to gauge interest in

displaying their work. Understandably, the artists were unable to take their work out of stores. Being able to pay artists enabled us to display the work of four artists.

How do you think other WiLS members could use what you learned and accomplished at their own organizations?

WiLS members might be interested in the book list we compiled. These authors are mostly contemporary writers of fiction, but the list also includes graphic novelists, poets, and children's writers. We've also included all of the surveys we used for others to adopt as needed. Finally, the contact information for the owner of Turtle Island Gifts and Chef Arlie Doxtator is included below:

Darlene Denny, Owner of Turtle Island Gifts

Email : ddenny526@gmail.com

Chef Arlie Doxtator, Oneida Chef (and an amazing resource on Indigenous foods)

Email : arliedoxator66@outlook.com

A portion of our grant funding was spent on collection development. As a library, we had a gap in contemporary Indigenous authors that is now filled. We plan to showcase these books throughout the year. We are also exploring ways to integrate some of what we learned about native plantlife in our library garden.











November 2022

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE & AWARENESS MONTH EVENTS

At the Kimberly Public Library

- **Nov. 5th & 19th**-Ho-Chunk Storytime
- **Nov 10th**-Willow Ornaments
- **Nov. 14th**-Cooking Demo
- **Nov. 28th**-Oneida Storytime
- **Nov. 29th**-Holly Jolly Dream Catchers
- **All Month**-Art and Artifacts Display

Go to the events tab at
kimberlypubliclibrary.org or call
the library at
920-788-7515 to learn more.



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