



Colorado Department of Education – Communications Office
201 East Colfax Ave.
Room 103
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303-866-3898
Fax: 303-866-6938

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News Release

Libraries Boost Services to Diverse Groups

Ten libraries are boosting their services to diverse populations by being the first participants in a new program sponsored by the Special Populations & Issues Committee of the Colorado State Library. The Community Conversations program capitalizes on libraries as thriving and active centers where people mingle for education, entertainment and information.

To encourage libraries to mirror their communities' composition and interests, the program supports the selected institutions with a \$500 grant for library materials, mentorships and technical advice.

Each of the libraries has designed a 'Community Conversations' project for 2009. The individual projects will engage an underserved or diverse community, create diversity awareness, or serve a particular customer group through an event or activity. Community leaders and partners will be involved, and the projects will foster dialogue and lifelong learning about cultural differences, as well as celebrate and encourage diversity.

The ten award winners include:

- Adams County School District 50, Clear Lake Middle School Library: Peace Banner International Night for students and families;
- Arapahoe Library District, Arapahoe County Detention Facility Library: Mental Health Connections, book talks and discussions;
- Auraria Library and Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library (Denver Public Library): First Editions & Sequels, exhibition of sculpture and discussions based on African-American women writers;
- Fort Collins Regional Library District, Harmony Library: Asian/Pacific American Outreach and Cultural Festival;
- Fort Morgan Public Library: Women to Women idea exchange and presentations;

- High Plains Library District (Greeley), Diverse Worlds Connect @your library, Somali outreach and cultural appreciation;
- Mesa County Public Library District (Grand Junction): Immigrant Outreach Film & Dialogue Series and community engagement presentations;
- Pueblo City-County Library District: Books à la Carte outreach to community sites;
- Rangeview Library District, Thornton Branch Library: New English Learners classes, conversations and events;
- University of Colorado (Boulder), Oliver Lester Math/Physics Library: Bilingual Education, panel presentation from the college, community and educators.

For more information, contact the Special Populations Committee at 303-866-6900 or Shelley Walchak, 303-866-6891 or visit: www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/librarydiversity.htm

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