

BCLA Multicultural Services Interest Group Meeting Minutes

Date: September 19, 2024 from 9:30-10:38 AM

Location: Zoom

Present: Gillian (Vancouver Public Library), Jessica (Burnaby Public Library), Emily (Burnaby Public Library), Tina Lee (Burnaby Public Library), Ann (Coquitlam Public Library), Ravi (Surrey Libraries), Alison (Okanagan Regional Library), and Andrea (West Van Library).

Agenda:

1. New business following the summer hiatus
2. Brainstorm ideas for continuing education event for 2024-2025
3. Roundtable
4. Next meeting & action items
5. Other?

Land Acknowledgement

Each attendee shared a land acknowledgment.

1. New business following the summer hiatus

There was no new business.

2. Brainstorm ideas for continuing education event for 2024-2025

Emily shared that Burnaby Public Library has seen an increase in residents who have uncertain or unstable residency. They raised the idea of finding speakers from non-profit organizations who serve these newcomers to participate on a panel.

Andrea offered to reach out to Impact North Shore (previously known as North Shore Multicultural Society) to see if anyone from their organization would like to be one of the guest speakers on a panel sharing best practices for supporting this vulnerable community of newcomers.

Ann raised the idea of asking Ravi to offer the cultural competence workshop that she delivers at Library Champions' events.

The group decided to create a small subcommittee who could meet in October to flesh out some of these continuing education ideas. The subcommittee consists of Emily, Gillian, Ravi, Laura and Andrea.

3. Roundtable

The Roundtable is when we share information about multicultural programming, services and collections that we are offering or would like to offer at our library systems.

Ravi shared that Surrey Libraries is offering a program for international students, the majority of whom are from India, that focuses on the development of digital skills. The number of international students that are committing suicide is quite high. Ravi shared that there is a new documentary that focuses on the sexual exploitation and abuse of this vulnerable community group.

Surrey Libraries is continuing to do outreach with Alexander College. And Surrey Libraries has teamed up with the South Asian Legal Clinic of BC to offer a series of workshops/information sessions. The topics covered? Sexual harassment, residential/tenancy rights and responsibilities and more.

Surrey Libraries has also started storytimes in Punjabi and Filipino, and runs a conversation circle for international students.

Emily shared that Burnaby Public Library is now offering a system-wide storytime in Korean. New this fall, social hours for Spanish and Japanese-Speaking families. The goal of this program is to connect with community. This program is library-led and while there is no formal library tour during this program, staff are on hand to answer questions.

Ann shared that Coquitlam Public Library is offering storytimes in Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese and Farsi. These languages are the top four languages spoken by newcomers in Coquitlam.

Ann shared that Coquitlam will also be hosting a three-part Brave Spaces Speaker Series on a variety of topics including anti-racism. Valerie Jerome, former Canadian Olympian, will be one of the speakers. This series will run in October and November 2024.

Alison shared that the Vernon Branch of the Okanagan Regional Library partnered with a local immigration association to offer a multicultural storytime.

Gillian shared that Vancouver Public Library offers online storytimes in Tagalog, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Farsi. These storytimes are available on Vancouver Public Library's YouTube channel. Tech help for adults in Vietnamese is being offered at one branch.

Andrea shared that West Van Library is currently offering a series of discussion groups in Farsi, hosted in partnership with Maah Khatoon, in which patrons will use literature, journaling, and meditation to explore themes of personal growth.

Andrea also shared that West Van Library recently launched their Skw'shítsut/Skw'shétsut – Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim Language Kits. These kits were developed in partnership with Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim speaker and knowledge keeper Tsitsáyxemaat Rebecca Duncan to support the preservation and revitalization of the Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim Language.

4. Next meeting and action items

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 21, 2024 from 9:30-11:00 on Zoom. The Zoom link for this meeting will be posted on Branches, BCLA's online forum and the Multicultural Services Interest Group's online forum both two weeks and two days before the meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend: BCLA membership is not required.

5. Other

No other items were raised.

Meeting adjourned at 10:38am.