



Pima County Public Library

Administrative Offices ♦ 101 North Stone Avenue ♦ Tucson, Arizona, 85701 520.791.4391

To the People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos and Story Talk team;

I would like to thank you for the opportunity you have given me and my fellow librarians to share Story Talk with almost a hundred teens throughout Tucson. We have reached youth at Nosotros Academy, a charter school in the Menlo Park neighborhood, at the Juvenile Detention Center with both male and female pods, at Marana High School with their Library Club, and at the Flowing Wells Branch Library with teen volunteers and patrons. As a trainer, I have tried to pass on the wonderful methodology and techniques that People & Stories has developed over the years with a small group of librarians. These few have spread the word about how successful and positive the teen response has been that many librarians are clamoring for a second session! But more importantly, none of us who have done the program are finished—we are determined to share this opportunity with teens throughout the city because we know what a positive impact it has had.

Story Talk is one of the few programs I have been involved with that reaches teens where they are “at”—it takes the short story and puts it in the hands of youth whose lives are so in the present that something as abstract as “literature” would ordinarily mean nothing to them. Many of the participants said that reading together has meant the most to them in this program. What an amazing thing; how many teens do you know who would ask to read with you?! Story Talk provides a communal atmosphere for learning about each other and the world of the short story; in a society where teens can so often become isolated and invisible,



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community is indeed a valuable outcome. Several teens also commented that they valued expressing their opinion of the story but also enjoyed learning about other people's perspectives. The opportunity to speak, to be heard, and to grow in the process is also invaluable.

Pima County Public Library has three main goals, outlined in our 2013-2016 Community Impact Plan: Learn. Create. Connect. The Story Talk program clearly encompasses each of these areas for a young adult population; from providing for the learning needs of individuals in a collaborative setting, to satisfying their need for self-expression, to creating an environment where people of all ages and backgrounds feel they have a voice and a social connection to those around them. We definitely see Story Talk as a part of our future in Tucson.

Sincerely,

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