



“IF WE SPOKE A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, WE WOULD PERCEIVE A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT WORLD.” (LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN)

Jhezabeth Lozano, the new library assistant for Spanish and youth services, wants to help residents nurture and retain their bilingualism

Tell us about your background.

I was born and raised in Ecuador and learned to speak English as a professional. I attended the English Language Institute at the University of Utah, where I studied as a requirement to receive my teaching license. I have taught Spanish at the secondary level (middle and high school) in Ecuador, Cambodia, and Indiana. I was also a school librarian for six years in my country. Every job I have had has prepared me for my current position in Spanish and Youth Services because they have allowed me to experienced firsthand the idea that that to be able to have learning experiences we need to be surrounded by learning moments. Libraries and schools work together to offer learning moments. I enjoy working on projects and in jobs that are related to students and help instill a lifelong love of learning.

What drew you to your current position?

I identified with Park City Library’s mission of

empowering minds, inspiring imagination, and connecting community. I admire the way that the entire Park City Library team is constantly developing programs that will bring children in and provide opportunities that appeal to different learning styles. When I learned that this library seeks ways to empower, inspire and connect the community of Park City, it attracted my interest and I wanted to be part of it. And now that I am here I will use my previous

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experience to be part of the empowering, inspiring and connection to the community as well.

You’ve only been on the job about six weeks, but can you share some ideas for

increasing engagement with Spanish-speaking and teen community members?

We want libraries to be children’s second home from an early age. For this reason, there are already weekly activities directed to children. To continue the work done with the little ones, I would like to institute weekly activities directed to the youth such as:

- Free tutoring for the AP Spanish Language and Culture, AP Spanish Literature, IB Spanish Language B and IB Spanish Literature, Spanish I-IV and Honor courses for secondary school students

- DIY courses for secondary-school students
- High school/college students volunteering to run an existent activity with children
- Story time for children 3-8 years old in Spanish directed to all children and their parents/guardian Spanish speakers and to all who would like to participate of the full Spanish immersion through children's books

Do you also have ideas for Spanish-speaking adult programs?

The library currently offers computer classes for adults in English. We could also hold computer classes in Spanish so that native Spanish speakers can learn the essentials of computer usage and general Internet management emphasizing writing a resume and cover letter, job applications and filling out forms. All Spanish speakers are welcome, we would like to let them know that they should feel comfortable coming to the library and will find resources that will allow them continue reading, searching and learning in their native language.

How are you reaching out to the Hispanic community?

Every time I see a Spanish speaker at the library I motivate them to continue coming. I invite them to bring their children to the weekly activities and to spread the word to their acquaintances, too. When they ask about what resources they can access, I show them so they can be familiarized with what we have.

Another effective way of reaching out to the community is through written communication: we can inform the Hispanic community about the written information found on the library website in the Spanish tab. There should be also a list of linked websites in the library that offers a more diverse list of recommended

websites with a variety of services written in Spanish.

Another way to reach the Hispanic community is to celebrate el Día del Libro (Day of the Book) on April 23 and Spanish language day (Día del Idioma Español) on October 12. These would be great opportunities to include the entire community (children, teens, adults, Spanish and non-Spanish speakers). The Día del Libro event will include a poster contest for which each participant will create a poster and illustrate a drawing that promotes reading and use Spanish language.

Many of the programs you've mentioned support social equity—or leveling the playing field so that everyone has a chance to succeed.

Yes, absolutely. We are striving to be a more inclusive community—one that values everyone's contributions. We should always aspire to include all sectors of society, starting with very young children. Social equity takes place in a community in which everybody belongs. It's our job to provide everyone with the tools to help them advance.

Learn more about the library's programs at parkcitylibrary.org.

