

Writers in Residence in Libraries Mini-Grant 2020 **DRAFT**

Writer in Residence for February-April

Margaret Regan will serve as the Spring 2020 Writer in Residence in the Library (WiRL) at the Pima County Public Library (PCPL). She is the author of two prizewinning books on immigration. *Detained and Deported: Stories of Immigrant Families Under Fire*, which won a starred review in *Publishers Weekly*, looks at the fate of undocumented immigrants who are arrested long after they've established lives and families in the United States. *The Death of Josseline: Immigration Stories from the Arizona-Mexico Borderlands* investigates the tragedy of migrant deaths in the desert. Both were named Top Picks in PCPL's *Southwest Books of the Year*.

Regan, a longtime journalist in Tucson, studied French and Spanish, and worked as an editor of a foreign language magazine and children's books before turning to journalism. She has won many awards for arts criticism, border reporting, and stories on the Irish immigrant experience. Her work has been published in the *Washington Post*, *Al Jazeera English*, *Utne Reader*, *Sojourners*, *Newsday*, *Black + White*, *Photovision*, and in regional and local publications such as *The Tucson Weekly*. She has appeared on NPR, C-Span Book TV, WHYY Philadelphia, KPFK Los Angeles, Pacifica, and many other radio stations. She gave a TEDx talk in Phoenix, and a solo half-hour Q&A appearance on Book TV's "Open Phones," program, taking questions about immigration from viewers around the nation. She's a regular speaker at the Tucson Festival of Books. Regan's books have been adopted in many university classrooms, including the University of California Davis, Loyola University Chicago, Franklin Marshall College, James Madison University, Butler University, Northern Arizona University, Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. **Margaret Regan's website:** <https://www.margaret-regan.com/>

Writer in Residence for May-July

Award-winning author **Jennifer J. Stewart** will serve as PCPL's Summer 2020 Writer in Residence. Stewart writes "seriously funny" books for children. Her books include *If That Breathes Fire, We're Toast!*, *The Girl Who Has Everything*, and *Close Encounters of a Third-World Kind*. Her picture book, illustrated by New York Times bestselling artist Lynne Avril, *The Twelve Days of Christmas in Arizona*, received the Glyph Award. Her work has been nominated for Arizona's Grand Canyon Reader Award, Connecticut's Nutmeg Book Award, and Maryland's Black-Eyed Susan Award.

Having lived in Tucson since the age of four, Stewart is a well-regarded part of the local writing community, though the reach of her work goes far beyond the desert southwest. Stewart earned an honors degree in English from Wellesley College, followed by an M.B.A. from the University of Utah. Stewart writes educational nonfiction as J. J. Stewart, and volunteers as a founding board member of the non-profit organization, Make Way for Books, supporting its mission to give all children the chance to read and succeed. She and her physician husband volunteer as Flying Samaritans. **Jennifer J. Stewart's Website:** <http://www.jenniferjstewart.com/bio.html>

Target Audience for Programming

Margaret Regan will kick off her Residency at the Tucson Festival of Books in PCPL-sponsored spaces and events to promote the WiRL project. Regan's public programs and one-on-one consultations are best suited to adult readers and writers interested in non-fiction writing, editing, and publishing. She can offer her expertise on journalism and the nuts and bolts of a freelance writing career. Regan's multilingual abilities allows her to reach English-, Spanish- and French-speaking members of our community.

Jennifer J. Stewart's extensive experience as a speaker and workshop facilitator for readers and writers of all ages makes her an appropriate addition to the list of diverse authors who have served as PCPL's Writers in Residence since the outset of the program. Stewart's public programs will provide writing inspiration, guidance in the journey to become an author, humorous anecdotes, and writing tips for authors in training. Serving her Residency in the summer will allow young writers to take advantage of her workshops and one-on-one consulting sessions. Her time at the library will culminate with MegaMania, the Library's annual summer festival of cosplay, gaming, crafts, local authors and artists, and all-around geekery for all ages.

Describe the programming the Writers in Residence will provide.

Regan and Stewart, like many of our WiRL alumni, will bring real-world experiences to bear as they mentor and connect the interests of writers in our community. These writers will share their talents and experiences in teaching, research, editing, journalism, manuscript submission, and publishing with an enthusiastic and vibrant community of writers in Southern Arizona.

Explain why this programming was selected for your community.

PCPL's purpose is to bring about positive community benefit through the 2020 WiRL project. PCPL Writers in Residence create space for writers to connect as collaborators, creators, and mentors. They educate patrons about library resources and technologies, provide interactive and inspiring hands-on writing and editing workshops, guide writers to connect with informal groups of like-minded individuals, and provide individualized assistance in the ever-popular one-on-one consultation sessions.

Former Writers in Residence have remarked on the diversity, creativity, and enthusiasm of writers in the community. Writers with varied backgrounds, experience, and interests have gratefully reveled in the support provided by Writers in Residence. From novices to previously published writers, individuals bring incipient ideas, handwritten outlines, typewritten words, or manuscripts in progress for feedback. They seek guidance on all stages of the writing process, from drafting to revising and eventual publication in the ever-evolving world of traditional or self-publishing.

Logan Phillips said, “I hope that folks would leave a session with me motivated to continue to explore their own voice, whatever that may be.” Janni Lee Simner offered encouragement, answered questions, and connected writers with the resources they needed, “resources that include our own library system.” All of our Writers in Residence have told us they are able to reach out to would-be writers in the library because the program is free and accessible. One patron who consulted with Alice Hatcher said, “I just wanted to say thank you for all you do. I just ... want someone in charge of this program to know how much it is valued and appreciated.”

Describe your community...

Pima County Public Library serves every type of community from smaller towns to dense urban neighborhoods. Our libraries are busy from open to close, and when school lets out many branches operate at standing room only. In any neighborhood, our libraries can be the place outside the home where a writer, can come frequently research to meet in informal groups, to find recreation and companionship and to escape the other elements of life. As Phillips says, "I think my experience is similar to that of many writers—time and space are two of the most precious resources needed to produce work. In my case, I’m a parent to twins... so quiet time in my home office is well, not so quiet!" Regan expressed delight at the notion of pursuing her freelance work without the distractions of her home office.

Writing programs that currently run in the library

Each year in the WiRL mini-grant application and reporting cycle, PCPL cites increasing writing and authorship efforts to reach all ages and demographics of writers. PCPL’s Events Calendar for the coming year lists over 350 events related to creative expression and writing, including author and editor meet-ups, poetry circles and exhibits, and motivational and creative writing workshops. The growing popularity and overwhelming patron satisfaction with the Writers in Residence Program helps to increase interest and participation in writing-related programs that are held throughout the year. A staff member at the Quincie Douglas Branch said that this program revealed a need in the community that the library didn’t know existed. It has been gratifying to be more aware of the desire for this type of programming, and subsequently better serve that need.

Describe the workspace designated for the Writers in Residence

As they engage in their own writing projects for a large part of their residency, the Writers in Residence embody and model the purposeful, open, and transparent culture of professional writing. They do their work in library study rooms or in creative spaces like the Idea + Space, the 101 Space(s), or the Grow & Play Space. Writers have access to parking as all branch library lots are open, and when they are working at the Main Library, they receive a parking validation or pass. The Writers have designated space and access to staff areas so that their belongings and equipment are secure when not in use. In addition, Writers in Residence receive travel or overnight accommodation support if they elect to provide services at the four branches outside the Tucson metropolitan area.