



Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:
Humanities Washington

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Seattle, WA 98109

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<https://www.humanities.org>

Organization's General Goals:
Humanities Washington opens minds and bridges divides by creating spaces to explore different perspectives. We envision a state where all people seek a deeper understanding of others, themselves, and the human experience, in order to discern and promote the common good.

Date of Award:	Level:
2017 Q2	\$2,501 to \$5,000

For more information, please read the attached report from Humanities Washington.

8802 27th Ave NE
Tulalip, WA 98271

TulipCares.org

August 9, 2018

Marilyn Sheldon, Director
Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund
8802 27th Ave NE
Tulalip, WA 98271

Re: Grant Report Q2 2017 14.2

Dear Ms. Sheldon,

On behalf of the trustees and staff of Humanities Washington, I want to thank the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund for its support of our 2017 Bedtime Stories gala event, the proceeds of which were used to support our statewide **Prime Time Family Reading Program**. The [REDACTED] grant the Foundation awarded to us in September 2017 helped Humanities Washington to raise \$169,000 at Bedtime Stories, funds that were used in large part to support the delivery of 21 **Prime Time** reading/discussion series throughout Washington State from October 1, 2017 and through June 30, 2018.

Completed Prime Time Family Reading Sessions During Grant Period:

Adams County:

Ritzville Public Library (school partner: Lind Elementary)

Clallam County:

Port Angeles Library (school partner: Dry Creek Elementary)

Clark County:

Vancouver Community Library (school partner: Hazel Dell Elementary)

Island County:

Oak Harbor Library (school partner: Oak Harbor Elementary)

Oak Harbor Library (school partner: Olympic View Elementary)

Jefferson County:

Port Hadlock Library (school partner: Chimacum Elementary)

King County:

Covington Library (school partner: Grass Lake Elementary)

Greenbridge Library (school partner: White Center Heights Elementary)

Issaquah Library (school partner: Clark Elementary)

Issaquah Library (school partner: Issaquah Valley Elementary)

North Bend Library (school partner: North Bend Elementary)

Tukwila Library (school partner: Cascade View Elementary)

Pierce County:

Lakewood Library (school partner: Clover Park School District)

Parkland/Spanaway (school partner: Collins Elementary)

Parkland/Spanaway (school partner: Clover Creek Elementary)

University Place Library (school partner: University Place Primary)

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Snohomish County:

Monroe Library (school partner: Fryelands Elementary)
Mountlake Terrace Library (school partner: Cedar Way Elementary)

Spokane County:

Hillyard Library (school partner: Regal Elementary)
Spokane Valley Library (school partner: Trent Elementary)

Walla Walla County:

Walla Walla Public Library (school partner: Sharpstein Elementary)

The Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund's award helped us to reach a total of **327 families statewide**, making an immediate impact on the lives of **1,068 children and parents/guardians**, including **29 families** and **101 children/parents/guardians** in your home county, **Snohomish County**. Charitable funds helped us cover program expenses including staff time dedicated to series coordination; curriculum usage fees; site team (Library Coordinator, Scholar, Storyteller, Community Organizer, and Preschool Coordinator) stipends; gift books for families and replacement books for libraries; and food and transportation costs for families.

Below, we have compiled feedback from our program staff and site team members, so that you can hear directly from those people actually delivering the program about what Prime Time is accomplishing as well as challenges encountered. (*Stories/testimonials from Snohomish County sites are highlighted for easy reference.*)

Serving Diverse and Underserved Populations

A consistent message Humanities Washington receives from the libraries is that offering Prime Time series enables them to connect with families they wouldn't normally serve (for example, English Language Learner families and families from cultures without a public library tradition). In most cases, the families coming to Prime Time are not regular library users. We offer a Spanish language curriculum when needed, and even our English language series served many Spanish-speaking families (at several sites, at least one site team member was available to translate). We supplied Spanish Family Surveys for evaluations when needed.

As with all family programs, it is important to have team members who are experienced working with diverse populations. We learn from every series how to improve our service to new and underserved populations. For example, because food is an important part of Prime Time, we want to avoid overlooking or eliminating any group by making culturally insensitive meal choices. It is possible that families could self-select out of participating because parents might be uncomfortable with the possibility of exposing their children to foods outside their culture. To avoid this, we now encourage sites to serve halal, vegetarian, or vegan meals and to make information known to potential participants by including meal information on recruitment materials.

Development of Critical Thinking Skills

Coming together for weekly Prime Time sessions provides a way for parents and children to interact and communicate with each other about *ideas*—which provides methods for family members to connect on deeper and, often, unexpected levels. When people talk about books, they are given “permission” to explore topics and express feelings that they might not feel free to do when they are talking about themselves.

Scholars on our site teams reported high levels of change in critical thinking skills at most Prime Time sites. In University Place “*participants asked progressively more complex questions based on complex ideas, particularly dreams.*” One young reader “*read the week’s theme in three ways, as fantasy, as goal, as something we do when awake and asleep.*” In White Center, parents reported that their children are “*now*

asking how and why” and “asking in-depth questions.” This is an important outcome of the Prime Time sessions, given that application of critical thinking skills can positively affect other aspects of their lives. The ability to question and reason allows participants to approach life’s challenges with more confidence and analytical acumen.

Mountlake Terrace Library Coordinator Susan Kirdahy offered: “Most parents became more involved in the discussions over time, started to help more with how their children articulated answers and thought about the books being discussed. They began to ask more open-ended, thoughtful questions, like those being modeled by the Scholar.”

Issaquah series Storyteller Jeremy Cooper reported: “The group for the most part seemed really interested in the idea from the get go and seemed to have good attitudes towards reading, but even those that didn’t [have a good attitude] did increase their desire to read and to answer the questions directed at them. One question in particular [regarding whether or not they would risk their lives for someone they knew or a stranger] elicited a lot of deeper feelings about how humans treat each other. I’m led to believe that they will pursue other books with the discussion questions in mind.”

Lasting Impacts on Reading and Beyond

Program Manager George Abeyta reports: “When I visited the sixth session of the **Mountlake Terrace** series last fall, I was approached by multiple parents who wanted to let me know how, because of their participation in Prime Time, their children had changed and showed improvement in school. One mother told me that her son was rarely given time to explore ideas at school because of the limited time allowed each student to speak. She said that because her (seven-year-old) son was able to fully explore and express his ideas at Prime Time, he was doing better in school and that he had bonded more with his blind grandfather by reading stories to him and then discussing their ideas. This child was especially sad to learn that Prime Time was only six weeks, so he made an excellent and cogent argument on why the group should continue meeting on Monday evenings at the library. In this way, the program is again supplying a third space for families to interact and learn, one that is away from the focus on standardized testing in school, and distractions at home that can make deep discussion a challenge for families.”

Monroe Storyteller Mechelle VanHoudt said: “All families contributed more readily as the weeks progressed. During the meals, several children were comfortable enough to share personal stories that related to the themes from a particular week. Two children also made well-thought out predictions about how they thought a particular character was going to react in an upcoming story, when I introduced the books for the following week. One child who spoke with a stutter became more confident sharing their thoughts as the weeks went by. By the last session this child shared at length about his feelings regarding the story we were discussing. It was obvious that this child was engaged and comfortable with the group.”

Issaquah Scholar Sara Jensen: “A few families kept bringing more and more siblings as the series continued (especially middle-school ages). It was great to see the group expand and hear that they were having fun at home together reading the books. One grandpa who is also the primary caregiver of a boy with a father in the military shared with me how meaningful the program was to him. The boy made a small video of one of our discussions so he could ‘show his dad’ what we do in Prime Time. His grandpa also shared that he taught himself to read at age 23 and graduated from the local high school illiterate. I was touched he shared his story, as he was very open about this is why he is doing the program with his grandson—so he will have a better life by being a reader.”

Mountlake Terrace Storyteller Stephanie Kehrli: “Two significant changes that we witnessed by the last

session: 1) 100% of the families had at least one library card (many had several) and 2) By the end of the program, most families were actually reading all of the books at home before discussion. I could tell they had been read because the families were making connections with books we did not get a chance to share out loud. This has never occurred in any other program I have conducted.”

Monroe Scholar Terry Lippincott: “I taught this program twice in Snohomish and about six months ago I ran into a mom and son who had participated. She told me that he is continuing to read at a level she hadn’t seen prior to our program! I also saw this mom at an Education Foundation fundraiser and she told me that she had been looking for a way to become more involved in the schools after participating and finding success in our program; amazing how the positive effects of Prime Time are found after the program ends.”

Program Challenges and Lessons Learned

The Prime Time program is successful in large part due to its fixed structure, which includes clear partnership roles and responsibilities, an established and rigorous curriculum, and consistent weekly goals in terms of themes for our Scholar and Storyteller to cover with participants. The program requires a strong commitment from our library partners because there are so many components that need to come together in order for the program to work—including aligning library and school schedules for the sessions, finding reliable site team members, and recruiting families who will commit to consistent attendance and communication with the site team. If a library partner fails in any of its responsibilities, the program will not succeed, despite Humanities Washington’s efforts. This is why we put a great deal of time and effort into selecting, cultivating, and coaching our library partners. Unfortunately, sometimes libraries that have signed on to host a Prime Time series in the end find that they cannot do so—usually due to unexpected staff changes or budget reprioritizing—and back out without giving us enough time to reschedule with another library.

Having enough qualified and trained team members continues to be a challenge. To respond to this, we hope to conduct another in-state training in 2019 or 2020 for new Scholars, Storytellers, and Library Coordinators. An in-state training also offers opportunities for already-trained team members to contribute to the ongoing refinement and evolution of the program in Washington by sharing their experience and expertise.

Recent Program Changes and Improvements

We have made some changes in the way we work with school partners and libraries specifically to address the challenges of recruiting families. For instance, we have developed a recruitment packet for libraries to use when working with schools; this packet includes three template letters to be sent to families from school principals.

We have updated the evaluation survey form families receive on the final session so that it will capture data that is more helpful in determining if/how Prime Time is impacting families. To better gauge the general impact of the program, we ask questions about library use, reading habits, and comfort with library services/resources. To collect information on the impact of six weeks of modeled behavior around reading, discussion, and family interaction, we ask open-ended questions so families can express changes they have experienced during their series. Some responses to date include: One mother reported that her son, who had previously visited the library only a few times per year, after Prime Time was “*thinking more about the different types of problems in books and exploring multiple ways to resolve those problems.*” A father wrote that Prime Time showed his family *how* to bond over reading together.

We also began to collect individual parent contact information as well as permission to contact parents in 6-12 months to ascertain improvements in academic performance (to augment library and teacher anecdotes).

We are pleased to present you with these results of your investment in the Prime Time Family Reading program, and hope you share our excitement about the impact your funds are making in the lives of participating children and adults. Thank you so much for the opportunity to partner with you to bring this invaluable curriculum to these deserving families.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Ziegler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Julie Ziegler
Executive Director

A handwritten note in black ink that says "Thank you!". The words are written in a simple, slightly cursive style, with an exclamation point at the end.

Prime Time Family Reading

Forging deeper connections between children and literature

Children's books aren't always child's play— they can inspire important philosophical discussions on topics such as fairness, courage, and compassion; and lay the foundation for a lifelong love of reading. Held over six weeks at libraries throughout the state, Humanities Washington's Prime Time Family Reading program inspires active thought, conversation, and connection between children and families.

