

# Grant County libraries receive grant to continue fight against racial injustice

By Sean Douglas

Last week, Indiana Humanities announced that 150 libraries, together with multiple schools, universities, and nonprofit organizations across the state of Indiana, would receive funds for materials addressing racial injustice.

The goal of the grant is to allow all of these entities to purchase highly sought-after books, digital materials, and films addressing racial injustice to add to circulating collections in their respective communities as well as work to educate and continue the fight against systemic racism. The grants awarded ranged from \$290

to \$1000, and the project was made possible from Lilly Endowment, Inc.

“Their stated goal is to help Hoosiers think, read, and talk about racial injustice and systemic racism,” Marion Public Library Special Projects Coordinator Sue Bratton said. “They want to support libraries in that effort. What this money will do is help us add materials to our collection to advance racial equity.”

Three Grant County libraries received funds, including Marion Public Library, the Barton Rees Pogue Memorial Library in Upland, and the Marion Ivy Tech Campus Library.

Each library was given a

comprehensive list of materials in a variety of mediums, including literature, cinema, and e-learning materials, from which to choose.

“As we are a small library, we have a small budget, so it definitely helped us expand our collection and diversify it at a quicker rate than I thought we could,” Barton Rees Pogue Memorial Library Director Aubrie Wickham said. “I think it will give our patrons a variety of reading that will hopefully let them hear stories from people that don’t always live in our community.”

At MPL, Bratton and her team are creating kits for

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Aubrie Wickham  
Barton Rees Pogue Memorial Library

book discussions for children, teens, and adults. The children’s kit will feature the graphic novel “New Kid” by Jerry Craft, while their Cultural Diversity Stories To Go Kit will feature titles such as “Are Welcome” by Alexandra Penfold, “I Walk with Vanessa” by Kerascoët, “On the Playground” by Dr. Jillian Roberts, “Strictly No Elephants” by Lisa Matchev, and the DVD “Let the Children March.”

The titles for the four teen kits are “March: Book One,” “March: Book 2,” and “March: Book 3,” all by John Lewis, and “Just Mercy: A True Story of the Fight for Justice” by Bryan Stevenson.

MPL’s adult discussion kits will include titles such as “Conjure Women” by Afia Atakora, “The Water



Dancer by Ta-Nehisi Coates, and “How to be Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi.

While Barton Rees Pogue did not disclose their grant-funded selections, Wickham stated that the library selected 74 titles from the pre-approved list, which included multiple movies and books for all ages.

She, like Bratton, believes that procturing grant-funded materials will deepen their patrons’ understanding and their ability to foster discussions regarding systemic racism and ways to eradicate from our communities and our country.

“I think that we can all benefit from reading about ways to be anti-racist,” Bratton said. “I think we can all benefit from the soul searching that is required from that. And I think that we can come together and talk about that. When we do that, we encourage more equity in our community. These are difficult discussions, and they can be very painful, but they are also very important. In today’s climate, I think they are crucial. I was just delighted to see this come from Indiana Humanities, [because] it’s really a wonderful opportunity for libraries to be able to reach a large cross section of the community.”

## Answers for Crossword and Suduko puzzles

U	R	U	S		P	A	R	J	I		D	H	A	L
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8	3	6	5	1	9	4	7	2
9	4	7	6	2	8	5	1	3
1	6	9	8	7	5	2	3	4
7	8	3	1	4	2	9	6	5
4	5	2	9	6	3	1	8	7
6	9	4	7	5	1	3	2	8
3	7	8	2	9	4	6	5	1
5	2	1	3	8	6	7	4	9

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