

MULTICULTURAL BOOK FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 14th, 2023

Secaucus Public Library
& Business Resource Center



Since
1935



secaucuslibrary.org

The Diversity Center
Connecting Communities through Culture



MULTICULTURAL BOOK FESTIVAL

Schedule of Events

Children's Author Events at the Story Tower Stage:



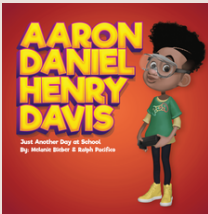
1:00pm



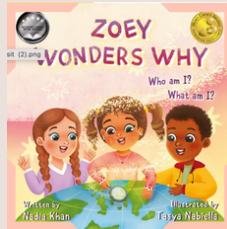
1:30pm



2:00pm



2:30pm



3:00pm



3:30pm

YA & Adult Authors and Speakers in the Adult Reading Room:



1:00pm



1:30pm



2:00pm



2:30pm



3:00pm



The Diversity Center (TDC) is a proposed center which will bring together the ethnicities and cultures in our community under one roof, to provide affordable performing arts and language education for all ages, with a focus on inclusion and respect.

The Center will be a meeting place for the diverse, multicultural communities throughout the metro New York and New Jersey areas. It will be a welcoming place to gather and celebrate the various arts, food, and culture of all backgrounds. It will be designed to be organic and respectful of the environment, energy efficient, and a reliable information resource for new immigrants in the community.

The Center will also engage in Advocacy & Outreach with the New Jersey Department of Education (DoE) and local school boards to include diversity and cultural studies in the school curriculum, establish scholarship opportunities, amongst other programs, to promote multiculturalism in schools.

The Center will provide consistent opportunities for artists and educators from the diverse communities in the Tri-state area for both teaching and performing.


**Follow The Diversity Center on Instagram and Facebook
for the latest updates on our activities:**



@The.Diversity.Center



@thediversitycenterusa



Secaucus Public Library and Business Resource Center

Incorporated in 1935, the Secaucus Public Library has grown from its modest roots in the attic of the old town hall to a state-of-the-art library with services and collections in two thriving locations. As a proud member of the BCCLS library consortium, our library also provides local residents with access to over 5 million books, periodicals and audiovisual items across 77 public libraries in Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Passaic counties through in-person visits, rapid interlibrary loan delivery, shared ebook collections and other digital services. The Secaucus Public Library has grown to play an active role in a vibrant and civically engaged community; a place where people celebrate words, ideas, and community every day.

With its main building at 1379 Paterson Plank Road and the Katherine Steffens Annex at 1007 Riverside Station Blvd at the Xchange, the library is easily accessible to Secaucus residents, businesses and visitors. A world-class collection, expert staff, thriving ESL program, and thousands of engaging programs each year for all ages and interests mean that everyone can find something at the library.

Main Library Hours:

Monday-Friday: 9am-9pm

Saturdays: 9am-4pm

Sunday: 10am-2pm

Find us online:

Website: secaucuslibrary.org

Facebook: [Secaucus.Library](https://www.facebook.com/Secaucus.Library)

Instagram: [@secaucus_library](https://www.instagram.com/secaucus_library)

Katherine Steffens Annex Hours:

Monday-Wednesday: 8:30am-8pm

Thursday: 8:30am- 4:30pm

Saturday: 10am-2pm



Featured Authors and Speakers

Marissa Bañez

Featured Book: *Hope and Fortune*

Website: www.marissabanez.com



A first-generation immigrant to the U.S. from the Philippines, Marissa Bañez is a graduate of Princeton University, a lawyer licensed to practice in New York, California and New Jersey, and now, an award-winning children's illustrated book author. She has also published legal articles for the prestigious New York Law Journal and the American Bar Association. She currently lives in New York City with her husband and daughter, whose childhood was filled with many original stories and puppet shows made up entirely by her mom. In her free time, Marissa likes to travel, design and make clothes, cook, binge-watch Star Trek shows and Korean dramas, and occasionally strum a guitar.

About the book:



A child who loses her way seeks help from 12 multi-cultural and multi-generational fairies, who give her practical life advice to get on the right track.

Trying to possess its beauty, Esperanza chases after a butterfly, which inevitably leaves her behind, lost and scared. Then, she meets 12 Fortune Fairies. Through her non-traditional Fortune Fairies, Marissa Bañez uses unvarnished words and vivid images to convey inspirational, aspirational, and optimistic

perspectives on meeting some of life's challenges. *Hope and Fortune* is an invaluable toolbox containing tools to help children cope in their personal life journeys. It is a **MUST BUY** not only for children but for everyone who has ever felt lost.

Hope and Fortune is a 2022 Winner of Story Monsters Approved!



Melanie Bieber

Featured Book: *Aaron Daniel Henry Davis: Just Another Day at School*

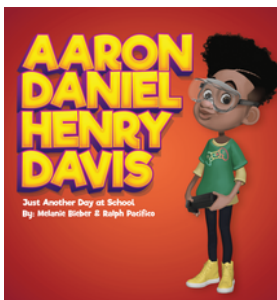
Website: www.adhdchildrensbook.com

Melanie Bieber is a licensed professional counselor (LPC) in New Jersey with over a decade of experience working with young children, teens and adults. She received her Master's in Philosophy of Education in Counseling and Psychological Services from the University of Pennsylvania. She also earned a Master's of Science in Education in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard University and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Criminology from the University of Maryland, College Park.



Melanie began her career working with kindergarten through eighth grade students in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn and then found her way back to NJ where she was a primary school counselor for the past seven years. At the beginning of 2022, she launched Level Up Counseling & Consulting, LLC to provide direct service to children, teens and adults who are committed to improving different aspects of their lives.

About the book:



Aaron Daniel Henry Davis: Just Another Day at School, tells the story of a typical school day through the lens of a child with an ADHD diagnosis.

My hope is that by highlighting the wonderful ways that a child with ADHD can think and contribute, this message reaches children just like Aaron so they can see themselves in a

positive light. Equally as important is my hope that those who may judge children with ADHD pause to reconsider their views the next time they meet someone like Aaron. Beyond the story itself, the book provides easily accessible guides for kids and adults to help address concerns and support children early in their developmental arcs. As an author, therapist and former elementary and middle school counselor, I know it is crucial to foster empathy, understanding and inclusivity through story and conversation.



Veronica Chapman

Featured Book: *King Khalid is PROUD*

Website: www.boxxout.com

Veronica N. Chapman is an entrepreneur and author, having written and produced a motivational play for teens, Ancestors Inc., and published two children's books, I Know I Can! and King Khalid is Proud. Veronica writes with the express purpose of making children believe in themselves.



A graduate of Spelman College (B.A. in Spanish) and Babson College (M.B.A.), Veronica commits her gifts and ideas to improving the world. To fulfill her commitment, she founded Boxxout Enterprises where she designs creative solutions for social change like Black Children's Book Week and others.

About the book:



There is power in the word PROUD. It feels good when someone tells you that they are proud of you. But imagine just how empowering it is when you do something that makes you proud of yourself!

King Khalid is a clever and courageous boy who loves to play video games, but his bedtime gets in the way. After his father reinforces the rules and makes him go to bed on time, King Khalid challenges himself to find a creative way around the rules so he has more time to play his games- even if he has to learn how to design his own video game!

He signs up for a coding class with the ultimate goal of staying up late, but in the process he accomplishes something that ultimately makes everyone proud.

King Khalid is Proud makes children believe in themselves, and helps them develop the type of confidence that turns into rock-solid self-esteem.



Jordan and Joelle Hernandez

Featured Book: *Twin Tales: Sasha and Sophie Celebrate Color*

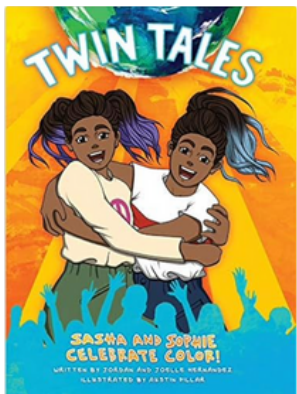
Website: www.jordanandjoelleonline.com

Jordan and Joelle Hernandez are 31 year old twins living in Hoboken, New Jersey. They are the proud authors of the *Twin Tales Series*. The debut book, *Twin Tales: Sasha & Sophie go to School* was released in 2016 and the second part of the series, *Twin Tales: Sasha & Sophie Celebrate Color*, was released in 2021.



Jordan and Joelle graduated from Loyola University Maryland where they both received bachelor's degrees in Communication with specializations in Journalism & Advertising. By day, they are marketing professionals. Jordan is the Associate Director of Content Marketing at Citizen Relations and Joelle is an Account Manager on the Transaction Team at Dotdash Meredith. In addition to their full-time work and endeavors as authors, the twins are co-owners of Jordan and Joelle Enterprises, LLC, which houses many brands including Double Dough, a home-based baking business and Completely Booked, a Book Instagram page, book club and book merchandise line. They are also contributors to Hoboken Girl and Montclair Girl blogs and social media accounts. When they are not working, Jordan and Joelle enjoy exercises, trying new restaurants and playing with their 13-year-old Yorkie Poodle, Chica!

About the book:



Twin Tales: Sasha & Sophie Celebrate

Color is the second book in the Twin Tales Series. The series is authored by Jordan and Joelle Hernandez and illustrated by Austin Pillar. It was born out of the civil unrest the world watched throughout 2020. As everyone sat at home and watched two pandemics unfold, it became abundantly clear that hatred and division were running rampant. This book is an introduction to celebrating diversity in all aspects of life for all ages and shows how the next generation can learn to lead with love.



Yessica Jain

Featured Book: *The Prisons of Magic*

Website: www.yessicajain.com



A senior in high school from New Jersey, Yessica Jain uses writing as an excuse to avoid schoolwork. She has always been an avid reader, in love with the magic of words. Since she started creative writing in middle school, she has written short stories in various genres, but these stories have a habit of turning into novels (through no fault of her own). She speaks four languages (English, Hindi, Spanish, and Mandarin), plays the piano, and runs a nonprofit called Shadow Your Future. She plans on pursuing a double major in economics and international affairs in college. Learn more and read her weekly writing blog at www.yessicajain.com.

About the book:



Five centuries have passed since a war led to the imprisonment of magic. By now, most of the world has moved on and forgotten magic ever existed.

But when Lyra—a poor orphan recovering from her brother’s death—uncovers this long-hidden tool, she sees the many opportunities its release could bring.

Jaxon, on the other hand, was raised in nobility and fears the release of magic will ruin his wealth and take away his status.

Their clash results in a war that has the power to change the course of the world, but Lyra and Jaxon worry only for themselves.

They are prepared to battle each other to protect what they value most, but the harder battles are those against their own morals and history. Those they rely on for support turn out to be unreliable, and those they deem untrustworthy claim to be on their side.

Are they willing to pay what they must in order to survive this war?



Nadia Khan

Featured Book: Zoey Wonders Why

Website: www.zoeywonderswhy.com

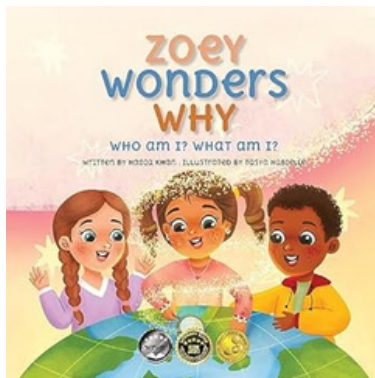
Nadia is a mother to four little boys who keep her on her toes. She has loved reading and writing ever since she was a little kid. She lives with her family in Nutley, NJ. Her favorite color is blue, and she loves baking cookies and cakes with her kids.



She loves Curious George, Bluey, and Sesame Street with her kids. She is currently catching up on adult shows, Games of Thrones and Lost in Space. Nadia enjoys books in the fantasy/science fiction categories. Nadia would love this book to help you as a parent and the readers to be proud of who they are.

All the readers should know they are special just the way they are. Enjoy more books to come with Zoey.

About the book:



Meet Zoey, a curious five year old kindergartener who is full of spunk and character.

She speaks her mind but sometimes a little too much.

Will Zoey hide her true self to fit in, or will she shine bright like the stars? Can she conquer her fears and love herself for all that she is?

Join her adventures into a diverse world of many beautiful traditions and customs.

Let's learn together with little Zoey about being the best that we can be in all walks of life.



Shraddha Nyati

Featured Book: **L.O.B.S.T.E.R**

Website: shraddhanyati.wordpress.com



Shraddha Nyati is a forensic expert by profession. When she is not slitting apart bodies or investigating crimes, you can find her tucked-in with a mug of hot chocolate, peeling layers of her heart and carving it out on paper. Her writing mostly focuses on bringing out the emotions in even the most mundane things, such as the rising steam from a cup of tea on winter mornings. She is a dreamer at heart and believes in the magic of dreams. She has two books to her name. Her first book, **From Ring to Mirror**, is a story about a woman who experiences life through her relationships and how those relationships change over the course of time. Her second book, **Lobster**, is about second chances. It tells a story about hope and how your heart feels and finds courage when it comes to matters of love.

A professional artist and a life coach by passion, she has been transforming the lives of people one soul at a time for over a decade now. In the same capacity, she has been actively writing handwritten letters to anyone worldwide who needs someone to be there for them. If you know someone who needs a warm hug through words, you can reach out to her at letterforsouls@gmail.com.

About the book:



Riya & Sameer had known nothing but deep love for each other, the kind of love people wrote poems about. 12 years after a fateful night, Riya is living her life in a small town of Maine in the US. For 12 years she had been picking the pieces of her life that Sameer had broken and tucking it in the deepest corners of her heart. Her life revolves around a set routine that she has come to love. In an unguarded moment of her disciplined life, everything that she had carefully tucked away comes exploding out.

To what extent will she let the explosion affect her life? Does a span of 12 years change the deepest feelings as it changes the person? Does the heart succumb to those moments which you have lived in your mind countless times in the hope of them happening someday?



Priya Parikh

Featured Book: Dancing Devi

Website: www.priyapauthor.com

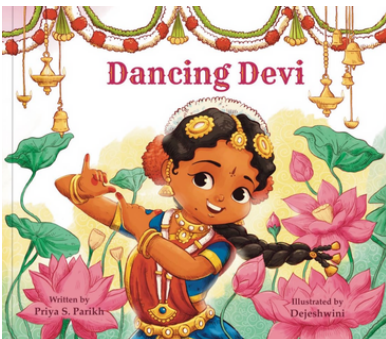


Priya Parikh holds a Bachelors in Public Health from Rutgers University and a Masters in Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International Public Affairs. Priya's hobbies include creative writing, singing, and also dancing to Bollywood music and Indian classical music. Priya's debut picture book, *Dancing Devi*, received positive reviews from Booklist, Foreword, Kirkus, and received a 2022 IBPA Benjamin Franklin Award for Best New Voice in Children's/Young Adult.

Priya's writing interest took off at a young age as she wrote poems, and narrated the lives of great leaders for a children's magazine, *The Sapling*, through the guidance of teachers at Vivekananda Vidyapith, an Academy for Indian culture and Indian philosophy. She also trained as a Bharatanatyam dancer for more than 10 years and completed her *Arangetram*, a debut performance of her formal dance training in 2009.

She believes that creative writing and storytelling have an important role in creating an inclusive world by allowing us to appreciate diversity, learn from underrepresented minority groups, and embrace our collective humanity. Priya has spent much of her childhood memories in the small town of Fort Lee, NJ and since then has moved 30 minutes away within New Jersey, USA.

About the book:



Devi knows that she's a good dancer. In fact, she's one of the best Bharatanatyam dancers at her dance school. So she's very upset when she learns she's lost the big dance competition. Her mom is a perfect dancer and Devi needs to be, too. Devi vows to practice her facial expressions and footwork until her dance is flawless, but no matter how much she practices, she keeps making mistakes.

Come along with Devi as she learns that failure is an important part of learning and growing.



Anna Petelina
Featured Speaker
Ukrainian National Women's League
of America
Website: unwla.org



About our speaker:

I was born and raised in a beautiful, very green city, Kyiv, the very heart of Ukraine. A country with a long history, a turbulent and soul-wrenching present, and, I am certain, a great future.

In Kyiv I pursued my education and career. My journey started at Kyiv National Linguistic University, where I studied English and Greek languages and later started a career in marketing and business development.

In 2019, my husband, my son, and I moved to the USA. There, I joined the Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA), the longest-running and largest Ukrainian women's organization in the US, as an educational and literary referent.

UNWLA is dedicated to promoting and developing educational and cultural efforts and providing humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians worldwide. I have been tirelessly working to raise awareness about the challenges faced by Ukraine's citizens and to advocate for positive change. I believe that understanding Ukraine's culture and history is crucial to comprehending the complexities of the ongoing full-scale war that Russia started in Ukraine on 24th of February in 2022.

My presentation is a chance to learn about Ukraine's current environment as it pertains to libraries, books, and culture from an authentic, everyday perspective. It's an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by its people and the resilience that keeps them going.

About UNWLA:

Established in 1925, the Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA) is the longest-running and largest Ukrainian women's organization in the US. Our mission is to promote and develop educational and cultural efforts and provide humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians worldwide. We are guided by principles of Christian ethics, religious tolerance, political non-partisanship, and universal respect for human rights.

Sifu Romain

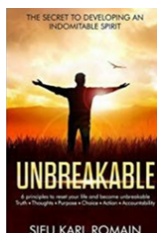
Featured Books: *Unbreakable* and *The Self-Confidence Factor: A Parent's Guide to Bully Prevention*

Websites: www.sifuromainonline.com and www.rkfmartialarts.com



World Champion and United International Kung Fu Hall of Fame inductee Sifu Romain has been studying and training in Kung Fu for 34 years. He is the owner and master instructor of the RKF Kung Fu Academy in Fairview, New Jersey.

His television appearances include: Oprah, Dr. Oz, NBC 1st Look, The Discovery Health Channel, ESPN, Good Day New York, MSG Networks, ABC-TV News and Fox National News. He is the founder of Kung Fu for a Better Life which is a non-profit organization offering programs focused on empowering children through basic martial arts philosophies.



Sifu Romain has authored two previous books ***Legendary Longfist*** and ***The Self-Confidence Factor: A Parent's Guide to Bully Prevention***. He has also co-authored two books with Dr. G. Steve Kinnard, ***The Cross and The Warrior*** and ***The Shaolin Athlete***. In addition, he has contributed to Dr. Oz's book and video ***You Staying Young***.



In ***Unbreakable -The Secret to Developing an Indomitable Spirit***, World Martial Arts Champion Sifu Karl Romain takes you through life changing events and shows you how to develop an unbreakable

spirit and how to find and stay true to your purpose. If you are at a crossroads in your life and are looking to develop the inner-strength to move forward, then this book is for you. In these pages, you'll discover how to implement the six principles to reset your life and become unbreakable, identify and overcome self-limiting beliefs, and develop greater self-confidence. Through allegories, personal stories, questions and coaching exercises, Sifu Karl Romain will take you on a journey that will create the shift needed for transformation.



Claudia Vidal

Featured Book: **Start Sooner**

Website: www.facebook.com/claudiavidalinc

Claudia Vidal was born and raised in New York City. She attended University in the Dominican Republic and is currently studying for a post-graduate certification in Coaching, Holistic and Integrative Psychotherapy. She lives in New York with her family and worked for nine years in the Human Services (developmental disabilities) field.



Claudia's favorite quote comes from Neville Goddard - "Dare to believe in the reality of your assumption and watch the world play its part relative to its fulfillment." It was partly this quote and partly that she was a victim of past destructive habits, which affected her deeply, that Claudia wanted to make a mark in the lives of others. She has always been inspired by the mind and the impact it has on human behavior and believes that habits shape our destiny in so many ways.

Because of this and her passionate desire to help men and women find their authenticity and co-create the life of their dreams, she started a new career as a writer. Her first book, **Start Sooner**, is a self-help title aimed at helping people to take care of relationships and finances and it is now available.



When she has time, Claudia loves traveling, often finding places which are far off the beaten track. She likes reading, dining out and getting in touch with nature as much as possible and also loves spending time with her family and giving back to the community when she can. In the past, Claudia has been involved in turkey donations for Thanksgiving and Christmas events for children with disabilities.

About the book:

Are you ready to improve your thinking pattern in the next 90 days? Identify and refine your thinking process so to create the time, space and energy needed to feel and think better. This short workbook will guide you through a four-part process which will increase your "awareness" and clarify your life vision.



Visit the vendor tables on the second floor for delicious international food and more!



Proud Supporters of the Multicultural Book Festival!

INFANTS • TODDLERS • PRESCHOOL-3 • PREK-4 • KINDERGARTEN



NOW ENROLLING!

Kiddie Academy of Secaucus is an early learning center located right in the Xchange Plaza! Established in 2012, KAS serves students from Infants through Kindergarten. Our Life Essentials curriculum allows students to reach age-appropriate objectives while learning through play. Students leave our center with a love for learning and the confidence needed for great success.

To learn more, schedule a tour and enroll:

kiddieacademy.com/secaucus

☎ 201-706-3626

✉ secaucus@kiddieacademy.net



Communication between our Academy and the families we serve has always been a priority at Kiddie Academy.

ACADEMY LINK
A PARENT COMMUNICATION PORTAL



Meals
Included

Enjoy watching your child flourish!

Stay connected to
your little one—
anywhere, anytime.

WatchMeGrow
Anywhere.

KIDDIE  **ACADEMY.**
EDUCATIONAL CHILD CARE

Kiddie Academy of Secaucus
1006 New County Road
Secaucus, NJ 07094

The BCCLS Library Consortium, the Diverse & Underserved Committee as well as Hudson Public libraries proudly present:

ONE BOOK



This October, in celebration of LGBTQIA+ History Month, **your local library and the County of Hudson invite you to read the amazing biography - Ma and Me by Putsata Reang.** A book of love, culture, and the need for acceptance.

The physical copies of the book are available through any BCCLS Member Library, the audiobook through Hoopla (available at some public libraries) and audio and ebooks through Libby for all BCCLS Member Library cardholders.

Book banning is no longer a thing of the past; with marginalized stories being at the top of banning lists. The IBook project seeks to augment the voices that are consistently silenced, such as those in the LGBTQIA+ community.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN AUTHOR TALK FEATURING PUTSATA REANG!



TUESDAY
OCTOBER 24TH



7:00 PM



PARAMUS PUBLIC LIBRARY
116 EAST CENTURY ROAD
PARAMUS, NJ 07652

Reading is an exercise of empathy; an exercise in walking in someone's shoes for a while
Malori Blackman.

As part of the IBOOK Project, Secaucus Public Library is hosting
An Evening Book Discussion featuring **Ma and Me.**

Monday, October 23rd. 7pm.

Main Library's Second Floor

1379 Paterson Plank Road, Secaucus, NJ

All are welcome to attend; light refreshments will be served.



HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION

OCTOBER 18, 2023

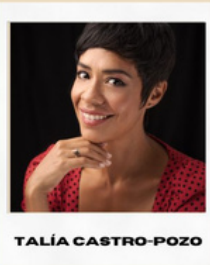
6:30 PM

**Secaucus Recreation Center
1200 Koelle Blvd., Secaucus, NJ**

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, join us for an evening of music, food, & dance, with world renowned dance instructor and choreographer Talia Castro-Pozo, and friends. Enjoy live music with the Cuarteto Siboney Band.

Snacks provided by Goya.

(NO PARTNER OR EXPERIENCE NECESSARY)



TALIA CASTRO-POZO



CUARTETO SIBONEY



GOYA

SPONSOR

Register using the calendar @ secaucuslibrary.org

Diversify Your Bookshelf

"Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books." -Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop

Do you want to know more about the importance of having access to a wide range of diverse books or how you can support diverse books in your community? Are you looking for book recommendations and other reading resources for children, teens or adults? Check out these websites to get started:

- **1000 Black Girl Books.** www.marleydias.com/1000blackgirlbooks
- **Black Baby Books.** <https://blackbabybooks.com/>
- **Book Riot's Annual Read Harder Challenge**
<https://bookriot.com/read-harder-2023>
- **Diverse Families Bookshelf.** <https://diversefamilies.org/>
- **Diverse Books Need Us.**
westportlibrary.libguides.com/DiverseBooksNeedUs/Home
- **Library for All.** <https://libraryforall.org/>
- **List of Lists: An Index of Diversity Book Lists for Adults.**
<https://listoflists.ischool.syr.edu/>
- **Read Across America.** <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america>
- **We Need Diverse Books.** <https://diversebooks.org/>
- **Women of Color in Romance.**
<http://www.wocinromance.com/>



And our favorite IRL
resource: Librarians!

We can give recommendations,
take requests, and look forward
to working with you to ensure
that our libraries are inclusive
and diverse!



**Proudly Support the
Multicultural Book Festival**

**For More Information about
Partners in Prevention,
visit pipnj.org**

**The Members of the
Secaucus P.B.A Local 84**



**Proudly Support the
Multicultural Book Festival**



Thanks for being part of the Multicultural Book Festival!

The Diversity Center and the Secaucus Public Library Board of Trustees thank Mayor Michael Gonnelli, the Secaucus Town Council, the Friends of the Secaucus Public Library, Secaucus Doll and Teddy Bear Hospital and the Secaucus DPW for their strong support and assistance in coordinating and promoting the Multicultural Book Festival.

We would also like to thank the authors, speakers, volunteers, attendees, library staff and donors who made today's event possible.

We hope to see you all in Spring 2024, when The Diversity Center returns to Secaucus for the 2nd Annual International Diversity Fair!

For updates regarding next year's Diversity Fair and other upcoming library and Diversity Center events, please follow us on social media!