2024

MARICOPA COUNTY READS SUMMER READING PROGRAM

SUMMARY & REPORT

PREPARED BY
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MARICOPA COUNTY
COUNTY
LIBRARY DISTRICT

Maricopa County
READS

2024 at a glance

62 public libraries
2 tribal libraries
1 military library
1 volunteer library
3 bookmobiles
& The Durango Juvenile Detention Center

123 Juvenile detention center participants
48 Achievers

97,025
Participants
47,026
Achievers
Achievers are participants who reach 1,000 points

100,401,388
minutes read

48.5%
achiever rate

64,272
challenges completed

1,308,573
badges earned

35,348 prize books ordered
1,680 prize books donated

Overview

Maricopa County Library District (MCLD) is proud to share the success of our annual countywide Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading Program. From June 1-August 1 all public libraries, two tribal libraries, one military library and one volunteer library totaling 66 libraries in 19 library systems encouraged 97,025 county residents (our highest number to date) to participate in the Summer Reading Program. The Maricopa County Durango Juvenile Detention Facility continues to participate, registering 123 kids, 48 of which earned a free book, for their simplified version of the program.

Each year we promote the Summer Reading Program using a theme and slogan provided by the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP). This year libraries celebrated a summer of adventure with "Adventure Begins at your Library/La Aventura Comienza en tu Biblioteca". The Arizona State Library supplies supporting materials created by CSLP to each of the participating library systems while branch staff the 19 library systems planned a comprehensive program using an interactive online platform, designed a marketing campaign and built relationships with local organizations.

Using the Great Reading Adventure software participants of all ages (children, teens and adults) work towards a goal of 1,000 points in 9 weeks. This interactive platform is where participants record minutes read and activities, are awarded digital badges, complete challenges and community experiences, redeem prizes and sponsored incentives and participate in free and engaging virtual and in-person events.

Participants also earn incentives at various point milestones which serve as a motivator for all ages to reach their reading goal of 1,000 points to earn their free book. This helps build home libraries, an important aspect of children's literacy success, whether they chose a book for themselves or donate it to a local organization that promotes literacy.

Summer Reading 2024 primary goals:

We employ various objectives and strategies that support accomplishing the two overarching goals of the program using communication and marketing strategies, software improvements and relationship building.

GOAL 1: Interrupt the summer slide, the common term given to the learning loss experienced by children while transitioning between school years.

GOAL 2: Promote literacy among children and their families.

Objective: Increase non-reader and non-library user participation.

Objective: Emphasize the fun of reading.

Objective: Help build home libraries.

Objective: Connect readers to community experiences

**Objective: Communicate literacy messages in simple, easy to understand ways.**

The Numbers

Maricopa County Reads increased the number of non-readers and non-library users participating in the Summer Reading Program by registering 97,025 Pre-readers (Birth to 4), Kids (5 to 11), Teens (12 to 17) and Adults (18+) from May 1 to August 1, an increase of 10,886 over last year. Of those, 47,026 reached at least 1,000 points, putting our achiever rate at 48.5%, a 2% increase. Below are graphs showing our growth over the last 4 years, a breakdown of participants and achievers by library system, and the statistics broken out by program.

SYSTEM WIDE PARTICIPANTS AND ACHIEVERS 2021-2024
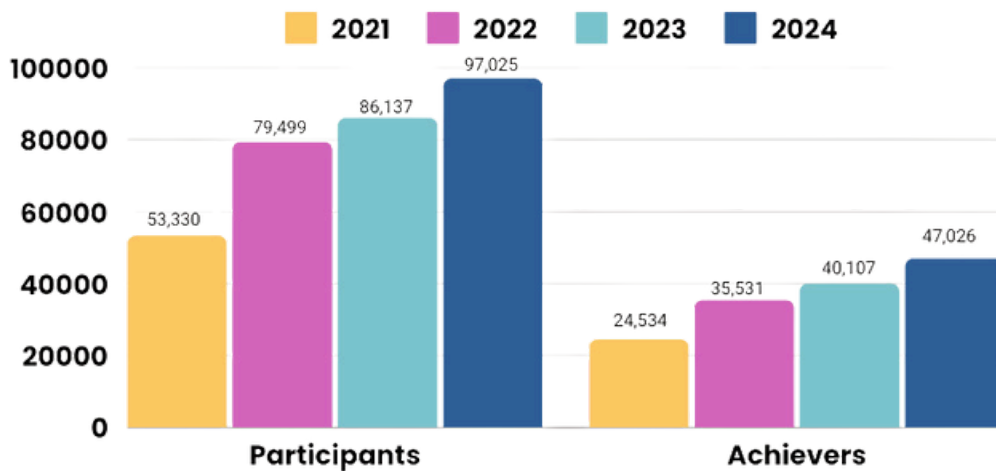
SYSTEM WIDE PARTICIPANTS ACHIEVEMENT RATE 2021-2024
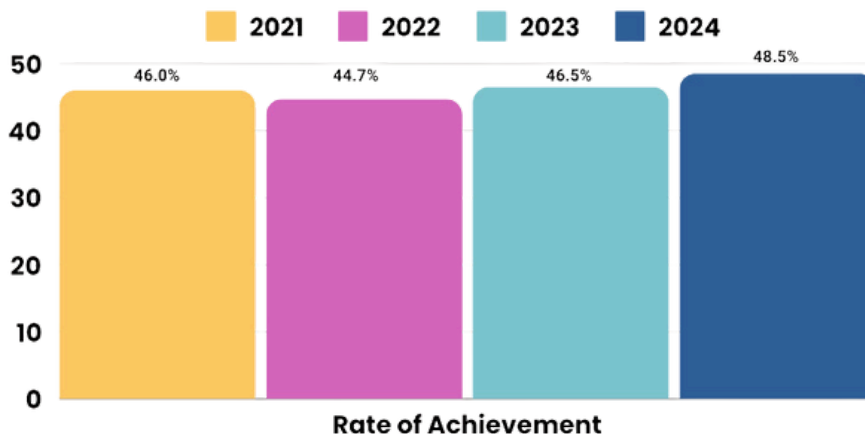
2024 Participants and Achievers by Library System

Library System	Total Participation	Total Achievers	Rate of Achievement
Avondale Public Library	2,226	1,125	50.5%
Buckeye Public Library	3,470	1,118	32.2%
Chandler Public Library	12,794	6,566	51.3%
Desert Foothills Public Library	352	126	35.8%
Fort McDowell Tribal Library	66	21	31.8%
Glendale Public Library	3,907	2,010	51.4%
Luke Air Force Base	90	62	68.9%
Maricopa County Library District	16,700	8,681	52.0%
Mesa Public Library	12,022	5,855	48.7%
Morristown Volunteer Library	10	0	0.0%
Peoria Public Library	4,813	2,322	48.2%
Phoenix Public Library	25,589	11,864	46.4%
Salt River Tribal Library	314	33	10.5%
Scottsdale Public Library	6,379	2,853	44.7%
Surprise Public Library	4,082	2,056	50.4%
Tempe Public Library	3,533	2,074	58.7%
Tolleson Public Library	458	150	32.8%
Wickenburg Public Library	118	52	44.1%
Youngtown Public Library	102	58	56.9%

Breaking our statistics down by age group, we can see which groups reach 1,000 points at the highest rates and where we see the most growth. The teens continue to have the highest achiever rate at 55% followed closely by adults with 53%. This year the kid and adult programs had the biggest jump in participant sign ups, growing by 5,212 and 3,688 respectively.

Achievers and Participants by Program and Library System

Library System	Prereaders		Kids		Teens		Adults	
	Participants	Achievers	Participants	Achievers	Participants	Achievers	Participants	Achievers
Avondale Public Library	364	167	827	355	322	193	713	410
Buckeye Public LIbrary	513	140	1,687	421	399	156	871	401
Chandler Public Library	1365	648	5,643	2,772	1,545	865	4,241	2,281
Desert Foothills Library	38	14	155	44	37	17	122	51
Fort McDowell Yavapai Tribal Library	8	5	38	5	3	2	17	9
Glendale Public Library	466	217	1,524	677	560	326	1,357	790
Luke Air Force Base	11	7	2	13	17	11	38	31
Maricopa County Library District	1,833	886	7,207	3,229	2,428	1,399	5,232	3,167
Mesa Public Library	1,692	777	4,851	2,089	1,402	731	4,077	2,249
Morristown Volunteer Library	2	0	7	0	0	0	1	0
Peoria Public Library	668	301	1,923	761	594	336	1,628	924
Phoenix Public Library	3,060	1,092	11,957	5,579	2,970	1,618	7,602	3,575
Salt River Tribal Library	9	1	166	9	36	4	103	19
Scottsdale Public Library	790	317	2,809	1,140	653	368	2,127	1,028
Surprise Public Library	527	231	1,660	693	524	293	1,371	839
Tempe Public Library	373	187	1,555	948	342	220	1,263	719
Tolleson Public Library	65	23	254	71	47	13	92	43
Wickenburg Public Library	15	7	46	14	24	8	33	23
Youngtown Public Library	15	6	27	11	8	2	52	39
TOTALS	11,814	5,026	42,360	18,840	11,911	6,562	30,940	16,598

Increase non-reader and non-library user participation

We surveyed 2,957 participants 98% of whom finished themselves or had children finish the program. As a result of participating in the Summer Reading Program:

- 87% of respondents said that they or their child reads more often
- 83% of respondents said they enjoy reading more.
- 82% of respondents reported their child is a more confident reader
- 93% of respondents reported their child maintained or increased their reading skills
- 83% of respondents said they learned something new
- 7% of respondents said they did not have a library card showing our program is reaching non-library users.

These numbers show that the majority of our participants not only enjoy participating but the program has improved their relationship with reading and the library.

Software changes

We continue to receive and integrate excellent feedback about the operation of The Great Reading Adventure software as we work with library systems throughout Maricopa county! User experience was improved with a welcome email (sent the day after participant registration), maintaining of Challenge search filters in a participant's session, a prompt shown to new participants asking if they want to add additional family members, and showing participant-entered book titles and authors in the participant history view. Many back-end staff improvements were incorporated surrounding performer registration including: a streamlined sign-up, a detailed spreadsheet export, and public display of streaming program end dates.

Marketing Plan

MCLD launched a countywide promotional campaign with the goals of bringing awareness to the program for new and previous participants, and increasing participant and achievement numbers.

The Library District designs and shares a wide range of marketing support to all participating library systems. This support includes ready-made social media posts and graphics, flyer/bookmark/poster designs, toolkits for promoting achievement, and press release and PeachJar templates. Using feedback provided from affiliate library staff, MCLD also designed additional materials this year including flyer and poster designs better explaining how to sign up for and use your MaricopaCountyReads.org account.

Images: 2024 flyer and bookmark

Marketing Plan continued

The Summer Reading Advertising Pool partnership continued this summer. This optional support allows library systems to buy into in a large-scale advertising campaign, giving access to a dedicated marketing staff who will coordinate and analyze a search engine marketing campaign on their behalf.

MCLD aided in serving 18,710 impressions to the Chandler and Buckeye Public Libraries.

MCLD's independent advertising campaign featured a mix of digital, print, and radio advertising.

Here are the highlights:
- The digital elements of the paid advertising campaign resulted in approximately **66,413 visits to MaricopaCountyReads.org**
- Approximately **26,036 new users** were brought to MaricopaCountyReads.org via the advertising campaign
- **1,036 Secret Codes** were entered from the various advertisement placements.

2024 digital and social media graphics

Emphasize the fun of reading

Game Content

When participants log in, they land on their individual dashboard. The dashboard is home to Summer Reading information like dates and prize information, their personal point tracker, links to fun literacy resources for kids, and our community reading goal tracker. This year our goal was 90,000,000 minutes, which we hit before the end of the program. Participants cited contributing to this goal as a motivator to continue reading throughout the summer and enjoyed feeling a part of a larger reading community.

"What I like the most about the program is the push/encouragement to read more and how the community collectively works to reach the goal of having a certain number of minutes read."

"I love being part of the reading community and seeing the total minutes read by the community."

Avatars continue to be a popular feature of the program. Participants start off with a limited set of clothing and accessory options. Bundles of themed pieces are released throughout the summer; participants enjoy changing them as new they receive new peices.

[What is your favorite part of the program?] *"Playing with avatar online -- changing its look".*

"I liked changing my avatar, dressing it up and playing with different styles."

Avatars featuring special clothes and disability pieces

Game Content continued

Digital badges are in game marks of achievement for reaching point milestones, completing challenges, attending events, and finding secret codes. Badges are a valued part of the program as they aid in motivating participants to continue logging their reading and engaging in the program for the whole 9 weeks.

"...activities at the library that gave badges encouraged my young readers to stay engaged in the reading and to want to explore more books at the library."

Point milestone badge and secret code badge.

Challenges help reluctant or struggling readers, and prereaders earn points outside of reading, making the 1,000-point goal achievable for all. This year library staff and partners created 192 challenges completed 63,990 times. This is over 11,000 more completions than in 2023. The most popular challenges are a combination of books and activities that children can do with their caregivers.

Top challenges include:

- Wow Water! focuses on a variety of water activities like drinking water, water coloring or listening to the sound of rain.
- Unplugged Adventures asks participants to play classic games like tic tac toe.
- Unplugged Physical Adventures wants you to go outside for some movement.

"He started paying attention to the challenges, and because of the challenges we got to try new activities together (watch movies, swimming and diving competitions, go online together, go on walks, try new recipes, etc)"

"I love the challenges. It broadens my book selection and I enjoy getting my badges."

192
challenges created

63,990
challenge completions

Gameboards

We offer three gameboard options, designed by Phoenix Public Library and printed through the Arizona State Library, for learners who need tactile engagement or families who want to limit screen time:

- Pre-reader gameboard for kids 0-4, includes early literacy activities.
- Kid gameboard for those 5-11, which includes secret code opportunities.
- All Abilities gameboard originally designed for adults and teens with disabilities.

Pre-reader gameboard

Kid gameboard

All Abilities gameboard

Based on feedback we received in our 2023 survey, the pre-reader gameboard feels too young and the kid gameboard is intimidating if reading 20 minutes a day is a struggle. To ensure the program was enjoyable to all, we promoted the All Abilities gameboard to those who fall between a pre-reader and kids confidently reading on their own; somewhere in the K-2nd grade range.

We employed a few strategies to increase awareness around the use of the All Abilities gameboard. Because it gamifies the program this helps us emphasize the fun reading.

- We printed a small amount for the MCLD branches who wanted it.
- We highlighted the gameboard on the dashboard (below).

Dashboard that appeared in participant profiles for one week.

"My kid loved coloring in the chart for every 20 minutes they read"

"She loved coloring the shapes and checking them off - cool way to supplement for kids."

"The pre reader board game made the program fun for my child. The activities were a great mix of reading and learning activities."

Streaming and In Person Events

Every two weeks 3-4 new streaming events became available for all summer reading participants. 1 American Sign Language interpreted program was available each month, totaling 17 programs over the 9 weeks. The start and end dates would were added to each video. Past participants found themselves waiting too long to watch a video and then missing it. Now participants can see how long they have to view something.

" I loved this years productions of summer activities online. I found them, fun, educational and brilliantly created... This year, I watched some of them twice! They were just that good."

"I really loved the fun virtual activities! Most of the in-person activities were understandably targeted toward children, but the online activities were really interesting to me. I especially liked the Celtic."

Our top viewed programs were:

- **Crafty Chica**- craft program geared towards adults: 2,632 views
- **Zovargo**- animal adventures for all ages: 2,424 views
- **ASL: Omnium: A Bold New Circus - A Celebration of Diversity:** 2,187 views
- **Happy Birds-** bird show for all ages: 1,111 views
- **Jump Rope Show-** jump rope tricks for kids: 891 views

Clockwise: Happy Birds, Crafty Chica, Zovargo

Streaming and In-Person Events continued

MCLD pays for one youth, teen and adult in-library event or kit in lieu of an event for each participating library. This is an opportunity for libraries to bring in performers that will draw larger crowds and unique learning experiences. These events are connected to the online program through earning a secret code and digital badge for attending. The kit options include both consumables for things like craft programming or items to keep and use for programming throughout the year.

2024 most requested in-person events:

- Around the World with Jungle Jill and Friends
- AKDC Kpop Dance Workshop (**new** this year!)
- Wildman Phil Wildlife Adventures
- Magician Eric Gilliam
- Mini Gold on the Go golf course

Top requested kit:

Neon Sign Making
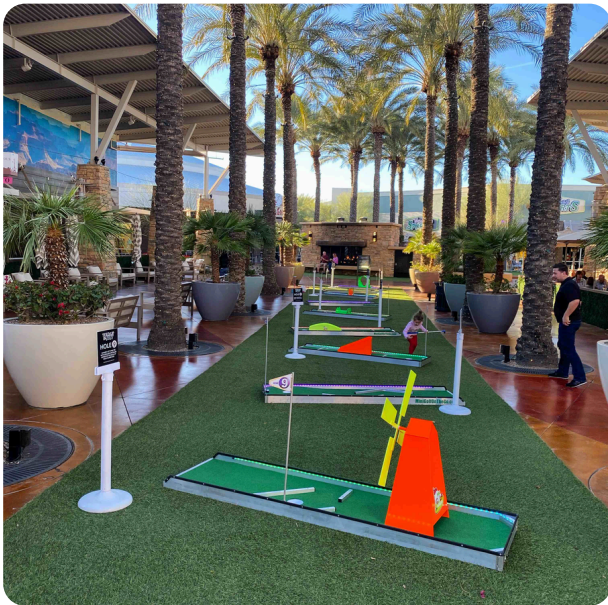
Images clockwise: Jungle Jill, Wildman Phil, Mini Golf

Build home libraries

Incentives

Businesses support the reading program by donating incentives participants earn as they reach point milestones or win drawings. Peter Piper Pizza and Raising Cane's consistently donate countywide free food coupons for those who reach 500 points. Coordinated through the Arizona State Library, Arizona State Parks & Trails donated one-day park passes at 750 points countywide and the Phoenix Mercury continues to provide (4) free tickets to one regular season game to all participants also at 750 points.

This year we built on our relationship with the Phoenix Mercury who provided us with bookmarks and a social media video featuring many of their players talking about books remembered from childhood. Building on these relationships to continue providing prizes at point milestones keeps participants engaged so they reach 1,000 points to earn their book. This helps us reach our goal of building home libraries important because easy access to reading materials is a factor in literacy success.

The Arizona State Parks pass and Phoenix Mercury tickets are beloved by our participants who often call these prizes out in our survey:

"I appreciate the prizes! We won Mercury tickets and as a single mother with no support other than what I can do, this was huge as it is not something I could have taken them to without this opportunity! Big win on family time promotion!!!"

"The prizes are why I participate. Taking my family to a game and a state park visit are worth the effort of logging my reading time."

"I liked how the Summer Reading Program needed to have you reach the half point to get prizes. I also liked that one of the prizes was a State Park Pass."

Drawing prizes for all libraries this year include:

- Childsplay Theatre 2 ticket vouchers
- Harkins prize pack for 2
- Crayola Experience free admission for 2
- LEGO Minecraft sets for kids purchased by MCLD
- Grand Prize: Childsplay Theatre basket including a family 4 pack of tickets

MCLD participants who logged at least 140 points per week were entered in to our weekly drawings for a chance to win:

- Pre-Readers- set of musical building blocks
- Kids- LEGO Minecraft set
- Teens- Kodak instant camera
- Adults - Kindle

Free Book Incentive

Participants who achieve 1,000 points earn a free book of their choice from over 150 titles ranging from classic titles like *Madeline* or *The Color Purple,* to more current bestsellers like *The Summer I Turned Pretty* to gratitude journals and coloring books. 75% of achievers ordered their free book totaling over 35,000 books ordered. 1,680 participants, 3% of participants, opted to donate their book to either a Head Start classroom or the Durango Juvenile Detention center; both of whom support children and their literacy needs.

MCLD continued to support the Durango Juvenile Detention Center's summer reading program who had 123 participants and 48 achievers. They received a stack of books for their kids, who reached 1,000 points, to choose from.
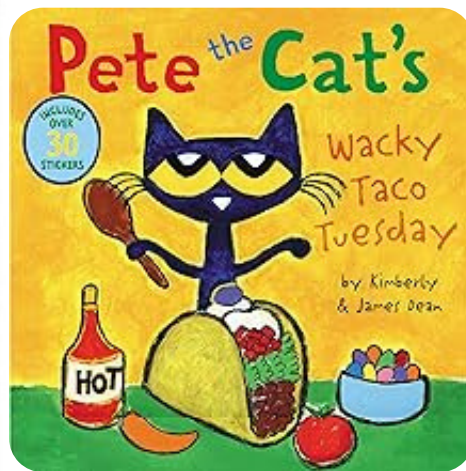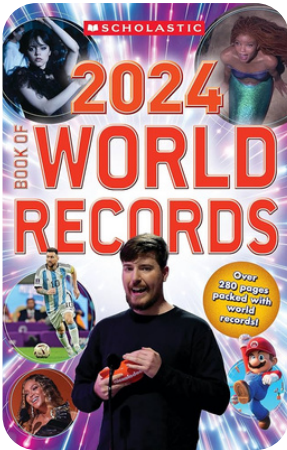
Images Top 5 English and top Spanish titles

Connect Participants with Community Experiences

194

community experiences created

14,388

visits

4,000 more visits than in 2023!

A community experience is a special summer reading event at a partner organization or a feature created in partnership with an outside organization. They provide participants with experiential knowledge, a key component of literacy and build community by drawing attention to local organizations and cultural institutions throughout the valley. Staff from participating libraries were tasked with creating at least one Community Experience per system; most collaborated with many more partners. Together, they created experiences and secret codes that summer reading participants redeemed for a digital badge and points.

Our top visited experiences were:

- Town of Gilbert:
  - Greenfield Pool
  - Art exhibit in the Southeast Regional Library
  - Friends of the Library store
- Chandler Museum
- Phoenix Zoo

Communicate Literacy Messages

Each year we include Smart Talk graphics created and provided by Head Start Arizona on the Pre-Reader dashboards. Each day an example of "smart talk", a back and forth conversation with young children to help them develop language and literacy skills, is highlighted in either English or Spanish.
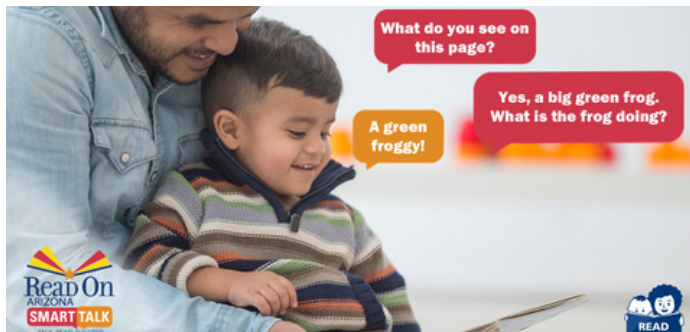
Images: Examples of Smart Talk graphics

Staff can also use challenges to communicate early literacy messages using simple language and manageable activities. We sought to maintain the number of early literacy challenge completions by creating a carousel of pre-reader challenges at the bottom of the dashboard. Of the 192 challenges created, 47 of these were for our pre-reader participants and were completed 25,332 times.
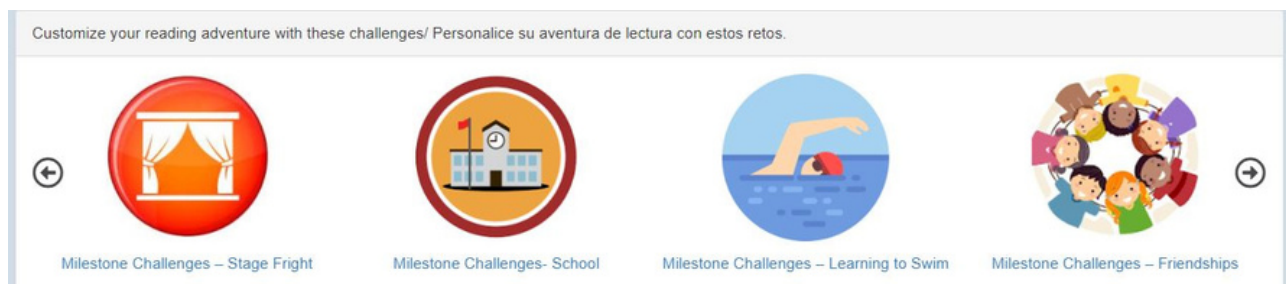

Image: Carousel of early literacy challenge badges

Looking Forward

The 2024 Summer Reading Program once again surpassed expectations by growing an additional 11,000 participants making this year our largest yet. With so many new participants, we will continue to strive to make this program achievable for all types of readers and skill levels while improving the navigability of the site for participants and staff using clear communication in our marketing and making practical software changes.

Thank You

Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading Program would not be possible without support and collaboration.
We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for making the 2024 program a success.

Maricopa County Library District

Director
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Danette Barton
Library Region Managers
Library District Branch Staff

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Participating Libraries

Avondale Public Library
Brenda Soto
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Chris Amarillas

Buckeye Public Library
Peter Grant
Janelle Anderson

Chandler Public Library
Jean Reynolds
Thuan Nguyen

Desert Foothills
Dawn Treude

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Tribal Library
Jacquelyn McCalvin

Glendale Public Library
Erin Garred
Merideth Jenson-Benjamin

Luke Air Force Base
Jennifer Crowell
Leanne McDermott

Maricopa County Durango Juvenile Detention Center
Cipriana Rosales
Christina Badilla
Saquan Bonets

Mesa Public Library
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Brianna Eusebio
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Cara Marshell
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Phoenix Public Library
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Wendy Resnik
Kelly Pearson

Salt River Tribal Library
Melissa Rave
Sophenia Begaye

Scottsdale Public Library
Charles Raybourn
Jen Kiesl
Jenny Lundin
Kassie Green

Surprise Public Library
Tonya Stuempfl

Tempe Public Library
Jess Jupitus
Gretchen Oates

Tolleson Public Library
Lila Garza

Youngtown Public Library
Mary Vass

Wickenburg Public Library
Sarah Brown
Suzie Wolfe

Maricopa County Partners

Maricopa County Supervisors
Jack Sellers, Vice Chairman District 1
Thomas Galvin, District 2
Bill Gates District 3
Clint Hickman, Chairman District 4
Steve Gallardo, District 5

Maricopa County Human Services Department
Jackie Thatcher- Early Education Division

Partner Organizations

Arizona State Library
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Arizona State Parks & Trails
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Malori Anthony

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