



*March 26, 2019*

**For Immediate Release**

**Media Contact:** Claudia Leung, [cleung@calhum.org](mailto:cleung@calhum.org), 415.391.1474 x303

**CALIFORNIA HUMANITIES ANNOUNCES 2019 LIBRARY INNOVATION LAB COHORT**

**Professional Development and Grant Program Helps Library Staff Respond to Immigrant Community Needs**

(Oakland, CA) — After a competitive process, **California Humanities** is pleased to announce awards for the **2019 Library Innovation Lab (LIL)** cohort and grant program to ten public libraries across the state, representing the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Coast, Los Angeles, Orange County, and the Central Valley.

Now entering its third year, the Library Innovation Lab program supports the design and delivery of responsive and relevant public humanities programming in California’s public libraries by providing a **nine-month practice-based professional development experience** and **cash grants of up to \$5,000** to participating library programmers. The creative and innovative programs that library staff develop will respond to the needs and circumstances of today’s **immigrants and immigrant communities** and foster more inclusive communities within our state.

Each cohort member will research, design, implement and assess a small scale, short-term public humanities project at their library between April 1 and December 31, 2019. Working in a collaborative learning environment that will incorporate face-to-face and virtual group meetings as well as individualized advising, participants will acquire new skills and knowledge in programming and project management, build confidence and develop capacity in working with immigrants and other target audiences through experimenting with new programming approaches.

“American public libraries have played an important role in welcoming newcomers throughout our history,” said **Julie Fry, President & CEO of California Humanities**. “This year, the cohort of our Library Innovation Lab program will continue that legacy by building capacity within California libraries for all communities in our state—from newly arrived immigrants to longtime residents. We congratulate the ten grantees whose projects will promote understanding and provide insight into a wide range of topics, issues, and experiences.”

To date, 32 California libraries from across the state have participated in the program. A [complete list](#) of all Library Innovation Lab grantees can be found on the California Humanities website.

## **2019 LIBRARY INNOVATION LAB COHORT**

Sonia Bautista, Senior Librarian  
City of Commerce Public Library

Veronica Casanova, Librarian III  
Tulare County Library System—Exeter Branch Library

Karina Huerta, Youth Services Librarian  
Sunnyvale Public Library

Kate McMillen, Library Associate III  
County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries—Cambria Library

Michelle Meades, Librarian  
Placentia Library District

Krystal Messer, Adult Librarian  
Los Angeles Public Library—Washington Irving Branch

Andrew Murphy, Supervising Librarian  
Mill Valley Public Library

Zoe Nash, Adult Services Librarian  
Orange County Public Libraries—Fountain Valley Branch

Refugio Rivera, Library Associate  
Napa County Library

Joshua Sanchez, Library Assistant  
Long Beach Public Library

### **ABOUT LIBRARY INNOVATION LAB**

Library Innovation Lab is supported in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Additional support is provided by Wells Fargo Foundation and the generosity of individual donors throughout California.

### **ABOUT CALIFORNIA HUMANITIES**

California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, promotes the humanities – focused on ideas, conversation and learning – as relevant, meaningful ways to understand the human condition and connect people to each other in order to help strengthen California. California Humanities has provided grants and programs across the state since 1975. To learn more, visit [calhum.org](http://calhum.org), or like and follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).