

**Progress Report from the Idaho Commission for Libraries
to the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
on the *Idaho Libraries Welcome All Project*
(Quarters 3 - 6: January 2022 - December 2022)**

Greeting Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship members and Happy New Year 2023! Much has happened since my last report. Of the \$15,000 in donation funds you awarded ICfL, all \$15,000 has been spent – every penny! It took the rest of our fiscal year 2022 and half of fiscal year 2023 to implement all the plans, programs, and training that I wanted to with your funds. It was a very busy year, but I am happy to say that I think much was accomplished with the \$15,000 donation from your congregation.

With a beginning balance of \$7, 705.15, the following project was funded with the remaining funds:

Creation of an ICfL library staff training course titled - “Indigenous Idaho: Future, Past, & Present”:

The Indigenous Idaho course was born from ICfL staff efforts to modify the University of Idaho course for graduate education degree students called “Introduction to Indian Education.” Three ICfL staff took this course in the fall of 2021 and determined that the course was too focused on teachers as the audience and too many changes would have to be made by ICfL to make it applicable to public and school library staff. We also wanted to see some live dialog, local presenters, and more interactive learning techniques included and thus decided to create our own continuing education course specifically for Idaho library staff. This was a larger and more complicated project than we first envisioned back in January 2021.

We spent February – May of 2021 creating the course outline, finding the right person to create the content, establish a contract, create the course in Niche, and review, edit, and finalize the course.

From June – August of 2021, we created all the registration and evaluation forms, reached out to and finalized the guest speaker/presenter schedule, promoted the course, answered questions and provided consultation to interested library staff, and set up the live webinar links.

From September – November, we implemented the course by offering and facilitating three 1.5-hour live webinars with guest speakers, answered submitted questions through the Niche online course, evaluated the course with our pilot participants, and mailed all libraries who completed the course the new books for their library collection. We also met as a team to do an internal evaluation of the course and recommended some small adjustments for the next time.

- 5 hours of Idaho Niche Academy content was created for the 3 online course modules;
- Free Idaho Niche Academy accounts were made available to all course participants;
- 31 library staff members from 27 libraries completed Round #1 of the Indigenous Idaho course;

- 3 guest speakers presented to the course participants from the Nez Perce Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and from the Indian Education Department of the Idaho State Department of Education.
- 324 newly published books by Indigenous authors were added to 27 different library collections (12 to each library) around the state;

Learn more about the course – read current blog post: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/ind/>

Round #2, for another 30 library staff, will be offered in February 2023, with federal funding. Depending on how things go for Round #2 and the availability of \$3,000-\$4,000 in ongoing funding, ICfL hopes to offer this course, with a facilitated trainer, once per year.

BUFF Expenditures for Indigenous Idaho Course:

- Contract with Mandi Harris, Idaho children’s librarian, Cherokee Nation citizen, and doctoral library student - **\$5,500**
- Newly published, high-quality books by Indigenous authors, set of 10-12 hardcover books for each of the 23 libraries who completed the course – for library circulation - **\$1,919.91**
- “United Voices: Awakening Cultural Understandings of Idaho’s Five Tribes” (31 copies; one for each course participant) - **\$285.24**

Total spent on Indigenous Idaho course: \$7,705.15

Feedback/comments from course participants:

“I loved all of the resources that were provided with this training. All of the presenters were not only informative will all of the information provided but just the way the presented themselves throughout the training was phenomenal. I truly enjoy a presentation when you can just feel the emotion and energy from the presenters through the screen and this was one that expressed it.”
– Mountain Home Public Library

“I liked learning about the significance of credible Native American authors telling accurate stories of Ingenious past. Looking through our library now, I can see that we have books where even the titles are insensitive-- for example one book is titles: The American Indian Costume. I plan to request this books removal and look for a more updated and accurate title to replace it.”
– Nampa Public Library

“Niche Academy was well-paced and engaging, with a good mix of text, video, and interactive elements. Combined with the in-person meetings, it gave me a lot of ways to interact with all the content.” – Boise School District Libraries

“I learned something in every link, every presentation, and every conversation. The resources for libraries was the most helpful to me. I am so glad information was covered for non-Natives.”
– Coeur d’Alene Schools Indian Education Program

“I really liked the guest speakers I thought they represented a great variety of issues important to Indigenous peoples of Idaho and that I learned something from each one that I can take back to my library.” – Timberline High School

What would course participants say to their colleagues about the course:

“I would want them to know that the course will make them think about the colonial aspects of their profession in new ways, and also will offer solutions regarding service to Indigenous people and the sharing of Indigenous knowledge.” – Ada Community Library

“I would want to be sure to tell them that the presentation was fair and balanced. I would tell them that they would learn and gain empathy.” – Potlach Jr./Sr. High School

“I loved the mix of "things to do now" (buy these books, check out this show on PBS) and "things to deeply consider about how you do things." It's nice to feel like I'm doing something, and to know that I'm taking concrete steps like that while continuing to deliberately consider the big picture is what's going to move the needle.”

Thank you for your contribution and please let me know if you have any questions about this project and the use of any of your contributed funds.

It's been a pleasure partnering with your organization, the Special Appeal Proposal process, the Racial Justice Ministry, and member Eileen Oldag and her committee!

I hope you all keep up the good work – I know we will do the same here at the Idaho Commission for Libraries!

Take care,
Kristina Taylor