

# Granting Success

## Talk Story as a Community of Practice

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As members of the Asian/Pacific American Library Association (APALA) Family Literacy Focus committee, we manage the Talk Story grant program. We hope this article will prepare you and your organization for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (AANHPI), and American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) storytelling-centered programming. We strive to provide informational and monetary resources for libraries and community organizations to implement culturally competent programming for AANHPI and AIAN communities.

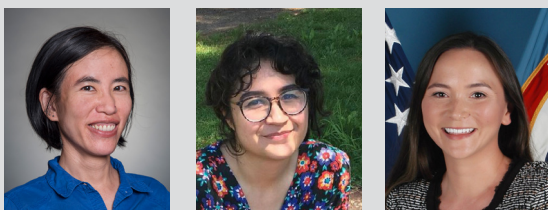
What is Family Literacy? It is

- parents, adults, and youth learning together;
- intergenerational learning and knowledge of reading, writing, and especially of social and cultural histories; and
- youth influenced by the learning attitudes and literacy behaviors demonstrated by adults.

Family literacy programming supports parents, grandparents, and caregivers as a child's first teachers, following the understanding that learning is a lifelong process. Youth and their motivation to learn are influenced by the learning attitudes and literacy behaviors demonstrated by the adults in their homes and communities.<sup>1</sup> Literacy behavior extends beyond print literacy and includes digital, financial, culinary, health, document, information, and media literacies, and more.<sup>2</sup> Talk Story: Sharing Stories, Sharing Culture supports opportunities for adult family members to build their own literacy skills as they strengthen their youth's literacy skills.

### What Is Talk Story?

Talk Story: Sharing Stories, Sharing Culture is a family literacy program that reaches out to AANHPI and AIAN families and their intergenerational community members. Talk Story celebrates and affirms Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian intersectionality through books, oral traditions, art, and more to provide interactive and enriching experiences.



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Literacy Focus committee 2022–2023 and a doctoral student at the University of Washington's Information School.

## How to Apply for Talk Story Grants

You may apply for either an APALA grant or an AILA grant, but not to both organizations. Two \$500 grants will be offered by each organization. Applications must be received by March 15, 2024.

Please submit a complete and detailed application, including a statement of financial or economic need, narrative describing how the grant addresses community needs and promotes the Talk Story mission, an explanation of how your program empowers AANHPI and/or AIAN communities, and a proposed budget.

Here are some tips for preparing a successful grant application.

- **Demonstrate service gaps.** Example: Joseph P. Addabbo School (Queens, NY) highlighted funding gaps that did not effectively support opportunities for enrichment for their high needs student population, which included 19% ELL (English language learner) students.
- **Address demographics.** The Novi (MI) Public Library intentionally identified their distinct Asian communities.
- **Describe unique programming.** How can you use the funds in a unique way? Example: Springdale (AR) Public Library used their grant money to create their own video and book media based on their existing collection.
- **Get community members involved.** Joseph P. Addabbo School put together an intergenerational reading buddy program.
- **Predict future benefits.** Manoa (HI) Public Library set up community storytelling sessions and recorded them for future viewers.

*The awards for the \$500 grants will be announced in May 2024. For more information, visit <https://www.apalaweb.org/talkstorytogether/resources/> or email [familylit@apalaweb.org](mailto:familylit@apalaweb.org).*

This program derives from the Hawaiian expression “talk story” that means “to chat informally” or “to shoot the breeze.” A linguistic scholar describes it as “a rambling personal experience mixed with folk materials,”<sup>3</sup> while author Maxine Hong Kingston uses the term to describe a Chinese/Chinese-American storytelling style, which is “an oral tradition of history, mythology, genealogy, bedtime stories, and how-to stories that have been passed down through generations, an essential part of family and community life.”<sup>4</sup>

In practice, rewarding Talk Story programming has been carried out as a student-senior reading buddy program, partnering with indigenous storytellers and supporting community AANHPI and AIAN businesses and authors.

Some of the past grant recipients have included public libraries, tribal libraries, school libraries, academic libraries, and non-profit organizations. &

## References

1. Ohio Literacy Resource Center, “What is Family Literacy?” September 11, 2018, <https://literacy.kent.edu/familyliteracy/whatisit.html>.
2. Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services, *Literacy for All: Adult Literacy through Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2019).
3. Karen Ann Watson, “Transferable Communicative Routines: Strategies and Group Identity in Two Speech Events,” *Language in Society* 4, no. 1 (1975): 54.
4. Jeslyn Medoff, “Maxine Hong Kingston” in *Modern American Women Writers*, edited by Elaine Showalter, Lea Baechler, and A. Walton Litz, 257 (New York: Scribner, 1991).