

Reminder 2/18/21

WE ARE HOMETOWN NEWS.



HCC's Latinx Empowerment Association is collecting the creation of a little free library

Reminder Publishing

Latinx Empowerment Association at HCC to create little free library

HOLYOKE – The Latinx Empowerment Association, a student Club at Holyoke Community College, is running a children's book drive to create a "Little Free Library" in the Holyoke Flats.

The club has scheduled February dates in different parts of the city where people can drop off donated books: Feb. 21; and Feb. 28, from 2 to 4 p.m.

While they are accepting donations of all kinds of children's books, they are emphasizing those that deal with topics of race, cultural heritage and representation, and LGBTQ+ issues.

"Our intention is to provide low-income families with access to a diverse range of books during the pandemic and winter months," said Miren Neyra Alcantara, a Holyoke resident and LEA Club president. "We believe in the power of literacy and education and are committed to social justice."

The idea began as a book donation and distribution for children who live in the Holyoke Flats, one of the poorest sections of the city. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, club members decided to turn the project into a "Little Free Library."

"As a resident of the Flats and a Holyoke Community College student, I believe that children who live here don't have enough access to books that represent them and their experience," said LEA Club member Alex Santiago, the lead organizer. "While two Little Free Libraries have been established in

Holyoke, their locations in the Highlands mean they are not easily accessible to children living in the Flats. As a club, we believe that representation matters, especially during this alienating time."

A specific location for the library has not yet been decided.

The book drive started on Feb. 13, from 2 to 4 p.m. in front of the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute at 164 Race Street.

It continues on Feb. 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. in front of the Dam Café, 2014 Northampton St.

The final day of the book drive is Feb. 28 from 2 to 4 p.m. in front of Ely Court, 70 Lyman St.

People who bring books should look for a white Kia Optima parked in the street with its trunk open and a sign reading "Book Drive Here." Club members are asking people to wear masks and respect social distancing guidelines.

"As people drive by they can drop their books in the trunk and they will receive a free surprise from one of the club members," said Alcantara.

The club has also created an Amazon Wish List for people who want to donate books but cannot make it to one of the book drive days.

To buy a book and donate from Amazon, please go to: hcc.edu/lea-books and follow the link on the page.

For more information please contact Alcantara at mneyraalcantara752@hcc.edu or Santiago at asantiago831@hcc.edu.