



MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

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MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY SELECTED FOR NATIONAL “BIG READ” GRANT
Milwaukee to Read and Celebrate In The Time of the Butterflies by Julia Alvarez

May 24, 2016—[MILWAUKEE]—Milwaukee Public Library announced today that it is a recipient of a grant of \$14,000 to host the NEA Big Read in the City of Milwaukee. A program of the National Endowment for the Arts, the NEA Big Read broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Milwaukee Public Library is one of 77 nonprofit organizations to receive a grant to host an NEA Big Read project between September 2016 and June 2017. The NEA Big Read in Milwaukee will focus on the novel *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez. Activities will take place in April and May of 2017.

Milwaukee Public Library has partnered with a number of organizations to increase participation in the Big Read, including:

- UWM Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS)- a designated National Resource Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education Title VI program
- Milwaukee Public Museum
- Ex Fabula
- Woodland Pattern
- Boswell Books
- Walker’s Point Center for the Arts

“We are honored to be selected as a Big Read grantee,” said Milwaukee Public Library Director Paula Kiely. **“Books can inspire and create new experiences. *In the Time of the Butterflies* is a poignant novel with themes that will appeal to readers of all ages and relate to members of our Milwaukee community. Bringing our community together around a great work of literature will have a lasting impact, and we look forward to engaging our strong partners in this effort.”**

In the Time of the Butterflies tells the tale of three women who are driven by a passion for justice in various aspects of their world, justice in the political process that would eliminate a dictator, and justice in society that would result in gender equality. The sacrifices these women make in pursuit of their ideals

brings to the forefront themes of sacrifice, self-identity, women's rights and the importance non-violence. These themes have the potential to draw audiences from Milwaukee's Latino, African American and Hmong communities and young and old alike. Discussing questions and issues relevant to our community and connecting these to a work of classic modern literature epitomizes the spirit of the NEA Big Read.

Managed by Arts Midwest, the NEA Big Read offers grants to support innovative community reading programs designed around a single book. The program supports organizations across the country in developing community-wide reading programs which encourage reading and participation by diverse audiences. Organizations selected to participate in the NEA Big Read receive a grant, access to online training resources and opportunities, and educational and promotional materials designed to support widespread community involvement.

The Big Read will kick off with an event at Central Library in April of 2017 and then a series of events throughout the next two months, including storytelling workshops, book discussions, a keynote with the author, classes and a teen poetry contest.

For more information about the NEA Big Read, please visit neabigread.org.

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