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March 2, 2022

## Berks County Public Libraries Partner with Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge to Release Native Booklist

*For immediate release*— Berks County Public Libraries is pleased to announce the release of a Native Booklist through a partnership with the Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge. The booklist, which is available in print and digital formats, highlights a curated lineup of book titles that acknowledge Native peoples' history and contemporary lives.

The idea for the booklist emerged when Amanda Funk, executive director of Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge, made a routine library visit with her children and picked up a library-curated LGBT Booklist. Funk then reached out to Berks County Public Libraries to explore a collaboration between the two organizations for a Native Booklist, one which would support the Center's mission to promote the visibility of Native Americans in Berks County and beyond through community education.

"Stories are our most effective teaching tools, sharing diverse perspectives and experiences with readers," Amanda said. "This booklist is good medicine because it shows us a roadmap for healing from damaging narratives about Native Americans through new narratives rooted in truth."

Stephanie Williams, the deputy administrator—outreach services coordinator for Berks County Public Libraries, began work on the booklist in January with recommendations by Marissa Guidara, youth services consultant for the Reading Library District.

The Native Booklist features 60 titles for all ages. Books such as *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom and *Bowwow Powwow* by Brenda J. Child appear within the Early Readers section while others like *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley and *Rain Is Not My Indian Name* by Cynthia Leitich Smith join additional teen titles in subsequent pages.

The release of the booklist corresponds with the Berks County Public Libraries System anniversary celebration. Established in 1986, the system sought to provide centralized support to member libraries through the improvement and strengthening of services and resources.

Through the years, the library system has provided libraries with supplemental resources to promote life-long learning and community engagement. The release of the Native Booklist is another step forward towards that goal.

“Libraries are for everyone,” says Stephanie Williams. “We are proud to partner with Amanda and the Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge to spread awareness of library resources that are available to all.”

The Native Booklist joins the library system’s LGBT Booklist in a special topics series which features materials in the countywide collection. Book titles that appear in both the Native and LGBT booklists can be checked out at any of the 23 member-library locations throughout the county or online at [www.berkslibraries.org/services/berks-county-resources/special-topics](http://www.berkslibraries.org/services/berks-county-resources/special-topics).

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*If you would like more information about this topic, please visit your local library or online at [www.berkslibraries.org](http://www.berkslibraries.org).*

**About the Berks County Library Systems:** The Berks County Public Library (BCPL) System is a department of the County of Berks, serving 411,442 county residents across 866 square miles and 72 municipalities since 1986. Through the support of the Berks County commissioners, BCPL staff aids in strengthening the Berks County community by providing centralized support for the 19 full-service member libraries and four branches. For more information, please visit [www.berkslibraries.org](http://www.berkslibraries.org).

**About the Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge:** Widoktadwen Center for Native Knowledge is a Native-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in downtown Reading. Our mission is to promote the visibility of Native Americans in Berks County and beyond through community education, leadership, and activism. Visit [www.widoktadwen.org](http://www.widoktadwen.org) for more information.