Teatro Yerbabruja
Bay Shore, NY

Grant request: $20,000
Book selection: An American Sunrise

Project information:
Proposed programming start date: 10-17-2021
Proposed programming end date: 04-10-2022
Number of partner organizations: 22
Number of book discussions: 16
Total number of events: 83
Anticipated total participants: 5,000

Panelist notes:
Organization Description Narrative

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja uses art as a tool for social change in partnership with other community leaders, propelling economic redevelopment, promoting cultural enrichment, and advocating cultural understanding among neighbors through artistic expression in the Central Islip, Brentwood, and Bay Shore/North Bay Shore, New York communities.

Founded in 2004 by Margarita Espada, it was Central Islip-Brentwood’s’s first arts center. Those communities have been challenged by racism and economic hardship for decades, and more recently plagued by MS-13 gang violence, and now are the epicenters of Long Island’s COVID-19 epidemic. Early programming included music and dance lessons for all ages, open mics, theater, and art exhibitions. Its 2008 original theatre production “What Killed Marcelo Lucero” explored hate crime killings, and toured for 4 years to colleges, schools, churches, and union halls, inspiring dialogue among Long Island and nearby communities about immigration and hatred on Long Island, receiving multiple awards, and media attention. In 2018 it was invited to move into the recently renovated historic Second Avenue Firehouse in Bay Shore to solidify arts-related rejuvenation of the downtown area. It now produces robust inclusive multicultural interdisciplinary programming creating opportunities and production space for local, New York City, and international artists.

Teatro Yerbabruja’s excellent record and notable experience presenting community-wide programming demonstrate its ability to conduct a successful NEA Big Read program. It has produced Long Island’s largest parade (Puerto Rican Hispanic Parade) for 8 consecutive years, raising necessary funding, coordinating with more than 50 community groups, media, and local government including law enforcement, and drawing an audience of 50,000 people. It has produced 10 Downtown Art Festivals in Brentwood and Central Islip, and has produced a Community Public Street Banners Art Project in Central Islip to highlight the role of the arts in that community’s State-funded Revitalization Project.

Big Read Long Island seeks to diversify readers by engaging the different sectors that make up our community. Aligned with our mission of art for social justice, we focus our effort on including populations that are difficult to reach, such as undocumented communities, the incarcerated, and families in transition from incarceration to civil life, often homeless and fighting addiction. We also target seniors who live mostly alone, and parents with their newborns or young children, to encourage them to develop the habit of reading. We also partner with the visual arts and design community, coordinating different events in our gallery and in other sites in Long Island that include concerts, art exhibits, writing workshops, and spoken word events.

Recognition and Awards include: Citation, Senator Boyle, Hispanic Heritage Month, 2019; Proclamation, Suffolk County Executive Office, 2018; Suffolk County Downtown Art Award, Public Art Project 2019; Martin Luther King Award, NAACP Islip, NY, 2018; Citation, Cultural Organization, Governor Andrew Cuomo’s office, 2018; Suffolk County Human Rights Commission Community Award, Suffolk County, NY, 2015; NAACP Islip Award for promoting civic rights, talents and prosperity for all people, Islip, NY, 2014; Top Advocate for Latino Empowerment, the Hispanic Network, NY.
Project Description Narrative (no more than three pages)

Our nation’s Latin American indigenous identity has suffered from violence and genocide since the Spanish colonization, and our identity has been rebuilt by our oppressors. In Suffolk County, which begins 45 miles east of New York City on Long Island, black slaves were forcibly bred with the indigenous population to reduce the taxable value of their offspring. Latinx immigrants, First Nations tribes, and the Black population on Long Island have all suffered displacement and exclusion from our lands, insecure housing, and homelessness, because of political, economic, social factors, and racist policies and practices. Suffolk’s population of 1,500,000 swells by another 200,000 during the summer beach season as the affluent come to play, yet the poverty rate of BIPOC communities is 3 times that of white communities.

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja chose Joy Harjo’s *An American Sunrise* because it offers us the opportunity to open the conversation about the history of our brown and black communities on Long Island. It enables us to include other communities in the discussion of issues of oppression, allowing us to reflect on our differences and similarities, the power of nature and the nature of power, memory, and our conception and search for physical and spiritual home. Harjo’s reflections on identity, home, homelessness and belonging are relevant catalysts for discussion and exploration in the highly diverse and challenged communities on Long Island.

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja seeks to create a multicultural community of readers on Long Island. Programming will take place across Suffolk County, reaching a broadly inclusive population, including the Shinnecock Nation, Montaukett tribe, Suffolk County’s diverse Latinx population, Black, and white populations of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds and citizenship status, school and university students, families, and incarcerated populations. Activities will be organized by a variety of partners and in a variety of formats to maximize accessibility. All activities address the themes and content of *An American Sunrise*, and encourage reading, writing, and reflecting on Long Island’s diverse communities and layered history.

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja will distribute copies of *An America Sunrise*, *The Good Luck Cat*, and *For a Girl Becoming* to partners at a summer organizational meeting. If COVID-19 prevents the in-person organizational meeting, books will be mailed to partners well before the start of the academic year.

October 11, Indigenous Day kick-off events in Bay Shore, produced by Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja, will include a press conference and activities at the historic Second Avenue Firehouse, including book distribution, an art exhibition opening featuring work created in response to *An American Sunrise*, poetry readings by DJ Taina, and a poetry slam/open mic. Kick-off weekend events will continue the next weekend with family art activities and readings of *The Good Luck Cat*. Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja will also host an Open Mic, and *An American Sunrise* reading and discussion on April 3, 2022, and a reading of *The Good Luck Cat*, and *For a Girl Becoming* for children and youth on April 4, 2022.

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja will partner with the Hauppauge (lead library partner), Bay Shore-Brightwaters,
Brentwood, and Central Islip public libraries. The libraries will feature *An American Sunrise, For a Girl Becoming, The Good Luck Cat*, and other indigenous American literature as suggested readings. Audience members will be able to attend poetry readings and discussions devoted to the issues raised in Harjo’s book as part of the libraries’ in-house event series, and children and caregivers visiting the library will hear Harjo’s *The Good Luck Cat* in their story hour. The Bay Shore and Hauppauge Libraries will also schedule music performances highlighting indigenous American history and culture, especially that of Long Island’s peoples. Library visitors will be able to listen to Harjo’s musical recordings, and performances by indigenous artists will be scheduled. Activities will be open to the public without cost and publicized on Library websites and other civic sites and media. Programs will take place between February and April 2022.

Joy Harjo has been invited to give the keynote speech for the Bay Shore Union Free School District/Bay Shore Schools Arts Endowment Fund’s annual *Ethnic Pen* reading/writing/diversity conference, followed by Q&A and a group interview by student journalists on April 8, 2022. Participants include high school students from Bay Shore, Brentwood, Central Islip, Islip, and other surrounding school districts. In sessions the rest of the day, students will have the opportunity to discuss and write poetry and prose in response to Harjo’s presentation. With Harjo’s permission, the address will be taped and made available to school districts across Long Island for a defined period of time as an educational resource.

The Shinnecock Artists Collective will present a free public reading and Q&A by Joy Harjo on the Shinnecock Reservation, also on April 8, 2022. Harjo’s themes of home and displacement are particularly relevant to the Shinnecock community because, though they remain on their ancestral land, they are under constant pressure from and in conflict with the ever-encroaching Hamptons communities that surround them. Shinnecock Artists Denise Silva-Dennis, Jeremy Dennis, Tecumseh Caesar, in partnership with Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja artists, will also present a Black and Brown Art Festival of Shinnecock Nation Art on April 11, 2022. Programming will include an exhibition, readings, discussions, music and dance performances, poetry slams, and food, in response to issues raised in *An American Sunrise*. The audience for these events will be drawn from members of the Shinnecock Nation and other area residents, and held on the Shinnecock Reservation. Though the Montaukett are not yet recognized as a Nation by the U.S. government, they maintain a strong tribal identity. The Montaukett Women’s Circle Book Club will read *An American Sunrise* and discuss the similarities and differences to their own community’s experiences in October 2021.

Dr. Harold Fernandez, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Northwell Health Network’s South Shore University Hospital, Bay Shore, who came to the U.S. as an illegal alien, and is author of *Undocumented*, and *A Boy and a Book*, will give multiple presentations to students and community members comparing his and Joy Harjo’s experiences of traumatic displacement and relocation, and the role that reading and writing played in his survival and ultimate success. We are in discussion with Northwell, New York State’s largest healthcare provider and the leader in the COVID-19 battle, to schedule these presentations at their facilities, and in community centers throughout Suffolk County.

The Suffolk County Community College Student Cultural Activities Program on October 9, 2021 will include readings from *An American Sunrise*, a book discussion, and poetry slams. Writing workshops will take place on October 15, 2021, there will be a lecture on indigenous
American literature and theater by Margarita Espada on January 22, 2022, and a panel discussion convened by Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja, “Decolonization & Indigenous Communities on Long Island” on February 18, 2022.

Sound Justice Initiative, Inc., a program for incarcerated adults, will present readings of An American Sunrise, book discussions, writing workshops, storytelling, songwriting, and/or performance art, dependent on the current public health situation, at the Suffolk County Jails in Riverhead and Yaphank, on November 9, 12, 16, 2021. Similarly, New Hours for Women and Children, a program for pre- and post-release incarcerated women and their children, will host reading and writing workshops and storytelling at their Brentwood facility on January 14, 2022.

Other educational programs for pre-school children and parents include story time and craft activities based on The Good Luck Cat at the Long Island Head Start programs on the Shinnecock Indian Reservation on March 30, 2022 and similar bilingual activities at the Bay Shore and Central Islip Head Start facilities on March 31-April 1, 2022. The Peconic Community School (K-6) has scheduled An American Sunrise, The Good Luck Cat, and For a Girl Becoming readings and discussions, and responsive art and poetry activities on November 23-24.

There will be robust programming for the Latinx community. The Latina Moms organization will hold reading and art activities based on The Good Luck Cat, and For a Girl Becoming for mothers and children on October 3, 2021 at a Brentwood venue TBA. Social service organizations Adelante Suffolk County, Pronto of Long Island, and Ola (Central Islip, Southampton, North Bay Shore) have scheduled an arts festival including readings and music for their senior program, and readings and discussions with responsive painting for the economically challenged undocumented immigrant, legal new immigrant, and Black communities on October 14, 22, 2021 and April 2, 2022. To maximize accessibility and underline the work’s themes, many activities will take place at Pronto’s Food Pantry Thrift Center, North Bay Shore. In addition, La Fiesta Radio will program radio readings of Harjo’s poetry.

The Custer Institute and Observatory Activity will present a concert highlighting the culture of people indigenous to the Americas, with a pre-show exhibition presented in partnership with the Southold Indian Museum, readings from An American Sunrise, and stargazing inspired by the poems. This all-age program will take place on April 10, 2022. The Southold Indian Museum/Long Island-New York State Archeological Association will also present a related exhibition and readings from An American Sunrise for area residents on April 20, 2022.

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja will actively promote its programming through its media partners, government officials, and programming partners to maximize effective use of digital online, print, radio, banners, and other public relations/marketing efforts to ensure strong community participation and inclusivity. Media partners include: Greater Long Island Media Group, La Fiesta Radio, Noticias Newspaper, Voz Latina Newspaper, and Shades of Long Island.
Project Partnerships Description Narrative

Our partners will play the roles of presenters, content creators, educators, conveners, public relations providers and financial supporters. Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja (Margarita Espada, Artistic Director) will itself be a presenter and overall coordinator of its own and all other events. All partnerships listed are confirmed. Partnerships will allow us to reach our intended audiences and engage individuals of diverse background and ability levels because the varied programs the partners create will be tailored, attractive, and publicized to different geographic and demographic communities, including members of the Shinnecock Nation and Montaukett Tribe, pre-school and K-12 children, university students, and adults from all Suffolk County demographics, be they BIPOC cultures, immigrants, seniors, the incarcerated and recently released from incarceration, families, or Long Island’s average suburban citizens.

Our primary library partners are members of the Suffolk Cooperative Library System: Hauppauge Public Library (lead library partner), Bay Shore-Brightwaters Public Library, Brentwood Public Library, and Central Islip Public Library. Hauppauge Public Library will coordinate book distribution to other libraries, as well as set up public readings, book discussions, concerts, and family programs. Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja Board President Steven Bard is the Board of President Hauppauge Library and former Board Member of the Suffolk County Library System, and has committed to expanding the programming throughout the library system.

Our primary educational partners are the Bay Shore Schools Arts Education Fund (BSSAEF) and the Union Free School District of Bay Shore. The BSSAEF is supporting Joy Harjo’s keynote speech at Bay Shore High School’s noted annual Ethnic Pen conference, which will be open also to other area high schools. In addition to funding, it will provide operational, curatorial, and promotional support of the event, and make the program materials available to school districts throughout Suffolk County. Cultural specialists in the schools will create NEA Big Read activities and will work with their students to create artwork for exhibits at Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja’s Second Avenue Firehouse Gallery.

Denise Silva-Dennis, coordinator of The Shinnecock Artists Collective, will oversee logistics, operations, and local publicity for Joy Harjo’s public reading on the Shinnecock Reservation, and will arrange for Harjo to meet with Shinnecock artists, writers, and elders, as Harjo’s schedule permits. She will also coordinate the Head Start programming and the Black and Brown Art Festival of Shinnecock Nation Art, including an art exhibit, readings, music and dance performances, and poetry slams in response to issues raised in An American Sunrise.

Dr. Harold Fernandez, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at South Shore University Hospital in Bay Shore will coordinate his speaking engagements with Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja, and will engage with his employer, the Northwell Health Network, to expand and coordinate his presentations throughout Northwell Health’s Suffolk County facilities.

Suffolk County Community College will work closely with Margarita Espada, a former member of their faculty. Espada will coordinate with Jill Santiago, Director of the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding for the Social Sciences and Humanities Department, as well
as the Student Cultural Activities Program to select speakers and organize content for the planned book discussions, writing workshops, poetry slams and panels.

The directors of Sound Justice Initiative, Inc. (Kerry Spooner) and New Hour for Women and Children (Serena Liguori) will coordinate distribution of materials and scheduling activities in the correctional facilities.

Each of these partners, including also the Montaukett Women’s Circle Book Club, Latinx Civic Organizations Adelante, Latina Moms, Ola, and Pronto, Long Island Head Start (Ana Figueroa, Outreach Director), the Peconic Community School, The Custer Institute and Observatory, and the Southold Indian Museum, through their established networks, volunteers, and promotional support, will help us connect with our target audience as their own constituencies reach all area demographics. We anticipate continuing to add more organizations and individuals as we continue to reach out to potential new partners, such as Seatuck Environmental Association, the Long Island Native Plant Initiative, and the Peconic Land Trust. We are also in the process of generating financial and promotional support from area businesses such as bookstores, restaurants, and retail shops.

Confirmed media partners include: Islip Township TV Channel, Greater Long Island Media Group, La Fiesta Radio, Noticias Newspaper, Voz Latina Newspaper, and Shades of Long Island. They will maximize effective use of digital, print, radio, banners, and other public relations/marketing efforts to ensure strong community participation and inclusivity. Each media company will provide print and online promotion, coverage, and interviews. La Fiesta Radio will also program radio readings of Harjo’s poetry. The Islip Town TV Channel will broadcast readings, interviews of participants, and stream selected programming. The partnerships with the Spanish language media organizations will enable us to reach the diverse Latinx communities that make up over 20% of Suffolk County’s population.

Government officials at the Congressional through local levels will issue proclamations in honor of NEA Big Read Long Island, publicize program events on their websites and social media, and promote participation in programs by attending events as their schedules allow.
Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja
Project Personnel

**Margarita Espada**, MFA: Founder Artistic Director, Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja. She is a New York State-certified theater teacher with over 30 years of experience as an educator, performer, playwright, arts activist, and cultural and community organizer. Espada serves on the advisory board for the arts for the Suffolk County Legislature and the NYS/NYSCA Dance Force. She will provide overall management of NEA Big Read Long Island.

**Cathy Barbash**, member, Board of Directors, Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja (volunteer), is a former Orchestra Manager of The Philadelphia Orchestra and veteran arts administrator with a recognized track record of creating and producing complex international performing arts initiatives, and a track record of 20 years of successful collaborations with Arts Midwest. Barbash will serve as assistant director coordinating Joy Harjo’s participation in Bay Shore High School’s *Ethnic Pen* Conference, as well as supervising media and promotion activities.

**Matthew Bollerman**, Executive Director, Hauppauge Public Library. Bollerman will be the coordinator of the participating libraries and serve as the liaison for the NEA Big Read program. [www.hauppaguelibrary.org](http://www.hauppaguelibrary.org)

**Denise Silva-Dennis**, coordinator of The Shinnecock Artists Collective. She is a Visual Artist and a retired Southampton Elementary School art teacher. Her professional achievements include two paintings that were selected for the exhibit ‘In Beauty It Has Begun…’ sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Smithsonian Institute. She will manage arrangements for Joy Harjo’s public reading on the Shinnecock Reservation, and coordinate the Shinnecock engagements with the Head Start program and the Black and Brown Arts Festival. [www.denisesilvadennis.com](http://www.denisesilvadennis.com)


**Jill Santiago**, Director of the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding for the Social Sciences and Humanities Department, Suffolk County Community College. Santiago works on developing educational programs for the Center and serves as a liaison for local school districts and community organizations who visit the museum and request-diversity based presentations. In addition to her role at the Center, she teaches in the history and humanities departments of the College. She will coordinate all activities at the college, including distribution of books, organization of readings, book discussion, poetry slams, writing workshops, lecture, and panel. [https://sunysuffolk.edu/experience-student-life/csjhu/](https://sunysuffolk.edu/experience-student-life/csjhu/)

**Amanda Dell’Universita**, Director of English Language Arts, K-12 Bay Shore School District. She will coordinate the Keynote speech by Joy Harjo and related programming for the *Ethnic Pen* Conference.

**Ana M. Figueroa**, Policy Council & Senior Manager for L.I Head Start Program. Figueroa will coordinate reading and family activities for babies, parents and Pre-K Children.
Dear Mrs. Espada

I am pleased to submit this letter of support on behalf of the Teatro Yerbabruja’s application for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read grant opportunity. The Big Read’s vision to introduce communities to aspects of our Nation’s history and culture through literature is directly correlated with Teatro Yerbabruja’s mission to connect community, art, and education on Long Island.

Teatro Yerbabruja has chosen "American Sunrise" — a poetry collection by Joy Harjo, U.S. Poet Laureate and member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation — as its book for the Big Read project. These accessible and thought-provoking poems address the power of nature, spirituality, memory, violence, and the history of America’s indigenous peoples. This book offers the opportunity for a meaningful discussion about Long Island’s diverse and dynamic demographics throughout history.

I support Teatro Yerbabruja’s mission to engage with local partners through artistic expression and I appreciate the important impact it has had on the community, especially during these difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Big Read program will bring the community even closer together through literature and enhance communication between our many voices. I intend to issue a proclamation in support of Teatro Yerbabruja’s Big Read project, should the grant be received, honoring the project and publicizing its many events through my official communications, website, and other social media.

Thank you for your dedication to connecting our community through art.

Sincerely,

Rep. Andrew Garbarino
Member of Congress
January 13, 2021

Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja, Inc.
17 Second Avenue
Bay Shore NY 11706
Attention: Steve Bard, President

Via Email sbardesq@aol.com

Subject: NEA BIG READ LONG ISLAND – TEATRO YERBABRUJA INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Greetings:

This letter will serve to confirm that Hauppauge Public Library, located in Hauppauge, New York, will partner with Teatro Yerbabruja as a participant in NEA BIG READ LONG ISLAND during 2021, should you be awarded a grant.

Established in 2000, we are a state-of-the-art public library whose mission is to provide free and open access to a broad range of written, electronic, programming and other materials to educate and entertain people of all ages and backgrounds. We serve thousands of individuals/families located in Hauppauge, and elsewhere in Long Island, with various cultural activities that in many instances focus on social equity and inclusion.

We are very excited about participating in this project. We anticipate that our activities will include: a music or dance performance highlighting the culture of one of Long Island's indigenous nations; a reading and discussion about the poems from Joyce Harjo's work; and an educational lecture or art exhibit. Health considerations permitting, these activities could be on-site as well as virtual.

Of course we also will promote both our and other BIG READ LONG ISLAND activities and programs via our social networks, web site, newsletters and other available means.

Regards,

Matthew Bollerman, Chief Executive Officer
To Whom it May Concern,

This letter will serve as a confirmation that the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding, Inc. (CSJHU), based in Selden, N.Y., will collaborate with Teatro Yerbabruja as a participant in the NEA Big Read Long Island, should they be awarded a grant.

Established in 2003, CSJHU works to educate our community on historical events, and to promote issues of social justice and respect for human dignity through educational programming. Our vision is of a world in which each person can live in peaceful coexistence and pursue a life in freedom and dignity, and in which our citizens reflect upon their moral responsibilities. Our mission and activities now serve thousands of students at Suffolk County Community College where we are located. In addition to educating the college community, the Center provides support to cultural arts and community events through our relationship with local school districts and other non-profit organizations.

We are honored to participate as a partner in the NEA Big Read: Long Island. We believe this project will bring the community together while helping to deepen our knowledge of the world, cultures, and people around us. It has the potential to broaden peoples’ minds and expose them to new information and experiences they might not otherwise have. We anticipate that our NEA Big Read: Long Island activities will include the incorporation of the chosen book in course content in academic departments of the College, book discussions, and writing workshops, dependent on the current public health situation.

In addition to joining with College faculty to promote this project in the classroom, the book discussions and writing workshops, we will promote our and other NEA Big Read: LONG ISLAND programs and activities on our social networks, and website.

Thank you,

Jill Santiago
Director
Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding
Suffolk County Community College
January 25, 2021

Steve Bard, Board President  
Margarita Espada, Executive Artistic Director  
Teatro Yerbabruja  
17 – 2nd Avenue  
Bay Shore, NY 11706

Dear Steve & Margarita,

I am pleased to learn of your proposed Big Read: Long Island Project, and your selection of the book, “An American Sunrise” by Joy Harjo, a Native American. The Montaukett Indian Nation would be more than happy to collaborate with community engagement, and consulting on your project.

Projects like the one you are planning will help broaden the understanding of Long Island’s first people community, which consists of five (5) tribal nations: Matinecock Nation, Montaukett Indian Nation, Setalcott Nation, Shinnecock Nation, and Unkechaug Nation.

Harjo’s book describes the Indian Removal Act of 1830 from the perspective of the Native people west of the Mississippi; however, east of the Mississippi River on Long Island, we had our own trail of tears!

The late Olivia Ward Bush Banks, of the Montaukett Indian Nation was a poet and playwright born February 27, 1869 and died 1944. Her work describes the struggle and experiences of our people; therefore, I suggest a discussion comparing the Muscogee Creek Nation plight to the Montaukett Indian Nation’s removal from Montauk Point, Long Island, NY.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sandi JWalker  
Executive Director & Government Affairs Officer,  
Montaukett Indian Nation  
202-420-0624 / Montaukett.executive.director@gmail.com

CC: Chief Robert Pharaoh  
Montaukett Indian Nation  
631-655-3290 / robertpharoah@gmail.com

38 Hempstead Street, Sag Harbor, NY 11963
January 12, 2021

Margarita Espada, Executive Director Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja, Inc.
17 Second Avenue
Bay Shore, NY, 11706

Good afternoon,

The Bay Shore School District would be honored to participate as a major partner in Teatro Yerbabruja’s *National Endowment for the Arts* (NEA) *Big Read Long Island* program. A diverse district, with a well-documented commitment to cultural arts, Bay Shore is well suited to play a major role in *NEA: Big Read Long Island*. In that capacity, we look forward to presenting U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo as the keynote speaker at the district’s annual *Ethnic Pen* conference, a day-long conference which is open to students from other Long Island school districts. With permission from Ms. Harjo, the address would be taped and made available to school districts across Long Island.

Established in 1996, *Ethnic Pen* celebrates reading, writing, and diversity. The conference has received national recognition and has hosted a distinguished and inspiring roster of writers, including Frank McCourt (Pulitzer Prize), Walter Dean Myers (Coretta Scott King Award, Newbery Honor), Edward Ball (National Book Award), Sonia Nazario (Pulitzer Prize), Colum McCann (National Book Award), Danzy Senna (Whiting Writers’ Award), Suzanne Fisher Staples (Newbery Honor), Carlos Eire (National Book Award), and Elizabeth Acevedo (National Book Award, Carnegie Medal).

The cultural inclusivity of *Ethnic Pen* is, in many ways, a reflection of the diversity of the Bay Shore District itself. We are proud to have a student population that is 18% African-American, 46% Hispanic/Latino, 28% White, 5% Asian/Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 3% Multiracial; 11% of our students are English Language Learners. The Bay Shore School District looks forward to giving hundreds of high school students the opportunity to meet Joy Harjo. We can think of no greater gift to young writers than the gift of inspiration.

Sincerely,

Amanda DellUniversita
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<td>Musician and Art Exhibition</td>
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<td>Kick off Event</td>
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<td>Second Avenue Firehouse</td>
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<td>1 presentation project 1 reading and 1 book discussion</td>
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<td>Books</td>
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<td>Administrative overhead</td>
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<td>Promotion</td>
<td>[Detail costs associated with advertising and promoting your NEA Big Read.]</td>
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If you'd like to offer further clarification on any expenses, please provide details below: