

# REFORMA DE FLORIDA

## Noticias del mes/News of the month

### Notes from the Editor

Welcome to our October newsletter. In this issue we're excited to announce that REFORMA de Florida sponsored an author at the Conference on Children's Literature. Read more about it in President María Vega's article.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Miami Book Fair. Read on to see how to get free tickets.

On a sad note, I'm disappointed to not have received any responses to several articles from the past two newsletters seeking member input. YOU represent our chapter, and we can't grow if our members don't participate in growing it.

I'm still looking for REFORMA members to join my CAYASC Book Review Committee. Thank you to two members who stepped up to the plate. I'm re-running the article again.

Until next time,

Alma Ramos-McDermott, Editor  
(Southern region)

Alejandra Rodriguez, Reporter  
(Central region)

### *The Conference on Children's Literature: A win for REFORMA de Florida*

by María Vega



*Author Maris Pasquale Duran meets President María Vega*

On Friday September 20<sup>th</sup> REFORMA de Florida's President María Vega and Treasurer Isabel Castro attended the *Conference on Children's Literature* sponsored by the Broward County Library. In addition to attending the conference, our chapter had a hosted table where we handed out information on membership as well as information on what the chapter could offer members. We gave out bookmarks celebrating Hispanic Heritage month and passed out tickets to raffle off books in Spanish, by Latina authors, and featuring Latina characters.

Our REFORMA de Florida chapter sponsored the appearance of author Natalia Sylvester, who spoke about her book *Breathe and Count Back From Ten*, which won the 2023 *Pura Belpré Young Adult Author Award* and the 2023 *Schneider Family Award Honor Book* for teens. It was also selected for the 2024-2025 *Sunshine State Young Readers Awards Florida Teens Read* pick for grades 9-12.

REFORMA de Florida officers talked about REFORMA and how the organization helps libraries and library staff. They also met with Latinx representatives of the upcoming Miami Book Fair and arranged for free tickets for REFORMA de Florida members. Lastly, we spoke with local Latinx authors to see how we could help connect them to our members and the public.



*The conference on Children's Literature (continued)  
Maris Pasquale Duran of Piper Chen Sings drawing  
a raffle winner from the box María is holding  
Notice our chapter logo on the screen behind them.*



*With author Johnnie Christmas of Swim Team  
and Gamerville. He has lived in Puerto Rico.*

Author Natalia Sylvester recently published a children's picture book titled *A Maleta Full of Treasures* (illustrated by Juana Medina). It is a Junior Library Guild Selection for both its English and Spanish versions.

Author [Raj Tawney](#), of Indian, Puerto Rican, and Italian ancestry will have his middle grade book *All Mixed Up* released next month. He is willing to present to libraries and schools across the state. Tawney has explored his identity through personal essays published in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and other outlets throughout the country.

If you're interested in hosting either of these authors at your library, please email the Board at [REFORMA de Florida](#) for their contact information. We'll be happy to introduce you to both authors!



*Authors Katherine Applegate and Gennifer Choldenko (seated), and Francie Devine (Broward County Library).  
Second Row: María Vega, Kimberly White (Broward County Library Community Engagement Youth Services),  
Melissa Karnosh (Youth Services Supervisor Broward County). We gave away autographed copies of their books  
in Spanish, which Gennifer is holding.*

*María Vega, authors Kerry O'Mally Cerra and  
Natalia Sylvester, Isabel Castro, Diana Haneski  
(Librarian at Marjory Stoneman Douglass High  
School and I Love My Librarian Award winner),  
Kimberly White (Broward County Community  
Engagement and conference planner)*



*The conference on Children's Literature (continued)*



*Isabel Castro, Natalia Sylvester, and María Vega*



*Natalia Sylvester autographing a book for Diana Haneski (Librarian at Marjory Stoneman Douglass High School and I Love My Librarian Award winner)*

***The Miami Book Fair is coming! Do you want free tickets?***

The 2024 *Miami Book Fair* will be held November 17 to 24 at Miami Dade College. REFORMA de Florida has worked with the *Miami Book Fair* to provide **free tickets** (for the weekend of Nov. 22-24) to the Book Fair for **all our members**.

The full Book Fair schedule will be announced October 15 on the *Miami Book Fair's* website: [www.miamibookfair.com](http://www.miamibookfair.com), but multiple pre-fair activities are already happening virtually. Pre-fair events include Latinx authors Haydée Zayas-Ramos, Raquel V. Reyes, and Orlando González Esteva, and the full fair line-up will no doubt include many more.

If you are a REFORMA de Florida member interested in attending the *Miami Book Fair* on November 22<sup>nd</sup> (Friday), November 23<sup>rd</sup> (Saturday), or November 24<sup>th</sup> (Sunday) please let us know which days you're planning on going and how many tickets you would like to receive. Email the Board at [reformaf@gmail.com](mailto:reformaf@gmail.com) and we'll make sure to save tickets for you.

We hope to see you there!







## *Followup on Latinx books, Pura Belpré, and CAYASC*

*by Alma Ramos-McDermott*

In past newsletters I asked for volunteers to join the *CAYASC Book Review Committee*, which I Chair. I would like to thank President María Vega and ReDeFL member Alejandra Rodriguez for stepping up and joining the Committee. In addition to writing reviews about children and Young Adult books with Latinx authors and illustrators, María and Alejandra are writing short summaries (not reviews) for their assigned years of Pura Belpré winning and honor titles. They're also writing discussion questions or activities for those books. This information will be placed on REFORMA National's Pura Belpré web page.

There are still many years of Pura Belpré winning titles to work on, as we must go back to 1996 when the award was "born". All winning and honor book summaries and discussion questions/activities need to be finished by Pura's 30th anniversary in 2026, so I hope to see many more members join the task.

**NOTE:** You must be a member of REFORMA de Florida to join us, as Committee members must be members of REFORMA National.

If interested in serving on the *CAYASC Book Review Committee* to review books about children and Young Adult books with Latinx authors and illustrators AND participate in producing summaries/lessons/activities discussion questions for Pura Belpré winning and honor titles, email me.

If you're a large, small, or independent publisher, and would be willing to send committee members recent titles from the above categories via Edelweiss, NetGalley, or snail mail for us to review, please email for logistics. I look forward to what we can accomplish because Juntos podemos!/Together we can!



## *Welcome Florida LIS students!*

A new school year has begun, so REFORMA de Florida welcomed students studying Library Science at our state universities by sending them a greeting along with an invitation to join our chapter. (*\*A larger version of our welcome flyer is at the end of the newsletter. Thank you Alicia K. Long for your creativity.*)

We want to wish our students, and everyone else studying at Florida's universities, a Happy Hispanic Heritage Month. If you're reading this and are an MLIS student, please join us!

***Are you a Corporate member of REFORMA de Florida?***

Corporate members are an important part of our chapter. Send a photo, business card, or a short blurb about you and your company for a future newsletter.

If interested, email us this information with the subject "Corporate member." We want to know more about you!

***What's happening in your region?: (Northern, Central, or Southern)***

What's happening in your library or region related to our Latino community?

Email your name, region, title, library name, a short summary of your news or event, and any photos with the subject "Qué pasa?/What's happening?" Your news can grow membership in your region, and for our chapter, so we look forward to hearing from you.

***Were you forwarded this newsletter but are not yet a member of REFORMA de Florida?***

To join or renew, go to REFORMA National's Membership page and make sure to check REFORMA de Florida as your chapter.



***Is your membership getting ready to expire?  
Are you a Member-at-large?***

Not sure if your membership is expiring? Email me with the subject "Is my membership expiring?" I'll let you know your status.

If you're a Member-at-large (not associated with any chapter), email me with the subject "Member-at-large" for information on how to join the chapter as a full-fledged member.



**USF SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDENTS...**

# HAPPY 2024 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

**FROM...**



**REFORMA de Florida** is the state's chapter of the National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking ([reforma.org](http://reforma.org))

Join us!  
You do not need to be a librarian or Latino/a/x/e to join, you only need to be interested in services to Latinx.

We plan events and meetings, we sponsor grants, scholarships, and work on projects together. How can we better serve the Latine population? Bring your ideas!

We welcome LIS students!  
(National membership \$10/year!)

To learn more about REFORMA de Florida and to join, visit [www.reformadeflorida.org](http://www.reformadeflorida.org)