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Diverse Book Fair spreads awareness with free, accessible books



By [Vanessa Eveleth](#) on April 29, 2022



Harbor Larsen, a junior biology major, browses the Disability Justice book selections at the Diverse Book Fair in Richer Commons on Tuesday, April 19. Larsen said they are glad the Student Diversity and Inclusion Center prepared the book fair event. "I think it's awesome," Larsen said. "I'm glad that the [books are] free because they can also support Under the Umbrella and local queer business." Photo courtesy of Q W. Image description: A white, masculine individual stands in front of a purple-clothed table displaying a diverse selection of books in Richer Commons Tuesday, April 19. The white, masculine individual holds the book *Disability Visibility*, edited by Alice Wong.

The Student Diversity and Inclusion Center hosted the Diverse Book Fair with books the center's coordinators said encompassed their programs, and offered the selections to the Westminster College community for free, in Richer Commons Tuesday.

The Diverse Book Fair was an opportunity for the diverse SDIC programs to engage the Westminster community with books that speak to students' various identities, according to SDIC Director Kari Lindsey in an email correspondence.

Lindsey said the book fair was funded through a grant SDIC received from Utah Humanities, with the objective of putting together identity-related programming.

Spreading Awareness with Accessible Books

Book drives are great for Westminster's community because it's an opportunity to bring something home for students to ponder and learn from, according to Dylan Richmond, a senior English major and the Engaging Whiteness coordinator.

"We're just giving out free books and spreading awareness of the [SDIC] programs," Richmond said. "[...] Who doesn't love free books?"

Sophomore acting major and Queer Compass co-coordinator Percy Cordero said the Diverse Book Fair was a way to expose people diverse books and show them there are more queer books out in the world.

"Some of these books are kind of expensive," Cordero said. "So it's nice to, you know, save some money and have a book that you're really interested in that you get to read later for the summer."



The Diverse Book Fair displayed free books the Student Diversity and Inclusion Center's coordinators felt encompassed their programs in Richer Commons on Tuesday, April 19. The book fair's goal was to share diverse stories from diverse authors, according to junior communication major, Disability Justice co-coordinator and Forum reporter Quinn Winter. "Each of the programs put together a reading list that they felt highlighted their program well," Winter said. Photo courtesy of Q W. Image description: A table with books and signs with the books listed is set up for the Diverse Book Fair in Richer Commons Tuesday, April 19. A sign titled Disability Justice Recommends is propped with the following books listed: Disability Visibility, Care Work, Get a Life, Chloe Brown, Eight Kinky Nights, The Body is Not an Apology.

The Diverse Book Fair benefits people who struggle to find time to look for diverse books and also those who might not have the money to spend, according to Cordero.

Junior communication major and a Forum reporter, Quinn Winter said they were in charge of planning and locating audiobooks for the diverse books selected.

Winter said getting the audiobooks was difficult because they had to find ways without going through subscription services.

“Audiobooks are expensive,” Winter said. “So I am really proud that we were able to find a way to [provide audiobooks] and give that option to people.”

Winter said an event that is supposed to be supporting a community should be fully accessible.

“Even when it requires extra work in the planning stages,” Winter said. “It’s doable. It’s worthwhile. It should be done.”

Favorite Diverse Book Selections

Queer Compass co-coordinator and sophomore acting major Percy Cordero helped choose LGBTQ+ books for the Diverse Book Fair – mostly ones they read, Cordero said.

Cordero said they chose the musical comic book, *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel.

“The musical is based off a comic artist and her life as a lesbian woman,” Cordero said. “I really wanted to put that out there because it has a really good story.”

Cordero said they struggled to find the comic book, until finally discovering it at *Under the Umbrella*, a queer bookstore.

Read more about *Under the Umbrella* in a [previous Forum story](#).

Disability Justice co-coordinator and Forum reporter Quinn Winter said *Disability Visibility* edited by Alice Wong was their favorite pick, falling under their disability justice category.

“[The book] is a collection of stories about disability that are very modern,” Winter said. “[...]It’s a really good intro book for people who are wanting to begin deconstructing kind of the ableist mindset that we grew up learning.”

Engaging Whiteness coordinator and senior English major Dylan Richmond selected books that fell under their jurisdiction of engaging whiteness.

Richmond said *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer was their favorite selected book and recommends it to others.

“I’ve read parts of it for different classes and it’s just a really good book on indigenous knowledge and relationships with nature,” Richmond said. “Things that kind of go outside and beyond the way white people have imagined it because it is about indigenous knowledge.”

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