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Rockville, MD, October 15, 2010-- Three libraries win 2010 Estela and Raúl Mora Award: Two winners based in California, one in Arizona

REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking, is pleased to announce that the following libraries have been selected to be the recipients of the *2010 Estela and Raúl Mora Award* for exemplary efforts in promoting El día de los niños/El día de los libros: The Arthur F. Turner Community Library of Yolo County Library in West Sacramento, CA; the Pima County Public Library in Tucson, AZ.; and the Santa Barbara Public Library System in Santa Barbara, CA. This brings the total number of Mora Award winners to 15, as “Día” enters its 15th anniversary.

The Estela and Raúl Mora Award was established by author and poet Pat Mora and her siblings in honor of their parents and to promote El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children’s Day/Book Day), also known as Día. Culminating celebrations of this year-long initiative that links all children to books, languages, and cultures are traditionally held on or near April 30. The Mora award is presented annually, in partnership with REFORMA, to the most exemplary celebration(s). Each library will receive \$1,000 and a plaque commemorating their efforts.

The Arthur F. Turner Community Library, a branch of Yolo County Library, is located in West Sacramento which has a significant Latino population. Library staff describes their first Día as a “rousing success” with twice the attendance expected. The celebration featured a poetry presentation by author Francisco X. Alarcón and a discussion of illustration by illustrator Maya Christina Gonzalez. The program also featured a lasso demonstration, a Mexican dance troupe, Mexican crafts, and a book giveaway for children. The program was funded by grants from First 5 Yolo, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, LSTA funds from the California State Library, and West Sacramento Friends of the Library.

“The committee was impressed with the teamwork and wide promotion that went into ensuring a very successful first Día,” said Mora Award committee chair Beatriz Pascual Wallace. “Their deliberate efforts created an event that has since brought in new library users and lays the groundwork for a strong Día tradition.”

Pima County Library has celebrated Día since 1997 and over the years has worked to expand its Día programming to all of its branches, recognizing that Día is for all children and is a way to “celebrate the cultural diversity of our community through books and reading.” In 2010, their celebration featured 39 literacy-focused programs at 27 branches. Programs included family storytimes, a bilingual puppet show, book-making workshops, and an American Sign Language storytime for toddlers. There were also art, music, and dance presentations by students of all ages. The program was funded by Pima County and Friends of the Pima County Public Library.

“One of the highlights for the committee was the community-driven aspect of Pima County Library’s Día celebration,” said committee chair Wallace. “Día celebrates children and this event included performances and presentations by 170 students of all ages. The outreach to local schools was very impressive.”

The Santa Barbara Public Library System hosted its second Día celebration, which staff describes as becoming “an important multigenerational and multicultural event for our community.” The event featured readings and presentations by authors Marni McGee and Molly H. Hahn, and local storyteller Joseph Velasco. Multicultural performances included a jujitsu demonstration, mariachi and folklorico groups, and Aztec dancing. The library’s marketing efforts were extensive, encompassing Spanish TV and radio. The program was funded by the Junior League of Santa Barbara and in-kind donations from local businesses.

“The committee felt this was a very strong Día celebration overall with diverse programming and strong collaborative work,” said Wallace. “We were particularly impressed with the working relationship they developed with local Spanish TV and radio. Because of this effort, families showed up at Día who would not have been reached by traditional flyers or online publicity.”

REFORMA will present the awards during the Midwinter meeting of the American Library Association (ALA) next January in San Diego.

This family literacy initiative is now housed at the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). The ALSC page lists planning resources and celebrations across the country at <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/initiatives/diadelosninos/index.cfm>.

Details about the Mora Award application and guidelines for 2011 will be announced and posted by February 2011 at <http://www.reforma.org>. Additional award information, photos, and links can also be found on Pat Mora’s website www.patmora.com/dia.htm.