



Riverside County Library System

**PRESS RELEASE
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LOCAL CHILDREN PAINT CHAIRS, INSPIRED BY EZRA JACK KEATS STORIES, TO CREATE A DESIGNATED CHILDREN'S READING AREA

HOME GARDENS, CA (February 5, 2020) – The Home Gardens Library is one of the busy 36 branches within the Riverside County Library System. This branch welcomes close to 95,000 patrons a year and offers a large collection of books and media materials, group study areas, public computers and dedicated zones for teens and children. The library is especially popular with children and introduced a unique opportunity to bring children and art together to create a designated children's reading area.

Branch Manager, Nancy Reiter's idea was to let children in the neighborhood create their own colorful reading area through "Sit for a Story!" a nine-week art program for children ages 5-12. Each week, Mark Tsai, a local volunteer artist, had participating children experiment with pastels, watercolors, colored pencils and other art supplies, purchased with the EJK Mini-Grant, inspired by their response to the text and illustrations in their favorite books by Ezra Jack Keats.

Working in teams of four or five, the children spent the last three weeks of the program painting chairs, mainly with acrylic paint, using the techniques they had learned. "The Library is a valuable resource to understand the community of Home Gardens." Said Nancy, "It is a place where our children gain access to art and cultural activities they otherwise may miss out on." At the end of the program, the nine hand-painted chairs were placed together in what has now become the designated children's reading area.

The Riverside County Library System is a division of the Riverside County Economic Development Agency. For more information, please contact the Riverside County Library System at (951) 369-3003 or visit www.rivlib.net.

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