



Rocky Vang  
(559) 600-6274  
(559) 970-1135

**Press Release**

For Immediate Release

**FRESNO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ONE OF 75 ORGANIZATIONS NATIONWIDE  
TO RECEIVE AN NEA BIG READ GRANT**

**November 1, 2017—Fresno, CA**—The Fresno County Public Library (FCPL) has received a \$14,000 grant to host the National Endowment for the Arts’ (NEA) Big Read. Administered in partnership with Arts Midwest, the Big Read broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a designated good book.

FCPL is one of 75 nonprofit organizations to receive a Big Read grant for hosting a community reading program between September 2017 and June 2018. Its featured book will be *The Late Homecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir*, by Kao Kalia Yang.

A Big Read kickoff event will be held on January 13, 2018, at the Woodward Park Regional Library. From then until the following April, FCPL will host a variety of related events, including Hmong embroidery demonstration, Hmong dance performances and much more.

“With one of the largest Hmong populations in the United States right here in Fresno County, the Library is excited to introduce *The Late Homecomer*, a wonderful book about a family’s journey to this country. The NEA and Arts Midwest offered an excellent option of books to choose from. This book, *The Late Homecomer* gives the Fresno County Public Library an opportunity to bring the community together and learn about one of the many beautiful cultures that make up Fresno County,” said County Librarian Kelley Landano.

“Through the NEA Big Read we are bringing contemporary works to communities across the country, helping us better understand the diverse voices and perspectives that come with it,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. “These 75 organizations have developed unique plans to celebrate these works, including numerous opportunities for exploration and conversation.”

Since 2006, the National Endowment for the Arts has funded more than 1,400 NEA Big Read programs, reaching every Congressional district in the country, and providing more than \$19 million in grants to organizations nationwide. During the past eleven years, grantees have leveraged more than \$42 million in local funding to support their NEA Big Read programs.

More than 4.8 million Americans have attended an NEA Big Read event, approximately 79,000 volunteers have participated at the local level, and 37,000 community organizations have partnered to make NEA Big Read activities possible. Last summer, the NEA announced a new Big Read Library focus on contemporary authors and books written since the NEA was founded 50 years ago.

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts is an independent federal agency whose project funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal arts access in communities across America.

For more information about the Big Read events and other library programs and services, please visit the library at [www.fresnolibrary.org](http://www.fresnolibrary.org) or call (559) 600-READ (7323). More information about the national programs can be found at [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov) and [www.neabigread.org](http://www.neabigread.org).

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