



MONROE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

enriching lives

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**‘THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US’ SELECTED
AS FEATURED BOOK FOR ONE BOOK,
ONE COMMUNITY OF MONROE**

MONROE, Mich. – The One Book, One Community of Monroe County Committee has chosen Reyna Grande’s Immigrant experience memoir, “The Distance Between Us,” as this year’s featured book selection.

One Book, One Community of Monroe County, modeled after a program developed by the American Library Association, promotes the value of reading by recommending a compelling book that links community members in a common conversation through readings, group discussions, programs and other events.

“The Distance Between Us” chronicles Grande’s immigrant experience as a young girl who was born in Mexico and raised by her grandparents while her parents left to find work in the U.S. At 9 years old, Grande entered the U.S. as an undocumented immigrant to live with her father.

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Filled with hope, she quickly realized that life in America was far from perfect. Her father's big dreams helped get them across the border, but his alcoholism and violent outbursts undermine his good intentions. Failed dreams, her father's alcoholism and his violent altercations pushed Reyna to find refuge in books and writing. Grande identifies with the strong Latina voices she encounters in her reading and goes on to become the first person in her family to earn a college degree and then a masters of fine arts in creative writing.

Grande is the author of two critically acclaimed novels, "Across a Hundred Mountains" (2006) and "Dancing with Butterflies" (2009). She was the recipient of the 2006 El Premio Aztlán Literary Award, 2007 American Book Award and a 2010 International Latino Book Award. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in creative writing. An active promoter of Latino literature, Grande has worked as program coordinator for book festivals, served as a judge for literary awards, and has been teaching creative writing workshops in the Los Angeles area.

"This is the eighth year we've hosted and planned a community read, and we're really hitting our stride," said Cheryl Johnston, faculty member and project co-chair. "Building on last year's momentum, we are well into the planning for 2014, and we are so excited for Reyna's visit to Monroe."

This year's reading initiative runs from March 17 to April 11. Grande is scheduled to visit campus for student workshops and a public book signing and presentation on March 26.

Books are available for purchase at the Monroe County Community College Bookstore, Book Nook and Books-A-Million. Founding partners include Monroe County Community College, The Foundation at Monroe County Community College, Monroe County Library System, Monroe Publishing Company.

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Major Sponsors include The Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, Books-A-Million, Eastern Michigan University and Sienna Heights University.

For more information, visit www.monroeccc.edu/onebook.

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