

ONE BOOK | ONE DISCUSSION | ONE COMMUNITY

Native Literary Mentorship Program

Call for Student Writers, Poets, Graphic Novelists & Illustrators

October-November 2025

Kern County Library, CSU-Bakersfield, and Bakersfield College are excited to launch the first Native Literary Mentorship Program in conjunction with the 2025 One Book Project. The purpose of this program is to lift-up native voices with professional guidance on crafting and publishing their work. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be professionally mentored by successfully published Native American Authors, Editors, and Illustrators.

Currently enrolled student writers, poets, graphic novelists, and illustrators with a tribal affiliation are encouraged to apply to be paired with a published Native American author for a 1-hour one-on-one Zoom session scheduled in November to receive personalized feedback on your creative work and discuss your publishing goals. Additionally, ALL applicants will be invited to the initial 1-hour Introductory Q & A Zoom session with EACH founding mentor!

FOUNDING MENTORS:

Deborah Jackson Tafta [deborahjtafta.com]

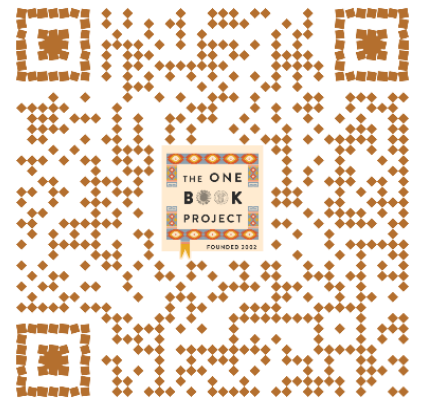
Leslie Stall Widener [lesliestallwidener.com]

Andrea M. Page [writerandreadpage.com]

Interested students must submit an [application form linked here](#) online -- or via QR code →→→→→→→→→→

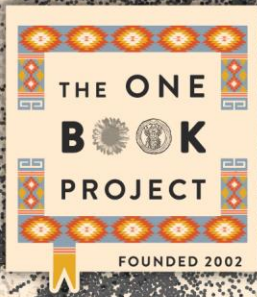
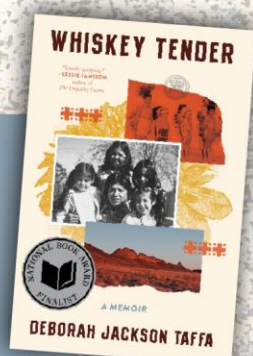
Application requires tribal affiliation, a brief description of your style as a writer or artist, one to three samples of your work, and a statement of support from a staff or faculty member.

Applications are due **Friday, October 10, 2025**. Awardees will be invited to a special recognition event at CSUB's Walter Stiern Library on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, from 3:30pm to 5 pm with the 2025 One Book Author, Deborah Tafta.



The **One Book Project** is a countywide reading and discussion project that fosters empathy, promotes awareness, and strengthens the fabric of our community by exploring the themes in this year's One Book selection: *Whiskey Tender* by **Deborah Jackson Tafta**.

Whiskey Tender is available for check out in print, eBook, eAudiobook, & book on CD from the **Kern County Library**. Also available for purchase from local bookstores.



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