

Local Teacher and Author, Sarairis Slusser, Wins Prestigious 2025 International Impact Book Award

RGV teacher honored for debut children's book celebrating courage, culture, and belonging among youth.

EDINBURG, TX, UNITED STATES, April 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sarairis Slusser, a dedicated Reading Language Arts teacher at Jose Borrego Middle School in Monte Alto, Texas, has been awarded the prestigious 2025 International Impact Book Award in the category of "Children's Inspirational/Motivational, Inspiring Stories" for her debut book, "Crossing Borders, Finding Home: A story of courage, friendship, and belonging."

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Stories have the power to open hearts, build bridges, and remind us that we all belong.”

Sarairis Slusser

The International Impact Book Awards recognize and celebrate literary excellence in stories that inspire, motivate, and empower readers. Slusser's heartfelt narrative resonates deeply with themes of resilience, friendship, and cultural pride, beautifully capturing the struggles and triumphs faced by young immigrants navigating new environments.

Born in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico, and raised in Brownsville, Texas, Sarairis Slusser now calls Edinburg, TX home. The “RGV” is where she passionately teaches and inspires middle school students.

Her award-winning book reflects her own personal journey and experiences, drawing from her Mexican heritage and the vibrant cultural tapestry of the Rio Grande Valley.

"Crossing Borders, Finding Home" follows Iris, a courageous young girl from Mexico who moves to a new country and confronts challenges like language barriers, loneliness, and cultural differences. Initially struggling with feelings of isolation, Iris's journey transforms when she forms meaningful friendships with classmates Lola and Moni. Through their support and a powerful school project, Iris embraces her cultural identity, earns respect from her peers, and discovers the true meaning of courage, friendship, and belonging.

Slusser crafted this inspiring tale taking from her personal experiences and with the aim of fostering empathy and understanding among young readers. The book serves as an excellent educational resource, particularly beneficial in teaching vocabulary and fundamental literary elements such as genre, author's purpose, plot, setting, theme, point of view, mood, and tone, making it an invaluable tool for educators teaching emergent bilingual students.

Reflecting on the recognition, Sarairis Slusser expressed deep gratitude: "Writing *Crossing Borders, Finding Home* was my way of honoring the courage I see in so many children who cross physical and emotional borders every day," said Slusser. "I wanted young readers—especially those who feel unseen or misunderstood—to know their stories matter, their cultures are beautiful, and their voices deserve to be heard, and I'm thankful to have been able to do that through sharing my personal story."

Slusser holds a master's degree in education and devotes her life to encouraging literacy and cultural pride within her students. Her teaching philosophy emphasizes the power of storytelling to bridge cultures, empower individual voices, and inspire meaningful dialogue.

Following the success of her first publication, Sarairis has also released a poetry collection titled "Fragments of Us: A Poetry Collection of Love, Loss, and the Spaces Between," further demonstrating her versatility and passion as an author. Both of her books are available for [purchase on Amazon](#).

When she isn't teaching or writing, Sarairis enjoys spending time with her family, exploring the rich and inspiring landscapes of South Texas.

"As a teacher, I've seen firsthand how stories can open hearts and build bridges," said Slusser. "Literature has the power to create empathy and connection—and that's what I hope this book continues to do in homes and classrooms everywhere."



Sarairis Slusser, local author and educator, proudly holds her award-winning children's book, *Crossing Borders, Finding Home*, honored with the 2025 International Impact Book Award.

Sarairis Slusser's accomplishment highlights the invaluable contributions educators make, both in classrooms and beyond, as they shape young minds and inspire communities through literature.

"I'm beyond honored to receive this award," she added. "But more than anything, I'm grateful for the opportunity to use storytelling as a way to uplift my community and encourage every child to be proud of who they are."

For more information about Sarairis Slusser and her work, or to arrange interviews and speaking engagements, you can find her on Instagram: @storiesbySarairis

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