



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

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Press Release

The Illinois Library Association’s Public Policy Committee is honored to present this year’s Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award to Illinois Representative La Shawn Ford. The award is given to a worthy recipient from the Illinois library community—librarian, trustee, legislator, or library—who has contributed significantly to legislative development in the state of Illinois.

La Shawn Ford is the Illinois State Representative from the 8th District. Serving Illinois as a Representative since 2007, La Shawn Ford has supported legislation that furthered libraries as he has led initiatives on education, sponsored media education in high schools, and supports many causes shared by libraries and librarians regarding inclusion, diversity, and equity. Perhaps most importantly, through his work on behalf of Illinois libraries, Representative Ford has continually secured grants for public libraries that made possible tangible impacts in facilities and services; such as the creation of digital studios, co-working spaces, development of children’s play areas, and expansion of children program rooms.

Born in Chicago, Ford lived in the Cabrini Green housing development on the North Side until his family moved to the West Side while he was still at a young age. The first in his family to attend a four-year college, he earned his B.S. in Education at Loyola University Chicago. Prior to serving as a legislator, Ford was a Chicago Public Schools elementary teacher and coached basketball.

It is clear that Ford has not forgotten where he came from through his continued work resolving social issues as a State Representative and serving on committees that focus on education, social justice, and human services. Public libraries are closely aligned

with his work in communities and can depend upon ongoing support from Representative Ford.

“Libraries are dynamic, socially responsive institutions - a nexus of diversity, and a lifeline for the most vulnerable among us. As a member of the General Assembly, I recognize these attributes, and I always want to find ways to incorporate funding and support for libraries into Illinois’ budgets.”

State Representative La Shawn Ford, D-Chicago

The Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award will be presented at the Awards Luncheon to be held on Tuesday, October 22, during the 2019 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference in Tinley Park.

For further information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

For Immediate Release