



**ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

Because Libraries Matter

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## Press Release

**The Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), receives the Illinois Library Association's 2021 Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award, which is awarded annually for sustained activity and contributions having a lasting impact on librarianship.**

RAILS has been a phenomenal national example of a regional library system with outstanding service to more than 1,250 private, public, school, specialized and university libraries in Northern and West-central Illinois.

RAILS has always united libraries through interlibrary loan and delivery services, continuing education, consulting, group purchasing, and a variety of other services.

When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, they quickly mobilized their resources to provide guidance for libraries struggling with decisions that Covid-19 created. They also kept libraries up-to-date regarding Covid-19 developments and library reopening statements. They reached out to library workers providing a support network. They continued putting out stellar products and resources for libraries. Some highlights include:

- The sleek and updated L2 calendar
- Winning a \$125,000 grant to purchase e-books and audiobooks for K-12 readers
- Bringing back the Explore More Illinois program

Over the past decade RAILS has provided exemplary performance and constant support to libraries in Illinois. They serve as an excellent model for other library consortia across the country. All of the above stated facts make RAILS a deserving recipient of the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award.

The Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award will be presented at an awards ceremony during the 2021 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. The conference will take place October 12-14, 2021.

For further information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

For Immediate Release