



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

Illinois Library Association
33 W. Grand Ave., Suite 401
Chicago, IL 60654-6799

Phone: 312.644.1896
Fax: 312.644.1899
Email: ila@ila.org

Press Release

Dylan Zavagno and his innovative podcast for the Deerfield Public Library is the recipient of the 2021 Illinois Library Association Readers' Advisory Service Award. The award, presented by the Adult Reading Round Table recognizes excellence in the planning, development and delivery of readers' advisory services to adults and teens.

Launched in 2017, the Deerfield Public Library Podcast is a monthly production that features in-depth interviews with notable guests, including community leaders, authors, artists, and others with interesting connections to Deerfield and the Chicagoland area.

While many library podcasts serve as a method of providing readers' advisory, the Deerfield Public Library Podcast is unique in its focus on whole-collection readers' advisory, introducing listeners to a wide variety of titles, subjects, and even formats. The diversity of guests and topics, as well as its focus on the local community, makes this podcast stand out.

The extensive preparation Dylan puts into each interview is evident in every episode. Dylan spends hours reading the authors' works and preparing thoughtful questions for his guests. The episodes often dive into deeper issues such as representation and inclusion in writing, as well as confronting difficult historical events. Guests have commented on the level of his preparation and the depth of his questions.

The podcast has featured a wide range of Chicagoland area authors, from fiction to nonfiction, mainstream to self-published, as well as bloggers, podcasters, journalists and artists. Some of the highlights include: acclaimed fiction author Rosellen Brown, bestselling thriller writer Mary Kubica, Chicago author William Hazelgrove, Chicago-based poet Sam Herschel Wein, local bookseller and author Nina Barrett, TV writer and

New York Times columnist Marina Shifrin, legendary comic book writer Chris Claremont, cartoonist Ken Krimstein, Chicagoland area Romance writer Sonali Dev, Jacqueline Nicole Harris who won the 2017 Black Caucus of the American Library Association Self-Publishing Literary Award for Poetry, professional wrestler Colt Cabana, cartoonist Jeffrey Brown, *Chicago Reader* film critic J. R. Jones, celebrated photographer Art Shay, writer Elizabeth Rynecki, James Beard Award-winning pastry chef and cookbook author Gale Gand, K. C. Johnson, former *Chicago Tribune* sports reporter and current Bulls Insider for NBC Sports Chicago, a romance blogger Jen Prokop and a romance writer Sarah MacLean, antiracist educator Christine Saxman, a popular YA author Jordan Melic, Eric Gellman, writer about Art Shay and Chicago Protest History, Dr. Kishonna Gray, author of *Intersectional Tech*, poet Dan Chiasson, Jason Drain who authored remarkable *Stateway's Garden*, an author and educator Dr. Jason Oliver Chang and many more.

In addition, in 2019 the Deerfield Public Library presented *The Fight to Integrate Deerfield: 60 Year Reflection*, which featured discussions, lectures and exhibits all focused on the history of Deerfield residents voting to block an integrated housing development in 1959. In conjunction with this program, the podcast featured Richard Rothstein, author of *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*.

In conjunction with the podcast, the library also creates a podcast collection, which includes books from all of the authors featured on the podcast. Aside from bestsellers, there are cookbooks, photography collections, poetry chapbooks, and even a local artist's portfolio. Some of these items are not widely available and this collection gives patrons the rare opportunity to access these materials. This display is placed at the entrance to the Adult Services department and each book contains a bookmark noting the related Podcast episode. We have found this display to be very popular and frequently browsed.

The Deerfield Public Library Podcast reaches, on average, over 200 listeners a month and it has proved to be an excellent extension of library's readers' advisory services, promoting books and media of all kinds and engaging readers with thoughtful, surprising, and exclusive stories from local figures. We invite everyone to listen to the Deerfield Public Library Podcast at <https://deerfieldlibrary.org/podcast/>.

The Readers' Advisory Service 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