



**ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

Because Libraries Matter

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## Press Release

**Christine Westerlund, Vice President of the Board of Trustees at the Chatham Area Public Library District, is the 2021 Illinois Library Association (ILA) Trustee of the Year Award recipient. This annual citation is awarded to a public library trustee for achievement, leadership, and service to libraries.**

Westerlund has served on the Chatham Area Public Library District board since 2001 as a Trustee, Vice-President, and President during her tenure at the library. Her career began working for governmental boards and then transitioned into the non-profit sector, with special attention to issues related to those facing poverty. Her background helps to ensure that the library continues to strive to be transparent and fiscally sound, as well as being accessible to everyone, regardless of social, political, racial or economic differences.

While serving on the board, she worked tirelessly to achieve the library's successful referendum and the subsequent building expansion that more than doubled the library's space in 2009. In 2009, Westerlund founded the library's Art Committee and she continues to chair this committee. Under her leadership, the library has welcomed multiple local artists and groups into the library to share visual educational opportunities with our patrons each year.

In her professional capacity, she has facilitated strategic planning sessions for the library and continues to help guide the library's future. She has served as a FOIA/OMA officer and the chair of the Library Director hiring committee. Last year, she became the latest Lifetime Member of the Friends of the Library. While she is well-respected for her professionalism, she also knows how to have fun; she has acted in our Friends of the Library Annual Murder Mystery Play fundraiser for many years.

She knows the value of libraries and has made it her mission to support all librarians and trustees in Illinois. She has supported and encouraged new directors, seasoned directors and library trustees by discussing how to work together to advance their libraries in their communities. For the last seven years, she has presented at the Small Public Library Management Institute (SPLMI) and later at Director's University (DU) on *Building Strong Relationships between Trustees and Library Directors*.

Her professional experience working with local governments, her understanding regarding issues related to poverty and her love for what libraries stand for are all assets for the library and community, and for all those serving in Illinois libraries. Her professional background, love of libraries and strong leadership skills make her a strong voice for Illinois libraries, an outstanding Library Trustee and worthy of ILA's prestigious Trustee of the Year award.

The Trustee of the Year 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