



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

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Press Release

Rhonda Jenkins, Library Media Center Director of Kendall Elementary School, Naperville, IL is the 2022 recipient of the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Librarian of the Year Award. This award recognizes a librarian’s distinguished service and leadership in Illinois Libraries. The award is presented and sponsored by Today’s Business Solutions, Inc. (TBS).

Rhonda Jenkins began her career in Illinois public schools in 1995. Experience as a one-on-one teacher in special education, a classroom teacher and a reading specialist equipped Rhonda to become a knowledgeable librarian who understands students and staff from a myriad of perspectives. In 2014, she began serving K-5 students as the Library Media Center Director at Kendall Elementary School in Naperville, one of 31 schools in Indian Prairie School District 204. Rhonda is an exemplary school librarian who has created and promotes an outstanding library program and inspires other school librarians to raise the bar of performance.

Jenkins contributes actively to professional organizations through promotion and presentations at the local, state, and national levels. Locally, since 2019, she co-leads Indian Prairie School District’s library leadership team for the 31 librarians in the 4th largest district in Illinois. She created and coined the “LLC,” or Local Librarian Chat for school librarians in the area and hosted two sessions beginning in 2019.

On the state level, Jenkins is a personal member of Illinois Library Association (ILA). She presented at the Illinois Association of School Administrators Annual Conference and co-presented at the Illinois Reading Association in Peoria, Illinois in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Active in the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE), she speaks at the annual conferences, and has served on the conference steering committee since 2019. She is currently the Technology Liaison between AISLE and Illinois Computing Educators. Additionally, beginning in 2019, she is one of AISLE's dedicated Monarch Award Committee members who select the set of books for Illinois children's choice award for students in kindergarten to second grade.

Word of Jenkins's exemplary presentations at the local and state level has led to invitations on national platforms. She spoke at the Midwest Education Technology Community (METC) Conference and the METC Podcast. Moreover, she was recognized as the "METC19 Spotlight Educator." A teacher for the Remote Reboot for *School Library Journal*, she focused on tools and ideas for librarians supporting remote or hybrid learning. She presented live in 2018 at the Scholastic Summit Workshops in Chicago, IL and Charlottesville, VA and in 2019 at the Orlando, IL; Greenwich, CT; and Denver, CO summits. Jenkins makes remote presentations seem personal and exciting for audience members. She dazzled librarians, teachers, and students alike with her love of reading in a remote setting on "Book Joy Live" with author Jess Keating in March 2020 (5,900 views) alongside Scholastic's Ambassador of School Libraries, John Schumacher. Later in September 2020, she was the featured school librarian on "Book Joy Live" with Jeff Kinney, author of the *Wimpy Kid* series. Additionally, she shared creative ideas remotely in the 2020 Creator Community WeVideo Summit in July 2020.

Rhonda Jenkins is a one-woman public relations program, promoting school librarianship in Kendall Elementary School, her district, her state, and her country. Jenkins's efforts, assisted by technology, lift school librarians in Illinois and beyond by

helping others become better librarians, ultimately resulting in more students who love to learn and read.

The Librarian of the Year Award will be presented at an awards ceremony during the 2022 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. The conference will take place in Rosemont, IL on October 18-20, 2022.

For further information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

For Immediate Release