



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

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Press Release

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) is pleased to announce that Julie Flack is a recipient of the 2023 Valerie J. Wilford Scholarship Grant for Library Education. The Valerie J. Wilford Scholarship is in honor of Valerie Wilford (1939- 2016), teacher and mentor to hundreds of librarians who made significant impacts in school librarianship, multi-type libraries, and resource sharing. The award is supported by the Valerie J. Wilford Memorial Fund and is granted to those in pursuit of education in librarianship, including classes, webinars, seminars, or conferences.

Julie Flack is currently the Technology Integration Specialist at Effingham Unit #40 Schools. The Effingham High School library has incorporated a Yoga Club into their programming activities. With this program, nearly 100 students have engaged in yoga practice, mindfulness activities, promoting affirmations school wide, and reading realistic fiction that helps students deal with anxiety, stress, and mental health issues.

Flack will use the grant money to complete a 200-hour online yoga course through Yoga Renew, an accredited online yoga school. Completing the yoga certification will meet her professional development goal of creating an inclusive, welcoming library environment that supports students in academic and personal success. Yoga and mindfulness can be a valuable tool for students' socioemotional wellness. It is also important to have a live, certified instructor for beginning yoga students to ensure proper practice, reduce possibility of strain or injury, and support students in SEL practices. Offering this program allows for students to participate in live, guided yoga who might not otherwise be able to afford it.

Flack will be recognized at an awards ceremony, during the 2023 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. The conference will take place October 24-26 in Springfield, Illinois.

For more information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

For Immediate Release