



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

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Press Release

The Illinois Library Association's (ILA) Youth Services Forum presents this year's Youth Services Achievement Award to Debbie Roycroft, KidSpace Office Coordinator at the Gail Borden Public Library District. This annual award is presented by the ILA Youth Services Forum and Brainfuse to a non-degreed (MLIS) individual working in the Youth Services Department for outstanding local contributions in library services to young people. Individuals nominated for the award must have created and implemented library programs, services, and/or initiatives in the community they serve that promote a love of learning. The award recipient must have positively impacted the lives of children

Roycroft has been a member of the Gail Borden Public Library District's KidSpace Department for five years and in that time has shown an immense range of skills from puppetry to collection development. She has certainly impacted her community with her programs and ingenuity, including one occasion where she helped a patron construct a corsage out of craft supplies for her daughter the day before the prom. It is stories like this one that showcase the value she brings to the library.

Roycroft is not afraid to tackle large projects, both on the technical side and the creative side of the position. She's displayed her analytical side by creating an Excel spreadsheet that organizes almost 1,000 puppets, flannels, and other storytime props. On the creative side, Roycroft has hosted a Preschool Puppeteers program in which she created all the puppets used in it. She has proved that she has a well-rounded skillset and is able and willing to take on a variety of programs and projects.

In a combination of the creative and technical, Roycroft lead the department with virtual programming via Zoom during the pandemic by adjusting her Preschool Puppeteers program for a digital audience. In addition, she reached out to local musicians and invited them to join the storytimes. Roycroft took a time when people were looking for creative outlets and brought together members of the community to share stories and music.

Finally, Roycroft worked alongside a coworker to conduct a Diversity Audit of their storytime collection to ensure that all participants saw themselves in the books read and felt welcome at every storytime. Books that contained racist stereotypes and language were removed and new, inclusive titles were added. This is yet another way that Roycroft has demonstrated her knowledge, which she shared with her colleagues when she presented at the Lake Superior Libraries Symposium in 2022 alongside her coworker.

This is only a taste of all the evidence that Roycroft is unmatched in her role at Gail Borden Public Library District. The outpouring of accolades from staff and patrons proved that she is the best choice for this year's award. Congratulations to Debbie Roycroft, the 2023 recipient of the ILA Youth Services Achievement Award!

The ILA Youth Services Achievement Award will be presented 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