



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because Libraries Matter

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Press Release

The Illinois Library Association's (ILA) Youth Services Forum is presenting this year's Youth Services Librarian of the Year Award to Heidi Knuth, Youth Services Assistant Department Head at the Bloomingdale Public Library. This annual award, presented by the ILA Youth Services Forum and Children's Plus Inc., is in honor of Marion Davis for her active role in services to children at the Des Plaines Public Library. Davis often served as a mentor to other librarians. The award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution in library services to youth. Since its inception in 1971, the award has been presented to individuals who exemplify resourcefulness, professionalism, and caring in their service to young people.

Knuth has been a member of the Youth Services Department at Bloomingdale for over ten years. Knuth's impact on the patrons of Bloomingdale is visible within the library, but also extends into the community spaces through various outreach events. Knuth's efforts make her a friendly face that is sure to direct patrons to the library for a welcoming experience that will ensure that they will return again and again.

Knuth has an eye for utilizing spaces to best reflect the needs of the community and advocating for those patrons. One of these examples is working on creating a makerspace that could be regularly used for programming for Grades K-6. A second example is the creation of a calming space for parents and children who need a break from the library's activity. This space demonstrates a focus on inclusivity in which all patrons can find a space in the library where they are comfortable.

In addition to creating an inviting library space, Knuth goes out in the community to meet patrons where there are. Knuth was involved in the creation of off-site storytimes at Panera and the mall although prior to the pandemic. On the more passive side of outreach, Knuth's book bins are placed in local businesses such as banks and post offices which allow kids some entertainment during errands while promoting the benefits of the library as well as creates partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce.

Knuth's library involvement does not stop at her library. Knuth has shared her love of libraries and her skills with her colleagues through her involvement in ILA. Knuth was a member of the Youth Services Forum for several years. She has devoted her time and skills to help plan fantastic conferences including the Reaching Forward Conference and the 2022 ILA Annual Conference where her knowledge and experience were sure to increase the experience of all of her colleagues able to attend.

Congratulations to Heidi Knuth, the 2023 recipient of the ILA Youth Services Librarian of the Year Award!

The ILA Youth Services Librarian of the Year 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