



**ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

Because Libraries Matter

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**Illinois Library Association  
560 W. Washington Blvd., Suite 330  
Chicago, IL 60661-2692  
Phone: 312.644.1896  
Email: [ila@ila.org](mailto:ila@ila.org)**

### **Emily Gilbert Named the 2024 Illinois Academic Librarian of the Year**

Emily Gilbert (she/her), Assistant Professor and Information Services & Liaison Librarian at the University of Illinois Chicago Library of the Health Sciences, is the 2024 recipient of the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Illinois Academic Librarian of the Year Award. The award, presented by the ILA Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL) Forum, recognizes an Illinois librarian who is making an outstanding statewide contribution to academic or research librarianship and to library development. The award is sponsored by Library Juice Academy.

Gilbert has demonstrated leadership in her efforts to make libraries more inclusive. She has been vocal about bringing representation to various populations in libraries and encourages library workers to be open about their identities when they can do so safely. Though she has researched a variety of library topics, she centers her research agenda on “systemic anti-fatness and how libraries can create an inclusive and accessible future for people in all bodies.” Her research on anti-fatness will be presented at the 2024 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. She also recently collaborated with a medical student to present a colloquium on anti-fatness to students in the College of Medicine. Furthermore, she attends curriculum meetings to speak up for more weight-neutral terminology and practices in medical education.

Gilbert is a passionate advocate for all libraries and for those who want to get involved and improve their communities. She has written and presented about her experiences running for her local public library board, and has used her story to encourage those who struggle to speak up to do so. In her time on the Schaumburg Township District Library Board, she has helped improve patron services and update policies to reflect the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century library in an ever-changing landscape. Gilbert has demonstrated a commitment to listening to the community, and she works hard as an individual contributor to the collective library board. She is particularly proud of the small part she played in the central library's recent second-floor renovation.

Gilbert has been involved with IACRL since 2018, has served the three-year term as incoming/sitting/past president of IACRL from 2020-2023, and participated in numerous committees. In her time as president, Gilbert made significant impacts on how the IACRL Executive Board operates. Unprompted, she took on the valuable yet invisible work of succession planning and documenting timelines and tasks of the operations of the forum to help facilitate easy transitions between leadership. Her efforts will have a lasting impact on the success of IACRL.

The Illinois Academic Librarian of the Year Award will be presented at an awards ceremony during the 2024 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. The conference will take place October 8-10, 2024, in Peoria, Illinois.

For more information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

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### **About the Illinois Library Association**

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) is a professional membership organization that represents Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. Founded in 1896, it is the third-largest state library association and serves as a chapter within the American Library Association. ILA is comprised of 2,000 personal and more than 500 institutional members, made up of public, academic, school, and special libraries, as well as librarians, library staff, trustees, students, and library vendors.