



ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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Illinois Library Association

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**Skokie Public Library Advisory Services Team Selected as
2025 Recipient of the Illinois Library Association Readers' Advisory Service Award**

The Advisory Services Team at the Skokie Public Library is the 2025 recipient of the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Readers' Advisory Service Award. The Team consists of Rummanah Aasi, Amber Ilisie, Amy Giacomucci, Andrew Hazard, Brenna Murphy, Paul Kim, Aubree Lanman, and Sharon Weinberg. The award, sponsored by the Adult Reading Round Table (ARRT) and the ILA Awards Committee, recognizes excellence in the planning, development, and delivery of readers' advisory service for adults and teens.

Among the Team's innovative services are Bookmatch and Screenmatch, in which community members submit interest questionnaires and receive personalized book, film, and television recommendation lists curated by staff. In 2024 alone, the Team provided nearly 1,500 book suggestions and over 200 film/television recommendations, each accompanied by a personalized annotation. The Team is mindful of including a diverse variety of authors and creators in their match recommendations, and match participants regularly share that their recommendations are both perfectly attuned to their personal interests and include titles they would not have found otherwise. This year, the Team is piloting match services for Skokie book clubs, and so far, the reception has been very positive. This exploration embodies the

Team's commitment to always thinking of new ways to connect with community needs and interests.

The Advisory Services Team offers ongoing services and products to engage readers and would-be readers where they are, at any time, to discover new books and genres. These include Beginner's Guide blog posts, which blend appeal-based explainers with expert staff recommendations on genres such as historical fiction, self-help, and fantasy. In 2025, the Team launched "Whatcha Reading," a YouTube series where staff discuss current reads in an engaging, accessible format. Blog posts and videos support the community in getting to know the Advisory Team, and over time, patrons build connections with Team members with similar reading interests to theirs.

The Advisory Services Team iterates on Skokie Public Library's perennially-loved library book discussion events—many of which are hybrid for greater accessibility—to connect with new patrons with different interests. These include genre-specific discussions like the Fantasy and Mystery Book Clubs, film screenings and discussions, and events building community through reading, like the Book Trails Walking Club and Reading Parties. They also support accessibility through Talking Books, which emphasizes audiobook-accessible titles, and offer technology instruction on Libby, Hoopla, and Kanopy. The Team also coordinates activities and pop-ups for Banned Books Week each year, engaging patrons of all ages in conversations about intellectual freedom.

The Team curates thoughtful suggestion lists and rotating displays spotlighting underrepresented voices and cultures; topics have included Autistic Fiction by Autistic Authors, Black Joy on Screen, and Muslim Authors in Adult Fiction. Their staff picks display, featuring handwritten shelf talkers, has become a community favorite, circulating 248 books in 2024 alone and drawing praise for the personal touch amidst the library's other thematic displays. The Team also regularly participates in local networking and professional development, including sharing their services and effective practices through trainings and groups such as ARRT.

The Illinois Library Association Readers' Advisory Service Award will be presented at an awards ceremony during the 2025 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference. The conference will take place October 14-16, 2025, in Rosemont, 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.