

# REPORTER

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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# *The Illinois Library Association Reporter*

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



## ON THE COVER

This view of the Chicago Botanic Garden's Circle Garden, near the Lenhardt Library, displays unusual combinations of annuals, changing with the season. Libraries all over Illinois are opening up their doors to the outside and creating beautiful and instructive gardens of their own, exposing patrons to the worlds of seed sharing, food production, cultivation, and sustainability. This approach to experiential learning is featured in articles on gardens and teen theater, as well as adapting programs and ideas to fit smaller communities, which are prominent in this issue.

Photo credit: Chicago Botanic Garden

The Illinois Library Association is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 3,200 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has four full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Strategic Advocacy Group for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization.

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# Can You Dig It? Library Gardens Are Growing in Illinois

“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.”—Cicero

**L**ibraries and gardens are natural cousins—they both depend on collective effort, they are bedrocks of our communities, they bring people together, and they require a lot of weeding! Dozens of Illinois libraries are utilizing outdoor spaces in creative ways to expand their mission—connecting with their communities through experiential learning, outdoor events, and participatory nature programming. These library gardens all share a powerful service ethic to increase environmental awareness and a knowledge and appreciation of where our food comes from. No matter the size of a garden or whether it is in a rural or urban area, the results are the same: to create a place where people find connections with each other, with their library, and with the beauty of nature all around us.

## SERENITY

At **Aurora Public Library’s** Parker Garden, people with memory loss and their caregivers have a safe and serene place to enjoy the outdoors together. A generous donation from the Parker family honors their mother, Elaine Parker, who was a beloved educator suffering from dementia when she died in 2012. Her legacy is this gracious garden designed by landscape architect Quatrefoil, Inc. Raised beds allow patients to touch the sensory plants, everything is nontoxic and sturdy, chimes alert caregivers to the gates, and benches and handrails help with limited mobility. “As a culture, we’ve learned to accommodate physical disabilities with elements like curb ramps, elevators, and text-to-speech capability on computers, but we can’t seem to bring ourselves to make environmental improvements to accommodate dementia,” said J. Scott Parker, one of Elaine Parker’s sons. This garden oasis is a serene and welcoming place to rejuvenate and reflect, just like the library itself.

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Photos on pages 4 and 5 courtesy of Aurora Public Library





Photo courtesy of Forsyth Public Library



Photo courtesy of Ida Public Library

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## BEAUTY

*Like to stop and smell the roses? Are flowers your forte? Help beautify the library all summer long by planting our flower beds. Plants will be provided. Members of the garden club of Decatur will provide the expertise. All ages welcome.* This simple invitation brings out the nicest folks to come together to beautify the flower beds at **Forsyth Public Library** every spring. Garden club members work with each child individually to pick out a plant, find a good spot, and talk about how plants grow. When kids come back to the library all summer long, they want to see how their little plant is doing. What makes the garden successful year after year is the special relationship the children develop with the outdoors and garden club mentors.

## NOURISHMENT

Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods*, inspired **Waukegan Public Library** to encourage kids to spend more time in nature—being outside and digging in the dirt turns out to be two of the best ways to teach kids about the environment and nutrition. Waukegan started its garden in 2010, and every summer, more than 250 kids help plant, weed, harvest, and cook from the produce. Most are from Hispanic families, with older teens translating for parents and helping younger kids learn English names for vegetables. Library staff and volunteers demonstrate how to grow vegetables in small spaces and containers and teach about the growing cycle. Kids learn about worms, composting, weeding, nutrition, good bugs vs. bad bugs, and most importantly hands-on STEM skills. Library staffer Sandy Sherwood enthuses, "It's exciting because some children have been with the program since the beginning and they have

little gardens of their own at home. They start to recognize cilantro, and hot peppers, and maple seeds that look like helicopters!" Colleague Amanda Civitello adds, "The garden promotes a sense of lifelong learning in the community, where it's a great experience for parents to learn alongside their children and be able to share those new experiences together."

Fairmont City (population 2,635) is 75 percent Hispanic, and most of the recent immigrants are from Mexico. **Fairmont City Library Center** started its community garden in 2013 and partnered with the University of Illinois Extension Office and the local 4-H club. Master gardener Margarette Gibbs was essential in providing hands-on expertise, and partners like Home Depot, the garden club, and local farmers all contributed. Produce goes directly to the families, and last year they harvested over 250 pounds of vegetables. Families learn about new veggies and how to cook with them. People from all walks of life gather together for this program that crosses ages and cultures, and working side by side helps them relate to each other. There's nothing like harvesting and making zucchini bread together to create a bond!

**Ida Public Library's** goal was to create interest both in the library's community garden and in the possibility of people starting their own community gardens, with the library functioning as a center for information about local food and gardening. The project helps people grow food, educates young people about the food cycle, emphasizes healthy eating, beautifies the property, and creates a healthier workplace by providing an opportunity for library staff to work in the garden and eat its produce. The garden was funded by a community action grant from the city of Rockford, volunteers and staff work side by side to maintain it, and local extension offices and master gardeners help facilitate programming. Just ask local partners to pitch in—they can surprise you!

City and suburban kids often live in apartments or houses without yards for planting, and libraries can show patrons how even a small container or plot of ground can still grow plants. **Arlington Heights Memorial Library** started the “Sprout Squad” last year during their “Summer Reading, Summer Doing” program. They developed participatory experiences for teens, and partnered with the park district to start a community garden. The park had a plot of land, and the library provided the teen volunteers and staff who could teach them gardening basics, research skills, and how to make healthy snacks. Whole Foods offered presentations about organic food, and the library brought laptops to the garden to access databases for plant identification. Ten teens and two mentors do everything, and at the end of the summer they show up at the farmer’s market to give away produce and demonstrate new recipes they’ve learned. Extra produce is donated to the Wheeling Township Food Pantry.

## NATURE

How do libraries make learning and appreciation for nature part of people’s everyday library experiences? Through outdoor classrooms and learning labs. Most libraries don’t have large outdoor spaces, or a budget to create an elaborate garden, but use their own ingenuity and local resources to customize a small area. Patios, courtyards, raised beds, and containers are all options for libraries with limited space. The **Hanover Park Branch of the Schaumburg Township District Library** decided to take Bedtime Storytime outside one night to enjoy the soft summer evening. Everyone was involved and happy, and they thought, “Why not use this space more? What if we had a garden?” The project started with five raised beds and a summer lineup of experiential programs for suburban kids who are not exposed to farming. “We want them to be able to connect that this is how we get vegetables—they don’t just appear at the supermarket,” said coordinator Monica Tapia. Spring Valley Nature Center is co-sponsoring the initiative with a “Farms and Food” program, and future plans include butterflies and Jack and the Beanstalk literary tie-ins.

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Photo courtesy of Peoria Public Library



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A patron who works at Garden Patch Farms in Homer Glen ([www.pickthefarm.com/](http://www.pickthefarm.com/)) connected the **Indian Prairie Public Library District** to the farmers, and that folks, is how a seed library is born. With a donation of five hundred starter seeds of fifteen different varieties, the library packaged five seeds per envelope, labeled them, set up loan rules, and started a circulating seed collection. The hope is that people will return the envelopes with new seeds they harvest, although the seed library is self-sustaining with ongoing donations from local partners. A seed swap and expertise from the local garden club launched the project, and this hands-on opportunity makes learning to grow a garden as easy as...bean plants. A request to The Gift of Carl Foundation ([www.giftofcarl.org](http://www.giftofcarl.org)) secured hand tools for adults and kids, kneeling pads, watering cans, and how-to gardening books. “Now we’re offering the seeds and all the tools so all people need is a little plot of land, or even a container,” noted library staffer Natalie Williams.

Gardens come with insects, so many garden programs also feature information about these fascinating creatures. The **North Branch of the Peoria Public Library** has created a huge buzz with their indoor observation beehive in the Children’s Room. Patrons can view live bees inside the hive and observe them flying out of the hole in the outer wall to the prairie grasses beyond. The library does not gather honey, but bees are there for everyone to observe close-up. Several libraries raise butterflies, but now bees are buzzing in the stacks!

## PLAY

**Aurora Public Library’s** Juvenile Protective Association Children’s Nature Garden is a magical playground for children to explore nature in an outdoor learning environment. Waterfalls, a fairy garden, reading gazebos, jumping stones, and a gathering tree for storytimes are a few of the charming areas kids will discover when they visit the library. **Geneva Public Library District** has a small garden area with objects such as pine cones, sea shells, acorns, and rocks for child-directed free play. The Chicago Botanic Garden hosted a program, “Inspiring Nature Play,” and library staff discovered a wealth of ideas about the importance of outdoor play for children both physically and developmentally. **Midlothian Public Library** uses its Storybook Garden for nature art projects, a sand and water table, storytimes, and outside playtime. Give children materials and an invitation to explore, and they will figure out creative and wonderful ways to connect with nature all on their own.

Photo courtesy of Aurora Public Library



## STORIES

StoryWalk®, created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont, is an innovative and delightful way for children—and adults!—to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Laminated pages from a children’s book are attached to wooden stakes, which are installed along an outdoor path. As you stroll down the trail, you’re directed to the next page in the story. Several Illinois libraries have adopted the model, partnering with park districts, county forest preserves, and other agencies to bring the delight of stories to outdoor spaces.

In “Trail Tales,” **Waukegan Public Library** and the Lake County Forest Preserve District bring local school children to outdoor experiential learning sites in Ryerson Woods. This fully bilingual storywalk features the book, *Miss Maple’s Seeds*. At the end of the trail is a Little Free Library, and kids are always excited to see what books they can take home. The walk is self-paced, and panels integrate with the surrounding foliage.

**Park Ridge Public Library’s** StoryWalk at the Wildwood Nature Center features the book, *“Little Owl’s Day,”* encouraging walkers to “Move, read, and spend time with your family outdoors!” **Oak Park Public Library** tied their Storywalk to a local author visit by Eric Rohmann and Candace Fleming for their book *Oh, No!*, and **Wilmette Public Library** highlighted *Muncha, Muncha, Muncha!* at Vattmann Park.

## COMMUNITY

Libraries are expanding their walls to include natural spaces and to provide opportunities for all ages to connect and learn together about plants and gardening. Engaging programs such as cooking demos, gardening advice, nature journals, poetry, and art can enhance your garden’s impact. The success of these projects comes down to forging community partnerships, tapping into local resources, finding staff who are interested in gardening, and just giving it a try even in a small way. Local businesses, civic organizations, garden clubs with master gardeners, and county extension offices are the key to making a gardening project work. A steady volunteer corps can be built with just a few interested people, and just like the process of starting a garden growing, you’re steadily growing community right alongside it. 🌱



## Thanks to the library gardeners featured in this story:

1. Heaether Venetucci-Johnson, Ida Public Library, Belvidere, IL. [idapubliclibrary.org](http://idapubliclibrary.org)
2. Kim Crawshaw, Geneva Public Library District, [gpld.org](http://gpld.org)
3. Amy Roth and Laura Stoney, Aurora Public Library, [aurorapubliclibrary.org](http://aurorapubliclibrary.org)
4. Janet Van De Carr and Kelly Durov, Park Ridge Public Library, [parkridgelibrary.org](http://parkridgelibrary.org)
5. Janet Piehl, Wilmette Public Library District, [wilmettelibrary.info](http://wilmettelibrary.info)
6. Natalie Williams, Indian Prairie Public Library District, Darien, IL. [www.ippl.info](http://www.ippl.info)
7. Monica Tapia, Schaumburg Township District Library Hanover Park Branch, [schaumburglibrary.org](http://schaumburglibrary.org)
8. Trisha Noack and Anna Hutson, Peoria Public Library North Branch, [peoriapubliclibrary.org](http://peoriapubliclibrary.org)
9. Amanda Civitello and Sandy Sherwood, Waukegan Public Library, [waukeganpl.org](http://waukeganpl.org)
10. Trixie Dantis, Arlington Heights Memorial Library, [www.ahml.info](http://www.ahml.info)
11. Rachel Miller, Forsyth Public Library, [forsythlibrary.com](http://forsythlibrary.com)
12. Katie Heaton, Fairmont City Library Center, [fairmontcitylibrary.org](http://fairmontcitylibrary.org)
13. Katie Clausen, Midlothian Public Library, [midlothianlibrary.org](http://midlothianlibrary.org)
14. Lori Pulliam, Oak Park Public Library, [oppl.org](http://oppl.org)

# Teens Tread the Boards: Here's What Happened

**W**hether teens act, write scripts, direct, construct sets, or design costumes, library theater clubs build capacity for creative expression and help develop leadership skills. Working with adults and peers on a common project, teens learn to collaborate, appreciate the value of each individual's contribution, and take pride in a job well done. One great beauty of library teen theater programs is their scalability. They can be run with five kids or fifty, on a generous budget or a shoestring. They can take place on a year-round, seasonal, or one-time basis. Plays can be student-written or professionally published, fifteen minutes in length or an hour. Sets, props, and costumes can be elaborate or minimal.

**Niles Public Library District's Project Playbill** brings together teens in grades 7-12 for Project Playbill, the library's summer theater program. It draws fifteen to thirty participating teens from the surrounding neighborhoods each year, and although teens audition, no one is ever turned away. Project Playbill runs for five weeks, meeting three days a week for two hours each session. The teens work together to write an original thirty-minute play, construct props and costumes, and put on the show. Older participants help by leading warm-up exercises, mentoring younger members, and editing the script. One or two are chosen to serve as directors and run rehearsals, make casting decisions, block each scene, and set the sound and lighting cues. I act mainly as facilitator, making suggestions throughout the process and guiding the teens through dilemmas like: How do we stage the fire in scene seven? (The solution: lots of shiny gold streamers!)

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“One great beauty of library teen theater programs is their scalability. They can be run with five kids or fifty, on a generous budget or a shoestring.”



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Costumes, props, and sets are modest. The cost of rehearsal snacks, refreshments for the performance, and pizza for the cast party is almost equal to the actual production. Materials that the library would otherwise discard (like cardboard boxes) are used, saving the budget for items like paint, duct tape, lighting equipment, and wigs. Most costumes come from items gathered at home, but a trip to the local thrift shop is usually necessary for a few items (like a blue pinstriped suit ... yes, it had to be pinstriped). The library purchased several sewing machines just in time to sew a few costume pieces this summer.

Project Playbill tends to attract a lot of creative, misfit kids who don't have many outlets to express themselves, and they grow from awkward middle schoolers into confident writers, actors, and artists, working together to accomplish a common goal and make lasting friendships. Some go on to study theater in college, while others are just happy to find a place where they belong. The audience has grown from thirty or forty at the beginning to seventy or eighty the past few years. Hearing their first wave of laughter roll across the room always gives me a thrill.

**Midlothian Public Library's Teens in Theatre (TNT)** is an ethnically mixed group, drawing almost equal numbers of African American, Caucasian, and Latino teens in grades 7–12, including homeschoolers and students from several different junior high and high schools serving Midlothian and the surrounding communities. Our production schedule has evolved to include three plays a year: Halloween, Valentine's Day, and in the summer. The Halloween and Valentine's Day plays are small-scale affairs, performed in our meeting room during library hours to an audience of about forty people. Sets, props, and costumes are simple and low budget, and students put in about ten two-hour evening rehearsals. The summer play is the crown jewel of the TNT year, performed after-hours in the main library space to an audience of about a hundred. Sets and costumes are more elaborate, but still low budget, with more rehearsal time.

TNT's Halloween and Valentine's Day are usually student written, while the summer play usually has a professionally-written script. All of TNT's plays are student-directed, one to two directors per production in charge of running auditions and rehearsals under adult supervision. But the artistic vision for the play belongs to the student directors, and the sense of responsibility, authority, and ownership developed by the student directors gets passed on to the entire cast and crew. The shared commitment to the production generated by the cultivation of student leadership is one of TNT's greatest strengths.



**Plainfield Public Library District's Teen Drama Group** runs monthly for grades 6–12, and each summer we put on a full-scale production. The program has evolved significantly since its inception and has grown to become one of the most popular programs offered for teens. Nine years ago, as the first teen librarian in Plainfield, I inherited the annual Murder Mystery from the adults that had botched the play so badly that management believed the teens had to be able to do a better job. I had zero play experience prior to running my first show, but like any good teen librarian: you fake it till you make it. I would adapt the adult murder mysteries for teens, basically taking out all the sexual innuendos. The teens were my biggest asset and helped me learn the ropes rather quickly, plus the parents that attended the performance loved it regardless of quality because they love their kids.

A chance encounter four years ago led to enlisting a part-time children's theater director, who became the director of our summer play and took it to an entirely new level—more elaborate sets, costumes, and dialogue instead of monologues. She then took over the monthly improv group and turned it into a drama club, which helped the teens to hone their skills, thus improving their abilities for the annual summer performance.

We went from contacting teens and begging them to be in our play to holding auditions of fifty teens for about fifteen roles. Attendance went from being just parents and friends to standing-room-only crowds. This summer's play was our best yet. Using the iREAD theme *Read to the Rhythm*, we performed a musical with a script purchased from Pioneer Drama. A bake sale run in conjunction with the play donates the proceeds to the library foundation, and our donor wall includes "Annual Play Cast and Crew" dating back to 2008. Returning actors come in and find their year on the donor wall and proudly say, "I was part of that performance."

There are many ways to engage teens in theater in public libraries. Design a program that works for your setting, your teens, and the adults who are committed to guiding and nurturing them. Library theater clubs give teens an opportunity to discover, develop, and take pride in their unique abilities as they learn to collaborate with others—above, beyond, and outside of the confines of what generally takes place in schools, creating experiential learning that lasts a lifetime. ■

# Small Is Beautiful: Trimming Big Ideas Down to Size

**M**ost of us have been there at some point: sitting at a conference, listening to representatives of big(ger) city libraries present a project, thinking to yourself, “How would I ever pull this off at my library?”

You ask: What was your budget? (Enormous.) How did your staff have time to do this? (Oh, our three computer programmers and four graphic artists did that part.) How can I adapt this to fit my library? (Shrug.)

Several Illinois librarians have adapted a project or concept instituted by a larger library—whether measured in population served, staff size, budget, or other measure—and brought it into their own library or community. Here’s how.

“Build it and they will come, It may not be as big and fancy as some of the others that you have seen or heard about—but in reality, most of your patrons do not know what other libraries are offering and they are happy to have what you are able to provide.”

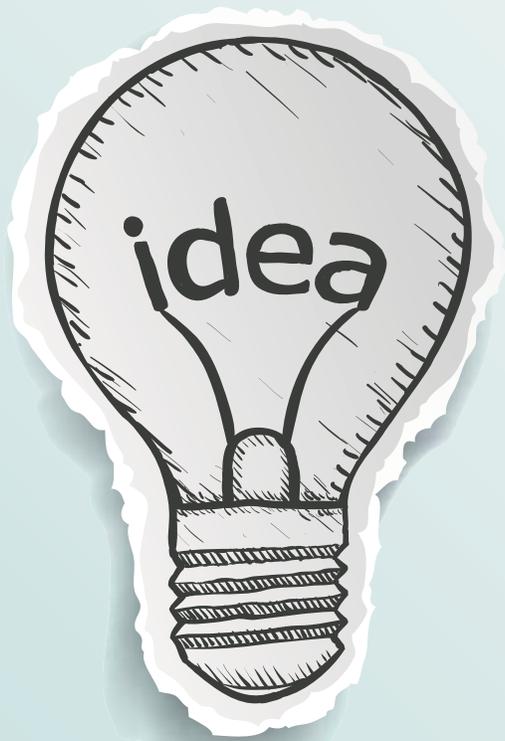
## ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

Tony Lucarelli, systems librarian at the Fountaindale Public Library District, attended a marketing presentation by the Brooklyn (New York) Public Library on using postcards to publicize library events in-house, instead of posting signs or flyers. Brooklyn Public Library serves a population of 2.5 million, in more than sixty branches, with annual revenue of \$139 million. Fountaindale serves a population of 69,600, has one main building, and an annual budget of about \$8 million. Not exactly comparable numbers.

Fountaindale didn’t have a graphic artist on staff at the time, nor the ability to outsource the printing and production. Lucarelli created a template for 4" x 6" cards in Microsoft Publisher, printed them on 8.5" x 14" card stock, and then cut the cards to size. He found an inexpensive postcard rack and placed it near the circulation desk and book returns, readily visible to anyone visiting the library.

“I thought Brooklyn Public Library had a great idea and concept, and took it as a challenge to adapt it to my library. Once I figured out the template and how I would produce the cards, everything fell into place,” said Lucarelli. “Card stock was \$15 for 250 sheets, and the postcard rack was \$150 with shipping. We use our photocopiers as printers, so all the printing was done in-house. I would usually do fifteen cards per program, as an initial run, and could easily print more if we ran out.”

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## PARTNERS MAKE IT POSSIBLE

From 2012 to 2014, Renee Grassi worked as head of Children's Services at the Glencoe Public Library. She wanted to implement a program called Sensory Storytime that she had learned about, but it required staff, materials, and space that exceeded the library's capacity at the time. Despite the challenges, Grassi knew this program would be well received. Glencoe, serving a population of nearly 9,000 people, is a member of the North Suburban Special Education District and some families chose Glencoe, just so their children could attend this school district. The priority was to bring this type of programming to serve an underserved population in the Glencoe community—it just had to be done in a different way.

The solution? A Sensory Storytime program was developed in partnership with a local disability-related organization called the National Lekotek Center. Grassi and the Lekotek's play specialists designed the program together. Lekotek ran the program and provided the accessible toys and materials. The library provided a small honorarium for staff time and cost of supplies.

The program would not have gotten off the ground without generous funding from the Friends of the Glencoe Public Library. They understood the need and the value, so were happy to financially support it. Through partnerships, the library was able to provide a new and innovative program to its community, while not over-extending staff and library resources.

## KNOW THE NEED, FILL THE NICHE

Media labs have been a hot topic of discussion in public libraries for the past couple of years. Fountaindale Public Library District, Arlington Heights Memorial Library, and Schaumburg Township District Library all offer elaborate and large-scale production studios.

Director Dawn Bussey from the Glen Ellyn Public Library (GEPL) knew the creation of a new media lab was a real possibility for Glen Ellyn, which serves a population of 27,450. But some questions needed to be answered first. Would the lab need to be so elaborate? What other resources are available locally for residents? Do those who need/want these resources already have access to them in some way?

After some research and investigation, Bussey learned that the local community college was already building a media lab in its new library. She didn't want to use tax dollars to replicate services, but also knew that Glen Ellyn high school students are often required to create more and more complex projects. Because these students do not have access to the equipment at school, the library could fill in that gap. Glen Ellyn also has a large number of individuals in its community who work from home or run their own businesses, and they may need to create, convert, or edit projects as well.

The result? A small media lab to fit the niche. The library enclosed an odd-shaped corner space with soundproof walls and added equipment for media conversion, content creation, and content editing. Then, staff started teaching classes about how to use the space and its equipment.

"Build it and they will come," Bussey says. "It may not be as big and fancy as some of the others that you have seen or heard about—but in reality, most of your patrons do not know what other libraries are offering and they are happy to have what you are able to provide."



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## PUT YOUR OWN STAMP ON IT

Sometimes that “big idea” is waiting to be found in your very own library community—all you have to do is ask. As a community engagement librarian at the Forest Park Public Library, Alicia Hammond always asks the community what interests them. She noticed a marked interest in art. People craved opportunities to make things and to express themselves creatively.

One day, Hammond began a conversation with library patron and local artist Elaine Luther about this very subject. She soon learned about a public art campaign that was taking the Chicago art community by storm. It was called *You Are Beautiful* and was developed by Chicago artist Matthew Hoffman. It began simply with one hundred stickers in 2002 in Chicago, and has since evolved into block-long murals, public installations, and exhibitions at cultural institutions involving thousands of artists. In 2015, Hoffman took up residency in the Andersonville neighborhood of Chicago, installing multiple murals using large-format block letters throughout the neighborhood.

Hammond was excited at the prospect of implementing something like this at her library. But with a population size of only 14,000, would a big idea like this be right for the Forest Park community? And she didn't want to simply copy another work of art; she wanted to take the foundation of the idea and scale it for her community. She knew it had to be an interesting piece of art, but more importantly, she wanted it to be a project that the community could work on together.

After further discussion and collaboration, Luther and Hammond decided to create an outdoor work of art in Forest Park, and *EXPLORE: Pop Up Community Art Project* was born. Luther constructed three-foot-tall letters that spelled the word *EXPLORE*, which were anchored in the front yard of the library. Community members of all ages were then welcomed to grab a paintbrush and add their creative touches. After its completion, the artwork stood in the front yard of the library for the next two months.

“I had a big realization that I did not have to do everything myself,” Hammond said. “Find people who are experienced and passionate about the things you want to create, and just ask for help. Creating community partnerships and finding experts is how things get done.”

*Have a successful story about bringing a big idea into a small(er) library? The Illinois Library Association's Best Practices Committee would like to hear about it! They will be hosting programs at the 2016 Reaching Forward and ILA Annual Conferences on this topic, and would like to feature stories and examples from other Illinois libraries. Send your stories to Bill Pardue, Best Practices Committee chair, [bpardue@ahml.info](mailto:bpardue@ahml.info). *

# Fine (Free) and Dandy: Libraries Say Good-bye to Overdue Charges

**I**n an episode of the TV series *Seinfeld* entitled “The Library,” Jerry receives a letter from the New York Public Library about an overdue book from the early 1970s. He is positive the book was returned, and when he goes to the library to sort it out, the librarian tells him, “Oh, *Tropic of Cancer*, Henry Miller. Uh, this case has been turned over to our library investigation officer, Lt. Bookman.”

By the end of the episode, Jerry realizes he hadn’t actually returned the book, heads back to the library to pay the fine. When Jerry says that he hopes there are no hard feelings and asks what the problem is, Bookman responds, “What’s my problem? Punks like you, that’s my problem. And you better not screw up again *Seinfeld*, because if you do, I’ll be all over you like a pit bull on a poodle.”

Of course, there is no library who employs a kick-butt-and-take-names-type like Lt. Bookman just to get their overdue materials returned. However, some of our patrons will think exactly that: one simple transgression such as returning materials a few days late leaves you embarrassed and financially culpable. Who would want to return to such a place?

There is no question that libraries need to be responsible for the collection, insure that holds are being filled in a timely manner, and act as good stewards of taxpayer dollars. But sometimes the overzealousness that we apply to materials is a detriment to customer service. Eliminating fines at libraries has been a lively topic on e-mail lists. We spoke with four libraries who took that fine-free plunge.

## START THE CONVERSATION

Creating financial barriers to public library use is counterproductive and goes against the library’s mission to encourage more use, not less. So after a three-year discussion, Elia Area Public Library District Director Matt Womack approached his management staff, who enthusiastically supported the notion of eliminating fines, especially after opportunities to play devil’s advocate to weigh pros and cons.

Getting staff on board was only half the equation, as final approval for a change of this scope rested with the board of trustees. The board was first asked to consider the notion without making a decision and given ample time to discuss. When it was time to vote two years later, the board had already weighed both the positive and negative outcomes and were ready to come to a decision.

In another Chicago suburb, the former library director of Algonquin Area Public Library District approached Access Services Administrator Gary Christopherson to discuss the idea of a pilot program targeting a specific area of the collection. They agreed to give it a go as an initiative to “think differently about library service.” Although not all staff were in agreement and voiced concerns about patrons waiting too long to receive holds, the board of trustees, who never considered fines a money maker to begin with, approved the decision in March 2014.

[continued on page 20]

“Creating financial barriers to public library use is counterproductive and goes against the library’s mission to encourage more use, not less.”



A stand alone library, Vernon Area Public Library District, began the discussion back in 2006, but they weren't ready to do away with fines quite yet. Then, when Algonquin found success in eliminating fines in 2014, it was time to revisit. "The idea fell in line with achieving one of our strategic goals of improving customer service. We felt that eliminating fines would reduce the number of negative interactions between patrons and staff, remove barriers to service allowing blocked patrons to come back to use the library, and foster goodwill in the community," says Head of Circulation Stephen Territo. As a result, they wrote a new policy and drafted a recommendation to the board, which approved it unanimously.

## HOW DOES A FINE-FREE PROGRAM ACTUALLY WORK?

The biggest fear preventing more libraries from letting go of fines is that materials won't come back in a timely matter and thus create longer wait periods for items with holds. The libraries who have implemented fine-free programs have proven that these fears are unfounded.

At Algonquin Area Public Library District, in lieu of fines, patrons are simply billed for the replacement cost of the item once the item is two weeks overdue, plus a processing fee and blocked from further checkouts. If and when the items are eventually returned, the bill and processing fees are waived and no fines assessed.

In a similar approach, Vernon Area Public Library District does not assess fines but bills the replacement cost for items that are more than fourteen days overdue. They wanted to make it clear to the public that "no fines" doesn't mean "no responsibility." Like other libraries who have eliminated fines, patrons are unable to check out any more materials until the overdue ones are returned. If a patron owes more than \$25 for an unreturned item, their account goes into collection if unpaid after thirty-five days, ensuring that the library is acting responsibly with taxpayer dollars.

Maintaining borrowing privileges is the reward for returning your materials on time at Ela Area Public Library District, where patrons are blocked from further checkout until late items are returned. However, there is also a fourteen-day grace period before those borrowing privileges are suspended, allowing more flexibility and incentives for returning items. In a press release to the public, the library stressed the several ways borrowers can renew and manage their account, even when the library is closed, to help mitigate an onslaught of overdue materials.

Evidence suggests that this approach might be more, or at least equally, effective as fines. After running a circulation report of long overdue materials shortly after implementation of the fine-free program, Ela discovered that only four patrons out of over six hundred still had items overdue. "I call that a win," maintains Womack.

You may be wondering how this could work at a smaller library. At Chadwick Public Library District in Carroll County, Library Director Jo Nell Castellani developed her own version of going fine-free. Being one of only two employees meant the elimination of fines didn't need a lot of rules and procedures. Castellani demonstrates that service trumps any fiscal gain. For overdue materials, she will send a letter listing the overdue items with the date the books need to be returned in order to not receive fines. If the items are not returned in three weeks, another letter is sent, billing the cost of the item. When the books do come back, Castellani limits checkouts to one item at a time until she gains a sense that the borrower is to be trusted again.

## OUTCOMES: THE TANGIBLE AND THE PRICELESS

Libraries that have gone fine free are not ones that rely heavily on fines for revenue and thus, the goodwill engendered has far outweighed any loss of income. In fact, these libraries state that the revenue from fines had been less than one percent of their overall budget, and I suspect that is the same for many libraries.

Although some patrons have had a hard time wrapping their heads around the idea of no fines—they seem to think the concept is just too good to be true!—the response has been overwhelmingly positive. A family with three children that regularly uses Algonquin Area Public Library District was always scrambling to get their DVDs back on time and a late night run to the library was a weekly occurrence. Now, they no longer see the library as a place that induces stress and creates penalties for transgressions, and they immediately sent a thank you to show their gratitude for the change in policy—just one of many positive interactions now that fines are gone for good.

Algonquin was prepared for any negative outcomes, such as an increase in overdues, by budgeting funds to order more materials and insure hold lists did not become too long. While overdues have doubled since going fine free, they have not had to dig into that extra money, holds have not suffered, and there is plenty in the way of a browsing collection to satisfy patrons.

Algonquin's Christopherson reports another example of the goodwill engendered by going fine-free. "A patron came to the desk with a hot book due that day. She had forty pages to go and was hoping to return her copy and get another one, but there were none on the shelf. I told her that with no fines, she could keep it until Monday and return it on her way to work that morning. The smile was priceless."

Vernon Area Public Library District's Territo notes that not only has the elimination of fines been good for patrons, it produced an unexpected boost in staff morale. "Staff like not having to deal with fines," he said. Because management is no longer putting staff in the position of being the bad guy whose role entails collecting money in their transactions with the public, the "interactions with patrons have been less negative."

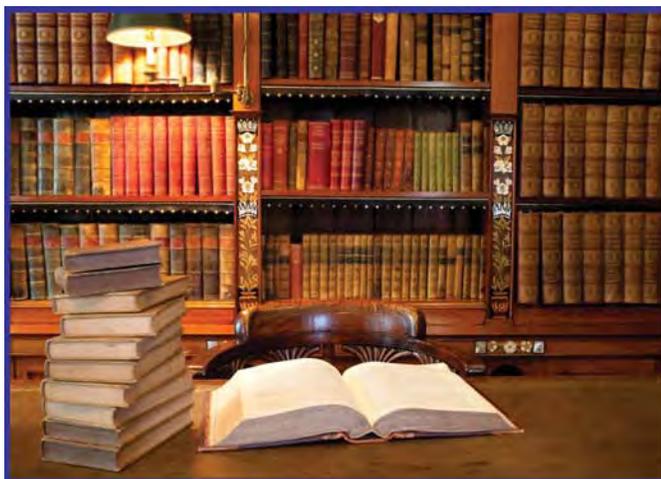
In an effort to welcome back those who have been uncomfortable to return because of the shame or financial burden of fines, Ela Area sends out postcards to patrons who haven't visited the library in more than eighteen months. They've already seen thirty patrons come back with these postcards, and that is only one way they are communicating the message; they are tapping into every platform at their disposal, such as social media, signage, newspaper releases, and messages to the school to prompt reconsideration of the library as a place to visit.

## ELIMINATING FINES WHEN YOU ARE PART OF A SHARED CATALOG

A challenge that may prevent libraries from implementing a fine-free program is whether the library belongs to a shared catalog. However, both Algonquin and Ela Area are members of the Cooperative Computer Services (CCS) catalog, and not all libraries who belong to this cooperative offer a fine-free program. A work-around for Algonquin was to make their fine-free policy only available to cardholders in the district. "We wanted to insure that we did not create a situation in which patrons abandoned their home libraries for the fine-free environment," notes Christopherson.

Ela Area's Womack says they have received great support from their surrounding libraries, much more than anticipated. Taking the lead on an initiative like this allows your fellow libraries to see it in action and be better informed to see if this would work for their own communities.

Whether your library is a stand alone or part of a shared ILS, these libraries demonstrate that fine free is possible. As we move further into the digital realm, fines will become less relevant, so now is a good time to close the book, so to speak. Most importantly, eliminating fines will encourage library use, foster a positive relationship between staff and patrons, and reaffirm that the library is not only full of knowledge, wonder, imagination, but also a benevolent and forgiving place. **ILA**



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# 2015 Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholars

Four of the eight Sylvia Murphy Williams scholars—Anna Buck, Heather Hummons, Jennifer Smith, and Alice Son—were able to attend this year’s Illinois Library conference. They made it a better and richer experience for all of us, and we asked them to share just a few of their impressions. Trixie Dantis, a member of ILA’s Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee, met with them and added her own impressions to this roundup.

## **Anna Buck**

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

I am so glad ILA and my library made it possible for me to attend the 2015 Illinois Library Conference. The three days flew by. I learned a lot in every session, but my favorites were Voices of Race, the We Need Diverse Books (WNDB) panel, and the Readers’ Advisory Rap Session. I also loved the opening session because those concepts resonated throughout the conference. (I still can’t believe that session actually lasted an hour and a half!)

I met many wonderful, engaging, and insightful people, but I especially enjoyed meeting my fellow scholarship winners. I learned about the current state of the Illinois budget, as it applies to libraries, at the ILA membership meeting, and met several Illinois authors. I have pages of notes full of ideas I’ll be able to apply immediately to both my work and my classes.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this year’s conference, and, as an online student, I really appreciated the unexpected opportunity to see both faculty and other students from my program. Thank you so much to everyone at ILA for making this wonderful experience possible.

## **Heather Hummons**

Dominican University

I really enjoyed the conference—it was so well run and organized. None of the usual issues you run into when going to large events, such as poor programming schemes, long registration lines, and cramped exhibit halls. Little things like the hotel shuttle, WiFi access at the conference center, variety of programming, and the adherence to scheduling made it clear that a lot of thought and effort went into its planning and execution.

I was really nervous about coming to the convention, considering I had never been before. My nervousness dissipated as soon as I arrived. The atmosphere was very welcoming. I met so many professionals from the various sectors of the library field—public librarians, academic librarians (the field I’m in), school librarians, as well as fellow students from both my institution and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In addition, it was very rewarding to meet so many alumni from Dominican and my fellow Spectrum cohorts, both current and alumni.

The panels I attended—especially Voice and Images, DiversiTEA, and Library Use of Social Media—were extremely informative. I walked away with some great tools to help me be more productive in the workplace and aware of my social responsibilities as a librarian working with diverse populations in a greater context. I gained a broader perspective on librarianship just from attending (plus librarians sure know how to party!).

## **Jennifer Smith**

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

My experience at the conference was a little different than I had expected it would be. I woke up sick on Thursday morning, so I did not get to attend as many panels or events as I had planned to. To my great surprise, most of what I learned came from talking to the people around me. In addition to being a Sylvia Murphy Williams award recipient, I worked at the conference as an intern. While helping at the registration desk on Saturday morning, I had a wonderful conversation with a professor whom I recognized from my school. He told me something that I have not stopped thinking about since. Librarians, he said, are by and large really wonderful and kind people. This was an echo of an opinion I had heard from Beck Tench the day before. She said librarians join the profession because of their hearts. This idea was my greatest takeaway. From the strangers in line with me at lunch to the people managing my internship to the fellow scholars in my cohort, everyone I met was exceedingly kind. I had a sense all weekend that I was at home, and as a first-year graduate student there is no better affirmation that I am on the right path than that.



### Alice Son

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

This was my very first statewide library conference, and I have to say that it did not disappoint! It was wonderful to hear from passionate, encouraging, and knowledgeable speakers at each session I attended, and to learn about what libraries across the state are doing to better their services. Outside of formal sessions, I feel like I learned equally as much from the random and candid conversations I had in and out of the conference center. What I love about libraries (and the people who work in them) is how gracious they are with the knowledge they've acquired—librarians are great sharers! So it was a privilege to meet with seasoned professionals, professors, library advocates, and my fellow scholars in this forum, and to now have the opportunity to reflect on the many experiences gained and the connections made.

A highlight of my time at ILA was attending the DiversiTEA organized by ILA's Cultural and Racial Diversity (CARD) Committee. It was encouraging to see so many people who were willing to discuss diversity issues in libraries and in the profession, and to learn from each other about a subject that is important to me. Another activity I was lucky to be a part of was the first ever YA Day! It makes sense to put on an awesome young adult program with so many young adult librarians in one place, and it was great interacting with these hilarious and enthusiastic teens!

### Trixie Dantis

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

This year's joint conference was an energizing and exhausting experience! It was amazing to see a record Peoria turnout and be surrounded by myriad library people from across the state, representing various parts of librarianship. My usual conference experience is spent hustling in and out of sessions frantically jotting down notes to report back to my department. This year I had other commitments—I was the presenter or programmer making sure attendees enjoyed the session.

With the joint conference, I had the opportunity to present with colleagues from the schools I support. It was a great experience highlighting the many ways public librarians can partner with school librarians and teachers to enrich the lives of students. Hosting an activity at YA Day—an opportunity for youth in grades 5-12 to participate in the conference—was a great break from the usual conference activities. I got to roll up my sleeves and make bookmarks with the young attendees.

I also had the opportunity to meet with the Spectrum Scholars/Sylvia Murphy Williams Awardees. I was delighted to meet with these library students on behalf of ILA's Cultural and Racial Diversity (CARD) Committee. I was lucky enough to attend my first conference with quite a few of my coworkers, something I took for granted. For all of these students, it was their first time attending conference. Considering the record numbers in attendance, for them the conference could be daunting. I was happy to be a friendly face in the crowd: someone to answer their questions and reassure them that everyone else is just as friendly, we're library people! I'm glad that CARD hosted most of them at the DiversiTEA where Dr. Nicole Cooke discussed cultural competence and the ever-changing diverse populations that libraries serve.

### 2015 ALA SPECTRUM AND ILA SYLVIA MURPHY WILLIAMS SCHOLARS

Vivian Alvarez

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Anna Buck

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Ariel Gonzalez

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Heather Hummons

Dominican University

Erik Ponder

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Jennifer Smith

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Alice Son

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Brittany Viesca

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



# 2015 Annual Conference Statistics

**Total attendees:** 1,694

**Exhibit booths:** 138

## Conference Registration

|                           | 2015         | 2014         | 2013         | 2012         | 2011         | 2010         | 2009       | 2008         | 2007         | 2006         | 2005         | 2004         | 2003         |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                           | Peoria       | Springfield  | Chicago      | Peoria       | Rosemont     | Chicago      | Peoria     | Chicago      | Springfield  | Chicago      | Peoria       | Chicago      | Springfield  |
| Full                      | 837          | 555          | 620          | 538          | 623          | 673          | 460        | 767          | 580          | 844          | 616          | 736          | 527          |
| Single day                | 451          | 170          | 611          | 197          | 643          | 575          | 138        | 588          | 189          | 580          | 181          | 531          | 166          |
| Preconference only        | 20           | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0          | 16           | 5            | 32           | 6            | 108          | 151          |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>           | <b>1,308</b> | <b>670</b>   | <b>1,231</b> | <b>735</b>   | <b>1,266</b> | <b>1,248</b> | <b>654</b> | <b>1,371</b> | <b>774</b>   | <b>1,456</b> | <b>803</b>   | <b>1,375</b> | <b>844</b>   |
| Speakers                  | 47           | 49           | 81           | 84           | 80           | 147          | 65         | 83           | 74           | 100          | 27           | 105          | 78           |
| Exhibits only             | 89           | 101          | 131          | 102          | 169          | 220          | 91         | 326          | 141          | 206          | 50           | 236          | 100          |
| Exhibitor representatives | 250          | 267          | 378          | 203          | 430          | 469          | 187        | 407          | 227          | 368          | 207          | 392          | 202          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>1,694</b> | <b>1,087</b> | <b>1,821</b> | <b>1,124</b> | <b>1,945</b> | <b>2,084</b> | <b>997</b> | <b>2,187</b> | <b>1,216</b> | <b>2,130</b> | <b>1,087</b> | <b>2,108</b> | <b>1,224</b> |

## Hotel and Booth Statistics

|  |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hotel Rooms Reserved by ILA                              | 1,325         | 980           | 491           | 810           | 685           | 685           | 994           | 695           | 795           | 592           | 783           | 575           | 918           |
| Hotel Rooms Used   | 1,190         | 921           | 352           | 729           | 432           | 384           | 737           | 611           | 939           | 690           | 945           | 626           | 1,169         |
| Number of Companies                                      | 116           | 113           | 124           | 111           | 125           | 149           | 101           | 157           | 125           | 137           | 113           | 151           | 132           |
| Number of Booths<br>(including any paid canceled booths) | 138           | 131           | 141           | 124           | 145           | 170           | 118           | 178           | 142           | 158           | 129           | 170           | 144           |
| <b>Total Booth Square Feet</b>                           | <b>13,900</b> | <b>13,100</b> | <b>13,300</b> | <b>12,400</b> | <b>14,500</b> | <b>17,000</b> | <b>11,800</b> | <b>17,600</b> | <b>14,200</b> | <b>15,800</b> | <b>12,900</b> | <b>16,700</b> | <b>14,400</b> |

1,266 early bird registrations accounted for 75 percent (versus 83 percent last year) of final paid registration figures; 247 advance registrations accounted for 15 percent (versus 11 percent last year) of final paid registrations; and 181 late and on-site registrations accounted for 10 percent (versus 6 percent last year) of final paid registrations.



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Illinois Library Association

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# 2015 Annual Conference Award Photos



## **Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial/Demco Award**

Sponsored by Demco. Award presented by Angie Schoeneck (l), Demco, to Richard Shurman, Cooperative Computer Services. Accepting on his behalf, Paul Mills (r), Fountaindale Public Library.



## **Esther Baker ISLMA Scholarship**

Award presented by Angela Green (l), ISLMA President, to Lauren Otahal, Hinsdale Central High School. Accepting on her behalf, Valerie Wilford (r).



## **Crosman Memorial Award**

Sponsored by Mortenson Construction. Award presented by Gail Bush (l) to Anne Slaughter (r), Reaching Across Illinois Library System.



## **Crystal Honor Award**

Sponsored by ISLMA. Award presented by Angela Green (r), ISLMA President, to the Honorable Jesse White, Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian. Accepting on his behalf, Anne Craig (l), Illinois State Library.



## **Davis Cup Award**

Sponsored by ABDO Publishing. Award presented by Heather Vulpone, ABDO Publishing, to Andrew Medlar, Chicago Public Library.



## **Demco Library Innovative Award**

Sponsored by Demco. Award presented by Angie Schoeneck (l) to Northbrook Public Library, accepting the award Kate Hall (c) and Andy Kim (r).



**Robert P. Doyle ILA Conference Grant for Support Staff Award**  
Sponsored by Reaching Forward. Alea Perez, Westmont Public Library



**Golden Ticket Award**  
Sponsored by Quality Books. Award presented by Stephanie Spetter (l), ILA Youth Services Forum Manager, to Gail Lundgren (r), Gail Borden Public Library District.



**Illinois Academic Librarian of the Year Award**  
Sponsored by CARLI. Award presented by Felice Maciejewski (l), CARLI Board Chair to Dennis Krieb, Lewis and Clark Community College, with Susan Singleton (r), CARLI.



**Intellectual Freedom Award**  
Sponsored by Quality Books. Award presented by Melissa Rice (l), ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee, to Emily Knox (r), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



**ISLMA Lifetime Membership Award**  
Award presented by Angela Green, ISLMA President, to Donald C. Adcock.



**ISLMA Past President Award**  
Award presented by Angela Green (r), ISLMA President to Stephanie Steiglitz (l), The Lane School, Hinsdale.

# 2015 Annual Conference Award Photos



## **ISLMA Polestar Award**

Award presented by Angela Green (l), ISLMA President, to Bonita Slovinski (r), Lincoln Junior High School, Naperville.



## **ISLMA Upstart Award**

Sponsored by Demco. Award presented by Angie Schoeneck, Demco, to Jason McCoy, Deer Creek/Mackinaw High School, Mackinaw.



## **Librarian of the Year Award**

Sponsored by Sikich. Award presented by Patrick Ferguson, Sikich, to Amanda McKay, Effingham Public Library.



## **Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award**

Sponsored by ILA Public Policy Committee. Illinois State Senator William R. Haine, 56<sup>th</sup> Dist.



## **Oberman and Rich Reaching Forward Conference Grant for Support Staff Award**

Sponsored by Reaching Forward. Brian Valesh, Eisenhower Public Library District.



## **Readers' Advisory Service Award**

Sponsored by Adult Reading Round Table (ARRT.) Award presented by Annabelle Mortensen ARRT (l), to Downers Grove Public Library, accepting the award, Sharon Hrycewicz (r).



**Reference Services Award**

Sponsored by Ancel Glink. Award presented by Britt Isaly (l), Ancel Glink, to Lindsay Holbrook, Chicago Public Library. Accepting on her behalf, Stuart Griner (r), Chicago Public Library.



**Deborah Dowley Preiser Marketing Award**

Sponsored by Oak Park Public Library. Award presented by David Seleb, Oak Park Public Library, to Jan Oblinger, Fremont Public Library.



**Alexander J. Skrzypek Award**

Sponsored by the Illinois State Library. Award presented by Anne Craig (l), Illinois State Library, to Patrice Johnson (r), Chicago Public Library.



**TBS, Inc. Technical Services Award**

Sponsored by Today's Business Solutions, Inc. Award presented by Nathan Handlon, Today's Business Solutions, Inc., to Brooke Sievers, Addison Public Library.



**Trustee of the Year Award**

Sponsored by Peregrine, Stime, Newman, Ritzman & Bruckner, Ltd. Award presented by Lila Marek (l), ILA Trustee Forum, to Kathryn Lind Caudill (r), Ela Area Public Library District.



**Young Adult Librarian of the Year Award**

Sponsored by Sourcebooks. Award presented by Mary Miller (l), ILA Young Adult Services Forum, to Heather Booth (r), Thomas Ford Memorial Library.

# ILA Welcomes New Members

We would love to welcome your friends and colleagues, too. By sponsoring a new member, you share the benefits of membership with others ... and help create a stronger and more effective voice to promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

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**Elena Feiza**, Algonquin Area Public Library District  
**Wendell Johnson**, Northern Illinois University Libraries  
**Celeste Kuta**, Indian Trails Public Library District  
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**Elizabeth Ludemann**, Arlington Heights Memorial Library  
**Rochelle Marsden**, Pekin Public Library  
**Estevan Montano**, Roosevelt University  
**Rozanne Porter**, Bartlett Public Library District  
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**Claudia Mondragon**, Poplar Creek Public Library District,  
Streamwood

**Obaidur Rarman**, Des Plaines Public Library

**Natalie Rothbart**, Eisenhower Public Library District,  
Harwood Heights

**Ryan Schaefer**, Ella Johnson Memorial Public Library District

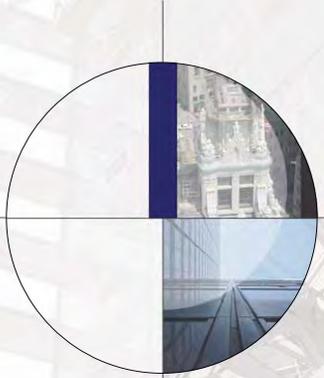
**Patricia Thompson**, Des Plaines Public Library

**Judi Thornton**, Chillicothe Public Library District

**Beverly Werts**, East Alton Public Library District

**Earl Wilson**, Des Plaines Public Library

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# 2016 Spring Continuing Education Opportunities

Trustees

Academics

Library Advocates

Support Staff

Youth Services

Additional information and registration forms for all these events will be available at [ila.org/events](http://ila.org/events) after December 15, 2015. Register online or print and mail or fax to the ILA office.

**Friday, February 12, 2016**  
**South Suburban Library Legislative Breakfast**  
Tinley Park Public Library

**Friday, February 12, 2016**  
**West Suburban Library Legislative Lunch**  
Chicago Marriott Oak Brook Hotel

**Saturday, February 13, 2016**  
**Trustee Workshop**  
Chicago Marriott Oak Brook Hotel

**Monday, February 15, 2016**  
**Presidents' Day Library Legislative Breakfast**  
Arboretum Club, Buffalo Grove

**Friday, February 19, 2016**  
**Metro East Library Legislative Breakfast**  
Sunset Hills Country Club, Edwardsville

**Friday, February 19, 2016**  
**Central Illinois Library Legislative Lunch**  
Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel

**Friday, March 18, 2016**  
**Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL) Conference**  
Chicago Marriott O'Hare

**Friday–Saturday, April 1–2, 2016**  
**Illinois Youth Services Institute**  
Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel

**Monday–Tuesday, May 2–3, 2016**  
**National Library Legislative Day**  
Washington, DC

**Friday, May 6, 2016**  
**Reaching Forward Conference for Library Staff**  
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont

# 2016 Legislative Meet-Ups

Efforts go statewide this year with five legislative events intended to give you an opportunity to meet with your legislators and speak with them firsthand about issues affecting you and your library. Library trustees, directors, and staff from public, school, and academic libraries are encouraged to attend and participate. Use this opportunity for photo ops with your elected officials to post on your Facebook page!

Find out which event will host your legislators and register at [www.ila.org/events/legislative-meet-ups](http://www.ila.org/events/legislative-meet-ups).

If your library isn't covered by one of these events, contact [ila@ila.org](mailto:ila@ila.org) for talking points to create your own legislative meet-up!

**Friday, 12 February 2016**

**South Suburban Library Legislative Breakfast**

Tinley Park Public Library  
7851 Timber Dr.  
Tinley Park, IL 60477

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7:45 A.M. doors open and breakfast is served

---

8:30 A.M. program begins

---

10:30 A.M. program concludes

---

**Price:** \$25

**Friday, 12 February 2016**

**West Suburban Library Legislative Lunch**

Chicago Marriott Oak Brook  
1401 W. 22nd St.  
Oak Brook, IL 60523

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11:30 A.M. check in

---

12:00 NOON doors open and buffet lunch is served

---

1:00 P.M. program begins

---

2:30 P.M. program concludes

---

**Price:** \$40

**Monday, 15 February 2016**

**Presidents' Day Library Legislative Breakfast**

Arboretum Club  
401 Half Day Rd.  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

---

7:45 A.M. doors open and breakfast is served

---

8:30 A.M. program begins

---

10:30 A.M. program concludes

---

**Price:** \$25

**Friday, 19 February 2016**

**Metro East Library Legislative Breakfast**

Sunset Hills Country Club  
2525 Illinois 157  
Edwardsville, IL 62025

---

7:45 A.M. doors open, photos with legislators, and breakfast is served

---

8:30 A.M. program begins

---

10:30 A.M. program concludes

---

**Price:** \$25

**Friday, 19 February 2016**

**Central Illinois Library Legislative Lunch**

Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel  
201 Broadway Ave.  
Normal, IL 61761

---

11:30 A.M. check in

---

12:00 NOON doors open and buffet lunch is served

---

1:00 P.M. program begins

---

2:30 P.M. program concludes

---

**Price:** \$40



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Name:

---

Institution:

---

Address:

---

Phone:

---

Fax:

---

E-mail:

**Please Select Event Location:**

- Tinley Park    Oak Brook    Buffalo Grove  
 Edwardsville    Normal

**Payment Information:** Registration Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Method of Payment:**

- Check    Credit Card    Bill Me

---

Credit Card Number:

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Expiration Date:

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Security Code:

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Name on Card:

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Signature:

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**Deadline for registration is February 1, 2016.**

**Cancellations**

must be received in writing before February 1. Cancellations received before February 1 will receive a 50% refund. No refunds will be given for cancellations received after February 1. Confirmations and additional information will be sent prior to the events.

**Send** this registration form and payment to Illinois Library Association, 33 W. Grand Ave., Suite 401, Chicago, IL 60654; phone: 312-644-1896, fax: 312-644-1899.

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