

New York Library Association Awards Library Leaders and Advocates at 2015 Annual Conference

The New York Library Association honored individuals for their support, leadership and advocacy of libraries at the 122nd Annual Conference and Trade Show in November in Lake Placid, NY on Friday, October 23.

The awards included Outstanding Advocate for Libraries, Outstanding Services to Libraries, and Public Library Innovation as well as the newly created Above and Beyond Award, established in 2014.

The NYLA Outstanding Advocate for Libraries Award recognizes and honors an individual who has made a far reaching, sustained contribution to the promotion and/or support of library and information services to the people of New York. The 2015 recipient, Senator Betty Little, understands that libraries and library systems are at the core of New York's educational infrastructure. Her strong advocacy and leadership in the New York State Senate has helped increase state library aid more than \$12M since 2012, including a \$5M increase this year, the largest annual increase in nearly a decade.

The NYLA Outstanding Services to Libraries Award recognizes and honors an individual who has made a significant, sustained contribution to the development, promulgation, growth or extension of library/information services to the people of New York. This year the award was presented to Mary Ratzler, a tireless advocate for all libraries in the state through her frequent and persistent visits to legislators, her work for the School Library System Association's advocacy platform, and her career as an educator and mentor.

The Mary Bobinski Innovative Public Library Director Award recognizes a public library director who has developed or implemented an innovative program leading to an increase in financial support and/or usage of their library. The 2015 recipient was Pauline Emery, Executive Director of the Southeast Steuben County Library, who successfully renegotiated the funding contract with seven municipalities to continue library operations, including establishment of long range financial planning, annual reports and audits, and instituting an endowment and spending policy. In addition, Ms. Emery increased the presence and use of the library; during a five year period under her leadership, patron visits increased 14% and circulation increased 54%.

NYLA's Above and Beyond Award honors individuals who have made significant contributions of recognized service to NYLA and the library profession. Richard Naylor was selected as the inaugural recipient of this award for meeting and exceeding all those criteria. He created, developed, and served as editor of JLAMS, the peer-reviewed Journal of the Leadership and Management Section; presented and led workshops and sessions at several annual Conferences; and served in elected and appointed positions in NYLA for years.

These individuals and their dedication to New York libraries were recognized on Friday, October 23rd at the Inaugural Banquet & Awards Ceremony at the 125th annual NYLA Conference.

About NYLA:

The New York Library Association (NYLA) is the voice of the library community in New York. NYLA is the oldest state library association in the country and represents school, college, special and public libraries, library staff, trustees, and students from around the state.

NYLA is the only statewide organization dedicated to advocating on behalf of all libraries and library staff in Albany and serves as the spokesperson on library matters to the media and public policymakers.

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