

Hall of Fame Librarian



Alan Hall

Throughout his 40-year career, Alan Hall has shown a commitment to advocacy, innovation and collaboration. His knowledge of Ohio library history and his dedication to the profession is well known throughout the state. Hall started his career in libraries as a student page at the Washington County Public Library in Marietta and has been a part of the growth and innovation of libraries ever since. In 1983, Hall fully automated the Public Library of Steubenville and Jefferson County and was an early proponent of libraries using automation to easily share resources with one another. His library was one of the first four library systems to join the SEO (Serving Every Ohioan) consortium, exploring the idea of sharing resources between libraries. He watched the consortium grow to a total of 93 library systems. Today, that concept of sharing resources statewide is what Ohio's library cardholders have come to know and love – and what other states have worked to replicate. Hall has also had a tremendous impact on the community. Mention his name in Jefferson County, and most residents will talk about his weekly column in the Herald Star newspaper. He has written on library history and local lore for more than 20 years. Now retired, Hall is still leading libraries. He was recently appointed to the State Library Board of Ohio.





Jeff Winkle

Librarian of the Year

Jeff Winkle has been putting books in people's hands for 40 years and has gone above and beyond to help staff and patrons excel in every way. He owned the Findlay bookstore Winkle's Open Book for 20 years before working as director of the Tiffin-Seneca Public Library and Kaubisch Memorial Public Library. As director of the Findlay-Hancock Public Library, Winkle spearheaded efforts to improve literacy in the community and was instrumental in the formation of the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County, working with school districts in Findlay and Hancock County, the University of Findlay, Owens Community College, and Read for L.I.F.E. These efforts led to new partnerships and initiatives, expanding the library's adult literacy programming and bringing the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to Hancock County. When the Findlay Library was affected by area flooding, Winkle spent the night at the library monitoring the situation, then leading a clean-up brigade the next day. His commitment to the library extends well beyond the local level. Winkle recently met with the Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency to share how public libraries will play an important role in a complete and accurate count for the 2020 Census.



Library Innovation Award



Andrea Francis

When West Toledo Library Branch Manager Andrea Francis saw the statistics on the number of grandparents raising their grandchildren, she immediately saw a way for the library to help. Francis was introduced to the Grandparent Project as a board member of a local senior center. She saw how the program provided much needed legal, financial, emotional and school-related support and knew the library could expand the program's reach with evening hours and separate programming for the kids. Grandparents from at least five counties in the Toledo area have participated in the program. It has been so successful that the project has expanded to other library branches in Toledo and other library systems around the state. This program is replicable and the costs to the library are minimal. The lectures are typically provided free-of-charge by local judges, teachers, psychologists and other community members. Francis has taken the project one step further and now offers a Grandparent Club and Grandparent Playdate at the library to address the isolation and loneliness expressed by many of the participants. Her work on the Grandparent Project demonstrates how public libraries play an important role in their communities and make a big difference in people's lives.



Trustee Award of Achievement



Barbara Denison

As a member of the Washington-Centerville Public Library Board, Barbara Denison has made a significant impact on the library system and the community it serves. She devoted a career to educating people and that passion did not end when she retired as a professor at Wright State University. Denison was instrumental in the recent renovation and expansion of the Woodbourne Branch of the Washington-Centerville Public Library system. She made it a priority to get the most value for the tax dollars invested. Her active involvement in every step of the project demonstrates her dedication to the library and the community. Denison launched an Art Speaks Volumes project with fellow trustees and local citizens to create original works of art for the library. The response from local artists was tremendous and original artwork is now on display for everyone to enjoy. Denison also directed the planning for the Sneak Peek Fundraiser Gala to celebrate the library's grand opening. The event drew more than 200 attendees and raised nearly \$40,000. Those funds were used to add an interactive wall in the Children's Area. Many people share knowledge, time and talent on local boards, but what sets Denison apart is the way in which she connects with people and her genuine desire to help her community.



Service Excellence Award



Grace Walker

Grace Walker is not content to establish a library program and consider it “done.” She is always looking for ways to improve and bring even more people into the library. As the Youth Services Assistant at Pickerington Public Library, Walker recognized a need for a sensory storytime for families. She thoroughly researched sensory issues, wrote and obtained a grant, and designed an entirely new class, called Sensory Stories and Play. The program included dim lights, quiet music, and fidget toys, plus it was held before the library opened to give families a comfortable place to explore the library. The program was such a success that Walker wanted to develop it further and reached out to a local Autism organization. This collaboration has led to a curated selection of books as well as additional resources for parents and caregivers at the library. Her efforts extend to adults as well. Walker leads a popular book club for adults with intellectual disabilities. She also embraced a project to establish a pollinator garden of native Ohio plants at the library that will benefit kids and adults. Walker is keenly aware of the needs and interests of community members and works tirelessly to share the library’s resources with them. Her ability to welcome and draw people with specialized programming illustrates her commitment to providing excellent customer service to all.





**Brittany Labinger and
Stephanie Brown**

John Philip Outreach Award

Brittany Labinger and Stephanie Brown have shown true dedication to the philosophy of taking programs and services outside of the library. This Outreach duo, dubbed the Discovery on the Go Team, works hard to provide students with exciting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities that align with Ohio's educational standards. Working closely with teachers, their programs often re-enforce what students are learning in the classroom. Brown and Labinger are willing to take these carefully planned lessons to schools, day cares, food pantries, parks, apartment complexes, or anywhere in the community where there are kids. Their creativity is on display with engaging activities such as "The Floor is Lava" obstacle course, coding tiny robots, or even creating snowballs out of common household products. After a lesson, Brown and Labinger often leave behind books and materials to encourage kids to keep reading and learning. They have done an amazing job of reaching children from all backgrounds and fueling their interest in science and math. This team is committed to creating connections between the kids and the library and setting the stage for life-long learning.



Diana Vescelius Emerging Leader Award

In four short years, Pamela Brockway has expanded library programming at the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County (PLYMC) and made a significant impact on the children and families in the Northeast Ohio. As the Early Learning Team Leader, Brockway is passionate about early literacy and Kindergarten readiness. Her enthusiasm has had a ripple effect on public libraries around Ohio. Brockway sought out the expertise of Saroj Ghoting, a nationally-recognized early childhood literacy consultant in nearby Pennsylvania, to devise a plan for creating new activities and resources for young children and their parents and caregivers. This collaboration led to a number of new programs including the library's popular Kindergarten Readiness Stations which are now available at every PLYMC branch. The stations change each month and always align with Ohio's Early Learning Standards. Brockway is also eager to share what she has learned with her colleagues, frequently attending continuing education events and exchanging ideas. In addition, she has been instrumental in providing new STEM programming to kids in the area by reaching out to community partners like Youngstown State University. Brockway's enthusiasm is contagious and she motivates others to join in her quest to help Ohio's children through the public library.



Pamela Brockway





Doug Evans

Citizen of the Year Award

As the former Executive Director of the Ohio Library Council, Doug Evans has made a lasting impact on Ohio's public library community. His work with the OLC Board of Directors, staff and library directors throughout the state will benefit libraries for years to come. Evans was instrumental in bringing public libraries together for an Opioid Symposium to discuss how libraries could educate Ohioans about the dangers of opioids. The event drew more than 250 library administrators and elected officials. His efforts did not stop with this program, but he went further and joined forces with the Ohio Opioid Education Alliance to make free tools available to all of Ohio's 251 public library systems. Libraries are now able to use these resources to educate Ohio's families and help prevent the next generation from abusing opioids. This is just one example of the countless projects that have had a significant impact on public libraries and Ohio's citizens. As Executive Director, Evans worked tirelessly to achieve the OLC's vision of advocacy, education and collaboration. He proudly served as the voice of Ohio's public libraries for 17 years.

