



## Hall of Fame Librarian

### Tim Kambitsch, Retired Director, Dayton Metro Library

Tim Kambitsch dedicated a long career to libraries, retiring recently with more than 40 years of service to the profession with experience working in every job in the library! He has used that vast experience to share and support colleagues, serving as a trusted confidant – always willing to lend a hand. Kambitsch was an active member of many library organizations, locally and nationally and is admired by colleagues across the country for his incredible knowledge and experience. He was also very active in the Dayton community by working with many partners, but closest to his heart was his work with Leadership Dayton, where he worked to develop future leaders in the community and was recognized for his volunteerism with multiple regional awards.



*TIM KAMBITSCH*

Unarguably, his largest project at DML was providing Montgomery County with 18 new library buildings. This multi-year, \$187M project, showed a determined focus, vision, and strategy and became one of the largest library construction projects in the nation. Kambitsch was involved at every step of the project, from assisting with design and hiring contractors, to helping vacuum and move furniture before a branch opening ceremony.

According to Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, Kambitsch made sure that the library was at nearly every table in the community and that under Kambitsch, libraries became anchor institutions in Dayton neighborhoods.

“While many of our neighborhoods have seen the pain of disinvestment by large companies and banks, the brand-new libraries have provided hope and opportunity to the people of our city,” Whaley said.

Under Kambitsch’s leadership, DML launched a number of successful programs including Home Help Centers, iPad lending, the Career Adventures Camp, Job Seekers, and early literacy kits delivered through home visits. These are just a few of the many examples reflective of his commitment to making the library an active destination for creative collaboration.

Kambitsch was the driver behind many of the changes at DML, emphasizing community support, intergenerational learning, hands-on experiences, greater equity, and neighborhood building. From his first job as a library page in 1972 to his most recent role as DML director, his passion for libraries remains unwavering.



## Librarian of the Year

### James Hill, Director, Chillicothe and Ross County Public Library

Since becoming Director of the Chillicothe and Ross County Public Library (CRCPL), James Hill continually assesses the community and leverages resources in order to provide services and programs that will have the greatest impact. Hill often talks about working in a “caring profession.” For him, that care encompasses CRCPL staff, customers, and the community at-large.

Ross County has been hit hard by the drug epidemic. Hill forged a partnership with other county agencies to bring a Peer Recovery Supporter to the library. This person provides an essential service to the county, helping people navigate the heroin epidemic and finding resources to help. The library board recently voted to continue this position as a library-hire when the grant funding expires. The community truly appreciates all that Hill and the CRCPL staff are doing. Perhaps one of the greatest acknowledgements of appreciation by the community was the passage of a continuing levy in 2020.



*JAMES HILL*

This year, it is important to note programs and services resulting from the pandemic. James was a key member of the Community Response Team. Under his initiative, the library developed a check-in program to monitor the elderly and isolated individuals. He had the library provide graphic arts assistance to the Health Department, added Chromebooks for patron checkout, extended Wi-Fi access, and a telehealth room was installed in the Main Library. But the pandemic has not stopped James or CRCPL from moving forward as evidenced by the expansion of the outreach department and a new bike lending program, among other projects.

James has served in a variety of leadership capacities at both the local and state level. This includes leadership roles in SERLS and OLC. In the community he has formed numerous partnerships with community organizations. James is currently president of both the Ross County United Way and Rotary Club.

Further, Hill is committed to his staff and staff development. Since becoming director, he has assisted six staff members in obtaining their Master of Library and Information Science degrees and professional certifications.



## Service Excellence Award

### Doug Stout, Veteran's Project Coordinator, Licking County Library

Doug Stout has worked for the Licking County Library for more than 30 years and has held a variety of different positions – Clerk, Driver, Circulation Supervisor, and Head of Building Services. He has demonstrated an *all-in, can-do* attitude at every phase of his career.

Stout is very passionate about libraries, seeks excellence in every customer service interaction, and has encyclopedic knowledge of the library facility and its history. He is always generous in sharing his time and knowledge with staff. It is with his most recent role, Veteran's Project Coordinator, that he deserves special recognition.



*DOUG STOUT*

What started out as an assignment on a local sesquicentennial planning committee blossomed into a newly created full-time Veteran's Project Coordinator position for Stout. In just a few years in this role, he has captured the stories of nearly 6,400 Licking County Veterans. His Veteran's Project has also helped the Licking County Library build partnerships throughout the state. He has produced three Veterans documentaries; presented dozens of Veterans programs to the Licking County community; and delivered numerous presentations to audiences of all ages throughout the state of Ohio and beyond.

He frequently collaborates with universities, historical societies, Veteran's groups, and schools for presentations and events. He has partnered with local institutions to act as a tour guide to historic sites like Gettysburg and has even connected the families of veterans across continents. The reach and scope of Stout's work is an inspiration for all libraries and a wonderful reminder to the community about the value of a public library.



## Ohio Friends of the Library Recognition Award

### Friends of the Medina County District Library



*Pictured from left to right: Carol Mamrak, Diane Grubbs, Beth Levar, Deb Tull, Kellie Conetsco, Joann Nice, and Susan Nelli.*

Amidst unprecedented times, the Friends of the Medina County District Library demonstrated ingenuity and persistence by altering their fundraising efforts to ensure that they could continue to support library programs despite the pandemic. They adapted their Author Events to Zoom events with great success and maintained a consistent social media presence that increased their Facebook followers by more than 29 percent and Instagram followers by 81 percent.

The Friends raised nearly \$9,000 in 2020 through fundraisers, grants, and donations despite the challenges of the pandemic. They did this by establishing new relationships and creating new fundraising initiatives, including an online “Get Into Character” fundraiser, an online December #GivingTuesday campaign, and a series of “Dine & Donate” fundraising events at local restaurants.

When their primary source of fundraising, public book sales, was curtailed by COVID-19 restrictions, the Friends found a way to sell books. They reached out to approximately 70 local and regional book dealers and arranged shopping appointments. As a result, the Friends group raised more than \$5,500 in four months and connected residents to the library and each other.



## Trustee Award of Achievement

### Dr. Garalynn Tomas, Trustee, Lorain Public Library System

Dr. Garalynn Tomas has demonstrated an exceptional level of commitment and service during her 21 years on the Lorain Public Library System (LPLS) Board. Her involvement with the library began as a Friend of the Library member who led community engagement for a building project at the North Ridgeville Branch in 1998, then expanded into chairing a successful levy campaign to fund that initiative.

Dr. Tomas officially joined the LPLS Board of Trustees in 2000, helping to establish the Library Foundation in 2004, and continuing to serve on the board for more than 20 years. She is currently serving two terms as president of the Board of Trustees.

In addition to her sustained local involvement, she has formed strong ties with area legislators and advocated on behalf of libraries. She has served as part of the Lorain County's Funding Formula Committee and in 2018 was appointed to the OPLIN Board, where she is currently serving on the Executive and Nominating Committees.

Dr. Tomas is recognized as a strong mentor to all levels of staff and colleagues, as well as someone who is adept at providing in-depth engagement that supports and respects library management.



*GARALYNN TOMAS*





## John Philip Outreach and Community Engagement Award

### David Siders, Civic Engagement Coordinator, Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library

David Siders always works to develop community partnerships, but during the COVID19 pandemic, he found unique ways to connect his community to the library and other needed services. Siders collaborated with the public access TV studio to create videos on topics such as job resources and supporting student remote learning. More than 15 percent of Cincinnati's population do not have access to the internet, so television was the best option to reach them. Siders also organized blood drives, free COVID testing collaborating with UC Health, and free wellness checks collaborating with Christ Hospital.



DAVID SIDERS

Siders also worked with local government agencies such as the Legal Aid Society and the Community Action Agency to connect people to resources which would help prevent evictions. He similarly worked hard to expand community members' access to voting information by organizing voter registration events, teaming up with a local theater group, and maintaining a voter information page on the Cincinnati and Hamilton County website.

As a result of Siders' tireless efforts, traditionally marginalized groups in the Cincinnati area have a true advocate. The pandemic showed that Siders knows how to best leverage library and community resources to help those in need.



## Diana Vescelius Emerging Leader Award

**Sondra Presley, Price Hill Branch Manager, Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library**

Sondra Presley is the Branch Manager at the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library's Price Hill Branch. Sondra managed a transition that saw her branch transform from one of the smallest branches to one of the largest branch facilities. She stepped into the position when the library was operating out of a small, leased space at the Rec Center. Presley worked collaboratively with the Rec Center to create programs for all age groups and paved the way for larger-scale initiatives within both organizations throughout the county.

Even during the pandemic, Presley and her team were able to partner with more than 20 local community organizations, providing summer learning materials, delivering free books to various community groups, distributing take-and-make kits, along with updates on the building project. Presley has also promoted Spanish language materials and signage and hired library workers fluent in Spanish to help meet the needs of the community.



*SONDRA PRESLEY*

Presley is also committed to sharing the positive impacts of library work with a diverse set of groups and community organizations, including joining the Ethnic Librarians and Staff Special Interest Group to form an affiliate group of the Local Black Caucus of the American Librarian Association.

She also serves as an elector to help develop the Choose to Read Ohio biennial booklist and partners frequently with colleagues at Mt. St. Joseph University. Presley's passion for her work and compassion for her community make her an ideal recipient of the Diana Vescelius Emerging Leader Award.



## Library Innovation Award

### ALL Ohio Public Libraries and Library Staff

Each year, the Ohio Library Council's (OLC) Library Innovation Award recognizes the wide variety of expertise, creative talent, and successful initiatives incorporated in Ohio's public libraries. This year, the Library Innovation Award is presented to ALL Ohio public libraries and staff members for their innovative work during the pandemic. This award acknowledges and celebrates Ohio public library employees, their remarkable resiliency and unwavering dedication to serving their communities.

From virtual storytimes to COVID testing sites, Ohio's public libraries adapted their services by launching virtual programs, expanding digital collections, and keeping Ohioans connected with internet access. Libraries shared their experiences with each other and worked together to implement services that would benefit millions of Ohioans, such as loaning WiFi hotspots, offering curbside pick-up and delivery services, and serving as food access points for families in need. Many of these programs and services are here to stay and will have an impact on Ohio residents for years to come.

"During the pandemic, Ohio's public libraries made it their mission to keep people connected, not just to the library, but to school, work and one another," said OLC Chair of the Board, Cheryl Kuonen. "Library staff quickly improvised and expanded services in unprecedented ways. The OLC Board of Directors and Awards & Honors Committee wanted to acknowledge the innovative work of all Ohio libraries and their employees over the past year. The Library Innovation Award celebrates their incredible work, resiliency, and dedication to serving their communities."

"OLC is honored to celebrate the achievements of these professionals, who are exemplary leaders and advocates, and whose contributions have advanced the mission of public libraries and improved the quality of life for millions of Ohioans," said OLC Executive Director, Michelle Francis. "As we navigate the challenges of this pandemic, now more than ever, we need to recognize the vast contributions of Ohio's public library employees and volunteers. My hope is that when members look back on these awards, they will see how the pandemic showed Ohio's public libraries at their very best."