



## Librarian of the Year

### **Sandi Thompson, Director, Puskarich Public Library System**

Sandi Thompson has made significant contributions to the library community through her exemplary leadership and mentorship roles. She is well respected locally and by her peers across the state.

Thompson continues to play a pivotal role at organizations such as the OLC, SEO (Serving Every Ohioan) Advisory Council, and Ohio's Broadcast and Educational Media Commission (BEMC). She has been instrumental in introducing new programs and innovative ideas, propelling the library community forward. Her own library, Puskarich Public Library, has served as a test library for various SEO consortium initiatives, demonstrating her commitment to advancing the field.



In addition to her work within the library profession, Thompson has actively fostered partnerships with external organizations to bring innovative services to her area of the state. Notably, she collaborated with the Harrison County Board of Commissioners to secure a former school building for the library. This partnership allowed the library to provide recreation and fitness programs, addressing the holistic needs of the community beyond traditional library services.

Thompson also worked to establish a broadband pilot program to bring internet services to more than 30 households in the rural Appalachian community of Deersville. This initiative has helped bridge the digital divide and increased access to essential resources for residents.

As a visionary leader, Thompson has overseen a significant renovation project at the library. This transformation has resulted in the addition of study rooms, a recording studio, and a makerspace, providing diverse and innovative resources to the community. Through her guidance, the library has become a gem of Southeast Ohio and a dynamic hub where individuals can pursue their educational, creative, and entrepreneurial aspirations.

A tireless advocate for Ohio's public libraries, Thompson often engages with members of the Ohio General Assembly to ensure they know about the essential work libraries are doing. She has cultivated genuine relationships with elected officials to ensure that the library perspective is considered and valued when decisions are made.

Thompson's accomplishments reflect her dedication to public library service and her unwavering support of the Harrison County community. Her leadership and mentorship have empowered others, while her ability to forge partnerships has brought transformative change to her library system and its patrons.

For these reasons and more, Sandi Thompson is the recipient of this year's Librarian of the Year Award.