

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION HONORS LIBRARY LEADERS AND ADVOCATES AT 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ALBANY, NY – The New York Library Association will honor individuals for their support, leadership, and advocacy of libraries at the 125th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Rochester, NY on Friday, November 9.

The [Senator Hugh Farley Outstanding Advocate 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 State. The 2018 recipient of the Senator Hugh Farley Outstanding Advocate Award is the late New York State Librarian, **Bernard (Bernie) Margolis**. Bernie served as the NYS Librarian from 2009 to 2018, where he provided leadership and vision to all of New York's libraries. During his time as the State Librarian, state funding for public library construction doubled, the Summer Reading program grew to encompass two million young readers, and free public access internet and WiFi became available in all of New York's public libraries.

The [Outstanding Service to Libraries Award](#) recognizes and honors an individual who has made a significant, sustained contribution to the development, promulgation, growth, or extension of library and information services to the people of NYS or to residents. This year's award will be presented to **Rebekkah Smith Aldrich**, Executive Director of the Mid-Hudson Library System. Rebekkah has worked tirelessly on the issue of sustainability, co-chairing the NYLA Sustainability Initiative and introducing the [Sustainable Library Certification Program](#), the first benchmarking program of its kind. Through Rebekkah's leadership, knowledge, and dedication, there has been a positive impact on library directors; library trustees; local, state, and national elected officials; and of course, the people who use libraries of all types.

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 2018 recipient is **Galina Chernykh**, Director of the Harrison Public Library. Under Galina's leadership, her community has been introduced to healthy living and sustainability through a variety of innovative programs, including *Environmental Minicamp*, *Eat the Rainbow – Kids Eat Healthy*, *Composting in the Garden and Birds in Our Garden*, among others. Galina has also overseen remodels of two of her branches with even more capital projects to come, all while increasing municipal budget appropriations for the library.

The [Intellectual Freedom Award](#) recognizes an individual who's efforts have furthered the cause of intellectual freedom in NYS. This year's award will be given to **Ned Davis**, Executive Director of the Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL). Under Ned, the FFRPL has become a strong voice in the Rochester

community for equality, open discussion, and access to information. He has introduced an array of controversial and important discussion series including, *Conversations on Race*, *Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here*, *July 64: Remembering the Race Riots & Rebellion of 1964*, *Because of Women Like Her*, and *The Anthony Mascioli Rainbow Dialogues*. By facilitating these programs, Ned allows diverse stories to be told and voices to be heard.

Congratulations to this year's award recipients, Bernard (Bernie) Margolis, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Galina Chernykh, and Ned Davis!

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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