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THE NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES 2020 NYLA AWARD RECIPIENTS

ALBANY, NY – The New York Library Association (NYLA) is pleased to formally announce their 2020 NYLA Award recipients. Each year, five individuals are recognized for the inspiring and tireless dedication and passion for libraries and the library community across the state.

- **The Senator Hugh Farley Outstanding Advocate to Libraries Award** recognizes and honors an individual who has made a significant and sustainable contribution to the development, growth, and extension of library and information services to New Yorkers across the state. This year, **Senator Rachel May**, of State Senate District 53 was presented with this award for her tireless efforts and genuine care about the sustainability of libraries and recognizes libraries are the epicenter of the communities she serves. This year, she was a key leader in restoring proposed funding cuts to libraries with more than \$780K allocated to libraries in her district in State Aid and Library Construction.
- **The NYLA Above and Beyond Award** recognizes and honors individuals who have made significant contributions of recognized service to NYLA and the library profession. This year, this **Dr. Barbara Stripling, Professor Emerita of Syracuse University**, was awarded this distinction. Dr. Stripling has had a significant impact on the field of librarianship; from her terms as President of American Library Association and New York Library Association to the development and re-imagination of the Empire State Information Fluency Continuum – Dr. Stripling has empowered librarians and library workers.
- **The 2020 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. This year, **Melissa Tacke, Director of the Castleton Public Library**, received this honor. Since 2015, Melissa spearheaded an incredible transformation of the library. For example, under Melissa's guidance, the library's summer reading program participation has seen a 300% increase in participation. She also leverages community partnerships and community groups and businesses to expand the breadth of programming the library provides for their patrons.
- **The 2020 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 and information services to the people of NYS or to residents. This year, this award was presented to **Sandra Michele Echols, Adjunct Professor at St. John Fisher College**. Sandra is the immediate past President of the New York Black Librarian’s Caucus, currently pursuing a Ed.D in Educational Leadership from the Caulfield School of Education at Saint Peter’s University, and starting her own business as a career consultant for adult learners. With a diverse array of experience and education, what unifies her is a professional philosophy as a librarian and scholar is a commitment to seeing and serving whole individuals.

- **The 2020 NYLA Intellectual Freedom Award** recognizes an individual whose efforts have furthered the cause of intellectual freedom in New York State. This year, James G. Neal, University Librarian Emeritus at Columbia University received this award. James is said to be the “epitome of an Intellectual Freedom advocate locally, state-wide, and nationally.” As a member of the Freedom to Read Foundation, James has worked to expand membership, bring in new funding, explore evolving issues, expand the diversity and inclusion in its work, and strengthen ties with ALA.

Earlier this month, the award recipients had their Awards Ceremony during the NYLA 2020 Annual Virtual Conference and Trade Show. To view the NYLA 2020 Award Recipients acceptance speeches, click [here](#). Congratulations to all this year’s award recipients!

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About The New York Library Association (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.