

Library Wins State, Local Awards



Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian was selected as the winner of the Indiana Library Federation (ILF) 2019 Outstanding Library Staff Award for her work on increasing Library access for domestic violence survivors.

After years of working in west coast bookstores and developing a specialty in rare books, Shannon is now studying to be a librarian at Indiana University and working as an Information Assistant at the Library. Shannon was awarded the Friends of the Library Pioneer Grant in February, which she used to start Creating Access for Violence Survivors (CAVS).

The CAVS project created Library protocol for Monroe County residents in hiding or transitional housing due to escaping domestic violence. It also provided training for Library staff on domestic violence and related issues, and gave Middle Way House residents access to eLibrary and digital learning tools on Library-curated iPads and Playaway tablets.

"Shannon's commitment to improving access to the Library for survivors of domestic and sexual violence within Monroe County will make significant and lasting improvements in our community now, and in years to come," wrote Stephanie Waller and Sarah Hunt of Middle Way House in Shannon's nomination letter.

"I know I have said it before, but I am still so humbled by all of this, and honored to have had the opportunity to serve my community in this way," Shannon said. "When I decided to pursue librarianship it was because I had a desire be of service. I'm grateful for all the help and support I received to bring this project to life."

The Library system itself was also chosen by its peers in the ILF community for an award. The 2019 Programming Award honors and recognizes a library system or branch of a library system that has successfully provided ongoing, innovative, and diverse programming designed to meet its community's needs.

55,733 participants attended one of the Library's 1,955 programs for children, teens, and adults in 2018. Areas of programming included digital creativity, book clubs, crafting, adulting, literacy, virtual reality, storytime, 3D printing, nonprofit support, inclusivity, caregiving, local & family history, theater performances, accessibility, cultural celebrations, and much more. All programs were free and open to

the public.

Both awards will be given at November's ILF annual meeting awards and honors banquet.



Finally, the Library has also been awarded the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce's inaugural Community Anchor Award, which recognizes a business or organization that has contributed positively to the local community over a sustained period.

The Library was nominated by the Friends of the Library, who wrote, "The Library plays a central role in facilitating the community's aspirations for Monroe County to be an informed, accessible, and inclusive place." The award was given at the Thursday, September 26 annual meeting of the Chamber.

The Friends of the Library supports the Library's vital role in the community and helps make programming and summer reading games possible.

Posted by Mandy H. on September 30, 2019

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