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Georgia Library Association - Paraprofessional Division Grants

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*People, Libraries
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

Georgia Library Association Paraprofessional Division Grants

The Paraprofessional Division of the Georgia Library Association (GLA) provides grants to full-time library paraprofessionals to facilitate their attendance at the Georgia Libraries Conference. Each winner also receives an awards plaque and a free one-year paraprofessional membership in the Georgia Library Association. This year, five paraprofessionals were chosen for the grants including Rebecca Ballard, Kaitlin Dotson, Lavonna Moore, Belinda Outwater, and Shannon Terral.



Rebecca Ballard is the children's specialist for Oconee County for the Athens Regional Library System. Some of her duties include evaluating the collection for her patrons' needs, working with patrons, designing and

conducting children's programming, and school outreach. In her time working at Oconee County Library, the number of children's programs offered has increased but also the monthly attendance has more than tripled. Many children come to the library specifically to see "Miss Rebecca." She has developed many popular and innovative programs such as Family Music Jam, Sensory Exploration, Slime-ology, Puppetry Camp, LEGO club, Chess club, and the Pagemaster Book and Movie Club, just to name a few. She introduced a wildly popular graphic novel collection for juvenile readers. She is a dynamite children's librarian with enormous

energy. However, she does not just keep her talents in the library walls. She is very active in community affairs providing children's programming for the Farmer's Market, participating in area festivals, and working to bring other performers to our area.

Kaitlin Dotson is a processing assistant at the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Georgia. Her job responsibilities include arranging and describing new collections



and preparing them for researchers to use. She is also responsible for providing reference assistance to researchers, both in person and remotely. She manages the accessing of incoming collections and ensures that deeds of gift are completed for every donation. She also tracks the processing statistics and assignments for the manuscripts unit. She recently completed docent training and is now providing tours of the galleries at the Special Collections Libraries. This interaction with the public has led to meaningful conversation regarding access for an evolving and complex community of patrons and visitors. She is consistently working to improve her skills related to arranging and describing collections. She is a wonderful addition to the Hargrett Library and a valuable member of the archival profession.

Lavonna Moore is the outreach/branch services assistant for the Okefenokee Regional Library System. She works at the front desk, assists with



programming, and is a jack of all trades. She frequently creates unique crafts for kids and adults. She is friendly and outgoing. She assists patrons with finding books using various online and print

resources. Patrons often request to see Ms. Moore because they know that she will be able to find whatever they need. Ms. Moore was recently promoted from library clerk to branch/outreach assistant so that she could use her skills to help all five branches. Her new job duties allow her an opportunity to find and implement new and creative programming for five counties. She does extensive research online using sources like Pinterest to design and market these unique programs. Everyone in the library system relies on Ms. Moore’s knowledge and her creativity. She has proved herself to be a valuable team member.

Belinda Outwater is the library manager for the Auburn Library. As a library manager she wears a lot of hats. She ensures daily operations of the library and maintains customer service standards. She delegates out projects in addition to the normal circulation and patron related tasks. She makes purchasing decisions and manages supplies. She works closely with the city staff and leaders to make sure the library is an integral part of the



community. She pursues and develops partnerships with local organizations and businesses to boost support for the library and its programs. She brings passion and a love of literacy to her job. She enjoys putting the right book in the right person’s hand at the right time. She brings leadership, not just management, to her staff. She has exhibited strong leadership abilities and shows that managing with compassion and a dedication to excellence are not mutually exclusive. She encourages her staff to be creative and to try new things. The staff has made the library the heart of Auburn, the place where the citizens can come and get information, assistance, or a friendly face. They are about “connections, not collections.” The library may be small, but they are mighty!

Shannon Terral is a medical library associate at the Greenblatt Library of Augusta University. Some of her duties include: providing excellent customer service to meet the needs of all library patrons, run the daily deposit, interlibrary loan, statistics, remove Banner holds, maintain an inventory list of the supplies for Access Services and order new supplies, check newly entered patron records for accuracy, manage and rent private study carrels and lockers, troubleshoot equipment problems, and create eye-catching flyers for library events. In the face of library restructuring, a university merger, and a changing library culture, Shannon has proved to be flexible, reliable, and insightful. She rises to challenges and is a veteran of hard work and dedication. She is willing to do all she is asked in support of the library and the department. She is a friendly and welcoming presence on the



information desk and works hard to make the patrons feel heard and respected.

For more information on the GLA Paraprofessional Division Grants, please see: <https://gla.georgialibraries.org/resources/paraprofessional-grants/>