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Georgia Library Association - 2020 GLA Awards

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

Georgia Library Association 2020 GLA Awards

Library Support Services Award

The Library Support Services Award is given each year to recognize someone employed in a library support profession who has furthered library development or who has made outstanding contributions to Georgia libraries as part of his or her job or business. The award winner could be a vendor employee, an employee of an office or department that supports library services, or an employee of an individual institution.

This year's winner is Kimberly Spencer, chief financial officer of the Coastal Plain Regional Library system.



Kimberly's nomination noted her drive in assisting with financial matters both within her system and throughout the state. She has assisted in developing policies for the

Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) new director orientation manual, headed up the RIF for the Georgia Libraries Accounting Alliance to replace Blackbaud, and has provided many informational sessions related to the implementation of MIP Fund Accounting. She has a reputation for being a team player, for being someone who understands the intricacies and individual needs of different library systems, and for being someone who is a knowledgeable and capable communicator.

Charles Beard Library Advocacy Award

The Charles Beard Library Advocacy Award was originally called the Library Advocacy Award. It was renamed in 2003 to honor Charles Beard, Georgia's strongest library advocate. The Charles Beard Library Advocacy Award is given each year to recognize someone not employed in or by a library who has made outstanding contributions to libraries.

LITERACY FOR ALL.

This year's winner is Beth Spillane with Literacy for All!

Beth's nomination notes her involvement with promoting the action steps for literacy in Georgia. She helped facilitate several meetings of library directors and staff from across the state, building consensus across the age spectrum. She continually involved libraries in the process to meet the state's literacy needs. When COVID-19 hit, Beth utilized her connections to allow five rural public library systems to offer 81 additional WiFi connections to assist K-12 students without internet connections. Her work seeks not only to find one-time benefits, but also to assist with ongoing capacity-building work.

Bob Richardson Memorial Award

The Bob Richardson Memorial Award was established by the Executive Board in 1999 in recognition of Bob Richardson's dedicated service to the Georgia Library Association. It honors those who have given outstanding service to the Georgia Library Association.

This year's winner is Virginia Feher, head librarian at the Oconee Campus of the University of North Georgia.



Virginia has been actively involved with the *Georgia Library Quarterly (GLQ)* for almost a decade, beginning as an associate editor and peer review coordinator, and becoming the editor soon after. In that time, she has been responsible for the direction and consistent delivery of GLA's official publication. She has also been actively involved as an officer in the Interlibrary Loan Interest Group and Government Information Interest Group, as well as serving as a past judge of the Academic Library Division's paper competition and an Atlanta Emerging Librarian coordinator. As editor of *GLQ*, Virginia has been an active and vocal ex officio member of the GLA Executive Board, providing valuable institutional memory and an engaged perspective on the continuing issues facing the association.

GLA Team Award

The GLA Team Award was established by the Executive Board in 2012. This award honors a team that has excelled in the past year by offering innovative programming or services, performing or acting on assessment activities, undertaking a successful outreach or promotion effort, or providing outstanding support of an individual Georgia library or Georgia libraries as a whole.

This year's winners are the Adult Programming Palooza Team: Angela Glowcheski, deputy director of Sequoyah Regional Library, and Tracy Walker, programming manager at Forsyth County Public Library!

Angela and Tracy joined forces to create a platform for people to share their ideas, success stories, and tips for improvement around adult programming. Not finding what they were looking for in already existing structures, they created Adult Programming Palooza to fill a hole in Georgia's library landscape. This work has served to save countless staff hours and to help libraries boost both their programming and outreach capabilities. Since its beginning in December 2018, they have sought to host Adult Programming Palooza twice a year to foster conversations and share best practices. They have also reinvigorated the GPLS reference listserv, providing it a new focus on community services and programming. Their efforts have shined a light on a service area that is traditionally overlooked, and their work continues to be a model for others in Georgia and throughout the national library landscape.



McJenkin-Rheay Award

The McJenkin-Rheay Award was established by an anonymous donor and approved by the Executive Board on July 17, 1981. It is given to recognize a librarian early in his/her career who has made outstanding contributions to the Georgia Library Association, to leadership as

exemplified by the careers of Virginia McJenkin (school libraries) and Mary Louise Rhey (public libraries).

This year's winner is Oscar Gittemeier, director of library services for the Teton County Library!

Oscar has been active in Georgia's libraries in numerous ways. His *Libraries Are Such a Drag* calendar fundraiser raised thousands of dollars



for the Beard Scholarship. His work with the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System allowed him to create connections with individuals throughout the city and to promote libraries

wherever he went. He was also principally responsible for work that received grants of more than \$500,000. Inside of GLA, he was vice president of Membership, where he worked to make connections with librarians across the state, to increase the presence of GLA at state library events, and to encourage excitement about GLA and all of its activities. As vice-president/president-elect, Oscar's voice was a welcome addition to the GLA Executive Board. He recently accepted a job that has taken him out of state, but his impact on Georgia's libraries will linger for years. Oscar has gained the respect of both new and seasoned professionals, and his multiple nominations attest to the inspiration that he provides within the field.

GLA Mid-Career Award

The GLA Mid-Career Award was established by the GLA Executive Board in 2018 to honor significant and ongoing contributions to the library profession, Georgia's libraries, and the Georgia Library Association by individuals who are in the middle of their library careers. This

award honors the accomplishments of recipients while also denoting GLA's belief in the ongoing potential of the recipients.

This year's winner is Casey Long, head of research and instruction services at Agnes Scott College.

Casey has had a continued positive impact on the library community throughout her career. Her numerous roles inside of GLA include chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee, Interest Group chair and vice-chair, and GLA secretary. Casey founded the GLA StoryCorps project that sought to record the stories of GLA's past and current leaders. She was instrumental in forming the Conference Recommendations Task Force that led to the current version of

the Georgia Libraries Conference. She was also a dedicated member of the Carterette Webinar Series, helping to significantly raise its profile and winning the GLA Team Award in 2017 for these efforts. On top of all of this, Casey has been an advocate for change, a friend and mentor to GLA members both new and old, and an independent voice for good in Georgia's libraries.



Nix-Jones Award

The Nix-Jones Award is given to a practicing librarian for distinguished service to Georgia librarianship. It recognizes substantial contributions to the library profession, such as: stimulation of library development, leadership in library programs, unusual and imaginative services, and outstanding support of Georgia's libraries.

This year's winner is Alan Harkness, director of the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries.

Alan's multiple nominations for this award spoke to his incredible energy, his passion for public service, and his dedication to the advancement of Georgia's libraries. Alan has worked in numerous libraries throughout Georgia in a variety of capacities, from



children's librarian and training manager to library director. In all of these roles, he used his platform to expand the library's capacities, and he used his creative and effective

teaching style to better all those he comes in contact with. Alan is at the forefront of the fine-free movement in public libraries, working hard to persuade funding agencies that this compassionate act increases public libraries' empathy and effectiveness. He is unafraid to speak his mind while still remaining an excellent listener. He epitomizes librarians in Georgia, and he raises the bar on quality and excellence for every Georgia librarian. For his distinguished and long-time service to so many of Georgia's libraries, GLA is proud to award him the 2020 Nix-Jones Award.

GLA Honorary Membership

Honorary Memberships are given to retired members of the Georgia Library Association

who have contributed significantly to the work of the association over a period of years. No more than three Honorary Memberships will be presented during any year.

This year, Carolyn Thomas Fuller has been awarded a GLA Honorary Membership.



Carolyn has faithfully served the Georgia Library Association ever since she moved to Georgia. She was a long-time chair of the Public Library Division, serving as chair and coordinator of the annual author's reception. She also served a three-year tenure as president-elect, president, and past president from 2010–2012. In addition to her service on the board, Carolyn is a regular judge for the Georgia Student Media Festival. She also worked tirelessly to drive GLA's activities in state advocacy, coordinating the Debi Davis prints for over a decade, which includes securing the financial sponsorship and hand delivering the prints to every elected representative. She was named Georgia's Librarian of the Year in 2017 by GPLS. As a director, Carolyn advocated for the importance of professional involvement, consistently sending many of her staff to the GA COMO Conference to expose them to ideas and professionals from around the state. Carolyn retired from the Henry County Library System in 2018 after successfully leading it for 20 years.