

MLS Awards 2008

Welcome to the MLS Annual Meeting Awards Presentation.

The MLS Awards Selection Committee reviewed the nominations and decided on the recipients. They represent all types of libraries and the MLS Board and Staff. I would like to thank them for their efforts. Please stand when I call your name.

Jan Chindlund, Ann Lee, Kathy Berggren, Tony Siciliano, Loree Washington, and Mary Claire Sabio. Thank you.

Janet Hayes Excellence in Customer Service Award

The Janet Hayes Excellence in Customer Service award recognizes an MLS staff member who demonstrates excellent customer service skills. This award was named in honor of Janet Hayes, who had a strong sense of customer service and provided essential support to all MLS staff and members. Janet worked for the system for twenty-two years, and she demonstrated her dedication to the members by making everyone she came in contact with feel special.

The winner of the 2008 Janet Hayes Customer Service Award is Tony Siciliano

Nominators made the following statements about Tony's commitment to member service:

"We had the opportunity to get to know Tony better when our library migrated to SWAN and have enjoyed his good humor, positive attitude, and all-around joie de vivre ever since. Tony truly exemplifies the best in service and regularly goes over and above the call of duty to answer queries and solve unique and complex cataloging and database scenarios."

"Tony answers questions with a song in his heart and a dance in his step. We've never hung up from a conversation with Tony without laughing."

“Tony has a feel-good nature about him that shows he loves and knows his job. Answering our questions seems like a pleasure for him [rather than a chore].”

I am pleased to add that the SWAN staff also nominated Tony for the Illinois Library Association’s Technical Services Award.

Please join me in congratulating Tony Siciliano.

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Susan K. Roberts Strengthening Our Profession Award

Susan Roberts was the consummate mentor for countless people in MLS. Her consistent encouragement of new professionals and support of her peers made her an indispensable asset to the profession, and her personal care and attention to her mentees made her a life-long influence in their lives. She also launched many innovative and forward-reaching programs aimed at providing services to all patrons of libraries, regardless of their location, income or education level.

The winner of the 2008 Susan K. Roberts Strengthening Our Profession award is Ruth Faklis.

Nominators made the following statements about Ruth:

“Through Ruth’s mentoring of her belief that Librarians are the last of the Renaissance people and the first on the edge of technology I realized the value of librarianship in society. Under Ruth’s leadership we were the first library in the nation to use wireless RFID and one of the first libraries in our system to have a wireless network.”

“Ruth Faklis is someone who automatically springs to mind when the word “mentor” is mentioned...Last winter, I had the privilege of coordinating a LACONI program in honor of Susan Roberts on the topic of mentoring. The first panelist I contacted was Ruth, as she is considered by all to be an ideal example of a mentor. Everyone in

that room learned something valuable from Ruth that day, whether they were brand new librarians or seasoned veterans.”

“Ruth has long been among the important leaders and mentors among the Library Administrators in MLS and has “groomed” a number of outstanding Library employees who have later become directors of their own libraries.”

“Ruth maintains positive relationships with former staff and networks extensively. She is always there to lend a helping hand and to provide advice.

I speak for many librarians when I say that she functions as an institutional resource for us. And she always helps with a glad heart!”

Please join me in congratulating Ruth Faklis.



Outstanding Government Official Award

The *Outstanding Government Official* awards recognize a government official for support of MLS member libraries.

The winner of the 2008 Outstanding Government Official Award is Senator Louis S. Viverito.

Nominators made the following statements about Senator Viverito:

“Senator Viverito has been highly instrumental in the support of library legislation and advocacy. His open door policy is greatly appreciated as issues that directly effect Illinois libraries get heard immediately.

“He recently supported our working cash effort on behalf of IL District libraries as well as the IMRF legislation that was before the General Assembly this Spring. The working cash legislation will help district libraries funding situations while strapped by the tax cap. His support

has been constant and unflinching. He regularly supports the ILA Advocacy Day activities and offers sound/sage advice on a regular basis.”

Please join me in congratulating Senator Louis S. Viverito.



Trustee of the Year Award

The Trustee of the Year award recognizes an MLS member library trustee for outstanding achievement as a public service official.

The winner of the 2008 Trustee of the Year Award is Marian Engel, Crete Public Library District.

Nominators made the following statements about Marian:

“Trustee Marian Engel has been on the Crete Public Library District Board for 20 years, but her involvement with the Crete Public Library goes back 45 years to 1963 when she was part of a three member Planning Council commissioned to explore the possibility of establishing a public library in the small rural community of Crete. Marian was chosen to participate because she herself was a librarian and was about to open the library at the new junior high school in town...So thanks to the determination and commitment of the Council and Marian Engel, the Crete Public Library came to be.”

“Because Marian is a librarian herself, she was able to bring professional knowledge and understanding to decisions about policies, programs and services. She always used her skills to benefit the library and the community.”

“Behind her mild-mannered exterior, lurks the heart of a true librarian – open-minded, intelligent, compassionate and slightly (well, maybe more than slightly) radical...Every library should have a trustee like Marian Engel.”

Please join me in congratulating Marian Engel.



Best Practices in a Library

The Best Practices in a Library award recognizes an MLS member library for inventing or establishing a creative or effective process or program.

The winner of the 2008 Best Practices in a Library award is the Moraine Valley Community College Library for the development of the Information Literacy Summit.

Nominators made the following statements about Moraine Valley Community College Library:

“The Information Literacy Summit is an outstanding professional development and collaboration event that has enhanced our community since its development seven years ago. Moraine Valley uses its unique position in education to bring together librarians and other educators from all levels of education to support information literacy instruction.”

Information Literacy Summit participants represent colleges, universities, schools, public libraries, library systems, and other organizations. The Summit’s discussions encourage collaboration and shared understanding in a way that supports our students and encourages learning. The Summit is an important event not just within

the MLS community, but in the state. Moraine Valley collaborates with John A. Logan College and Illinois Central College to ensure that the information literacy discussion is statewide.”

Please join me in congratulating the Moraine Valley Community College Library.



Innovation in Technology Award

The *Innovation in Technology* award recognizes an MLS member library employee for the creative or inventive use of technology in their library.

The winner of the 2008 Innovation in Technology award is Lisa Perez of the Chicago Public Schools.

Nominators made the following statements about Lisa’s project:

With a grant awarded by the Illinois State Library, through Lisa Perez's efforts, our department established an island in the virtual reality environment Second Life. Its purposes are to (1) provide a forum for our school librarians to network and collaborate, (2) to provide access to virtual resources, (3) to extend our professional learning communities, and (4) to provide access to virtual events and resources provided by other professional organizations, such as the American Library Association and the International Society for Technology in Education. In addition to establishing a virtual CPS Professional Library, librarians representing eleven CPS schools created virtual office spaces to promote collaboration. Our island partner organizations include the Golden Apple Foundation, the Library of Congress American Memories training program, the University of Chicago eCUIP program, Chicago State University, the

Illinois School Library Media Association, AdvancEd, and the Center for Interactive Learning & Collaboration.

Please join me in congratulating Lisa Perez.

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Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lifetime Achievement award recognizes an MLS member library employee for continued excellence and significant contributions to an individual library, the Metropolitan Library System, or the library profession.

The winner of the 2008 Lifetime Achievement award is Sharon Wsol, Director of the Orland Park Public Library.

Nominators made the following statements about Sharon:

“For over twenty-five years, Sharon has contributed her knowledge and expertise to the library field, sharing her experience in library law issues, public librarianship, and customer service...Sharon’s most successful accomplishment has been serving as Library Director in Orland Park. Over the last ten years, the OPPL has metamorphosed from a medium-size library to one of the largest public libraries in MLS.”

“Librarians who have worked with Sharon over the last twenty years know she has extensive knowledge of her field, the willingness to share her resources and ideas , and an overall abundance of common sense...To build one building is substantial, to have produced three libraries in her lifetime is impressive.”

“During her career as a librarian, Sharon has been instrumental in the passing of two referendums which ultimately led to the construction of new library buildings in the suburbs of Crete and Orland Park Illinois. She has also been an active member of the Illinois Library Association, the American Library Association, as well as SSLAG, the SLS Legislative Organization, the SLS Library Administrators group, the Reference Services evaluating committee, SWAN Council and most recently with the SWAN Governance Group.”

“Her steady focus, good cheer and ability to look ahead to the next goal, next project is the mark of a good leader. She does not waste time on irrelevant issues, she remains focused on what needs to be done and creates an atmosphere where good ideas are well appreciated and allowed to flourish.”

“Sharon Wsol’s career has been marked by excellence; her achievements are both bold and subtle. Library users of the South Suburbs are well served because of her thoughtful, intelligent and innovative leadership. From beautiful, well thought out buildings to technological innovations to service oriented programs she has always strived for excellence in service, in collaborations, in mentoring, and in leading.”

Please join me in congratulating Sharon Wsol.