



News Release

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East Lansing Public Library Earns 2017 State Librarian's Excellence Award *Interlochen and Tahquamenon libraries also honored*

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LANSING – The East Lansing Public Library (ELPL) has earned the 2017 State Librarian's Excellence Award for superior customer service, State Librarian Randy Riley announced today.

“Michigan libraries are among the best in the nation,” said Riley, who presents on October 20 the annual award, including \$3,000 in privately-donated funds, at the Michigan Library Association's annual conference in Lansing. “They are so much more than just ‘book warehouses.’ Michigan libraries are the centers of their communities.

“East Lansing Public Library consistently provides top notch service to its users; has made establishing community partnerships a priority; and continues to serve as a model for outstanding customer service.”

The Library of Michigan Foundation and Library of Michigan (LM) present the State Librarian's Excellence and Citations of Excellence awards each year to highlight the importance of services provided by Michigan's libraries.

This year's Citations of Excellence went to the Interlochen Public Library and Tahquamenon Area School Public Library in Newberry. Each library receives \$1,000 as a Citation of Excellence winner.

The State Librarian's Excellence Award is sponsored by the Roger and June B. Mendel Fund through the Library of Michigan Foundation. The Citation of Excellence Awards are funded by Martin L. Gibbs in memory of his late wife, Carole Sorenson and the Library of Michigan Foundation in recognition of former Executive Director Carolyn “Sparky” Mowery.

"We are thrilled and humbled that the Library of Michigan and the Awards Committee chose the East Lansing Public Library to receive the State Librarian's Excellence Award," said Kristen Shelley, Director of the East Lansing Public Library. "The ELPL staff work tirelessly to provide quality programs and services to the community. It's such an honor to have the staff's hard work and passion for serving our community recognized."

Riley said the selection committee, with representatives from public, school, academic and special libraries, was impressed with the level of service ELPL provided amid a \$1.5 million renovation.

"Their website currently lists dozens of upcoming programs ranging from story times, teen job fairs, knitting groups, adult book clubs and maker space programs," he said.

"The committee especially was impressed with the library's partnership with Michigan State University by opening its doors to international students, scholars and their families. Programs like *East Lansing Welcomes the World*; participating in the *International Student Resource Fair*; offering a weekly *Practice Your English* session; providing volunteer opportunities; and supporting projects like the *One Community, One Read* event have made a huge impact in East Lansing."

State Librarian's Excellence Award evaluation factors include: demonstrating that the library provides superior service to its customers and community in a cost-effective manner, with a can-do attitude; always delivering on promises; and fulfilling the library's commitment to high standards of customer service.

In earning Citations of Excellence, Interlochen Public Library and Tahquamenon Area School Public Library also are recognized for a devotion to customer service.

Interlochen Public Library stood out for efforts to partner with the local senior citizen center and the Traverse Bay Area Homeschool program. Its involvement in the 5toONE program, which works to increase family participation in free programs designed to improve early childhood outcomes in the five-county region of rural northwest Michigan, indicated a significant commitment to serving all members of the community.

Tahquamenon's battle for survival and numerous victories have centered on providing exceptional service. The library's *It's YOUR Library Too* campaign was singled out for a roughly 60 percent increase in new patrons since 2010. Also, new collection development activities have updated the library's holdings and helped to attract new users and supporters.

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The Library of Michigan – Michigan's official state library agency for more than 185 years – is part of the Michigan Department of Education. To learn more, visit www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan.