NEWS RELEASE

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PA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION HOSTS ANNUAL GATHERING OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN HISTORIC ERIE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS.

Mechanicsburg, PA (October 18, 2019) – Each year, the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) honors the service of their members, as well as those community volunteers, who go above and beyond the call of duty to support the work of libraries throughout the commonwealth. And this year was no different. During their 2019 Annual Conference, the Association proudly recognized the following:

- **Library of the Year Award**: This award is given to the Chester County Library. The recognition honors a library that demonstrates excellence in the following areas: service to the community, advancing staff development and leadership in and support of Association activities such as the Pennsylvania Library Association’s Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS) and the PA Forward initiative. Chester County Library is the second library to receive this honor.

- **Distinguished Service Award**: This award is given annually to one person in recognition of exceptional meritorious service to libraries of the commonwealth. This year’s awardee is David G. Schappert with King’s College-PA. David is a past Pennsylvania Library Association President, member of the Association’s Legislative Committee, as well as the PA Forward Steering Committee and Training Team member.

- **Certificates of Merit**: These are awarded to individuals making outstanding contributions during the last five years in Pennsylvania. This year’s winners are Sheli Pratt-McHugh, University of Scranton-Weinberg Memorial Library; Chris Snyder, Bucks County Free Library; Sylvia Orner, Scranton Public Library; Jennifer Knisely, Altoona Area Public Library; and Kimberly Hrivnak, Allegheny County Library Association.

- **Elected Official Award**: This award may be given annually to an elected official or officials for exemplary support of library service in Pennsylvania. This year, the association was proud to award this deserving honor to Representative Stan Saylor, Chair Appropriations Committee, Pennsylvania House of Representatives, 94th District. Rep. Saylor serves part of York County.

- **New Librarian Honors Award**: Honors a librarian who has been in the profession fewer than six years. It recognizes the originality and inventive ability of a new librarian who devises new and improved methods in library service on a statewide or local level. The 2019 awardee is Emily Mross with Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

- **Trustee of the Year Award**: Presented to a public library trustee in recognition of outstanding leadership and service to library development at the local, system, district and/or state level. This year’s recipient is Chester County Library’s Earl Baker.

“The Pennsylvania Library Association is able to do what we do thanks to the unwavering efforts of our volunteers and our members,” said Christi Buker, PaLA Executive Director. “These awards are just our small way of shining a
light on what all librarians, library staffs and our volunteers do to continue promoting the value libraries bring to communities they serve. We are thankful for their support and engagement and are honored to be able to recognize their efforts. Congratulations to all of our 2019 winners.”

A committee comprised of association members reviews the nominations, submitted in late summer, and selects winners for the listed categories. Awardees are then invited to attend the association’s annual conference where they are recognized among the membership, their peers, representing all library types and sizes from throughout Pennsylvania.

“It was my honor to serve as the Chair of the 2019 PaLA Awards Committee and to be a part of the process of shining the spotlight on so many library professionals and partners who work humbly behind the scenes not for the sake of recognition, but sincerely out of commitment to promoting and improving libraries in Pennsylvania.” Said Carrie Sturgill, Head of Youth Services, Radnor Memorial Library. “Congratulations to all the award winners and thank you to everyone who submitted a nomination. It was incredibly rewarding to read about the innovative work that is happening all around the Commonwealth. Thank you for sharing your stories, and please keep it up!”

The Association’s MLS or Master of Library Science degree scholarship was also awarded during the afternoon event. Three Pennsylvania Library Association MLS Scholarships are available to Association members who are working toward their Master’s degree in the Library Science field. Each recipient receives a $1,500 scholarship and is required to complete a minimum of three credits toward the degree during the scholarship year. This year’s scholarship recipients are:

- **Danielle Gowen** ~ Library Assistant Youth Services, Haverford Township Free Library
- **Jen Powell** ~ Director, Tyrone-Snyder Public Library
- **Lisa Rand** ~ Youth Services Coordinator, Boyertown Community Library

For more information about the scholarship, including application information, visit [https://www.palibraries.org/page/Aid](https://www.palibraries.org/page/Aid).

Founded in 1901, the Pennsylvania Library Association is the state’s oldest and most diverse professional library organization serving libraries, library employees, library trustees, and Friends of the Library groups. PaLA represents more than 1,300 personal, institutional and commercial members affiliated with public, academic, special and school libraries throughout the commonwealth. The association represents the profession in Harrisburg with the state legislature and provides opportunities for professional growth, leadership development and continuing education for librarians.

For a listing of previous award winners, visit [https://www.palibraries.org/page/Awards](https://www.palibraries.org/page/Awards). For more information about the work of the Pennsylvania Library Association, visit [www.palibraries.org](http://www.palibraries.org).