



FLORIDA LIBRARY  
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**Press Release**

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**LIBRARIES, LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY SUPPORTERS HONORED**

The Florida Library Association (FLA) honored outstanding libraries, individuals, businesses and library supporters during its annual conference held May 7-9, 2014 at the Lake Buena Vista Palace Hotel. Award recipients were selected from a large number of applicants for the quality of their service to their local communities and to the library profession.

**AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE OPENING SESSION ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 7:**

**Public Library Website: Palm Beach County Library System**

In April 2013 the Palm Beach County Library System launched a completely new website and Web Catalog. These changes were designed to enhance the user experience and their ability to find just what they are looking for. Patrons have responded that they love it!

**Libraries Mean Business: Orange County Library System**

Workforce Central Florida (WCF) and the Orange County Library System (OCLS) have implemented a collaborative services model. WCF focuses on "putting Central Florida residents to work," OCLS supports "making Orange County a great place to live, learn, work, and play." Monthly workshops at libraries using resources teach participants how to find, apply, and

interview for work. After taking part in OCLS' technology classes, individuals leave with a polished professional resume and new technology and job searching skills.

**Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award: Martin County Library System**

Martin County Library System's L.E.A.P. program provides outstanding service to the youth of Indiantown, Florida. L.E.A.P. (Library Education After-School Program) is a homework and recreation program for at risk youth. It focuses on the cognitive, social, and physical domains of child development. L.E.A.P. is unique in the library sphere because it is a trailblazer for providing youth services to students through their local library.

**Excellence in Marketing and Public Relations: Hernando County Public Library System**

When the Hernando County Public Library System (HCPL) was selected as *FLA's 2013 Library of the Year*, Hernando County was in the midst of a difficult budget year, including facing a shortfall of over one million dollars. Winning the FLA award was just what HCPL needed. The library used the award to launch a widespread community awareness campaign focusing on the importance of HCPL. The objectives included keeping the library system fully funded, to receive community support and recognition, and to build staff morale by recognizing and celebrating this important achievement.

**Library Innovation Award: The Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library**

In June 2012, Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library formed a partnership with Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) to present six live virtual global story times through the Broward Education Communications Network (BECON). The interactive, virtual story times are geared

toward kindergarten through second grade and promote the library, literacy, and the joy of reading to children who may otherwise have never set foot in a library. Each program has local themes and global stories through which, students learn about other countries, cultures, and customs.

**Maria Chavez Hernandez “Libraries Change People’s Lives”: Yoshira Castro-Fritz, Library Branch Manager, Manatee County Public Library**

Over the past 12 years Yoshira Castro-Fritz has grown the Hispanic Services program from nothing to a dynamic inclusive library program of story hours, film programs, cultural celebrations, ESOL classes and conversation clubs, and a comprehensive collection of print, audio and eMaterials for the Latin community. She also created partnerships with the businesses and educational agencies to improve the marketing, literacy options and the instructional opportunities at the library.

**Outstanding Business and Media Partner: The Levenger Foundation**

The Levenger Foundation has been instrumental in raising thousands of dollars annually for the Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition by supporting the *Loop the Lake for Literacy Bike Ride* around the Okeechobee Lake. The Foundation also supports teen and young adult services at the Delray Beach Public Library by sponsoring the Annual Battle of the Books Program. In addition, the Levenger Foundation supports education for emergent library leaders to promote library services to the Latino and Spanish speaking through sponsoring the REFORMA de Florida Scholarship.

AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE CLOSING SESSION ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 9**Friends, Foundations and Boards - Outstanding Member: John Quick, Miami-Dade Public****Library System**

Friends' President John Quick quickly mobilized the Friends of Miami-Dade Public Library to take a multi-pronged approach to help the libraries when the Mayor and Board of County Commissioners proposed to close 22 of 49 branches, eliminate 250 jobs, and drastically reduce hours. John's hard work and leadership helped to prevent the closure of even a single library branch for FY 2013-2014. John continues to create library awareness and stability, working with the Friends and the Mayor to create the Library Blue-Ribbon Task Force, dedicated to finding a long-term solution to preserve the library system.

**FLA Librarian of the Year: Susan Dillinger, Director, New Port Richey Public Library**

Since she joined the New Port Richey Public Library in October 1990, Susan Dillinger has worked to provide an effective and progressive library for the residents of New Port Richey and Pasco County at large. In October 2012 she was named Interim City Manager and despite holding two full-time positions, she was able to continue to improve the library through new programs that promote environmental friendly initiatives. While interim City Manager she worked to bring equality to city's departments through the City's budget, and promote redevelopment throughout the City. Ms. Dillinger is an effective leader, helping others through her knowledge as a librarian, and continuously working to make people's lives better.

**FLA Library of the Year: Palm Beach County Library System**

Dream, Discover, Do - the Palm Beach County Library System has 17 locations located throughout this culturally and economically diverse community. The scope and nature of programs and services provided by PBCLS reflect the diverse needs of the patrons and the community. The library system offer materials in many formats: hard copy, paperback, large print, downloadable, and audio formats. Patrons can check out DVDs and music CDs, attend cultural, educational, entertainment programs, computer classes, musical performances, or community meetings. Professional information specialists help individuals find the information they need for research papers, business ventures, family histories, and medical conditions. And the Bookmobile travels to more than 40 stops a month and offers outreach services to those who are visually or physically unable to visit the library.

**FLA Lifetime Achievement: Julie Hunter, Associate Director, Broward County Library**

"Libraries serve people and serving people through libraries has been a wonderful path for me," says Julie Hunter, a retired library professional who began her career in 1965 as a reference librarian. In the 47 years since, Ms. Hunter has been a trailblazer, a leader and the woman who opened two of the nation's premier public libraries for the study and preservation of African-American history and culture: the Auburn Avenue Research Library on Black History and Culture in Atlanta, Georgia and the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center (AARLCC) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. AARLCC is the only library of its kind in Florida. Throughout her career,

she has strived to provide access to information for all, and has devoted her career to maintaining and preserving that right.

**FLA Leader of the Year: Faye C. Roberts, Past Executive Director, Florida Library Association**

Faye Roberts is the epitome of a successful library professional. In her decades of library service she has dramatically advanced the stature of libraries in Florida. From her ten years as Lake City Director through her years at the State Library, Faye was a risk taker, and innovator. Faye brought that experience, professionalism and leadership to us as FLA's ED. She is the face of librarianship for all types of libraries in Florida, representing us all with dignity, grace, tact, humor, and garnering respect from all who encounter her. Faye managed the association with a skill that kept it financially solvent, and enabled it to expand services. Her leadership has resulted in the FLA having national reputation as one of the best State Library organizations in the country!

More information about FLA awards, including the purpose of each award, may be found at <http://www.flalib.org/awards.php>

Additional information about the Florida Library Association is available online at <http://www.flalib.org>

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