

**For Immediate Release:**  
November 8, 2017

**For More Information**  
**Contact:** Rachel French

**Jesse White Awards More Than \$340,000 in Project Next Generation Grants**

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White awarded \$344,341 in 2018 Project Next Generation (PNG) grants. White created the program, which is the first statewide mentoring program to be administered through Illinois public libraries. Project mentors work with young students at public libraries to develop technological skills and guide them in life skills, such as effective communication, goal setting and conflict resolution.

“I am committed to improving the lives of young, at-risk children in Illinois,” said White. “I established this innovative program when I first became Secretary of State to give students an opportunity to receive hands-on experience with the latest technology at their local library.”

Libraries were awarded grants from the Illinois State Library using federal Library Services and Technology Act funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Grants were awarded to public libraries serving culturally diverse, low-income and underserved populations.

More than 10,000 students have participated in the PNG program since its inception in 2000, and 944 mentors have generously offered their time to provide training for students to help them obtain technological skills while encouraging lifelong learning.

PNG grant recipients include the following public libraries:

- Beardstown Houston Memorial Library
- Brimfield Public Library District
- Carbondale Public Library
- Centralia Regional Library District
- Chicago Ridge Public Library
- Decatur Public Library
- Elmwood Park Public Library
- Geneseo Public Library
- Glen Carbon Centennial Library District
- Grande Prairie Public Library in Hazel Crest
- Harrisburg Public Library District
- Joliet Public Library
- Kankakee Public Library
- Kewanee Public Library District
- LaSalle Public Library
- Matteson Area Public Library District
- Mississippi Valley Library District in Collinsville
- Moline Public Library
- Pekin Public Library
- Peoria Public Library - Lincoln Branch
- Richton Park Public Library District
- Six Mile Regional Library District in Granite City
- Sparta Public Library
- Thornton Public Library
- Wood Dale Public Library District

For more information, visit <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/grants/png.html>.

###