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A Newsletter from the Illinois State Library — Jesse White, Secretary of State & State Librarian

Spring
2016

INSIGHT

"Letters About Literature" contest winners announced

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White announced that students from Galesburg, Inverness and Wheaton are the winners of the 2016 "Letters About Literature" contest. The national reading and writing contest for students in Illinois is sponsored by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Center for the Book. Secretary White honored the winners at a ceremony in his Springfield office in May.

"For the ninth year in a row, I am proud to announce that Illinois had more entries than any state," said White. "The young writers we honored today have demonstrated, through their writing skills, how literature impacts so many lives."

To participate in the competition, students in grades 4-12 must read a book or poem and then write a personal letter to the author explaining how the book changed their views of the world and/or themselves. Students may select authors, living or deceased, from fiction, nonfiction, contemporary or classic. The Illinois Center for the Book appointed judges to select the top essayists in three competition levels.

This year's Illinois winners are:

- Level I, Grades 4-6: **Emma Blaum** of Galesburg wrote to author R.J. Palacio about her book, "Wonder." Emma attends Galena Primary School. Her letter was submitted by her teacher, Trista Richard.
- Level II, Grades 7-8: **Sarah Huddleston** of Inverness wrote to co-author David Levithan about his book "Will Grayson, Will Grayson." Sarah attends Quest Academy in Palatine. Her letter was submitted by her teacher, Jen Fabsik.
- Level III, Grades 9-12: **Zachary Kowalczyk** of Wheaton wrote to Illinois author Alex Kotlowitz about his book, "There Are No Children Here." Zachary attends Benet Academy in Lisle. His letter was submitted by his teacher, Lori Rogalski.

Each winner received a \$200 check from the Illinois Center for the Book, a plaque signed by Secretary White, a tour of the

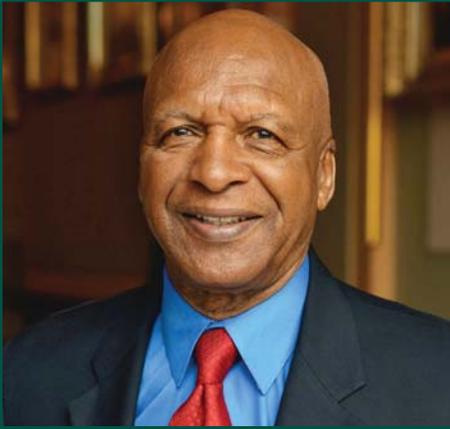


Pictured from left to right: Zachary Kowalczyk, Level III winner; Emma Blaum, Level I winner; Sarah Huddleston, Level II winner; and Secretary White.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield and a complimentary lunch at the Illinois State Library. Teachers received a \$100 check from the Illinois Center for the Book to purchase books for their school library, a tour of the Lincoln Presidential Museum and a complimentary lunch at the State Library.

At the event Secretary White was presented with the Crystal Honor Award by the Illinois School Media Association (ISLMA). ISLMA announced Secretary White as the winner of the award in the fall of 2015 for his distinguished support of school libraries throughout Illinois.

Read the winning essays at <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/projects/projectse.html>.



Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White named Library Luminary

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has been named an Illinois Library Luminary by the Illinois Library Association (ILA). The Illinois Library Luminaries program is ILA's honor roll that recognizes achievement and helps build an endowment fund for future generations. Secretary White was named a luminary by the ILA board this spring. White became Illinois' longest-serving Illinois Secretary of State on May 30, 2014, which also makes him the longest-serving Illinois State Librarian and State Archivist. White's tenure has been an asset to libraries in the state budgeting process, protecting them from the most severe cost cutting in lean years. In addition to overseeing the State Library and literacy programs, as well as the archives of significant legal and historical records, the Illinois Secretary of State's office performs a wide variety of tasks, ranging from driver and vehicle services to registering corporations and enforcing the Illinois Securities Act. White was first elected to the office in 1998 and was re-elected to a record-breaking fifth term in 2014. Congratulations, Secretary White.



Lincoln books donated to public and academic libraries

In April, two books highlighting Abraham Lincoln were donated to the Illinois Center for the Book at the Illinois State Library to be distributed to Illinois public and academic libraries. The books, "Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way: The America Lincoln Knew" and "A Day Long To Be Remembered: Lincoln in Gettysburg" were generously donated through a partnership with acclaimed Illinois landscape photographer, Robert Shaw; renowned Lincoln and Civil War historian, Michael Burlingame; and the Abraham Lincoln Association.

Thanks to this gift, Illinois library patrons will have the opportunity to experience firsthand how Dr. Burlingame's masterful writing and Shaw's powerful images are woven together with Lincoln's own words to create an elegant and exciting exploration of Lincoln's life story.



Pictured from left to right: Robert Shaw, Illinois photographer; Bonnie Matheis, Illinois Center for the Book coordinator; Kathryn Harris, president of the Abraham Lincoln Association; and Michael Burlingame, Illinois author.

Secretary of State Jesse White hosts second national "Targeting Autism"

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White hosted the second national "Targeting Autism" forum in March at the State Library in Springfield. The "Targeting Autism" program, launched last year by Secretary White and The Autism Program (TAP) of Illinois, is an innovative program designed to develop and implement creative ways to address the needs of Illinois residents impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

"The need for libraries and local providers to collaborate to better serve those with ASD is more important than ever in Illinois as the state's budget impasse has negatively impacted many service providers," said White. "Working with local families and ASD providers, libraries can provide resources and supportive environments that will help those with ASD achieve their full potential. I am happy that we have been able to continue this important program."



Emerging Writers Competition contest winners announced

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White awarded poets from Highland, Carbondale and Chicago as winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award in the 11th annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition.

Lisa Tellor-Kelley of Highland was awarded first place for her poem "Girl in Chemise." Christopher Wilson of Carbondale received second place for his poem "Rises with the Light." Trina Young of Chicago was the third-place winner for her poem "Bad Omens." The winners read their poems and received their awards during a ceremony at the State Library.

"I started the Illinois Emerging Writers Competition to promote creative writing and provide a unique opportunity for recognizing literary talent in the state," White said. "Illinois has a long and rich literary heritage, and these poets are adding to the tradition established by legendary Illinois poets like Gwendolyn Brooks. Great poems have the ability to enrich and enhance our lives, and I'm pleased to congratulate this year's talented winners."

The competition is named for the late Pulitzer Prize-winning Illinois Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks. It is co-sponsored by the Illinois Center for the Book and Kevin Stein, Illinois Poet Laureate.

The winning poems are available at www.illinoiscenterforthebook.org. Also, the poems will be submitted for possible publication in Ninth Letter, RHINO and Quiddity magazines, and Poetic License Press publications.



Pictured from left to right: Kevin Stein, Illinois Poet Laureate; Trina Young, third-place winner; Christopher Wilson, second-place winner; and Lisa Tellor-Kelley, first-place winner.

State Library's comprehensive online calendar

To view the State Library's calendar of events and deadlines, visit <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/calendar/home.html>.

Leadership changes at the Illinois State Library

State Library Director Anne Craig has accepted the position of senior director of the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), effective July 1. Anne spent 27 years at the State Library and served as director since 2005. Lawren Tucker, chief deputy director, retired on June 30. Lawren dedicated nine years of service to the Secretary of State's office and State Library. Greg McCormick has been appointed acting deputy director of the State Library, effective July 1.

State Library employee wins book award

Congratulations to **Marcus Birch**. His children's book, "Imaginary Boy," was honored with a Silver Medal for Juvenile fiction at the 2016 Independent Publisher Book (IPPY) Awards. The IPPY awards are designed to bring increased recognition to the deserving but often unsung titles published by independent authors and publishers.

Read more about the IPPY awards and check out the other national category medalists at: <http://bit.ly/20cbSwy>.

State Library staff news

Karen Egan from the State Library's Development Group was named the Secretary of State's Employee of the Year for 2015.

Bonnie Matheis, Illinois Center for the Book Coordinator, was the Secretary of State's Employee of the Month for January.

Cyndy Colletti, associate director of grants and programs, retired after more than 24 years of service to the Secretary of State's office and State Library.

Lawren Tucker, chief deputy director, retired after nine years of service to the Secretary of State's office and State Library.

“Targeting Autism”

(Cont. from page 3)

More than 70 library professionals, autism providers and advocates from across Illinois along with professionals in other states came together in March 2015 for the first national forum. Attendees gained a better understanding of the diverse needs of people with ASD and their families, and the ways libraries can support these patrons. Since then, forum participants have developed local collaborations and implemented a variety of programs and services.

At the second forum, attendees shared their experiences over the past year with each other. They also had an opportunity to hear from parents, ASD experts and two young students with ASD who host their own weekly web series to increase autism awareness.

New York Times best-selling authors John Donvan and Caren Zucker were on hand to discuss their book, “In a Different Key: The Story of Autism,” and sign personal copies for those in attendance. Donvan and Zucker were also awarded the Illinois Literary Heritage Award at the event for their lifetime of remarkable journalistic achievements. The award was established by the Illinois Center for the Book to recognize and acknowledge extraordinary contributions to literary culture.

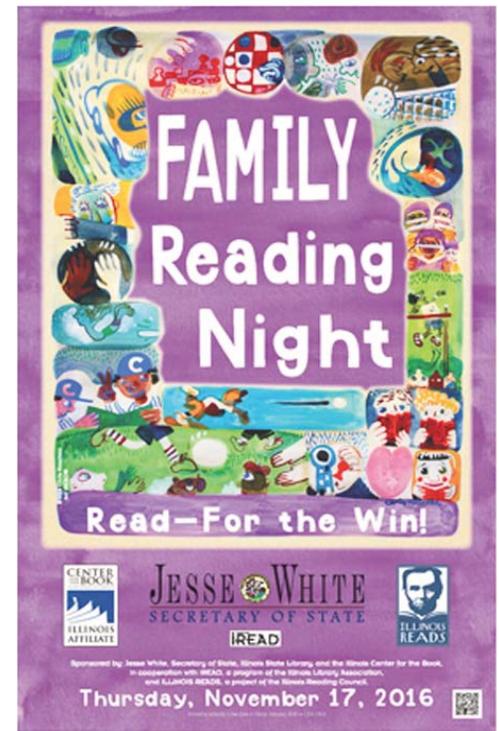
“Targeting Autism” was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through a National Leadership Forum Grant.

Family Reading Night 2016

Before you know it fall will be here and it will be time again for Family Reading Night (FRN), so it’s not too early to begin planning and preparing. FRN is an annual statewide event held the third Thursday in November to encourage families to spend quality time reading together. The event is sponsored by Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the Illinois Center for the Book. This year’s event will be November 17, with the theme “Read – For the Win!”

“It is important for families to spend time reading together,” says Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White. “A parent is a child’s very first teacher. This night provides parents with an opportunity to not only read to their children, but read with their children and spend quality time together as a family.”

Each year, posters and bookmarks are made available for libraries, schools, as well as youth and literacy organizations to promote their FRN programs. Unfortunately, due to the state budget impasse, the Illinois State Library will be unable to print the posters and bookmarks but have



made them available for download from the Secretary of State’s website and can be accessed from the following link: <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/frn.html>.

E-News from the State Library

E-News from the State Library’s weekly electronic newsletter is the best way to find out what’s happening at the library. E-News is where you will learn about grant offerings, continuing education opportunities and other library-related information. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving E-News, please send their email address to Kyle Peebles at kpeebles@ilsos.net with the line, SIGN THEM UP.



Insight
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