



*The Voice of the Library Community*

**New York Library Association**

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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION HONORS LIBRARY LEADERS AND ADVOCATES AT  
2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**ALBANY, NY** – The New York Library Association will honor individuals for their support, leadership, and advocacy of libraries at the 126th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Saratoga Springs, NY on Friday, November 15.

The [Senator Hugh Farley Outstanding Advocate Award](#) recognizes and honors an individual who has made a far reaching, sustained contribution to the promotion and/or support of library and information services to the people of New York State. The 2019 recipient of the Senator Hugh Farley Outstanding Advocate Award is Assemblymember Patricia Fahy. Assemblymember Fahy has represented the 109<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, comprised of the Capital Region, since 2013, and throughout her tenure has been a fierce advocate for libraries. She can always be counted on to vote for library funding and does everything she can to ensure the libraries in her district get what they need.

The [Outstanding Service to Libraries Award](#) recognizes and honors an individual who has made a significant, sustained contribution to the development, promulgation, growth, or extension of library and information services to the people of NYS or to residents. This year's award will be presented to **Lauren Comito and Christian Zabriskie**, Founders of Urban Librarians Unite (ULU). For the past decade Lauren and Christian have been seen on the front lines of library service: planning programs to benefit refugee children, doing story times for displaced children during Hurricane Sandy, and advocating for library funding in NYC and statewide.

The [Mary Bobinski Innovative Public Library Director Award](#) recognizes a public library director who has developed or implemented an innovative program leading to an increase in financial support and/or usage of their library. The 2019 recipient is **Caitlin Johnson**, Director of the Schuylerville Public Library. Serving as the Executive Director since 2015, Caitlin has increased circulation by 38%, library visits by 32%, program attendance by 118%, and summer reading participation by 427%. She has also ushered in multiple building projects, including an accessible ramp and sidewalks, interior renovations, handicap bathrooms, and a 500 square foot addition.

The [Intellectual Freedom Award](#) recognizes an individual who's efforts have furthered the cause of intellectual freedom in NYS. This year's award will be given to **the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF)**. The CBLDF provides legal referrals, representation, advice, assistance and education to cases affecting the First Amendment right to read, create, publish, sell, and distribute comics and graphic novels.

Congratulations to this year's award recipients, Assemblymember Patricia Fahy, Lauren Comito, Christian Zabriskie, Caitlin Johnson, and the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund!

**About NYLA:**

The New York Library Association (NYLA) is the voice of the library community in New York. NYLA is the oldest state library association in the country and represents school, college, special and public libraries, library staff, trustees, and students from around the state.

NYLA is the only statewide organization dedicated to advocating on behalf of all libraries and library staff in Albany and serves as the spokesperson on library matters to the media and public policymakers.

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