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***School Library Journal* and Scholastic Announce 2017 School Librarian of the Year**

*Winner Tamiko Brown from Ed White E-STEM Magnet School in El Lago, TX, and Four
Heroes Recognized for Outstanding Achievement, Leadership, and Innovation in
School Libraries*

NEW YORK, NY – August 24, 2017 – Today, *School Library Journal* (SLJ) named **Tamiko Brown** of Ed White E-STEM Magnet School in El Lago, TX the winner of the **2017 School Librarian of the Year Award**. Sponsored by Scholastic Library Publishing, this award honors K–12 school library professionals for outstanding achievement and the exemplary use of technology to engage students. As the 2017 School Librarian of the Year, Tamiko Brown will receive \$2,500 cash, plus \$2,500 worth of print and digital materials from Scholastic Library Publishing, and is currently featured on the cover of *School Library Journal's* September 2017 issue, available in print and online. To read the article and learn more about the School Librarian of the Year Award, visit: <http://www.slj.com/liboftheyear>.

For the first time ever, four librarians were honored as Heroes for outstanding performance in designated categories. In addition to being featured in print and online articles for SLJ.com, each Hero will receive \$500 in materials of their choice from Scholastic Library Publishing. The 2017 School Librarian of the Year Heroes are:

- **Maker Hero:** Alisha Wilson, Booker T. Washington High School, Pensacola, FL
- **Hero of Collaboration:** Jan Wilson, Brookwood High School, Snellville, GA
- **Hero of Family Outreach:** Liz Phipps Soeiro, Cambridgeport School, Cambridge, MA
- **Hero of Equitable Access:** April Wathen, George W. Carver Elementary School, Lexington Park, MD

Each nomination was evaluated by a panel of qualified industry professionals—including the 2016 School Librarian of the Year, Todd Burleson—based on several criteria such as exemplary service to fulfill the needs of students and school community, effective integration of library services with curricula, demonstrated student engagement, parent and family outreach, and more.

Quotes about the 2017 School Librarian of the Year Award:

Tamiko Brown, 2017 School Librarian of the Year

“It is an honor to represent the school library profession for the next school year. I am truly grateful to serve as a librarian where personalized learning, a research driven environment, and collaborative leadership are expected daily, so our students can thrive and reach their goals.”

Kathy Ishizuka, Executive Editor, *School Library Journal*

“We are privileged to highlight the work of these stellar educators, who help students gain critical literacy skills and engage in personal, creative expression using technology. *School Library Journal* is pleased to honor these exemplars of the profession through the School Librarian of the Year Award, which underscores the important work of librarians in fostering dynamic, lifelong learning. *SLJ* looks forward to supporting these honorees as they continue in their work inspiring students and fellow teachers.”

Allison Henderson, Vice President and General Manager, Scholastic Library Publishing

“Since 2014, Scholastic has had the privilege of honoring many bright, creative, and passionate librarians through the School Librarian of the Year Award, and this year is no exception. By transforming their libraries into innovative learning spaces and partnering with families, the community, and peers, these librarians exemplify creativity and dedication. We look forward to seeing how they inspire future generations of young readers and independent thinkers.”

About the 2017 School Librarian of the Year Winner and Finalists:

2017 School Librarian of the Year Tamiko Brown, Ed White E-STEM Magnet School, El Lago, TX

Above all else, Tamiko Brown is committed to innovation and instilling a love of learning in students of all ages. After Ed White Elementary School transitioned to focus on STEM, Brown embraced the new challenge by not only creating the school’s first-ever makerspace, but also extending the maker experience beyond the library. Brown teamed up with public librarians to help students obtain access to resources over the summer, hosted book clubs, Minecraft club, and family outreach events, and secured a grant to develop take-home makerspace kits for students. As a leader both in her district and the community, Brown currently serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Clear Lake, collaborates with fellow librarians at state and district conferences, and welcomes educators from other districts to visit her space and learn about innovative design on a budget.

Maker Hero, Alisha Wilson, Booker T. Washington High School, Pensacola, FL

In 2015, Alisha Wilson left her teaching position at Booker T. Washington High School to become the school’s new librarian. Determined to transform the space into a hub of discovery and learning, Wilson partnered with faculty, students, and the community to create an Innovation Center and introduce resources that would revolutionize how the space was used—from scissors and crafting material, to sewing machines, Ozobots, and 3D printers. Looking for a way to foster creativity and provide one-on-one support for students, Wilson developed the library’s Spark Lab, encouraging students’ free thinking through project-based learning. She also led a partnership with the University of West Florida to start the high school’s first-ever Writing Lab, where college students volunteer to help Booker T. Washington students improve their writing skills.

Hero of Collaboration, Jan Wilson, Brookwood High School, Snellville, GA

Jan Wilson built her school library into the “Learning Commons”—a place of collaboration, creativity, and opportunity for Brookwood High School students.

Whether she is partnering with local businesses to plan book distribution events, organizing community fund raising, mentoring new librarians, or collaborating with teachers to implement supportive school programs, Wilson utilizes her more than 20 years of experience as a school librarian to empower everyone around her. As leader of the school's media committee, Jan focuses on instruction by presenting professional development sessions on technology and encouraging peers to co-lead or lead their own PD sessions.

Hero of Family Outreach, Liz Phipps Soeiro, Cambridgeport School, Cambridge, MA

The Cambridgeport School library allows all students and families the opportunity to learn, explore, and make connections together—an effort led by school librarian Liz Phipps Soeiro and her passion for building community. Building on this idea, Phipps Soeiro implemented “Coffee and Conversation,” a program to help families gather and discuss topics in a comfortable, safe setting. As a strong advocate for citizenship and social justice, Phipps Soeiro helps students develop their research, communication, and advocacy skills through project-based learning, visits from local public figures and organizations, and field trips, including a tour of City Hall to see local government in action. Phipps Soeiro also serves as the Legislative Co-Chair for the Massachusetts School Library Association, and is part of the inaugural Libraries Without Borders advisors committee.

Hero of Equitable Access, April Wathen, George W. Carver Elementary School, Lexington Park, MD

April Wathen goes above and beyond her role as librarian by acting as a champion for her students—creating opportunities for continuous growth, regardless of funding limitations. As a result of her tireless efforts partnering with the community, working with outside agencies, and applying for grants, George W. Carver Elementary School became the first elementary school in the county to introduce resources including a makerspace, computer science program, and 3D printer. Currently, Wathen serves as the Chairperson for the Maryland Association of School Libraries where she works to ensure that every student in her school, district, and even her state have equitable access to what he or she needs to succeed.

To learn more about the 2017 School Librarian of the Year Award, visit: <http://www.slj.com/awards/school-librarian-of-the-year>.

Scholastic Library Publishing is a division of Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education and media company. For more information about Scholastic (NASDAQ: SCHL), visit the Company's media room at <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com>.

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About School Library Journal:

[*School Library Journal*](#), a Media Source Inc. publication, is the premiere journal for librarians and information specialists who work with children and teens. A source of quality journalism and reviews for more than 60 years, *SLJ* produces award-winning features and news coverage on: literacy, best practices, technology, education policy and other issues of interest to the school library and greater educator

community. *SLJ* evaluates a broad range of resources, from books and digital content to databases, in 6000+ reviews published annually.