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Tina Sabol Named 2017 *LJ* Marketer of the Year

Medina County District Library Community Engagement Manager Receives National Award for Levy Campaign That Turned Into a Communitywide Advocacy Win

NEW YORK, NY - October 2, 2017 - Medina (Ohio) County District Library Community Engagement Manager Tina Sabol is *LJ*'s 2017 Marketer of the Year, sponsored by Library Ideas. Sabol combined marketing savvy and hometown ties to develop and implement a library levy campaign that secured 10 years of funding and nurtured robust relationships with all corners of the Ohio community. Sabol will receive a \$2,000 cash prize and is featured in *Library Journal*'s October 1, 2017 issue, available in print and online.

Bestowed for the second time this year, the award recognizes the importance of innovative approaches to marketing of library services, the role of marketing in building library engagement, and the value of quality marketing collateral to help build a vibrant sense of the library and define its relevance in the community.

Medina County District Library (MCDL), *LJ*'s 1998 Library of the Year, serves a diverse population of 150,000 approximately 40 miles south of Cleveland. In addition to its six branches, the system maintains a bookmobile and outreach services at facilities such as the local juvenile detention center and county jail. With its current levy due to expire at the end of 2017, Sabol and her team began plotting their strategy early in 2016. A "yes" vote would generate about \$5.6 million annually for the system - more than 60 percent of its budget - allowing it to maintain operations and expand services.

MCDL's marketing push featured the traditional components of a library campaign: print advertising and postcards, yard signs, t-shirts, newsletters and car signs. But it was Sabol's four-pronged strategy - a robust social media effort, YouTube videos featuring library users, strong outreach led by a speakers' bureau and an all-volunteer Citizens for the Library political action committee - that ultimately won the day.

"We gave the community many mediums and many chances to tell us what they wanted," Sabol said. "We didn't just assume."

Born and raised in Medina, Sabol knows the community and those ties served her well when organizing the campaign. MCDL Assistant Director Theresa Laffey said,

“She knows the politics of the area. She knows the value of volunteering for the school, for the church... they all go hand in hand.”

More than 100 people volunteered on the campaign in some way: making calls, posting yard signs and helping run the library’s informational campaign.

The levy was won by 66 percent – a significant improvement over the 2007 vote.

“Tina’s approach and delivery exemplifies the spirit of the *LJ* Marketer of the Year Award,” said Rebecca T. Miller, editorial director of *Library Journal* and *School Library Journal*. “She demonstrated a keen understanding of her community and the best ways to connect with its various audiences. The result will be sustained and expanded library services for the community and rejuvenated relationships with its library users.”

Honorable mentions for the 2017 *LJ* Marketer of the Year Award go to:

- Marketing and Communications Team, Poudre River Public Library District, Fort Collins, Colorado, for “Brewin’ Up Books,” Fort Collins Book Fest promotion.
- Marketing and Communications Department, Los Angeles County Public Library, Downey, California, for “Compton Turns the Tables,” a grant-funded DJ lab program raising awareness of nontraditional services.

These campaigns are also featured in the October 2017 issue of *Library Journal*. For award guidelines, visit <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/awards>.

About Library Journal

Founded in 1876, *Library Journal* is one of the oldest and most respected publications covering the library field. Over 75,000 library directors, administrators, and staff in public, academic, and special libraries read *LJ*. *Library Journal* reviews over 8,000 books, audiobooks, videos, databases, and websites annually, and provides coverage of technology, management, policy, and other professional concerns. For more information, visit www.libraryjournal.com. *Library Journal* is a publication of Media Source Inc., which also owns *School Library Journal*, *The Horn Book*, and Junior Library Guild.

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