



The Illinois Library Association Awards Inclusive Travel Grant for National Conferences to Beth Smilack

by Submitted by Jerseyville Public Library
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JERSEYVILLE -The Illinois Library Association (ILA) has announced the recipient of the 2023/2024 [ILA Inclusive Travel Grant for National Conferences](#). This \$1,000 grant is designed to support the attendance of Illinois librarians and library staff from underrepresented populations in librarianship at a national conference of their choosing.

The recipient of this grant is Beth Smilack, currently serving as the Marketing and Communications Specialist at the Jerseyville Public Library in Jerseyville.

Formerly a member of the Board of Trustees at Jerseyville Public Library for nine years, Smilack resigned to take on the newly established Marketing and Communications position at the library.

Over the past six years, Smilack has dedicated herself to expanding the library's outreach efforts, particularly through enhancing its social media presence. She has also worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the library within the community, effectively

marketing its resources and services to residents of both the city and the surrounding county.

Smilack plans to use the grant to attend the 2024 Library Marketing and Communications Conference.

Eligible recipients include librarians and library staff from populations that have faced structural barriers to national participation, including those eligible for ALA's Spectrum Scholarships (those who identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black /African American, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern/North African, and/or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander); people with disabilities; people who identify as LGBTQUIA+; and rural librarians or library staff.

The grants, supported by ILA's Diversity Scholarship Fund and by a sponsorship from Fast Forward Libraries, LLC, are intended to make the library field more accessible to all, via direct support to our colleagues. Grants are awarded in rounds depending on available funding and conference dates; a second round for one additional grant is now open.