Sacramento Public Library Awarded Inaugural Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize, Recognizing the Public Library as a Vital Community Asset

Major new prize carries $250,000 purse; developed in partnership between the Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation and Library Journal

NEW YORK (PRWEB) October 29, 2019 -- Library Journal (LJ) today announced Sacramento Public Library is the winner of the inaugural Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize. Developed in partnership between the Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation and LJ, this award recognizes the public library as a vital community asset. To honor its exemplary record, the library will receive $250,000 from the Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation at a gala celebration held during the 2020 Public Library Association conference in Nashville and is showcased in LJ’s November 2019 issue, now available in print and online.

“I congratulate Sacramento Public Library for being the inaugural winner of the prize, and applaud the library’s vital impact working with local government, community organizations, and area residents,” said Gerald (Jerry) Kline.

Sacramento Public Library serves a unique mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas and has an unusual governing structure that brings together leaders of all of them, making the library a natural convener for communitywide conversations and shared problem solving.

In 2009, when Library Director/CEO Rivkah Sass arrived, she and her team had to rebuild community trust in the aftermath of a major controversy. The team implemented an ambitious plan with the goal of increasing positive public awareness, engagement, and ownership. As a result, the library is now a go-to partner on civic initiatives and highly valued by community members.

“We were gobsmacked when we heard the news that we are the first to receive the Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize,” said Sacramento’s Sass. “This national honor reinforces that the work we do every day matters. This recognition is for each and every person in our community.”

Sacramento Public Library exemplifies the power of the public library to be a fully integrated and critical community asset. It aligns its mission with community goals, as well as helping to set them; embeds staff in other institutions; works in collaboration with other civic entities; and engages in co-creation with the people it serves.

“Sacramento Public Library exemplifies the ways that engaging with the community fuels the library and the community it serves,” said Rebecca T. Miller, editorial director of Library Journal and School Library Journal. “Together, the library and the residents of the vast and varied region it serves have created a model for shaping the future together.”

The following judges helped determine the winner:

- Deborah Jacobs, former director of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Global Libraries initiative, former Seattle City Librarian, and LJ 1994 Librarian of the Year;
- Eric Klinenberg, Helen Gould Shepard Professor of Social Science and director of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University and author of Palaces for the People: How Social
- Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life; and
- Marc A. Ott, executive director of the International City/County Management Association.

For more information about the Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize, visit www.libraryjournal.com/communityimpact.

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 MSI Information Services, which also owns School Library Journal, The Horn Book, Junior Library Guild, and AKJ Education, Inc.

About the Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation
The Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation, based in Emeryville California, has provided millions of dollars to philanthropic causes since its inception, with a particular focus on libraries.
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