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2025 BARACK OBAMA LIBRARY AWARD

Do you know a teacher of 5th-8th grade students who could make good use of a classroom library?

The Illinois Reading Council is honored to invite you to submit a nomination for the Barack Obama Library Award. This award is a classroom library, valued at \$1000, which was created in 2006 through a generous gift to the Illinois Reading Council from (then) Senator Obama. He granted a generous gift to the Illinois Reading Council to support teachers with this award and continues to contribute annually. This collection includes culturally relevant and inclusive literature, representing Black and brown characters and cultures. The books in this collection focus on the middle-school (5th-8th) grade range. Would you please help us identify a worthy recipient?

You are especially qualified to make a nomination if:

- You teach or reside in **Illinois**, and
- **You are a member in good standing of the Illinois Reading Council.** (You do not need to be a teacher of middle-grade students to make this nomination, AND self-nominations are permitted and encouraged. However, IRC members may nominate only one teacher per year.)

By completing a nomination you will be:

- serving the Illinois Reading Council,
- helping a teacher bring culturally relevant literature to his or her students, and
- assisting the IRC in responding to Senator Obama's challenge to "get more kids reading."

Submit a nomination by completing the nomination form by November 1, 2024. If you have any questions about eligibility, the award, or how to complete the nomination, please contact Jena Kent at 309-454-1341 or by e-mail at irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org.

Thank you in advance for helping the Illinois Reading Council with this Obama Library award. Together we are doing something important for Illinois teachers and their young readers.

Past recipients:

2007 - Sharon Dodds, *Peoria High School, Peoria*
2008 - Cindy Morgan, *Lynne Thigpen Elementary, Joliet*
2009 - Melissa Beckler, *Washington MS, Springfield*
2010 - 5th Grade Team, *Nicholson Elementary, Aurora*
2011 - Shanna Creech, *Kolmar School, Crestwood*
2012 - Amy Orvis, *Montessori School, Rockford* & Christine Keller, *Centerville Elementary, Cahokia*
2013 - Stephanie Solbrig, *Lewis School, Carbondale*
2014 (Spring) - Nicole Moss, *Franklin Middle School, Champaign*
2014 (Fall) - Ericka Brown, *Moos Elementary, Chicago*
2015 - Maureen Daley, *James Hart School, Homewood*
2016 - Meghan Tippy-King, *Whiteside Middle School, Belleville*
2017 - Merijha Branson, Tisha Neeley, and Tami Robertson,
Mary W. French STEM Academy, Decatur
2018 - Dana Hendricks, *Hamilton Junior High School, Hamilton*
2019 - Margo Ransom, *Strasburg Elementary School, Strasburg*
2021 - Gwenetta Posey, *Dr. Howard Elementary School, Champaign*
2022 - Nora Flynn, *Percy Julian Middle School, Oak Park*
2023 - Rachel Heckman, *Bloomington Junior High School, Bloomington*
2024 - Michael Kennedy, *St. Catherine of Siena-St. Lucy School, Oak Park*

Members of the committee:

Jena Kent, *Chair*
Stephanie Benson, *Region 1*
Natalie Biancalana *Region 2*
Diana Wilkie, *Region 3*
Teresa Burdin, *Region 4*
Donna Herman, *Region 5*
Cindy Wilson, *Region 6*
Susan Cisna, *Region 7*
Cheryl Walker, *Region 8*
Gabe Herbst, *Region 9*
Cindi Koudelka, *Region 10*

2025 Barack Obama Library Award
Nomination (Application) Form

IRC Nominator: _____ Title/Position: _____

Nominator's IRC Membership Number/Expiration Date: _____

IRC Council: _____

Relation to nominee: _____

How might the Obama Literacy Fund Committee contact you?

Name of Teacher Nominee:

(Self-nominations are permitted and encouraged)

Teaching position:

School name and location:

How can this person (you) be contacted by the committee?

Please tell us about the nominee's (your) career teaching positions.

On a separate sheet, describe how the nominee (you) meet(s) the intention of the award. Please address in some detail

- how the students this nominee teaches match the target population,
- how this nominee makes especially good use of a classroom library, ideally through teaching procedures that permit self-selection,
- how the nominee is positioned to make use of literature which is culturally relevant to 5th-8th grade African American students, and
- and how this nominee by history and job circumstances, is likely to use the library with the target population for a number of years to come.

Note: Finalist(s) will be visited to confirm above criteria.

Submit application by November 1, 2024 to:

Illinois Reading Council, Attn: Obama Award, 1100 Beech Street, Building 8, Suite 2, Normal, IL 61761

Electronic submissions are acceptable also. Submit to irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org