

News Release: American Library Association

Public Information Office
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312 944-6780

From: Peggy Barber, Director
Public Information Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The 1977 Distinguished Library Service Award for School Administrators will be presented to Dr. John M. Franco, Superintendent of the City School District, Rochester, New York.

The annual citation is presented by ALA's American Association of School Librarians (AASL) at the AASL Honor Luncheon on Sunday June 19 during ALA's annual conference (June 17-23.) The recipient must be a person directly responsible for the administration of a school or group of schools who has made a unique and sustained contribution toward furthering the role of the library and its development in elementary and/or secondary education. The award was announced by Mrs. Peggy Pfeiffer, President of AASL, at the Midwinter Meeting of the American Library Association in Washington, D.C., January 30 - February 5, 1977.

Since Dr. Franco became Superintendent in 1971, the number of professional library media specialists has increased from 40 to 64 and supportive staff from 47 to 82. The number of schools served by library media centers has increased from 31 to 56. Thousands of dollars were spent upgrading, redecorating and refurbishing.

In 1965 a ten year plan was developed to provide library media centers in all the elementary schools in the district and to change the totally print secondary libraries to library media centers. While Dr. Franco was Administrative Director of Elementary Schools he continued to actively support the program of developing library media centers in all elementary schools. He also continued

add 1. Dr. John M. Franco

to push for money for salaries of full-time professional and supportative staff in each library media center, total renovation of library facilities, adequate basic collections of materials, and continued yearly allocations for materials in order to keep the collections current.

By 1975 all elementary schools had library media centers and the Rochester District received the School Library Media Program of the Year Award. Secondary schools had also undergone great change.

In 1976 the district was facing a large deficit, but Dr. Franco insisted that no monies allocated for library media center personnel, materials or services be cut. He reminded the community that the library program had been recently rated as the most outstanding in the nation and that he would not favor any cutbacks. Dr. Franco also feels that the library media centers play such an important role in the educational program that they must continue to grow and expand even in hard financial times.

"The library," Dr. Franco says, "is one of the few programs that reaches every child in every school. Its programs support individualized instruction, the pursuit of individualized interests and the development of positive self concepts. It supports the curriculum mandates and changes in instructional techniques. Such experiences should help students grow into mature, well-adjusted, thinking adults who will have better opportunities of making worthwhile contributions to their families and to the larger society."

Members of the jury which selected Dr. Franco were Barbara C. Cade, Atlanta, Georgia, Chairperson; Donald C. Adcock, Glen Ellyn, Illinois; Karen G. Beam, Indianapolis, Indiana; Barbara P. Carroon, Jackson, Mississippi; Dr. Bettie R. Helser, Wheat Ridge, Colorado; and Margaret H. Miller, Los Angeles, California.