

Everyday Advocacy Matters

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From the Editor



If you're wondering what Everyday Advocacy looks like, check out the drawing of me to the right. Lillian, my 5-year-old library BFF, has captured the spirit perfectly.

Lillian knows I love books. (It says so at the top of the drawing.)

Lillian knows I love coffee. (See my poorly hidden cup perched on the desk next to the flagpole?)

And best of all, Lillian knows I'm a big part of her favorite place—the library. (Notice how hard I'm working at my desk.)

Obviously I've made quite the impression on Lillian, and that makes two things crystal clear:

1. I look totally awesome.
2. I'm an Everyday Advocate, loud and proud!

As Member Content Editor of the ALSC Everyday Advocacy website, I'm pleased to welcome you to Everyday Advocacy Matters, an electronic newsletter starring Fabulous You in the roles of Relationship Architect, Community Builder, and Library Champion. Published quarterly, Everyday Advocacy Matters extends the EA website's rich resources with targeted, timely, and fun content.

Since a key Everyday Advocate trait is the ability to ask for help, I'm asking for yours as we move forward. Own this newsletter by telling your ALSC colleagues about the daily difference you make in the lives of the children and families you serve. Complete the Share Your Advocacy Story web form or e-mail me the details.

Be proud. Be awesome. Be an Everyday Advocate!

In the meantime, enjoy this first issue of Everyday Advocacy Matters.

Jenna Nemec-Loise
Member Content Editor
ALSC Everyday Advocacy Website & Electronic Newsletter

Everyday Advocacy Spotlight

Awesome Advocate Profile: Starr LaTronica, ALSC President



Starr LaTronica, ALSC President

Youth Services/Outreach Manager, Four County Library System (Vestal, NY)

What does Everyday Advocacy mean to you?

Everyday Advocacy is truly a way of life. It's the ability and the desire to bring the library and all its wonders into everyday interactions. I can always find a relevant connection to the library and its resources within any conversation. Sometimes it's the juxtaposition of information about libraries in relationship to other subjects that makes the most personal and profound effect on someone and provides them with a "light bulb" moment.

What's been your proudest advocacy moment?

After years of advocating for libraries in New York State, it was tremendously gratifying and beneficial for the community to be approached by our local state senator to design and partner on a multi-county, year-long reading program for kids.

However, I have to say it's the small-scale individual success stories I treasure as true triumphs, like overhearing fifth-grader Eden expounding to her peers on the services that the library provides: "You can call them before you go and they'll see if the book is there and hold it for you. If they don't have the book, just tell them you want it and they'll get it and call you when it comes in."

I knew Eden had established a lifelong relationship with library services. We all recognize that the most effective message comes from an engaged, trusted source, so when Eden advocated for library use with her own classmates—well, it doesn't get any better than that!

What advice or wisdom can you share with other Everyday Advocates?

We children's librarians are filled with pride and passion for what we do. We're truly here to create a better future for children through libraries, so though we may be introverts, my advice is this:

1. **Don't be shy!** Don't hide your commitment to this cause under a bushel—let it shine!
2. **View obstacles as opportunities** to explain and educate.
3. **Fight cynicism.** Remember how lucky we are to be members of this profession, and we have a duty to share our enthusiasm. So as Dorothy says in *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*, "Never give up. No one knows what's going to happen next."

News You Can Use

Celebrate National Friends of Libraries Week (October 20-26)

Need some fresh ideas for expressing your undying gratitude to your most ardent advocates? Honor them with a National Friends of Libraries Week celebration!

Visit the United for Libraries website to download PR and marketing materials and an application for the 2013 National Friends of Libraries Week Awards. (Applications for the 2013 awards are due December 2.)

Don't have a Friends group at your library? The party's still on! Consider hosting a recognition ceremony for all the volunteers and staff members who make an everyday difference for youth and families in your community. There's never been a better time to say, "Thanks for all you do!"

Make Your Case for Midwinter 2014

Want to join your ALSC colleagues in Philadelphia but don't know how to justify your attendance in these tough budget times? Check out these steps in making the case to get the conversation started and advocate for Fabulous You!

Beat the 2014 Budget Blues with Pew Research Center Reports

Looking for ways to make sure library programs and services for youth are supported in your library's 2014 budget? Don't miss these 2013 reports from the Pew Research Center: *Library Services in the Digital Age* and *Parents, Children, Libraries, and Reading*.

Dazzle the powers that be with facts and figures about how highly communities value their public libraries. Topping the lists of library must-haves for survey respondents? Reference librarians and literacy programs for children. That's you in spades!

Need a little more help? Look no further than these thoughts from librarians like you. Pepper a few carefully chosen quotes into your budget justifications to pack a little extra punch.

Get Inspired

Savvy Success Story: The Boggs Educational Center (Detroit, Mich.)



Jennifer Mann, Youth Librarian
Cromaine District Library (Harland, Mich.)

It all started with a conversation.

Earlier this year, I approached my library director, Ceci Marlow, and asked if Cromaine District Library would be interested in donating books to a new charter school opening in Detroit, The Boggs Educational Center.

I felt strongly about this school because of my archival research on a 2013 documentary about social and political activist Grace Lee Boggs and my respect for both her and her husband, fellow activist James Boggs.

Additionally, I love what the school is about. Its philosophy is based on the core concepts of community, volunteerism, and place-based education (PBE). This school is currently a living example of creating change through neighborhood conversation, activism, and participation.

And most importantly, the school asked for help. They needed books.

My director suggested soliciting The Library Network (TLN), a public library cooperative serving 65 libraries in southeast Michigan. After a few cancelled meetings, I attended their Steering Committee Meeting and presented my proposal, which they accepted! Any TLN library wanting to donate books to Cromaine could do so through the TLN mobile truck delivery system. After receiving numerous donations, I drove and delivered them to the school with the help of two volunteers, both Wayne State MLIS students. (One student even rode her bicycle from her apartment to help!)

On the advice of a student, I contacted Wayne State University professor Kafi Kumasi. Dr. Kumasi specializes in multicultural issues, urban education, and school librarianship and was a teacher in Detroit before getting her graduate degrees.

The student was right—Dr. Kumasi was wonderfully receptive! To solicit student support for our project, she asked me to create a promotional flyer, which she shared with Wayne State Diversity Graduate Student Assistant (GSA) Nichole Manlove and the Associate Dean. Long story short: Flyers were hung, a message went out on the MLIS listserv, and the GSA coordinated with the Wayne State Purdy Library to make it an additional drop off center.

Of course, I had contacted Boggs' wonderful principal, Julia Putnam, about our book collection effort. In fact, Julia and I are currently working on creating a youth/urban/outreach librarian collective with the school. We are still in the planning stages, but the bottom line is to share librarians' resources and knowledge in order to set up creative literacy and storytelling spaces. Volunteers have already responded from Wayne State to assist with this project, from helping set up literacy stations (alphabet boards, phonetic tubs, and letter baskets) to conducting storytelling, dramatic play, and puppetry activities. We hope to have volunteers visit the school

Savvy Success Story: The Boggs Educational Center and perform on a monthly basis. Julia has also suggested asking librarians to present professional development workshops for teachers.

Quite simply, this effort is all about the transformational power of libraries and community engagement. The Boggs Educational Center and libraries have a shared vision: Our survival as learning and resource centers depends on big-picture thinking and demonstrating our deep connection to each other through regional issues and community building from the very youngest through the very oldest life stages.

Libraries must be able to demonstrate that they can make a difference in people's lives. Through this collaboration with The Boggs Educational Center, we wanted to make a statement about the caring nature of libraries and library staff as well as their capacity to help solve community problems and help transform people's lives for the better.

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