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Nashville Public Library Named 2017 Library of the Year by *Library Journal* and Gale

NPL recognized for education focus as Library of the Year award celebrates 25 years

Nashville, Tenn. and Farmington Hills, Mich., June 6, 2017 — Tennessee’s Nashville Public Library (NPL) has been named the [2017 Library of the Year](#) by *Library Journal* magazine and Gale, a Cengage company. The Library of the Year is a prestigious honor awarded to a library that demonstrates profound service to community, creativity, leadership, and innovation in developing community programs. Nashville Public Library stands out for its ability to bring stories, reading, and learning to life to educate the community—from the youngest learners through adults.

“This is an honor for our library, for our dedicated staff, and for Nashville and Davidson County,” said Kent Oliver, Nashville Public Library Director. “I want to thank our patrons, elected officials, employees, volunteers, the Nashville Public Library Foundation, the Friends of the Library, and all our supporters.

This award reflects our commitment to our community. Nashville Public Library helps meet the challenges and embrace the opportunities we face as our city continues to grow. We are committed to helping shape education, economic development, and community growth for everyone.”

Nashville Public Library serves a community of nearly 700,000 residents through its 21 locations across the city. With a staff of more than 350, plus almost 600 volunteers, the library has encouraged more than 3.3 million visits and answered nearly 300,000 questions over the last year. These statistics reflect an impressive level of engagement by its users, but more importantly, lead to learning outcomes for the Nashville community. The library fosters a love of reading and learning through innovative storytelling programs that incorporate the city’s history. Through its renowned Civil Rights Room and Collection, its citywide book club “Nashville Reads” and the Bringing Books to Life! initiative, the library is able to use stories to engage the community in learning.

“Great libraries find compelling solutions to the challenges in their communities. Nashville Public Library stands out for its range of services, innovation in partnerships, and commitment to evolving as its community does, while keeping a keen eye on what’s important from the past,” said Rebecca T. Miller, editorial director of *Library Journal*. “We are very excited to have Nashville join the stellar Library of the Year roster.”

Nashville Public Library has a strong partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) to put public library materials and technology into students' hands. The Limitless Libraries initiative has infused millions of dollars into school libraries and helped local schools meet or exceed state collection requirements. The initiative has funded the buildout of several school libraries into vibrant, engaging, and creative spaces for students to learn. Limitless Libraries has become a national model for cities considering similar deep partnerships between schools and public libraries.

Nashville Public Library has also focused on closing a material digital divide within the community – more than one in ten Tennesseans don't have access to the Internet and more than 40 percent of students don't have access to the Internet or computers at home. In addition to providing basic digital infrastructure, the library offers numerous outreach services to the neediest populations and at-risk communities.

"Now, more than ever, it's important to demonstrate the wide-reaching impact libraries have on the education, health, and economy of the communities they serve," said Harmony Faust, vice president of marketing for Gale. "Through creative programs and strategic initiatives that touch everyone in the community, Nashville Public Library is a stellar example of the important work public libraries do."

The 2017 Library of the Year Award will be presented, along with \$10,000 in prize money, at a reception during the American Library Association Annual Conference in Chicago, IL, on June 25.

To learn more about Nashville Public Library and what makes them Library of the Year, visit the Gale [blog](#) and read the full cover story in *Library Journal* [here](#).

About Nashville Public Library

A Nashville Public Library (NPL) card is free, but it's also priceless. A 2016 study by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce calculated the value of NPL's services and collections at \$2,951 per Nashville family and the direct impact of NPL on Davidson County at \$94 million. NPL maintains a collection of millions of items, including books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, and streaming and downloadable books, movies and music. The Library also offers more than 800 public-use computers, free art exhibits, educational programs, events for all ages, 24/7 reference assistance, online databases, interlibrary loan and special collections. Metro Archives, located at the Main Library, houses 5 million historic documents. Equal access is provided by the Talking Library audio reading service for the print disabled and Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. For more information, call 615-862-5800 or visit library.nashville.org.

About Cengage and Gale

Cengage is the education and technology company built for learners. The company serves the higher education, K-12, professional, library and workforce training markets worldwide. Gale, a Cengage company, provides libraries with original and curated content, as well as the modern research tools and technology that are crucial in connecting libraries to learning, and learners to libraries. For more than 60 years, Gale has partnered with libraries around the world to empower the discovery of knowledge and insights – where, when, and how people need it. Gale has 500 employees globally with its main operations in Farmington Hills, Michigan. For more information, please visit www.gale.com.

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 Media Source Inc., which also owns *School Library Journal*, *The Horn Book*, and Junior Library Guild.

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