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Urban Libraries Council Celebrates Public Library Leadership

2016 ULC Joey Rodger Leadership and Urban Leader Award Recipients Announced

Washington, DC — The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) recently announced the recipients of the 2016 Joey Rodger Leadership and Urban Leader Awards at a special celebration during the 2016 ULC Annual Forum in Kansas City. The awards recognize transformative leadership that advance the impact and strategic role of public libraries in communities across North America.

2016 Joey Rodger Leadership Award

Lynn Williamson, Chief of the Neighborhood Library Services Division for the Free Library of Philadelphia, received the [2016 Joey Rodger Leadership Award](#). Lynn has worked for the Free Library for 21 years in neighborhood libraries, as a subject department head, and as an administrator in Materials Management. As the lead library administrator for 52 neighborhood libraries, Lynn's primary focus is community engagement with all of Philadelphia's neighborhoods. She has recently taken on the challenge of moving the Free Library's neighborhood library services deep into the 21st Century with new models of community connectedness and collaboration. Through a new Cluster system for organizational design, the Free Library is developing Community Councils throughout the city to improve operational efficiency, inspire civic involvement among community members, and engage leaders across the social service, nonprofit, and civic spheres. This design is intended to build the economic vitality, educational encouragement and health of communities, particularly in areas of economic distress.

2016 Urban Leader Award

Mayor Don Iveson of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada received the [2016 Urban Leader Award](#), which recognizes an outstanding civic leader whose work with local government, funders, community leaders and others elevates the essential role that public libraries play in driving community well-being. A vocal

supporter of library services, Mayor Iveson served on Edmonton Public Library's (EPL) Board of Trustees for six years during his time on the City Council. As Mayor, he has ensured that EPL is a key player in citywide initiatives including leadership committees focused on ending homelessness and poverty in Edmonton and advocating for Indigenous Peoples. Recognizing the critical role public libraries play in providing essential learning opportunities to all Edmontonians, Mayor Iveson recommended EPL as the home for the City of Learners initiative, which seeks to create an ecosystem of lifelong learning in the community. He has also played a key role in supporting critical library capital projects and fundraising initiatives, including the rehabilitation of facilities, the construction of new buildings in underserved areas of Edmonton, and calling on the city's development community to "Complete the Fleet" and raise the final \$100,000 needed for the epl2go Literacy Vans.

"Perhaps the most important ingredient to an organization's ability to achieve success is its leadership," said Susan Benton, ULC President and CEO. "We live in a fast-paced, complex society. It is critical that we have a clear vision and an ability to recognize our mission and stay the course. Ms. Williamson and Mayor Iveson are leaders who do just that."

About Urban Libraries Council

Urban Libraries Council (ULC), founded in 1971, is the voice for public libraries and the force that inspires them to evolve. ULC creates the tools, techniques, and ideas to make ongoing improvements and upgrades in services and technology. ULC also speaks loudly and clearly about the value public libraries bring to communities, and secures funding for research that results in the development of new programs and services. And by serving as a forum for library leadership, ULC produces innovative ideas and best practices that ensure community impact.

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