Blue Valley High School named National School Library Program of the Year

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CHICAGO — Blue Valley High School, located in Stilwell, Kansas, is the American Association of School Librarians’ (AASL) 2015 National School Library Program of the Year (NSLPY) Award recipient. Sponsored by Follett, the NSLPY annually recognizes a school library program that meets the needs of the changing school and library environment and is fully integrated into the school’s curriculum. The recipient receives an obelisk – the symbol of school library excellence – and $10,000 toward its school library program.

Blue Valley High School (BVHS), a public school located in the southern suburbs of Kansas City, serves both a suburban and rural student population. To meet BVHS’s mission of “High levels of learning for all,” the BVHS school library strives to be the “heartbeat” of the school, where personal and academic growth is the principle focus. Its primary endeavor is to be service-oriented and provide the school community – which includes students, teachers, staff and parents - the opportunities and means to achieve and grow.

“The committee was impressed with the two librarians whose strengths complemented each other so well,” said Nancy Everhart, awards committee chair. “Ken Stewart has developed outstanding community outreach projects - most
specifically the College Readiness Dialogue program with academic librarians. Jessica Edwards has strong technology skills and the LibGuides she has created for courses and projects with faculty demonstrated the types of collaboration put forward in Building Partnerships for Learning as outlined in AASL’s program guidelines.”

The BVHS school library program maintains a highly participatory culture by holding community conversations about the library with all of its stakeholders. During the conversations, the participants voice their aspirations and goals for the library, possible obstacles to obtaining those goals and solutions to overcoming those obstacles. Participants then receive all of the comments from all of the groups and also regularly receive updates as to how the school library program is approaching the various aspects.

“Congratulations to Blue Valley High School! This school has definitely demonstrated their commitment to quality library services,” said AASL President Terri Grief. “Just a few years ago the principal at Blue Valley was recognized as the AASL Distinguished Administrator and now the library receives the National School Library Program of the Year Award. The administrator and school librarian partnership is quite evident and is a model for other schools in the nation. The students at BVHS are the real winners. Congratulations to the librarians, Ken Stewart and Jessica Edwards and the entire Blue Valley High School community!”

“We have great respect for innovative school library programs, such as Blue Valley High where the focus is on student success in college and career,” said Tom Schenck, president, Follett School Solutions. “It’s vital today’s school libraries are teaching 21st-century skills, and Follett is committed to supporting and recognizing the programs where kids create, collaborate, and think critically. These are the programs that make a lasting difference in so many lives.”

“We are so grateful for Follett’s longstanding support,” said Grief. “By sponsoring award programs such as NSLPY, Follett clearly illustrates its advocacy for school library programs and the important role they play in improving literacy.”

The AASL award winners will be honored at the AASL Awards Ceremony during the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. The ceremony will be held from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 27. All are welcome to celebrate the accomplishments of their peers during this recognition event taking place prior to the AASL President’s Program.

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The American Association of School Librarians www.aasl.org, a division of the American Library Association (ALA), empowers leaders to transform teaching and learning.

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ALA Units:
American Association of School Librarians
PR Category:
Awards (Professional Recognition)

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