



AT THE LIBRARY

By Julie Winkelstein
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“Recipients are those individuals who are recognized by their colleagues as exceptional leaders whose dedication, commitment and vision inspire others, or whose singular contribution to the field of information science has been particularly significant.”

-Announcement from the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Society of Information and Technology, January 2008

This past week I received an email about the Contribution to Information Science & Technology Award (CISTA), which is an annual award given by the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Society of Information & Technology (LACASIS). CISTA honors an individual who has made significant contributions to the field of information science. 2007’s honoree is Dr. Carol Tenopir, a professor at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The announcement describes her areas of teaching and research as including information access and retrieval, online resources and the impact of technology on reference librarians and scientists.

This is the second email I’ve gotten in the last week about awards or honors that relate to books and libraries. The other one was about children’s author, Jon Scieszka, who on January 3 was appointed by the Library of Congress as the first National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. His

books include *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* and *The True Story of the Little Pigs*, both of which are very popular and funny. According to the press release, Scieszka will “use his two-year term to promote reading and to reach out to reluctant readers through the media, personal appearances, and project development.”

Although these two awards couldn’t be more dissimilar, I was struck by the fact that both of them emphasize the value of libraries and books in the lives of all of us. Tenopir’s award acknowledges the significance of how we find our information, while Scieszka’s stresses the value we place on children and reading.

I also wondered how many other awards there are like this – ones I may see mentioned but know little about. I did a little searching and came up with quite a few.

The first one is the *New York Times* Librarian Awards. This program honors U. S. librarians who have provided

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outstanding public service and have had a strong and positive impact on their nominators. In 2006, this award was extended to include college and university librarians, who could be nominated by faculty, staff and administrators; the public librarian nominations come, appropriately, from the public. In 2006, the "Times" received more than 1300 nominations from 45 states for the 25 winners.

I discovered the American Library Association website (www.ala.org) has a long list of awards. For instance, the Cavendish Award "recognizes either a school or public library which demonstrates excellence in library programming by providing programs which have community impact and respond to community needs." Or the W.Y. Boyd Literary Award, an annual award "honoring the best fiction set in a period when the United States was at

war...(It) encourages the writing and publishing of outstanding war-related fiction for young adults or adults."

The Haycock Award honors "an individual for contributing significantly to the public recognition and appreciation of librarianship through professional performance, teaching and/or writing."

There are many more, some honoring authors or illustrators, some particular to individual library associations, kinds of libraries, or even those who work with libraries, such as publishers, booksellers, and hardware and software dealers.

I appreciate the large number of library-related awards, each supporting a different aspect of librarianship. After some thought I decided if I were to sponsor an award, it would be for helping to increase the diversity of our profession in some way. Perhaps I'll do that.

Each award supports a different aspect of librarianship
