



**Contact: Tisa Davis – Indiana Library Federation
941 E. 86th Street, Suite 260, Indianapolis, IN 46240
Phone: (317) 257-2040**

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Sandy Francoeur to receive first-ever ILF Read-Aloud Champion Award

Sandy Francoeur has been selected to receive the 2018 Indiana Library Federation (ILF) Read-Aloud Champion Award. The ILF Read-Aloud Champion Award honors and recognizes professionals or volunteers who demonstrate outstanding commitment to reading aloud in an Indiana program (school, library or community-based) to further a lifelong love of reading.

Sandy has served the St. Joseph County Public Library for 14 years, working in various roles such as Circulation and Teen Services before becoming the Children's Library Assistant at the Roger B. Francis Branch. As the children's librarian at the Francis Branch of St. Joseph County Public Library, Sandy has made early literacy--and specifically story times--a central component of the services offered to young children and their families. She presents story times and lap-sits three days a week, although she has said she would offer it every day if she were able. A lap-sit is designed for both the parent or caregiver and child ages 0-2. Sandy's story times are extremely popular, with anywhere from 40 to over 100 participants. In this way, she is engaging babies and toddlers in stories and activities that build a love of reading at an early age, which will lead them straight into story time. In both her story times and lap-sits, she includes hand-plays, activities and songs to help build language, motor skills and more. Using songs, shakers and her ukulele, she incorporates music to support concepts from the books she reads. She uses nursery rhymes in repetition, so that families who regularly attend learn them by heart. Sandy makes a point to remind parents how important nursery rhymes can be for building language. She also talks about *Every Child Ready to Read* in her story times, incorporating signage that tell parents to read, write, sing, talk and play with their children.

Sandy also visits several local schools to read to children in preschool through elementary grades. In doing this, she is bringing a joy of stories to children of all ages, many who do not come in to the public library.

It is clear how Sandy has had a positive impact on her community through the act of reading aloud and it is for this reason the Awards & Honors Committee of the Indiana Library Federation selected Sandy as the recipient of its first Read Aloud Champion Award.

Sandy graduated from Purdue University and has been married to her husband, Scott for 24 years. They have two children, Nicole and Alex.

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About: Indiana Library Federation is the statewide nonprofit association for academic, public, school and special libraries and the staff and volunteers who support them. Indiana Library Federation, the state chapter of American Library Association, provides professional development, awards, programs, member services and advocacy.

Indiana Library Federation leads, educates and advocates to advance library services for the benefit of Indiana residents.

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