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BCALA Announces 2014 BCALA Presidential Awards Recipients

The Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), America's oldest and largest advocacy group for African American Librarians, exists in part to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of African-American librarians whose endeavors may otherwise be overlooked. In keeping with this goal, BCALA has selected four individuals, one library and two affiliate chapters to receive BCALA awards for 2014.

Ms. Michele T. Fenton, a cataloger with the Indiana State Library, has won the 2014 *Distinguished Service to the Black Caucus of the American Library Association* award. She was recognized for her contributions to the caucus and her contributions to the profession. She has published multiple articles that have informed and enlightened the profession and the public. Fenton has made presentations at library conferences. Fenton has also created the blog "Little Know Black Librarian Facts" to inform librarians of their history.

BCALA also announces winners for five 2014 presidential awards. **Rosalind Moore**, a recent graduate of the library and information science program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, received BCALA's 2014 *Graduate Student Award*. She was selected because she contributed to the cause of BCALA as a graduate student. Moore was active and lent her time preparing, participating in some of BCALA's most notable programs. She made presentations at the National Conference of African-American Librarians, the American Library Association conference, and the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color.

Richard Ashby, Jr., director of LiteracyNation, Inc., received the 2014 *Librarian of the Year Award*. He is the director of the Yeadon Public Library in Yeadon, Pa. Ashby is also a "street corner librarian". He is interested in making people around him have access to free books so he passes them out on the street corners in his community. He was previously the vice president and the past president of the New York Black Librarians' Caucus. He is also a member of the BCALA Executive Board.

Carolyn Garnes, currently retired after 30 years with the Atlanta Public Library, has been named *Retiree of the Year*. She is still an active member of BCALA who supports the programs of the Caucus. Garnes is also active in ALA. In retirement, not only is Garnes an active and loyal member of BCALA, she has founded "Aunt Lil's Reading Room", a Georgia-based nonprofit.

The Portsmouth Colored Community Library Museum, a Portsmouth, Va.-based museum that once served as a library for Portsmouth's Black residents, was honored with the *Library of the Year Award*. The Portsmouth Colored Community Library Museum was opened in 1945 to serve the segregated African-American community. After segregation, the library and its building faced difficult times. In 1959, when segregation was no longer and the libraries were integrated, support for the library

diminished. Today, it is a thriving museum that houses Portsmouth's rich African-American history. In 2009, it was listed on the Virginia Landmark Register of Historic Places. In 2010, it was recognized by the National Register of Historic Trust.

Two BCALA affiliate chapters – the **New York Black Librarians Caucus** and the **Indiana Black Librarians Network** – were recognized as BCALA's 2014 affiliates of the year.

“All of these winners exemplify the qualities that this organization values most,” said BCALA president Jerome Offord, Jr. “The presidential awards were created for the very purpose of the BCALA president humbling himself or herself to recognize the people who truly make our organization great and our profession a noble one. I couldn't be more proud of these winners.”

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Find more information about BCALA at www.bcala.org.