This award belongs to all of us.

Thank you!
Serving Diverse, High-Demand Communities
The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County serves 49 separate jurisdictions that are economically, educationally, and ethnically diverse. The library is one of the largest, oldest, and most heavily used in America. With 17.6 million items borrowed in 2011, it is the eighth busiest library in the country.

Promoting Academic Success and Lifelong Learning
Cincinnati is the library’s single largest jurisdiction, with critical educational needs: it has the third highest rate of childhood poverty (48 percent) in the nation, and 20 branches serving communities where fewer than 80 percent of children read at grade level.

The library participates in Read On!, a regional initiative involving more than 70 organizations. It provides tutoring at 18 Cincinnati Public Schools in partnership with community organizations. The library also teams with Read Aloud to raise awareness of the importance of reading to children in developing literacy.

Foundations for Success
The library’s children programs target three factors that are critical to academic success: kindergarten readiness, school attendance, and preventing summer learning loss.

As a partner in the United Way’s Success by 6 program, the library teaches parents, caregivers, and preschool instructors to use the technique of shared reading with preschool children, to help them develop key pre-literacy skills for kindergarten readiness. Early Learning Express visits childcare providers to teach shared reading and provide books and manipulatives, and children’s librarians use shared reading during storytime.

The library takes a proactive approach to school truancy. If staff members see children in the library during school hours, they determine which school they attend, review the school calendar, and contact the school.

Lack of supplemental summer educational activities often sets low-income children significantly behind their classmates. Two library programs help prevent summer reading loss: summer reading and Brain Camps, which provide intensive week-long or three-day enriching experiences to families who can’t afford other programs. The library also installed AfterSchool Edge stations for 12 branch libraries to help reduce summer learning loss in math.

Community-Wide Access to Lifelong Learning
The library established an Adult Learning Center that provides help with literacy and math skills, online job applications, and GED preparation. The Online Learning Center provides a one-stop shop to access these learning resources online.

In addition, the library is extremely active
The National Medal for Museum and Library Service was presented in a White House ceremony by Mrs. Michelle Obama on May 8, 2013.