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Media Inquiries, Contact:

Lisa Wolfe, L. Wolfe Communications
lwolfe@lwolfe.com/773-278-2800

**Michigan's Lance Werner Named
Library Journal's 2018 Librarian of the Year**

*Kent District Library Executive Director Honored for Strong Leadership, Legislative Advocacy,
Championing Patron Access*

NEW YORK, NY – January 3, 2018 – Lance Werner, executive director of the Kent District Library (Michigan), is *LJ's* [2018 Librarian of the Year](#). The award, sponsored by Baker & Taylor and celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, honors a professional librarian for outstanding achievement and accomplishments reflecting the loftiest service goals of the library profession.

Previously a 2016 *LJ* Mover & Shaker and 2017 Michigan Library Association Librarian of the Year, Werner is honored for his strong leadership, effective legislative advocacy and championing access for his patrons. Werner will receive a \$1,500 cash prize and is featured in *Library Journal's* January 2018 issue, available in print and online.

Among his recent accomplishments, Werner convinced the Kent District Library trustees to invest \$400,000 in ebooks, secured health care for part-time Kent District Library employees, spearheaded a countywide literacy initiative, secured grant money to bring back the library's bookmobile after a 30-year hiatus, and testified before the Michigan Senate and House committees to win tax capture amnesty for libraries statewide.

Nominated for the award by Michigan Library Association Executive Director Gail Madziar, Werner has been the executive director of the 18-branch library system since 2011. "Lance brings a passion for all libraries, not just his," Madziar said. "When he's working on an issue or he's coming up with new ideas or some state-of-the-art technology that he wants to get into his library, he's thinking of libraries across the state, across the country."

Whether it is working with his library board members to secure funding for a new initiative, testifying before the Michigan State Legislature, or going fishing with local residents, Werner credits his success to relationships. "I preach the gospel of 'don't make it too complicated.' Always act with kindness, love, and empathy," he said. "Try your hardest, be passionate, believe in what you're doing, and things are going to work out fine."

He added, "This is the best time ever to work in the library. Because we're at a crossroads, and we can make changes that will impact how library service is offered for the next hundred years...we can do something that can change the trajectory and push us to a new level. And that's the greatest gift of all."

“As the 30th recipient of the *LJ* Librarian of the Year award, Lance exemplifies the dynamism and keen intelligence we expect in a winner,” said Rebecca T. Miller, editorial director of *Library Journal* and *School Library Journal*. “His deep understanding of the importance of building and nurturing strong relationships at all levels has resulted in improved service for his community, enhanced benefits for the Kent District Library staff, and improved the outlook for libraries across Michigan. We are very excited to name him *LJ*’s 2018 Librarian of the Year.”

For award guidelines, visit <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/awards>.

About Library Journal

Founded in 1876, *Library Journal* is one of the oldest and most respected publications covering the library field. Over 75,000 library directors, administrators, and staff in public, academic, and special libraries read *LJ*. *Library Journal* reviews over 8,000 books, audiobooks, videos, databases, and websites annually, and provides coverage of technology, management, policy, and other professional concerns. For more information, visit www.libraryjournal.com. *Library Journal* is a publication of Media Source Inc., which also owns *School Library Journal*, *The Horn Book*, and Junior Library Guild.

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