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SUZANNE WHITE NAMED LIBRARY DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

NEWTON, NC – Catawba County Library Director Suzanne White was named Library Director of the Year by the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association (NCPLDA) at its statewide conference December 1.

Considered annually, this award is given to a current library director who has contributed to the growth and development of his or her library by providing leadership, inspiration, and creativity to staff, patrons, and trustees.

White was nominated by five of her peers from the NCPLDA, who cited her numerous contributions to the Library's growth and development over the past year. Her nomination cited her ability to tackle the "phenomenal job of relationship building and communicating the impact of the library" and described her as "a model for community engagement and library advocacy."

The award recognized White's leadership of several major achievements over the past year. These included securing more than \$85,000 in grant funding for new initiatives, such as coordination of 2016's county-wide Big Read with community partners; the creation of Born to Read, a project designed to provide early literacy classes and tools to expectant parents and newborn babies; and a Latino outreach program designed to enhance Library services for Spanish-speaking residents.

White also expanded the Library's role as a technology and digital literacy hub through creation of TechConnect, a maker space that provides access to leading-edge technology, and the development of the Library's Home Free Internet project that will lend wi-fi hot spots to community members for whom lack of internet access is a problem. Additionally, she worked with Friends of the Library, the Library Board, and the Catawba County Board of Commissioners to establish the Library Endowment.

"Suzanne has tremendous vision for how to transform the Library of yesterday into the Library of tomorrow," said Catawba County Manager Mick Berry. "Her passion and advocacy for the impact libraries can have in our community is inspiring, which is evident through the innovative programs she and her staff continue to develop. She is truly deserving of this honor."

Along with her professional achievements, White was nominated for her personal commitment to the community. According to her nomination, "Suzanne regularly volunteers in the community by serving food at the local soup kitchen, packing backpacks with food for

disadvantaged children or pulling weeds in the Library's community garden. As a Library advocate, she participates in several community organizations to represent the Library and work collaboratively to continuously improve our county.”

White joined the Catawba County Library System as director in 2013. She previously served as the Public Services Manager with Rowan County Library. White currently resides in Conover, N.C., with her family.

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PHOTO CAPTION: Catawba County Library Director Suzanne White was commended by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners for being named the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association’s Library Director of the Year. Pictured left to right: Commissioner Kitty Barnes, Board Vice-Chair Barbara Beatty, Board Chair Randy Isenhower, White, Commissioner Sherry Butler, and Commissioner Dan Hunsucker.

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