



NEWS RELEASE

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Two BCPS educators are among 44 nominees for the 2024 Maryland School Librarian of the Year award

The BCPS nominees represent Hillcrest and Seventh District elementary schools

Towson, Md. – The Maryland Association of School Librarians has recognized Baltimore County Public Schools library media specialists Travis Knox of Seventh District Elementary School and Jacqueline Schoen of Hillcrest Elementary School as two of its 44 nominees for the 2024 Maryland School Librarian of the Year award.

In a letter, Melaney Sanchez and Brittany Tignor, co-chairs of the Maryland Association of School Librarians Awards Committee, wrote that the nominees “represent the crucial role school librarians play in fostering academic success, promoting literacy, and enhancing collaborative learning environments.” The recipient of the award will be announced in May 2024.

Knox is in his sixth year as a library media specialist, and he has worked at Seventh District Elementary since 2011, beginning there as a classroom teacher. A product of Baltimore County Public Schools, Knox attended Padonia International Elementary, Cockeysville Middle, and Dulaney High schools. He has earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education and a master’s degree in library media/instructional technology, both from Towson University.

Asked about his achievements at Seventh District Elementary, Knox said, “I am most proud of my high circulation numbers; the average was 58 books per student last year. I am a strong believer that every child should be allowed to go home with a book. We never truly know what a book might mean to a child. It only takes one book to change someone’s life!”

“Mr. Knox is the embodiment of our school motto – ‘Work Hard, Be Kind, Have Fun!’,” said Seventh

District Principal Heather Denmyer. “Mr. Knox is one of the hardest working staff members in our schoolhouse. He is one of the first people our staff calls on for support with technology or ideas about books. He is known for being kind to students and his colleagues. Most importantly, he knows how to have fun! The laughter from the library can be heard throughout the day when he is doing a ‘Read Aloud.’ The excitement and voices he brings to reading are legendary.”

Schoen has been a library media specialist for 26 years and worked at Elmwood and Woodholme elementary schools before joining the staff of Hillcrest Elementary School eight years ago. She has earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education and a master’s degree in instructional technology with a focus on library media, both from Towson University.

“I feel that my biggest achievement,” Schoen said, “is that my students love coming to the library. I want to make them see that research is fun and books are amazing. I have also worked hard in making sure my students see ‘window, mirrors, and doors’ in our collection – ‘windows’ to see other cultures, ‘mirrors’ to reflect themselves, and ‘doors’ that will transport them to amazing places.”

“Mrs. Schoen’s dedication and wealth of experience have made her an invaluable asset to our Hillcrest family,” said Hillcrest Elementary Principal Debita Basu. “Her genuine love for reading and the remarkable way she shares it have endeared her to us all. This recognition is a well-deserved honor for a truly beloved librarian who always goes above and beyond!”

(Editor’s note – Photos of [Knox](#) and [Schoen](#) can be found on Flickr.)

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[Baltimore County Public Schools](#), the nation’s 22nd largest school system, engages and empowers its talented students, teachers, staff, and stakeholders and strives to build an innovative and collaborative learning community where all students excel and reach their highest potential.

Engage. Empower. Excel.