



**KENOSHA**  
**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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**Kenosha Public Library Named Finalist for 2021 IMLS National Medal  
for Museum and Library Service**

**KENOSHA, Wis.**—The Institute of Museum and Library Services announced today that Kenosha Public Library (KPL) is among 30 finalists for the 2021 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Kenosha Public Library is the only institution in Wisconsin to be selected as a finalist for this award this year.

"The revival and reinstatement of the National Medals by IMLS is another signal of recovery and renewal in the nation's very challenging—but very hopeful—times," said IMLS Director Crosby Kemper. "We are celebrating not only the ongoing excellence of the best of our museums and libraries, but their extraordinary efforts through the pandemic, the recession, the racial justice protests, and national divisions to serve, heal, and bring together our communities. Congratulations to all 30 finalists."

The National Medal is the nation's highest honor given to museums and libraries that demonstrate significant impact in their communities. For more than 25 years, the award has honored institutions that demonstrate excellence in service to their communities. KPL was selected [\[BV1\]](#) as a finalist after an extensive application process that included the support of Senator Tammy Baldwin.

"KPL staff sustained library services for the most vulnerable members of our community with remarkable courage and conviction through the compounded challenges of both a global pandemic and local civil unrest," shares KPL Director Barb Brattin. "Courage is a rare thing. We are grateful to IMLS for recognizing Kenosha Public Library's commitment to equity as our north star for responding to a tragic period in our history. The Kenosha Public Library was selected as a finalist after an extensive application process that included the support of Senator Tammy Baldwin.

"For 120 years, the Kenosha Public Library has eagerly met the challenges and needs of the community," said Baldwin in a letter supporting Kenosha Public Library KPL's nomination. "This commitment is illustrated by their current focus on equity and inclusion and their efforts to provide resources to their community during the coronavirus pandemic, while assisting in bridging divides in the community."

The Kenosha Public Library KPL inspires learning, nurtures curiosity, and strengthens the neighborhoods of Kenosha through services intentionally designed to meet the needs of our diverse and resilient community. In typical years, over 600,000 visitors enjoy early literacy programs, engaging lectures, book clubs, and activities that ignite their curiosity about the world around them, engage them in meaningful exploration and discovery, and inspire them to learn more.



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Last year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic the library provided innovative services to connect community members to each other and to the changing world of information around them. Providing programs to over 44,000 visitors through accessible virtual platforms and safely designed outdoor experiences in 2020, Kenosha Public LibraryKPL strived to keep Kenoshans connected even while physically distanced.

“KPL staff sustained library services for the most vulnerable members of our community with remarkable courage and conviction through the compounded challenges of both a global pandemic and local civil unrest,” shares KPL Director Barb Brattin. “Courage is a rare thing. We are grateful to IMLS for recognizing KPL’s commitment to equity for responding to a tragic period in our history.”

To celebrate this honor, IMLS is encouraging Kenosha Public LibraryKPL’s community members to share stories, memories, pictures, and videos on social media on Friday, April 9th as part of the Share Your Story campaign, using the #IMLSmedals hashtag, and engage with IMLS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). For more information, please visit the [IMLS website](#).

National Medal winners will be announced in late spring. Representatives from winning institutions will be honored for their extraordinary contributions during a virtual National Medal Ceremony this summer. To see the full list of finalists and learn more about the National Medal, visit the [IMLS website](#).

#### About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s libraries and museums. We advance, support, and empower America’s museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. Our vision is a nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities. To learn more, visit [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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