



Mohawk Valley Library System Outstanding Library Staff Award 2025 Nomination Form

Framed Certificate + \$500 for Library Materials Identified by Bookplate(s)

Please answer the following 3 questions using this form. Make your answers descriptive and concise as you describe the contributions made to foster library services in your community. This written part of the application should be no more than 2 pages total. Please focus on activities that took place over the last 3 years.

You may add up to 2 additional pages of support materials – photos, publicity materials, news stories, etc. The application package may not exceed 4 pages total.

The award is open to any paid employee at an MVLS library. It is awarded to library staff, not library directors.

I nominate Sally Ostrander affiliated with the Gloversville Public

Library, for the MVLS Outstanding Library Staff Award

Submitted by Valerie Acklin, Library Director

Submit nomination via email to kclingan@mvls.info by Monday, September 8, 2025

1. Please describe this staff member's history at your library.

Sally first joined the Gloversville Public Library as a Library Clerk in October of 2017, while the Library was in the throes of its massive renovation project and housed at a temporary location -- a particularly chaotic time to join the team. Despite this, and the fact that she only worked part time, she quickly became the staff member that every other staffer felt they could turn to for guidance and support. This, along with her unparalleled work ethic, kindness-forward attitude, and level-headed approach to problem-solving, led to her promotion to full-time Senior Library Clerk in February of 2022. While civil service doesn't currently offer her any additional steps for advancement, this hasn't stopped Sally from learning new skills and finding new ways to ensure everyone – patrons and staff alike – have positive Library experiences every day.

2. What, specifically, did the nominee do to earn your nomination? Where and when did the activities and services take place?

Sally has not done just one thing. Or even a series of things. Sally is an integral part of almost everything we do, every day. And she has been for years. She makes everything she does better: working at the Information Desk, supervising our clerical staff, providing public computer assistance, working in Youth Services, helping train new hires, providing readers advisory and notary public services, conducting all invoicing and ordering, compiling monthly statistics, acting as recording secretary at all Board meetings, helping complete the NYS Annual Report, and, most recently, taking on the task of desk shift scheduling. All these activities and services take place all the time, everywhere in the library. So, her greatest impact comes not from what she does or where she does it, but how she does all that she does. Sally deserves this award not just because she does her job efficiently and effectively, but because she does so with a relentless generosity of spirit, an unwavering support of those around her, and with innovation and initiative – qualities that don't often get featured in press releases, newspaper articles, or social media posts. So, I hope the following can convey to the award committee just how much she deserves to be celebrated.

Time and time again, I have seen her help her colleagues in a manner no one else does (including myself, if I'm being honest). A few examples of this include: independently devising an individual workplan to provide scaffolding for an employee with executive function challenges; putting aside her own wishes during a recent organizational restructuring to build the team possible; as well constantly remaining flexible, focused, and forward-thinking after our recent budget failure that resulted in the library needing to pivot 180-degrees overnight to keep our doors open. And when our Custodian recently had to take time off to tend to a family emergency, Sally, on her own, took charge in organizing folks to take over his duties until his return. That's just how she rolls.

When it comes to working with the public, those same attributes shine bright. I have often witnessed her deactivate a patron interaction that was on the verge of escalation through active listening, respectful language, and compassion. I know she get down on the floor to interact with children and have heard from the co-workers who respect her how she creatively looks for outside-the-box solutions when faced with a customer service conundrum. Truth is, whenever there is a situation in the building and my fellow librarians and I can't assist for one reason or another, Sally is often the one that steps into the void and keeps the library going.

3. How did your library/community benefit from this effort? How was it successful?

Sally has had a tremendous impact on our library community: patrons often seek her out if they have questions or concerns, because talking to her is like talking to a friend, colleagues feel they can approach her with questions or for instruction without judgment, and our professional staff (which includes me!) know that we can bounce ideas off her or ask for unbiased feedback. But her value extends out into the community in ways that make a huge difference, but are rarely considered: she is an unwavering ambassador for the library out in the community – even if she is not on the clock; our vendors and local stakeholders respect her, and therefore the library, for her

professional manor and stellar communication, our Board takes her input seriously, knowing that she always has the library's best interests, not personal gain, at heart. These things may not seem flashy or big "I" important at first, but consistently and over time they help strengthen our foundational values and ensure that we succeed no matter where we set our sights.

**Return via email to Kate Clingan at kclingan@mvlis.info by
Monday, September 8, 2025**