

# ALA American Library Association

## **For Immediate Release**

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Contact:

Tina Coleman

Staff Liaison

Graphic Novels & Comics Member Initiative Group

312.280.2152

[ccoleman@ala.org](mailto:ccoleman@ala.org)

American Library Association

## **Winners of the 2015 Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grants for Libraries Announced**

The American Library Association (ALA) and the Will and Ann Eisner Family Foundation will honor the two winners of the 2015 Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grants for Libraries Saturday onsite at the ALA 2015 Annual Conference in San Francisco, CA. The grants, funded by Will and Ann Eisner Family Foundation, are administered by ALA's Games and Gaming Round Table and the Graphic Novels & Comics in Libraries Member Initiative Group. ALA received more than 150 applications this year.

The Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grants for Libraries consists of two annual grants. The Will Eisner Graphic Novel Growth Grant provides support to a library that would like to expand its **existing** graphic novel services and programs and the Will Eisner Graphic Novel Innovation Grant provides support to a library for the initiation of a graphic novel service, program or initiative.

The 2015 Will Eisner Graphic Novel Growth Grant is awarded to Yuma High School Library, Yuma, AZ. Their current graphic novel selection is only 2.69% of their collection, and yet accounts for 31.76% of their circulation, thus their project - "Improving Literacy and Enriching Lives" - will expand their graphic novel collection to better serve their diverse student body which includes students from low-income households and students who are English language learners.

The 2015 Will Eisner Graphic Novel Innovation Grant was presented to Bellmore Memorial Library, Bellmore, NY for their project "Picture Yourself: Using Graphic Novels to Explore the People and Perceptions of Bellmore." Their project aims to connect the library with a diverse local audience and document life in the town through book clubs, graphic novel workshops and the opportunity for patrons to write and illustrate their own story of their Bellmore.

Each of the grants awards the winning libraries with a \$2,000 voucher to purchase graphic novels from the distributor-partner – Diamond Book Distributors, \$1,000 to host a graphic novel-themed event, and a \$1,000 stipend to attend the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. Additionally the winners will receive the Will Eisner Library (a graphic novel collection of Will Eisner's work and biographies about acclaimed writer and artist) and copies of the graphic novels nominated for this year's Will Eisner Awards at San Diego Comic-Con.

Jury member Amy Mikel said, "Our congrats go out to every librarian and library organization who took the time to submit an Eisner grant proposal. In the more than 150 proposals put forward we saw a real trend of creative, engaging library programming and, more importantly, a real need for graphic novels in libraries of all types nationwide."

Nancy and Carl Gropper of the Foundation add, "Will Eisner devoted his life to the development of comics and graphic novels which he called sequential art. He worked tirelessly to demonstrate the literary value of the graphic novel format. Graphic novel librarians have played a vital role in championing the graphic novel category and the Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grant program is our way of showing our great appreciation."

About The Will and Ann Eisner Family Foundation

The Will and Ann Eisner Family Foundation fosters innovation and creativity in graphic literature, sequential art and comics. It encourages others to continue and build upon the legacy of Will Eisner, who broke new ground in

the development of visual narrative and the language of comics and was the creator of The Spirit, John Law, Lady Luck, Mr. Mystic, Uncle Sam, Blackhawk, Sheena and countless others. For more information about Will Eisner visit [www.willeisner.com](http://www.willeisner.com).

#### About ALA

Established in 1876, the American Library Association (ALA) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization created to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. More information on the [grant and the application process](#) can be found at <http://www.ala.org/gamert/will-eisner-graphic-novel-grants-libraries>.