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**The 2014 ALA Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grants for Libraries
will be presented at the ALA Annual Summer Conference in Las Vegas
Two libraries to win cash grants and graphic novel collections worth more than \$7,000.**

New York, NY – (June 2, 2014) The Will & Ann Eisner Family Foundation has announced the third annual **ALA Will Eisner Graphic Novel Grants for Libraries**. The grants will be presented to two libraries at the American Library Association's Summer Conference to be held in Las Vegas this year June 26th to July 1st. The two grants help libraries to improve their graphic novel collections and their comics-related programming.

Both winning libraries will receive graphic novels nominated for the prestigious Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards, the Will Eisner Library of books and DVDs, a \$2,000 voucher for the purchase of additional graphic novels, a \$1,000 grant for the library to hold graphic novel or comics themed events and a \$1,000 travel stipend. The collection of titles comprises over 200 graphic novels making the total value for each award approximately \$7,000.

Carl Gropper, President of the Foundation said, "We developed this award as a way to recognize the importance of graphic novels as a true form of literature, the role that librarians have played in the growth of the graphic novel format, and to show Will Eisner's many contributions to the comics medium. While Will Eisner helped to create the foundations for comics and graphic novels librarians have championed the benefits of the graphic novel format and the comics medium to the world's readers.

Gropper continued, "The addition of the Eisner Award-nominated titles to the grants reflects the spirit of inclusion that Will Eisner was known for. He would have loved to participate in the current convergence of the comics and library communities. The winners of the Eisner Awards are announced each July at San Diego Comic-Con and are considered the Oscars of the Comics Industry. The list of nominated titles is created by a committee of independent industry experts, which has included a graphic novel librarian since 2005.

"We thank the publishers of the Eisner Award-nominated graphic novels who have contributed their books to the grants, and we especially thank our special partners, the publishers of the Will Eisner Library - **W.W.Norton, DC Entertainment, Dark Horse Comics, IDW Publishing, and Abrams ComicArts** - for their ongoing support and contribution of Will Eisner's graphic novels and textbooks. The **Brodart Company** is our library distributor-partner and a sponsor for this year's prize. They will be handling the cataloging and shipping of the graphic novels to the winning libraries."

The two winning libraries will be announced on the Graphic Novel Stage at the American Library Association's Annual Summer Conference in the Las Vegas at noon on Saturday, June 28th. Information will be available for libraries on how to apply for the 2015 grants.

About WILL EISNER (March 6, 1917 – January 3, 2005) Will Eisner was an acclaimed American comics writer, artist, and entrepreneur. He is considered one of the most important contributors to the development of the medium. He is known for the cartooning studio he founded, for his highly influential comic series, *The Spirit*, for his use of comics as an instructional medium, for his leading role in establishing the graphic novel as a form of literature with his groundbreaking 1978 graphic novel, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*, and for his educational work in the medium as exemplified by his three textbooks. In a career that spanned seven decades — from the dawn of the comic book to the advent of digital comics, Will Eisner was truly the 'Father of the Graphic Novel' and the 'Orson Welles of Comics'.

About the American Library Association The ALA is the oldest and largest library association in the world, provides 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 is available online at <http://www.ala.org/gamert/will-eisner-graphic-novel-grants-libraries>.

Visit www.willeisner.com for more information.

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