

## Literacy Champion Award 2023

### Nomination for Allison Giggey

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Allison Giggey is a Teacher-Librarian at Queen Charlotte Intermediate School and President of the PEI Teacher-Librarians' Association. A lifelong believer in the transformational power of language and the written word, Allison demonstrates a commitment to supporting and promoting the specialized work of school libraries that reaches far beyond the walls of her own school, impacting teachers, students and communities across Prince Edward Island.

Allison has always been a bookworm herself and knew early in life that she wanted to be a librarian. After finishing junior high she focused her aspirations on becoming a teacher-librarian in an intermediate school. Whenever anyone commented that students were at their most awkward and unpleasant in Grades 7 to 9, Allison replied that the difficulties of the early teen years were exactly why she wanted to work in that setting. She was thrilled to join the staff of Queen Charlotte Intermediate School almost immediately after graduating with her BEd from UPEI and even more excited to be offered the opportunity to take on the role of teacher-librarian.

Over the last fifteen years, Allison has worked tirelessly to ensure the QCIS library is a welcoming space that invites all students to experience the joy of reading. She has intentionally expanded the diversity of stories and creators found on the library's shelves with the hope that everyone, especially BIPOC and LGBTQ+ students, can find themselves reflected in the collection. Under her leadership, the QCIS school library has become particularly significant for students who may be less engaged in athletics or other extracurricular activities.

She fully embraces the challenge of engaging reluctant readers, taking the time to learn about her students' interests until she finally finds a title or series for them to enjoy. Even students who never borrow a book benefit from spending time in a place designed to foster student empathy, collaboration and critical thinking. In addition, as teacher-librarian Allison has organized numerous student book clubs, author visits, book fairs, Indigo fundraisers and other events.

As well as her work at Queen Charlotte, Allison has been involved in the PEI Teacher-Librarians' Association since the beginning of her career. She is a long-serving member of the association's executive, first as Secretary-Treasurer, then Vice-President, and now President. Teacher-librarians across the province look to Allison for guidance on questions ranging from how a school library can best support classroom teachers to tips on the most visually-appealing ways to shelve books to trouble-shooting the integrated library system used by Island schools. Allison

cheerfully responds to each request, creating synergy by encouraging teacher-librarians to share their challenges and successes so everyone can learn and celebrate together.

She also continuously advocates for school libraries and teacher-librarians, initiating meetings with the Minister of Education and other senior administrators from the Department to promote the benefits of libraries for all students and urge the government to support these important resources with adequate funding and minimum teacher-librarian qualifications.

Allison a worthy recipient of the Literacy Alliance's Literacy Champion Award. The results of her incredible efforts are already evident in her school, among her colleagues, and across the Island. However, the most exciting outcome of Allison's work is the many young people who continue to be inspired by her enthusiasm and love of learning to become librarians, educators, writers, lawyers, community organizers and more. Allison's full impact is still yet to come – and there is no doubt it will be a significant one.