

I Love My Librarian!

Award

Stephanie Dannehl
Bertrand Community School
Bertrand, Nebraska

Nominated by: Dennis Shipp

Every student has that one, special teacher. The one who has the power to make a child feel welcome, challenged, inspired, and loved. One teacher can make a difference. For Stephanie Dannehl, that teacher was a librarian. Because of the librarian who befriended her when she was growing up, Steph felt compelled to become a librarian so she could return the favor, and impact the lives of children.

How has the nominee improved your life or the lives of others in your community?

Steph has played an integral part as school librarian at Bertrand Community School. When she was hired, the district made the commitment to gut and renovate the facility's existing library. The vision being to make the school library the best in the state—a 21st century library. Steph assisted greatly in the planning and design process. She provided leadership to help the committee understand and plan for both the current and future needs of the structure. The district's board of education relied on Steph's leadership when determining the most effective layout that would be both welcoming and inspiring to students of all ages. After a year-long planning process, the new library was constructed. It is a state-of-the-art facility that encourages exploration, creation, and collaboration between students, teachers, and community members.

This library is not only open during the school day. This space helps provide STEM enrichment activities for students after school. Steph's vast knowledge with technology and STEM has made her a valuable resource for this program. Since Bertrand does not have a community library, Steph has made her library available to students during the summer as well to allow students the opportunity to retain knowledge and skills learned during the school year. During this time students have an opportunity to participate in a summer reading program, coding activities, play games, or simply come and create using supplies that Steph has made available. It is a safe and fun environment that children of all ages can utilize.

"I like the library and all the activities and building we can do. It is a place to do creative things and Mrs. Dannehl helps us do all of those things."

--Addison Anderson, Student, Bertrand Community School

"The new library is a fun place to read! There is comfortable furniture to sit on! I also like doing experiments with technology, like making a virtual tour of our farm for the HoloLens and other programs. Mrs. Dannehl, likes Science so it is fun."

--Livia Philips, Student, Bertrand Community School

“Mrs. Dannehl has transformed our library into what I think is one of the best libraries in the state. She has given us students numerous opportunities to better our education by bringing in new technology for us to work with and also a variety of new books to read. She is always ready to lend a helping hand with any new project we can come up with, and will do whatever it takes to see that we get it completed. Mrs. Dannehl has spent countless hours working on grants to get new devices and other tools to help better our education. Landon and I have recently been working with the new Hypervision, which makes 3D holographic images. Mrs. Dannehl got the Hypervision with a grant that she wrote. She has been a crucial part in the whole process since we are one of the only schools in the country who have a Hypervision.”

--Landon Anderson and Joseph Pelton, Students, Bertrand Community School

“Mrs. Dannehl showed me how to use the Morphi app to design a house. Then she helped me put the design into the HoloLens so I could see it in 3D. When I saw it in 3D I realized that I needed to make some changes to my design to make it better. The door handle was too large, and the walls went over the roof so it wasn’t very nice. And now I know where to put the window!”

--Easton, Student, Bertrand Community School

“The best part of library is the VR headsets. You get to go places but you are in class. You get to learn, but it is fun.”

--Bishop Hansen Student, Bertrand Community School

“I like working with Morphi because you have to think of what you are going to build and how to make it.”

--Malia Brown, Student, Bertrand Community School

“My favorite part of the library is learning new things. Mrs. Dannehl has taught us how to make QR codes and how to make 3D shapes on the Morphi app.”

--Jennifer Elox Mora, Student, Bertrand Community School

“You can do VR and learn about animals. You do new things on your iPad like Google Slides. Mrs. Dannehl is nice and she lets us do new things.”

--Wylie Sheets, Student, Bertrand Community School

“This outstanding librarian and educational team player is progressive when it comes to information management and technology. She is not intimidated by anyone or anything. I admire her for her courage. When I share my hesitancy about a particular subject or project, she replies that she doesn’t know everything either, but together with students we can overcome the obstacles. Stephanie Dannehl’s attributes are much more complex and inclusive than I can put on paper. When I try to give her credit and thank her for her leadership, her comeback is that we are learning and doing this together. She is very quick to share credit with the whole team. She simply makes the people around her better.”

--Bill Ford, Industrial Arts Teacher, Bertrand Community School

In what ways does the nominee go above in beyond in her role as librarian?

Steph has successfully combined her love for the library with her love of technology. She is revered across the state of Nebraska as a leader in both library science and technology integration. She led the two-year process to help her school district integrate the one-to-one initiative. She has presented at multiple statewide library and technology conferences in addition to national conferences such as the Association of Educational Service Agencies and the International Society for Technology in Education. It is also not uncommon for her to travel to school districts across the state of Nebraska to conduct in-services for other librarians and teachers.

Steph is also a pioneer in the field of having students create using the mixed reality device, the Microsoft HoloLens. Steph has taken this device and learned how students can create a design, and transfer it to the HoloLens in order to allow students to experience their designs in 3D. This has inspired students who have not typically experienced success in school. One student has used the Morphi app to design a train engine. He then used the HoloLens to view his object at any angle and made modifications before it was sent to the 3D printer.

Steph employs exceptional marketing skills. She leverages social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote events and activities that occur in her library. In addition, she has created a Google Site to highlight student work done in augmented, virtual, and mixed reality. Those sites can be accessed by clicking on the following links.

AR, VR, and MR in Bertrand Community School (<https://sites.google.com/view/arvrnr/home>)
Bertrand Library Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/School/Bertrand-Library-651052271649832/>)
@BertrandLibrary (Twitter) (<https://twitter.com/bertrandlibrary>)
@bertrand_library (Instagram)

“Steph works well beyond the traditional 40-hour work week. She is continually researching ways that she can make her library better. Most of her peers don’t comprehend how hard she works because she makes her job look easy. She performs all of her duties with a smile.”
--Shaun Kidder, Principal-Bertrand Community School

“As a teacher-librarian for her school you can find her not only supporting students but also the educators in her school district. She is the first to take their hand and support them in new technologies, experiences and opportunities. Many times, Stephanie takes it even further by encouraging and supporting these teachers to present and share at state and national conferences. Teachers without a doubt move forward in their careers from these opportunities and experiences.”
--Heather Callihan, Technology Integrationist, Grand Island Northwest Public School and NETA Board Member

“A few short years ago, this energetic young lady was hired by our district as we were moving to a one to one initiative with iPads. She introduced us to the classroom management system of Schoology. To be honest, since I was nearing retirement, I wasn’t sure how much time and effort I wanted to invest in learning and using this system. But Stephanie’s gentle, persistent, and positive encouragement moved me forward. Soon I was totally invested. I was creating courses, Edpuzzles, and Aurasmas. I was, with her

help, creating screen casts, iMovies and using many apps that she introduced me to. Little did I know, this was merely the beginning. Steph and I have created augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality learning units. She has led the way for my students to create homes and buildings using Chief Architect and Solidworks. Once created, she researched a way to get such projects into the HoloLens, which allowed students to experience their project in a life-sized mixed reality. My students have created homes and then enjoyed the experience of walking through these projects. Now Mrs. Dannehl is leading a group of instructors on other projects, including Hypervision. This technology, like the HoloLens, is cutting-edge. It is a 3D projection that can be reprogrammed by students.”

--Bill Ford, Industrial Arts Teacher, Bertrand Community School

“Steph is committed to excellence and does not let anything stand in her way. When her school district could not afford virtual and augmented reality or STEM equipment for the library, Steph worked overtime to research opportunities and write grants so students would not have to do without. She has currently been awarded multiple grants totaling over \$50,000.”

--Shaun Kidder, Principal, Bertrand Community School

“The library allows me to be more creative. I especially like creating programs for the 3D printer and the HoloLens. She a great person for our school!”

--Clayton Stempke, Student, Bertrand Community School

“My fourth graders have enjoyed using the virtual reality headsets and the Expeditions app. This technology has given my students the opportunity to see and “visit” places they can only imagine visiting. With the help of Mrs. Dannehl, I have been able to take my kids to the Great Wall of China, Antarctica, and the Coral Reefs off the coast of Australia. This has opened up a new world to our students. It is so much fun to hear, “Wow!” and “That’s so cool!” when they see the pictures that make them feel like they are there. The technology that Mrs. Dannehl has been able to make available to us has definitely changed the way that I teach and has given the students in our school an opportunity that many do not get.”

--Michelle Samuelson, Teacher, Bertrand Community School

How does the nominee make their community a better place?

Steph is highly involved in providing support in Schoology, the district’s Learning Management System. She currently represents the school and community as a Schoology Ambassador. Her knowledge in all areas of technology integration is excellent. She is extremely personable when working with outside entities to help the school and community.

In an effort to strengthen the relationship between the school and community, Steph has involved community patrons by inviting various individuals to serve as “guest readers” during library time. Community members from all walks of life have been invited into the library including farmers, bakers, grandparents, stay at home moms, and businessmen. She has also brought in nationally known authors such as Peggy Sunberg to read to students, and help students gain a better understanding of the writing process. These programs allow adults to model the reading process, and share their love of reading and life-long learning with students.

Steph has designed other activities that promote and encourage family/patron participation. Such activities include an elementary pumpkin decorating contest in October. This is not your typical run of the mill pumpkin decorating contest. Steph's contest challenges students to decorate their pumpkin like their favorite book character. Then, students give a book report, and the school votes on a winning pumpkin. Steph then uses her own personal funds to create a book to showcase the winning pumpkins and incorporates the use of augmented reality to make the books come to life as the students share their oral reports. Of course, Steph makes each student feel like a winner regardless.

"The Halloween pumpkin contest Mrs. Dannehl has created ignites excitement within my students. They love the opportunity to combine reading with a creative hands-on activity. Many of my students arrive at school in the morning and the first thing they do is stop in the library to show off what they created or to walk around and observe what other students have designed. These projects also encourage my students to read different books they may not have otherwise. They look at the pumpkins and books other students have chosen and are able to find books that interest them."

--Jenna Moench, Teacher, Bertrand Community School

"Stephanie is always giving her time, support and expertise to students, staff and her community. Stephanie deserves to be recognized for her commitment to lead, grow and learn."

--Heather Callihan, Technology Integrationist, Grand Island Northwest Public School and NETA Board Member

What makes the nominee a leader in her community?

Steph's love of teaching does not stop at the school walls. In the summer or evenings one can see her working with parents and/or patrons of her community providing Tech on the Deck, a professional development opportunity that focuses on helping parents understand the technology that their children are utilizing.

Steph is both a leader in her community and the state of Nebraska. Steph represents the school and community by accepting leadership positions at the state level. She has served on the Nebraska Educational Technology Association board of directors for the past 3 years. She currently serves as president. This association organizes two statewide high-quality conferences each year. These conferences are attended by thousands of Nebraska educators. Prior to her presidential position, she presented at these conferences on numerous occasions.

"Tech on the Deck has been an opportunity to learn new technology skills in a relaxed setting. Steph began the idea with the intention of encouraging others not to fear technology, but to embrace it instead. The theme is always to teach a manageable and practical tech tool. It's great to have guidance and support while doing something new and to be surrounded by others who want to learn as well."

--Nancy Nelson, Educator

"Stephanie Dannehl is a great asset to the Bertrand Community Schools and the community of Bertrand as a whole. Her enthusiasm for technology and her students is quite apparent. This enthusiasm extends beyond the classroom to community and parents. She coined a term "Tech on the Deck," where she would lead groups of adults into the world of technology. She would teach things such as Google,

Chrome, and many other “computer” things to “non-computer” individuals. She would elaborate on applications for parents to be wary of on their students’ phones. Mrs. Dannehl is always teaching and exploring technology, in and out of the classroom.”

--Lona Dahlgren, Parent

“The size of our school and the technology that we can offer our students is very unique, especially when you consider we are 1:1 iPads, have VR devices, and HoloLenses at our disposal. Mrs. Stephanie Dannehl is the main reason we have what we have. She has spent countless hours working on grants to help fund the technology budget to ensure we have access to the most recent technology tools available. Many hours have been spent training the staff on how to use this technology so that it is available to our students.”

--Michelle Samuelson, Teacher, Bertrand Community School

“Mrs. Dannehl and I have met through our Educational Service Unit. Recently I had the privilege to observe, learn, and collaborate with Stephanie Dannehl while completing field experience hours for a grad class. During my time with Mrs. Dannehl, I gained invaluable knowledge from her as I learned how to better serve my school as a media specialist.

The strengths Mrs. Dannehl brings to her school is her expert knowledge in innovative technologies. On top of maintaining her library with all its books, students, library classes, and daily troubleshooting issues, Mrs. Dannehl really excels in tech integration, collaboration, and creating opportunities for all students to become 21st-century learners and users of technology. While observing her library I saw her incorporate virtual reality and augmented reality activities with her students. I also observed her collaborating with other teachers and helping them integrate the same innovative technology into their classrooms! I witnessed students going on virtual field trips to places like Antarctica, a bee farm, and exploring marine life in the ocean. Students in rural Nebraska were able to witness these global places up close and personal, all without leaving their classrooms! I watched elementary students problem solve through trial and error as they created and designed their own 3D files using the Morphi app and Blender. Students were using 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, innovating, designing, and creating all without even knowing it! Mrs. Dannehl also excels in her willingness to collaborate with others and networking outside her building. She has really put Bertrand Library on a global map for tech integration and continues to learn from others to bring the newest technologies and ideas to students who live in the rural town of Bertrand, Nebraska. I gained new ideas, learned how to advocate for my own library, and have made plans to continue to collaborate with Mrs. Dannehl in the future. Stephanie Dannehl is a leader in the library field by far, and the best part is she is willing to help those around her become better themselves! I am excited to see all she still has yet to accomplish, and wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors!”

--Erica Chancellor, Media Specialist, Minden High School

“Steph has had a tremendous impact on teachers that are not only at her district, not only in our service agency area, but across the entire state of Nebraska. Her creativity and innovative nature have helped her students create projects that other educators haven’t even dreamed of. She is constantly asking “What if...” She regularly presents and shares at conferences in Nebraska and across the United States. She is

always willing to provide help and support beyond these workshops and conferences. She is always an email, call or tweet away.”

--Kate Hatch, Staff Development Director, Educational Service Unit #11

"Stephanie is a natural leader among her peers. She is always seeking out the latest tools and practices and is eager to share those with her colleagues. She has been instrumental in coordinating ESU 11 Librarian meetings and has scheduled national-level speakers such as Holly Clark and Tanya Avrith to present to our group. She is an invaluable resource in the ESU 11 area."

--Wade Gibson, Media and Technology Coordinator, Educational Service Unit #11

“I’ve known Stephanie since she took classes from me to obtain her master’s in Instructional Technology with a School Librarian Concentration. I’ve enjoyed watching Stephanie grow from a tech savvy teacher to a competent school librarian to a technology leader in the state. She has given freely of her expertise and time in both NSLA and NETA. She has also stepped up to the plate to teach in the same program she took when we needed extra help. She is an inspiration and model to the many teachers and librarians she has touched with her service.”

--Sherry Crow, M.L.S., PhD., Professor, Teacher Education, Administrator of the School Librarian Endorsement Program, University of Nebraska Kearney

Steph has proven herself to be one of the BEST librarian/media specialists in the state of Nebraska. She is the epitome of energetic, humble, hard-working, enthusiastic, intelligent, tenacious, and gracious. We are fortunate to have her in our school and community.