

# I Love My Librarian!

2017 Award

## **Timothy Ryan**

Sully Branch Library  
Rochester, New York

### **Nominator: Trina Thompson**

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets them apart?**

What sets Mr. Ryan apart as a librarian from the rest is his dedication to the needs of our community, his enthusiasm for his job, and his engagement with the Sully Branch's patrons.

Mr. Ryan is never too busy to assist any patron and his love for his job and the community his contagious. Nobody loves what they do for a living more than Mr. Ryan. He is a true asset to our community and he is definitely an agent for positive change.

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

I have known Mr. Ryan for just about 2 years as a librarian at the Sully Branch. He first began assisting me with finding housing and services for me and my family. I came to the library as a patron and as a single mother with 3 kids. I had just left an abusive relationship and had nowhere else to go. I was without a home or any place to stay. My 3 daughters were ages 5, 3, and 1 and I had no food to give them.

Mr. Ryan found me crying as I was sitting with my children in the library. He approached me and asked what was wrong and if there was anything he could do to help. It was not easy trusting people given what I had just endured, but something about the way Mr. Ryan approached and spoke to me let me know that he truly cared for the well-being of me and my children. I then began to tell Mr. Ryan about my situation and he smiled politely and told me that everything would be OK and that he was here to help.

Mr. Ryan then got some food and water from the back of the library and gave it to me and my kids. He then took me over to the children's section of the library and he suggested that I leave my daughters there for a little bit with one of the literacy aides so that he could assist me further. That was the beginning of how I met Mr. Ryan and how he helped get me back on my feet. That day he assisted me with finding shelter and getting food and medical services through the Department of Human Services.

Over the next two years Mr. Ryan assisted me with gaining computer and information literacy skills, helped me get my own apartment and establish credit, assisted me with crafting my resume and obtaining employment, and he helped me to enroll in school in the nursing program at Monroe Community College.

Today me and my daughters are in a better place all because of Mr. Ryan, the Sully Branch Library, and the services they provide for the community. I am not the only patron who Mr. Ryan has helped when it was needed the most. Every day I am in the Sully Branch I am consistently amazed with the stellar assistance Mr. Ryan provides. Mr. Ryan does his job without the expectation of a reward and he is extremely humble. He doesn't need an award to justify the job he does, but he sure as heck deserves one for benefit he provides our community day in and day out.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Mr. Ryan makes a difference in the community by creating a safe, informative, and entertaining environment at the Sully Branch Library. The Sully Branch is located in the most poverty-stricken quadrant of the City of Rochester. Rochester also has a very high crime rate and one of the lowest high school graduation rates in country. There is gang activity located all around the Sully Branch. Yet, with all of these negatives plaguing the community, the Sully Branch and Mr. Ryan are a beacon of hope and resilience. They are a positive symbol the community can look to and one that inspires each of us to be the best person we can be and to take care of and give back to the community we live in.

By offering state of the art technology programs that incorporate 3D printers, video games, coding and game design software, and virtual reality, Mr. Ryan is keeping our teens engaged and off the streets, off of drugs, and out of the gangs. He is giving them a foundational knowledge and the confidence to pursue their dreams that they aren't receiving in our schools and one that will prepare them for a bright future in which technology has become the focal point.

Furthermore, by offering to assist with homework, TASC, SAT, ACT preparation, resume workshops, job fairs, food stamps, medical insurance, and legal questions about custody and divorce, Mr. Ryan has cemented himself as a positive difference that is meeting the needs of all of those in our community.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

Mr. Ryan has improved my quality of life in a variety of ways in which I can never repay. I came to him as an abused, homeless, hungry, uneducated, scared, single mother of 3 young girls, and he assisted me in becoming what I am today. A confident, proud, strong, African-American female and mother. I now own my own home, am finishing my associates degree in nursing, and I am very actively involved with our community so that I can give back as much as possible that which Mr. Ryan and the Sully Branch Library gave to me.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place? Please be specific.**

Mr. Ryan makes the library a better place because he creates a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. But most importantly, he treats everyone as a human being that deserves respect and compassion. He understands the needs of our community and the people who reside within it. He doesn't look down upon anyone whether they are homeless, an immigrant, or what have you. He doesn't turn anyone away who needs assistance whether you are affiliated with a gang, foreign, African-American, etc. Mr. Ryan makes the library a positive place in a community filled with so many negative aspects and influences. The library is my home away from home and Mr. Ryan makes it that way.