

I Love My  
Librarian!  
2011 Award

**NOMINATION FOR  
Barbara K. Weaver**

Regional Library Director  
Ivy Tech Community College  
Northwest  
Gary, Indiana

**NOMINATED BY**

Becky Sacopulos  
Gary, Indiana

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

Barbara Weaver's inventive presence, verve, and respect for students and staff as Regional Library Director for Ivy Tech-Northwest's campuses in Gary, East Chicago, Valparaiso, and Michigan City has resulted in the establishment and operation of a regional tutoring program where college students can persist and flourish with one-on-one help with their courses. This peer tutoring service is staffed with academically strong Ivy Tech students. She has integrated the use of technology for online resources and facilitates students' and faculty's use of the interlibrary loan services. She was instrumental in the layout and design of the library at Ivy Tech's newly dedicated Valparaiso campus. Her creative talents have resulted in the development of a Library Treasure Map that is used during the orientation program to showcase the physical features and resources of the College's libraries to incoming students, website support of the region's library catalogue in the state Virtual Library, and the Library Reverse Jeopardy game highlighting library services, online resources, and the research process. She has connected the campuses and community through the Northwest Indiana reading literacy initiative called "Books to Bridge the Region." Barbara demonstrates the WOW factor in work ethic and service to others.

**2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?**

As a newly hired Ivy Tech grant development employee ten years ago, I had a need for resources for grant research. I met Barbara and she introduced me to her staff. I noticed that she had built a family environment and a cohesive team with limited resources. The library was in use. She has a warm, engaging personality and was accessible to answer questions I had. She provided me information about online resources as well as print resources. She was very supportive in subscribing to the Chronicle of Philanthropy as well as grant search engines including online services that helped me get started in my work. In addition, she introduced me to web search techniques and strategies for on-topic results I was pursuing. She never diminished my skills but rather was willing to provide hands-on opportunities for me to learn about the basically new field of grant writing I was entering so that I could be successful. She sought out DVD resources, and she suggested resources for me to examine prior to the possibility of including them in her next order. As a result of her early assistance and support of my grant searches, the College has been the recipient of many grants. While I now work solo, I feel comfortable in collaborating when the occasion occurs because she remains available to assist. Staff and students have become interested in pursuing grants to enhance their programs and to support learning initiatives. She is continuing to improve the nook at each of the region's libraries for career materials, scholarship availabilities and grant writing resources. This is another example of Barbara's sensitivity to needs at the College and her proactive support of individual staff members and students.

She supports Ivy Tech's strategic goals including ensuring that students achieve their education goals by enhancing student orientation, expanding information and making the effort to provide a college library environment that results in a great academic support service for student success. She works with others to seek academic and financial resources that assist our students. When staff asked for support of various community literacy building partnerships, she was open to providing support for these initiatives. One of the initiatives held in collaboration with the Gary Literacy Coalition and the Northwest Indiana Literacy Coalition is the "Put your nose in a book" program. Many staff and students have participated by stopping what they were doing at 10:00 A. M. to read during the one week activity. This emphasized the importance of literacy and reading to everyone. Students and their professors, administrators, custodians and culinary staff engage in reading. Altrusa Club of the Indiana Dunes' program "Reading Under Cover" is used in GED preparation classes encouraged parents to read to their children for the development of early literacy skills. Many of the GED students were mothers and we had a committee of Ivy Tech students lead the reading to children activity and discuss the importance of showing children an interest in books and reading. The

city-wide “Books to Bridge the Region” is a one book reading initiative spanning seven northwest Indiana counties served by Ivy Tech. We are trying to build a community of readers showing them that reading can open up worlds that students and staff may not have otherwise known. The “Books to Bridge the Region” goals are to create conversations among communities and foster critical thinking related to a topic. In the spirit of involving the Ivy Tech student body, Barbara personally approached the College’s English composition instructors with copies of the books as well as ideas on how the book can be integrated into the class curriculum. From serving as a great topic for research papers to spawning chapter essays the layers of themes that can be used to integrate books into a syllabus is very broad. This activity engaged student participants during “brown bag” lunch circles in discussions to compare and contrast their ideas related to the book they all read. Lunch circles at each of the Ivy Tech campuses had a group facilitator and the librarians assisted with the process. As part of this program, Barbara invited Ivy Tech students to hear award winning book authors. She partnered with the Portage Public Library and with Purdue University Calumet in hosting authors.

### **3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?**

Ivy Tech-Northwest has transitioned from a technical college to a community college. In addition to associate’s degree programs in fields, such as health and business, the College now offers liberal arts courses and a Corporate College where training and preparation for jobs in industries and businesses. Barbara does not wait for others to come to her before launching initiatives to draw the interest of students and staff to the library not only for support of academic programs but also to be the helper at their side. For 18 years, she has served the College in an exemplary way.

Instead of an inner sanctum place, she has created welcome spaces at each of the four Ivy Tech-Northwest campuses with the help of the librarians who work as a cohesive team. She does her homework. She has made the library a comfortable and inviting place to come to with staff happy to help. Also, she has embraced the need for electronic access 24 hours a day for those moving forward with technology enhancements and connectivity. Thus the Ivy Tech Virtual Library content continues to be enhanced.

We occasionally brainstorm ways to promote reading, not only required for academics but also for personal enjoyment. Barbara affords time for collaboration. We achieved funding for some of these ideas. For example when the Associate Professor of the Physical Therapy Assistant program published his book about a Nigerian student’s journey including barriers he faced in improving his quality of life through educational achievements, she assisted me in writing the proposal to fund the purchase of paperback copies for the students and staff interested in attending his program designed to promote reading and writing and making the connection. About 200 people attended the program she helped to coordinate. Barbara also

finds time to involve the libraries in literacy activities. She is creative with whatever resources she has and works well with others. She worked with a committee to help promote the inaugural edition of Off the Lake publication of student and staff essays including her own essay.

Sometimes our community college students bring their young children to school with them when the students use the library. To provide materials for the children while their parents use the library, Barbara has created a collection of children's picture books. This has a dual purpose since the collection supports the college's Early Childhood education program and the community's use of the materials.

She coordinates the collection development of materials for the four regional libraries. She researches and selects books, videos and other materials for each library with input from the library staff and faculty. She has worked closely with the academic programs to increase the library resources to support their accreditation efforts. In recent years she has worked with the current administration of Chancellor Valtierra to increase support for the libraries' activities across the region.

Barbara serves as Ivy Tech's regional faculty advisor for its new Library Technical Assistant program. The Library Technical Assistant program is a two-year associate's degree offered online for students interested in an entry-level library career. In the early 90s Barbara's activity with the American Library Association led her to serve as the chairperson for a national subcommittee of LIRT, a group that promoted information literacy by providing quality instruction to students in better utilizing library resources. She has been an exemplary advocate of promoting use of the library resources. Besides the layout and design of the new library at the Valparaiso campus, she has set up and developed over time a small library from practically nothing when the Michigan City campus of Ivy Tech-Northwest opened the fall of 1998 and partially ran it for three years. Presently, she is laying out the plans for a redesign of the Michigan City campus library. She takes pride in her work and people who work with her respect her.

Critical to students' course placement in most programs at Ivy Tech is the passing of the Compass test. For the nursing program, students must take the TEAS exam. Through the years, Barbara has made available review materials for each of these exams that are now available online and also in hard copies.

#### **4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?**

Despite her numerous responsibilities, Barbara taught the majority of the library overview one hour class sessions at the Gary campus within the English composition, sociology, business and culinary classes as part of her support to the instructors. She enjoys being part of the students' world of learning. She is a team player and supportive of staff.

As the student advisor for the Library Technical Assistant program for the region, she has personally encouraged a number of students to enroll into this program. She mentors students throughout the program to support successful completion and help students obtain jobs.

With the start of the College's involvement in the first area-wide "Books to Bridge the Region" literacy initiative in northwest Indiana in 2007, she was instrumental in organizing all the book discussion at the four Ivy Tech regional campuses. This included setting up facilitators as leaders and taking the individual responsibility of leading the Gary campus book discussions which has had the largest turnout of any of the campuses in the area. Forty-three students and staff attended the group discussion in the third year requiring five facilitators for manageable discussions in small groups. This is the fifth year of the program that is available in every school and library in the seven county region. Now as an annual fall event, she continues the momentum for involvement by personally approaching instructors in the English and communications fields to promote the book to their students and to promote the benefits of reading. She has a passion for reading and making things happen for students at Ivy Tech with her personal, enthusiastic approach.

For 17 years, up until last year, she was also the regional tutoring coordinator of the peer tutoring program she started at Ivy Tech-Northwest's four campuses. The peer tutoring program has grown tremendously. This was in addition to her position as the Regional Library Director. She provided stability and growth for that program. This program, that she once handled herself, has now transitioned into a full-time department for tutoring that also includes using test preparation guides that she first initiated.

Considering the high proportion of part-time staff in the library compared to other departments, she has one of the most stable staffs with the longest tenure of part-time employees at Ivy Tech-Northwest. This can be attributed to the family environment she has created. She gives the part-time and full-time staff freedom to do their jobs well. Employees feel her encouragement and are supportive of ideas she brings to them.

She has been very helpful to faculty as well. She helped one English instructor in a book of which she was a major contributor. The book *Let the Games Begin!*, an

interactive information literacy instruction exercise, was published this summer. Barbara put together an exercise called Library Reverse Jeopardy that is a colorful variation of the TV show with library questions in seven categories and of increasing difficulty. This game has been used in training new and even existing part-time library staff as well as students. She was instrumental in the design of the library instructional program at the Ivy Tech-Northwest, including the creation of a Library Treasure Map that is used part of new student orientation. She created the helpful Resources for Student Success guide that includes information on media, computer and materials resources, information literacy and guide to the Virtual Library. This guide is now also available online.

Barbara also served on a committee to prepare the New Faculty Orientation Guide that includes information about the dual credit program, capstone courses, distance education, prior learning assessment, policies and college procedures, and WEB4faculty, to make faculty more comfortable. The multilayered design was her idea and this guide is now a professionally printed brochure. She is a doer and extends herself when she sees a need to make enhancements for the College.

She has been an active supporter of instructors as they prepared for program accreditation over the years helping the nursing, business, physical therapist assistant, respiratory care, culinary, mortuary science and technology programs. She makes sure the libraries have journals, online resources and books that support those programs. In addition, she ensures each program has hard evidence of the resources and acquisitions and collections that are available through a program binder with supporting lists of materials that is much appreciated by the faculty.

Instructors call upon her to prepare selections of materials for student support of various teaching units they wish to highlight for research activities. When students request help in research projects, she helps them seek out resources themselves so they will gain independence in their future searches. She cares about the students' success.