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## **Little Free Library Announces 2026 Todd H. Bol Awards for Outstanding Achievement**

*From an 11-year-old in Jacksonville, to a single mom in the UK, to an organization serving a diverse immigrant population in Minneapolis, winners of the eighth-annual awards show that book joy can be cultivated in every community*



**St. Paul, MN (May 19, 2025)** –The Little Free Library® (LFL) nonprofit organization is proud to announce the recipients of the eighth annual **Todd H. Bol Awards for Outstanding Achievement** honoring six exceptional individuals and organizations that exemplify LFL’s mission to build community, inspire readers, and expand book access for all. This announcement coincides with **Little Free Library Week**, a global celebration taking place May 17-23.

Since its founding, Little Free Library has inspired thousands of volunteers around the world to become stewards—dedicated caretakers of book-sharing boxes who champion literacy and connection in their communities.

“Little Free Library stewards give so much more than books—they give their time, care and heart to their communities,” said LFL CEO and Executive Director Daniel Gumnit. “This year’s Todd H. Bol Award winners each have a unique story, but they share a deep commitment to helping neighbors feel seen, connected and inspired to read. Their generosity reflects the very best of the Little Free Library network, and we are honored to celebrate the difference they make every day.”

#### **The winners are:**

**Brentley Alexander of Westminster, South Carolina**, was inspired to bring book joy to his community—and himself—after a hiking accident left him paralyzed. Alongside his great-nephew, who also loves to read, Brentley created the “Wheelie Readiculous Booktique,” a large Little Free Library serving readers of all ages. “In my rural community, this has, in a way, brought out the best in people,” Brentley said. “With my entire being, I believe it has kept me from hospitalization by keeping me moving, strengthening me, and keeping my mind focused on everything but quadriplegia. Happiness plays a big role in wellness. If you’re not happy, you’re not healthy.... Owning a Little Free Library has shown me that being a wheelchair user isn’t where my story ends.”

**Mary Charbonneau of Spokane, Washington**, whose Little Free Library book-sharing box has been a beacon for connection and book access in her community. “We wanted to help support literacy from our front yard,” Mary said. “Our Little Free Library has provided 24/7 free books to many who cannot afford to buy them and/or lack access to transportation to visit the public library.” Beyond sharing books at her Little Free Library, Mary distributes free books at the local farmer’s market to reach even more readers. “We connect with a lot of people that live outside our neighborhood and many that are learning about the Little Free Library movement for the first time!”

**Paisley Deverson of Jacksonville, Florida**, is only 11 years old, but her passion for reading is strong, and she has already started four Little Free Libraries. “I never knew how big of a need there was for them in my community,” Paisley said, but the response has been overwhelmingly positive. “I have gotten so much joy in seeing the kids come to the libraries to get their free books.” To make Paisley’s vision a reality, she took the initiative to collaborate with Jacksonville’s City Council as well as the Mayor’s office. “It showed me that even a small idea can grow into something really big when a community works as a team.”

**Lyndsay Hogg of Hartlepool, England**, was overjoyed when she applied for and received one of the 90 Little Free Libraries that Penguin Random House UK was gifting in celebration of their 90th anniversary. “We are not in the most affluent town, so incentives like this make such a difference to morale,” Lyndsay said. Once installed, her library—“The Book Hogg”—became a local sensation, inspiring authors to drop off signed copies of their books and prompting the local council to commit to building 11 more book-sharing boxes. “I am a single mum of two boys who just wants to show them that small acts of kindness are all it takes sometimes to genuinely make a difference,” Lyndsay said.

**Kim Michele Richardson of Louisville, Kentucky**, a *New York Times* bestselling author, is leading the *Courthouses Reading Across Kentucky & Beyond* initiative, which endeavors to place a Little Free Library at each of the 120 courthouses across her state. “For those having to attend court, courthouses can be extremely noisy, boring and frightening, so to be able to offer an escape into a book and give solace to another is priceless,” Kim said. “Many who walk into courthouses are also economically oppressed and cannot afford basic necessities, much less a book. To have the opportunity to choose a book for themselves or a child is a wonderful gift—and another way to possibly grow life-long readers.”

**Communities Advancing Prosperity for Immigrants (CAPI) of Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center, Minnesota**, started their Little Free Libraries as part of LFL’s Read in Color initiative. “Brooklyn Center, where CAPI’s headquarters is based, is an under-resourced community with one of the highest populations of people of color [in the state],” said Monique Hernandez, CAPI’s Development and Communications Director. “Access to books is not always guaranteed and buying books or visiting well-stocked libraries can be difficult due to time, transportation or financial constraints. Our Read in Color Little Free Library helps bridge that gap, offering free, immediate access to stories that reflect a wide range of cultures, languages and experiences for children and

adults. When someone finds a book that looks like them, sounds like their family, or opens a window into a new world, it can be quietly transformative. It offers connection, a sense of belonging, and says that their stories matter. And in a diverse community like ours (CAPI provides services and resources to immigrant and refugee communities), that sense of shared humanity is one of the most meaningful impacts of all.”

**The Todd H. Bol Awards for Outstanding Achievement—part of the Little Free Library Week celebration**—are named for LFL’s founder, Todd Bol, who created the first Little Free Library book-sharing box in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin, and passed away unexpectedly in 2018. This is the eighth year the awards have been presented, and LFL will continue to honor Bol’s memory for years to come.

Before his passing, Bol said: “I really believe in a Little Free Library on every block and a book in every hand. I believe people can fix their neighborhoods, fix their communities, develop systems of sharing, learn from each other, and see that they have a better place on this planet to live.”

**Read more about this year’s Todd H. Bol Award winners and see their photos:**  
[LittleFreeLibrary.org/todd-bol-awards](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org/todd-bol-awards)

**Learn about Little Free Library Week, May 17-23:** [LittleFreeLibrary.org/lfl-week](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org/lfl-week)

*Little Free Library Week is generously sponsored by ThriftBooks.*

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#### **ABOUT LITTLE FREE LIBRARY**

Little Free Library® (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that builds community, inspires readers and expands book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Library book-sharing boxes. There are more than 200,000 registered Little Free Libraries worldwide in all 50 states, in 128 countries and on all 7 continents. Through them, over 500 million books have been shared since 2009. LFL has received the World Literacy Award as well as honors from the Library of Congress, National Book Foundation and others. The organization grants Little Free Libraries full of books to underserved areas through its Impact Library and Indigenous Library programs and champions diverse books through its Read in Color initiative. To learn more, visit [LittleFreeLibrary.org](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org).



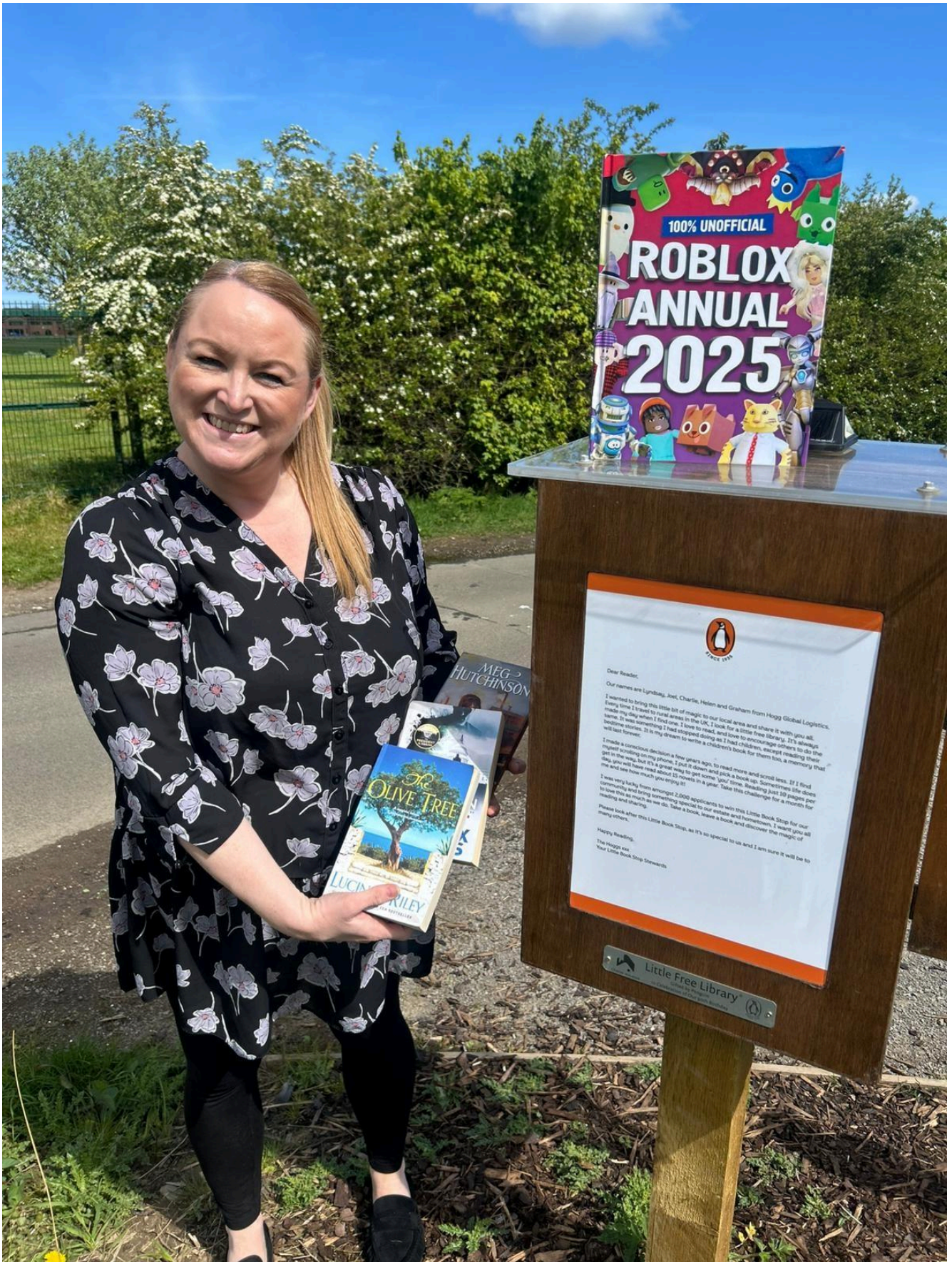
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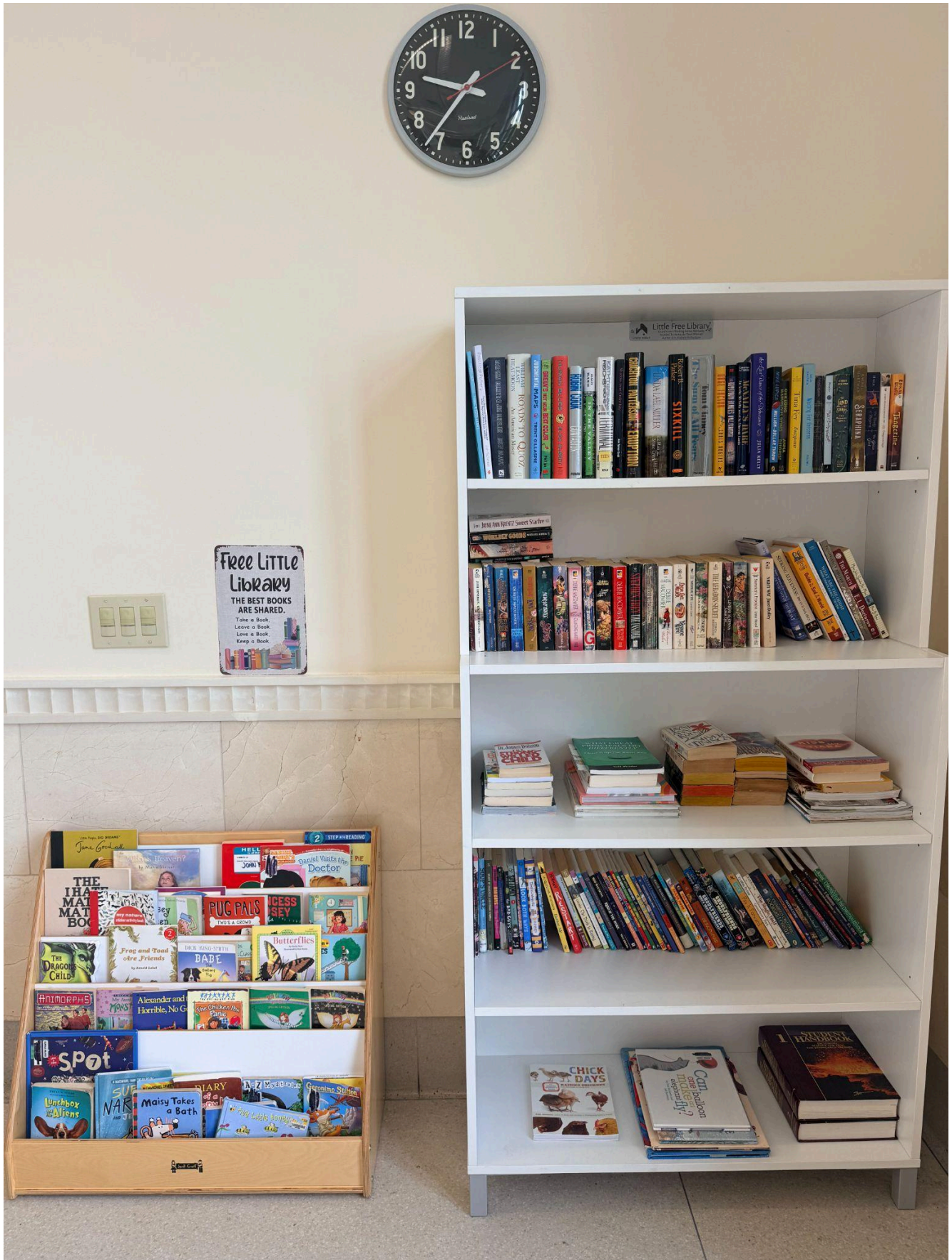
Mary Charbonneau



*Paisley Deverson (left)*



Lindsay Hogg



One of Kim Michele Richardson's courthouse Little Free Libraries



*Monique Hernandez of CAPI*