

ANNOUNCING THE 2024 OHIOANA BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

The Ohioana Library is pleased to announce the finalists for the 83rd annual Ohioana Book Awards. First given in 1942, the awards are the second-oldest state literary prizes in the nation and honor outstanding works by Ohio authors and illustrators in five categories: Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, Middle Grade & Young Adult Literature, and Juvenile Literature. The sixth category, About Ohio or an Ohioan, may also include books by authors who are not Ohioans.

The recognition this year's stellar list of authors has received includes the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize, the PEN America Literary Award, the Kirkus Prize, the Coretta Scott King Book Award, the Caldecott and Newbery Honors, and the IPPY Gold Medal. Five finalists are debut authors, and eight are previous Ohioana Book Award winners.

On June 3, Ohioana will kick off the eleventh annual "30 Books, 30 Days," our popular feature in which we profile one award finalist every day on our social media. This year, the Ohioana Book Award committees selected thirty-three finalists, so our feature will expand by three days! In mid-June we'll launch the annual Readers' Choice Award poll, which allows the public to vote online for their favorite book among the finalists.

Winners will be announced in July. The 2024 Ohioana Awards ceremony will be held at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus on Thursday, October 3. The finalists are:

Fiction

- Cunningham, Michael. *Day*, Random House
- Hyde, Allegra. *The Last Catastrophe*, Vintage Books
- McBride, James. *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*, Riverhead Books
- McDaniel, Tiffany. *On the Savage Side*, Knopf
- Thai, Thao. *Banyan Moon*, Mariner Books
- Umrigar, Thrity. *The Museum of Failures*, Algonquin Books

The Director's Chair

Dear Friends,

Since I became Executive Director of the Ohioana Library Association, one thing I excitedly look forward to each spring is announcing the year's Ohioana Book Award finalists in our May Newsletter. I'm delighted to do so again, in what is my final newsletter before retirement.

From the finalists announced in the cover story, you can easily see why I am so excited. What a truly incredible list! Several of them are among America's and Ohio's most celebrated authors and illustrators; others are at the beginning of promising literary careers. Our congratulations to them all!

It has been an eventful spring as Ohioana celebrates 95 years since we were founded by Ohio First Lady Martha Kinney Cooper. Last month, we had our most successful Ohioana Book Festival ever with nearly 5,800 readers of all ages joining us at Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library. This month, we're welcoming Ohioana's seventh

Nonfiction

Dawidziak, Mark. *A Mystery of Mysteries: The Death and Life of Edgar*

Allan Poe, St. Martin's Press

Gay, Ross. *The Book of (More) Delights*, Algonquin Books

Judd, Robin. *Between Two Worlds: Jewish War Brides after the Holocaust*,

The University of North Carolina Press

Lohman, Sarah. *Endangered Eating: America's Vanishing Foods*,

W. W. Norton & Company

Smith, Maggie. *You Could Make This Place Beautiful*, Atria Books

About Ohio or an Ohioan

Bordewich, Fergus M. *Klan War: Ulysses S. Grant and the Battle to Save*

Reconstruction, Knopf

Grush, Loren. *The Six: The Untold Story of America's First Women*

Astronauts, Scribner

Meckler, Laura. *Dream Town: Shaker Heights and the Quest for Racial*

Equity, Henry Holt and Company

Schneider, Amy. *In the Form of a Question: The Joys and Rewards of a*

Curious Life, Avid Reader Press

Weatherford, Carole Boston. Illus. by Frank Morrison. *How Do You Spell*

Unfair?: MacNolia Cox and the National Spelling Bee, Candlewick

Poetry

Byas, Taylor. *I Done Clicked My Heels Three Times*, Soft Skull Press

Glaser, Elton. *Ghost Variations*, University of Pittsburgh Press

Hessenauer, Anita M. *Let Go*, Resource Publications

Reeves, Phoebe. *Helen of Bikini*, Lily Poetry Review Press

Robinson, Nicole. *Without a Field Guide*, Unbound Edition Press

Stephens, Dior J. *CRUEL/CRUEL*, Nightboat Books

Middle Grade & Young Adult Literature

Adams, Richard. Adapted by James Sturm. Illus. by Joe Sutphin. *Watership*

Down: The Graphic Novel, Ten Speed Graphic

Chen, Kara H. L. *Love & Resistance*, Quill Tree Books

Erebia, Federico. *Pedro & Daniel*, Levine Querido

Leahy, Elisa Stone. *Tethered to Other Stars*, Quill Tree Books

Rex, Adam. *A Little Like Waking*, Roaring Brook Press

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Remember Us*, Nancy Paulsen Books

Juvenile Literature

Awan, Jashar. *I'm Going to Build a Snowman*, Simon & Schuster Books for

Young Readers

Bentley, Tadgh. *One Chicken Nugget*, Balzer + Bray

Gray, Gary R. Illus. by Oge Mora. *I'm From*, Balzer + Bray

Hillenbrand, Will. *The Voice in the Hollow*, Holiday House

Lee, Chiquita Mullins and Carmella Van Vleet. Illus. by Jennifer

Mack-Watkins. *You Gotta Meet Mr. Pierce! The Storied Life of Folk*

Artist Elijah Pierce, Kokila

Executive Director – Dr. Kim

Kiehl, an outstanding leader who will take Ohioana to new heights as we march forward to our 100th anniversary in 2029.

As I mentioned, this is my final newsletter as Executive Director. Since we introduced this online publication in December 2013, we've produced 65 newsletters. It has been my privilege and pleasure to write this introductory column for nearly all of them.

What a joy it has been to work for this wonderful organization. I'm grateful to so many people: Governor and Mrs. DeWine; the Ohio General Assembly; our volunteers from across the state, led by the Ohioana Board of Trustees; the authors and illustrators who continually inspire and enrich the lives of readers everywhere. And Ohioana's incredible staff – Kathryn, Courtney, Miriam, and Charlotte. My heartfelt thanks to you all.

Lastly, **thank you** for sharing the love of books and reading. **You** make what we do possible. It has been an honor for me to be on this journey with you.

David E. Weaver
Executive Director

MEET OHIOANA'S NEW DIRECTOR: KIMBERLEE KIEHL, PHD

Kimberlee Kiehl holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from Penn State University, an MS in Special Education from the College of St. Rose, and a BS in Speech Pathology and Audiology from the State University of New York at Geneseo. Kim started her career as a special education teacher for infants and toddlers who were terminally ill. Following the completion of her PhD, she was an Associate Professor in the College of Human Ecology at The Ohio State University from 1990 through 2000. She also served as Associate Dean for Academic Programs, and an Extension faculty member in the same college, and an Adjunct Associate Professor until 2012.

Kim served two tenures at the Center of Science and Industry (COSI), one as Chief Strategy and Operations Officer (2000-2012) and returning later as Senior Vice President for Experience and Operations in 2018 until the closure of the museum due to COVID in 2020. Following her first term at COSI, she was recruited as Executive Director of the Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center,

an early childhood education school with classrooms located inside the Smithsonian Museums. In 2016 she returned to Ohio to assume the position of Director of the Museum of Ohio Project at the Ohio History Connection where she was responsible for the planning of the *Ohio: Champion of Sports* exhibition. Most recently, Kim served as Associate Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer at the Ohio High School Athletic Association, managing the daily operations for the statewide organization.

Kim was born on Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, but spent most of her childhood in Corning, New York, after her father left active duty. She comes to the Ohioana Library Association Executive Director position with a lifelong love of books, and a passion for story, memory keeping, and historical collections. She is the owner and Chief Memory Officer at *Stories of a Life, LLC*, where she helps people organize their printed photos and use them to tell their life legacy stories. A resident of Lewis Center, Kim is a mom to two adult children, a son and a daughter, and “Grammy” to four grandchildren. She enjoys scrapbooking, photography, and reading all genres, often reading two or three books at a time!



Photo by Chris Walker