



## Local Library Champion Award

**Barry Romich, Wayne County Public Library with broad support from libraries across the region**

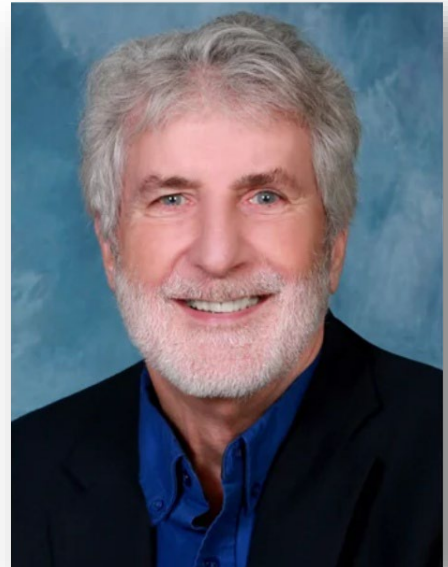
Barry Romich, President of the Romich Foundation, is the recipient of the 2025 Local Library Champion Award. This prestigious honor recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional commitment to enhancing public libraries and expanding access to resources and opportunities for all Ohioans.

Barry Romich has redefined what volunteer leadership can look like. Through his visionary support and tireless advocacy, Barry has helped libraries in Wayne County and beyond with his commitment to innovation, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

From equipping libraries with 3D printers, laser engravers, and circulating tech kits to funding training and collaborating directly with library staff, Barry has empowered public libraries to embrace emerging technologies and create dynamic makerspaces that inspire creativity and discovery.

His commitment to sustainability was evident when he donated solar panels for a library bookmobile, reducing environmental impact while raising awareness of green technologies.

His impact doesn't stop at equipment. Barry's leadership is deeply personal and purpose-driven. He reinvested philanthropic award funds to build a Maker Cart for his local library, kickstarting a wave of STEAM programming that continues to engage learners of all ages.



Perhaps most notably, Barry's commitment to community inclusion is reflected in the creation of the Joyful Café, a welcoming coffee shop inside the Wayne County Public Library in Wooster that provides meaningful employment for adults with developmental disabilities. This partnership has elevated libraries as not just centers of knowledge, but as inclusive, community-driven spaces for people of all abilities and backgrounds.

Barry is a visionary, a builder, and a true champion of public libraries. His unwavering support has enabled libraries to innovate, grow, and become more deeply embedded in the lives of the people they serve. Through imagination, advocacy, and heartfelt generosity, Barry has shown what's possible when one person commits fully to the mission of public libraries.

For these reasons and more, Barry Romich is the recipient of this year's Local Library Champion Award, and we thank him for his extraordinary contributions to the Ohio library community.