



Emerging Leader Award

Collin Kuhn, Youth Service Associate, Ritter Public Library

Collin Kuhn, Youth Services Associate at Ritter Public Library in Vermilion, is the recipient of the 2025 Emerging Leader Award. In just a few years, Collin has rapidly distinguished himself as a rising star in Ohio's library community. Through his leadership, commitment to intellectual freedom, and innovative work in youth services, he has made a profound impact in a remarkably short time.

From the moment he became eligible, Collin pursued certification as a Certified Public Library Staff member, and he hasn't slowed down since, consistently seeking out professional development opportunities with a relentless drive to better serve both his team and the public.

As president of the library's bargaining unit, Collin helped unify staff and management during a period of transition, bringing optimism and diplomacy to every conversation. His natural ability to lead by example, paired with his collaborative spirit, has made him a trusted colleague and mentor, even at this early stage in his career.

A passionate advocate for inclusive access, Collin co-led the redesign of the juvenile nonfiction classification system to better support young readers and played a central role in transforming the children's area to exceed accessibility standards. His efforts in developing more than 25 STEM-focused early literacy kits, along with his wildly popular storytimes, underscore his creative and community-focused approach to youth engagement.



Collin's dedication to growth is matched by his commitment to uplifting those around him. He actively shares insights from trainings and workshops, supports new staff through onboarding, and has worked to strengthen vital partnerships with local schools. He is currently preparing to pursue his MLIS, further signaling his long-term investment in the profession.

With his vision, energy, and natural leadership, Collin is not only shaping the future of library services, he's setting the standard for what the next generation of library professionals can achieve. For these reasons and more, Collin Kuhn is the recipient of this year's Emerging Leader Award.