



## Library Innovation Award

### Huron Public Library's "Huron Beacon Podcast"

The Huron Beacon Podcast is the recipient of the 2025 Library Innovation Award. At the heart of this initiative is Rebekah Hire-Santoro, Head of Marketing and Emerging Technology at the Huron Public Library. Her creativity, leadership, and community vision brought the project to life.

While podcasts are a well-established format, Huron Public Library has reimagined the medium in a way that directly supports its strategic goals and the needs of the community. The Huron Beacon Podcast is not just a program, but a community-building tool, designed to connect local residents with the people, stories, and organizations that shape their daily lives.



When the library's strategic plan called for stronger community engagement and the development of an audio/video production space, Rebekah saw an opportunity to do something different. Rather than creating a podcast about books or internal library topics, she built a platform for the community itself to be heard.

The podcast highlights local leaders, organizations, and initiatives, offering them a space to share who they are, what they do, and how they serve Huron. In doing so, it fills a critical gap. Before the Huron Beacon, the city had no dedicated local news source. The podcast now serves as a trusted source of timely, relevant information, elevating voices that may not otherwise have been heard.

Rebekah's leadership also ensured that the podcast served a dual purpose: it introduced staff and patrons to the library's new media production studio, offering hands-on experience with emerging technology. It's a brilliant example of how one innovative idea can fulfill multiple strategic objectives—community engagement, technology access, digital literacy and storytelling—all at once.

The Huron Beacon Podcast stands as a replicable model for libraries across Ohio, showing how innovation can meet real community needs in thoughtful, impactful ways.

Huron Public Library will be formally recognized during a special ceremony and luncheon at the OLC Convention and Expo on November 19, 2025 at the Huntington Convention Center in downtown Cleveland.