



April 14, 2021

Information: Joy Testa Cinquino / 716-858-7182 / testaj@buffalolib.org

BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR TO RETIRE IN JUNE *Mary Jean Jakubowski to Leave Post Following Nearly 30 Years of Service*

Kathleen Berens Bucki, Chair of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees, announced today:

ERIE COUNTY, NY - After nearly thirty years of working for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Mary Jean Jakubowski, Library System Director, has announced her retirement effective in late June 2021. Appointed Director a decade ago, she has also served as Chief Operating Officer, Human Resources Officer, Central Library Department Head and as a Librarian, working in several departments at the Central Library and the Orchard Park Public Library.

"The B&ECPL Board of Trustees recognizes Mary Jean's forward thinking; she has not only raised the level of community awareness about library services, but she has also encouraged new partnerships, bringing organizations with similar missions into the Central Library," stated Kathleen Berens Bucki, chair, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees.

"In addition, Mary Jean has created new initiatives such as the establishment of the downtown Reading Park, mounting of major public exhibits featuring the Library's Rare Books and Special Collections, offering a sports equipment lending and children's library card amnesty program, building the *Launch Pad MakerSpace*, and creating the *Library by Mail* service. She has increased effectiveness and efficiency of operations, improved labor-management relations, successfully advocated for over \$20 million in library grant funding and always maintained a balanced budget. She has strongly supported advancing access to technology by restoring bookmobile service with a WiFi-equipped vehicle that travels to underserved areas of Erie County, as well as expanding access to free high-speed internet, both inside and outside of library buildings," added Bucki.

"Mary Jean is well-versed in all library processes and day-to-day operations, which has made her extremely effective in leading this large and complex organization consisting of 37 libraries, 9 of them in the City of Buffalo, and working with a federation of 22 governing bodies and hundreds of employees, while serving approximately 400,000 library cardholders," said Bucki.

During her tenure as director, Mary Jean's unwavering belief in the important role of libraries has transformed the local public Library System into a community-focused organization that reaches beyond its walls to provide a myriad of free resources and services.

Mary Jean is an active member of several organizations including the Western New York Library Resources Council, the New York State Public Library Systems Directors Organization, the New York Association of Library Systems, and the New York Library Association. She is also a member of the Key Contact Program with the American Library Association. From 2012 – 2017, Mary Jean served as a member of the New York State Regents Advisory Council on Libraries. Mary Jean is an Executive Committee member for Trailblazing Women of WNY; a 2021 Athena Leadership Award Finalist and annually has been recognized by *Buffalo Business First* as one of the region's *Power 250* honorees.

"The Library System Board of Trustees will immediately commence a search for Mary Jean's replacement as Director. We are confident that we will identify a successor who will build upon the successes of Mary Jean's distinguished tenure," concluded Bucki.

Click here for a photograph of Buffalo & Erie County Public Library retiring Director Mary Jean Jakubowski: <https://tinyurl.com/Library-Director-MJJakubowski>.

Photo credit: © Heather Bellini Photography, LLC Web:

www.HeatherBelliniPhotography.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/photographybyheatherbuffalo

Instagram: @belliniphoto

###