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NPL NAMES STEPHEN EDWARDS ADULT EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR
Adult Education Coordinator at World Relief Nashville Honored for Dedication to Refugees



NASHVILLE, Tenn. –Nashville Public Library (NPL) awarded its first **Adult Educator of the Year** Award Jan. 29 to **Stephen Edwards**, Adult Education Coordinator at World Relief Nashville.

Edwards' nominators and the selection panel praised his dedication to the refugee population that World Relief Nashville serves, his customization of cultural instruction to their specific challenges, and his commitment to his students and their families in and outside the classroom.

NPL accepted nominations in the fall of 2015, seeking an educator—paid or volunteer—who exemplified creativity and passion for making Middle Tennessee's adults better readers and more literate overall.

"I'm very thankful for this," Edwards said. "It's a representation of our organization and everything that we do. We all work together to help the people—who we care tremendously about—to thrive and to achieve and assimilate to life in the United States."

The Adult Educator of the Year honor includes a \$500 gift card for a classroom project, a night out at the Belcourt Theater and a one-night stay at the historic Hermitage Hotel.

Edwards accepted the award at **NPL's 2016 Adult Education Symposium** at the Main Library, where adult educators and community partners gathered for professional collaboration and development.

Mayor Megan Barry greeted the attendees and opened the symposium: “You and many other passionate people and organizations are working every day to improve literacy, educational attainment and English language proficiency for our community’s adult learners. Because literacy and English proficiency make it easier for our citizens to fully participate and lead in our community, this is essential work for building a stronger Nashville.”

NPL Director Kent Oliver thanked the group of educators, saying, “Nashville Public Library is committed to the lifelong education of everyone in Davidson County. You are all important partners in this mission, and I want to thank you for your dedication to literacy and reading in our city.”

About Nashville Public Library

The library maintains a collection of 2 million items, including books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, movies, and music. The Library also offers more than 800 public-use computers, free art exhibits, educational programs, events for all ages, 24/7 reference assistance, online databases, inter-library loan and special collections. Equal access is provided by the Talking Library audio reading service for the print disabled and Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. For more information, call (615) 862-5800 or visit library.nashville.org.

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Photo credit: Erika Chambers. Figure 1: Mayor Megan Barry welcomes attendees to the Adult Education Symposium at Nashville Public Library. Figure 2 (left to right): NPLF president Tari Hughes, NPL Director Kent Oliver, Adult Educator of the Year Stephen Edwards, Dollar General director for community initiatives Denine Torr, SunTrust Bank's Kelly Holmes.