



RESOLUTION FOR  
**GINA MILLSAP**  
 RESOLUTION IN APPRECIATION OF GINA MILLSAP'S SERVICE  
 AS THE TOPEKA AND SHAWNEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S  
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



NOVEMBER 19, 2020

*B* e it resolved that the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library Board of Trustees recognizes and honors Gina Millsap for her service as the library Chief Executive Officer. The Board appreciates her leadership, vision and dedication to the library and wishes her the best on her retirement.

"World class communities have world class libraries."

This statement greets all who enter the recently renovated rotunda of the library. However, there is another truth that is missing, "World class libraries have world class leaders." Gina Millsap has been a world class leader for the library for the past 15 years.

From the moment that Gina began her tenure with the library in 2005, she worked to ensure the library would make a greater impact on people's lives in Shawnee County. Through dedication, innovation and collaboration she oversaw the creation of Community Impact Goals as well as an update of the library's brand, mission, vision and core values. Gina used these standards as guiding principles in her role as Chief Executive Officer.

As a visionary and an innovator, Gina led and coordinated changes to the building, services, programs and collections. Under her guidance the library implemented public Wi-Fi, moved the DVD collection into the main library and created "The Edge" for teens. A new "Red Carpet" vehicle soon followed along with three new bookmobiles as well as a "Learn & Play Bus."

In 2015 the library created and implemented a Facilities Master Plan that led to new and newly renovated spaces: Claire's Courtyard, the Learning Center, the Plaza and the Alice C. Sabatini Gallery. Being a conscientious steward of all aspects of the library, Gina also focused on maintaining the building and grounds with such projects as new terrazzo flooring, roof replacement, and an additional parking lot.

Fiscal responsibility was a priority in all these improvements. Gina worked closely with The Library Foundation to fund several projects with private donations accounting for more than \$2 million of the total expenses. She also coordinated with the library's Board of Trustees to refinance bonds and retire the building mortgage, saving \$995,000.

Gina's work centered on partnerships and collaboration. She often proclaimed, "We are not the lone ranger!" Gina excelled at bringing people together, facilitating discussions and taking action. She looked for ways to use a collective impact model and work with partners to better use resources and scale up services. One example is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. She collaborated with The Library Foundation, the United Way of Greater Topeka and several other partners to administer and raise funds for this service that has an immense impact on the lives of young children to help prepare them for kindergarten.

Community involvement has also been a hallmark of Gina's time in Shawnee County. She was a co-chair of Heartland Visioning and served on the board of 712 Innovations. Gina is currently a board member of the YWCA of Northeast Kansas.

Gina has been an advocate for libraries her entire career and consistently looked for opportunities to showcase libraries as essential community assets. That advocacy extends beyond the traditional roles of libraries. She championed the need for fast and reliable internet service as a basic component for economic and community development, chairing the project workgroup for Topeka and Shawnee County Community Broadband Planning Task Force.

When ebooks first began to explode in popularity, libraries had difficulty getting new titles from publishers. Gina helped organize a petition with more than 10,000 signatures that was sent to the major publishers seeking their cooperation in providing ebooks to library customers. Almost 10 years later all of these publishers have made ebooks available to libraries, becoming one of the most popular services in libraries nationwide.

Gina's leadership extends beyond Shawnee County. She has been active in many national organizations in several different capacities. She served as president of the Library Leadership and Management Association, a division of the American Library Association. She currently sits on the board of Lyrrasis, a nonprofit organization that provides continuing education and services to the library industry.

Gina's success has been recognized nationally. After her first year at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, she was named a "Mover and Shaker" by *Library Journal*. Additional awards followed including the Urban Library Council Top Innovator Award for the library's work in the community and civic engagement, and a Library Aware Community Award by *Library Journal*. In 2016 the library received international acclaim when it was named Library of the Year by *Gale/Library Journal*. This award is commemorated in the new rotunda flooring and will forever be a source of pride for the library and the community.

Gina's impact on libraries will continue to be felt through the people she has coached and mentored. She shared her message via numerous local and national presentations and developed relationships with individuals across the country. She frequently offers her insight and advice to other librarians as they grow in their careers. Her greatest impact is on the people she works with every day, who have applied her advice to help make this library a world class institution. Gina's ability to include as many people as possible in leadership roles has also enhanced employee skills and understanding. They will continue to benefit from her influence long after she retires.

No matter the difficulty of the task, Gina approached it with a positive attitude, a sense of humor and a smile. Her upbeat attitude and enthusiasm brought out the best in her employees and made working fun. The community will miss Gina's talent and expertise overseeing the operation of one of its proudest institutions. Her colleagues will miss her compassion, her laugh and her friendship.

The Board of Trustees expresses its appreciation to Gina for her leadership, loyalty and devotion to the library. Her commitment to the highest standards of excellence made the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library one of the best in the land positioned for more success in the years to come.

*Liz Post*

LIZ POST  
 CHAIR  
 TOPEKA AND SHAWNEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Jim Edwards*

JIM EDWARDS  
 VICE-CHAIR  
 TOPEKA AND SHAWNEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
 BOARD OF TRUSTEES