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Contact: Cathy Leiber  
484-661-6151

## **‘JUDITH’S READING ROOM,’ A NONPROFIT FOCUSED ON “FREEDOM THROUGH LITERATURE” WINS AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION GRANT**

Sixty organizations, libraries and schools competed for the 2012 American Library Association’s Krug Memorial Fund grant; Judith’s Reading Room named among the 8 winners.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bethlehem, PA (June 8, 2012) – The American Library Association (ALA) named Judith’s Reading Room as one of eight recipients of this year’s Krug Fund Grant in support of Banned Books Week. Banned Books Week, which will take place September 30 to October 6, 2012, celebrates the freedom to access information, while drawing attention to the harms of censorship. 2012 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Banned Books Week.

In addition to Judith’s Reading Room, recipients of this year’s grant included the ACLU of Pennsylvania, California Polytechnic State University, St. Catharine College (Kentucky) and Simon Sanchez High School in Guam.

“We are thrilled with the variety and scope of events among the record number of applications,” said Barbara Jones, Executive Director of the ALA’s Freedom to Read Foundation. “The best part about the Krug Fund grants is that they encourage librarians, teachers and organizations to be creative with their plans, which helps make Banned Books Week more fun for readers in their communities and further spreads the message of the importance of the freedom to read and the role of libraries in protecting that freedom,” said Jones.

Judith’s Reading Room will celebrate coast-to-coast signature events during Banned Books Week at three universities: Lafayette College in Easton, PA, Villanova University in Villanova, PA and the University of Southern California (USC). To promote intellectual freedom and foster intellectual curiosity, Judith’s Reading Room will sponsor Flash Mob Read-Outs of 30 years of banned books at each campus. At Lafayette College, Alan Gribben, Professor of English at Auburn University at Montgomery and editor of the recently-published expurgated versions of Mark Twain’s “*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*” and “*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*” will be the featured speaker at Skillman Library on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Promotional material highlighting Banned Books Week will be supplied by Judith’s Reading Room to all of its 30 custom libraries that the organization has dedicated in its two years of operation, including on board the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77) aircraft carrier.

In 2011 Judith’s Reading Room was named top award winner in the Wells Fargo volunteer service award program out of a competitive field of 500 nationwide nonprofit organizations. The organization recently was awarded grants by The Donley Foundation and The Rider-Pool Fund. “Judith’s Reading Room is exceptionally proud to be named a winner of the Krug Fund grant,” said Scott Leiber, President of the Board of Directors of Judith’s Reading Room. The organization is committed to partnering and building strong alliances with others to provide literacy-rich environments that serve people who are not mobile for any reason, including elderly in nursing homes, urban communities and active-duty troops. We believe that this caught the attention of the American Library Association’s grant committee and that is what led to their decision to select Judith’s Reading Room from the excellent field of 60 proposals,” he added.

Judith's Reading Room promotes "Freedom Through Literature" by providing custom libraries to nonprofit organizations that serve people who, for any reason, have limited or no access to literature. The organization was established in 2010 to honor the memory of Judith F. Krug, a champion of the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech. "Judith's Reading Room is our interpretation of spreading the word of freedom through literacy, by delivering custom libraries – free of cost with the goal to enrich lives through the simple act of reading," said Leiber.

Since its establishment in 2010, Judith's Reading Room has donated 31 libraries: 23 custom-designed mobile and eight permanent libraries in five states and in four countries, containing 33,000 books valued at more than \$360,000.

For more information on Judith's Reading Room, please visit [www.judithsreadingroom.org](http://www.judithsreadingroom.org).

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