



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—WNBA ANNOUNCES WNBA AWARD WINNERS

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The WNBA has selected the current librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden; and novelist, poet, and bookstore owner Louise Erdrich as the 2017 WNBA Award winners.

The WNBA Award is presented every other year to “a living American woman who derives part or all of her income from books and allied arts, and who has done meritorious work in the world of books beyond the duties or responsibilities of her profession or occupation” (from the WNBA's website: <http://www.wnba-books.org/wnba-awards-2>). The award has been presented continuously since 1940, originally every year and since the mid-1970s, biennially.

This year, in commemoration of the WNBA's Centennial, the organization is honoring *two women who represent the wide spectrum of women in the book world*—one woman involved in the business or dissemination of books and one in the creation of them.

Hayden was selected due to her commitment to making libraries relevant to the world, responsive to the trends of their times, and vital parts of the communities they serve. Erdrich was selected due to her dedication to adding to the complex narrative of American culture, to giving voice to indigenous peoples, and to supporting the importance of independent bookstores, through her own store, Birchbark. More biographical details about the honorees are available on the attached addendum.

To learn more about this award and previous winners, please visit <http://www.wnba-books.org/wnba-awards/wnbaawards>.

The history and recipients of the WNBA Award will be celebrated and recognized at the WNBA's Centennial Celebration to take place on Saturday, October 28th in New York City at Pen + Brush.

About the WNBA

The organization was founded in 1917 by women booksellers who had organized as a group during the women's suffrage marches in New York City that year. A 501c (3) organization with eleven chapters across the country, the WNBA aims to connect, educate, advocate, and lead in the book world and greater literary community. We do this through networking and professional development, as well as public programs including the **WNBA Pannell Award**, which promotes bookstores that excel in connecting kids with books; the **WNBA Award**, which honors visionary bookwomen, from Eleanor Roosevelt and Doris Kearns Goodwin to Ann Patchett and Amy King; and **National Reading Group Month**, which celebrates the joy of shared reading. We also are an **NGO affiliated with the United Nations** Department of Public Information.

Addendum to 6/12/2017 Release Announcing WNBA Award Winners Biographical Details

Carla Hayden was sworn in as the 14th Librarian of Congress on September 14, 2016. Hayden, the first woman and the first African American to lead the national library, was nominated to the position by President Barack Obama on February 24, 2016, and her nomination was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on July 13.

Prior to her latest post she served, since 1993, as CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland. Hayden was nominated by President Obama to be a member of the National Museum and Library Services Board in January 2010 and was confirmed to that post by the Senate in June 2010. Prior to joining the Pratt Library, Hayden was deputy commissioner and chief librarian of the Chicago Public Library from 1991 to 1993. She was an assistant professor for Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh from 1987 to 1991. Hayden was library services coordinator for the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago from 1982 to 1987. She began her career with the Chicago Public Library as the young adult services coordinator from 1979 to 1982 and as a library associate and children's librarian from 1973 to 1979.

Hayden was president of the American Library Association from 2003 to 2004. In 1995, she was the first African American to receive Library Journal's Librarian of the Year Award in recognition of her outreach services at the Pratt Library, which included an after-school center for Baltimore teens offering homework assistance and college and career counseling.

<https://www.loc.gov/about/about-the-librarian/>

Louise Erdrich was born in Little Falls, Minnesota in 1954. As the daughter of a Chippewa Indian mother and a German-American father, Erdrich explores Native-American themes in her works, with major characters representing both sides of her heritage. In an award-winning series of related novels and short stories, Erdrich has visited and re-visited the North Dakota lands where her ancestors met and mingled, representing Chippewa experience in the Anglo-American literary tradition. Many critics claim Erdrich has remained true to her Native ancestors' mythic and artistic visions while writing fiction that candidly explores the cultural issues facing modern-day Native Americans and mixed heritage Americans.

Ms. Erdrich is the author of fifteen novels as well as volumes of poetry, children's books, short stories, and a memoir of early motherhood. Her novel *The Round House* won the National Book Award for Fiction. *The Plague of Doves* won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, and her debut novel, *Love Medicine*, was the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. Erdrich has received the Library of Congress Prize in American Fiction, the prestigious PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. She lives in Minnesota with her daughters and is the owner of Birchbark Books, a small independent bookstore.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/louise-erdrich>