



For Immediate Release

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School Librarian Kelsey LaPort is Certified Sustainable

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative recognizes Kelsey LaPort as a leader in sustainability.



Suffolk County, NY –December 4, 2024 – Kelsey LaPort, school librarian at Sunrise Drive Elementary School in Sayville, New York has been designated a “Certified Sustainable School Librarian” through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative’s award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP).

In less than a year, Kelsey LaPort of Sunrise Drive Elementary School successfully completed the Sustainable Library Certification Program by expanding access to resources, approaching each day with empathy and understanding, and strengthening connections within her school and community. Her efforts draw an inspiring picture of how school libraries can support sustainable practices and instill these lessons in their students.

Kelsey’s passion, persistence, and attention to detail shine through in every aspect of her work. Her deep dedication to social equity drove her to advocate tirelessly for over two years to secure eBooks and expand the library’s digital resources for her students. By paying close attention to the needs of her community, Kelsey started an inter-elementary school book club to encourage a love for reading, foster friendships among her fifth graders and their future classmates, and ease the often-challenging transition to middle school.

"When I began my journey as a librarian at Sunrise Drive Elementary, I shared with my principal two long-term goals: to make the library the heart of our school and to integrate sustainability into our library program," said Kelsey.

Making massive headway on her goals and partnering with her school's STEAM teacher Jennifer Horton, Kelsey led research projects where students explored sustainability topics hands-on. She also introduced a TerraCycle recycling program, working with students to collect and sort recyclable materials and fostering a sense of environmental responsibility. Both of these initiatives provide memorable, real-world, practical applications to student learning: establishing a broader sense of community and demonstrating that learning is more than busywork.

"Kelsey LaPort has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability through innovative projects that integrate environmental awareness into student learning. She has created a library environment that embodies the principles of environmental soundness, social equity, and economic feasibility. These efforts align perfectly with the goals of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, making her a deserving candidate for the Sustainable Librarian Initiative Certification," said Kelsey's mentor and fellow certified school librarian Michelle Statfeld.

This accomplishment makes Kelsey the fourteenth school librarian to complete the Sustainable Library Certification Program: an award-winning community of practice designed to provide public libraries, academic libraries, library systems, and school librarians with exclusive resources and guidelines to shift towards a cleaner, greener, and more equitable future.

Sharing an understanding with her community that completing the Sustainable Library Certification Program is just the beginning, Kelsey aspires to continue shaping her students into informed, inspired, and engaged citizens. Reflecting on her achievement, Kelsey shared: "I'm thrilled to have earned the Sustainable Library Certification, and I'm excited to continue finding fresh opportunities to move us toward a more sustainable future."