

GCBA Grades 4-8 Committee (2015-2016 Book Selection)



Committee Chairperson:

Denise Davila, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor

Reading, Writing, Children's Literature, and Digital Literacies Program

Department of Language and Literacy Education - The University of Georgia

[Click here for more information about Dr. Davila.](#)

Committee Assistant:

Adam Crawley – Graduate Assistant

Reading, Writing, Children's Literature, and Digital Literacies Program

Department of Language and Literacy Education - The University of Georgia



I am excited to serve as the assistant for the GCBA committees. Prior to becoming a doctoral student, I earned a B.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Education and M.Ed. in Children's Literature and Language Arts. As an elementary teacher for twelve years in various Georgia public school districts, connecting students with a wide array of children's literature and incorporating such texts within content areas were passions. Students in my classes participated in the GCBA voting process, competed in reading competitions, discussed books via literature circles, responded to their reading through independent conferences and blogs, and interacted with texts in a variety of other ways. Some of my current research interests include historical fiction, culturally diverse children's literature, and digital responses to texts. I am an avid reader and enjoy meeting authors/illustrators at events throughout the country. I have been involved with UGA's annual Conference on Children's Literature for several years as a presenter and volunteer, and I look forward to further serving the awards and conference this year!

Committee Members:

Joy Frerichs

School support and public library volunteer - Cedar Ridge School, Antioch Elementary, Dalton Public Library, Dalton County



I have been the coordinator of Young Adult Choices and Teacher's Choices of the Southeast. I have reviewed YA books for years. I have presented at conferences and taught staff development. I love sharing books with students.



Terrie Gribanow

Media Specialist - Dearing Elementary, McDuffie County

I am the mother of two, wife of one, and the media specialist of 500+. I have been the media specialist at Dearing Elementary (a PK-5 elementary school) for the past 13 years, and I LOVE my job. I love teaching my students how to read and how to enjoy reading. I help the students at Dearing Elementary learn how to develop healthy reading habits and find books that interest them. I help my students know how to decide what they like to read. I can do these things because I read all of the time, and I take the time to get to know my students...yes, all 500+ of them. I feel it is my duty to provide, via my school's media center, books of all genres, topics, interests, and walks of life to the students at Dearing Elementary. It is that sense of duty that I bring to this committee. I am on a mission to find the best that is out there, not only for my students, but also for the 2015-2016 GCBA Gr. 4-8 nominee list. I look forward to the journey this mission will bring.



Janice Kelley

Media Specialist - Shallowford Falls Elementary, Cobb County

I have been a media specialist in Cobb County in Marietta for twelve years and have worked in Cobb for over 20 years. I received my Master's and Specialist degrees in Media and Technology at the University of West Georgia. I have been the coach of a Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl team for the last eight years and a member of the Cobb County Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Steering Committee for the last five years. Many of my teams have won the Cobb County Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl and have gone on to win regional and division bowls. I'm waiting for that perfect team to take it all the way to the State competition! This is my second year on the Georgia Children's Book Award Committee. Not surprisingly, I spend most of my time working on lessons for the media center and reading countless books to recommend to students.



Bev Kodak

Sixth Grade Teacher - Ola Middle School, Henry County

I'm a sixth grade Language Arts teacher and Department Chair at Ola Middle School in Henry County. I have been teaching for eighteen years, but I have been a voracious reader my entire life. In fact, I've kept a record of all the books I've read since I was a teenager. I share my love of books with many people. At my school, I'm a teacher and the coach of the Reading Bowl team. In 2009, my team won the middle school State Championship. It was an amazing experience to watch my students bond with students they'd never met about books. Even though it's a competition, they recognized that they had so much in common with their competitors. In addition to working with students, I also volunteer with the largest fan-run science fiction convention in the United States. I'm the director of the Young Adult Literature track at DragonCon which allows me to spend four days talking to authors, readers, librarians, teachers, and other science fiction and fantasy fans about the books we're so passionate about. I am very much looking forward to serving on the GCBA Middle Grade committee. There are so many good books from which to choose. How will we ever narrow it down to just twenty books? I'm looking forward to the challenge!

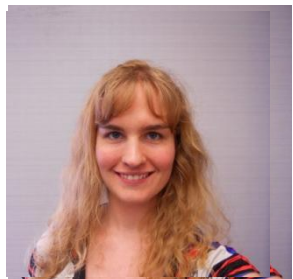


Eileen Lynch

Media Specialist - Double Churches Middle School, Muscogee County

I cannot remember any time before I learned to read. I cannot remember a time I wasn't surrounded by, and in love, with books. As an educator for over 20 years, nothing seems more important than a student's ability to read. If you can read, you can do anything or go anywhere. If you love to read, then you have discovered a magic of seeing yourself in another dimension. I do love fiction, but I recognize there are all sorts of readers in the world. I learn about the best books from my students. I am constantly amazed at all the wonderful storylines and characters in children's literature.

I have been involved with the Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl for ten years. I started as a volunteer, became a coach, and now I am the coordinator for the Muscogee County School District. The MSCD Reading Bowl is the best day of my school year. It is absolutely heavenly to be surrounded by people who love to talk about books and relate them to their own lives. I like the fact the GCBA books selected are from a variety of genres and people. I believe this fact reflects the student readers of Georgia and has helped me discover some books I will cherish forever.



Amie Pilla

Access Services Librarian - Dekalb County Public Library, Decatur Branch

After spending years as a Children's Librarian in public libraries in Illinois and Georgia, I now run the circulation department at the Decatur Branch of the DeKalb County Public Library where I work on connecting people of all ages to quality books.



Erin Rehberg

Media Specialist - Thomas County Upper Elementary and Middle Schools, Thomas County

I have been an avid reader since my preschool years. As a child, I was likely to be located at either the public library in her neighborhood or reading to dolls and stuffed animals. This early love of language, literacy, and learning led me to a career in education. After teaching high school English at Thomas County Central High School for seven years, I am now in my third year as the media specialist at Thomas County Upper Elementary and Thomas County Middle School in Thomasville, Georgia. I enjoy coaching two Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl teams, connecting kids with books they will love, and helping students learn how to do better research. I have a Bachelor's degree in English Education from The University of Georgia (2005) and a Master's degree in Instructional Technology (Library Media) from Valdosta State University (2009).