St. Charles City County Library-Director Finalists-December 2017:

**Button, Eric:**

Since starting his first job as a shelver in high school at Pikes Peak Library District, Eric Button has been drawn to the satisfaction he found in helping patrons access library services. After more than 25 years of public library experience, Button is now Deputy Director at St. Louis County Library (SLCL), the largest and busiest public library in Missouri. As Deputy Director, he provides leadership and oversight of many areas, including Branches, Reference, History & Genealogy, Bookmobiles and Mobile Services, Youth Services, Adult Programming, Acquisitions, Cataloging, Processing, and System Administration.

His proven success with leadership and managing people enables him to continually raise the profile and effectiveness of the organization. As a key leader at SLCL, he has initiated progressive changes and improvements that garnered SLCL numerous awards, including “Missouri Library of the Year” in 2015. He helped launch programs such as Free Summer Meals, and planned for an after-hours computer lab, both of which were recognized by the Urban Libraries Council with “Top Innovator” awards. Since the passage of Proposition L in 2012, Button has been actively engaged with staff, architects, and consultants in “Your Library Renewed,” a capital improvement campaign to replace or renovate 19 of the 20 SLCL branch locations. His experience has been called upon countless times to shape the design and function of 14 renewed library facilities to date.

Button earned a Master’s in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois in 1998. He continued his education by completing the Certified Public Library Administrator program through PLA-APA in 2013.

**Kuhl, Jason:**

Jason Kuhl passionately believes the best libraries create community and help people lead more successful lives, and he has spent his seventeen-year professional career empowering staff to transform that vision into reality. He fell in love with public libraries through a part-time job as a college student in Normal, IL, and after a stint as a graduate student in art history, he returned to libraries for good. Before earning his MLS from the University of Illinois in 1999, he worked for libraries ranging in size from a large urban system to a small community college.

Kuhl began working for the St. Louis County Library in 2000, eventually becoming manager of the system’s largest branch. In 2008, he became Information Services Manager at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library and served in three positions there, most recently leading an innovative staff of 240 and overseeing a budget of $14 million as Executive Director. During his tenure, he collaborated with stakeholders to create an aspirational vision for the library; led a renovation to transform the library into a dynamic space for the community to gather, learn, create, and find inspiration; increased partnerships with local organizations; worked to create a culture of strategic innovation; and helped position the library as the community’s premier place for cutting-edge technology access and instruction, high-profile events, and engaging exhibits for all ages. In 2016, Kuhl was elected by library staff throughout the state to the Executive Board of the Illinois Library Association and currently serves as its treasurer.
Steinmacher, Michael:

Michael Steinmacher, the 2016 Library of Congress Federal Librarian of the Year, is the director of Barr Memorial Library, which serves Soldiers, families and the extended military community in and around Fort Knox, Kentucky. Steinmacher has transformed Barr, the installation’s public library, through building community support, attracting donors and sponsors, and developing popular and acclaimed programs and services such as the Authors at Your Library series, Star Wars Reads, and one of the first Army Library Makerspaces. Under Steinmacher’s leadership, Barr was the first Army Library to achieve Department of Defense Premier Status and it was named the Library of Congress’s Federal Library of the Year in 2014. Steinmacher’s community-focused library philosophy hinges on customer service delivered by caring, empowered library staff, utilizing both traditional library services and technology to make the Library a destination unto itself.

Before his work at Fort Knox, Steinmacher served in progressively responsible professional positions with the Louisville Free Public Library, including being manager of its 16 branch locations. In a decade with LFPL, he served a diverse range of constituents in both inner city and suburban locations. Accustomed to dealing with the challenges of modern public library service he, as manager of the Iroquois Branch Library, led the development and implementation of the system’s award-winning Internationals program.

Steinmacher work on topics ranging from customer service to RFID has been presented at professional conferences and he has been published in a wide range of venues, including American Libraries and Library Journal.