

Lauren Seward-Munday Interview Queen Mary Library Technician

Lauren has always had a love for books and reading so her choice of career as a Library Technologist was the perfect fit for her. After graduating from Algonquin College in May 2011, Lauren wanted experience and references for her job search, so she immediately registered to volunteer in schools with the Ottawa Volunteers in Education



program. Lauren volunteers at least 5 hours a week at Queen Mary Public School as a library technician assisting the library teacher Petra Alinec working with students in Kindergarten to grade 6. Lauren also volunteers at the Diefenbunker Museum updating their catalogue to make it accessible to the City of Ottawa Archives.

As a young child, Lauren loved to be helpful. In high school, Lauren volunteered over 400 hours, 10 times the minimum requirement to graduate. When asked how and why she developed such a strong volunteer ethic, she responded, “I like making community connections. I like being dependable but what I really like is the commitment of regular volunteer work. People are relying on me to show up, to be helpful.”

Lauren’s favourite children’s book was Robert Munsch’s “I Have to Go!” She recalls a funny memory, “The first time I met a boy named Andrew, I asked him if he had to pee!” In high school Lauren became published author when one of her many short stories was published in “What If?” magazine.

Lauren’s love of literature also brought her together with her life partner—they met on an online book forum for her favourite author Brian Jacques’ Redwall teen series. When asked about her favourite book of the day, she immediately replied, “*Crush Candy Corpse* one of the Forest of Reading Program books in 2013”. [Forest of Reading](#) is an Ontario Library Association

program—of course, she would pick a book from this list! On a side note: Crush Candy Corpse is also about a volunteer!

Lauren is Mom to a 20-month-old ‘reading’ baby. She reads to her son since birth and says his favourite books are the Pigeon series by Mo Willems. “He pretends to read them to me. He holds the books and turns the pages. He wants to do it himself.” This lucky boy is well on his way to building solid literacy skills.

When asked what her ideal job would be she says, “My ideal job is in the library environment or records management in a non-profit organization that I believe in. It’s important to me to feel like I am making a difference.”



Lauren catalogues books in the library at Queen Mary which allows Library Teacher Petra Alince precious one-on-one time to read to her students, show them how to use the library and introduce them to exciting books that interest them. “Reading aloud to children has an incredible impact on their ability to read—and on their entire lives,” says early literacy specialist, Mem Fox, in her book *Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever* Harcourt 2008.

When asked, “What is your favourite flavour of ice cream?” Lauren replies, “Mayan Chocolate an interesting combination of cinnamon and chocolate”—the perfect match in my book!

The Ottawa Volunteers in Education program, a program of the Ottawa Network for Education, safely screens community volunteers for schools in Ottawa. For more information about volunteering in schools, please visit our website www.onfe-rope.ca/ovie

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