



# OWASSO REPORTER



## Jennifer McQuade recalls her greatest influence and mentor

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By Haylie Smart Staff Writer  
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There usually is an influential person in someone's childhood who sets in motion what they'll do in their life as an adult.

Sometimes it's a parent, aunt or uncle, teacher, neighbor or close friend. For Owasso Library Branch Manager Jennifer McQuade, it was a librarian.

"My favorite author is Stephen King, introduced to me when I begged the librarian for more scary books. She introduced me to the master of horror, to my great delight," Jennifer said.

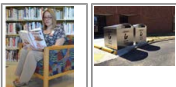
Though she spent a lot of time moving around as a child, she and her mother always spent time at the local library.

"I remember reading every book I could find on Greek mythology and all the Little House on the Prairie books," she said.

When she was in middle school she became a latchkey child and didn't enjoy being home alone, so she found refuge at the Nathan Hale Library in Tulsa.

"I used to spend all afternoon at that library, where I felt safe and the librarians were kind to me," Jennifer said.

She felt she had come full circle when she



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earned her master's degree in Library

Science and accepted a job with Tulsa City-

County Library System.

"Though she probably didn't realize it, that librarian at Nathan Hale Library changed my life by planting the seed of my future career choice," she said.

Jennifer is approaching her 1-year anniversary in August as Owasso Branch Manager after replacing longtime manager Barbara Barnes. That transition has brought many changes in the library.

"One of my challenges began immediately. When I became manager it caused a domino effect as everyone was promoted to new positions. I began interviewing and hiring within the first week," Jennifer said.

In her first year she has learned to write a business plan, how to give performance reviews and how to promote the library to the community. She credits much of her knowledge to the leadership class the Owasso Chamber of Commerce offers.

Although it's been a whirlwind of changes, her most memorable moment was the library's Touch-A-Truck event back in April.

"Hundreds of people came out to our event and it was so much fun. We are hoping to have this event every year," she said.

In her role as manager, Jennifer said she feels she has become a better listener, and focusing on a person's strengths and staying positive are important to staff morale.

Her latest challenge is on the horizon, which is to incorporate more technology into the library.

The library will be closed Aug. 22-29, for a small renovation project.

The big circulation desk at the front of the library will be removed and small individual service stations will be placed throughout the library.

"New self-checks will be installed where customers can check their items in and out, pay fines and renew items," Jennifer said.

Customers also will be happy to know a drive-thru book drop-off container will be installed outside for convenient returns.

"These changes benefit library customers because we will be changing our focus from tasks such as checking items in and out to helping customers find what they need," she said.

The library is located at 103 W. Broadway St.



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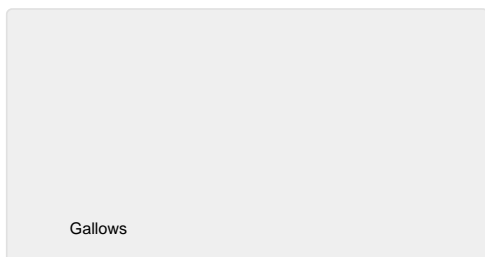
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