



**2019 Federal Library
Technician of the Year**

Gabriele Davis
U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland Pfalz Libraries
Kaiserslautern, Germany

Selection Criteria Statement (covering achievements during Fiscal Year 2019, not to exceed 500 words per criterion; include impact statements and/or quantifiable data such as statistics, cost savings to the institution, program changes, project completed, etc.)

1. Demonstrated commitment to **service excellence** in support of the mission of the library or information center in Fiscal Year 2019. (Include brief statement of the library mission.)

The mission of the Army Library Program is to serve as a strategic knowledge management resource that enables the Army to gain and maintain full-spectrum knowledge superiority, while concurrently facilitating research, education, training, self-development, well-being, outreach, and lifelong learning-the right information at the right time and place to support the Army mission. Ms. Davis is an integral part of the Garrison libraries meeting this mission. Despite staffing shortages this year she simply doubled down, completed her responsibilities whilst looking to see what else needs addressing. Reduced hours this year has affected users of the branch library. In order to meet security needs of the post guard unit she re-prioritized her schedule in order that the library was available for guard dog training. She mentored a new junior staff member who is learning to become the branch manager and her keen attention to detail and personal maturity means the manager has a ready resource beside her as she learns all the policy and processes that go into a functioning, vital library. Despite non-stop IT issues this year that stymied library patrons in processes such as initiating passport registrations or Army training by transient active duty troops, it's Ms. Davis' calm demeanor and expert knowledge that ensured patrons got on with their priorities successfully. She is approachable and friendly with patrons, putting people at ease with a joke, making first time library users feel like they are taken care of, welcoming people to Germany with her multi-lingual ease. This is important due to the nature of PCS's – during this stressful period of soldiers and families lives this library acts as a de-stressor. The Heidelberg Army community shut down its library and closure and this branch library assists many patrons who live 2 hours away, who are bruised over the closing of their beloved library. It's Ms. Davis' warm welcome and sense of duty that wins over these customers and ensures they feel the relevance of libraries in their lives. As Army Libraries continue to pour funding into e-resources she's quick to market these resources to all patrons and will fit the e-resource to the particular audience or need. This means staying on top of training of which she consistently accomplished this year - she sets a standard that other staff take note of and emulate. She's quick to share knowledge and that accounts for this library system having the 10th highest usage of e-resources in all Army Libraries this year despite being a rather small system. Overseas libraries experience high turnover and a strong counterbalance is that Ms. Davis provides the continuity as staff come and go. Her absolute attention to detail, focus on her position as well as her colleagues frees the library director up to develop areas for improvement in customer services and increased programming. This library executed 1145 programs in FY 2019 – this seems remarkable but is quite do-able when one understands the caliber of staff like Ms. Davis. She IS the strategic knowledge management resource for this library.



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2. Demonstrated exceptional **technical competency** during Fiscal Year 2019 in one of the following: public services, technical services, information technology, or other library/information service areas.

Ms. Davis is a technical service champion having started cataloging as a paraprofessional about 30 years ago for Army Morale, Welfare & Recreation Libraries in Europe. Due to longevity she is well known throughout Europe as "the fastest cataloger in the West". She is acknowledged as the unofficial resource for countless librarians and library technicians who have cataloging responsibilities in Army MWR libraries in Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Belgium. She provides training and guidance to degreed librarians as well as countless technicians who had no formal cataloging experience/education and does so respectfully, with the excited air of learning a new skill. She is amazingly accurate-- making sure patron's records are correct so they can check-out materials anywhere in the MWR Library world, making sure the call numbers, collection codes and all other data points are accurate so people can find materials with ease. Throughout this year she's cataloged or modified up to 1300 records in a month which is impressive as she also provides direct circulation desk coverage at 2 libraries and has a hand in library programming. As Army Libraries will be transitioning to a new ILS in the near future it's crucial that the database is as clean as possible. Ms. Davis has worked pro-actively this year with this in mind and it's due to her well-honed cataloging abilities that this library's portion of the database is consistently accurate, as well noting other libraries holdings needing correction and then ensuring corrections were made with sensitivity. This year she initiated technical services training for a new, young library technician as retirement looms 5 years down the road and she wants to ensure the technician can seamlessly take over cataloging duties for the Garrison. As the libraries had 3 new technicians and one new librarian start this year she has been instrumental in training staff on use of the ILS. Due to her patient manner and cheerful, can-do attitude they've learned the system quickly, therefore freeing up staff to take on other duties. Ms. Davis was solely responsible for cataloging and retrospective cataloging of the library collection in order to stand up the popular, locally curated Parent & Professional Educational Resource Center collection which is a targeted collection for parents and professionals such as staff working in the 10 Child & Youth Services facilities in the community as well as being available via interlibrary loan to 16 other European Army Libraries and local Air Force post libraries. In addition to providing cataloging services to the Garrison to which she belongs she provides assistance to the Region as well during staff draw-downs – this provides direct services to the 16 other OCONUS libraries which means materials hit the shelves quickly for library patrons throughout Europe. At the fiscal year end the branch library was fortunate to receive new library shelving and new floor plan – this necessitated a speedy weeding of all collections and Ms. Davis quickly accomplished this task. The result has garnered high praise from patrons and increased circulation of materials.

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3. Demonstrated **flexibility** during Fiscal Year 2019 (i.e., adapting work methods to changing conditions and dealing effectively with ambiguity).

Ms. Davis' absolute flexibility came into play countless times this year. In particular it was an incredibly challenging year with non-stop IT issues. It was not uncommon for her to search out a working computer in which to accomplish her primary responsibility which is cataloging – this often meant working out of another Garrison library 30 minutes away or at the Region Center, also a considerable distance away. With no working computer, sometimes for weeks on end, she continually kept in contact with IT support in order to try and isolate various IT issues. She could be counted to find a workaround for any and all technical issues no matter how longstanding the problem was and not to need higher intervention. IT issues she worked that affected her cataloging duties in general affected the day-to-day operation of the branch library. She was an incredibly efficient trouble-shooter and could facilitate service recovery to ensure customer services did not decline – other staff relied on her to respond quickly – there is no facility based IT support in overseas Army Libraries and so it's imperative that staff be well-trained in responsive trouble-shooting. Additionally the library doubled-down this year with a goal of having all paraprofessionals trained in pulling and executing weeding lists for their assigned portions of the collections and Ms. Davis was the trainer for the one-on-one sessions. She has an easy communication style from which to learn and being incredibly thorough she ensured staff understood the intricacies involved in the laborious ILS the library uses. This has specifically freed up the professional staff for other higher-level work. While Ms. Davis' primary responsibilities have been technical services for years, she also has a hand in the more traditional library technician tasks. Progress in library operations has decreased hands-on circulation duties which has freed up paraprofessional staff to develop their programming abilities. Ms. Davis does not shy from her increased programming responsibilities. No matter what program the library is putting on Ms. Davis is always counted on not just for an enthusiastic, welcoming smile but her "dig in and get it done" attitude which transfers over to younger and newer staff members. She's a strong staff multiplier in the library and as the library has executed 8 annual community events with approximately 250 attendees at each event, she's a driving force in program success. It needs to be noted this main and branch library system has a way-too small staff of 10 when fully staffed – being able to execute large events requires dynamic, every-ready battery staff such as Ms. Davis. This library functioned as well as it did in 2019 despite multiple, rolling vacancies because of the absolute dependability, flexibility and positive attitude of Ms. Davis. She quickly solved staffing shortage issues at either library before one could blink – if she saw a way to counteract shortages, to maintain or increase customer service, to assist her colleagues, she quickly brought her solutions to notice and ensured the mission marched forward.

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