

KSU professor donates children's book to Kent State collection

Nick Boone | Posted: Monday, January 26, 2015 7:35 pm

A Kent State professor recently donated her first children's book, the first full original book of its type, to Kent State's Marantz Picturebook Collection for the Study of Picturebook Art.

Joanne Dowdy, a professor of adolescent and adult literacy, said that she donated her work, "Olympic Hero: Lennox Kilgour's Story," within the past few months because she wanted it in a safe location where others can enjoy it.

"None of us know how soon we will be closing up our time here on Earth," she said. "So I wanted them to be in a place where people can get them long after I'm gone."

Dowdy wrote the story about her father's trek to win a 1952 Olympic bronze medal for weightlifting for Trinidad and Tobago, according to a university press release.

Dowdy said that she enjoyed working with the illustrator of her book, Dillon Sedar, the illustrator who created the book's 25 pictures, due to his enthusiasm. Her time with Sedar, she said, was one of the best collaborations she has had in her career because she taught him while he was a student at Kent State before graduating in 2013.

She said she put a lot of thought and work into this book and wanted to make sure it will be around for a while, and that her book showed the importance of collaboration: She and Sedar both had the same goal and were passionate about the outcome.

Marianne Martens, an assistant professor of library and information science, said that at the children's library, they believe picture books are a piece of art, so they treat them like that.

"Children's books have a bigger impact on society than what people think," Martens said.

"Children's literature is closely tied to societal views on children."



Joanne Kilgour Dowdy

Joanne Kilgour Dowdy, Kent State professor of adolescent/adult literacy, recently wrote and published a book about her father, a 1952 Olympic bronze medal winner.

Children book reviewers Ken and Sylvia Marantz donated the collection to the Children's Library Center, which was dedicated in 2008, for the study of picture book art and the importance children's books have on society.

The collection, located in the Reinberger Children's Library Center on the third floor of the Kent State University Library, includes more than 25,000 picture books from the past 40 years. It also has copies of books that have won the Caldecott Medal — an award given to notable artists of American picture books for children.

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