

2020 Youth Media Award Winners
Paulina Poplawska, Library Director

The American Library Association Midwinter Conference recently concluded in Philadelphia. During Midwinter the top books, video, and audiobooks for children and young adults are revealed. And the ones that have been announced are a delight!

A recent read of mine topped the list! “New Kid” by Jerry Craft won the 2020 John Newbery Medal for outstanding contribution to children’s literature and the 2020 Coretta Scott King Author Book winner, recognizing African-American authors and illustrators of outstanding books for children and youth adults. It’s also the first graphic novel to have won the Newbery. The story is about seventh grader Jordan Banks who loves drawing about his life. His parents send him to a new prestigious private school instead of art school, where it's a struggle to fit in as he navigates a world different from his Washington Heights apartment. If you enjoy Raina Telgemeier or Gene Luen Yang, this is the graphic novel for you!

“Undeclared” by Kwane Alexander and illustrated by Kadir Nelson was awarded the Caldecott Medal for most distinguished American picture book for children and the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Book Award. It’s an illustrated poem, an ode to African Americans throughout history. It features both the dreamers and the doers who made a difference and the challenges that they faced. The story doesn't identify these individuals throughout but there's historical context and more detail in the end for those interested.

The Odyssey Award, the best audiobook produced for children or young adults was awarded to “Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction” by Jarrett J. Krosoczka. The audiobook was narrated by the author, Jeanne Birdsall, Jenna Lamia, Richard Ferrone, and a full cast. It’s a memoir about growing up in a family dealing with addiction and finding what sustains you to survive; for Krosoczka it was art.

To explore more award winners and nominees, check out the American Libraries Magazine blog at: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/2020-youth-media-award-winners/>. As always we look forward to seeing you in the library!