

Chicago Superhero Wins Two Editor's Choice Awards: A New Kind of Hero for a New Generation

Cockroach the Superhero series combines heart, humor, and action to inspire kids to find courage in unexpected places.



COCKROACH THE SUPERHERO

Skokie, Illinois Aug 16, 2025 (Issuewire.com) - Chicago Superhero Wins Two Editor's Choice Awards: A New Kind of Hero for a New Generation

Out of the thousands of children's books published each year, few manage to blend action, heart, and humor like Steve Frederick's *Cockroach the Superhero* series. His newest book, *The Bangle Bombers Blast Banks*, was just named an Editor's Choice by both *The Children's Book Review* and *BookLife / Publishers' Weekly*, high honors in the field.

The story opens with a literal bang: The mysterious Bangle Bombers dynamite a city bank vault and vanish without a trace. But the real story begins when 11-year-old Kyle Alexander, an anxious but imaginative kid, jolts awake. Kyle isn't just any kid. He's secretly Cockroach, a reluctant young superhero, named by a cruel joke from a criminal, an insult he's learned to wear with pride.

Kyle's life is intense: enduring bullying at school and from another superhero, hiding his secret identity from his parents and his very astute and all-too-inquisitive Grammy, and trying to stay awake in math class, all on top of chasing down criminals. But with the help of his ragtag superhero team, including a wise, tree-shifting mentor named TreeMan, Cockroach discovers that words and compassion can be more powerful than fists and force.

"These books don't rely on flashy gadgets or flawless heroes," says Frederick. "They show that being scared doesn't disqualify you from being brave."

A Chicago teacher shared how her class was stunned when a superhero de-escalated a fight using only kindness and empathy. One student gasped, "He didn't do anything but talk!" The transformation of bullies becomes one of the story's most moving surprises.

Frederick's books are superhero adventures with soul. Kids laugh at the wild villains and clever plot twists, but also see themselves in the characters: the overlooked, the anxious, the underdogs.

The series features a diverse ensemble of heroes, including a former police officer turned flying wheelchair pilot. And always at the center is Kyle, a boy learning to lead not through power, but through presence and purpose.

At its core, *The Bangle Bombers Blast Banks* is about finding strength in unlikely places and doing the right thing, even when it's hard.

The series includes:

- *Breakfast of Superheroes*
- *Secrets of the Superhero's Ring*
- *The Bangle Bombers Blast Banks*

About the Author

Steve Frederick read comics as a kid and dreamed of being a superhero, but never got superpowers. Years later, he found his second chance through fatherhood. When his son Ryan became a superhero fan, Steve made up stories to entertain him—then shared them at school. His read-alouds became so popular, students called him "The Superhero Dad."

He's also a career coach and award-winning writer, but his proudest reviews come from classrooms: "I read *Breakfast of Superheroes* to my class... They were hooked. At the end, they clapped—and voted it their #1 read-aloud of the year."

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