Ivonne Martinez studied Criminal Justice at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB). In 1985 she was accepted at the IU Police Department (IUPD) as a cadet, and a year later she graduated from the police academy. Her dream was to become a police officer, so she left her studies a few credits short of her BA to search for full time work. While applying for police work she worked as an EMT, a book store clerk and a part-time officer at IUPD. In 1989, she moved to Washington, DC hoping for better opportunities, unfortunately due to strict eye sight requirements, she soon stopped her search. While deciding what to do next, she worked as a clown, mascot, dispatcher, underwriter, baby/house/pet sitter and finished her Bachelor’s Degree at the University of District of Columbia. In looking for something more permanent and with benefits, Ivonne applied for a library assistant position at Dahlgren Memorial Library, the Health Sciences Library at Georgetown University. Based on her work ethic and skills, she was soon promoted into a supervisory position. In this role, she managed the daily operations of the information services desk, wrote and implemented new procedures, and trained staff and students. She proposed and coordinated the integration of the reference and circulation desk into a single service point.

At Dahlgren, Ivonne worked with many great librarians who through the years supported and insisted for her to get a Master’s Degree in Library Sciences. In 2004 she applied and was accepted to the MLIS Fast Track program at Pittsburgh University. Around the same time, at Dahlgren she requested a more challenging position with greater growth opportunities which resulted in the creation of a position of Education Services Associate. In this position Ivonne took on professional-level opportunities while working towards her MLIS. In this position she worked in reference, coordinated outreach activities, taught information literacy and software classes and acted as liaison for the School of Nursing and Health Studies. In 2006, Ivonne was awarded the Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance (CIRLA) Fellowship. This fellowship gave her an opportunity to complement her health science library background, with a general academic library experience by rotating through various operational departments at Lauinger Library, Georgetown’s Main Campus Library.

In 2007 once she received her Masters Degree, Dahlgren’s Director and Ivonne’s immediate supervisor created the position of Hospital Outreach Librarian. In this position Ivonne coordinated Dahlgren’s efforts to initiate and facilitate continuing collaborative relationships and partnerships with the Georgetown University Hospital.
Bio

In 2008, with the economic downturn, Ivonne and her husband Keith decided to cut down expenses and simplify life by moving to a beautiful rural town in WV. Ivonne applied to a few local college libraries and the town’s public library. With no public library experience, Ivonne was offered the Director’s position at Mountaintop Public Library. She was the only applicant with a library degree and the board of directors believed from the moment they saw her that she could turn a very old rural library around.

Ivonne was given a challenge that she could not refuse; the evolution of this small rural library is a great story which could be titled “the little library that could.” From day one she was surprised that, with the proximity to the elementary/middle school, there was no partnership with the public library. Within the first three months children were coming to the library during school hours for book discussions, library orientations and to check out books. Story Hour was also established once a week for Pre-K aged children. Apart from her daily administrative duties, she writes grants, organizes book sales, and other fund raising events, seeks donations, and speak frequently to local organizations. Ivonne gives a lot of credit to members of the community, the Board of Directors, library staff and teachers, for the library’s success. For Ivonne this job has been the hardest she has ever done, the lowest paid, but yet the one she loves the most. Her wish is to build a foundation of readers so they can make better choices in life and go on to realized their dreams.