



## YALSA Annual Report to ALA Council

Sarah Hill, President, 2016-2017

**Mission:** Our mission is to support library staff in alleviating the challenges teens face, and in putting all teens – especially those with the greatest needs – on the path to successful and fulfilling lives.

**Vision:** Our vision is that all teens have access to quality library programs and services – no matter where they occur – that link them to resources, connected learning opportunities, coaching, and mentoring that are tailored to the unique circumstances of the community and that create new opportunities for all teens' personal growth, academic success, and career development.

YALSA's actions are driven by the three priority areas in our latest [Organizational Plan](#): 1) leading the transformation of teen library services; 2) advocacy to policy makers at all levels to increase support for teen library services; and 3) funder and partner development.

### Leading the Transformation of Teen Services

#### Organization Reorganization and Realignment

Much of the past year has been a period of reorganization and realignment to free up time and resources to focus on the activities in the new plan. YALSA's 2016 - 2018 [Organizational Plan](#) calls for restructuring the association so that it is better configured to meet the needs of today's teens, members and libraries. Via a member survey in 2016, the majority of respondents indicated that the kind of volunteer opportunities they want most are short term, opt in, and virtual. We also know from an environmental scan that many of the resources YALSA currently provides do not meet the needs of many of today's diverse teens. As a result, all 70+ committees, juries, and advisory boards were evaluated by the YALSA Board in 2016 and most are changing. Both of these issues—member needs and teen diversity—are driving the committee restructuring. Take a look at this [slideshow](#) to see how the Board is re-envisioning YALSA to support our new mission, especially the changes between Slide 2 and 3.

The Board identified and prioritized cultural competence content for YALSA continuing education efforts, and utilized more short-term task forces instead of year-long committees; for example, the board directed YALSA staff to move to a short-term, point-of-need [mentoring program](#). You can read more about how the Board acted to transform member participation at this [blog post](#). The YALSA Executive Committee's role changed to focus more on relationship building with ALA and fiscal operations of the Division. [Juries](#) also changed this year—instead of being appointed to year-long terms, they only worked for three months to select the winners of their member awards, and they volunteered simply by completing a brief form. Also, for the first time, all strategic committees created their own task lists and timelines for the year. YALSA also piloted a Resource Retreat as an alternative to traditional committees and taskforces at the

2017 Midwinter Meeting, where a group of members were invited to create a literacies toolkit in one intensive day of work.

YALSA membership passed the following bylaw change in 2017--all book award committee positions will be appointed, instead of a mix of appointed and elected. This levels the playing field for members and creates just one path to serving on award committees.

The YALSA membership voted virtually on a new logo, to update the look of the organization. Members were given three options and this letterhead shows the winner!

### Book List Update

As part of the August 2016 board document “Recommendations for Transforming Remaining Work Groups,” a Selected List Transition taskforce was created to offer recommendations for transitioning selected lists to YALSA’s blog, [The Hub](#), in two phases: the first to take place in 2017 with Amazing Audiobooks (AA), Popular Paperbacks (PP) and Quick Picks (QP). Throughout the fall of 2016, the task force worked virtually to create a draft plan, shared the draft plan with members and gathered feedback during an online member chat in Nov., and then reworked the plan based on that feedback. The plan was then submitted back to the Leading the Transformation of Teen Services Board Standing Committee to ensure alignment with YALSA mission and Organizational Plan, and that the plan addressed the stated goals of the project:

- Provide more timely information
- Share information in an easier to use format
- Create new resources to meet the needs of today’s diverse teens
- Ensure the flexibility to embrace new formats as they emerge
- Include new and diverse voices in the process
- Create new resources for library staff beyond traditional collection development and readers’ advisory tools

At Midwinter in Atlanta, the board approved this [document](#) that moves the books lists to the Hub over two phases in 2017 and 2018. The lists aren’t going away, but instead of standing committees, the lists will be developed by teams of YALSA members working through The Hub. This allows for virtual participation as well as for sharing information in a more timely way. In February 2017, more than 60 YALSA members volunteered to serve on the Amazing Audios and Quick Picks Teams. Team members were trained by the Hub Manager, Molly Wetta, and the [new selected list process has already begun](#). The initial roll-out has taken longer than expected, but the Board is excited about the possibilities of quicker nominations for the lists and the virtual opportunities for members. The Board will evaluate the process before moving the other lists (Great Graphic Novels and BFYA) to The Hub in 2018.

### Teen Tech Week™ 2017



This year's Teen Tech Week™ (March 5-11, 2017) theme, Be the Source of Change, encouraged teens to leverage technology available through their library to make a positive change in their community. Free posters and planning materials helped library staff implement great digital literacy and tech-focused programs and services for and with teens. The Teen Tech Week™ Committee expanded YALSA's existing STEM Toolkit into a free downloadable STEAM Toolkit. Activities included a Twitter Takeover by a partner each day: the Congressional App Challenge [@CongressionalAC](#), The LAMP [@thelamp](#), Gene Luen Yang (TTW National Spokesperson) [@geneluenyang](#), YALSA's Teen Tech Week Committee, and ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy [@oitp](#). Both Best Buy and OITP supported the event through sponsorships.

## YA Services Symposium

Just over 500 attendees participated in the 2016 YA Services Symposium in Pittsburgh, PA, Nov. 4 – 6, 2016. YALSA selected the winners of its Symposium Programming Challenge. A total of three first place winners and one honorable mention were selected. Winners were selected at YALSA's 2016 YA Services Symposium which took place Nov. 4-6, 2016, in Pittsburgh, PA via a "shark tank" like setup where attendees pitched their ideas to a panel of judges. Each winner received a monetary award of \$1,500 to help fund their program and the honorable mention recipient will receive \$500. Funding for the challenge was provided generously through a grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

The call for the 2017 [YA Services Symposium](#) programs and papers related to the college and career readiness theme is closed on February 1, and registration opened in April. Members could apply for travel stipends through June 1. The event will be held November 3 –5, 2017 in Louisville, Kentucky.

## Publications

YALSA has released two new digital publications: [YALSA's Top Reads: STEM and Making](#) and [YALSA's Top Reads: Community Engagement and Collaboration](#). Each features a collection of YALSA's best journal articles blog posts, and resources on the featured topics. Readers of the [STEM and making publication](#) will find a wealth of practical expertise guaranteed to help them develop, elevate, and evaluate STEM and making programming in their library, while the [community engagement and collaboration](#) edition offers ideas, strategies, and resources to both those who are just getting started in community engagement and seasoned pros.

The Board approved the position paper "[The Library's Role in Protecting Teens' Privacy](#)," written by Mark K. Chelton, and was encouraged when ALSC endorsed the paper.

The YALSA board approved a new [research agenda](#) that notes five forward-thinking priority areas

1. The Impact of Libraries as Teen Formal and Informal Learning Environments
2. Library Staff Training, Skills and Knowledge
3. Equity of Access
4. Cultural Competence, Social Justice and Equity
5. Community Engagement

YALSA updated and expanded its collection of [case studies](#) that illustrate best practices in serving 21<sup>st</sup> century teens, as outlined in YALSA's 2014 report, *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: a Call to Action*.

### New Interest Groups

Members successfully petitioned YALSA's Board to create several new [Interest Groups](#) this year: Teen Services Coordinators IG, Los Angeles County Area IG, Washington DC Metro Area IG, Picture Books for Teens IG, and Teens are Not Alone IG. The Board is working on a process to provide more robust supports for these opt-in, virtual groups.

### Member Town Halls & Responding to the Political Climate

The [November Town Hall](#) took place soon after the 2016 presidential election, and over 40 members met virtually to discuss how we can support teens during challenging times. During the month of December, The Hub and the YALSAblog had alternating daily posts about social justice. The [February member virtual town hall](#) was about taking social action. Members discussed the different actions that library staff can take as private citizens to support teens, especially those teens who are the most vulnerable in the current social and political climate. A wiki page was created to serve members: <http://bit.ly/2flHuxL>.

### Teen Read Week™

YALSA celebrated TRW Oct. 16 – 22, 2016 with a multi-lingual “Read for the Fun of It” theme. This year, YALSA encourages libraries to connect with teens around the theme “**Unleash Your Story**” during Teen Read Week™, October 8–14, 2017. Library staff, afterschool providers, and educators are encouraged to leverage this theme to encourage teens to write, tell and share their own stories as well as find stories, biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, folktales, and more in their local library. Library staff are also encouraged to join the free [Teen Read Week site](#) for full access to a variety of resources for help planning Teen Read Week activities.

### New Teen Book Finder Database

Thanks to funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, all YALSA's selected lists, and book and media award winners and honorees have been put into a free, fully searchable online database. Lists can be downloaded and customized for library use. Visit [booklists.yalsa.net](http://booklists.yalsa.net), and be sure to add a link to this resource on your library's web site. Thanks to an FY18 Strategic Initiatives grant from ALA, other teen-focused book awards and lists from ALA Affiliates and Roundtables will be added in the fall of 2017 to the database and app.

### Future Ready with the Library

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), in partnership with the [Association for Rural and Small Libraries](#) (ARSL), have announced the first 20 participants of its [IMLS](#) grant funded project, [Future Ready with the Library](#). Through this project, YALSA and ARSL will support the members of the first cohort as they work with a community partner to develop college and career readiness services for the middle school students in their area. The project will require participating library staff to commit approximately 2 - 3 hours per week throughout 2017. Members of the first cohort participated in a two-day orientation at ALA's [2017 Midwinter Meeting](#) in Atlanta, GA, Jan. 19 – 20, 2017 and will take part in online classes through the rest of the year. The [Future Ready with the Library](#) project will engage a total of 80 library staff,

separated into three cohorts, over a three-year period. Learn more about the project [on our website](#).

### IMLS Grant for National Forum on Transforming Teen Services Through CE project

YALSA, in partnership with the [Chief Officers of State Library Agencies \(COSLA\)](#), was awarded a grant in the amount of \$99,784 by the [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#). The grant funds will be used to host a National Forum on Transforming Teen Services Through Continuing Education, which will address the importance of prioritizing the role of continuing education in teen services and the need for State Library Agency (SLA) staff to gain skills that will help them support and train public library staff in teen services. The forum, a yearlong effort starting June 2017, will be implemented over the course of several phases which include: both face-to-face and virtual meetings and discussions, as well as researching and testing key findings, and culminating with the dissemination of a final report and supplementary materials. As part of the national forum project, a one-and-a-half-day summit will be held November in Louisville where the project's advisory board, SLA youth services staff, and other invitees will engage in in-depth discussions. Learn more about the National Forum [here](#).

### Member Grants, Awards and Scholarships Evaluation

At the 2017 Midwinter Meeting YALSA's Board directed the President to establish two taskforces to evaluate YALSA's portfolio of member grants and awards to identify challenges, opportunities, and gaps.

## Advocacy

### ESSA

YALSA supported the efforts of the ALA Washington Office, AASL, and Every Library in their advocacy efforts of the previous year to [advocate for school librarians](#) for all teens. In October 2016 YALSA signed on to the STEM Ed Coalition's letter to state lawmakers encouraging them to make STEM a priority in ESSA implementation plans.

### Postcards

At the 2017 ALA Midwinter Meeting, YALSA distributed postcards to attendees for them to fill out and send to their members of Congress, focusing on how libraries help teens succeed in school, and prepare for college, careers and life.

### #SaveIMLS

YALSA worked with the ALA Washington Office to distribute calls to action to members and supporters in an effort to restore federal funds for libraries that were eliminated in the White House's draft FY18 budget. The YALSAblog published several posts about the Institute of Museum of Library Services (IMLS) to raise awareness among members about how all libraries benefit from IMLS funds. [YALSA is collecting](#) and sharing out stories from members illustrating how IMLS funds have helped the teens in their community.

### District Days

YALSA's Board directed the President to appoint a member taskforce to provide education, information and resources to members so they can connect with their Congress members when they are home in their district at various times during the year. District Days resources are freely available on [YALSA's wiki](#).

#### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers initiative

In March 2017 YALSA signed on to the Afterschool Alliance's letter of support to Congress outlining the importance of federal funds for out-of-school-time programs, and calling on Congress to continue to fund this important initiative.

#### National Library Legislative Day

Thanks to fundraising efforts of the Friends of YALSA, we were able to send a third YALSA member to National Library Legislative Day in May 2017 to save IMLS and advocate for net neutrality. Executive Director Beth Yoke and President Sarah Hill had meetings all day on the Hill, and several other YALSA members advocated for teens by attending meetings with their state delegations.



From left: YALSA Executive Director Beth Yoke, two teen library users from Baltimore, YALSA President Sarah Hill, and YALSA Division Councilor Todd Krueger.

#### Net Neutrality

YALSA's Board approved a [statement in support](#) of strong net neutrality, based on language provided by the Ala Washington Office, which was submitted to the Federal Trade Commission in May 2017.

## Funder and Partner Development

### Friends of YALSA

Each year [Friends of YALSA](#) is tasked with raising just over \$14,000 to support member grants and awards. The Financial Advancement Committee organizes this fundraising effort. They also updated YALSA's [Fundraising Guide](#).

#### Funder Exploration

The Board's Standing Committee on Fund and Partner Development compiled a list of potential foundations and funders whose philanthropic goals align with the work of YALSA.

#### Leadership Initiatives

At their 2017 Midwinter Meeting, YALSA's Board approved the establishment of a taskforce to raise funds to support the leadership efforts outlined in YALSA's 2016 – 2017 Implementation Plan.

#### Staffing

In 2016 YALSA's Board approved the use of interest from endowments to support the creation of a new part-time position in YALSA. Taylor Crossley began work at YALSA Oct. 31, 2016, and provides support to YALSA's literacies initiatives, including Teen Read Week, summer learning, book awards and selected lists.

#### New Toolkit

A task force of YALSA members created a new toolkit, [Partnering to Increase Your Impact](#).

#### Partner Outreach

The Board's Standing Committee on Fund and Partner Development updated a list of organizations who have similar missions to YALSA. Staff now send a monthly message to these organizations outlining ways they can connect to and participate in the work of YALSA.

#### Partnering on Projects

YALSA is currently partnering with these other organizations on projects funded by IMLS:

- the University of Maryland's Youth Experience, which is a post-MLS certificate program for library staff interested in serving youth
- the Public Library Association is implementing an internship program for teens as part of an effort to recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds to the profession
- the Mozilla Foundation is working to equip more library staff with evidence-based digital literacy skills and competencies
- the Connected Learning Research Network is implementing a project to identify persistent problems of practice in the library community and ways of addressing those issues

#### Planned Giving

In November 2016, YALSA's Board approved a [new plan](#) to support an on-going planned giving effort.