

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco
June 26 – 30, 2015

Topic: Confirmation of Support for President’s Program

Background: Chris Shoemaker is focusing his year on helping libraries ensure that all teens gain the digital literacy skills they need to succeed in school and 21st century careers. As a part of this effort, YALSA is hosting a competition via the President’s Program at Annual for its members in order to encourage them to embrace new service models and rethink how they’re meeting the needs of today’s teens. The best examples will receive funding and/or in-kind support from YALSA and its partners. Linda Braun, Chair of the President’s Program Planning Taskforce, has presented a proposal for the board’s consideration. The short time frame for this proposal is due to the fact that the taskforce was waiting to hear about the outcome of the Best Buy grant proposal before finalizing its plans. Best Buy contacted YALSA just before Midwinter. On Feb. 24th YALSA’s Board voted to adopt the proposal. Including the item as a part of this meeting simply ensures it will be entered into the official record of the association.

Action Required: Consent

President’s Program

The plan is to ask members to share their digital literacy program or service idea via an online application for a program or service that meets the following criteria:

- Supports teens in developing digital literacy skills, especially youth from economically disadvantaged areas
- Integrates the key principles of YALSA’s *Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action* report (www.ala.org/yaforum)
- Demonstrates involvement with the community and with teens in developing and implementing the program

In order to heighten interest and encourage participation, part of the process will be modeled after the popular TV show Shark Tank, which features aspiring entrepreneurs pitching their business idea to a panel of potential investors. In YALSA’s version, the President’s Program Planning Taskforce will first vet the initial applications and identify finalists who will then participate in the “shark tank” at YALSA’s President’s Program at ALA’s Annual Conference. At the event the finalists will pitch their ideas to a team of experts made up of tech entrepreneurs, educators, library leaders and YALSA partners who will provide feedback and a chance to prizes. It is envisioned that up to three winners will be selected at this conference event.

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All applicants, regardless of whether they are selected to go on to the final 'shark tank' round, will receive constructive feedback regarding their proposal as well as recommended resources to help them pursue their project. Finalist and winning applications will be featured on YALSA's web site in order to promote best practices in helping teens gain digital literacy skills. Partner resources related to digital literacy will also be featured on the site. Additionally, winners will blog about their projects on the YALSAblog as a means of providing the library community with an insight into the program planning, implementation and evaluation process.

Proposal

Direct up to \$15,000 worth of YALSA funds for use in promoting best practices in digital literacy services and programming via the 2015 YALSA President's Program.

- Proposed use of funds:
 - Subsidizing the cost of travel and attendance to ALA Annual Conference for the semi-finalists. Approximately \$1500 will be used for each of the up to six selected semi-finalists. The \$1500 will cover airfare, two nights' hotel and registration to the conference.
 - A cash prize and/or purchase of technology to support the work of the up to three winners of the Shark Bowl.

Rationale

- YALSA recently received a back payment of over \$230,000 for licensing the image of the Printz seal, so this expense would not be a burden on YALSA's budget
- The President's Program Planning Task Force had planned that part of the Best Buy digital literacies grant that YALSA applied for would be used for prizes for the winners of Shark Bowl; however, the Best Buy funding did not come through
- Use of the funds in this way will not only support the theme of the YALSA President but will also support the work of the association by highlighting the Future of Library Services for and With Teens: A Call to Action report as well as the Research and Best Practices goal of the strategic plan.
- This level of support for winners of the Shark Bowl will help YALSA create a program that will draw interest and attention and it is expected that as a result of the potential prize, the association will receive more and higher quality applications. The higher level of pitches - both in terms of quality and number - will also give YALSA content to use to support getting the word out about the importance of the Futures report and the work of the association.
- YALSA's Executive Director is currently seeking sponsors for this effort. Being able to demonstrate to potential sponsors that YALSA has invested in this effort sends a signal to potential sponsors that this is an important priority for YALSA

Next Steps

After a response from the Board, the President's Program Planning Task Force will finalize the creation of a WordPress site about the initiative and then immediately begin marketing the opportunity to members. The timeline for this effort is tight, because successful applicants will need time to make arrangements for attending the annual conference.

Requested Actions

- That the Board vote to direct up to \$15,000 of funds in the FY15 budget to support the President’s digital literacy effort as outlined above
- The Board vote to direct the Executive Director to roll the \$1,392 in interest from the Leadership Endowment that was originally going to be used for the President’s Program (as outlined in Midwinter 2015 board document #17) back into the endowment principal