

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta  
January 20 – 24, 2017**

**Topic:** Confirmation of 2018 Symposium Site Location

**Background:** Over the past several months YALSA staff have been exploring options for a location for YALSA’s 2018 YA Services Symposium. Since this is a key revenue source which YALSA depends on in order to fund member services, as well as a popular event with members, choosing an optimal location is a priority. The goal is to obtain approval for the date and location of the 2018 symposium now in order to be able to negotiate the best rates with hotels. Identifying the date and location over a year in advance will also ensure adequate time to plan and promote the event. Nicole O’Connor, YALSA’s Program Officer for Conferences and Events, has provided the proposal below for the Board’s consideration in August 2016. In order to be entered into the official record of the organization, this document is presented as a consent item for the Board’s 2017 Midwinter Meeting.

**Action Required:** Consent

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**SITE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

- size and proximity of airport to downtown
- cost, convenience and safety of transportation options w/in the city
- size of area drive-in population
- hotel rates and availability
- lack of other library events in area at the time of Symposium
- not an area where YALSA has recently hosted a Symposium, Institute or other event
- not in a part of the country where ALA has recently hosted a major event
- prior success of other ALA functions in city
- potential draw as tourist destination
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tier city to ensure lower rates for attendees

**DATES TO AVOID**

**Holidays:**

Oct 8 Columbus Day  
Nov 6 Election Day  
Nov 11 Veterans Day  
Nov 22 Thanksgiving Day

Dec 3 first day of Hanukkah

**2018 Events:**

- PLA National Conference will be in Philadelphia April 2018 and Nashville in 2019.
- 2018 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans June 21-26
- ALSC Institute in TBD, usually September (even years)
- AASL Fall Forum, date and location TBD
- Teen Read Week™ (Oct. 7-13)
- ALAN Workshop in Houston, Nov. 16-18

State & Regional Library Assoc. conferences (see:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/conferencesevents/afficalendar/index.cfm>)

**2019 Events:**

- 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, WA: January 25-29, 2019

**RECOMMENDED DATES** (please note: hotel rates typically drop at the end of Oct.)

- November 2-4, 2016 (first choice)
- November 9-11, 2016 (second choice)

**FORMER SYMPOSIUM LOCATIONS**

2017: Louisville, KY

2016: Pittsburgh, PA

2015: Portland, OR

2014: Austin, TX

2012: St. Louis, MO

2010: Albuquerque, NM

2008: Nashville, TN

**POTENTIAL 2018 LOCATIONS**

We surveyed attendees in 2014 and 2015, and they said their number one consideration for attending was the location city (content was the second deciding factor). Then, when asked what cities they would like to see host they Symposium, the Austin attendees voted New Orleans first, Seattle second, and Savannah third. The Portland attendees voted Seattle first, Denver second, San Diego third.

Taking into consideration all of the information above, the Request for Proposals (RFP) was sent out in May, 2016, to Savannah, The Palm Beaches area, Chicago, Denver, and Salt Lake City. Based on the response to the RFP, the following cities were eliminated due to room rates that were too high (about \$169).

- Savannah
- Chicago
- The Palm Beaches area

Salt Lake City had a rate of \$129 over the 1<sup>st</sup> choice dates and Denver had a rate of \$139 over the 2<sup>nd</sup> choice dates, so site visits were conducted to determine which city would be the best fit.

In addition to the hotel and accommodations:

- The Utah Library Association Conference usually takes place in May
- The Association of Colorado Libraries Conference is usually in Oct.
- The 2018 Mountain Plains Library Association Conference is scheduled for fall in Kansas
- The symposium has never been located in the Mountain region
- The 2017 symposium was in the Mid-Atlantic region, and 2017 ALA events are not in the Mountain region

#### **Summary of Salt Lake City site visit**

- There is a train from the airport that costs about \$2 and takes about 25 minutes. SuperShuttle and cabs are also available.
- The hotel does not have enough sleeping rooms, so there would have to be an overflow hotel that would be at a lower rate and one block away.
- The meeting space is adequate, but the pre-function space for breaks might be a little smaller than past hotels.
- There are restaurants and night life within walking distance from the hotels, all public transportation in the downtown area is free. The train stop is 1 block away from hotel.
- YALSA's preferred date is available.
- Salt Lake is an airline hub for Delta and also has low cost carriers like Southwest, jetBlue, Frontier, and Alaska.
- The downtown Salt Lake library is open 24 hours a day

#### **Summary of Denver site visit**

- There is a train from the airport that costs about \$9 and takes about 55 minutes. (Once off the train, a transfer to a free bus is needed to get to the hotel. SuperShuttle and cabs are also available.
- The hotel is very large with two towers of sleeping rooms.
- There are multiple floors of meeting space (YALSA meetings would all be on the same floor).
- There is a large selection of restaurants and night life within walking distance from the hotel, public transportation downtown 16<sup>th</sup> street mall is free.
- YALSA's 2<sup>nd</sup> choice date is available.
- The 2017 symposium was in the Mid-Atlantic region, and 2017 ALA events are not out West

#### **Comparison of hotels**

**YALSA Board of Directors – Midwinter 2017  
Topic: Confirmation of 2018 Symposium Location  
Item #5**

<b>Salt Lake City</b>	<b>Dates Available</b>	<b>Room Rate</b>	<b>Meeting Rooms</b>	<b>Concessions</b>
Sheraton Downtown	11/1-11/5	\$129 s/d	comp rental w/ \$30k food & beverage spend and 80% room block pickup	1 per 40 comp rooms, 3 suite upgrades, 5 staff rooms at \$99, 10% off internet in guestrooms

<b>Denver</b>	<b>Dates Available</b>	<b>Room Rate</b>	<b>Meeting Rooms</b>	<b>Concessions</b>
Grand Hyatt Denver	11/1-11/5	\$179 s/d	comp rental w/ \$30k food & beverage spend and 85% room block pickup	1 per 40 comp rooms, 3 suite upgrades, 5 staff rooms
Marriott Denver City Center	11/7-11/11	\$150 s/d, Triple, \$170, Quad \$190	comp rental w/ \$30k food & beverage spend	1 per 40 comp rooms, 5 suite upgrades
Embassy Suites Denver Downtown	11/1-11/5	\$179	comp rental w/ \$35k food & beverage spend	3 suite upgrades, comp wi fi in meeting and sleeping rooms
Sheraton Downtown	11/7-11/11	\$139	comp rental w/ 80% room block pickup	1 per 40 comp rooms, 3 suite upgrades, 5 staff rooms

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the site visit, the Sheraton Downtown Salt Lake City from Nov. 2 - 4 is the best fit for the Symposium. The hotel has adequate meeting space, offers the lowest room rate, and is within walking distance of shopping and restaurants. There are hotels nearby if the YALSA block at the Sheraton fills. There is a variety of inexpensive and convenient transportation options from the airport, and the downtown is very compact making it easy to get around. Compared to Denver, there will also be less of a conflict with state conferences, as Utah's is in the spring and Colorado's is usually in Oct. Denver was a strong second, and will likely be seriously considered for future symposia.

**Proposed Board Action**

Approve Salt Lake City as the site for the 2018 symposium and direct the Executive Director to work with staff to execute the necessary contracts with the hotel.

**Additional Information**

- ALA Calendar of Events: <http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/calendarofevents>
- Salt Lake City Convention & Visitors Information: <http://www.visitsaltlake.com/>