young adult
library services

INSIDE:

THE TEENS SPEAK OUT: WHAT TEENS IN A TECH HIGH SCHOOL REALLY THINK ABOUT LIBRARIES
SHIFTING TEEN SERVICES FOR A NEW TEEN SPACE
AND THE WINNER IS...: HIGHLIGHTING AWARDS AND LISTS ON THE HUB
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About This Cover
Today, building collections for teens goes way beyond the book, includes a wide-variety of resources, and requires working both inside and outside of the library building.

YALSA has many tools to help you connect and collect including yearly lists of the best books and media for young adults. Find all of the recent titles at www.ala.org/yalsa/best. On that page you’ll find links to downloadable tools to promote the best titles in your library.

Every day each of us make a host of choices that have an impact on the work we do and/or the lives we lead. As professionals working with teens in libraries, or in other educational or youth development fields, readers of this journal constantly make choices about how to help teens grow up successfully and succeed in college, careers, and life. And YALSA, through its president, board of directors, and members, makes choices about everything from what projects to fund to the books selected for the association’s annual awards and lists.

At first glance, the table of contents for this issue of YALS might not strike you as a selection of articles about choices, but take another look:

- In Chris Shoemaker’s “From the President” column he lets readers know about the choices the YALSA board made during their Midwinter Meetings. These choices centered on the need to focus the work of the association on the findings of the Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action report (often referred to as the Futures report and available at http://ala.org/yaforum).
- The article “The Teens Speak Out: What Teens in a Tech High School Really Think About Libraries…And What You Can Do to Improve Their Perceptions” highlights the choices library staff need to make in order to guarantee that teens understand the value of the library in their lives.
- Choices about staffing and space allocation are central to Wendy Stephens’s article on creating a vibrant teen space in a school library.
- Every award and list covered in the articles in this issue, from YALSA’s Teens’ Top Ten list, to the William C. Morris Debut Author Award, to the Michael L. Printz Award represents choices made by members of YALSA committees and participating teens about what are the best books of the year.

As you read through this issue of YALS, keep in mind the choices you make every day that have an impact on the teens and families you work with. Ask yourself: Am I making choices that support the full range of needs teens have—from college and career readiness, to digital literacy skills, to relationship building with peers and adults, to connecting to reading materials that support teen personal and academic interests?

In reading the articles in this issue, I think you’ll find some good ideas for making good choices in serving teens in your community. And, don’t forget, you can find more inspiration and support in making these choices by reading YALSA’s Futures report. It can be your guide to the how, what, and why of the choices you need to make to serve teens in 2015 and beyond.
A New Focus for YALSA

At our January meeting, the YALSA Board voted unanimously that the focus of their work and current strategic planning needs to be grounded in the findings of *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: a Call to Action* report (available at http://ala.org/yaforum). This document will drive all of the work that YALSA will take on over the next few years and will be the foundation on which our new strategic plan is built. YALSA’s Board is going to eat, sleep, and breathe the report. If you haven’t read the report yet, I strongly encourage you to do so! Think about what you need in order to implement the recommendations in the report and be ready to share your ideas and thoughts. Member feedback helps drive the Board’s decision making, and there will be several opportunities to share your input. We will keep you informed about those via the weekly YALSA E-news.

One such opportunity is a virtual member town hall that will be held on May 14 from 8 to 9 p.m., EST, via Adobe Connect (advance registration is not required) at http://connectpro87048468.adobeconnect.com/townhall_echats/. I hope you participate!

It’s All About You

Why focus on the Futures report? We all know that libraries are struggling to stay strong and relevant in a rapidly changing landscape. Many library budgets are shrinking and staffs are being downsized. In order to adequately meet the needs of you, our members, the YALSA Board must identify these changes and proactively address them. In doing this, we will be able to provide resources and services that empower you to have a strong and positive impact in your library and in your community.

One thing that is increasingly heard in the library community is that libraries can no longer be only about “stuff.” In other words, libraries are so much more than the furniture, technology, books, etc. that are inside their walls. This makes perfect sense to me, because we all know that a library isn’t a library without the librarians and library staff who dedicate themselves to helping community members! You—not the stuff—are what changes people’s lives. So, YALSA’s Board will be looking at how YALSA needs to evolve in order to better support YOU and all aspects of teen services that you deal with every day.

Read On and Get Involved

As YALSA continues to align its work with the findings in the Futures report, you’ll notice that one way we’re helping you do likewise is by publishing articles in this journal with information that can help you in your day-to-day work. Don’t miss the article about how to focus your school library space so that it supports the needs of today’s teens. This article aligns with the findings in the Futures report because it focuses on audience. We all need to be thinking about all of the teens in our community, and not just the ones that walk through the library door. And, be sure to read the article “The Teens Speak Out: What Teens in a Tech High School Really Think about Libraries . . . and What You Can Do to Improve Their Perceptions.” Seeking and using teen feedback is a key recommendation in the Futures report, and this article can help give you some direction.

I know that you are all very busy, but it would be helpful to YALSA’s Board if you could take a moment and tell us how you #act4teens. In other words, what are you doing differently since you’ve read the Futures report? What challenges and success have you had? We have a super quick online form for you to fill out at http://ow.ly/Ivhy.

When I filled out the form, I included information about how the Rye Free Reading Room is creating a partnership with teachers and teens to mentor and demonstrate STEM skills in after-school library programs. By partnering young students up with both teens and teachers, they are excited to learn about the science around them, and share their learning with their parents, peers, and guides. Your responses will help us guide our work at the Board level. With your permission, we may also reach out to you to share your story in future YALS articles or YALSA blog posts. You can also join the discussion on Twitter by using the #act4teens hashtag. We want to hear from all kinds of members, not just frontline library workers. So, students, retirees, grad school faculty, advocates, and others should weigh in as well!

The Future Is Bright

I look forward to taking this journey with you into the future where together we can build a new YALSA that has an improved capacity to meet the needs of all of its members and to advance the teen services profession. We have a unique opportunity to increase the impact we have on teens, and I hope you will join me in the cause.

YALSA
And The Winner Is . . . : Highlighting YALSA Awards and Lists on The Hub

By Carli Spina

As the literature blog for YALSA, The Hub (http://yalsa.ala.org/thehub) offers extensive coverage of all aspects of young adult literature. Though this extends to posts on a wide range of topics within the field of YA literature, one particular area of focus for the blog is highlighting authors and works that have been recognized by YALSA through awards or lists. This work is not only a central part of the official mission of The Hub, but is also a major part of the work that the blog’s Advisory Board members do throughout the year. The awards and lists form the backbone of some of the most effective and popular recurring community events that The Hub hosts each year. At the same time, they help to introduce these important and exemplary books to a wider audience, ensuring that both young adult librarians and other YA enthusiasts know about, and hopefully read, the top works and authors in the field.

Reading Challenges
Though YALSA award winners, nominees, and lists are integrated into all of The Hub’s work throughout the year, twice annually they are specifically highlighted as part of The Hub Reading Challenge and the Morris/Nonfiction Award.

The Hub Reading Challenge
The Hub Reading Challenge is the centerpiece of The Hub’s promotion of YALSA awards and lists. Originally titled the Best of the Best Reading Challenge, and only comprising titles recognized by YALSA, this challenge expanded in 2012 to include young adult books recognized by the Stonewall Book Awards and the Schneider Family Book Awards. The annual challenge runs from just after ALA Midwinter Meeting in January, when award and list recipients are announced, until June, just before ALA Annual Conference. During this time, participants are challenged to read 25 books from the list of eligible titles. As the 2014 Hub Reading Challenge guidelines stated, this list includes YA titles that were named winners or honor titles for the Schneider Family Book Award, the Stonewall Book Award . . . the Alex Award, Award.

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for Excellence in Nonfiction, Margaret A. Edwards Award, Michael L. Printz Award, Odyssey Award, and William C. Morris Award, as well as the 2014 Top Ten Amazing Audiobooks, Best Fiction, Great Graphic Novels, Popular Paperbacks, and Quick Picks.1

As this lengthy list of awards and lists suggests, participants have many options to choose from, including audiobooks, graphic novels, and even books that were originally marketed to adults but have crossover appeal for young adults. A participant’s ultimate submission can consist of any combination of 25 of the eligible items and must be submitted using the official form found on The Hub. Each year a prize is offered; in 2014 this prize consisted of a tote bag full of books for one lucky winner selected at random from all participants. To further encourage discussion and interaction, everyone who completed the challenge was eligible to submit a response for publication on The Hub.

In addition, discussing and commenting on the books read and on the process itself is encouraged within the comments section of each week’s check-in post (a weekly post by Hub Advisory Board members focusing on their own experiences reading the titles from the list and encouraging participants along the way), on the Hub Challenge group on Goodreads or via social media using the challenge hashtag (#hubchallenge). Offering so many ways to interact has proven to be an effective method for engaging with participants. In 2014, the initial blog post about the Hub Challenge garnered over 300 comments and the Goodreads group attracted 240 members. While subsequent check-in posts don’t attract the same number of comments as the initial post, they nevertheless tend to attract a significant amount of interest and a greater number of comments than the average post on The Hub. Moreover, participants are encouraged to track their reading online using their blog, Goodreads, LibraryThing, YouTube, or other social media accounts and share a link to those posts in the comments, which takes the conversation about these books to other online communities and beyond the borders of The Hub. Overall, the challenge has consistently proven to be an effective way of increasing community engagement around the books that have been recognized by YALSA committees.

Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge
Beginning in early December each year, the annual Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge follows a similar pattern to that of The Hub Reading Challenge. This challenge focuses on the William C. Morris YA Debut Award and the Award for Excellence in Nonfiction, and therefore runs from the day that the lists of finalists for these awards are released, in December each year, until the Youth Media Awards at the ALA Midwinter Meeting (in January) where the winners are announced. To complete the challenge, participants must read all of the finalists for either or both of these awards. Though no prizes are offered for this challenge, there are weekly check-in posts that encourage participants to keep to their reading goals. These posts also offer a jumping off point for conversations about participants’ reading experiences and, as an added incentive, participants can count any books read for the Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge towards their future Hub Reading Challenge list. As with the Hub Reading Challenge, blog comments and social media posts form the backbone of the challenge. In 2014, the initial Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge blog post attracted 98 comments, with the weekly check-in posts garnering additional comments throughout the challenge. And, as with the Hub Challenge, participants are encouraged to discuss the books on their other social media accounts, which helps to spread the word about the Morris and Nonfiction awards and the year’s finalists. Though this challenge does not tend to attract the same number of participants as the Hub Reading Challenge, it does build interest in the awards and the Youth Media Awards more generally.

Featuring YALSA Committees Work Throughout The Year
In addition to these two challenges, The Hub integrates books from the YALSA awards and lists into a wide range of other activities throughout the year that help to introduce Hub readers to the books and authors selected by YALSA committees. These activities range from including a link to award and committee information each time a recognized book is mentioned on The Hub to providing additional commentary and analysis on the books selected, such as Katie Shanahan Yu’s “Where Are They Now?” post following up on new works from Morris honorees and winners.2 All of this work helps The Hub to achieve its mission of drawing attention to award and list books outside of the bounds of the annual challenges.

Teens’ Top Ten
Though not included in The Hub Reading Challenge, the Teens’ Top Ten list is an important part of the work that YALSA does to draw attention to high-quality young adult literature. (See the Hot Spot section of this issue for more on the Teens’ Top Ten list.) Young adult books are nominated for the list by members of teen book groups at libraries all around the country and are then voted on online by teens ages 12 to 18. The list represents a teen perspective on the best books of
And The Winner Is . . .

the year and, as such, offers an important and different perspective on current young adult literature. The Hub takes an active role in promoting the Teen’s Top Ten throughout the process, from publishing posts written by teens who were in the nominating groups to covering the announcement of the books that are ultimately included on the final list of ten. In addition to promoting the books that the teens select, our coverage of Teens’ Top Ten also gives The Hub an opportunity to bring a teen voice to the blog, which is another of the blog’s key goals. The Teens’ Top Ten books are also included in promotional efforts throughout the year.

**Author Interviews and Read-alikes**

One of the ways we promote Teens’ Top Ten books and other award winners is through interviews with the authors. The Hub makes an effort to interview all of the authors of winning books. These interviews, which are generally conducted by regular Hub contributors, offer readers a new insight into the authors who created the best young adult literature of the year as selected by YALSA committees. Though each interview is unique, they all help to personalize the authors and often give readers an insight into their writing process and inspirations. They also give authors a chance to offer their thoughts on their books and more generally about their work and experiences.

When authors are not available to be interviewed, Hub contributors create read-alike lists to offer an equal amount of promotion to each of the books. These lists offer options for readers who enjoy the book in question and can also help librarians who are looking for display ideas to advertise the latest YALSA selections. Taken together, both of these approaches to publicizing these books allow readers to go beyond the pages for a single award winner or nominee and connect it to the larger world of young adult fiction.

**Award Ceremonies, Announcements, and Events**

For both the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the Annual Conference, Hub contributors report on the events. This coverage includes a complete list of award winners, but often includes reporting from members who attend these events in person. While these posts include pictures and video from many of the events, they primarily focus on describing speeches or other presentations that coincide with these events. From time to time, this coverage can also extend to other panels and sessions at the conferences including discussions of the YALSA award winners, such as reader’s advisory presentations that focus on YALSA awards and lists. Coverage of these events provides a set of resources for librarians who want ideas about how to integrate these books into their marketing and reader’s advisory efforts or who are trying to determine whether the books are a good fit for their library’s collection.

**Elections**

The first step of all of YALSA’s awards and lists is electing YALSA members who are willing to volunteer their time to select the books. To help YALSA’s members to fill these positions, The Hub gives candidates for these positions the opportunity to be interviewed for a post that introduces them to voting members and help membership choose the best candidates. These interviews allow candidates to connect with The Hub’s readers and YALSA members in a much stronger way than they can through the short biographies that are included on the ballot. Though this is outside The Hub’s usual focus on writing directly about young adult literature, it is an important contribution that the blog makes to the YALSA awards and lists.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the year, The Hub’s Advisory Board and contributors strive to introduce readers to YALSA award nominees and winners as well as the books that are selected for inclusion on YALSA lists. The coverage takes many forms in an attempt to capture the interest of fans of young adult materials, while simultaneously providing relevant information for librarians who are interested in making informed decisions or finding the information they need for their collection development and marketing efforts.

**References**

We’ve all read the research indicating that most U.S. teens are heavy technology users and that they often turn to technology first to fulfill their informational, social, and other needs. Unfortunately, there isn’t much research that tells us where libraries fall into this tech-heavy picture of teens’ daily lives. With the goal of understanding how today’s teens view public and school libraries, we undertook a three-year Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)-funded study that examined teens’ technology use practices, their social searching practices, and their use and nonuse of public and school libraries. In this article we will briefly describe part of that project, share what we learned about teens’ views of libraries, and detail the best practices that can be drawn from this research.

Background: Research Into Teens’ Use (and Nonuse) of Libraries

There is a long history of research into library use in the United States, but most studies have focused on adults as library users.¹ Within the few studies that have focused on teens, recurring themes include teens’ negative impressions of public library facilities and services, and a preference for Internet and other technology use over public library use.² U.S. teens also tend to rank libraries and librarians low on the list of resources that could help meet their everyday-life information needs because they do not perceive them as relevant or useful.³ When teens are the focus of library-use studies, the literature heavily favors library users as research participants, meaning that we do know something about the library attitudes and behaviors of frequent library users but little about the attitudes of nonusers and infrequent users.⁴ In general, about 70 percent of U.S. teens use their public libraries on at least an occasional basis.⁵

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Study Methods
As a part of a larger study, we conducted surveys and interviews with 25 students at a grade nine to twelve technology magnet high school in a large U.S. city. The school is a competitive-entry urban magnet public high school with a curricular focus on science, technology, mathematics, and entrepreneurship. There were 488 students enrolled during 2013 when we conducted the study. Approximately 30 percent came from economically disadvantaged families, and approximately 65 percent were minorities.

As shown in Table 1: Participant Ages, the students in the study ranged in age from 14 to 18, with about one-third male and two-thirds female. Roughly a quarter identified themselves as black/African American and about a quarter identified themselves as white. Nearly one-fifth identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Table 1: Participant Ages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number &amp; Percent of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>8 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>10 (40%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sex of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Number &amp; Percent of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17 (68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8 (32%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the current status of many urban school libraries. In their 2011 report on urban schools, the American Association of School Librarians found that “only 37% of respondents indicated that their [school] libraries are staffed by one or more full-time, professionally credentialed librarians.” Nonetheless, the students in our study consistently described the space as their school library, and the lack of a librarian on the school staff represents the sad reality of many U.S. urban (and nonurban) schools.

Study Results: Perceptions of Libraries and Motivations for Library Use
During the interviews, we asked the students to think about the last time they had been to a library and to discuss the kinds of activities they had conducted there. In general, they were infrequent school and public library users, although most were able to recall experiences using their school and public libraries at some point in the past. One likely reason for their collective infrequent use of their school library was the lack of a school librarian on staff for the prior three years. The space was still being used to store circulating library materials, but no lessons or organized activities took place there.

Regardless, on the whole these teens were infrequent library users.

Perceptions of Libraries
For the most part, the students had limited perceptions of both public and school library resources and services, with over three-fourths (19, or 76 percent) equating “libraries” with “books.” As librarians and library researchers, we know that libraries offer much more than just books, but this message isn’t getting through to this group of high school students. For example, one of the 18-year-old girls explained that she didn’t use libraries because, “I’m not a book person.” The idea that libraries might have other services or resources of interest hadn’t occurred to her.

This view of libraries as just book providers was further limited by the students’ tendency to think just of paper books when they thought of libraries. As many of the students in this technology-focused school preferred to read online, they didn’t see a need to go to libraries to meet their reading needs and interests. For example, one of the girls (age 18) explained, “Actually taking out a book from the library and things like that, I haven’t done that since eighth grade. I mean since forever. Because typically, if I need a book, I can go online and just look it up.”

It makes sense, then, that ten (40 percent) of the teens expressed the belief that in today’s highly technological world, libraries have become obsolete. They felt that the Internet and online content providers such as Google Books and iTunes have made libraries an artifact of the past. Although the professional library literature suggests promoting libraries as technology access points and as hardware and software providers, these teens didn’t see a need to turn to libraries for technology. Nearly all had connectivity at home and owned multiple mobile devices, including school-issued laptops. They also tended to view personal technology as easier and quicker to
use than library devises and resources. As one of the boys explained, “Because everyone is so tech-based, it is kind of pointless to go into the library anymore” (male, age 17).

Past researchers have found girls to express more positive views of libraries than boys, but in this group of teens, both girls and boys alike held this view of library obsolescence. For instance:

Interviewer: Do you ever use a public library at all?
Female, age 15: I haven’t been to one in a while . . . . Since we have the Internet, I guess that is something you can look up, or there is something on there called e-Books or something. You can always buy it off of iTunes at some point.

Interviewer: It sounds like the reason you don’t go to the public library anymore is that you have access to things that you want—
Female, age 15: Comfortably at my home.

However, several students expressed regret at their lack of knowledge of how to use libraries. Had they received better library instruction in school or elsewhere, they likely would have been more frequent library users:

When I visited [local college name] I saw a lot of kids there with their books, I was like, “Wow! I hope I’m going to know how to use the library resources [when I get to college] because that’s just not something I’m used to.” (male, age 18)

Sadly, since his school didn’t have a librarian on staff or a working library program, it’s unlikely that he will know how to use the library when he arrives at college.

In addition to questioning the modern-day relevance of libraries, nearly one-third (eight teens, or 32 percent) of the students explained that overly restrictive library policies kept them from using their libraries, especially public libraries, more often. They expressed apprehension over strict disciplinary policies and the impression that libraries were unfriendly to teens. Public library fines were especially problematic for these teens, many of whom came from working-class families:

Interviewer: What about the public library? Do you ever use the public library?
Male, age 18: The [city name] library?
No. Personally I know that I’m really bad at remembering due dates, or I’ll just be like really lazy one day and be like, “I don’t want to return this book right now.” So to save myself money and know I don’t have to worry about that, I don’t bother using real libraries.

Unwarranted fines were also problematic:
I used to [use the public library]. What ended up happening was a $30 fine for a video that I didn’t even check out, so I never ended up going back and finding out how to solve the problem. (female, age 16)

Motivations for Library Use

Still, the picture is not entirely gloomy. Even though these teens tended to view libraries as outmoded, this does not mean that they never used them. Almost all had visited their public and school libraries at points in the past, tending to frequent libraries more as children than as teens. About one-quarter (six, or 24 percent) identified themselves as having been frequent public library users as children but current nonusers as teens. On the other hand, two of the 25 had recently rediscovered the public library and had again become frequent users:

Interviewer: Can you think about the most recent time you were in a library?
Female, age 17: Totally.
Interviewer: Which library and what were you doing?
Female, age 17: Sure. It started out as part of an English assignment that we were doing, an independent reading, so you could do an author study, or a genre study, and I chose an author study. So my English teacher had two of the books I wanted to read, but there were two more that I didn’t have, and nobody

Table 3: Self-Reported Race/Ethnicity

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<thead>
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<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number &amp; Percent of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>7 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>4 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biracial/Other</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Parental Education Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Education Level</th>
<th>Number &amp; Percent of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>2 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>7 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>9 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2 (8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result, it would be inaccurate to label this group of teens simply as “nonusers.” Rather, we need to think in terms of teens’ library use as ranging from frequent to infrequent, with the goal of encouraging more teens to move closer to the “frequent” end of the scale. One way to work toward this goal is to build on the reasons why this group of teens did use their libraries.
Motivations for Library Use: Social Interaction and Leisure Opportunities

Although libraries are traditionally and primarily viewed as information organizations, the teens in our study used their libraries for social interaction spaces more than for information access. They told stories of using their school and public libraries for hanging out, socializing, listening to music, eating, and playing games. This was not surprising in the case of the school library, as it lacked an active library program. In the absence of a librarian on staff, it had become largely a place where “People usually just go to the library to play music or just chill out, eat lunch or read a game magazine. I have used it for that. They have cool magazines there” (male, age 18).

Although obviously a staffed library would have been more valuable to the students at this school, the youth-directed social and leisure use of the unstaffed school library space highlights the value of a place for unstructured social interaction in schools and suggests that one way school libraries can increase student use is to facilitate these kinds of unstructured interactions even in schools with active library programs.

Social interaction was also a motivating factor for public library use. Several students told stories of going to public libraries to accompany friends or family or to meet peers there. One-fifth of the participants (five, or 20 percent) explained that they would likely only go to their public library to accompany a friend or family members or that they would only do schoolwork or hang out in the school library if friends or project collaborators were there.

For example, one of the girls (age 16) told the following story:

Interviewer: Can you think about a time you were in a library, what library was it, and what were you doing there?

Female student: I actually was at the [public] library last Tuesday, but that was actually the first time in years that I went. I actually went there because my friend needed a book for his class, and he was going to get a library card, and he wanted me to come. He had money, but he owed, so I allowed him to use my card, and we actually ended up staying because it had this program going on in the back, and they told us if we stayed there was going to be food, so we stayed and played some games.

Interviewer: What kind of program?

Female student: They have these things every Tuesday, these teen programs that they have, and all these teens from different places come and meet, and they play all these games, and eat, and just hang out. It was really fun. We actually started going on Tuesdays, because it was really fun.

Interviewer: Did you use any technology while you were in the library there? When you said they had games, were they old-fashioned board games?

Female student: We actually did not use technology while we were in there. I’m surprised. They were taking books, and we were making poems out of the titles of the books. It was really fun. We played Dance, Dance, Revolution. They do things like karaoke, but that’s about it. No technology.

This student went to the library to accompany a friend with the goal of going just once. By chance, she and her friend were able to take part in a social program, and the resulting social experience led to her becoming a more frequent library user. This is the classic story of a successful library program, and it highlights the importance of providing engaging social programs to appeal to infrequent users.

Motivations for Library Use: Schoolwork Space and Academic Resources

Less frequent but still important motivations for school and public library use were tied to academic work needs.

When asked if they used public libraries, several of the senior-year students said that they did not use them on their own, but they had gone to the public library with their teachers and classmates as a part of their senior capstone projects. Some of these students were surprised to learn all that their public libraries offered, and they thought they might like to go back at some time on their own to use the library collections.

Some students were drawn to libraries for academic purposes while others were attracted to the physical building itself: “[I go to the library] not really because it’s in the library, but I can finish my work just because there is not a lot of people in there. That really has nothing to do with it being the library itself” (male, age 17). Here we see the importance of both school and public libraries providing study spaces for students.

Best Practices for Public and School Libraries

Building on our findings from this study, we suggest the following best practices for increasing and improving teens’ use and perceptions of school and public libraries.

Marketing

- Focus marketing campaigns on promoting the relevance of libraries to today’s teens. Sure those “READ” posters are great, but teens already connect books and reading to libraries. It’s time to help them connect libraries to other pursuits, such as social interaction, self-improvement, and community involvement.
- We must work to broaden teens’ views—and teachers’ and parents’ views—of the library beyond the limited role of just information provision to the broader multiple roles of supporting teens’ social, entertainment, self-improvement, community involvement, and personal and school information.
Librarians interested in increasing marketing and outreach should be mindful of the library’s physical and virtual boundaries. Since many teens are infrequent public library users, but most teens do go to school, public librarians can reach broader audiences by marketing their services and resources in schools instead of just in the library building and via library social media accounts where only current library users will see them. Other places where library marketing can reach library nonusers or infrequent users include shopping malls, video game stores, churches and synagogues, laundromats, parks, and anywhere that teens tend to congregate.

Policies
- Librarians should be mindful of messages they send to teens and think of policy as supporting and promoting positive behaviors rather than preventing negative behaviors. This means that we should strive to frame policies in positive terms to give teens more positive views of libraries and to show them that the library respects them as people. A sign that says, “No loud phone calls in the library!” sends a negative—even angry—message of distrust. A sign that says, “Please take all phone calls to the lobby to avoid bothering people who are reading or studying,” sends a message of respect and trust.
- Librarians interested in increasing collection usage should rethink fines for overdue materials. Several of these teens said that they avoided using public library collections largely out of fear of accruing fines for late returns. Even fines as little as 60 cents served as deterrents for use. In many cases, it would benefit libraries more to have increased collections usage than to collect fines or to have materials returned on time. Robocalls, text message reminders, and other methods that do not involve financial penalties could encourage teens to return materials without scaring them away from libraries altogether.

Space Allocation and Use
- To accommodate the two main categories of library-use motivations found in this study, school and public libraries should strive to create separate spaces for: (1) socializing/entertainment pursuits and (2) academic work/reading, clearly communicating to teens the appropriate range of behaviors in each area. Different physical space design and different space use policies are needed to support these two major categories of use.
- Offer programs that facilitate social interaction. Remember that social interaction is both healthy and necessary for teens. Many libraries focus their programming just on books and reading. It is important to offer a range of library programs, including some that encourage increased use of the collection, some that facilitate social interaction among teens, and some that provide entertainment outlets and shed positive light on the library as a vibrant, fun environment.
- Understand that the physical space of the library itself can be the most valuable resource/service that your library has to offer. Even though the library at this school had no staff, the library space itself played an important role in the school as a place for students to spend unstructured, out-of-class time studying, socializing, and communicating. And when there was a chemical leak at the school and it had to be evacuated, teachers took their students to the nearby public library as a safe place to spend the day.

Conclusion: On Keeping Libraries and Library Services Relevant

The professional literature indicates an overwhelming profession-wide emphasis on libraries as resource providers and on libraries as paper book providers in particular. However, based on this study it makes sense for librarians who work with teens to shift the traditional focus of libraries as resource providers to libraries as social opportunity facilitators, educational support providers, and community builders. This is not to suggest abandoning resource provision as a core of library services, but it does suggest bolstering other aspects of library services such as libraries as social gathering, community building, and collaboration spaces, and broadening programs beyond the limited goals of reading and library collection usage.

Without doubt, the most alarming finding from this study was the large number of teens who viewed school and public libraries as relics of the past, a largely nontechnical past that has little relevance to their tech-heavy daily lives. As a field, we need to focus on making the ongoing relevance of libraries obvious to teens and to their teachers and parents as well. The future of YA librarianship depends upon it.

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References


5. See, for example, Abbas, Kimball, Bishop, and D’Elia 2008; Vavrek 2004; and Sin 2012.


In 2011, a librarian I knew from attending state conferences together sent me an e-mail, asking for input on the new facility her school was planning. At the time, I was working in a high school library that opened in 2002, the year before I began work there. My predecessor hadn’t wanted the space “to be a computer lab,” so consequently, it had a real last-century feel. Our enrollment doubled in my ten years there, and the space was well used, but we were a cash-strapped rural district that was limited in what we could do by practical considerations. We were at capacity as far as network drops went, and adding new ones was prohibitively expensive. Power strips and extension cords were daisy chained, rather treacherously, everywhere you looked. The windows weren’t shaded, and all of the lights were on a single switch, meaning that to watch anything in the light of day, you plunged the entire space into darkness.

My pie-in-the-sky suggestions for the new space of the librarian that contacted me included “more outlets than you could possibly ever need,” placing some in the floors to facilitate mobile projection, as well as dedicated spaces for technology tools for student creation and collaboration. When that librarian got in touch some months after her request for input, it was to tell me that she was retiring after 39 years at the school and wanted to know if was interested in the job. The idea of a tabula rasa was too tempting to resist, and I changed jobs to spearhead the transition.

I left my well-established program and some great collaborative relationships for the opportunity to have input into organizing this exciting new space. I started work well before the school year with a flurry of consultations with the architect, the project coordinator, and the interior designers. I okayed the central infinity-curve shelving and nixed the idea of applying quotations to the walls using decals, which I felt would date quickly, and considered fabric swatches before I had even met the teens in this community.

Bring on the New

The new library is two stories, a showpiece for the school campus with lots of glass visible from where two busy pathways of students in the school meet. The second story is basically a peripheral catwalk open to the first floor, but we had security cameras installed to help supervise that space. Our collection arrangement takes advantage of the immediacy of the first floor to provide fiction, comics, and graphic novels, and curricular materials in current use. Nonfiction, reference, and two specialized collections for career planning and local history are housed upstairs where they can be accessed as needed.

I never moved a collection before this, but I did so twice in the next year and half, first from the mid-century standalone library building into our temporary space in a converted woodshop, and the second time from our constrained quarters in the shop into our new spacious facility. In the process, I learned why professional library movers exist as an industry.

Our school community is very oriented towards preparing students for success in postsecondary education. Network connectivity, hardware availability, and practical assistance relating to rather traditional assignments are the main demands on the library here. Our technology evolved into what I like to think of as “triage.” The students use their district-issued iPads, but when they demand more robust computing, there are more than a dozen PCs and laptops around the library for that. And our first-floor iMac lab provides state-of-the-art multimedia production capabilities for students working on more sophisticated digital products. We spend a lot of our time helping students retrieve and format documents on a range of devices, using a variety of programs.

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Not Just About Space
The reimagined space didn’t just mean thinking about floor plans, collections, and technology. It also meant a change in hours and staffing models. When planning for construction, my principal surveyed students and found they wanted the new facility to offer a space to work before and after school. (That acknowledgement, that teens need library support both before school and after school, especially if we were to really encourage meaningful instructional technology integration, was one of the things that drew me to this position two and a half years ago.) But making this work with our staffing demanded rethinking the traditional librarian and assistant model. Yes, I was willing to work solo for three hours every day if it meant our students would have access to the library through extended hours, so my local school administration and school board set out to make that happen.

The first practical concern involved extending the hours beyond the traditional “open” 20 minutes before and after school. I took the morning shifts. I am a morning person and was at school before 7:00 anyway, and this new arrangement allows me to leave work at 2:30, or 45 minutes earlier than before. My instructional assistant, Cassie Brooks, begins work at 10:00 a.m. and stays until either 5:00 or 8:00 p.m., depending on the day of the week. This staffing shift increased Cassie’s weekly clock hours from 32.5 to 40. Cassie has an MLIS and worked as a public library director before coming to work with me in 2012, so she is extremely well qualified to provide both research and technical guidance and student supervision in the afternoons and evenings. We also increased our dependence on student aides for clerical activity like checkout and inventory.

The only real downside of our new schedule is that teachers who need assistance in their classrooms must wait until 10:00 a.m. for me to come troubleshoot. Because our new space is expansive, teachers can bring their classes in for lessons, where before I had to visit classrooms to be able to provide instruction that required digital projection.

The Impacts
There are some challenges inherent in supervising the only “open” space on campus in the mornings. The largest challenge is monitoring traffic from the adjacent coffee shop, which has one entrance in the library and one into the lobby of the school, especially given the administration’s mandate that student consumption be limited to water while in the library space. But the library and coffee shop are interdependent, in that purchases made there before and after school fund our additional hours.

We have been tracking library usage in the mornings and afternoons through student sign-ins to justify the additional expenditure on staffing. One month after starting our extended hours, we were up to about a dozen regulars who meet in the mornings to finish homework as soon as the library is open. Some mornings we exceed 30 students. The morning arrivals tend to use the public spaces, while those who stay to work after school are more likely to gravitate to one of the four soundproof study rooms. In addition to more traditional visits, teachers bring classes in for small group work in our study rooms, and teachers have borrowed the keys to hold pre-exam study sessions on the weekends.

More distance-independent services are another thing that has evolved from our new split shift and the shifted nature of more and more classroom learning. We are creating digital content related to citation and research projects that can live in the students’ Blackboard course management system and curating resources via Symbaloo. The space is also used after hours two nights a week for a credit recovery night school.

I like the fact that the new library space is not viewed as somehow belonging to me. It is quite a contrast to the school library where I worked before, where my paraprofessional and I were the only key holders and mediated any activity before or after school. I also feel that independence from me as an individual builds a sense of shared ownership and makes the library program more sustainable in the long run.

Now, our space is one of the busiest on campus, put it down to the clusters of casual seating and variety of workspaces and technology in addition to its architectural assets. I think door count, rather than circulation, will be the best metric to gauge our usage now.
On February 2 2015, at ALA’s Youth Media Awards, YALSA president Chris Shoemaker announced Gabi, a Girl in Pieces (Cinco Puntos Press) by Isabel Quintero as the winner of the 2015 William C. Morris YA Debut Award. Quintero accepted her award at the Morris and Nonfiction Award program and presentation later that morning in front of a crowded room of librarians, publishers, and other conference attendees. Three of the four other Morris Award finalists also spoke during the program: Jessie Ann Foley (The Carnival at Bray published by Elephant Rock Books), Len Vlahos (The Scar Boys published by Egmont Publishing), and Leslye Walton (The Strange and Beautiful Sorrows of Ava Lavender published by Candlewick Press). E. K. Johnston (The Story of Owen: Dragon Slayer of Trondheim published by Carolrhoda Lab”) was scheduled to attend the event, but she was unable to reach Chicago due to inclement weather.

For anyone unfamiliar with the Morris Award, all of this attention may seem a bit excessive. However, many people (including some YALSA members) may not be aware of the extensive, underlying research process that ensures the Morris Award title named by YALSA every year actually does, as stated in the award criteria, “represent the highest achievement in a debut work for young adults.” To learn more about the criteria for this selection, visit the YALSA Morris Award site at http://bit.ly/yalsa_morris_policy. This article encapsulates the selection process, from the building of the nomination list to the final vote at Midwinter.

Building the Eligibility List
Since the Morris Award Committee’s charge is “To annually select and annotate from the previous year’s publications a short list of five of the best young adult books written by a first time author, then to select one winner from among the five,” each Morris Award chair strives to build the most comprehensive list of that year’s debut titles. The entire process often begins at ALA Midwinter, in January of each year, before the Committee even officially starts its work. The Morris Award chair (and often a very hardworking administrative assistant) talks to publishers in the exhibits and gathers advanced reading copies (ARCs) of debut titles so that the Committee can start vetting spring titles in advance of their publication dates. After Midwinter, letters are sent to publishers (who are encouraged to submit debut titles throughout the year), field nominations are solicited, reviews are read, blogs are scoured, and various online book sources (from vendors to publishers) are searched. The Committee as a whole provides suggestions of debut titles to the chair and the administrative assistant throughout the year. At the ALA Annual Conference, in June of each year, the chair and the administrative assistant gather ARCs of fall debut titles to ensure that no debut title is overlooked.

For the 2014 year, the Committee considered titles published between January 1 and December 31 (recent action by the YALSA Board changed this eligibility calendar to better align with other awards sponsored by YALSA; this change is in effect as of 2015). By the end of the eligibility year, the Chair and Administrative Assistant have

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The Journey to the Morris Award

The road to the Morris Award begins with a list of titles. The YALSA selection committee titles, from the Alex Awards to the Teens’ Top Ten, and other published titles, maiden names, and other titles are considered. The eligibility process begins with an online search of the Library of Congress (LC) website. If an author’s eligibility has not been ruled out by this point in the process, one returns to the online book vendor. Advanced search tools are often used, along with any other information about the author gathered from numbers two and three above.

The Road to Morris Eligibility

The next stage in the process focuses on a title’s eligibility status. All of the YALSA selection committee titles, from the Alex Awards to the Teens’ Top Ten, and other published titles, maiden names, and other titles are considered. The eligibility process begins with an online search of the Library of Congress (LC) website. If an author’s eligibility has not been ruled out by this point in the process, one returns to the online book vendor. Advanced search tools are often used, along with any other information about the author gathered from numbers two and three above.

1. An online book vendor is checked immediately. The information found in these types of vendors may not always be accurate, but it can sometimes lead to detailed author biographies, website URLs, and social media links.

2. Next, the search moves to the Library of Congress (LC), where both the LC Name Authorities and the overall LC Online Catalog are searched. These spots can just as often be dead ends (no data for yet-to-be-published titles) as they can be treasure mines (links to pseudonyms, dates of birth, or full names for those authors who only publish under initials). For authors with very common names, LC can help differentiate the Morris author from someone with the same name publishing in earlier decades, or even centuries.

3. WorldCat is the next stop. Like LC, it can sometimes provide vital connections that cannot be found anywhere else (forgettable titles that might not rate inclusion with the LC are almost often in WorldCat). Always, the metadata entered somewhere behind the scenes may have a five-page pamphlet or a guest-edited issue of a magazine classified as “book,” so it is not the definitive source. When the Chair or Administrative Assistant stumbles upon a book title that may be (but may not be) an earlier publication by the author in question, the earlier title is tracked down, often through interlibrary loan. No stone is left unturned.

4. If an author’s eligibility has not been ruled out by this point in the process, one returns to an online book vendor. This second search is much more thorough than that in step one above. Advanced search tools are often used, along with any other information about the author gathered from numbers two and three above.

5. Then, the search moves to the author’s presence online. The Chair and the Administrative Assistant look at the author’s biography, website, and other online media. These sources may add little new information to the search or may reveal a wealth of new information that congeals little bits of data gathered along the way. For example, if the debut author’s work is a novel about a teen who winds up as a production assistant on a movie set and the WorldCat search revealed a much older title (written by an author with the same middle and last names) about how to get a job in the film industry, discovering through an online interview that the “debut author” had an entire career in the film industry before turning to writing will raise enough questions for the Committee to contact the publisher about that earlier title. If the older title was written by the same person, that “debut” author is no longer eligible.

6. The final step in this search process involves a general Google search, honed to find an author’s possible pen name (or real one), connections to other published titles, maiden names,
etc. This step will often find “chatter” about the author in unofficial spaces (sometimes librarians are the ones chattering), which can reveal previously unknown pseudonyms and such.

Once both the Morris Committee Chair and the Administrative Assistant have completed the search process above (leaving notes/questions/comments for each other in the spreadsheet), many titles may have questions that are not accounted for within the eligibility. YALSA staff is consulted any time there is a question around one of these finer points. Some are cleared up immediately, while others may require contacting the publisher of a particular title.

An important factor to remember is that many times the potentially eligible title may indeed be that author’s debut book with that particular publisher. Many editors and publishers working with a new author are caught by surprise when, upon an e-mail from the committee, they check with the author in question and discover that the book they submitted as a debut was not in fact a debut. Other titles, never marketed by their publishers as “debut,” may be listed on a debut website or blog or tagged as such on a website like Goodreads.

As one last final check, any title that becomes an official nomination is then verified with the publisher to establish final eligibility, above and beyond the multistep research process.

**Bumps in the Road**

The process described above, although seemingly long and complicated, becomes rather easy by the 40th title or so. There are some types of publications that can slow it down a bit, like titles by multiple authors, titles with illustrators, and titles by hybrid authors. In those cases, the chair returns to the policies and procedures:

“Works of joint authorship are eligible, but only if all contributors meet all other criteria. For example, graphic works created by an author and an illustrator are eligible, but only if both contributors have never published before.”

When there are multiple authors for one title, the chair must determine the level of contribution of each. For truly cowritten titles, both authors go through the process described above and both must be ruled eligible. Sometimes, this step is very clear: both authors are listed on the title and copyright pages (with the all-important “and” between their names) and attached to the author authorities in the metadata. Other times, one author takes precedence over the other, either through the use of the word with instead of and, or by only one author holding the copyright for the title. In these cases, the level of contribution of the second author must be determined.

The titles in question often hold the key for these situations. The first author may thank the second for his/her help with the research or with a specific chapter. Sometimes, the second author is described by the first as “my coauthor.” Occasionally, the publisher’s press releases for the particular title may describe the two as coauthors. If none of these types of sources provides enough information for the Morris Award Committee Chair and YALSA staff to determine the individual level of contribution, the publisher is contacted. This process is particularly complex as there have been titles initially deemed eligible prior to publication that have coauthors appear in the final published version.

Another thorny area is the illustrated text. Since the Morris considers “original young adult works of fiction in any genre, nonfiction, poetry, a short story collection, or graphic work,” quite a few of the potentially eligible titles are illustrated in some way. Due to the eligibility requirements that both contributors must be debut, many graphic texts do not make it through the process. While there may be a new voice emerging as a writer, often the illustrators have well-established publishing records. The Committee is charged with considering the work in its entirety (unlike some committees required to give preference to text above images or vice versa); therefore, the most distinguished debut must be a true debut from both the textual and visual sides.

With the growth of electronic books and the self-publishing industry, the Morris Award Committee has seen a surge in the number of potentially eligible titles by writers with fairly established careers. Again, the chair goes back to the policies and procedures on eligibility: “Titles that are self-published, published only in e-book format, and/or published from a publisher outside of the US will not be considered eligible until the first year the book is available in print or distributed through a US publishing house.” Since these types of titles are currently ineligible for Morris consideration, they also cannot make an author under consideration ineligible. For example, traditional publishing houses have been acquiring more and more titles by self-published authors with built-in audiences. There are many authors who have a few titles on Amazon or in Goodreads before traditional publishers release their Morris-eligible debut titles.

**The Reading Begins**

At the end of the road, after eligibility status has been established or disproven, the title moves on from the working list to either the eligible or ineligible list. Ineligible titles are no longer under consideration by the Committee. Eligible titles have a few different fates. If a title came to the Committee as a field nomination (submitted via the form on the YALSA website and not nominated...
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by Committee members) and is deemed eligible, it requires a second nomination from someone on the Morris Committee. Also, the Committee as a whole divides up the entire eligible list typically (two readers per title) and nominates from that list.

These official nominations (from Committee members) are based on the criteria from the Policies and Procedures:

1. This award recognizes excellence by a first time author writing for young adults.
2. The winning title must exemplify the highest standards of young adult literature and must be well written. The book’s components (story, voice, setting, accuracy, style, characters, design, format, theme, illustration, organization, etc.) should be of high merit.
3. Popularity is not the criterion for this award, nor is the award based on the message or content of the book.
4. The book must have teen appeal or have the potential to appeal to teen readers.
5. In the sum of all the criteria, does the book represent the highest achievement in a debut work for young adults?

These criteria also guide all discussions of nominated titles. Once a title has been officially nominated, every member of the Committee reads it in the final published version. Since a title can be nominated from an ARC, the Committee may have to wait on the final version to be released before that title can be discussed. For other titles, everyone on the Committee may already have access to the published version. Depending on the publication date for each specific nominated title, the chair determines the meeting at which that title will be discussed.

One of the criteria that sets the award committees apart from many of the list committees is the literary element. As noted in number three of the criteria above, popularity is not a factor for Morris. While the Committee does consider teen appeal or the potential for teen appeal, this is just one of the elements weighed into the discussion of the nominees on the road to the shortlist decision.

Countdown to the Shortlist

Since the Morris Award finalists (or the shortlist titles) are announced by YALSA no later than the second Monday of December of the eligibility year, the Committee often does its heaviest reading (and rereading) in October and November. As facilitator of the discussions and voting, the chair is charged with keeping the Committee focused on the criteria of the award. In the end, the final shortlist vote takes place in the very early days of December and the shortlist is set. Annotations are edited, press releases are written, and the finalists are announced.

The Final Vote

Unlike many other committees, Morris has already done the majority of its work in advance of ALA Midwinter in January. The Committee only has the shortlist titles to reread and reanalyze. On the Saturday before the ALA Youth Media Awards, the Committee meets for one final discussion and the award-winning title is selected.

In the end, while not all across the librarian and publishing worlds may agree on the shortlist of titles or the final Morris Award title each year, it is important to keep the entire process in mind. Every book that gets Morris buzz is not necessarily eligible for the award. Others that are eligible may have small inconsistencies, plot holes, or characterization problems that arise during committee discussion. At the end of the journey, that committee has selected what they consider to be the one title that best fits the criteria of the award.
When I learned that I was to chair the 2015 Printz Committee, my first reaction — excitement — was quickly followed by self-doubt. I asked myself:

- How will I know which books are the best?
- Am I really qualified to take on this responsibility?

Ready or not, the roller-coaster ride was about to begin.

There is immediate comfort in the fact that the chair of a selection committee does not bear the weight alone. My main job was to facilitate reading and discussion so that committee members could stay focused on the task at hand. And my committee turned out to be exceptional, with a terrific blend of strengths and experience. Let me now offer my deepest appreciation for the work of the 2015 Printz Award Committee:

Hayden Bass, Seattle Public Library; Robin Brenner, Brookline Public Library; Adrienne Butler, Oklahoma Department of Libraries; Naphtali Faris, Kansas City Public Library; Angela Frederick, Metro Nashville Public Schools; Shelly McNerney, Olathe East High School; Matthew Moffat, Fairfax County Public Libraries; and Terri Sneethen, Blue Valley North High School. Our administrative assistant, John Sexton, more than upheld his honorific “Chair Whisperer.”

In the months preceding our Printz term, I reread many previous Printz winners and honor books, looking for hallmarks of quality. Sometimes it was clear to me; other times not so much. Maybe there were just bum years. I had never considered that. What if we had a bum year? Even worse, what if we missed reading the best book of the year?

What Makes a Winner?
All of this worry turned out to be fruitless, but it did drive me to see how literary excellence is recognized. Here’s a snippet from the YALSA Printz Award criteria (available at http://bit.ly/yalsa_printz_policy): “What is quality? We know what it is not. We hope the award will have a wide AUDIENCE among readers from 12 to 18 but POPULARITY is not the criterion for this award. Nor is MESSAGE. In accordance with the Library Bill of Rights, CONTROVERSY is not something to avoid. In fact, we want a book that readers will talk about.”

There’s more, of course. But this introduction put a helpful spin on things for me. Certainly we don’t want the Printz books to be shelf-sitters. It does happen, though; I admit that there are winners that I haven’t been able to sell to kids. On the other hand, there are countless guides to popular teen books. YALSA’s own Best Fiction list, Popular Paperbacks, and Quick Picks, as well as reader-driven lists such as YALSA’s Teens’ Top Ten or those on sites like Goodreads, are great guides to popular teen books. As to the second point, I had not consciously realized how a book with a moral message can seem weightier, more worthy, than a book without an obvious lesson. An excellent book can be transformative in the way it reveals hidden folds of meaning, but that meaning may be different for individual readers.

Most of all, I loved the invitation to find a book that “readers will talk about!” That put me in a better mind to understand choices of earlier committees. Many of them tease controversy. Powerful books evoke strong reactions. If our best candidate gets teens to think about and discuss taboo subjects, then let it shine.

I also thought a lot about this section from the YALSA Printz criteria:

“The following criteria are only suggested guidelines and should in no way be considered as absolutes. They will always be open to change and adaptation. Depending on the book, one or more of these criteria will apply:

- Story
- Voice
- Style
- Setting
- Accuracy
- Characters

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Selecting the Michael L. Printz Award

- Theme
- Illustrations
- Design (including format, organization, etc.)

I realized that for each book the questions asked and the answers uncovered will be different. As a result the way these criteria are interpreted can be different from title to title.

Getting Started with Selecting

When the books started coming in, it was both easier and more difficult to apply the criteria. There were actual characters, settings, and stories to analyze. It ceased to be theoretical. On the other hand, at first it was hard not to fall in love with every book. In the early months, committee members tend to nominate books that fall from favor over the course of the year. The bar for excellence is topped again and again. In the beginning, however, everything looks good.

And they are good. Sometimes I would reflect on the accomplishment of getting a book published, something I have never done. This is humbling. I learned much from fellow committee members in the respectful way they analyzed a book. It’s as if each book is a winner until proven otherwise.

The obvious truth, however, is that most eligible books don’t make the cut. Characters can be flat, or unbelievable, or too young for our age group, even in the midst of a grand adventure tale. The setting may be vague or inexplicable, common failings in fantasy world-building. Especially troublesome in my mind are stories that evolve around the “I’ve got a secret” premise. Readers discover early in the book that a character has something to hide. The suspense of the plot hangs solely on this secret until it’s finally revealed at the end. And there are many novels that are unabashedly formulaic, designed to appeal to a select audience.

Committee members rooted for them all, however. I became acutely conscious of the love and attention that had gone into each production. It was painful to see fine characters dissolve into stereotypes over the course of a novel, or plots that start off promising but fall into mediocrity halfway along. Sustaining the initial energy of a story is hard. Book after book seemed afflicted with unfortunate lulls that fill those pages between exciting beginnings and intriguing endings. Many times I was sure that I had discovered “The One True Printz,” only to get a tepid reaction from others on the Committee. To make it through all the readings and rereadings is truly a triumph for any book.

The Committee Hums Along

I got into the habit of sending out a weekly e-mail, informing committee members of titles that I had received. I took the extra step of checking to see if each title had received any starred reviews. Those stars elevated a book to must-read status. Committee members then responded to the e-mail, claiming books for their reading commitments. We didn’t assign titles, as some committees do. I confess there were times when I was ready to resort to that efficient technique, especially when it seemed as if there were a core set of readers that were hurting through the books. Instead, I came to understand that Committee members had different styles of reading and reporting. Some members would submit feedback on a title as soon as they finished; that was my personal style. Others would write up several books and submit them when they had more time to reflect, on weekends, for example. And some were just slower readers. They took the time to completely absorb the book, and then gave feedback. As a speedy reader, I needed to realize it was not about numbers of books read.

Having said all that, it was still critical that everyone stay abreast of reading, especially as we started nominating titles. The solution for this became monthly chats on ALA Connect (a virtual space available to all ALA/YALSA committees). We worked our way through the nominations, three books at a time. (Many titles were discussed in person at Committee meetings at ALA Annual Conference in June as well.) Each Committee member prepared feedback. During the two-hour chat session, we posted our individual comments on a book one person at a time, and followed by freeform discussion. I would say this worked great, and it did in terms of maintaining energy and enthusiasm, but Sunday mornings (when these chats were scheduled) seemed to be a bad time to chat on ALA Connect. One week, when ALA Connect was down, we ended up “chatting” on Google Docs with moderate success.

Let the Polling Begin

Between comments in our Committee space on ALA Connect and chat sessions, we had a pretty good idea which books were contenders. But nothing shakes things up more than a straw poll. In a straw poll, all nominated titles are listed, and each Committee member checks off a top ten. It’s a lot like seeing all your children lined up, pleading with big hopeful eyes. Pick me, the one with the fantastic twist at the end! No, pick me! I have the best characters! But what about me, the nonfiction book that reads like an adventure novel? It’s a very dramatic event in the life of a selection committee.

It is truly wonderful to see books that everyone chose to be in the top ten. But what happens when the book that you know should be in the winner’s circle only gets one vote — your own? That happened to me more than once. For me, it meant
returning to the book to see if another reading reinvigorated my conviction or if it reveals flaws that I was too dazzled to see. Admittedly, the latter is usually the case. But if even two others have placed that book in their top ten, then there is a fighting chance.

There is a common saying in selection committees that one loves a book so much that they are willing to “bleed on the table” to see it win. Perhaps everyone finds that special book; I certainly did. It’s a book that, in my mind, succeeds on every level. I can envision the Printz sticker on its cover. I’ve scoured through the book repeatedly to collect all its merits. But when the straw poll results come back, it’s a clear “meh.” This is the time to step back and appreciate the function of consensus. With nine members, there are most likely nine different personal favorites. It can be quite painful.

**What Qualifies?**

As Committee Chair, I had another responsibility, one that I found especially tricky over the course of the year. I needed to verify the eligibility of each title. Generally this is straightforward in terms of publication year and such. But I did get tripped up when it came to determining self-publication. Here’s the troublesome clause from YALSA’s criteria of eligibility: “Titles that are self-published, published only in eBook format, and/or published from a publisher outside of the US will not be considered eligible until the first year the book is available in print or distributed through a US publishing house.”

There was a time when a book published through a vanity press was relatively easy to spot. The production quality was a bit off. We knew the names of suspect publishing houses. But times have quickly changed. Authors can buy services such as editing and marketing through scores of publishing enterprises. Many of these are offshoots of recognized publishers. Do these qualify as self-published? Not exactly. However, the phrase “print on demand” served as a pretty reliable indicator of self-publishing. But even that information could be slippery when rooting through a publisher’s website.

My solution was to track down any such book that came to our attention, either through field nomination or physical delivery, and give it a read. The books then had the opportunity to disqualify themselves. Many had little to do with young adults. Others were aimed at a niche audience. In the end, I discovered some interesting writers, but nothing with Printz dazzle.

I think the biggest dread our committee shared over the course of the year was the possibility of missing something award-worthy. As I mentioned earlier, we read everything that was starred by the major professional review journals. Mock Printz awards and Best of 2014 lists were also a great help in bringing worthy titles to light. Publishers were generous in sending books, and we all saw new books as they arrived in our respective libraries. The most terrible obstacle was time. We were simultaneously reading new books, books that needed reading by another pair of eyes, and books that were officially nominated. This is not a big surprise; everyone serving on a selection committee should understand what a huge time commitment lays ahead. But it’s an urgency that pressed into every moment.

Another consideration that came into play was diversity. I confess that I had fallen into the shallow interpretation of “diversity” that translates into “including people of color.” That interpretation carries its own merits, since the overwhelming majority of young adult books feature white, female characters. But my Committee fellows pointed out that there is a “diversity of viewpoint” that embraces many facets of experience. Certainly race is one, but economic class, religion, physical exceptionalities, gender identification, mental health, and many other qualities also serve as factors.

Since the Printz is a literary award, the winner and honor books do not comprise a balanced slate of books that represent all reading tastes or cultural backgrounds. So while we seek out this diversity of viewpoint in our Printz reading, we still look for literary excellence above all. Sometimes this leads to surprises, and sometimes it leads to disappointments.

**And the Winner Is**

The award winners were announced at the Youth Media Awards program in Chicago at ALA Midwinter Meeting in January. Our choice came after a full year of dedicated reading, dissecting, and debating. The winner: *I’ll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson, published by Dial Books. And the honor titles: *And We Stay* by Jenny Hubbard, published by Delacorte, *The Carnival at Bray* by Jessie Ann Foley, published by Elephant Rock Books, *Grasshopper Jungle* by Andrew Smith, published by Dutton Books, and *This One Summer* by Mariko Tamaki, published by First Second.

Can’t wait to see what comes out next! YALS
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Teens’ Top Ten (and then some)

By Morgan Brickey, Stephanie Charlefour, and Stacy Holbrook

Any librarian knows that recommending books to teens can be tricky. Teen reactions can range from a reluctant, monosyllabic “Meh” to an emphatic “No!” or a blank stare that gives away nothing, except that an adult’s recommendation is not to be trusted. Teens want books that are visually appealing and contemporary. The last thing they need is a book that’s going to be an embarrassment to be caught reading. Keeping up with popular and current young adult titles—the titles teens will want to read—is a job in and of itself.

But there is a resource of titles picked for teens, by teens, that helps connect teens to the books they want to read—the annual Teens’ Top Ten list sponsored by YALSA!

About the Teens’ Top Ten List

YALSA’s Teens’ Top Ten (TTT) is an annual list of recently published books chosen entirely by teens. As a part of the YALSA YA Galley project, TTT-selected teen groups assess the same books that are considered by YALSA members that serve on the association’s Best Fiction for Young Adults and Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers committees. The YA Galley initiative was started at the request of several publishers who wanted teen readers’ feedback on their publications. Since the project started, its grown from 19 publishers in 2001 to over 60 (not including imprints!) today. Teens that participate in the project receive galleys to read and are then expected to provide feedback for each title. Library staff working with the teens provide guidance in critiquing books. By providing unpublished galleys to teens, this literally puts the most current titles in their hands.

About the TTT Groups

Writing reviews for participating publishers is only one of the duties of the TTT teen groups. Throughout the year, participating teens also nominate books to be on the annual TTT list. The groups are not limited to the titles provided by the publishers for this list; they can nominate any current title that they think should be included.

The Teens’ Top Ten nomination list relies heavily on contributions from selected teen reading groups. These preselected 15 teen reading groups receive galleys directly from publishers, then they are expected to read and write a review for each book they received. If multiple copies of the same galley are sent, then multiple reviews are requested. After reading, teens have the option of...
nominating the title for the TTT list; some are added while others fall short of making the list. Teens are the ultimate decision maker of what titles make the list. TTT reading groups can be found all over the United States in school libraries and public libraries or as a collaboration between the two. They represent rural and urban areas, small and large library systems, with middle grade– and high school–aged readers. Each group can serve up to two years at a time, with library staff advisors serving as liaisons and as links between publishers and teen readers. The advisors also serve as mentors, helping their groups learn about book evaluation and methods of critiquing writing.

New TTT groups are chosen every two years, with the YALSA TTT Committee evaluating applications based on specific criteria and sample teen reviews. Advisors must be a YALSA member and have experience leading a book group. The groups applying must show that they are well-established reading groups capable of reading and reviewing over 300 galleys each year. You read that right—over 300 unique titles are shipped out to the teens every year!

It is a lot of hard work for both the teens and the advisors, but it pays off. Teens get to have a voice in the books they want to read and they have a direct line to the publishers who read their reviews and comments.

About the Nomination Process
In January each year, the YALSA TTT Committee narrows down the list of titles nominated by teens to the top 75. This year, for 2014’s list, there were over 1,200 nominated! These nominations were whittled down to 75, and in order to make that list, each title had a minimum of five nominations. Groups just starting as TTT participants focus on these nominated titles during the first several months of their work, and the returning groups refresh their memories about these 75 titles selected. All of this is in preparation for voting in March, when the TTT teen groups have the arduous task of selecting the 25 titles that are released as the current year’s nominations.

This list of 25 is published to teens worldwide on the TTT website, and thousands of teens vote for the titles that appear on the final list of ten. This voting period lasts from mid-August through the end of Teen Read Week. (An annual program sponsored by YALSA in October of every year.) The final Teens’ Top Ten list is announced the following week.

This past year actress Willow Shields, who plays Primrose Everdeen in the Hunger Games movies, was the Teens’ Top Ten spokesperson and announced the titles that made the final cut.

The History of Teens’ Top Ten
YALSA announced the first official TTT list in 2003—actually two lists, one from the nominating teen groups and one from the voting public. But the history of the TTT begins much earlier, starting with an idea sparked in the late 1980s. That spark of an idea solidified by the early 1990s, and in 1999 a pilot project was created. The pilot had only two teen groups who read the books from the already selected Best Books for Young Adults list. However, the lists did not suit either of the participating groups, who preferred to make their own nominations, and the library staff advisors found that they could not get enough copies of the current titles. The TTT Task Force determined that the experiment needed a different approach and created a second pilot in 2001. The new project combined TTT with the YA Galley Task Force (the group working with publishers on gathering teen feedback) to give publishers feedback on their newest titles. Of the 16 groups on the established YA Galley list, five became TTT nomination groups to help select the 2001 TTT list.

The TTT has gone through many changes since those first lists in the early 2000s. Five nominating groups have become 15. Two lists have become one. But the premise stays the same—the TTT is a teen choice list where teens are in control.

About TTT Changes
Though most of the Teens’ Top Ten kinks were worked out over a decade ago with the brave few pilot groups, TTT continues to change and adapt to accommodate teens. Creating book trailers for every nominated book is now on the YALSA TTT Committee’s “to-do” list. (You can find these videos on the Teens’ Top Ten YouTube channel at http://bit.ly/ysla_ttt_trailers.) This is a great resource that can help “sell” a title to a reluctant reader.

The teen groups also have more responsibility than in previous years. Each group has the opportunity to create a blog post on The Hub (YALSA’s YA literature blog) where they publish book reviews, or observations about the books they are reading. This gets the teens even more involved in letting others know their ideas about young adult literature.

Another change implemented this year is expanding who the teens are that are able to contribute to the list of nominated titles. Starting this year, any teen can nominate a title to be considered for the Teens’ Top Ten designation to be considered for the list of 75 that the teen groups will eventually vote on. To nominate current titles, teens who are not a part of a participating reading group can submit an online form available on the TTT website: www.ala.org/yalsa/reads4teens/.

About the TTT Committee
The YALSA TTT Committee was officially established in 2003—it was called the YA Galley Committee—and
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Teens' Top Ten (and then some)

was a merger of the YA Galley Task Force and Teens’ Top Ten Task Force created in 1999. The name of the committee changed again in 2010 to the Teens’ Top Ten Committee. The TTT Committee is a virtual committee of seven YALSA members. The term for each member is two years, and each year there are at least two members from the previous term on the committee.

The TTT Committee is an active group. Members each take a different role in the project, from collecting statistics about the titles nominated, to recording each title nominated by teens, to being a liaison to the TTT groups, to marketing TTT throughout the year, to keeping track of each title sent by publishers and reviewed by the teen groups.

The teen groups, TTT Committee, YALSA staff, and publishers all come together to create something unique. No matter the role, each member plays an integral part in the development of the Teens’ Top Ten list, in keeping the project going, and in giving that 1988 spark of an idea life—allowing teens to create their own best of the best list.

Still Relevant After All These Years
The landscape of young adult literature is dynamic. The Teens’ Top Ten list stays on top of trends and must reads in the field. Some of the books on the TTT are highly recognizable; others are bit more obscure. The TTT list is a diverse list of characters, plots, and genres—it is obvious that teens want to read about a wide range of emotions and situations. By the time the list of nominations goes public on Celebrate Teen Literature Day (the Thursday of National Library Week, which takes place in April each year), the books have only very recently hit the shelves, making the TTT list very current.

The Teens’ Top Ten is a ready reference source for all librarians. The right book for any teen is bound to be represented on the list! It truly is the People’s Choice Award of YA literature.

Guidelines for Authors
Young Adult Library Services is the official publication of the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association. Young Adult Library Services is a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with young adults (ages twelve through eighteen) that showcases current research and practice relating to teen services and spotlights significant activities and programs of the division.

For submission and author guidelines, please visit http://yalsa.ala.org/yals and click on “Submissions.”

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Cost: $175 for digital download; $199 for paper edition with CD containing PowerPoint presentations (binder-ready, three-hole punched and tabbed). For 20% off orders of 25 or more, mention code YUTB12 for Understanding Teen Behavior and code YTEC12 for Strengthening Teen Services through Technology.

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Join YALSA at the ALA Annual Conference!

YALSA has big plans for Annual 2015 – join us in San Francisco, California, June 26–30 for five action-packed days with an abundance of opportunities for learning, networking, and face-to-face interactions with your favorite authors and experts in the teen services field. For a complete listing of YALSA events, please visit: http://tinyurl.com/YALSAac15.

To register, please visit www.alannual.org. Already registered? You can add special events such as the brunch honoring Margaret A. Edwards Award winner, Sharon M. Draper, to your existing registration in two ways: (1) by phone: Call CompuSystems at 866-513-0760 and ask to add the Edwards Brunch to your existing registration; or (2) online: Click on the dashboard link found in your registration confirmation email. If you need additional assistance with adding events, email alaregistration@compusystems.com.

Conference Events

YALSA will also be hosting the following ticketed events:

- **Free Preconference! Meeting the Literacy Needs of Hispanic and African-American Teens**
  - **Friday, June 26th, 1–4pm**
  - Reading test scores of Hispanic and African-American youth continue to lag behind those of their Asian and Caucasian counterparts. Libraries can play an important role in helping to ensure that all Hispanic and African-American youth have the literacy skills they need to succeed in school and be ready for college or careers. This session will explore strategies for reaching and engaging these youth with library programs and services.
  - **Tickets: Free. Registration is required.**

- **YALSA and Booklist Present: The Michael L. Printz Program and Reception**
  - **Friday, June 26, 8–10pm**
  - Kick off your Annual Conference by attending the Michael L. Printz Program and Reception on Friday night! Hear Jandy Nelson, the 2015 Michael L. Printz winner for her book *I’ll Give You the Sun*, speak about her writing. The honor book authors Jenny Hubbard (*And We Stay*); Jessie Ann Foley (*The Carnival at Bray*); Andrew Smith (*Grasshopper Jungle*); and author Mariko Tamaki, and illustrator Jillian Tamaki (*This One Summer*) will respond to questions submitted by librarians and local teens. The event will conclude with a reception. The annual award is administered by YALSA and sponsored by *School Library Journal* magazine. **Tickets – $34.**

- **Margaret A. Edwards Brunch**
  - **Saturday, June 27, 10:30am–12:00pm**
  - Join us for brunch and listen to Sharon M. Draper, the winner of the 2015 Margaret A. Edwards Award, speak about her writing. The annual Award honors a significant and lasting contribution to writing for teens. The Award is administered by YALSA and sponsored by *School Library Journal* magazine. **Tickets – $39.**

- **YA Author Coffee Klatch**
  - **Sunday, June 28th, 9–10am**
  - Enjoy coffee and meet with YALSA’s award winning authors! This informal coffee klatch will give you an opportunity to meet authors who have appeared on one of YALSA’s six annual selected lists or have received one of YALSA’s five literary awards. Attendees sit at a table and every 3 or 4 minutes, a new author arrives at the table to talk about upcoming books!
  - **Participating authors include:** Leigh Bardugo, Deborah Biancotti, Erin Bow, Rae Carson, Carey Corp, John Darnielle, Zak Ebrahim, Jack Gantos, Bill Konigsberg, Stephanie Kuehn, Margo Lanagan, Lorie Langdon, Sophie Maletsky, Marissa Meyer, Patrick Ness, Mitali Perkins, William Ritter, Neal Shusterman, Allan Stratton, Nova Ren Suma, Jillian Tamaki, Mariko Tamaki, Scott Westerfeld, Carol Lynch Williams, Suzanne Young.
  - **Tickets – $25.**

Advanced registration ends June 19, 2015. Register in advance and save on onsite registration costs.

Find more details about registration and housing at the ALA Annual website, www.alannual.org. For more information on YALSA’s Annual Conference schedule...
visit the YALSA Annual Conference wiki page, http://tinyurl.com/YALSAac15.

YALSA opens program proposals for 2016 Annual Conference

Proposals for continuing education sessions to be presented at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida, June 24–28, 2016 are now being accepted. Proposals may be submitted through June 1 via the form here: http://tinyurl.com/AC2016.

YALSA is accepting proposals for creative, innovative programs that address topics of focus in the Future of Library Services for & with Teens: a Call to Action report. Access the report at http://tinyurl.com/yalsareport.

Proposals must fall within one of the following categories:
- Teens/demographics
- Collections
- Spaces (physical and virtual)
- Programming
- Staffing
- Youth Participation
- Outreach
- Administration/Policy

Individuals may submit multiple proposals; however, no individual will be chosen to present or co-present more than one program. Proposals that are largely sales pitches or that focus on only one particular product will not be accepted. All presenters, moderators, speakers, etc. will be expected to cover their own travel and conference registration costs. Most program time slots are 60 minutes in length. However, there are a limited number of 90 minute time slots available.

The YALSA membership will vote on all of the proposals submitted to determine which will move forward. Those who submitted proposals will be notified of their status the week of Sept. 1, 2015.

Teen Services 101: A Practical Guide for Busy Library Staff

YALSA’s newest publication, Teen Services 101: A Practical Guide for Busy Library Staff is now available in print, e-book, and as a print/e-book bundle in the ALA Store. This publication aims to give library staff who are new or simply unfamiliar with serving teen patrons a realistic guide that can help them efficiently and effectively reach this segment of the community.

Chapters within the guide cover real-world topics such as planning teen programs and making the library space welcoming to teens. The book also provides information about how libraries can increase their impact through community partnerships. Order it at www.alastore.ala.org. YALSA/ALA members receive a 10% discount.

For information about how to publish with YALSA, visit http://ow.ly/Iuh6e. All revenues from publishing go to support the mission and work of YALSA.

NEW! Teen Programming Guidelines

YALSA’s Programming Guidelines Development Taskforce developed Teen Programming Guidelines – a brand new resource for members and the library community. These guidelines are meant to help library staff identify best practices in programming for and with teens. Access the programming guidelines, along with other national guidelines, at www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines.

Get Away @ your library, Oct. 18–24, 2015

YALSA kicked off Teen Read Week™ 2015 on April 16 by launching the Teen Read Week website. The website features updated resources for the annual celebration of teen reading, including activity ideas, planning resources, publicity tools, products, and more. Sign up for a free online community member account on the official Teen Read Week website to get access to exclusive resources such as a themed logo, webinars, and more. Learn more and sign up at www.ala.org/teenread.

Official themed Teen Read Week products are available for purchase at www.alastore.ala.org/trw, including the downloadable 2015 themed Teen Read Week Manual, created by YALSA’s 2015 Teen Read Week Committee. The Manual includes tips and ideas on programming, publicity, displays, and more relating to the 2015 theme. Other fee-based products include themed posters and bookmarks. Purchases support the work of YALSA and ALA.

Apply for the Teen Read Week™ Grant!

YALSA members can now apply for a Teen Read Week program grant, funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation. Ten grants worth $1000 each are available. Details including how to apply can be found at www.ala.org/teenread. Applications are due June 1.

YALSA Member Awards and Grant Winners

Each year YALSA gives more than $150,000 in awards and grants to its member. The deadline to apply for most grants is December 1 and applicants must be current members of YALSA.

The 2015 awards and grants winners are:
- Baker & Taylor Conference Grants: Lisa Castellano and Alicia Tate
- Board Fellow: Abigail Phillips
- BWI/YALSA Collection Development Grant: Chelsea Couillard-Smith and Robyn Vittek
- Dorothy Broderick Student Conference Scholarship: Lauren Lancaster
- Emerging Leader: Johana Orellana
- Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grants: Ligaya Scaife
- Great Books Giveaway: Lorain City High School in Lorain, Ohio (1st); Civic Center Court Secondary School in San Francisco, California (2nd); and Northwoods Middle School in North Charleston, South Carolina (3rd).
- MAE Award for Best Literature Program for Teens: Peggy Hendershot
- Margaret A. Edwards Trust Collection Development Grant:
Brandt Ensor, Jean Forness, Graig Henshaw, Carolann MacMaster, *Emma McCandless, Brooke Nelson, Emily Otis, and LaRaie Zimm.* runnerup

- Midwinter Paper Presentation: Mega Subramaniam
- National Library Legislative Day Travel Stipend: Jenna Jaureguy and Vandy Pacetti-Tune
- Spectrum Scholar: Claudio Leon
- Volunteer of the Year Awards: Sarah Hashimoto and Robin Fogle Kurz
- YALSA Writing Awards: Shari Lee, Jaina Shaw, Anna Tschetter, and Sarah Ludwig

To apply for 2016 awards and grants visit www.ala.org/yalsa/awards&grants. Most applications are due Dec. 1, 2015.

**Be a Part of National Library Legislative Day!**

ALA is hosting National Library Legislative Day in Washington D.C. May 4–5. Learn more at www.ala.org/NLLD. For those who can’t make the trip to Washington DC, we still need your participation! ALA and YALSA are planning several easy ways that you can participate virtually. To learn more about what you can do from your home state, visit www.ala.org/united/advocacy/virtuallegday. Don’t forget YALSA has lots of advocacy resources to help you speak up for teens and libraries year-round at www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy. YALSA

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Help your co-workers and community **learn about the importance of teen services with these free handouts:**

[www.ala.org/yaforum/tools](http://www.ala.org/yaforum/tools)

“We all need to do our part to help teens! Join me in using these resources to raise awareness about how libraries can help teens.”

— Chris Shoemaker, YALSA President

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In this completely revised edition, young people learn how to get and manage credit, how to make and stick to a budget, how to pay for college, how to determine needs versus wants, how to pay for a car, how to open a bank account, how to balance a checkbook, how to manage finances online, and how to avoid financial mistakes. You will also learn about investments, taxes, checks, debit cards, credit cards, and budget tips. This book is filled with helpful suggestions from financial counselors, and you will discover ways to jumpstart your financial future and use money responsibly.
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