young adult library services

WINNER 2016 APEX AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

THE ADVOCACY ISSUE

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ADULT LIBRARY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 03

YALSA Young Adult Library Services Association

CYPHER AS YOUTH ADVOCACY

SPRING 2017

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YOUNG ADULT LIBRARY SERVICES
The Official Journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association

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» Want more *YALS*? Members and subscribers can access the latest and back issues of *YALS* digitally on the YALSAblog at http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/yals/, as well as browse supplemental *YALS* articles and resources.

FROM THE EDITOR

Crystle Martin

In 2015, YALSA embarked on the strategic planning process. The new organization plan (adopted by the YALSA Board in Spring 2016) centers on three priority areas that YALSA will focus on over the next three years. Those priority areas are Advocacy, Fund and Partner Development, and Leading the Transformation for Teen Services. The Winter 2017 issue focused on Cultural Competence, a part of Leading the Transformation for Teen Services. This issue will focus on Taking Action through Advocacy.

The issue covers taking action from different angles. The research roundup article, by Lucia Cedeira Serantes, an assistant professor at Queens College, covers supporting teen privacy and protecting against surveillance in the library. This dovetails nicely with the new YALSA position paper by Mary K. Chelton, "The library's role in protecting teens' privacy," adopted by the YALSA Board at Midwinter 2017. Deborah Takahashi, a branch librarian at the Pasadena Public Library, expands the idea of teens needing to have trust in the library by offering perspective on how libraries can reaffirm their roles as providers of safe spaces and unhampered access to resources.

In the Trending section, D. C. Vito, executive director and cofounder of The LAMP, ties teaching teens media literacy as a way to help them take action for themselves. Rica G., an Atlanta-based lyricist and educator, describes using Hip Hop as a way to empower youth.

Three articles focus on taking action for teen services in public and school libraries. Kelsey Barker, a teacher librarian from Longfellow Middle School, looks at creating a library brand as a way to emphasize the impact of school libraries in their community. Audrey Hopkins, who oversees teen services at Smith Public Library, makes a case for advocating for teen services. David Wang, a librarian at the Elmhurst Community Library, describes how he moved from awareness to taking action both with his library administration and larger bureaucratic structures outside of the library.

Don't forget that the YALSAblog includes additional materials that complement the print *YALS*. You'll find that content at: http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/category/yals

Masthead

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
Young Adult Library Services is the official journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association. YALS primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education for librarians serving young adults, ages twelve through eighteen. It will include articles of current interest to the profession, act as a showcase for best practices, provide news from related fi elds, publish recent research related to YA librarianship, and will spotlight signifi cant events of the organization and off er in-depth reviews of professional literature. YALS will also serve as the offi cial record of the organization.

Sarah Hill

The timing of our YALS advocacy issue couldn't be better—the recently released White House budget is a call to action for all who support teens and libraries. The budget eliminates all funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Many people I've spoken to aren't sure how IMLS funding affects their library or their community. Check out this database (https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants) to find out, but remember that IMLS provides more than just competitive grant monies. The IMLS Grants to States Program is its largest grant program – providing funds to all states. In my state of Illinois, that amount was more than $5.4 million in 2016. How do your state libraries use those funds? Click on your state to find a five-year plan: https://www.imls.gov/grants/grants-state/state-allotments.

Thanks to LSTA funds from IMLS through the Illinois State Library, my regional library system (covering most of central and southern Illinois) added 61 new libraries to our consortial online catalog through the Dream Grant. Thanks to this FY15 grant, my community college patrons have easy access to the materials in those libraries, and can interlibrary loan them, thanks to daily delivery, funded, in part, with LSTA funds and the Illinois State Library. My patrons wouldn't receive the library service they expect without LSTA funds. And so, I advocate to #saveimls.

ALA and YALSA need your help to ensure that IMLS is saved, because without libraries, teens will not have the resources and support they need to succeed in school and prepare for college, careers, and life. Please follow the YALSA blog to track our recent efforts to #saveimls, and join the fight at ALA's new website http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/federallegislation/fight-for-libraries. Don't forget to invite your Congress members to your libraries during District Days in April (check out the YALSA wiki for more information) and sign up to participate in National Library Legislative Day. Held on May 2nd in Washington D.C., you can also participate virtually through social media, and, as always, by calling and emailing your own members of Congress.

Advocacy was also on everyone's minds at ALA Midwinter in Atlanta.

(continued on page 5)

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YALSA's Selected Lists, 2.0

Editors note: This is a modified version of a blog post from the YALSAblog by YALSA Board Member Franklin Escobedo http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/2017/01/27/some-of-yalsas-selected-lists-are-changing-heres-the-scoop/

Last year YALSA's Board of Directors voted to change the process of how YALSA's lists of recommended reading are developed. To make sure we're all on the same page, these are the selected lists the Board addressed:

- Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults (AAYA)
- Best Fiction for Young Adults (BFYA)
- Great Graphic Novels for Teens (GGNT)
- Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults (PPYA)
- Quick Picks for Reluctant YA Readers (QPYA)

None of the lists are going away; rather, the process for which they are being developed is changing to:

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

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

> During the January YALSA board meetings in Atlanta, a board document was approved with modifications. Check out this document (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SelectedListTransition_MW17.pdf) that outlines the transition of Phase 1. However, keep in mind that the Board added a modification to that original proposal, which is that Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults (PPYA) will also have a "Best of" list.

So what's new is that instead of standing committees, the lists will be developed by YALSA members through The Hub. This allows for virtual participation as well as for sharing information in a more timely way. Between January 27 and Feb. 12, YALSA collected 51 volunteer forms from members who would like to work throughout 2017 to develop the next Amazing Audio and Quick Picks lists. 10–15 members were selected to work on each list (20–30 members total), and as part of their work, they'll be writing blog posts for The Hub about the books they nominate. As you'll see in the Board Document #29 (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SelectedListTransition_MW17.pdf), The Hub manager, Molly Wetta, has worked out a process that will help make the

writing process easy for members. These are actually tools and skills that members can use in their everyday jobs, whether writing a press release for a program or writing a proposal for more funding for your teen services program.

Another addition to this effort is getting teens involved in the process. When I worked on PPYA, I would often ask my teens which books they liked, especially if it were a genre that I wasn't familiar with. This was always a great way to engage my teens and I would take back their comments and reactions back to the committee. Now those same teens will be able to work with us to become guest bloggers for the list. There are other exciting changes, as well, which are outlined in the document, so I encourage everyone to read it carefully. And be sure to check in with The Hub (http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/) to see what nominations there are so far this year!

The Board realizes that there are challenges that might come up, but this is still an evolving process. As we move forward with this first phase, the Board will evaluate how everything is working, and use that information to inform planning for phase 2. In 2018, for phase 2, the remaining two selected lists (BFYA and GGNT) will move to The Hub. With feedback from the chairs, list coordinators, and the YALSA members working on the lists, improvements will be made to the process while increasing opportunities for members who haven't been able to participate in developing the lists in the past. The virtual experience will make it easier for more YALSA members to get involved. And like everything new, there might be challenges, but with board members, YALSA staff, and members working together, the plan will succeed!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from page 3)

Advocating for libraries, advocating for facts, and advocating for those who have been unjustly treated were topics of conversations for library staff who attended the conference.

As you've heard, YALSA is in the midst of organizational change in order to meet the goals in our three-year organizational plan (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan) that was adopted by the Board in April 2016. I can't believe it's been one year! YALSA staff and board members are trying to efficiently bring about changes in the organization to make it more #teensfirst to meet our vision.

In the YALSA board room, simplify was the word of the weekend, because board members are streamlining processes for members and YALSA staff so that time is created for new membership engagement opportunities that meet the goals in the new strategic plan. As you read over the documents (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/2017-midwinter-meeting-agenda-and-documents) presented to the board, most of them involve advocacy. Why? Because in the Implementation Plan, one goal is that 100% of YALSA members will "conduct advocacy at some level and know they are doing so." The YALSA Board is also taking steps to include advocates for libraries (who aren't librarians) on the YALSA Board (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BroadeningBoard_MW17.pdf). How will we do that? Beginning this year, the YALSA Governance Nominating Committee will include one advocate on the election slate. Hopefully, the presence of advocates on the YALSA Board will bring unique perspectives and broaden our outlook on serving youth.

YALSA's updated Advocacy Toolkit (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/2017%20Advocacy%20Toolkit.pdf) was updated in January to include timely resources to help you advocate for teens in your community. No matter your familiarity with advocacy, you can use the different levels of the Advocacy Benchmarks to gain knowledge and develop new strategies and goals for yourself, your teens, or your library (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/AdvocacyBenchmarks_Activity.pdf).

If you'd like to stay current about what's happening within YALSA, please check out the Issues and Current Projects page (see http://www.ala.org/yalsa/issues-current-projects) on our website. Read on to learn more about how you can advocate for teens in your communities!

The Library's Role in Protecting Teens' Privacy: A YALSA Position Paper

Find out why it's important for libraries serving teens to protect the privacy of teens.

Editor's Note: This position paper was written for YALSA by Mary K. Chelton and adopted by YALSA's Board of Directors, January 22, 2017.

Abstract

The rights of young people are regularly challenged across the country by schools, organizations and individuals. Libraries, however, play a fundamental role in protecting the intellectual freedom rights of everyone, including teens. In a recent example of a challenge to adolescent rights, the FBI has proposed as set of guidelines for surveilling Internet use by at-risk students in secondary schools, in an attempt to prevent recruitment of youth in the United States by terrorist organizations on the Internet. Besides the lack of published evidence that this is a widespread problem or that being categorized as "at-risk" leads one to succumb to terrorist recruitment any more than other antisocial or self-harming behavior, the guidelines contradict the role of school librarians and staff in supporting the critical thinking and inquiry activities of 21st century learners. Furthermore, the guidelines promote increased surveillance of innocent students already overly surveilled in schools as well as in other contexts, which is an ongoing problem for students of color. Library staff in schools and public libraries are urged to adhere to the 21st century learner standards, to communicate their importance to administrators in protecting student privacy, and to resist unwarranted surveillance, as a professional social responsibility.

Background

As pointed out in *Intellectual Freedom News*[1], the FBI has announced plans to refer more suspects showing leanings toward becoming terrorists—particularly juveniles—to interventions by involving community leaders, educators, mental health professionals, religious leaders, parents and peers, depending on the circumstances.[2] In these cases, the FBI will not necessarily cease its criminal investigation and will remain alert to suspects who become dangerous or plan to travel to join extremists overseas. To assist this effort, the FBI has published guidelines for secondary school personnel regarding at-risk behaviors that serve as "drivers of violent extremism," to facilitate intervention activities that would disengage youth from them

While this may seem expedient from the FBI's law enforcement perspective, there is little published evidence that high schools are hotbeds of potential terrorist recruits. For example, the September 2015 report lists 54 "American foreign fighter aspirants and recruits" in Appendix II whose ages are listed. Of these 54, 3 are age 15-17 (all are from one Colorado family), and 2 are age 18 (both from Minnesota). Far more are over age 30.[3]

As noted in *Standards for the 21st Century Learner*[4], school librarians are expected to help students "make sense of information gathered from diverse sources by identifying misconceptions, main and supporting ideas, conflicting information, and point of view or bias." Given this standard, and the usual array of classroom assignments on contemporary issues in the school curriculum, it might be said that school librarians and staff and their instructional colleagues are already helping adolescents think critically about the information they find on

the Internet, and do not necessarily need FBI interventions in the absence of direct evidence.

Position

The FBI Guidelines imply that there should be increased surveillance of adolescents deemed "at risk" by a variety of criteria, especially those youth who use social media and the Internet to access information. Given the changing demographics of the high school population, it is incumbent on school librarians and staff and their public library counterparts to remember that students of color (the ones usually considered most "at risk"), are already over surveilled online and in person in a variety of school and retail contexts.[5,6] Adding libraries to this list of surveilled institutions runs in direct opposition to the institution's mission as well as its attractiveness and usefulness to young people, and should not happen.

In addition to the role of school librarians as digital literacy instructors, the existence of the FBI Guidelines warrant a reminder that confidentiality of library records is a core value of librarianship. For libraries to flourish as centers for uninhibited access to information, library staff must stand between users' right to privacy and freedom of inquiry on the one hand and perceptions of prohibition (real or imagined) against their exercise on the other. Just as people who borrow murder mysteries are unlikely to be murderers, so there is no evidence that seeking information on the Internet about terrorism produces terrorists, regardless of age. Those seeking information on the Internet about terrorism are unlikely to be terrorists, and may only be looking for information for a school assignment. Library staff need to remember that being curious and being young does not automatically make one suspect, nor in-need of a mind-changing intervention, even among at-risk youth.

Besides Articles 1-3 in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the American Library Association (ALA) has stated that the privacy of user interactions, including those by young people, are to be protected,[7] that prohibitions on censorship apply to school library settings as well other types of libraries[8], and the use of online resources by youth is important[9], but none of these statements directly addresses the FBI concerns over the dangers of "at risk" status and access to specific types of information on the Internet.

Libraries have a strong history of promoting and preserving users' intellectual freedom rights, including privacy. Youth and their families depend on the library as a place for unfettered access to information. In order protect the privacy rights of teens, library staff should

- Refresh their knowledge of key documents, like the *Intellectual Freedom Manual* and *21st Century Learner Standards*
- Report challenges or violations of teens' privacy to ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom via this online form: http://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/report
- Embed educating teens and their parents and caregivers about their rights into library services and programming
- Keep up to date on privacy and surveillance issues through resources such as ALA's District Dispatch and the YALSAblog
- Seek out training on topics including but not limited to: privacy, students' rights, libraries' role in intellectual freedom, and how to leverage technology tools that protect privacy
- Participate in events such as the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom's Choose Privacy Week, https://chooseprivacyweek.org/
- Take advantage of technology that protects library patrons' privacy
- Make a commitment to reach out to and serve at-risk youth in the community and address their needs, whatever they may be
- Identify and work with community partners who are also committed to protecting teens' rights

Conclusion

Promoting intellectual freedom is at the core of what libraries do, and this is articulated in key publications from ALA, such as the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. Therefore, resistance to excessive surveillance of Internet use in secondary schools by any young adults in the absence of direct evidence provided by law enforcement is a social responsibility of library staff in and out of school settings.[10] Library staff should ensure that teens' intellectual freedom rights are protected, and work with administrators, educators and other stakeholders to protect teens' privacy.

For the references check the digital version of the paper: http://www.ala.org/yalsa/library's-role-protecting-teens'-privacy-yalsa-position-paper

Answering the Call for Middle School College and Career Readiness: YALSA "Future Ready" Project Kicks Off

Learn how rural, small and tribal libraries are helping middle schoolers with college and career readiness.

Laura Pitts

When the opportunity to apply for YALSA's first cohort of the three-year IMLS funded "Future Ready with the Library" (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/future-ready-library) program came my way, I was immediately on board with the mission behind the project—develop a way, through partnerships with community organizations or educational outlets, to address the issue of college and career readiness initiatives among middle school students.

As a librarian at The Scottsboro Public Library in Scottsboro, Alabama, the language of preparing students for college and career futures is familiar. In our own community, the local economic development authority, the local community college, two public school systems and various non-profit organizations utilize the language of college and career readiness in planning for the future—both for growth in their own organizations and growth in bringing workforce development to Jackson County. After all, the workforce is moving toward a 21st Century skills set that prides itself on encouraging students to look at the various career, vocational, and educational opportunities that may be available to them in their own backyard.

Because of that, YALSA's "Future Ready" program is a perfect fit for my community. However, its not just my community that is benefiting from the year-long program and all of it's counterparts. Fifteen other rural, small, and tribal libraries in the U.S. are taking part in the project. These libraries span America from Alaska to New York, to Ohio to Florida, and will be working to not only recognize the needs of college and career readiness among middle school students, but working on pathways of partnerships that can provide resources to middle school students, families, educators and community entities. Through weekly online Community of Practice postings, group work and constant dialogue regarding our successes and failures as the project moves along, we are all working toward a common goal of helping our libraries provide needed services to the people in our communities.

While students of all grade levels should be afforded opportunities of exposure to college and career readiness, it's the needs of middle school students that have been ignored for far too long. A study conducted by ACT titled "The Forgotten Middle" (https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ForgottenMiddleSummary.pdf) found that fewer than two in ten eighth graders are on target to be ready for college-level work by the time they graduate from high school. The study goes on to say that the level

of academic achievement met by these eighth graders has a "larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school," than the rest of their high school academic endeavors. So what exactly is going on with these students the years before entering the eighth grade that is causing them to not be on track for success after high school? Is this lack of preparedness a result of academic needs not fulfilled or something else that stems from an emotional learning need that students are simply not getting at home or at school? The beauty in those questions is that the answers are not clear and because of that YALSA recognizes the need to address these learning concerns for middle school students.

Yet, how does the library answer the call for college and career readiness? For the generations of library users before now, libraries while always valued as places of learning, brought with it a simple feeling of being the place where books are checked out. Times are a little different now. Technology, in all it's glorious uses and accessibility, has changed both services and programs that are offered at libraries. On any given day at The Scottsboro Public Library not only are we helping people check out a book, but we are also helping them answer questions about job applications and resume development. On the other side of the building children are engaging in popup brick building Makerspaces, taking on reading challenges at the reading wall and finding the latest fiction or non-fiction topic that Dewey, the library's live aquatic turtle, has suggested for the day. Learning is immersed in all levels for all ages throughout the building.

Take a look at your own library and you will see learning emerging at all levels in your building. When a library embraces the idea of future ready, it must be willing to engage in a new role—the role of education extension. Libraries in the age of STEM and STEAM learning and now college and career readiness must recognize this role as an extension of the school classroom. Schools are faced with time and budget constraints to simply meet all of the needs that a student may have. Libraries can fill those gaps with flexible literacy learning, meeting those needs head on in unique ways. Each community, school system and library will define college and career readiness differently. What is important is that the community and its counterparts all get on board with the same concrete definition. While the definition may seem as simple as having the skills and knowledge needed to succeed after high school by either furthering academics or entering the workforce, if you dig deeper the definition maybe more rounded and focused on the needs of your immediate community.

While the main focus for "Future Ready" is to target the needs of middle school students, the even bigger focus is partnerships. How can a library partnership with a community entity meet the needs of the middle school students? This question leads libraries to an opportunity to help address real issues that affect the long-term growth and survival of communities and the youth that live in them.

The first cohort of "Future Ready" met together in Atlanta, Georgia for a two-day workshop to meet the other participants in the program and tackle some of the "cold feet" feelings as the project started. One of the biggest questions that came up had to do with the anticipated end result of the project. The answer: whatever we need it to be. Each community is different. Each library is different. Each set of middle school students are different. With that in mind, even the way a community (and a library) tackles the need to provide college and career ready services to students is different.

"This question leads libraries to an opportunity to help address real issues that affect the long-term growth and survival of communities and the youth that live in them.

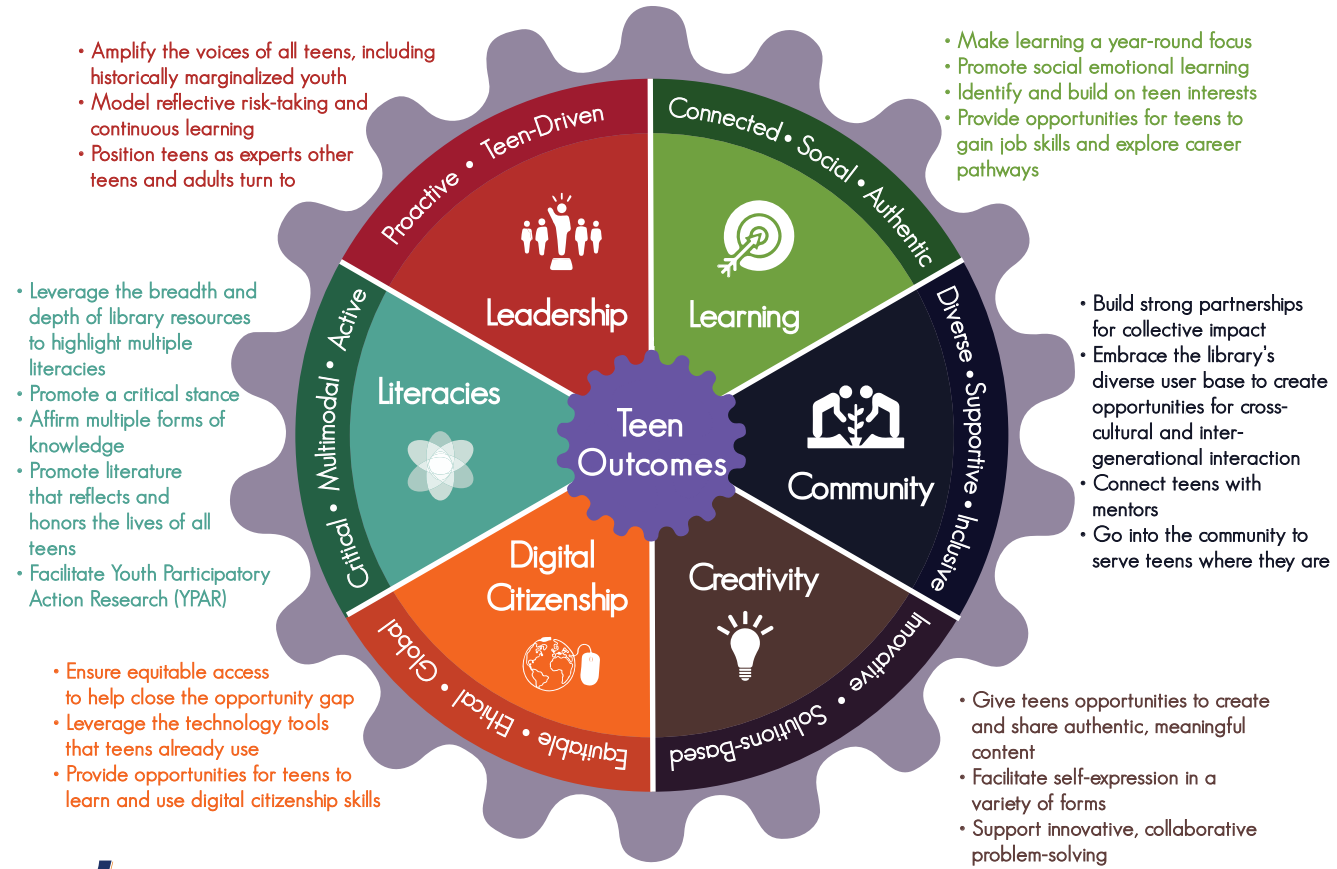
American poet William Butler Yeats once said, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." And sometimes, the simple act of lighting that fire is through providing a student with the materials needed for long-term learning success. Libraries should be in a constant state of filling pails and lighting fires of learning. Not only do we show how the library is able to work with community members and community partners, we set ourselves up to tackle the bigger issues facing our young patrons, including those about how to plan the best possible route for life, regardless where the wind and sails may lead.

LAURA PITTS is the director of the Scottsboro Public Library in Scottsboro, Ala.

Reimagined Library Services for and with Teens

Editor's Note: This is a new YALSA infographic illustrating the teens first approach to library services.

REIMAGINED LIBRARY SERVICES FOR AND WITH TEENS



yalsa
Young Adult Library Services Association
www.ala.org/yalsa

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/teens-first

Created by Casey Rawson, UNC Chapel Hill

2017 YALSA Book Award Winners and Selected Book and Media Lists

A full list of YALSA award winners and the top 10 lists for each of the association's selected lists.

Award

ALEX Award

- The Queen of Blood by Sarah Beth Durst, published by Harper Voyager. HarperCollins Publishers.
- The Regional Office is Under Attack! by Manuel Gonzales. Riverhead, an imprint of Penguin Random House.
- In the Country We Love: My Family Divided by Diane Guerrero with Michelle Burford. Henry Holt and Co.
- Buffering: Unshared Tales of a Life Fully Loaded by Hannah Hart. Dey Street an imprint of William Morrow, a division of HarperCollins Publishers.
- Arena by Holly Jennings. Ace Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House.
- Every Heart a Doorway by Seanan McGuire. a Tor Book published by Tom Doherty Associates.
- Romeo and/or Juliet: A Choosable-Path Adventure by Ryan North. Riverhead Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House.
- Die Young with Me: A Memoir by Rob Rufus. Touchstone, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.
- The Wasp that Brainwashed the Caterpillar by Matt Simon. Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House.
- The Invisible Life of Ivan Isaenko by Scott Stambach. St. Martin's Press.

Margaret A. Edwards Award

Sarah Dessen for:

- Dreamland
- Keeping the Moon
- Just Listen
- The Truth About Forever
- Along for the Ride
- What Happened to Goodbye?
- This Lullaby

William C. Morris Award

Winner

The Serpent King by Jeff Zentner, published by Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a Penguin Random House Company.

Finalists

Girl Mans Up by M-E Girard, published by HarperTeen, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Rani Patel In Full Effect by Sonia Patel, published by Cinco Puntos Press.

The Smell of Other People's Houses by Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock, published by Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a Penguin Random House Company.

Tell Me Something Real by Calla Devlin, published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, and imprint of Simon & Schuster.

YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction

Winner

March: Book Three by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell, published by Top Shelf Productions, an imprint of IDW Publishing.

Finalists

Hillary Rodham Clinton: A Woman Living History by Karen Blumenthal and published by Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives by Kenneth C. Davis, and published by Henry Holt, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune by Pamela S. Turner. Illustrated by Gareth Hinds, and published by Charlesbridge.

This Land is Our Land: A History of American Immigration by Linda Barrett Osborne, and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS.

Odyssey Award

Winner

Anna and the Swallow Man written by Gavriel Savit, narrated by Allan Corduner. Listening Library

Honor Recordings

Ghost written by Jason Reynolds, narrated by Guy Lockard. Simon and Schuster Audio.

Dream On, Amber written by Emma Shevah, narrated by Laura Kirman. Recorded Books.

Nimona written by Noelle Stevenson, narrated by Rebecca Soler, Jonathan Davis, Marc Thompson, January LaVoy, Natalie Gold, Peter Bradbury, and David Pittu. HarperAudio.

Michael L. Printz Award

Winner

March: Book Three by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell. Top Shelf Productions, an imprint of IDW Publishing.

Honor Books

Asking for It by Louise O'Neill. Quercus, a Hachette Company.

The Passion of Dolssa by Julie Berry. Viking Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers.

Scythe by Neal Shusterman. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster's Children's Publishing.

The Sun is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon. Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House.

Book and Media Lists

*Below are the top ten titles for each list. In addition to the top ten, the full lists of each are available at http://tinyurl.com/yalsabookawardslists.

Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults

- *Anna and the Swallow Man* by Gavriel Savit, read by Allan Corduner. Listening Library, 2016.
- *Beast* by Brie Spangler, read by Andrew Eiden. Blackstone Audio, 2016.
- *Gemina* by Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff, read by Carla Corvo, MacLeod Andrews, Steve West, and a full cast. Listening Library, 2016.
- *Kill the Boy Band* by Goldy Moldavsky, read by Barrett Wilbert Weed. Scholastic Audio, 2016.
- *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson, read by Marc Thompson, Rebecca Soler, January LaVoy, Peter Bradbury, Jonathan Davis, David Pittu, and Natalie Gold. HarperAudio, 2016.
- *Orbiting Jupiter* by Gary D. Schmidt, read by Christopher Gebauer. Recorded Books, 2015.
- *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys, read by Jorjeana Marie, Will Damron, Cassandra Morris, and Michael Crouch. Listening Library, 2016.
- *Star Wars Ahsoka* by E.K. Johnston, read by Ashley Eckstein. Listening Library, 2016.
- *Traffick* by Ellen Hopkins, read by Kirby Heyborne, Julia Whelan, Madeleine Maby, Rebekkah Ross, and Jacques Roy. Simon & Schuster, 2015.
- *Wink Poppy Midnight* by April Genevieve Tucholke, read by Michael Crouch, Alicyn Packard, and Caitlin Davies. Listening Library, 2016.

Best Fiction for Young Adults

- Berry, Julie. *The Passion of Dolssa*. Viking Books for Young Readers. 2016.
- Chee, Traci. *The Reader*. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 2016.
- Hardinge, Frances. *The Lie Tree*. Harry N. Abrams. 2016.
- McGinnis, Mindy. *The Female of the Species*. Katherine Tegen Books. 2016.
- Medina, Meg. *Burn Baby Burn*. Candlewick. 2016.
- Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost*. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books. 2016.
- Sepetys, Ruta. *Salt to the Sea*. Philomel Books. 2016.
- Shusterman, Neal. *Scythe*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2016.
- Yoon, Nicola. *The Sun is Also a Star*. Delacorte Press. 2016.
- Zentner, Jeff. *The Serpent King*. Crown Books for Young Readers. 2016.

Great Graphic Novels for Teens

- Allison, John and Lissa Treiman.
  - *Giant Days, Volume 1*. 2015. Illus. Boom! Box.
  - *Giant Days, Volume 2*. 2016. Illus. Boom! Box.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi and Brian Stelfreeze. *Black Panther, Book One: A Nation Under Our Feet*. 2016. Illus. Marvel Comics.
- Hatke, Ben. *Mighty Jack*. 2016. Illus. First Second.
- Lemire, Jeff and Emi Lennox. *Plutona*. 2016. Illus. Image Comics.
- Lewis, John, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell. *March: Book Three*. 2016. Illus. Top Shelf.
- Ross, Edward. *Filmish: a Graphic Journey Through Film*. 2015. Illus. Self Made Hero.
- Russel, Mark, Ben Caldwell, and Mark Morales. *Prez, Volume*

1: Corndog in Chief. 2016. Illus. DC Comics.
- Takano, Ichigo. *orange: The Complete Collection 1.* 2016. Illus. Seven Seas Entertainment.
- Vaughan, Brian K. and Cliff Chiang. *Paper Girls 1.* 2016. Illus. Image.
- Vaughan, Brian K., Steve Skroce, and Matt Hollingsworth. *We Stand On Guard.* 2016. Illus. Image.

Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults

- Copeland, Misty. Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina. Simon and Schuster/Touchstone. 2014.
- Grande, Reyna. The Distance Between Us: A Memoir. Simon and Schuster/Pocket Books/Washington Square Press. 2013.
- Satrapi, Marjane. Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood. Random House/Pantheon Books.
- Bray, Libba. The Diviners. Hachette/Little, Brown and Co. 2013.
- Yancey, Rick. The Monstrumologist. Simon and Schuster/Saga Press. 2015.
- Farish, Terry. The Good Braider. Amazon Children's Publishing/Skyscape.
- Forman, Gayle. Just One Day. Penguin Group/Speak. 2013.
- Niven, Jennifer. All the Bright Places. Random House/Ember. 2016.
- Oliver, Lauren. Vanishing Girls. HarperCollins/HarperCollins Childrens Books. 2016.
- Patel, Sonia. Rani Patel in Full Effect. Cinco Puntos Press. 2016.

Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers

Nonfiction

- Higgins, Nadia Abushanab. *Feminism: Reinventing the F-Word.* 2016. Illus. Twenty First Century Books/Lerner.

Fiction

- Buxbaum, Julie. *Tell Me Three Things.* 2016. Delacorte Press/Random House Children's Books.
- Garvin, Jeff. *Symptoms of Being Human.* 2016. Balzer + Bray/HarperCollins.
- Johnston, E.K. *Exit, Pursued by a Bear.* 2016. Dutton Books/Penguin Random House.
- Lemire, Jeff. *Plutona.* 2016. Illus. Image Comics.
- Lukavics, Amy. *Daughters Unto Devils.* 2015. Harlequin Teen/Harlequin.
- Nijkamp, Marieke. *This Is Where It Ends.* 2016. Sourcebooks.
- Reynolds, Jason and Brendan Kiely. *All American Boys.* 2015. Atheneum/Simon and Schuster.
- Russo, Meredith. *If I Was Your Girl.* 2016. Flatiron.
- Tash, Sarvenaz. *The Geek's Guide to Unrequited Love.* 2016. Simon & Schuster BFYR/Simon & Schuster.

Free Advocacy Toolkit

www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy

Use this updated toolkit to speak up for teens, libraries & the Institute of Museum & Library Services

YALSA

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Can't make it to D.C. May 1-2 for National Library Legislative Day? Virtual Library Legislative Day allows you to participate from home. Visit **www.ala.org/united/vlld** and let your members of Congress know how critical your library is to your community.

We'll send you reminders to take action, along with talking points, email templates, and other resources to help you craft your message. We'll also include a link to the live webcast from National Library Legislative Day, so you hear the issue briefing live from D.C. on May 1.

United for Libraries
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Research RoundUp: Advocacy: A Focus on Privacy and Surveillance

What privacy and surveillance mean for advocacy for and with youth.

Lucia Cedeira Serantes

Welcome to Research Roundup. The purpose of this recurring column is to make the vast amount of research related to youth and families accessible to you. To match the theme of the spring issue, this Research Roundup column focuses on activist aspects of advocacy and technology. For each item listed below you'll find a short overview of what the research resource is all about and some ideas about how you might integrate the findings and recommendations into your work with youth.

When exploring the topic of advocacy in LIS one can find that it is often connected to two different realms: activism/social justice and management/marketing. For this column, I would like to focus on the activist aspect of advocacy and one topic that is frequently and unquestionably connected to youth: technology. For information related to other aspects, one can always start at the ALA Advocacy office and explore the toolkits and related documents prepared by each association, including YALSA (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy).

As information professionals, we try to keep up with the many tech developments and find ways to successfully implement them in libraries. Some of these developments explicitly target youth as early adopters, highlighting its strengths (often connectivity, convenience, portability, and social status) but forgetting their weaknesses (privacy and data collection issues). I am going to briefly discuss two projects and the work of one researcher that will hopefully help librarians who work with youth/teens to strengthen their knowledge about privacy protection and data surveillance issues to consequently feel more comfortable creating events and activities for and with teens about these topics. Sometimes it is hard to advocate for teens' privacy and safety online when it is also difficult for us to follow the many news reports and developments about the changes and advances in the different platforms we use in our daily lives. The following two projects offer a manageable starting point, easy for newbies and with more advanced resources for those already involved in this type of tech-focused advocacy.

The Glass Room and MyShadow.org

The Glass Room is a project created in collaboration between Mozilla and the non-profit organization Tactical

Tech. During the end of November and December 2016 it had a physical space in NYC that some of us were lucky enough to visit. While the space took on the aesthetics of many tech stores, it was filled with examples of activist projects, artwork, and research that reflected and commented on online security, surveillance/privacy, and personal data. Even though the physical space is no longer available, the digital space remains. In the *Resources* area, one can find some of the videos that accompanied the exhibition as well as links to the *SmartOn* series from Mozilla and another Tactical Tech project, *MyShadow and Me*, that was awarded a BOBs award (https://thebobs.com/; Best in Online Activism) in the category of Most Creative and Original. The *Resource* section serves as a helpful filter to aspects of those two projects that should be part of digital learning spaces for teens. Even easier to use is the *Data Detox* kit. This kit was part of the Data Detox Bar area of the physical exhibition and is available in pdf form (https://theglassroomnyc.org/files/2016/12/DataDetoxKit_optimized_01.pdf). The kit is organized as an 8-day challenge where each day focuses on different aspects of your technology use and guides you in the process to recover control over your digital self. After one has done it oneself, it is easy to adapt to one-shot sessions or a long workshop for teens. The 8 sections are:

1. Discovery
2. Being Social
3. Searching, Surfing, Shopping
4. Connecting
5. Making Choices
6. Who Do They Think You Are?
7. Creating a New You
8. So…What Next

The process starts with a simple exercise to see the degree to which Google is embedded in our digital life and, for example, to see the type of data that is being collected from our online selves (https://www.google.com/takeout). Each of the eight sections comes with specific and easy to follow instructions to add or edit privacy settings in different aspects of your digital self and life. A *Day Challenge* after each section invites the user to take the work for that day a bit further. This project perfectly complements the work already advanced by the *Library Freedom Project* where teen librarians can also find a selection of resources useful to use with youth (https://libraryfreedomproject.org/youthonlinesafety/). This collection offers less guidance than the 8 day challenge kit, but would be a helpful complement for librarians and patrons already aware or active in tech activism or advocacy.

By Rhododendrites - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=54291140

Data Privacy Project

Most of the time when one speaks of privacy or surveillance, external forces such as corporations, government, or criminals are at the center of the discussions. Libraries and librarians, however, should also be involved in these discussions because of our role in offering free access to many different types of technologies and connectivities. The *Data Privacy Project* is the result of an IMLS grant and brings together an interdisciplinary team formed by academics, librarians, tech experts and activists. Melissa Morrone, a librarian at the Brooklyn Public Library and member of Radical Reference, is at the core of the project. One aspect of this project that would be of extreme interest for teen (or any) librarian

is the *Privacy Literacy Training*, an initiative focused on training and developing online tools that showcase how information moves, is shared and stored online and consequently the importance of digital privacy and data literacy. Although the project is still in development, there are already some examples of resources in this section: *Historical Overview* and the *Mapping Data Flows* sections. For instance, through an exploration of the technological changes in libraries, the first section brings to the forefront patrons' privacy issues that these technologies have created or exacerbated. During the past year, in-person training sessions were offered in the NYC area and in the near future, training materials will be also available on the site. The ideas and tools already on this site and the ones to be soon added will certainly support the work of librarians who serve teens to be aware of privacy issues that could potentially emerge inside of the walls of the library.

Sonia Livingstone

Sonia Livingstone is a professor in the department of Media and Communication at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her work focuses on children and youth and the opportunities and risks afforded by digital and online technologies. For LIS professionals, her work is especially relevant if they are working in schools or in close collaboration with education environments and families, as well as with younger teens, between 10–14 years old. For teen librarians already familiar with the work of danah boyd, Livingstone could expand their knowledge through her cross-national approach as well as multiple collaborative projects. Her professional page (http://www.lse.ac.uk/media%40lse/WhosWho/AcademicStaff/SoniaLivingstone.aspx) is a clearing-house of many projects and initiatives, some funded by prestigious organizations such as the MacArthur Foundation or European Union agencies. Among her work, such as the 2016 book with Julian Sefton-Green, *The Class: Living and Learning in the Digital Age*, I'll briefly discuss an article written with Alicia Blum-Ross and available open access. It offers a short and solid introduction to her approach to the relationship between youth and technology:

> Blum-Ross, Alicia, and Livingstone, Sonia. (2016). From youth voice to young entrepreneurs: The individualization of digital media and learning. *Journal of Digital and Media Literacy* 4, no 1-2 (2016). Accessed January 15 2017. http://www.jodml.org/2016/06/27from-youth-voice-to-youngentrepreneurs-the-individualizationof-digital-media-and-learning/

Makerspaces and other tech-oriented spaces and events are increasingly central to library teen spaces and teen activities. Blum-Ross and Livingstone, however, reflect over these celebrated initiatives to question a rhetorical shift from what they call a "voice" discourse to an "entrepreneurial" discourse, connecting these initiatives with job-readiness instead of creative expression and civic engagement. Their exploration and analysis of these digital learning initiatives are guided by interviews from their previous project *Parenting for a Digital Future* where they interviewed formal and informal educators. If your professional interests align with youth and technology and you would like to be more knowledgeable about advocating for youth rights and better understand the often overlooked risks, I would seriously invite you to follow Livingstone's work.

I do not want to finish this column without acknowledging the political climate for the next four years that will likely make efforts related to advocacy, social justice, and activism even more important in the daily work of any librarian. For those readers who have missed these three YALSA publications here you have a reminder:

- Chelton, Mary K. (January 22, 2017) *The Library's Role in Protecting Teen Privacy: a YALSA Position Paper*. Accessed January 31, 2017. http://www.ala.org/yalsa/library's-role-protecting-teens'-privacy-yalsa-position-paper
- "Supporting Youth in the Post-2016 Election Climate." *YALSA Wiki*. Last modified December 22, 2016. http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Supporting_Youth_in_the_Post-2016_Election_Climate
- Takahashi, Deborah. "When Libraries Become a Refuge for Youth in a Post-Election World." *YALSA Blog*. Last modified November 19, 2016. http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/2016/11/19/when-libraries-become-a-refuge-for-youth-in-a-post-election-world/

Also, be aware that you are not alone in your community and there are many organizations in your proximity that have experience in resistance and advocacy. Visit these organizations and let them know that teen librarians are allies and are keen to support, collaborate, and spearhead their initiatives.

LUCIA CEDEIRA SERANTES is an assistant professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (Queens College). Her research interests include youth media, reading and public libraries.

Using Media Literacy to Combat Youth Extremism

D.C. Vito

During the last few years, I've been heartbroken by stories about young people choosing paths of violent extremism. I'm talking about people like Dylann Roof (https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/us/dylann-storm-roof-photos-website-charleston-church-shooting.html?_r=2), the young white supremacist whose shooting rampage left nine black churchgoers dead in South Carolina, or Hoda Muthana (http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/index.ssf/2015/04/meet_hoda_muthana_the_quiet_gi.html), a young Muslim woman who left her family in Alabama to marry an ISIS fighter in Syria. Their choices are stunning for their impact on the lives of innocent people, and because the path to redemption after such a choice seems nearly impossible.

At The LAMP, staff teach youth to comprehend, create and critique media messages, as a way for youth to advocate for themselves.

I read these stories but had never really considered them through the lens of media literacy. That is, until I received an invitation from UNESCO to attend a conference (http://en.unesco.org/ConfQcUNESCO/home) on the internet and what they term "youth radicalization." As the Executive Director of The LAMP (Learning About Multimedia Project), a nonprofit media literacy organization teaching people to comprehend, create and critique media messages, the experience transformed the way I think about our work, and opened my eyes to a new potential for how expanding access to media literacy and critical thinking can change the lives of young people worldwide.

It actually took very little time for me to see how The LAMP could add value to the conversation about youth extremism. During the opening session of the conference, panelists immediately took issue with the subtext of the conference, saying it was too easy to blame the internet for turning normal-seeming youth into rage-infused extremists. It was argued that this approach gives the internet way too much credit, while giving hardly any to young people. Of course I agree; we at The LAMP speak often about the faulty logic of blaming media or technologies instead of the people responsible for creating and interpreting them. It's one of the reasons why we do what we do in the first place. We believe everyone

is a producer and a reader, and that we all share the responsibilities that come with those privileges.

When three different high-ranking UNESCO officials used the term "media literacy" in their opening remarks, it was music to my ears. It only got better when Ross Lajeunesse (http://en.unesco.org/internet-and-radicalization-youth-preventing-acting-and-living-together/ross-lajeunesse) from Google stood up to say that the most effective way to steer youth away from violent extremism was to give them a safe space to challenge harmful and misleading media. That's exactly the kind of space created by The LAMP in its hands-on programs, and through the use of media remix tools like MediaBreaker/Studios (http://mbstudios.thelamp.org). We've never pitched these tools and programs as a means for combating terrorism, but hearing these experts and leaders speak so passionately about the potential of media literacy to do just that was like an alarm bell directly striking my brain.

I counted at least a dozen more times when media literacy was raised as an antidote for violent extremism. I'm used to meeting with people and making the case for how media literacy can help young people find jobs, become more engaged in their communities and make more informed choices, but not avoid a life of domestic or international terrorism.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing parts of the conference was the (only) session in which actual youth were present, hidden by a scrim and with their voices altered to protect their identities. Both young people had been detained at the airport en route to join ISIS, and when a member of the audience asked what piece of propaganda compelled them to defect to a terrorist organization, both agreed that there was no single piece of media. Rather, it was the collection of anti-Muslim messaging they found inherent to our culture, which reinforced their status as outsiders and undesirables. I was equally struck by another comment the young people made. They provided more insight, saying that the same things that caused them to pursue a violent pathway was the same things that caused them to abandon it: the search for answers.

I wondered how their lives might have been different if they had been offered the skills, tools and the agency to push back on those messages. Maybe if they could have found purpose in creating positive representations of Muslim identity and culture, they might have chosen a different path. What if their youthful energy could be channeled into creating remixes of propaganda videos, where they could refute the false manipulations of Koranic doctrine directly into the videos?

Since returning from the conference—and since the end of the 2016 presidential election, which concluded shortly thereafter—I've sensed a new urgency for media literacy. I personally have heard from many who say they now, finally, understand why The LAMP does what it does. In some cases, people are motivated by the rise of what is often called "fake news" in the media (which I prefer to simply call lying), but in other cases I hear fears of extremist thinking and activity. Media literacy is now widely cited as a crucial part of the solution to combating extremism and misinformation, two epidemics which in many ways march hand-in-hand. Particularly because library spaces often function for young people as bridges from their school lives to their out-of-school lives, librarians have to be included as front-line activists to ensure that all youth can comprehend, create and critique media messages.

Believe me, I'm not saying media literacy is the end-all solution to ending violent youth extremism. The issue is far too nuanced and complex for any single silver bullet, so to speak. But I'm more convinced than ever that it is a vital tool, and that so far we have barely begun to tap into its potential to address a range of ills. Regardless of how different people may vote, I think we can all agree that we want more peaceful places where young people can grow with promise and confidence.

But how to do this? The challenges in teaching media literacy are legion, for school-day educators and for librarians alike. Media literacy skills are difficult to measure, and access to technology and broadband are often unreliable, particularly in low-income communities. Media and technology are constantly shifting, as industries invent new ways to reach and engage our senses. Competing ideologies and the fear of accusations of

> Regardless of how different people may vote, I think we can all agree that we want more peaceful places where young people can grow with promise and confidence.

indoctrination, copyright violations or censorship also crop up in my conversations with practitioners. Yet no one can deny the importance of meeting these challenges, and offering young people the best we have to give them in media literacy education.

One challenge which came up in a recent Twitter chat we hosted with librarians is that critiquing media is often seen as akin to bashing media—because criticism can equate with negativity. This is problematic because teaching media literacy typically includes critiquing media. Sometimes, those media include TV shows, video games, music and movies we enjoy or even love. We at The LAMP believe this challenge can be overcome by focusing on the skills which are cultivated by critiquing media.

For example, literacy, as it is widely understood, is the ability to both read and write. So when The LAMP teaches media literacy, we spend time discussing, or close reading, a piece of media. Then we move on to writing, so that students create their own commercials, documentaries, podcasts, etc. Combined, these processes build basic critical thinking skills and empower young people to express themselves positively, while engaging in what we refer to as the "productive struggle" of problem-solving and learning to work with others.

In this way, the teaching of media literacy can help young people make smart decisions, even through personal struggles like those faced by many of the young people who turn to extremism. Other benefits for teaching media literacy include increased empathy, as learners are often asked to consider other perspectives, and the development of research and technical skills to support increased college and career readiness. We believe by addressing the tangible benefits of media literacy, we can begin to address an unfathomably difficult issue like youth extremism.

If you're interested in learning more about how to harness media literacy education for your library programs, I invite you to visit The LAMP online (http://thelamp.org/) where you can sign up for our mailing list. You'll get free tools and resources from us and from other leading experts in the field of media literacy, and you'll learn more about upcoming virtual training opportunities.

D.C. VITO co-founded The LAMP (Learning About Multimedia Project) in 2007 and is the current Executive Director. Follow The Lamp on Twitter: @thelamp.

Cypher as Youth Advocacy

Teaching Hip Hop as a way of life and means to empower youth.

Rica G

In January 2016, my dear friend Adrian Gardner and I held our first club meeting in a high school science classroom. Back then, we were both fresh out of college serving in AmeriCorps and trying to figure out how to best connect with our mentees. Initially, we set out as lyricists seeking to assist younger writers with their craft. Thus we set out on a mission and the Cultivating Young People Harnessing Energy & Respect Program (CYPHER) was born. At that point, we had no idea that CYPHER would become the family that it is. Our youth advocacy developed into us teaching Hip Hop as a life skill.

Those of us who were schooled by Hip Hop come from a community with a history of our cultural experiences being neglected by traditional education. I am now aware of the available research about Hip Hop Based Education (HHBE), but I rarely hear about it from people outside of the academic sphere. Our efforts go towards providing young people with the resources and opportunities that we desired at their age. We implement HHBE to host public speaking workshops, put students in professional recording studios, and help them book performances. The CYPHER Program, Inc. does not operate primarily on findings from scholarly articles or interviews with experts in the field of HHBE. With that in mind, our mantra outlines our method of operation:

> We Are Cultivating Young People,
> harnessing energy and respect
> We do this for the love;
> we don't do this for a check
> Put our all into all we do
> Because we know the youth are up next
> We understand it takes a village
> So it's all hands on deck.

From its origins as an extracurricular club geared toward students who hadn't previously been involved in their school community, to the all-age encompassing, Atlanta-based community program it is now, CYPHER is as organic as fresh produce from a community garden. What we do is apply what we have learned over the years as emcees, producers, engineers, etc. and encourage our students to build on our knowledge. It helps that our team is comprised of individuals who are lifelong citizens of Hip Hop as well as students of the game.[1] There is much more to be learned about life from Hip Hop culture than its more obvious potential in the classroom (Kelly 2013).[2]

The Content

As an American literary art form, Hip Hop lyricists provide texts that speak to and for us in a way that is far less abstract than say the traditional classics of William Shakespeare or John Steinbeck. Not to negate or discredit the relevance of non-Hip Hop texts in education, but there is something inherently electrifying about lessons found in rap music. Powell outlined the source of this feeling:

> [Rap] emerged from the streets of inner-city neighborhoods as a genuine reflection of the hopes, concerns,

[1]By "the game" I mean the music industry. This is a commonly used colloquialism for any form of business activity.

[2]The list of citations is available in a companion piece on yalsa.ala.org/blog/yals/

> and aspirations of urban Black youth in this, the last quarter of the 20th century. Rap is essentially a home-made, street-level musical genre. . . . Rap lyrics concentrate primarily on the contemporary African American 'Black' experience. . . . Every issue within the Black community is subject to exposition in the rap arena. Hit rap tunes have broached touchy subjects such as sex, sexism, racism, and crime. . . . Rap artists, they contend, 'don't talk that love stuff, but 'rather' educate the listeners.

In fact, that further demonstrates my goal of using HHBE to teach beyond what school curricula seems to label as standards of achievement. For example, during one of our earlier CYPHER meetings, I played the music video for "U.N.I.T.Y." by Queen Latifah. For reference, the song addresses street harassment, domestic violence, and intragender violence among women. My intention was to create a discourse about gender, womanism, and the role of oppressive language in our culture. Of the students in attendance, none of the high schoolers had ever listened to the song or watched the video. What I thought was a timeless classic turned out to be a lost staple among the youth. That sparked an entirely new experience for all of us in the room. Suddenly, it became acceptable for these teenagers to develop and share their honest opinions about gender equality and domestic violence. Whether they agreed to curb their use of oppressive language or not, they learned how to address sensitive topics in a non-combative way. It was apparent that by engaging in that type of open conversation, we grew as a family unit. There were none of the restricting elements of power and rigid structure apparent in the room. What occurred was a connection between high school students and recent college graduates that proved to each of us that by collectively exploring the powers of Hip Hop, we were certainly tapping into something more grand than a simple afterschool club for rappers.[3]

> In a sense, Hip Hop is and has been a mentor to students of the game like myself.

The Mentoring

As a member of the black community, I grew up hearing the phrase, "it takes a village to raise a child." As a member of the Atlanta artist community, I have witnessed countless poets and rappers use their platforms to speak on the *needs of the people* or how much *needs to be done* in our community. What has been missing, however, is a rolling opportunity for those artists to be held accountable for their claims. By extending an invitation for local artists to join CYPHER as guest mentors, we provide students with a broader and more realistic perspective of mentoring. During my service with AmeriCorps and my previous mentoring/tutoring involvements, program directors always stressed the importance of consistency in relationship building. The life of a performing artist does not allot much time for stringent commitments like those typical of a formal mentoring program. It is important to us that the students learn that lesson as well. From that perspective, the rules of formal mentoring are not really applicable with our program.

We explain to our mentees that guest mentors are like cousins in our family. They may not be there every time you go home, but when they are present you are reminded that they, too, are members of the family. In formal mentoring, consistency leads to longer and stronger relationships (Rhodes 2007). Alternatively, our approach is marked by the notion that the relationships should be forged between the mentees and Hip Hop rather than stressing the importance of individual ties.

A key factor in our high school member involvement is that they are vital to the success and sustainability of CYPHER's mission. I refer to it as our multi-generational mentoring program. Middle school students receive mentoring from the high school students. Everyone receives mentoring from the adult mentors. This provides teenagers with an opportunity to groom younger students while learning important organizational and life skills. Instead of challenging the adolescent fight for independence, we equip them with the tools and the confidence to achieve new gains. As they demonstrate an understanding of the responsibility tied to the powers of Hip Hop, we place students in positions that challenge them to become servant leaders. For example, our high school students now like to coordinate their own studio sessions. This was a process they had to learn from us walking them through it a few times. They also like to invite or coach younger students in these sessions. On many occasions, my team and I have watched students pass down lessons and sometimes exact

[3] I refer to the five elements of Hip Hop as the "powers of Hip Hop." A widespread understanding of these elements is outlined by the teachings of the Universal Zulu Nation. They are Graffiti, Emceeing, DJing, Bboy/girling, and Knowledge. See http://new.zulunation.com/elements/

quotes from our work with them.

In a sense, Hip Hop is and has been a mentor to students of the game like myself. I learned to be keen to toxicity of domestic violence from Eve's hit song, "Love is Blind." Master P's journey as an investor and businessman taught me about the linkage between street hustle and business acumen (Strauss 1998). When the early 2000s ushered in the Snap Music craze, my friends and I learned how to improvise with numbers of people by engaging in synchronized social dance (Clark 2016). The list of fond memories and the lessons they taught me is endless. In summary Hip Hop teaches its loyal students how to be whomever they want to be.

The Process and the Point

One of my twelve-year-old students, Taygen, says it best, "I realize Hip Hop is more complex than it seems. Do you want to ask yourself, 'Is it possible?' or tell your future self, 'I can do this, just keep on trying.'" The likelihood of unknowingly teaching nuanced lessons like that to a sixth grader in a traditional program does not seem probable. This is why I emphasize Hip Hop culture. At every turn in life, I have consciously and subconsciously viewed the world around me through this lens. Perhaps students like Taygen will take into account what they learn from CYPHER and apply it to areas that are not clearly demarcated as within the boundaries of Hip Hop. Imagine the power behind implementing that level of metacognitive thinking to everything from educational pursuits to social settings or business ventures.

Being committed to youth advocacy forces me to push the boundaries of existing practices. It is inexplicably common for people within our community to complain about the problems with "kids these days." It perplexes me when we as a community expect young adults to just know all there is to know about life because everything is best learned through experience. My hope is that students continue to find themselves in the work that I do integrating Hip Hop into my computer science classroom and my youth mentoring organization. CYPHER as youth advocacy is a challenge and a call to socially conscious artists to step up and put our actions where our words are. ■

ERICA LOUISE RICHARDS, best known as RICA G., is an Atlanta-based lyricist and educator who believes in using Hip Hop culture to improve the conditions of the world around her.

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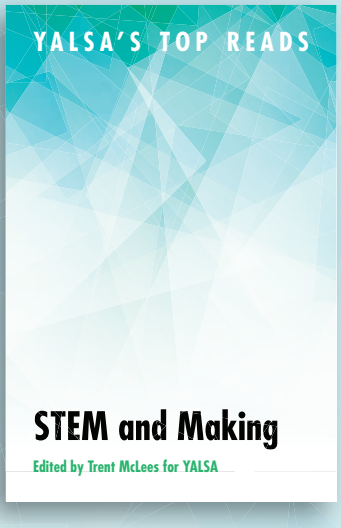

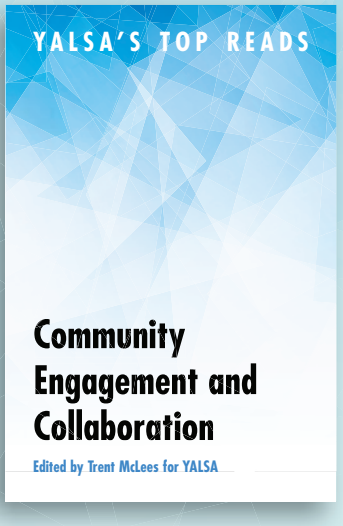

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Advocating for Teens in Public Libraries+

Exploring the ways library staff can advocate for teens in the library.

Tiffany Boeglen & Britni Cherrington-Stoddart

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 41,731,233 young people ages 10–19 living in the United States in 2015[1]. That's roughly thirteen percent of the total U.S. population. Yet, teens are often underserved and underrepresented in public libraries. The reasons why are both frustrating and sometimes predictable. Deficiencies related to funding can play a large role in reducing or eliminating services for teens. Whether it's scarcity of resources, a reduction in open hours, or the absence of dedicated teen-serving staff, some public libraries have found themselves struggling to provide even minimal services for teens. In addition to these challenges, at times there is also resistance in providing services for this age group simply because of perceptions people have about teens. Behaviors such as talking loudly, extreme fashion choices, engaging in horseplay, etc., can cause a great deal of frustration for staff and library customers, resulting in a lack of support for programming and services that keep teens in the library.

Despite these challenges, there are still many passionate librarians working in public libraries across the country whose drive to work with teens compels them to find ways to overcome these obstacles so they can provide valuable and much-needed programming for this often perplexing age group. The struggle comes in how to prevail in spite of the difficulties. It can be hard to convince those resistant to teen services of their value, but purposeful and thoughtful advocating for young adults can be a powerful tool. The question then becomes how do we advocate effectively? Fortunately there is a great deal of evidence backed up by compelling research that supports the many benefits of having teen services in libraries. By looking at current research, this article will address why offering teen services in public libraries is so important. It will consider the impact that developing programs and services in direct line with the emotional and

1. ACT for Youth: http://www.actforyouth.net/adolescence/demographics/)

social needs of this age group can have on participants. It will also address the importance of partnering with other teen-serving organizations within the community, highlight the many benefits such relationships offer the library, and explore ways in which library staff can effectively advocate locally and nationally for teen services.

Research and Teens

As community-minded organizations with missions ranging from enriching lives and creating lifelong learners to nurturing a thriving community, public libraries are a natural space to foster unique and much-needed services for young adults. In order to understand how libraries can positively affect the lives of teens through programming and services, it's important to first understand what it is that they need and why they need it. According to *The Teen Brain: Still Under Construction*, a publication released by the National Institute of Mental Health, teenage brains experience extensive changes throughout adolescence. Once believed to reach maturity in childhood, we know how the human brain experiences significant growth and change throughout adolescence (https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-still-under-construction/index.shtml). Studies have shown that at the time of adolescence the area of the brain most fully developed is the part responsible for instinctual reactions and emotional responses; while the area responsible for managing more complex thoughts like reasoning, long-term planning, impulse control, judgment, and anticipating consequences is not yet fully mature until our early twenties. So what does this mean? In short, teens don't think like adults. How they make sense of the experiences they have and the environment that they grow up in can have a significant impact in shaping their future behavior.

In the late 1990s, the Search Institute, a Minnesota-based organization dedicated to researching what it takes for young people to succeed, developed a list of assets or experiences that children and teens must have to grow into healthy, responsible, and well-rounded adults. These 40 Developmental Assets (http://www.search-institute.org/content/40-developmental-assets-adolescents-ages-12-18) take into account the emotional and social needs of young adults at a time when their brains are experiencing significant changes and outlines different ways specific experiences can positively benefit and prepare them as they grow into adults. The list highlights both external and internal assets, identifying key experiences teens need. These assets include, but are not limited to: Caring Neighborhoods, Service to Others, Positive Peer Influence, Creative Activities, Reading for Pleasure, Personal Integrity, Planning and Decision Making, Resistance Skills, Peaceful Conflict Resolution, and Sense of Purpose. These resources and research provide us with a road map to help us know how to better serve our teens.

Programming for Teens

For the past decade, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (CMLibrary) has used the extensive research centered on teen brain development along with the Search Institute's forty developmental assets to build a core catalog of programming and services that take into account the exceptional needs of the young adult population. Programs such as Tutoring for Teens, Community Service Saturdays, and College 101 offer participants the chance to experience some of the Search Institute's healthy building blocks. Through these programs, CMLibrary can reasonably expose teens who participate in teen programming to approximately twenty-five of the Search Institute's forty assets.

One of CMLibrary's strongest examples of a program designed with adolescent developmental needs in mind is the system's VolunTeen program. In the mid-2000s, CMLibrary began to create a volunteer program specifically designed for young adults. Notably, that this program was not intended to mirror the system's active adult volunteer program. While adult programs afford volunteers the chance to give back to their community, they are based more on what adults can give the library. While teens also volunteer to give back, the VolunTeen program is more about what the library can provide for them.

For example, interested teens are required to apply for the program during a designated time frame. This requires them to plan ahead and make decisions in order to be considered. It also emulates the process of applying for college. Applicants are required to attend a professional style interview for which staff help them prepare. They are required to read and respond to e-mail in a timely fashion and follow directions. If selected, participants then must attend a mandatory orientation and training. Teens in the program are held accountable for being on time, communicating with staff when they need to make scheduling adjustments, managing their time effectively, their work performance, and more. They learn the importance of asking for help when they need it. For teens who return to the program for additional sessions, many have the opportunity to take on leadership roles, such as helping to train new incoming participants. Staff take time to provide feedback so teens are aware of how they're doing and what, if anything, they need to work on. For many kids the experience they gain from participating in a program like this is the only workforce development

experience they may have before they apply for jobs or college. While a program like this is more demanding for staff, it has a lasting and quantifiable impact on those who take part.

This program doesn't benefit only the young adults who are accepted. All teens who apply are granted an interview, so even applicants who are not selected benefit from the initial communication requirements as well as the experience of the interview itself. They are given feedback on their interview as well as a list of other volunteer opportunities in the community and are encouraged to apply again. Staff make every effort to positively impact teens regardless of how they interact with them through this program and are fortunate to often have the opportunity to forge relationships, many of which last into adulthood.

This represents just one of the many programs the library offers that was designed specifically to meet the developmental needs of adolescents. The creation of such programs demonstrates the ways in which using current research on the social and brain development of teens may be used to create programming designed to benefit them as they grow into adulthood and work toward becoming productive members of society. These programs may then be used to demonstrate the positive effect that the library has on the lives of community teens and to argue for more funding and greater support for the library and its services.

Partnering with Local Organizations

Opportunities to positively affect teens should not be strictly limited to in-house efforts. Fostering partnerships with teen-serving organizations within the community is another great way to bolster services and strengthen advocacy efforts for teens outside the walls of the library. CMLibrary sustains a number of these partnerships, one of the most extensive being the relationship between the library and the public school system. CMLibrary and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) have worked together to create ONE Access, a program that makes the library's resources available to all CMS students by allowing their student ID to function as a library card. According to the library's website, "…more than 100,000 of 147,000 CMS students accessed Library services using their student IDs in an initiative called ONE Access" (https://www.cmlibrary.org/oneaccess). The success of this program highlights the important role that the library plays in supplementing the education of teens and children within the community.

College 101 represents another partnership that serves to enhance the educational opportunities of community teens. College 101 is a series of college readiness programs implemented by organizations such as the Princeton Review and local community college, and offered by the library. These programs provide teens with information and advice concerning college prep, financial aid, scholarships, college admissions essays, and more. They also allow students to take free practice ACT and SAT exams. College 101 programming offers teens information that is vital to their college career at no cost, allowing them to more confidently pursue a college education.

Safe Place exemplifies another unique partnership that the library has formed. Libraries have traditionally been viewed as a "safe space" for teens and children. YALSA's "A Call to Action," addresses this saying, "At the most basic level, libraries provide a safe and welcoming place for all teens. Public libraries are often described as safe places where teens can go after school or in the summer to stay off the streets. For many homeless teens, the library is a place to be out of the elements and to connect with others."(11) Safe Place takes this a step further by making the library a place that teens may turn to in times of crisis. Safe Place is described as "a national youth outreach and prevention program for young people in need of immediate help and safety. As a community-based program, Safe Place designates businesses and organizations as Safe Place locations, making help readily available to youth in communities across the county" (http://nationalsafeplace.org/what-is-safe-place/). Teens and children that are experiencing a crisis may come to the library and request a "Safe Place," and library staff will work with community partner, The Relatives, to ensure that these individuals receive the help needed. The Relatives is an organization that exists to help "children and youth find shelter and support … The Relatives serves as the Safe Place agency for Mecklenburg County and the surrounding area, partnering with local businesses to ensure young people in need have access to immediate help and supportive resources" (http://www.therelatives.org/about-us/). This allows the library to play a vital role in positively affecting the lives of youth by serving as a place of safety and refuge.

In addition to serving as a Safe Place, the library partners with other community organizations that help to promote inclusivity and diversity. One such partner is Time Out Youth (TOY). TOY is described as an organization that "is a place where you can experience a sense of belonging and community. Whether you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, a straight ally—or just don't want to be labeled, you

will be welcomed here" (http://www.timeoutyouth.org/content/about). Many libraries within the system have invited speakers from TOY to discuss LGBT issues with teens and promote their organization. The importance of such services is highlighted in YALSA's "A Call to Action" saying, "Schools nationwide are hostile environments for a distressing number of LGBT students." In offering such programs the library is expressing to all teens that it is a safe place regardless of race, gender, religious belief, or sexual orientation. In turn the library is able to offer programming and services to TOY that support the organization and its mission, as well as community teens.

Advocating Locally and Nationally

Advocating for teen services within the public library can be difficult, especially when faced with issues such as unsupportive staff and lack of funding. An effective way to combat this is to present a carefully compiled list of statistics and research that demonstrate teen presence within the community and the library. Such information provides support for the inclusion of programming and services for teens. It may also be used to demonstrate the diversity of the teen population. YALSA's "A Call to Action" discusses the significant shift in the demographics of the teen population saying, "there are currently 74.2 million children under the age of eighteen in the United States; 46% of them are children of color . . . Children of mixed race grew at a faster rate than any other group over the past decade, increasing by 46 %." Demonstrating the diversity of the teen population effectively argues for the development of a wide variety of programs and resources. Circulating surveys and hosting focus groups that directly inquire after the needs of this age group, especially as they relate to workforce development and educational support, provide additional evidence to support the need for teen services.

> Demonstrating this vital community role allows the library to more effectively advocate for funding and support for enhancing and extending services.

Each partnership that the library creates serves to enhance the services and programming offered to teens so that their needs may be more effectively met. In doing so, the library also creates an ally within the community that is able to articulate how their work with the library directly benefits youth. These partnerships may then be used to exemplify the important role that this organization plays in the community as a leader in the effort to meet the developmental and academic needs of teens. The library is therefore not operating within a vacuum but is actively involved with various community organizations that allow it to expand its efforts and reach more

Dedicated teen services staff are in a position to provide information that indicates the extent to which teens use the library. Teen services staff spend time fostering relationships with their teen patrons, determining their needs, and really getting to know and understand them. YALSA's "A Call to Action" relates the importance of relationship building saying, "To support their learning—personal, work-related, and academic—library staff must connect with teens as individuals . . . This theme was echoed by other participants, who used words like allies, mentors, coaches, and partnerships to describe the relationships that library staff must develop with teens in order to provide effective and substantive programs and services" (Braun, 10). Staff that take the time for relationship building with their teen patrons can design and implement dynamic programming and services, and relate to others why this is necessary. One very effective form of advocacy used within by CMLibrary is Stories of Real Success. Stories of Real Success are interactions with patrons, in which staff or the library have had a positive impact on a customer. In relation to teens specifically, these stories often take the form of a teen participating in the library's VolunTeen program and later using that experience to obtain a job, or developing a love of the library while participating in teen programs and then choosing to pursue a career in library services. These stories provide tangible examples of the ways in which the library can play a vital role in positively influencing a young person's growth and development. Combining statistical data with examples of impact provides a

strong case for the development and implementation of services for teens. This information may then be shared with library administration, staff, and members of the public to demonstrate why offering teen services is necessary and beneficial.

Sharing this information on a national level is equally important in terms of advocating for teen services as a whole. Professional development opportunities, such as conference presentations and poster sessions, as well as writing for blogs and journals, allow teen services staff to impart valuable knowledge and experience with others. These venues promote the sharing of ideas and information that may be used to improve upon library services nationally. Advocating on a national level also allows the library to tell its story. It can often be very discouraging when fighting for funding and staff for teen services and consistently being faced with obstacles. However, hearing from others who have encountered the same issues and found ways to overcome such roadblocks is extremely empowering and encouraging.

Conclusion

While teens represent a sizable portion of the population, they are often underserved and underrepresented within the public library. It therefore becomes the responsibility of teen-serving staff to advocate for this group of individuals, as this staff is in a unique position to share current research and personal experiences that demonstrate a need for services for teens. Teen-serving staff can point to the impact that developing programs and services in direct line with the emotional and social needs of this age group can have on participants. They can also address the many benefits that partnering with other teen-serving organizations can give to the library. Armed with this information and support, teen-serving staff have the tools necessary to effectively advocate for teen services at all levels.

TIFFANY BOEGLEN has been a librarian with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, North Carolina, for eleven years, seven of which were spent in teen services. She currently serves as an adult services librarian in the main library of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library system. BRITNI CHERRINGTON-STODDART has been a teen services librarian for four years and is currently the teen services lead librarian at the Independence Regional branch of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

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http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/District_Days

Creating a Unique Brand for Your School Library: Values, Vision, Voice, and Visuals

Increasing your library's visibility as a form of advocacy.

Kelsey Barker

"I wish I could just sit in here and read all day!"

Approximately the one thousandth time I heard that statement in just my first year, I nearly lost my mind. As a school librarian, I know that I am an integral part of my school—and I am busy every second of the day!—so why do students, parents, and staff continue to saddle me with this antiquated stereotype?

Frustrated and desperate for the credit I felt I deserved, I did something that would later prove to be one of the most valuable advocacy moves I could make. I made a logo for my library, and I put it on everything—all my lesson plans, how-to technology guides for teachers, parent communications, and anything else I could copy and paste that JPEG onto. Suddenly, teachers, administrators, and parents were stopping by to recognize my contributions. Just identifying the origin of something useful was enough to create a connection with stakeholders!

Excited about this idea, I read everything I could find about branding on websites like Spruce Rd, Career Contessa, Brit and Co, and Levo League. I learned that branding is so much more than a logo—it is the intentional alignment of everything you do to support a larger goal. Because branding my school library would look different from personal or entrepreneurial branding, I distilled ideas from these resources down to four main concepts that apply to branding a library: Values, Vision, Voice, and Visuals. These ideas have aligned everything from the policies I set to the displays I create with the thoughtfully formed purpose of my program and emphasizing the role that the school library plays within the institution and the community. I have created a unique and authentic brand for my library that portrays cohesion, consistency, and professionalism to my stakeholders.

When it comes to advocating for your school library, you are probably already sharing on the school website or social media, holding special events, and sharing pro-library literature with your administrators and staff. So how will creating a library brand help elevate your advocacy efforts? The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) advocacy committee defines advocacy as an "on-going process of building partnerships so that others will act for and with you, turning passive support into educated action for the library program. It begins with a vision and a plan for the library program that is then matched to the agenda and priorities of stakeholders." Creating a library brand makes this happen in two ways: it establishes vital foundations of your program that will inform how the library is seen by stakeholders, and it clearly communicates the library's worth and roles in the lives of students, teachers, and community members. Rather than concentrating advocacy efforts to reactively insist on importance, we proactively focus on conveying that the library's vision and plan are already aligned with that of the larger organization and the goals of teachers and students. Unite the great work you are already doing under a common purpose, then let that great work speak for itself. Instead of demanding to be seen and appreciated, refine your program and show how your program shines in your school, organization, and community.

Organizations spend thousands for professional branding, but you already have everything you need to create a library brand—your unique library program! Carefully consider the values that drive your program, how you want it to grow and develop, the voice you use to communicate about your program, and how it is visually represented. Each area will help refine your message and allow you to create a library brand that is professional, authentic, and uniquely your own, and that will function as an advocacy tool for your library.

Values

The important first step of developing your library's unique brand is identifying the values that guide it. These are the big ideas that form the foundation of your library program. Your values reflect your "why"—the reason your program exists. With solid values in place, the path forward is clear. Your values inform everything you do, and establishing them provides a reference point for every decision. They reveal the priorities and strengths of your program, and determining which values are right for yours will enable you to create a clear message for your brand.

To pinpoint which values drive your program, make a list of as many of the important elements as possible; you may value collaboration, creativity, openness, or imagination. Your list should include both the existing strengths of your program and your aspirations for the future. Narrow down the list to the three to five most essential ideas. Congratulations, you have found your values! Labeling these key concepts is the first step to branding your library.

The values of your library program will form the heart of a clear and cohesive library brand, but you should also use your values as a guide to inform your practice. When you examine your library through the lens of the things you find most important, it is easy to see what components align and which do not. Consider how you spend your time in the library. How much of your week is filled with tasks that truly align with your values? If a driving value is continued education, you should be spending time reading professional journals or blogs, attending professional development, or viewing webinars online. If you are sacrificing these activities for others that do not support your values, it may be time to adjust your schedule. It can be enlightening to compare your priorities in principle to the things you prioritize in practice. Assess other aspects of your program with your values in mind, and you may find areas that are ripe for improvement.

There are so many incredible things happening in school libraries all over the world. Every time I read a blog or look at Twitter, I see another brilliant idea that I am itching to try. Identifying the values that drive your program will make it clear which new ideas reflect those values and are worth pursuing, which ideas you might revise to better serve your purpose, and which are not a good fit for your program. This relieves you from the pressure to do it all, instead doing the important things well and creating a more cohesive program. Your values inform the curation of a quality library program, and when they inspire your unique brand, that quality shines through.

Vision

Once you have established the values that inspire your program, take a page from the books of countless major organizations and create mission and vision statements for your library. There is a reason that many corporations, institutions, and most likely the school or district that employs you have published mission and vision statements; these statements clearly and concisely provide critical information about the priorities, purpose, and long-term goals of the organization. Writing mission and vision statements for your library is not only an important part of advocacy but, like identifying your values, it is a beneficial exercise in mindfully reflecting on your practice. It can be difficult to distill all of the many important functions of your library into a couple of powerful sentences, but once you do, your mission and vision will guide your practice forward.

A mission statement is a one- to two-sentence declaration of your library's values, purpose, and importance. Think of it as an elevator pitch for your program; a mission statement conveys what you stand for in a way that is easy for stakeholders to understand. When writing your mission statement, consider how you want your program to be seen by students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community. If your district or school has published a mission statement, let it inspire your own. A mission statement that clearly supports that of the larger organization with like ideas and similar language leaves no question that the library is a vital component that supports the goals of the parent organization.

Other things to consider when creating your mission statement include community partnerships, the role of the library in student learning, and leadership responsibilities. Ask yourself how you would like people to feel when they visit your space, and revisit your values to make sure your mission aligns. It may be useful to look at the mission statements of organizations you admire, but it is important to make your statement reflect your library's unique nature. Your mission statement tells the world what your program is all about, so make sure what it is saying is authentic.

When you have written a mission statement that clearly defines your

values, purpose, and importance, you can begin to think about the orientation of your program moving forward. A vision statement requires you to consider how to continuously stay true to your mission, and it will be the guiding force that leads you into the future mindfully and in alignment with your values. A vision statement conveys the direction that your program is headed in by defining the ideal future. What does it mean to succeed in your mission? What does your school or library look like if everything you do is one hundred percent effective? What strengths and assets will get you there? Though it may seem unrealistic to consider the answers to these questions, clarifying your definition of success shows stakeholders that the library program is dedicated to continued growth and improvement. Understanding where you are headed provides motivation and direction for your program and can help inspire the creation of the more tangible daily, monthly, and yearly goals that will get you where you want to be.

If you look to other institutions for vision statement inspiration, you may find that many do not have one. Whether these organizations keep their visions internal or overlook their value altogether, school libraries should not follow their lead. A published vision statement emphasizes both the relevance and future orientation of the school library, and every school librarian knows the importance of demonstrating these two qualities in advocacy. If your school or district does have a vision statement, aligning yours emphasizes the significance of your library program within the larger organization. If you are working from scratch, check out the statements of other school or public libraries. Another great example is the YALSA "About" page, which features both a mission and a vision statement.

When you have polished your mission and vision statements, make them visible to the people who matter. Publish them on the home page of your library website where users will see them every time they visit. Post them on the wall in your library where they are noticeable to any student, parent, or staff member who enters. And do not forget to make them visible to the most important person—you. Post your mission and vision statements somewhere you will see them every day: on your computer, framed on your desk, or taped to the coffeemaker.

Constant reference to the mission and vision you have established will help keep it cohesive, consistent, and headed in the right direction.

Voice

With the foundation of guiding values, a powerful mission, and an ambitious vision, advocating for your school library program is only a matter of conveying these ideas to the world. Determining the unique voice of your library enables you to communicate with stakeholders in a way that supports your mission. Voice is values, mission, and vision in practice, including the application of these principles as well as the tone of written and verbal communication. The 2017 YALSA Advocacy Toolkit (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy) explains that effective advocacy includes "identifying the right audience: in the case of libraries, this could be your library director, coworkers, board of trustees, school board, city council, county commission, or some other group or individual." For school libraries, this list could also include parents, students, and site or district administrators.

> Creating a library brand supports advocacy in two ways: it establishes vital foundations of your program that will inform how the library is seen by stakeholders, and it clearly communicates the library's worth and roles in the lives of students, teachers, and community members.

A thoughtfully defined brand voice expresses professionalism, awareness, and authenticity and gives credibility to your cause by aligning your communication style to your goals. The Advocacy Toolkit also directs librarians to have a persuasive message: "clearly state what you want and why it is important… always tie the 'ask' into the needs of teens and their families." Consider how your values might come across in your advocacy, and appeal to your audience by sharing how they can help the library achieve its vision.

If you have not put much thought into the voice of your library before, it helps to consider it in terms of the established brands you encounter every day. Marketing and advocacy are not dissimilar, and marketing campaigns for your favorite brands are a great place to find inspiration. Take notice of the brands you use and why you prefer them over others. Note what they do well, how they present themselves, and how they are perceived by the public. How do your favorite brands express their values through marketing, and how can your library show yours through the words and images you share in advocacy? Considering the voice of other brands you admire can inspire the unique voice of your library.

A brand voice is the unique personality of your program that comes through in everything you do, including written and verbal communication. The tone of your brand voice may be serious or light-hearted, emotive or understated, academic or humorous, depending on the values of your library. An elementary school library that values curiosity and play may communicate in a bright, bubbly tone, while a prep school library valuing tradition and achievement may interact with formality and restraint. No matter how you decided to communicate, it is essential that the tone of your brand voice is consistent and supports the values of your program.

The unique voice of your library brand is important not only in the words you share but also in the decisions you make that convey that voice to students, staff, and the community. The policies and environment of the library reveal its values whether intentionally or not. A library that values student ownership may have a space for students to post and share their work, while one that values independence might emphasize a self-checkout station. The practices that reflect your values are just as important as the tone with which you communicate them. Students may not read your mission statement on the wall but they will come to understand what the library stands for when they experience it firsthand.

Visuals

Each part of branding your school library shapes the next—the mission statement is inspired by the values, and the vision statement positions the mission toward the future. The brand voice is informed by the values and drives the mission and vision forward. All of the work to define your library brand so far builds to the final component—the visuals. Brand visuals include the color palette, typography, and imagery that give your library brand cohesiveness and a esthetic value. Visuals are the graphic representation of values, vision, and voice, and they convey the elements of your brand to the world with straightforward, professional style.

A consistent color palette for your visuals emphasizes the consistency of your library brand. There may already be colors that show up repeatedly in your space in fixtures or decor. The colors you choose for your palette will appear on library signage, your website, and social media, and inform the creation of your logo. To keep your brand polished and cohesive, choose one or two bold colors and two to three neutral colors for your palette that reflect your values. No need to dive deep into the psychology of color; consider bright colors for energy and enthusiasm, cool tones for calm and relaxation, or neutrals for a traditional feel. Keep your space in mind, including wall color, carpet, and fixtures, and choose colors for your palette that match or complement the existing elements. When you have selected your colors, use tools like the Eyedropper extension in Google Chrome to get the color codes; then you can be sure to use the exact right shade every time. Keeping your color palette consistent shows that you are mindful about the message of your library brand.

Between constant presentations, displays, and instructional tools, school librarians publish a lot of written content, and font has likely been the last thing on your mind. Like a consistent color palette, uniform typography displays a professional and cohesive brand. We have all seen signs typed in an unattractive mix of fonts; you have worked hard to build your program, why not market it with a polished, distinctive look that shows you are thoughtful about your communications? When choosing fonts for your library brand, keep it simple; choose one font that has some character for your logo and headers, but make sure it is readable. Then choose a simple, classic font for body text, comparing the two to be sure they pair well. Use only these two fonts on everything from the library website to your hall passes. The use of consistent typography is one of the simplest ways to create a professional look for your program. Even if your users do not consciously recognize the fonts you choose, your brand typography is a key component of your overall brand message. Think of it this way—if no one notices the font, you are doing something right!

The color palette and typography you choose for your library brand will inform the creation of a brand logo. The quickest way to advocate for your program, a logo is also one of the most valuable advocacy tools you can have and serves many purposes for your library brand. Identify library property such as office supplies, technology, and carts by labeling them with your logo. Use the logo to validate library helper name tags and hall passes, and add it to instructional materials so

that parents and teachers realize your role in student learning. When your logo is featured on everything you create, your stakeholders will come to recognize it and more clearly understand how valuable the library is to the school and community.

If you have never created a logo, do not worry, good logos are very simple. Spend some time looking at the logos of brands you admire for inspiration. Consider symbolism and what kinds of images you might use in your library logo. Using the color palette and typography of your brand and an image if you like, make a simple logo that conveys your library's values. Free online tools like Pixlr and Canva can help you easily create a simple, beautiful logo to show the world what your library is all about. When your logo is ready, put it on everything: social media, desktop backgrounds, presentations to staff and stakeholders, newsletters and parent communications, reports, even your e-mail signature. The more frequently users see your logo, the more recognizable it becomes, and the more effectively it can be used to advocate for your program; a well-placed logo alone can be one of the most effective advocacy tools.

The purpose of school library advocacy is to demonstrate the value of what we do. Unfortunately for school librarians, advocacy often involves justifying our role to legislators, community members, and administrators. Fighting stereotypes and budget cuts may leave us feeling undervalued. Creating a quality brand adds value to any product or service, and school libraries are no exception. A cohesive brand speaks for itself, allowing the amazing work you already do to function as advocacy for your program without adding to your workload: let your value of technological literacy inform your program choices, and students will share with teachers and parents that the library is where they learned to code; add your logo to materials you create, and teachers and administrators will recognize all that you contribute to the school; use your unique voice to tell the story of an awesome day in the library and earn community support that can help support your mission. Branding boosts your advocacy efforts by adding value and visibility to your existing program.

A library brand is most useful in advocacy when it is consistent across all platforms. When your values, vision, voice, and visuals align in a cohesive package, your users recognize that they can expect you to maintain the same priorities, communicate the same way, and act in the same manner all the time. They come to expect a certain standard of performance from you; the expectation of high standards creates value. Applying branding principles to advocacy sets your program apart by clarifying your message and showing stakeholders the importance of your program. By mindfully branding your school library, you show the world a consistent, quality picture of the consistent, quality work you already do.

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Libraries as Refuge for Marginalized Youth

Why it's important for library staff to continually advocate for marginalized teens.

Deborah Takahashi

Library staff working with teens have always been dedicated to making sure that teens see the library as a space that is safe and free from judgment and/or harassment. As many teens in the United States are confronted with challenges related to the current political and social climate, it's important for teen library staff to reaffirm their role as provider of safe space where teens can discover resources and people that will help them make good decisions about their lives and their futures. This is particularly important for those youth who are marginalized and who, as a result, may be in the most need of the services the library does and can provide. With the implementation and adoption of YALSA's *2016–2018 Organizational Plan* (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/OrgPlanAdoption_AN16.pdf) and *Core Professional Values for the Teen Services Profession* (http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Columbia-Youth-Report-FINAL_26-July-2014.pdf), we have been asked to reaffirm this role of advocacy.

Identifying and Serving Marginalized Youth

In 2014, Columbia University hosted the *Columbia Global Policy Initiative* in conjunction with *The Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth* to discuss marginalized youth. According to *Overcoming Youth Marginalization Conference Report and Policy Recommendations* (http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Columbia-Youth-Report-FINAL_26-July-2014.pdf):

> Youth are also likely to face marginalization due to their membership in excluded demographic groups, including: women, indigenous, disabled, LGBTQI, refugee, ethnic minority, migrant, and economically impoverished... This layered marginalization not only infringes upon the human rights of young people, but also has negative effects on the cohesion and stability of the societies in which they live.

In the wake of the election results, youth who identify as LGBTQ flooded national suicide networks expressing their despair and fear. According to Steve Mendelsohn, Executive Deputy Director for the *Trevor Project*, reporting to CNN (http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/11/health/election-crisis-suicide-prevention-hotlines/):

> It's been ongoing since Tuesday night,' he explained. 'Young people are calling us who've never called us before. They're scared, and they don't know who to turn to.... Given all the rhetoric that they've heard leading up to the election, it makes sense that they're frightened.

As young adult (YA) library staff, we are called to help teens advocate for themselves by providing them with uncensored access to information and resources that will assist them in their time of need. In other words, we need to provide teens with resources that are up-to-date and relevant to their needs. We also need to be prepared in case a teen has a crisis in our library where we can assist them in a timely and supportive manner. Since we are not mental health experts, social workers, or legal advocates, we should have the skills to recognize youth in need and refer them to

someone, or an organization, that can help them.

Providing Support to Youth and Library Staff

Teens have been asking questions that we were not prepared to answer. In fact, library staff may have had to endure interactions with patrons where they are upset, grieving, or frustrated. A few teens may have even confided in us as to what they can do to help themselves, their families, and/or someone they know. As these concerns grow, now is the time to provide or create resources (i.e., handouts, brochures, books, *LibGuides*, online weblinks collection) that include topics such as health care (mental and physical), LGBTQ advocacy services, transgender health services, immigration advocates, legal advocates, how teens can spot and report hate crimes, emergency housing, and support groups. We also need to make sure these materials can be accessed in the library and online. If possible, leave information in every corner as anonymity is important to those who feel most vulnerable. Lastly, reach out to community partners and agencies to share these resources and continue to work closely with these partners as their services and resources are always changing.

Share these tools with staff who don't normally work with teens. Whether it's a training notebook, or guides that contain a list of community organizations, websites, phone numbers, or scripts, staff should be prepared to provide assistance with confidence and empathy. As YALSA members, we have access to great resources such as *Webinars on Demand* (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/onlinelearning/webinars/webinarsondemand) and the YALSA Wiki (http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Supporting_Youth_in_the_Post-2016_Election_Climate) particularly the sections on the post-election climate and serving diverse teens. These resources provide a wealth of information to help us find a starting point to ensure that marginalized teens are able to access our services and resources in a safe and welcoming environment.

Collaborating with Schools and City Agencies

If the library has yet to work with city or county public health departments, I highly recommend that we connect with these agencies as they can provide trainings that focus on marginalized youth. Furthermore, we need to establish, or reestablish, relationships with local schools. When teens returned to school (postelection), teachers facilitated difficult conversations where students expressed concern, anxiety, and fear for their families, friends, and themselves. Denver Public Schools, where minority and immigrant students make up a large percentage of their student population, deployed groups of teachers, counselors, leaders, and advocates to help their students grieve and process their feelings. Alan Smith, Denver Public Schools Associate Chief for Culture, Equity, and Leadership Teams, stated (http://www.cpr.org/news/story/denver-teachers-students-are-confronting-the-anxiety-of-a-trump-presidency):

> The district will explain to undocumented families that students will still be educated under federal law. They'll also be providing training for teachers on empathy.

He said teachers can also play a role helping students distinguish between rumors and reality. The district said it will closely monitor attendance and dropout rates going forward, which can spike particularly among undocumented students who may feel a sense of hopelessness about their futures.

As teachers, counselors, leaders, and administrators mobilize to help their students navigate these next four years, libraries can provide another network of support.

Whether it's providing teachers and counselors with information about our services, we need to engage these individuals and ask them what we can do to support their students. In other words, we must go out into our schools to talk with students. A great place to start is to meet with school organizations and clubs. By talking with these teens, we can have an honest dialogue about the library, its services, and find out how we can help teens in our communities. More importantly, these teens may be able to connect us with groups of marginalized youth who may not be aware of what we offer at the library. If getting to the library is an issue, definitely reiterate that we have online resources that can be accessed any time via their mobile devices or computers at schools or at home. As we talk with teens, we also need to communicate with teachers by asking them if they would like us to present our resources

If possible, leave information in every corner as anonymity is important to those who feel most vulnerable.

at the next department meeting. As educators and YA library staff, it's vital that we work and support each other as teens are fretting about the future and it's our job to ensure that they are safe, welcome, and accepted in our school and libraries.

Evaluate and Update Policies and Procedures

By supporting our schools and staff, we need to take an even bigger step that conveys to the community our stance on serving and advocating for teens. The first step we can take is to evaluate ALL of our policies (e.g., behavior, collection, circulation, Internet, etc.) by asking teens to get involved. One way is to start a discussion with our teen advisory boards, local youth organizations, and marginalized youth, to provide valuable insight that can change how we provide service to their groups. When reviewing these policies, ask teens to pay attention to language and timeliness of statements. If polices were adopted twenty years ago, have them note groups of people who may have been overlooked (i.e., people with disabilities and people who identify as LGBTQ). Granted this could take a significant amount of time, but these meetings will convey to teens that their voices matter and their dedication to the library and community is powerful. With this feedback, we need to have a conversation with our directors about revising and/or adopting these new ideas to protect the rights of youth and their rights to use the library and have access to resources.

Transforming YA Spaces into Safe Spaces

Prior to the twentieth century, libraries have served in many different capacities including guarding sacred texts, acting as the epicenter of educational pursuits, and, to some extent, "members only" clubs. However, the events of the last century shifted the library paradigm where libraries have evolved from exclusive to inclusive to a place of refuge. From New York to Washington, D.C., and to Arkansas (http://www.programminglibrarian.org/articles/post-election-library), libraries came to the aid of their teen patrons who were reeling from the November election. From displays to creative outlets, teens now know they have a place to decompress and process the events of today and tomorrow. For marginalized youth, they need to know they are welcome and wanted in the library, so now is the time to dedicate our YA areas and buildings as safe spaces.

In 2014, the city of Ferguson, Missouri, exploded after the death of a local teen, Michael Brown. In an effort to help the community heal, Scott Bonner, Director of the Ferguson Public Library, put up a simple sign stating: "During difficult times, the library is a quiet oasis where we can catch our breath, learn and think about what to do next. Please help keep our oasis peaceful and serene," (http://www.programminglibrarian.org/articles/post-election-library). By designating the library as a "peaceful oasis," patrons were able to sit and process what happened in their city without fearing for their safety. Although events like Ferguson could happen again, libraries need to be proactive and take the necessary steps to creating a safe space for all, especially the youth.

So where exactly do we start? One thing we can do is connect with networks that specialize in providing services to marginalized youth with services and staff training. In 2014, the King County Library, in the state of Washington, connected with *Safe Place* (http://nationalsafeplace.org/what-is-safe-place/):

Safe Place is a national youth outreach and prevention program for young people in need of immediate help and safety. As a community-based program, Safe Place designates businesses and organizations as Safe Place locations, making help readily available to youth in communities across the country. Locations include: libraries, YMCAs, fire stations, public buses, various businesses, and social service facilities.

Along with *Safe Place*, there are various organizations such as the *Safe Zone Project* and the *GLSEN Safe Space Kit* that can provide guidelines on how to build a safe space for teens. Once we have established a safe space, we must define what it means and how staff can assist teens who are being bullied or discriminated against. Staff may need additional training or a resource explaining the purpose of the space and how they can help teens. Lastly, the public needs to be educated about safe spaces and understand that teens need to have a place to be who they are without fear or judgment. As information centers, we can easily create an advocacy campaign using displays, posters, and flyers informing patrons where we stand on creating a welcoming inclusive environment for everyone, especially teens.

The Importance of Self-Care

If you were to ask any one in our profession what words describe YA library staff we will most likely hear: passionate, dedicated, and commitment to teens. As we go into the world advocating for teen rights, we need to recognize that we are also human beings who need time to rest and regenerate. Just like teachers, YA library staff are there to wipe the tears and listen to the fear, shame, anger, and sadness. As the country grapples with the current administration, we must work together to support and care for each other. More importantly, we must learn to advocate for ourselves by recognizing that

we need to take care of mental and physical health.

If issues arise in our libraries and/or communities, and we need to vent, get in touch with colleagues, and take a night off. Whether it's meeting at a bar, a restaurant, or coffee shop, we need to feel like we are not alone—so make some time to vent to someone other than our significant others and families. Also, when we leave the library, try to leave work issues at work and NOT bring them home; although our loved ones are there to listen to us, sometimes it can be too much and cause friction at home, which isn't helpful or productive.

When dealing with difficult patrons or situations, remember to take breaks and get some fresh air. If we need to watch fifteen minutes worth of super cute animal videos to make us smile, then bookmark a few websites just in case. There are many self-care tips that can be found in books and online, so take some time to find the routines that work best for our schedules and lifestyles. As YA library staff, we have a tendency to not disconnect from our jobs, but with the issues that we are facing today, we need to be more proactive in our self-care or we will burn out.

The Future of Libraries as Refuge for Marginalized Teens

Serving marginalized teens is not a new phenomenon. Depending on where we are located and the type of community we serve, it is important to recognize that there will always be one or many teens who feel like they don't belong. By providing these teens with a place to call their own, and creating services to help them navigate this chaotic world, we are telling them that they matter. If we run into any opposition, or resistance, from the community, know that we can rely on each other, our state library organizations, YALSA, and ALA to help us fight for these teens. Teens (regardless of their background and circumstances) should never have to fear for their right to live a happy and healthy life. However, when society says otherwise, the call to action will sound and it will be up to us to take a stand. The future may seem bleak for some, but as Albus Dumbledore said in *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light." ■

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From Awareness to Advocacy: An Urban Teen Librarian's Journey from Passivity to Activism

Why it's important to be an active advocate.

David Wang

Today, community engagement and advocacy are essential components of our yearly strategic planning for public libraries. My journey started approximately seven years ago when I began feeling the effects of the economic downturn. I will discuss my thoughts, reactions, and also the initiatives I introduced to combat my growing disillusionment with funding issues. For me, it started as an inception of awareness and became a passionate pursuit for the welfare and improvement of the teens, both living and attending school, in my community library. The rise in importance of community engagement, precipitated by the funding fallout from the 2008 recession, created new opportunities for partnerships and more opportunities for demonstrating our role as educational linchpins in the community.

A chain of events connected originally to the Great Recession of 2008 led to the tri-library systems of New York City (New York Public Library, Brooklyn Library, and Queens Library) losing roughly $65 million in funding (annual operating funds) from FY 2008 through FY 2014 under the Bloomberg administration. The first major restoration of funding for NYC library systems took place in FY 2015 with the advocacy efforts of a united front consisting of library staff, administrators, patrons, supporters, and other various community stakeholders. Mayor Bill de Blasio, the current mayor of New York City, working together with members of the City Council, provided a total restoration of $43 million spread between the three library systems of New York Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, and Queens Library.

In October 2012, after working for approximately three years as a YA librarian in an upper-middle class community in northeast Queens, I was transferred to central Queens tasked with building relationships with teens and tweens from working-class communities (Corona and Flushing). One of the challenges of working in such an ethnically diverse county in the country is that each neighborhood may require somewhat different types of engagement. In my former community readership was relatively high among tweens and teens, so my primary goals were collection development and arts programming. In the new-immigrant Asian and Latino communities of Corona and Flushing, I was more concerned with literacy and college and career readiness. The population density combined with the number of families turning to the community library for afterschool programming from homework help to college and career guidance was quite substantial. So, given the budget crisis and understaffing, librarians and support staff were often juggling multiple roles but continuing to provide quality service through day-to-day reference and related programming.

During this time, I became more active in YALSA, attending conferences, participating in award jury committees, and developing professionally while recharging my batteries in a manner of speaking. In spring 2014, I began my turbulent odyssey toward advocacy when Queens Library reopened the Queensboro Hill community branch after approximately three years of renovation. Over the span of fifteen to twenty years, the demographics and ethnic makeup of this south-Flushing neighborhood had

transformed into an enclave of mostly single-story homes largely owned by mainland Chinese and Chinese Americans from Wenzhou and Fujian. Most of these families were new immigrants who tended to be apolitical, insular, and extremely hard working.

Children and young adults from the community were often left on their own after school in the library while their parents were at work; grandmothers often tried to keep up with their dependent grandchildren and looked to the library staff for support. On top of barriers related to language and culture working with ethnic communities, our staff of three librarians were asked to embrace, engage, and foster relationships with a daily average of thirty to forty high school students from the local high school. As the YA librarian, I quickly realized that we would be overwhelmed with everything from issues of delinquency and nascent gang violence to cultural and language communication issues. After six months, we were in need of more staffing in the form of bilingual youth counselors and librarians and more funding for educationally engaging programs. New immigrant youth groups visited our branch daily, hanging out with their ESL brethren, ostracized by their more assimilated peers, and given up on by their overburdened ESL or bilingual education teachers. I attempted to connect volunteer mentors with many of them, introducing them to career options through Career Discovery workshops. We wanted additional librarians to help in the overall community engagement and day-to-day programming revolving around children, tweens, and teens.

In the YALSA "Issue Brief: Teens Need Libraries," the point about teens needing additional help and guidance preparing for college and the workforce particularly struck a chord with me. When I attended high school in New York City, we had roughly eight hundred students in our graduating class but only two college counselors and four guidance counselors. Figuring the poor ratio of students to counselors, I realized, thinking back, that it was a combination of a special mentor and my support network of friends and classmates that helped me navigate the college exploration and application process. Today, speaking with young adults and college students at the library, I connect, using a shared experience, by talking about the first job I held at my high school and how it is similar to a page position for a teen here in the library. As the YA librarian at my community library in Queensboro Hill, I realized that I could serve as that special mentor for a number of my teens and high school students with whom I could develop a rapport.

The local high school has a senior class of roughly 900 students with two college counselors and six guidance counselors. The challenge of overcoming the systemic problems of overcrowding and understaffing in New York City Public schools is real; with my burgeoning drive to connect my advocacy to my day-to-day work, I began to apply for grants, write game design and coding class proposals, and organize and facilitate career development/guidance workshops. I invited people from across my network to speak about their careers and the work and choices they made that helped them reach their goals. I wanted my teens to be able to connect with real people who are working in careers they may aspire to or have questions about. My teens were an incredibly diverse group hailing from countries including Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, China, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Beginning in 2015, I began requesting more staff and assistance from my manager and administration so that I could dedicate more of my time to program development instead of spending time staffing the reference desk. Usually, the answer, rarely provided in a direct fashion, was often equated with a general theme of budget cuts and decreased funding from the city. The essential takeaway for me was that advocacy would help bridge the gap between what was possible to what was ideal. Over time, I concluded that the only way for me to proactively address these issues of understaffing and limited resources at the library was to advocate for greater funding and champion the needs of my community library. I wanted positive change in the form of staffing reinforcements and greater funding for engaging, life-changing programs, so I decided to move from administrative pleas to advocacy.

I wanted positive change in the form of staffing reinforcements and greater funding for engaging, life-changing programs, so I decided to move from administrative pleas to advocacy.

These advocacy efforts I took part in all took place within a span of approximately ten weeks between early April and mid-June 2015. First, I signed up to attend an "Invest In Libraries" campaign rally at City Hall (http://www.investinlibraries.org/) where library staff, administration, and community supporters coalesced to voice their concerns and announce the demand for full budget restoration to the three library systems of New York City. In the following weeks, I joined fellow librarians, library government and community affairs staff, and our union leaders (Local 1321) to convince local politicians, through scheduled face-to-face meetings, to demand that Mayor de Blasio restore $65 million to the NYC library systems. In the last week before the NYC budget was to be finalized, my staff, administration, and community leaders helped to organize our own community library rally at Queensboro Hill (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_39MpGQ-dKTw). It was a display of civics in action and the power of a community when it is united for a just cause.

The Queens Library administration worked hand in hand with frontline staff, the union leadership (Local 1321), Urban Librarians Unite (a library advocacy organization), elected officials, and community stakeholders across practically every neighborhood in the borough. As an example of an introverted librarian, my personality did not fit the profile with that of a community activist. It was a difficult step for me, but I realized that in order to create a teens-first atmosphere and effect positive change in our community and our library, many voices needed to come together to echo our plight to both our mayor and elected politicians. I saw my activism as a form of advanced civics; my community needed advocates to help with adequate funding of public libraries, and I decided that I needed to step up and serve as an advocate.

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Making a Case for Teens Services: Transforming Libraries and Publishing

Advocacy can come in many forms, but always focuses on the teens.

Audrey Hopkins

Contemplating the evolution of youth services is similar to revisiting my own childhood. I've always been a library kid. My mother is a librarian, so I grew up in and around librarians and libraries. I would spend hours navigating the physical library, microfiche, and later databases on my own. As a teenager I became a volunteer at a local library and assisted with their summer reading program. Having practically grown up in libraries, advocating for teen services came naturally, and established the foundation of my passion for youth advocacy. I had a physical space I could go to that made me feel safe, and countless resources; whether it was librarians eager to assist me, or books that exposed me to different thoughts, worlds, or perspectives. Though I didn't realize it at the time, reading for pleasure was a gift. It taught me practical knowledge, as well as empathy, and helped me find my voice for the things that were and are important to me, such as social justice and human rights. My experiences reinforced a love and commitment to information, public service, equal access, and the belief that the public library should be an inclusive community without confines.

As a Teen Services Librarian now I realize how lucky I was to have those experiences, and I appreciate the transformative impact they've had on me. Through my involvement with libraries as a youth and a professional, I was able to experience and participate in the evolution of youth and teen services firsthand.

As a teen I read the *Sweet Valley High* series, followed by S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* countless times. I only knew of realistic fiction in the young adult genre. Then, the *Harry Potter* series came along which had a huge impact on me, my peer group, and the young adult demographic. Finally, a magical high fantasy series of considerable girth in which I could also grow with

the characters, and I had options! *Harry Potte*r served as a gateway for not only young people, but also the young adult publishing industry. Due to a baby boom in 1992, a renaissance of Young Adult Literature occurred in the early 2000's, and has been on the rise ever since. In return, we also have as many options if not more for young adults in variety and genre selection when compared to Adult. Science Fiction has its Dystopian subgenre, and more recent successors such as Steampunk, Cyberpunk, Social Science Fiction, etc. Not to mention the coalescence of completely different genres, such as Alternative History's that combines Historical Fiction with any other genre. The possibilities of previously unheard of and untapped hybrids were now a reality (http://www.cnn.com/2013/10/15/living/young-adult-fiction-evolution/).

The hallmark of what makes Young Adult Literature is the reflection of firsts and the shared human experience of transformation which, prior to the early 2000's was not as readily accessible. Young Adult Literature has been an unstoppable powerhouse ever since. Not only because it provides a relatable teen voice previously overlooked, but also because of adult interest in the genre. As quoted by the Association of American Publisher's in 2014, "The area of largest growth for the trade category was children & young adult, which had double-digit growth in both revenue (20.9%) and units (13.5%). Children & Young Adult Fiction surpassed the Adult Fiction market with 843 million units and 746 million units sold respectively" (http://newsroom.publishers.org/us-publishing-industrys-annual-survey-reveals-nearly-28-billion-in-revenue-in-2015). That was also the year that John Green' *The Fault in Our Stars* was released in paperback. A pivotal milestone for Young Adult Literature, which would also go on to help pave the way for New Adult; Literature that bridged the gap between young adults and early 20 somethings. One could say that 2014 was the year that Young Adult Literature saved the publishing industry.

> No matter how teens make use of the library's teen spaces for technology, social reasons, reading, or community, they have a place to call their own.

In sync with literature, Teen Services has also evolved. Teen Services have been making strides from the traditional house of books and extension of the public school system, to fulfilling other roles involving civics and community. A first priority for libraries is to present unbiased information and materials while providing safe spaces for ingenuity and creativity inclusive to all teen populations. No matter how teens make use of the library for the teen space, technology, social reasons, reading, or community, they have a place to call their own.

Teens within the past two decades have requested the following needs from their libraries: "Research and homework help, Internet/computer access, opportunities to volunteer, teen-friendly spaces where they can study and socialize, useful teen websites, access to technologies they value, as well as technology-driven services that include online personalized readers' advisory and mobile apps" (http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/2014/05/beyond-books-nooks-and-dirty-looks-the-history-and-evolution-of-library-services-to-teens-in-the-united-states/).

My own current experience corroborates this information. I presently oversee Teen Services for a public library in Texas. In order to meet those needs we have a teen room for 6th through 12th graders that features laptops, gaming units, and a maker-space where teens can create electronic textiles using Arduinos, as well as traditional making materials. It also houses the Young Adult collection. The room constantly buzzes with teens and energy. It was designed with a pop art aesthetic reminiscent of the artist Roy Lichtenstein, and is radically different from the subtle organic aesthetic found throughout the Children's and Adult departments. It also has music of teen interest playing at all times. Having a separate space designated for teens is ideal, and has had a profound effect on the popularity of the library's services as well as our personal relationships with teen patrons.

The popularity of the Smith Public Library's teen programs and services is also due to staff having a teen centered attitude. For example, instead of having a traditional book club, we incorporate activities, and depend on feedback from the teens on what it is they want to read. This year we discussed *Red Queen* by Aveyard and played "headbands". Teens had different characters and terms relating to the book on their forehead and would try to guess what was on the card based on clues from other teens. We also discussed Shanna Swendson's *Rebel Mechanics* and hosted

a steampunk party with cosplay and Steampunk crafts as the activity tie-in. The book club averages 30+ participants per meeting and grows each year in response to the teen centered philosophy of staff.

A popular teen program we've offered the past two summers is called Canvas Vandals. It's a Street Art Workshop where teens learn the history and techniques of Street Art, and create an original stencil that they then spray paint on to a surface to take home. Other popular programs include Roller Derby 101, where the Dallas Derby Devils, one of the 2 Roller Derby Organizations of the Dallas/Ft. Worth area come and advocate the sport, explain the game, and we finish up with a few rounds of sock derby. This year popular young adult author Julie Murphy will be leading a discussion for aspiring teen writers.

The Smith Library's teen programming is a huge success for several basic reasons. We understand that teens want content, camaraderie, and value our teen centric approach. Also, that teen's don't attend our programs with the intent of eating food. That is a misconception one sometimes hears as an incentive to get teens to attend library programs. Of course they like food, they're humans! The way to build a teen patronage is to consistently advocate the lives and needs of teens, and to understand that teens are their own population in need of their own ecology. Show the community that teens are of value, and that they need as well as deserve their own space, collection, and consideration. By recognizing the distinct needs and collective interests of teens you can advocate for teen lives and promote lifelong library users.

I realize what a privilege it was for me to grow up in and around libraries and I am forever grateful. However, I can't help but imagine how I would have flourished and loved libraries even more if I would have had access to the private space and programs aimed specifically at teens that are available today. I am hopeful for the future, and eager to watch the continual evolution of library services for teens.

AUDREY HOPKINS is a feminista librarianista extraordinaire who has been working in youth services for the past 5 years. She presently oversees Teen Services for the Smith Public Library of Wylie, TX.

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/blog/yals/submissions/.

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The YALSA Update

Be Part of National Library Legislative Day

Teens and libraries need your support now more than ever. Do your part and learn more about how you can participate in National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) at www.ala.org/NLLD. Can't make the trip to Washington, D.C.? 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.

Teen Book Finder Database Launched!

YALSA has launched its Teen Book Finder Database, the highly-anticipated counterpart to its Teen Book Finder app. The database, generously funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, is a free resource that allows users to search by award, list name, year, author, genre, and more, as well as create personalized lists and locate titles in nearby libraries. The database is replacing all the web pages on the www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists part of YALSA's web site, except for the current year's nominations and latest winners. If you have bookmarked these pages on your library's site, please change those to the database: http://booklists.yalsa.net/. The old web pages will only be available until May 1. Learn more and start exploring the new database at http://booklists.yalsa.net.

Apply Now for YALSA's 2017 Symposium Travel Stipend

Any individual interested in attending YALSA's 2017 Young Adult Services Symposium, taking place in Louisville, KY November 3-5, 2017 can apply by June 1 for one of two travel stipends to offset travel expenses.

Each stipend offers up to $1,000: one to a library worker who works directly with young adults, with at least one year of experience; the second to a student enrolled in an ALA or NCATE accredited library program (you must be a graduate student as of November 2, 2017) with a focus on serving young adults in a library setting. Learn more and apply now through June 1 at www.ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium/stipend.

Unleash Your Story! Teen Read Week™ 2017

Teen Read Week 2017 will be celebrated October 8-14 with the theme of "Unleash Your Story!" The theme encourages libraries to share great stories, tales, memoirs, autobiographies and more from their collections with teens and to help teens write, tell, record, and share their own personal stories.

Visit the official Teen Read Week site (www.ala.org/teenread) for great resources on planning, marketing, and more to help you celebrate.

New 2017-2021 National Research Agenda

YALSA has published its new 2017-2021 National Research Agenda, which identifies five priority areas of research intended to help scholars frame and build more robust findings in their research. The five priority areas are:

- The Impact of Libraries as Teen Formal and Informal Learning Environments
- Library Staff Training, Skills and Knowledge
- Equity of Access
- Cultural Competence, Social Justice and Equity
- Community Engagement

Read the full agenda at www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines/research/researchagenda.

Join YALSA at the 2017 ALA Annual Conference

YALSA has big plans for Annual 2017 – join us in Chicago, IL June 23-26 for four 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: tinyurl.com/YALSAac17.

To register, please visit www.alaannual.org. Advance registration rates end June 16, 2017 at noon. Already registered? Add special events such as the brunch honoring Edwards Award winner, Sarah Dessen, to your existing registration in two ways: (1) by phone: Call CompuSystems at 855-326-8344 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:

- **YALSA and *Booklist* Present: The Michael L. Printz Program and Reception**
  Friday, June 23, 8-10pm
  Kick off your Annual Conference by attending the Michael L. Printz Program and Reception! Listen

to the 2017 Michael L. Printz award-winning authors, John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell, and honor book authors, Louise O'Neill, Julie Berry, Neal Shusterman, and Nicola Yoon, speak about their writing, followed by a reception. The annual award is sponsored by *Booklist* magazine. Tickets – $34.

Margaret A. Edwards Brunch
Saturday, June 24, 11:30am-1pm
Join us for brunch and listen to the 2017 winner, Sarah Dessen, speak about her writing. The award honors an author's significant and lasting contribution to writing for teens. The annual award is sponsored by *School Library Journal*. Tickets – $34

YA Author Coffee Klatch
Sunday, June 25, 9-10am
This informal event gives 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. Every 3 or 4 minutes, a new author will arrive at your table to talk about their upcoming book! Tickets – $25. Coffee, tea, and a continental breakfast included. See the full list of authors participating at tinyurl.com/YALSAac17.

Advanced registration ends June 16, 2017. Register in advance and save on onsite registration costs.

Find more details about registration and housing at the ALA Annual website, www.alaannual.org. For more information on YALSA's Annual Conference schedule, visit the YALSA Annual Conference wiki page, tinyurl.com/YALSAac17.

2018 Annual Conference Program Proposals Open June 1

Proposals for continuing education sessions to be presented at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA: June 22-25, 2018 will be accepted starting June 1, 2017 through August 1, 2017.

YALSA is accepting proposals for creative, innovative programs that address topics of focus in Organizational Plan: www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan

Proposals must fall within one of the following categories:

- Administration/Policy
- Advocacy
- Collections & Content Curation
- Community Engagement & Partnerships
- Programming
- Spaces (physical and virtual)
- Staffing
- Teens/demographics
- Youth Voice & Participation

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 programs that were submitted to determine which programs will move forward. Those who submitted proposals will be notified of their status the week of September 18, 2017. Visit the YALSA website at www.ala.org/yalsa/events for updates.

YALSA Seeks Nominees for 2019 Slate

YALSA is currently seeking candidates for the following board positions: President-Elect, Board Members At-Large, and Division Councilor. Elected board members will begin their work June 25, 2018.

If you have an interest in putting your name on the ballot for one of these positions, we recommend that the first thing you do is learn about what the expectations are for board or committee members. These resources can help:

- Talk to current board members to learn more about board service: www.ala.org/yalsa/board-directors and read about board service online: www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/election

If you think you have both the necessary experience and time available to serve on YALSA's Board, please contact the Governance Nominating Committee Chair, Governance Nominating Committee Chair at sarah@masslibsystem.org to express your interest.

2017 Teens' Top Ten Nominees

By the time you receive this issue, the official nominees for the 2017 Teens' Top Ten will have been announced. Be sure to encourage teens to check out the list and read them over the summer so they can vote for their favorite titles in August! Find the list of nominees and information about voting at www.ala.org/yalsa/teenstopten.

Apply by June 1 for Funds to Present a Paper at the 2018 ALA Midwinter Meeting

One successful applicant will receive up to $1,500 to defray the cost of travel to Denver, CO, to present a paper that addresses one or more priorities in YALSA's Research Agenda. The paper will also be published in an upcoming issue of YALSA's peer-reviewed, open source *Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*. Learn more and apply at http://www.ala.org/yalsa/awardsandgrants/mwpaper

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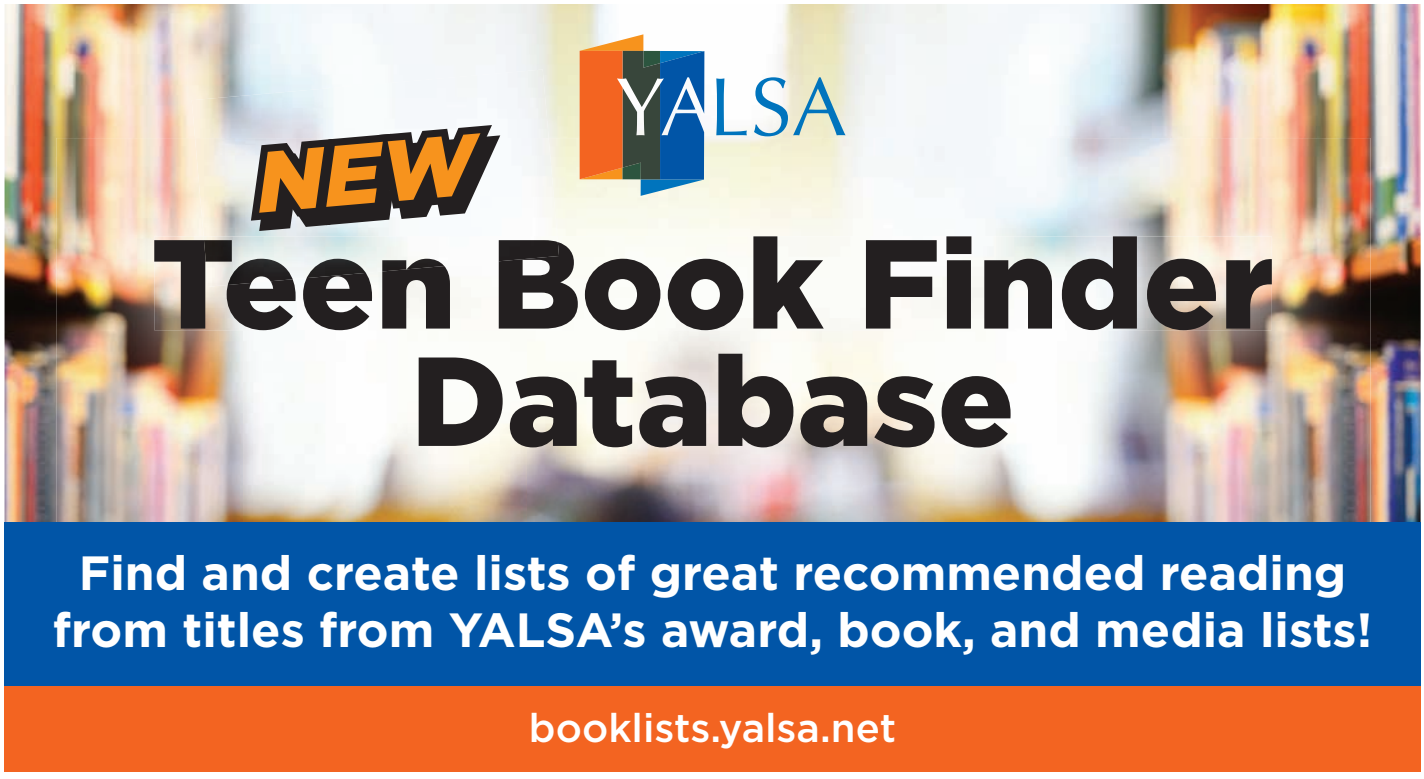
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booklists.yalsa.net

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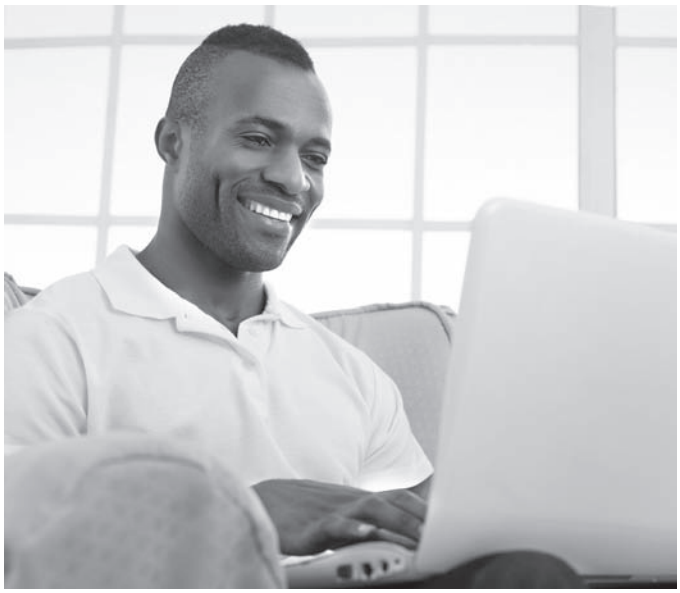

Live webinars are available exclusively to members as a ***free*** member benefit the third Thursday of each month.

Webinars available 24/7:
All archived webinars are free for members and available after the live presentation via the *Members Only* section of the YALSA website at ***tinyurl.com/yalsamembersonly.***

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