

**YALSA Board of Directors  
Midwinter Meeting, Virtual  
January 22-26, 2021**

The William C. Morris YA Debut Award Committee Manual  
October 2020

**Definition**

William C. Morris was an influential innovator in the publishing world and an advocate for marketing books for children and young adults. Bill Morris left an impressive mark on the field of children's and young adult literature. He was beloved in the publishing field and the library profession for his generosity and marvelous enthusiasm for promoting literature for children and teens.

The William C. Morris Award celebrates the achievement of a previously unpublished author, or authors, who have made a strong literary debut in writing for young adult readers. The work cited will illuminate the teen experience and enrich the lives of its readers through its excellence, demonstrated by:

- Compelling, high quality writing and/or illustration
- The integrity of the work as a whole
- Its proven or potential appeal to a wide range of teen readers

**Purpose**

The William C. Morris Award will:

- Recognize authors who make a significant impact on the field of young adult literature who are publishing their first books.
- Emphasize the importance of fresh new voices writing for teens.
- Encourage new authors to write and publish for teens.
- Position YALSA as a source for discovering important, talented new authors.

**Committee Charge**

To annually select the best literary debut from authors writing for young adult readers, available in English in the United States during the preceding eligibility year, and, if warranted, to also select honor titles. The short list of finalists will be announced during the first week of December, with the winning title announced at the following ALA Midwinter Conference/ New January Event. The winner and honor authors will be recognized at an ALA or YALSA Conference.

## **Committee Members**

A committee of YALSA members will consist of nine members including the chair, plus an administrative assistant if the chair so requests [see below]. The Vice President/President Elect will appoint the chair and the eight members of the committee. Committee members serve an approximate 12 month term beginning February 1st and ending after the following ALA Midwinter Conference/ New January Event.

Committee members must not solicit publishers for free personal copies of books. If members receive, or are offered, unsolicited copies of books from publishers, they may accept the titles. Committee members must not solicit publishers for favors, invitations, etc. If members receive these, however, they will use their own judgment in accepting. Publishers understand that such acceptance in no way influences members' actions or selections.

The chair is a voting member of the committee with all the rights and responsibilities of the other members. In addition, the chair presides at all meetings of the committee and serves as facilitator of both discussion and committee business. The chair of the committee or the administrative assistant will contact publishers to obtain copies of nominated titles for all committee members. The chair will serve as list owner of an electronic discussion list created through the YALSA office solely for use by the committee, and will take responsibility for list maintenance. The chair has responsibility for any contact with publishers.

If the chair desires, the Vice President/President-Elect of YALSA may appoint an administrative assistant in consultation with the committee chair. The administrative assistant will assist the chair in duties that may include the following: contacting publishers on behalf of the chair/committee, maintaining the database of nominations, tabulating votes, and other such duties assigned by the chair. The administrative assistant is a non-voting member of the committee, and must be a YALSA member.

Committee members, including administrative assistants and chairs, who have completed one full term on any of YALSA's six award committees may not be appointed to the same or another YALSA award committee for two years from the conclusion of their term. In extreme circumstances, and at the President's discretion, an exception may be made if a committee member resigns suddenly or if there is a shortage of qualified candidates for positions. The President, after discussion with the Executive Director and Committee Chair, may determine that the best course of action is to appoint a member regardless of his/her recent committee service history.

Members are required to attend all committee meetings, read widely from books eligible for nomination and to actively participate in discussions year-round via a closed electronic discussion list. Additional information about committee member responsibilities is available from YALSA's [Handbook](#). All committee members must comply with YALSA's Policies, as presented in the online [Handbook](#), including: [Social Media Policy](#), [Policy of Ethical Behavior for YALSA Volunteers](#) and the [Award Committees Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

In general, only committee members attending the ALA Midwinter/ New January Event committee meetings are eligible to vote. In extenuating circumstances (i.e. injury that prevents travel; cancellation of the live conference as we saw in January 2020), the President of YALSA may approve virtual attendance of one member or of the entire committee. If a member is unable to complete the entire term, the President of YALSA may appoint a replacement.

**Division Consultants and Communication**

YALSA will assign an oversight committee liaison to deal with questions from the chair and the committee regarding procedures and personnel. The chair will communicate fully with the board liaison and with the staff and leadership of YALSA.

**Working with the Chairperson**

The YALSA oversight committee liaison will work with the chairperson to review the procedures of the committee and to make recommendations for improving the process during the working year. The oversight committee liaison will also work with the chairperson to resolve procedural and personnel issues as they arise.

**Working with Committee Members**

Committee members may consult with the YALSA oversight committee liaison should there be unusual issues that the chairperson cannot resolve, particularly if there are issues regarding the chairperson’s performance of duties.

**Committee Calendar**

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| November | Incoming chairperson reviews committee ethics, policies, procedures and manual in preparation for coming year   |
| December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson reviews committee roster and initiates committee member introductions</li> <li>• Chairperson sets expectations with the committee and explains his/her management style. These expectations should include an agreement among committee members about a consistent virtual meeting time, at least once a month. Committee members are expected to prioritize attendance at these virtual meetings as highly as they would in-person meetings at ALA Annual or ALA Midwinter/ New January Event.</li> <li>• Chairperson recommends reading and other preparations, as appropriate, to prepare the committee members for their task, providing particular support to members who have not served on an award committee before</li> </ul> |
| January  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outgoing &amp; incoming chairpersons touch base to share information and discuss any business or issues that will carry over into the next year</li> <li>• Chairperson touches base with oversight and staff liaisons to address any initial questions or concerns</li> </ul>  |
| February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson holds a virtual meeting to discuss the process, policies and procedures. Members should have begun actively reading eligible titles. If they have not started receiving books</li> </ul>   |

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|                                  | <p>from publishers, they are encouraged to acquire eligible titles through their own library systems or through ILLs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson submits quarterly chair report by Feb. 15th.</li> <li>• Committee members and chairperson participate in virtual training facilitated by YALSA president</li> <li>• Chairperson works with Program Officer for Conferences &amp; Events to schedule meetings for ALA Annual</li> </ul>   |
| March, April, May                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee reads, suggests and discusses titles.</li> <li>• Chairperson submits quarterly chair report by May 15th.</li> <li>• Chairperson reminds committee members to submit final nominations for Annual discussion no later than June 1.</li> </ul>  |
| June                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee prepares to discuss nominated titles at Annual. Titles that are nominated after June 1 will be discussed later in the year, to prevent last-minute nominations from causing unnecessary stress.</li> <li>• Chairperson sends out Annual meeting agendas and confirms times and location of committee meetings with members.</li> </ul>  |
| ALA Annual                       | <p>Meeting agendas should include a discussion of each nominated title and a discussion of the remainder of the process.</p> <p>Two straw polls are recommended to follow the discussions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Should each title be considered for the award?</li> <li>2. A vote for the titles in your top 5 today.</li> </ol> <p>Chairperson takes advantage of face to face setting to mentor any committee members who may need support or guidance in terms of improving committee performance.</p> |
| July, August, September, October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson submits quarterly chair report by Aug. 15th.</li> <li>• Chairperson works with Program Officer for Conferences and Events in August to set up meetings for Midwinter/ New January Event.</li> <li>• Committee members read, suggest, and discuss titles. Committee members continue to nominate titles.</li> </ul>  |
| Late October/ early November     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson sets up virtual meeting times with YALSA staff liaison, and shares procedures with committee members. Chairperson reminds the committee that the last day to submit nominations is November 1.</li> <li>• Chairperson may be asked by YALS editor to write an article for the spring issue about the award</li> </ul>   |
| November                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 1 is the final day to submit nominations.</li> <li>• Chairperson submits quarterly chair report by Nov. 15th.</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-November: virtual meeting is held to discuss the nominated titles.</li> <li>• Mid- to late-November: virtual meeting is held to vote on the shortlist, which will consist of up to 5 titles.</li> </ul>  |
| Late November to early December (depending on when YALSA needs final list) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson writes annotations for the shortlist titles. Booklist Consultant reviews and makes suggestions on the annotations.</li> <li>• Chairperson sends out Midwinter meeting agendas and confirms times and locations of committee meetings with members.</li> <li>• Chairperson sets expectations for other aspects of Midwinter/ New January Event involvement: attendance at Youth Media Awards Monday morning and Morris/ Nonfiction Awards Reception immediately following the Youth Media Awards. It is recommended that Sunday evening be kept free since the shortlist publishers traditionally host a dinner for the shortlist authors and committee members.</li> </ul> |
| Early December   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YALSA publishes the annotated shortlist.</li> <li>• Chairperson coordinates promotion of the shortlist with the Hub blog manager, the Awards &amp; Lists Marketing Taskforce Chairperson, and committee members.</li> </ul>  |
| ALA Midwinter Meeting/ New January Event                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee meets to decide the winner from the shortlist of up to five titles. The winner will be announced at the Youth Media Awards Monday morning.</li> <li>• Chairperson works with the Program Officer for Conferences &amp; Events to draft and submit a press release.</li> <li>• Attend and participate in the Youth Media Awards</li> <li>• Attend and participate in the Monday-morning reception and celebration that follows the Youth Media Awards. Chairperson introduces the Morris Award winner and finalists and presents them with their awards during the reception.</li> </ul>  |
| After ALA Midwinter/ New January Event                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson works with the Hub blog manager and the Awards &amp; Lists Marketing Taskforce chairperson to promote award winners</li> <li>• Chairperson touches base with the incoming chairperson to share information and discuss any ongoing matters</li> </ul>  |

**Eligibility**

- The award and honor book winner(s) must be authors of original young adult works of fiction in any genre, nonfiction, poetry, a short story collection, or graphic work.

- The award winner(s) must not have previously published a book for any audience. Books previously published in another country, however, may be considered if an American edition has been published during the period of eligibility.
- Works of joint authorship are eligible, but only if all contributors meet all other criteria. For example, graphic works created by an author and an illustrator are eligible, but only if both contributors have never published before.
- Books must have been published between November 1 to October 31 of the year preceding announcement of the award. (For the 2021 award, books must have been published between November 1, 2019 and October 31, 2020).
- Edited works and anthologies are not eligible.
- The shortlist may consist of up to five titles.
- The award may be given posthumously provided the other criteria are met.
- The winner and shortlisted book authors are encouraged to attend an award ceremony following the announcement of the award at ALA’s Midwinter Meeting/ New January Event.
- If during a specific year, no title is deemed sufficiently meritorious, no award will be given that year.
- The chair, with assistance from designated YALSA staff, is responsible for verifying the eligibility of all nominated titles.
- To be eligible, a title must have been designated by its publisher as being either a young adult book or one published for the age range that YALSA defines as "young adult," i.e., 12 through 18. Books published for adults or for younger children are not eligible.
- To be eligible, a title must be widely available in the US to libraries and teens.
- Titles that are self-published, published only in eBook format, and/or published from a publisher outside of the US will not be considered eligible until the first year the book is available in print or distributed through a US publishing house.

Appendix A offers further, detailed guidance on eligibility questions.

## **Criteria**

- This award recognizes excellence by a first time author writing for young adults.
- The winning title must exemplify the highest standards of young adult literature and must be well written. The book’s components-- story, voice, setting, accuracy, style, characters, design, format, theme, illustration, organization, etc.-- should be of high merit.
- The components noted above should add up in a way that particularly draws in teen readers, encouraging them to pick up the book, and then to read on.
- Popularity-- the attention or support a book receives as a result of marketing, social media, professional or nonprofessional reviews, or word of mouth-- is not the criterion for this award, nor is the award based on the message or content of the book.
- In the sum of all the criteria, does the book represent the highest achievement in a debut work for young adults?

## **Confidentiality**

As all nominated titles must be kept confidential, there will be no announcements of nominated titles. All committee meetings and discussions, including electronic discussions, are closed to YALSA membership and the general public.

## **Nominations**

- Committee Nominations will be accepted for books that meet the published criteria.
- Publishers, authors, agents, or editors may not nominate their own titles.
- Field nominations must be seconded by a committee member prior to November 1.
- Nominations may be accepted from the field and from committee members up to October 31.
- Final selections are made at the ALA Midwinter Meeting/ New January Event during a series of committee meetings closed to the public.
- Barring extenuating circumstances, only committee members attending the ALA Midwinter Meeting/ New January Event will be allowed to vote. See the **Committee Members** section for additional details.
- Members can vote only on books they have read.

## **Suggestions for Reading and Nominations**

It is the duty of all members to seek out eligible books and evaluate them based on the award criteria throughout the year. While books sent by publishers should be given a fair evaluation, they are a convenience and should not be taken as the total of eligible titles.

A list of eligible titles should be developed by watching for starred and otherwise positive reviews in professional journals, scanning industry publications, and seeking out debut author promotions (for example, Roaring Twenties Debut novels).

It is recommended that all eligible books be read by more than one committee member. Some books will need no further consideration, but books with greater potential should be read by additional committee members assuming eligibility has been established. The discussion and suggestion of these titles may take place via email, virtual meeting, or shared documents as appropriate.

When multiple committee members feel that a book is a potential short-list contender, then a committee member should nominate the title.

A nomination is made by completing the form on the YALSA website. The chairperson will then forward the nomination to the committee.

Nominated books are to be read by all committee members. Books nominated by June 1st will be discussed at the Annual Meeting. Nominations for the year close on November 1st to

allow committee members time to read all nominated titles before the short list is selected.

## **Field Nominations**

Field nominations are encouraged. To be eligible, they must be submitted on the official “William C. Morris Award Suggestion Form” available on the YALSA website. The form allows for both a rationale and summary of nominated titles. The chairperson should notify the committee of all field nominations, which must have a second from a committee member to become official.

Only those titles that have been nominated will be discussed at the Annual Conference meetings and November conference call discussions. Furthermore, all nominated titles must be discussed. To prevent a conflict of interest, publishers, authors, or editors may not nominate titles in which they have a vested interest.

## **Voting Procedures**

Straw polls may be used during the process to determine committee interest. It is recommended that a poll be conducted following the discussion at the Annual conference in order to judge front-runners and eliminate nominations without support.

## **Honor Titles**

The shortlist of up to 5 titles will be determined during a virtual meeting in late November. Committee members are reminded that the titles are confidential until they are announced by YALSA in early December. The winner is determined and announced during the following Midwinter Conference/ New January Event. The remaining maximum of four titles will be considered Honor Titles. All annotations for the shortlist titles must be finalized before the announcement and submitted to the YALSA offices for inclusion on the website and in messaging for the press.

## **Final Voting of Award Title at Midwinter Conference/ New January Event**

- Barring extenuating circumstances, members must be present to vote. See the **Committee Members** section for additional details. Proxies will not be accepted.
- Ballots will be used and tallied by either the chairperson or their designee(s).
- Voting procedures are at the discretion of the chairperson. This method has been successful in the past:  
On the ballot each member votes for their top three choices. First choice receives five points; second choice receives three points; third choice receives one point. To win, a title must receive five first place votes and must also receive at least five more points than the second place title. If no title meets these criteria on the first ballot, any title receiving no votes is removed from consideration and a period of discussion of remaining titles follows. A second ballot is then conducted. Balloting continues in this fashion until a winner is declared.

## **Relationship with Publishers**

Committee members are required to abide by YALSA’s Conflict of Interest Policy and will not solicit publishers for copies of titles; however, they may accept any unsolicited ones that are offered or sent to them.

Committee members should not solicit publishers for invitations to receptions, etc. If members receive these, however, they will use their own judgement in accepting them, and will exercise good etiquette in thanking the publishers for invitations. Publishers understand that such acceptance in no way influences members’ actions or selections.

It is highly recommended that the chairperson and/or administrative assistant send an introductory letter to all publisher contacts in January spelling out the committee charge, eligibility requirements for submissions, and including a list of committee members. The chairperson should work with the YALSA office to accomplish this.

## **Chairperson Responsibilities at the Midwinter Meeting/ New January Event**

Friday afternoon-- attend the ALA Awards meeting, run by the ALA Press Office

Saturday-- scheduling a meeting for 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm this afternoon is recommended. If this timeframe does not work, make sure to allow several hours of meeting time.

Sunday morning-- the final press release is due to the ALA Press Office. You will receive a template for the release at the Friday ALA Awards meeting.

Sunday evening or early Monday morning-- the committee may telephone the author directly to notify them. The author’s publisher should also be notified. YALSA’s staff liaison will provide telephone numbers.

Monday morning-- the committee is expected to attend the Youth Media Awards, sitting together in a designated area.

A Morris/Nonfiction Award program traditionally follows the Youth Media Awards later Monday morning. The committee sits together at the program and the chairperson introduces each of the Morris finalists and the Morris Award winner as they are invited to speak.

## Appendix A

### Eligibility

In previous years many questions have come up and some precedent has been established.

**INELIGIBLE**, Some situations that disqualified books:

- Author had previously published books for other audiences.
- The book was only available as an e-book.
  - The book must be available in print to be eligible.
- Author-artist of graphic novel had previously illustrated a different graphic novel
- The book in question was the author's first work translated into English as their US debut, but it was not the first book the author had published in their original language.
- The book in question was the author's US debut, but they had published prior titles in another country.
- The book was from such a small press that it wasn't actually widely available enough to meet that portion of the eligibility requirement.
  - may require a closer look on a case by case basis.

**ELIGIBLE**, Some situations where books were deemed eligible this year and in the past:

- Author had previously self-published a book. Self-published titles are not eligible for Morris so do not count against eligibility.
- Author had published stories or essays in an anthology or magazine.
  - However, if the author had published a short story collection or collection of plays that was only their own work means they would be disqualified.
- Book had previously been published in another country, but US publication was this year and otherwise met criteria.
- Author was listed on an earlier published book as author, but it turned out their writing was all photo captions that were pulled from their work on a magazine.
- Author had published a screenplay. Since screenplays aren't eligible for Morris, having published one doesn't make an author ineligible.

- Publisher is UK-based but has distribution for their titles in the US market through a US

publisher (we felt this fit the requirement of being “available in print through a US publishing house”).

- Author had previously co-authored a play, the only copy of which was at the Library of Congress, suggesting it had been sent in for copyright registration but not actually published.
- Author had previously done some very small print run (less than 50) poetry compilations through their graduate school.
- Author’s first publications were government documents.
- Author had edited, but not been sole writer of a travel book for one of the big travel book series.
- Author had another book listed in Worldcat but no libraries held that book; when we checked with the publisher, we learned that the book had been promoted in their catalog but cancelled before official publication.
- The book was the debut of a fiction writer, but someone with previous publications did the illustrations. Since this was a prose novel, not a graphic novel, the call was that the illustrator did not count against the novel’s eligibility.
- The book was available as an ebook last year, but came out in print this year.
  - Eligibility is determined by the book’s first year in print
- The author had a thesis/dissertation appearing as a publication in WorldCat. It was determined that the author was eligible, as this was an academic requirement for the degree and technically an unpublished manuscript (even if that school’s library had cataloged and bound a copy).

### **Eligibility Due to Audience**

The criteria for the award specifies Young Adults as ages 12-18 and that books for younger children or adults are not eligible. As publishing does not always adhere to strict guidelines there have been some questions of eligibility raised on both ends of the range. Middle grade books may be eligible if the committee feels they are substantially for the 12 and up age range. Similarly, books, usually graphic novels published without an age range by the publisher, may be considered eligible if young adults are a substantial part of the intended audience.

## Appendix B: Frequently-Asked Questions

### **What is the true time commitment for this committee?**

The committee term lasts from when you accept the position in October or November to the end of ALA Midwinter in January or February, so up to 16 months. There are obviously peaks and troughs of time commitment within that term, though. In addition to attending ALA Annual and ALA Midwinter (or the New January Event), there are usually monthly virtual meetings that last at least an hour, plus the time commitment of not only reading on average 70-100 titles a year, but also potentially rereading titles under discussion. It is very important to pace yourself and create a balance between seeking out new titles to nominate and reading titles already nominated so that you don't end up overwhelmed.

### **When will the books start to arrive?**

It can take almost a month for titles to start arriving after the chair provides committee contact information to the publishers. You may not receive any books until February or even early March, depending on where you live. As a result, it is important to try to seek out eligible titles on your own at your library, read reviews and recommendations, debut lists, seek out titles on NetGalley or Edelweiss, etc. in order to get a head start. You should never rely solely on what is mailed to you, as often there are small presses that might not have the ability to ship galleys to committee members but who have published wonderful titles that should not be overlooked. Although it may feel like it takes forever for titles to arrive, they will. And then they will keep coming, and you will have to find a way to store everything that arrives. You will likely receive several hundred books over the course of your term, so think carefully about where you want them shipped - home or office.

### **How should I handle invitations from publishers?**

When you are serving on a confidential selection committee, you are likely to receive publisher invitations to dinners, lunches, teas, happy hours, dessert parties, and breakfasts at ALA Annual and ALA Midwinter/ New January Event. You may also receive invites at other times of year if you happen to live somewhere along the trajectory of an author's book tour. You are welcome to accept these invitations if they do not conflict with prior obligations, including scheduled committee time at Annual. You may want to check with your chair about current rules, but generally speaking standard etiquette and confidentiality apply here as they would anywhere. Accept as many invites as you like but try not to double-book. Do not cancel when you get a better offer. RSVP yes or no (no matter what), and do let them know if you will not be able to attend for any reason. Do send a thank you email after the event (this is not only polite but usually guarantees future invitations!) Do not discuss eligible titles, what you are currently reading, or what the committee is discussing or reviewing. It is perfectly fine to discuss previous favorite titles from that publisher and to ask about upcoming titles - after all, that is why you are there.

### **What will ALA Annual be like and how do I plan for it?**

ALA Annual usually runs from Thursday to Tuesday in late June. You should plan to be there from at least Friday through Monday. The chair will determine as early as possible how often you need to meet (1-2 days, usually) and where and at what hours, in coordination with the committee's ALA liaison, and will communicate those details to you a month or so before the conference as one of the deciding factors will be how many titles you need to discuss. Early registration for ALA Annual is usually made available soon after ALA Midwinter/ New January Event. Your ability to register early is of course dependent on means and reimbursement policies at your home library, but I would recommend registering early not only because early bird registration is cheaper, but also because you then have the ability to book your hotel early (but don't have to pay for it/confirm until very close to the conference). There are usually 2 HQ hotels, and those room blocks and some of the better and more affordable options book up quickly. It is sometimes worth picking a double room in advance and then determining if you have someone you can share with before the best options run out. Similarly, if you are not a morning person one or both of the HQ hotels are often the site of publisher breakfasts to which you may be invited, so it's that much faster to go downstairs. They are also sometimes the site of dinners or dessert parties, if you are not a night person. At least one is also usually quite close to the conference center, if that appeals to you. You should think about what's most important to you over the course of the conference in terms of convenience, proximity, etc. It's also worth noting that Morris committee meetings will likely take place in an HQ hotel rather than the conference center as they are confidential.

You will likely start to receive publisher invitations for dinners, etc (see above) in March/April. When thinking about what you want to attend, keep these things in mind: you will likely have short lunch breaks on days you meet as a committee, which would make off-site lunch invitations a challenge unless you arrange a longer lunch break with the chair - who may be willing to accommodate as they too receive invitations. Similarly, you will need to make sure that you are able to make it on time to committee from any breakfasts to which you are invited. Dinner is not usually an issue as committee meetings break up by 5. However, there are several events that you might want to keep your calendar clear for that happen every ALA Annual, including the Printz reception, the Newbery Caldecott Legacy Banquet, and the Coretta Scott King awards breakfast. The dates for those will be published when registration goes live so you'll have time to plan. It's also possible that your committee will want to meet as a group for a meal (lunch or dinner, or both) - while this is not required it is one of the nice things about working so closely together for a year!

Depending on when you arrive and depart, you may have less time than you think to visit the exhibit floor and attend sessions, especially if you are locked in committee discussions for two full days. Annual is an overwhelming, busy, and wonderful experience - it just requires a bit of strategy in advance to make the most of it!

### **What will ALA Midwinter/ New January Event be like and how do I plan for it?**

Most of the advice above about early registration, publisher invitations, etc, is the same, but there are a few Morris-relevant differences for ALA Midwinter. First, the Youth Media Awards (YMAAs). These happen first thing in the morning on the Monday of Midwinter. As a committee,

you are likely to gather even earlier - as early as 6 - to call the selected author and inform them, to take group pictures, and to get settled in the auditorium. It is common to select some sort of group

accessory or theme for those pictures in advance - you and your committee will make that choice sometime in the winter.

You will likely only meet once to decide on the Morris winner, so you will have more time for other things, but you should keep the night before the YMAS open as the publishers of the 5 shortlisted titles will often host a celebratory dinner for their authors and the committee members. You should also not plan to leave early or at all on Monday as after the YMAS there is a brunch for Morris and Excellence in Nonfiction awardees at which all 5 of the shortlisted authors will speak.

Please note that the information in this response pertains to ALA Midwinter, and that there will likely be some changes with the New January Event that rolls out in 2022.

**What am I allowed to say after the committee is over? Can I review/ talk about a book after the fact?**

It is perfectly fine to discuss in general terms the short list titles and the winner, though this should not include confidential details about committee debates or discussions, nor who nominated which title. A review, for example, would focus simply on what made the book a short list pick and a recommended acquisition title, but not on any internal debates about its place on the list or who championed it.