

**YALSA Executive Committee Meeting  
Via conference call, April 17, 2013**

**Topic: Marketing Strategies and Self-Guided Plan**

**Background:** As per Board directive, YALSA contracted with a marketing consultant, Susan Harris at North Star Strategies, so that the organization could build some expertise in the area of marketing and develop a strategy for its marketing efforts. The first step in the project was for the consultant to interview by phone several YALSA members in order to get a sense of the association and member needs. After the interviews, the next step was to survey members, lapsed members and nonmembers. As a next step, the consultant led a work session with the Executive Committee and staff in order to get more member leader feedback to help inform her work on YALSA's Self-Guided Marketing Plan, a final copy of which was shared with the board and discussed by the group in early April. The Executive Committee may want to further discuss the plan and the board feedback to see if any additional action would be beneficial.

**Action Required: Discussion**

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**Key areas for action from the board discussion**

- Need to better promote what we already do.
  - Some disconnect in board role in doing this.
  - The DMP Committee could be more proactive in pushing forward information on a regular basis
  - Communicating member benefits with an eye towards direct and indirect benefits, including the use of testimonials.
- Recognize and create a community for new members as well as assessing what their needs are.
  - Survey new members?
  - Roll out and promotion of badges could be beneficial to this group and to student members and help to create community there.
  - Helping new and student members translate academic/outside skills to the profession. Resume training a member benefit?
- Create a pre-conference, seminar or e-course on skills that will help members stay engaged in committee work (governance, evaluation, reviewing, etc).
  - CE Advisory Board to address? Ad-hoc board group?
- Get FAC involved in promoting advocate member rate
- Translate/promote CE to non-librarians.

**Staff Actions**

Beth Yoke reviewed the document with Letitia Smith and discussed implementation. Much of the recommendation centered around sending email communications to segments of the membership. For example, the plan recommended monthly emails to new members and student members as well as bi-monthly messages to school library members. The conclusion was that this approach would not be the best course of action, due to the amount of emails members already receive from ALA and YALSA combined, and due to capacity issues with staff. Instead, Jack recommends that we create an opt-in opportunity for these member groups to sign up to receive targeted messages, which seems like a great way to achieve our marketing goals without too much burden on members or staff.

**Items that will be implemented are as follows:**

- In March Letitia sent out a postcard mailing to over 800 lapsed members, and followed up by email in April
- In April Beth worked with Jack to record a new Get Involved webinar.
- In April Letitia will set up a listserv for student members and another for new members and use those to push out quarterly marketing messages.
- From April forward, Letitia will work with Jackie to promote the new school library, student and new member listservs and encourage people to opt in.
- In April Letitia will revisit the email messages that go out to new members and members whose dues are about to lapse and incorporate suggested messaging from the marketing plan
- In late April/early May a member recruitment postcard will be mailed to ALA members who work with youth but who are not YALSA members, with follow up by email
- In April Letitia will revisit the email messages that go out to new members and members whose dues are about to lapse and incorporate suggested messaging from the marketing plan
- In April Letitia will investigate the activities of the ALA New Members' Round Table to see what YALSA may adapt
- In April Nicole will identify all the free webinars YALSA has done in the past two years and make sure they appear on the web site, including any career focused ones, which will be featured in the Career Development portion of the site
- In May Beth will work with Shannon to record a new webinar about getting the most out of your membership
- In May Jackie will send out a postcard featuring select YALSA products to NCTE and IRA members who are librarians or middle or high school teachers, with follow up by email. Jackie will evaluate the effort and consider making an annual outreach effort, if this one was successful
- From May forward Letitia will begin sending out email messages to individuals whose membership lapsed that month
- From June forward, Letitia will send out quarterly email blasts to all members featuring a different member benefit (those messages will also be posted on YA-YAAC & YALSA-BK with a 'look what you're missing' tagline)
- In July Letitia will begin a member referral project and run it for one year to determine its effectiveness
- In July/Aug. Letitia and Jackie will revisit the member recruitment and get involved portions of the web site and institute improvements, based on the marketing plan

- In July/Aug. Nichole will explore possibilities for events at the 2014 Midwinter and Annual meetings exclusively for new members and for students. If they are popular, they will be incorporated into conference events moving forward.
- Aug/Sept. Letitia will work on a student membership drive by reaching out to GSLIS faculty who teach YA or youth focused courses (the National Guidelines Committee is compiling that list). If the effort is successful, YALSA will implement this annually.

### **Possible Next Steps for the Board**

- Student members and new members seem to be a priority. Determine whether existing groups can address their needs, or if a taskforce or ad-hoc group needs to be established.
- Revisit the Committee task list for 2013 – 2014 to include priorities from the self-guided marketing plan. Committees impacted would likely be DMP, CE Advisory Board
- Determine whether the CE Advisory Board can address the goal of providing career and professional growth resources to members, or if a new group needs establishing.
- Other?

### **Additional Resources:**

- Communications, Marketing and Planning,”  
[www.councilofnonprofits.org/resources/communications-planning](http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/resources/communications-planning)
- “Critical Role of Marketing Research,”  
<http://managementhelp.org/marketing/market-research.htm>
- Katya’s Nonprofit Marketing Blog: [www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/](http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/)
- Survey results can be found at:
  - Members: <http://ow.ly/en2DL>
  - Lapsed members: <http://ow.ly/en2JQ>
  - Nonmembers: <http://ow.ly/en2PA>