

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago
June 28 – July 2, 2013**

Topic: Library School Student Engagement in YALSA

Background: At the 2013 Midwinter Meeting the Board adopted a proposal for a YALSA Special Interest group as a pilot program as a subdivision of the ALA Student Chapter at the University of Alabama. Additionally, the YALSA Strategic Priorities and Action Plan and the YALSA Self-Guided Marketing Plan, both developed by NorthStar Strategies, contain a number of recommendations about how YALSA can increase membership and retention among LIS students. In an effort to support the needs of future youth services librarians and to increase their engagement in YALSA, the YALSA Board will want to consider how to move forward strategically, and in a way that is consistent with capacity discussions. A proposal to establish a LIS Student Engagement taskforce is provided below.

Action Required: Action

Proposal

Establish a taskforce to develop a plan of action that will focus on supporting the needs of LIS students who are studying to become future teen services librarians, increase their engagement in YALSA, and scaffold their transition to full-time active YALSA members upon graduation.

Rationale

- YALSA currently has 963 members who self-identify as LIS student members (out of 5,161 total).
- YALSA currently reaches out to LIS students in a number of specific ways including:
 - Offering a student member discount (\$58--\$33 for ALA/\$25 for YALSA)
 - Awarding the Dorothy Broderick Student Conference Scholarship which funds travel to annual for one graduate student for up to \$1,000
 - Participating in the Spectrum Scholars program
 - Providing a stipend for a student enrolled in an ALA-accredited MLS program to attend the YA Literature Symposium
 - Administering YALSA's virtual mentoring program which pairs an experienced librarian with a new librarian or graduate student in an LIS program

- The YALSA Strategic Priorities and Action Plan, as well as the YALSA Self-Guided Marketing Plan, both developed by NorthStar Strategies, contain a number of recommendations about how YALSA can increase membership and retention among LIS Students including:
 - Creating an LIS student community
 - Creating an LIS student section on the website
 - Providing access to leadership and experienced members
 - Providing a special LIS student field trip or social event at annual
 - Targeting marketing for LIS students
 - Continuing with 101 and 201 events at annual
 - Updating and disseminating the “Get Involved” webinar
 - Conducting research to identify what LIS students learn in library school and where the gaps are that YALSA might address
 - Creating special programming for LIS students
 - Establishing resume building training
 - Prominently featuring the student member discount
 - Piloting the University of Alabama proposal for a student chapter

- The YALSA staff have already begun to implement/coordinate many of the recommendations in the YALSA Self-Guided Marketing Plan including:
 - Creating an LIS student community - student listserv established & promotion began with the June E-News
 - Prominently featuring the student member discount – Letitia is working this into her membership recruitment materials
 - Piloting the University of Alabama proposal for a student chapter – Launches in August 2013.
 - Targeting marketing for LIS students – Jackie does this via the ALA student newsletter & will begin doing this via the student listserv
 - Continuing with 101 and 201 events at annual
 - Updating and disseminating the “Get Involved” webinar – it was updated in April 2013 and dissemination is ongoing
 - Providing a special LIS student field trip or social event at annual— Nichole will address in planning for ALA annual 2014
 - Providing access to leadership and experienced members – provided via the mentoring program

- Last year as part of an Emerging Leader project, YALSA surveyed student members, but got a low response rate: only 72 people completed the survey; 68 of those people indicated that they were currently a student. Findings related to this proposal include the following
 - 30% of the respondents learned about YALSA from a professor at their LIS school or from the ALA Chapter at their LIS school.
 - Their top 5 expectations of YALSA include professional development resources, networking opportunities, employment opportunities,

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committee or interest group participation, and scholarship/grant opportunities.

- The top 5 kinds of content they find most useful on the YALSA website include book awards & recommended lists, news and updates in the field of YA librarianship, special initiatives, professional development resources, and information on how to get involved in YALSA (tied with JRLYA).
 - Many (>50%) of them are unaware or don't use of many of the resources YALSA offers.
 - When asked which of the student-focused services from YALSA they were aware of before completing the survey, the top response (52%) was the discounted student membership.
- ALA has additional data on current and former LIS students that will be useful to the taskforce's work including:
 - ORS is completing a member survey and should be able to do cross tabs for students.
 - Membership development is working with an Emerging Leaders group that is surveying 1st, 2nd and 3rd year members (not students) on why they join and why they remain members/why they end membership. The majority of 1st year members are those who recently completed their MLIS.
 - Membership development has market data on the number of students enrolled in MLIS programs, graduation rates, and the percentage that join ALA.
 - Given the YALSA board's recent discussions about capacity building, a strategic plan of action is needed that will ensure that YALSA is providing the best type/level of support for LIS students while ensuring that YALSA resources are being directed optimally.

Proposed Charge

To work with the YALSA staff to implement the recommendations suggested by NorthStar Strategies that are not currently being implemented by YALSA including:

1. Inventory the YALSA website to:
 - Identify content of specific interest to LIS students and promote this content via the student listserv, YALSA E-news, and other communication channels
 - Determine missing content and make recommendations for creating it
2. Identify what LIS students learn in library school and where the gaps are that YALSA might address – ALA has some data the task force could begin with; the

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- task force might also consider mapping LIS curriculum from ALA accredited programs to the YALSA competencies
3. Establish resume building/job search training—this might include compiling a list of resume building resources, providing sample resumes, developing resume writing FAQs, providing job search tips, etc.
 4. Recommend additional special programming or resources YALSA might provide for LIS students – in addition to using the data collected in bullet points 1 & 2 (above), the task force might consider surveying LIS students who are non-YALSA members, interviewing a sampling of youth services LIS faculty, and conducting a focus group of LIS students who are YALSA members to identify gaps in YALSA programming
 5. Determine what additional ways beyond the mentoring program that YALSA can provide access to leadership development and experienced members

Task force term: 2-year term starting in Sept. 2013 and ending June 30, 2015. Taskforce Size: 5-7 members including at least one Youth Services Faculty member from an ALA accredited library school, one LIS student specializing in teen services, and at least one current or recent Board member.

Action Requested

The Board move to approve the establishment of a School Library Student Engagement Taskforce and direct the in-coming President to appoint members to the group.

Additional Resources

- The YALSA Strategic Priorities and Action Plan, as well as the YALSA Self-Guided Marketing Plan, both developed by NorthStar Strategies
- 2013 Midwinter Board Student Chapter Proposal
- Results of 2012 Emerging Leaders survey:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=KYUluHFBoMurvPCaeKJ_2b7cgCQnL1D19IeUGPLbm3Nbo_3d