

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
2007 Annual Conference
Washington, DC, June 21-27, 2007**

Topic: Nonfiction Award Proposal

Background: During the Midwinter Meeting the Board established a taskforce to plan a nonfiction award. A draft of the proposal is provided below for your feedback.

Action Required: Action

The YALSA Award for Excellence in Non-Fiction for Young Adults

Background Information

What

An award for the best nonfiction book published for young adults during a September 1 – August 31 publishing year. The title may change pending sponsorship of the award.

Why

“Nonfiction outnumbers fiction in new titles published each year by 4 to 1, so the nonfiction judges read twice what we did — 500 submissions.” This quote from Marianne Wiggins in the November 26, 2006 LA Times described her experience judging adult fiction for the National Book Award.

While there are several awards for excellence in publishing for young adults that include non-fiction works, there is no specific award to recognize it. Having such an award will promote the growing number of non-fiction materials published for young adults and inspire wider readership and recognition of the importance of the genre.

Current awards for young adult literature include:
(listed in previous report from Midwinter 2007)

Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards

<http://www.hbook.com/awards/bghb/>

“Winners are selected in three categories: Picture Book, Fiction and Poetry, and Nonfiction. Two Honor Books may be named in each category.” (Children and YA)

National Council of Teachers of English

<http://www.ncte.org/elem/awards/orbispictus/106877.htm?source=gs>

Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Award – Any title of nonfiction (for grades K-8) informational literature that has as its central purpose the sharing of information. Includes biography, but excludes textbooks, folklore, poetry

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

http://www.aspc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=edu_yabookaward

The Henry Bergh Young Adult Award will be presented annually to an author that makes a contribution to humane young adult literature with a publication date in the preceding year the award is given. Books should be written for an audience of young adults between the ages of 13-17. Works of fiction, non-fiction, and collections of short stories, essays, or poetry by one author are eligible.

Canada Information Book Award

<http://www.library.ubc.ca/edlib/table/awards/information.htm>

The Children's Literature Roundtables of Canada Information Book Award is given to a book that arouses interest, stimulates curiosity, captures the imagination, and fosters concern for the world around us. The award's aim is to recognize excellence in Canadian publishing of non-fiction for children. The criteria include accuracy, clarity, imaginative approach, appropriateness of organization and format, and sensitivity to ethnocentric and gender biases.

New Zealand Post Book Awards for Children and Young Adults

http://www.booksellers.co.nz/nzpb_abt_awards.htm

This award is for books which present well-authenticated data, with consideration given to imaginative presentation, interpretation and style. Poetry, folklore and retellings of myths and legends will be included in this category. Text books and resource kits are not eligible. Non fiction books with intended audiences ranging from children through to young adults may be entered in this category.

Sibert Award – ALSC

<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/sibertmedal/sibertterms/sibertmedalt erms.htm>

The ALSC Informational Book Award shall be awarded annually to the author of the most distinguished informational book published in English during the preceding year. There are no limitations as to the character of the book except that it be original work although poetry and traditional literature (e.g., folktales) are not eligible.

National Book Foundation – National Book Awards

<http://www.nationalbook.org/nbaentry.html>

Not specifically for nonfiction, but they have had non-fiction finalists in the young people's literature category. Full-length books of fiction and general nonfiction are eligible. Collections of short stories and collections of essays by one author are eligible. Collected and selected poems by one author are eligible. All books must be published in the United States.

Jane Addams Book Award

<http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfjab/jaddams.htm>

“The Jane Addams Children's Book Award has been presented annually since 1953... for the children's book of the preceding year that most effectively promotes the cause of peace, social justice and world community.”

AAAS/SB&F/Subaru Award [American Association for the Advancement of Science/Science Books & Films/Subaru--which provides the \$5000 award].

<http://www.sbsonline.com/prizes>

“The AAAS/Subaru SB&F Prize for Excellence in Science Books celebrates outstanding science writing and illustration for children and young adults. The prizes are meant to encourage the writing and publishing of high-quality science books for all age groups.”

Green Earth Book Award, sponsored by the NewtonMorasco Foundation

http://www.newtonmarascofoundation.org/programs/a_ge.cfm

“The Children Fiction award is comprised of a monetary award of \$1,250 to the author and \$1,250 to the illustrator (or \$2,500 if the author and illustrator is the same person). The Young Adult Fiction award is comprised of a \$2,500 monetary award to the author. The Nonfiction award is comprised of \$2,500 to the author. In addition, a \$500 donation will be provided to the environmental organization chosen by each winner and approved by the Newton Marasco Foundation.”

Procedures

Charge: To annually select the best non-fiction single title published for young adults between September 1 of the preceding year and August 31 of the current year, available in English in the United States and, if desired, to also select honor titles. The short list of finalists will be announced during Teen Read Week, with the winning title announced at the following Midwinter Conference. Two winners and honor authors will then be awarded every other year in a ceremony at the YALSA YA Lit Symposium.

Committee Members:

The Committee shall consist of a chair, eight members, a consultant, and an administrative assistant if the Chair requests. The Chair and four members will be appointed by the Vice President/ President-Elect of YALSA. The remaining four members will be elected by the membership of the Association.

Members serve two-year terms beginning immediately after Annual and ending after Annual of the announcement year. All members are required to attend all Award Committee meetings held during the selection process. In the event a member is unable to complete her/his term, the President of the Association shall appoint a replacement from among the members of the Best Books for Young Adults Committee or Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers Committee.

The chair is a voting member of the committee with all the rights and responsibilities of other members. In addition, the chair presides at all meetings of the committee and serves as a facilitator of both discussion and committee business. As such, the chair must serve as a list owner of an electronic discussion list created through the YALSA office solely for use by the committee, and take responsibility for list maintenance. The chair has sole responsibility for any contact with publishers. The chair is also required to attend the YA Literature Symposium where the Award winner will be honored.

In consultation with the Chair, the Vice President/President-Elect may appoint an administrative assistant for the term. The administrative assistant is not a voting member.

Committee Calendar

- May: Balloted committee members are elected and invitations are accepted for appointed members and chair.
- June: Committee members meet to firm contact list and go over nomination and voting procedures.
- The Committee will begin work immediately after Conference, with the reading of titles to be available beginning September 1. The Nomination list is updated monthly.
- January: The Committee meets at Midwinter and votes on Nomination list.
- June: Committee members meet at Annual Conference and votes.
- August: Nominations are closed.
- September – October: committee meets through series of phone conference calls to vote.
- October: Winners are announced at Teen Read Week.

Eligibility

The Award for Excellence in Non Fiction for Young Adults shall be awarded annually to the best nonfiction title published for young adults during the preceding September 1 – August 31 year. The Award will be given to a title that honors a work for subject, treatment and accessibility to young adults.

- All genres of non-fiction are eligible for consideration, including graphic novels.
- The title must have been designated by its publisher as intended for young adults who are defined as persons between the ages of twelve and including eighteen.
- The title must include excellent writing, research, presentation and readability for young adults.
- The title must bring information to young adults in a new or unique way.
- Titles from a series may be considered on their individual merits.
- If 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.
- The award will be presented to the author(s) of the winning and/or honor titles.

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 members suggest titles beginning in June, with suggestions due each month through the end of the time period. Nominations are required from each committee member.

Each suggestion must in writing on an official online suggestion form. Each suggestion must include the following information: author, title, publisher, price, ISBN and publication date.

Field Suggestions

Field suggestions are encouraged. To be eligible, they must be submitted on the official suggestion form. Committee members will be notified of all field suggestions, which are eligible to be considered for nomination by members. Only those titles that have been nominated will be discussed at Midwinter and Annual Conference meetings, though a committee member may request that a suggested title be moved to the discussion list and thus treated as a nominated title. Furthermore, all nominated titles must be discussed. Publishers, authors, or editors may not nominate their own titles.

Voting Procedures

Following discussion at Annual, balloting will begin. Members must be present to vote. Proxies will not be accepted. Additional titles nominated after this point will be considered in the final voting conference calls between August 31 – mid-October.

Final Voting of Award Title

- Oral ballots will be used and tallied either by the chair or her/his designee(s).
- Members are reminded that, at this point, they are voting for the winner, NOT for honor titles.
- On the ballot each member votes for her/his top three choices. First choice receives five points; second choice receives three points, and 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.

Honor Title(s)

- A short list of Finalists will be announced during Teen Read Week, with the winner announced during the following Midwinter Conference in January. The remaining maximum of four titles will then be considered Honor Titles.

Relationship with Publishers

Committee members are not to 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 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.

Evaluation of Award

At the end of the first two years, the award will be reevaluated by a task force, composed of a group representative publishers and members from YALSA. With the development of many different educational formats, criteria for the format of the winning titles will be reevaluated. Reevaluation should also include discussion of any changes needed in policies and procedures as well as determination of continuation of award.

Sponsor

Permabound has discussed sponsorship of this award with YALSA staff, to include an educational component. It may be possible to include a stipulation that the committee develop discussion questions or other material of the maximum winning and honor titles annually.

Award Ceremony

This Task Force considers it important that both Winners and all Honor authors be allowed to speak briefly at the ceremony in its proposed YA Literature Symposium location. Another suggestion is to have a forum for the Honor authors at the Symposium.