

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Dallas
January 20 – 24, 2012

Topic: Mission Moment: Teen Read Week™ Mini-Grant Impact

Background: A 2011 Teen Read Week grantee report is provided below to give the Board an idea of how TRW and the mini grants worked to support YALSA’s mission to “expand and strengthen library services for teens, aged 12-18. Through its member-driven advocacy, research, and professional development initiatives, YALSA builds the capacity of libraries and librarians to engage, serve and empower teens.” The report illustrates one specific example of capacity building at the local level that would not have been possible without YALSA.

Action Required: Discussion

Background: The 2011 Teen Read Week (TRW) was celebrated Oct. 16 - 22 with the theme “Picture It @ your library.” YALSA obtained a grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation to distribute 10 mini grants of \$1,000 to YALSA members who submitted the best ideas for TRW programs. Program ideas were vetted by YALSA’s TRW Committee. Each grant recipient was asked to submit a follow up report.

Title & Description of Project: “Read My Lips: Stories of My Life.” In six weekly workshops participants learned to create a 2-4 minute digital story based on a memory from their life. The workshops were modeled after Joe Lambert’s *Digital Storytelling Cookbook* (2010), a book written by one of the creators of the Center for Digital Storytelling.

Target Audience: 12-18 year-olds in the Chesapeake Public Library service area

Number of Participants: 10

Coordinator/Grant Applicant: Jessica Fessler, Chesapeake Public Library

Impact:

The best part of the program was getting to work with the teens and start to build a relationship with them. Our library had been short staffed for about a year and Young Adult programs were the first thing that got cut. We have been forced to start building up programs from the ground up.

From past experience I know that it is essential to offer great programs, but if you do not have a group of teens to come to the program, it doesn’t matter how great the program is. Once you have established a good relationship with teens, you can offer bad programs and they still will come.

This program allowed my co-worker, Katie Walton, and me to start working on that relationship with the teens. Having the gala and inviting the teen's parents and friends was also a very good experience. The friends were able to see the work and fun the participants had and it allowed Katie and me to build a relationship with the parents. I expressed to them how much we enjoyed their children and thanked them for allowing them to participate.

My favorite part of the program was building a relationship with the teens and getting to share my own personal stories with the teens. They all seemed to really enjoy hearing about my crazy antics as a teen. Getting to know the teens better will also help to me better prepare for future programs. I now know that I have teens who really enjoy creative activities, like writing and acting, as well as ones who enjoy working with the latest technology- they couldn't keep their hands off the iPad.

I would really like to say thank you to YALSA and Dollar General for giving us this opportunity to enhance our teen programming. Without this grant, we would never have been able to afford an iPad for our library. The iPad has so much potential to be used in so many different ways in library programs and I am looking forward to the challenge of making our teen program even better. Thank you!