

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

**Topic:** Frequency of YA Literature Symposium

**Background:** The first YA Lit Symposium was held in 2008 and netted about \$27,000 in revenue. The second was held in 2010 and netted about \$40,000 in revenue. Based on the past success of the symposium, the board may want to consider if moving the event to an annual format is desirable.

**Action Required:** Action

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**POTENTIAL BENEFITS:**

**Net Revenue**

- The net revenue from the 2010 symposium was just over \$40,000. This is a significant revenue generator for YALSA. For example, in FY11, YALSA netted a combined total of \$23,003 for its online courses, webinars and licensed institutes. If YALSA could approach that sum every year instead of every other year it would add needed revenue to YALSA's budget.

**Strategic Plan Support**

- The symposium directly supports multiple goals in the strategic plan: continuing education, research and best practices and member engagement & recruitment.

**Increased Local/Regional Presence**

- Member survey results indicate that members still strongly value face-to-face events. If YALSA held an annual event in a different region of the country each year, this could help meet the member need for a more visible YALSA at the local level.

**Increased Member Engagement**

- An annual symposium would offer members more opportunities to present programs and papers and to network face-to-face with peers.

**A New Home for the Morris & Nonfiction Event**

- Shortened conference schedules at Midwinter and Annual have made it difficult to find a good time slot for holding an award event for these two newest YALSA awards. An annual symposium could facilitate moving the award event at the symposium and solve the dilemma of where to try and put it in an overcrowded Midwinter and Annual schedule.

**POTENTIAL OBSTACLES:**

### **Sponsorships**

- Having the Symposium in the same month as the AASL and NCTE/ALAN National Conferences and four months before PLA's Conference will likely make it more difficult to get sponsors; however, YALSA had no sponsors for the 2010 symposium and was still able to bring in \$40,000 in net revenue.
- Authors may be more difficult to obtain, because they may be in demand for AASL or NCTE/ALAN.

### **Attendance**

- If the symposium is every year, will fewer people go, because they have less time or funds for travel?
- Will the fact that the AASL Annual Conference would be a week or two after a 2013 symposium significantly impact attendance?

### **Programming**

- We would have to begin planning the content as soon as possible, so that details could be announced at the 2012 Symposium.

### **Net Revenue**

- Negotiating hotel rates and meeting space rental would be difficult since there is no history of the event meeting annually.
- If moving to an annual format means that fewer people actually attend, net revenues will be negatively impacted. Additionally, high attendance helps offset hotel costs by getting YALSA lower room rates, more complimentary hotel rooms for staff and complimentary meeting room rental. Fewer attendees mean an increase of expenses to YALSA and higher room rates for attendees.

### **Capacity**

- Since the symposium hasn't been held annually before, it is uncertain whether staff can handle the increased workload; however, if lower priority or less successful/impactful projects were scaled back, this could free up some staff time to devote to the symposium.

### **POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

- On the years that other Divisions do not have a conference, they increase the amount of preconferences (and sometimes other ticketed events) that they hold at Annual. However, YALSA's preconferences and institutes have had steadily declining attendance rates, so this is probably not the best option for YALSA.
- Some Divisions, in the off year they do not have a national conference, hold a smaller event such as the AASL Fall Forum, or a virtual event, such as the PLA Spring Symposium, which are near the size of YALSA's Symposium, although the amount of net revenue they earn is minimal (about \$5,000).
- Do nothing at this time and stick with the biennial format, but try to find ways to increase revenue.

- Try moving to an annual symposium format for 2013 and 2014 symposium to see how successful they are, and then in 2014 evaluate whether to continue with an annual format or move back to a biennial one.
- Try moving to an annual symposium format for 2013 and 2014 and for 2014 explore the feasibility of connecting it to a major state library association conference (either just prior or just after).

## **PRELIMINARY PLANNING FOR 2013**

### **Dates &/or Locations to Avoid**

It's imperative to avoid ALA Midwinter, ALA Annual and PLA's National Conference. This eliminates January, March and June as options. It's also desirable to avoid the AASL National Conference, which can be in Oct. or Nov. Since hotel rates are generally better in Nov. than in Oct., AASL seems to be moving their conference into Nov. December isn't a good month for conferences, due to the major holidays that are celebrated that month.

- **Holidays:**
  - Oct 14 Columbus Day
  - Oct 15 Eid-al-Adha
  - Nov 4 Election Day
  - Nov 5 Muharram (Islamic New Year)
  - Nov 11 Veterans Day
  - Nov 28 Thanksgiving Day & first day of Chanukah
- **Library & Literary Related Events:**
  - 2012 ALSC Institute is in Indianapolis, Sept. 20 – 22
  - 2013 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, IL: June 27- July 2, 2013
  - National Book Festival (in Sept. or Oct.—they won't know the exact date until 12 months in advance)
  - 2013 Teen Read Week, Oct. 12-18
  - 2013 ALA/Divisions Fall Executive Committee Meeting, Oct. 25 - 27
  - 2013 USBBY conference, sometime in Oct.
  - 2013 AASL National Conference National in Hartford, CT, November 13-17
  - 2013 NCTE/ALAN Boston, Massachusetts, November 21-24
  - 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia January 24-28
  - 2014 PLA National Conference March 11-15, 2014, Indianapolis, Ind.
  - Regional Book events (see [www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/bookfair.html](http://www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/bookfair.html))
  - State & Regional Library Assoc. conferences (see: <http://www.ala.org/ala/conferencesevents/afficalendar/index.cfm>) (Sept. 25-27 South Dakota Library Association, Sioux Falls, Oct. 16-18 Iowa Library Association, Coralville, IA)

**RECOMMENDED DATE & LOCATION:** First weekend in November, Pacific Northwest

- This option offers the potential for the lowest hotel rates and does a reasonable job of avoiding other major library and literary events.

**YALSA Board of Directors – Midwinter 2012**  
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- The location is preferred, because many of the other library events happening around the same time are on the East Coast or in the Midwest.