

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Seattle
January 19-24, 2007

Topic: First Time YA Author Award Proposal

Background: At the 2006 Midwinter Meeting the Board voted to establish a taskforce to develop a proposal for a First Time YA Author award, to be funded by the Morris Endowment. The taskforce has submitted a draft proposal and is seeking feedback from the Board. The final proposal needs to be submitted to the ALA Awards Committee in June of 2007 in order for this award to be given in 2009.

Action Required: Discussion

YALSA 1st Author Task Force – Draft December, 2006

Notes, comments and areas of concern addressed to the YALSA board are in green type.

Name: First Time YA Author Award, The Morris Award

Note: suggestions for award name are still being kicked about, Board suggestions would be most welcome.

CHARGE: To select the best book published annually for young adults by a first time author or authors (see eligibility) and up to four honorable mention titles by qualifying author(s).

Note: the purpose of the award may need to be clarified. The committee was somewhat divided on eligibility issues and defining what a first book for YAs means. (see eligibility note)

CRITERIA: The YALSA First Author Award celebrates the achievement of an author or authors who have made a strong literary debut in writing for young adult readers. The work cited will illuminate the teen experience and enrich the lives of its readers through its excellence, demonstrated by compelling, high quality writing and/or illustration, the integrity of the work as a whole, and its proven or potential appeal to a wide range of teen readers.

Committee Members:

The committee will consist of nine members including the chair, plus and an administrative assistant if the chair requests (see below). 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. All committee members must be YALSA members.

Note: Or all members could be appointed by the Vice President/President Elect.

Members are required to attend all committee meetings and to actively participate in the electronic discussion list. They are required to read widely from books eligible for nomination. If a member is unable to complete the entire term, the President of the Association will appoint a replacement.

Committee members should not solicit publishers for free personal copies of books. If members are offered or receive unsolicited copies of books from publishers, they may be accepted. 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.

The chair is a voting member of the committee with all the rights and responsibilities of the other members. In addition, the chair presides at all meetings of the committee and serves as facilitator of both discussion and committee business. The chair of the committee or the administrative assistant will contact publishers to obtain copies of nominated titles for all committee members. The chair will serve as list owner of an electronic discussion list created through the YALSA office solely for use by the committee, and will take responsibility for list maintenance. The chair has responsibility for any contact with publishers.

If the chair desires, the Vice President/President-Elect of YALSA may appoint an administrative assistant in consultation with the committee chair. The administrative assistant will assist the chair in duties that may include the following: contacting publishers on behalf of the chair/committee, maintaining the database of nominations, tabulating votes, and other such duties assigned by the chair. The administrative assistant is a non-voting member of the committee, and must be a YALSA member.

Eligibility:

1. The award and honor book winner(s) must be authors of original young adult works of fiction in any genre, non fiction, poetry, a short story collection, or graphic work.
2. The award winner(s) must not have previously published a book for any audience. Books previously published in another country, however, are one exception; presuming an American edition has been published during the period of eligibility, foreign titles are considered.

Note: This would exclude authors who have published books for adults or younger children. So, authors that have crossed over (Oates, Barry, Pearson, Gruber, etc.) would not be eligible. Board input is desired!

3. Works of joint authorship are eligible, but only if all contributors fit the first criteria. For example, graphic works created by an author and an illustrator are eligible, but only if both contributors have never published before.

**YALSA Board of Directors – Midwinter 2007
First Time YA Author Award Proposal**

4. Books must have been published between January 1 and December 31 of the year preceding announcement of the award.
5. Edited works are not eligible.
6. As many as four honor titles may be selected.
7. The award may be given posthumously provided the other criteria are met.
8. The winner and honor book authors are not required to attend the Award ceremonies, but authors will be encouraged to attend

To be eligible, a title must have been designated by its publisher as being either a young adult book or one published for the age range that YALSA defines as "young adult," i.e., 12 through 18. Adult books or titles for younger children are not eligible.

Nomination and Voting Procedures:

- Both field and Committee nominations will be accepted for books that meet the published criteria.
- Publishers, authors, agents, or editors may not nominate their own titles.
- Field nominations must be seconded by a committee member.
- Nominations may be accepted from the field and from Committee members up to December 1.
- Final selections are made at the Midwinter Meeting during a series of Committee meetings closed to the public.
- Only Committee members attending the Midwinter Meeting will be allowed to vote.
- Members can only vote on books they have read.

Nomination Form:

Author:

Title:

Publisher:

Publication Date:

ISBN: (use hyphens)

Select category

- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Poetry
- Anthology

Brief annotation describing book:

**YALSA Board of Directors – Midwinter 2007
First Time YA Author Award Proposal**

Brief statement explaining why you think this title is a candidate for the First Author Award in terms of its literary merit and the criteria in the guidelines.

Name:

Address:

Library Affiliation:

Fax:

Email:

Submit form

Annotations and Press Release

The committee is responsible for writing a press release and annotations for the winning title and honor books. Both the annotations and the press release will include discussion of the literary merits of the titles. The annotations and press release must be written prior to the Monday awards press conference.

The press release will be posted on YALSA-L, and also made available on the YALSA web site at www.ala.org/YALSA. The list will also appear in a spring issue of *Booklist* and the ALA publication *ALA's Guide to Best Reading*.

Note: It may be desirable to issue a short list of finalists prior to the Midwinter meeting, in keeping with other awards like the Man Booker, etc. This could be of use to publishers and YALSA members.

Still to be resolved or open issues:

Award Name

Sponsor or sponsor

Form and/or Type of Award

Voting procedures – do these need to be spelled out?

Presentation of Award

Programming possibilities