

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Chicago  
January 30 – February 2, 2015**

**Topic:** Diversity on the YALSA Board

**Background:** Diversity on YALSA Board was a Mega Issue brought forth by Shannon Peterson at YALSA's board meeting at the ALA 2014 conference. No formal action was taken as a result of the discussion. To move the topic of diversity on the YALSA Board forward, Nicola McDonald has presented the information below for board consideration.

**Action Required:** Action

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**Requested Action:** Create a taskforce to analyze the current board recruitment and selection policies, procedures and resources, and recommend improvements in order to bring more ongoing diversity to the YALSA Board.

**Rationale:**

- For YALSA to effectively respond to "objective 4a: expand and diversify the total membership of YALSA" in the strategic plan, it's essential that the YALSA Board's leadership reflects diversity and have an inclusive representation of a wide variety of incoming and potential members and the groups they represent.
- Increasing the diversity of the YALSA Board of Directors will result in a wider professional representation, increased cultural awareness in discussions and decision-making, and offer a more inviting/welcoming environment to reaching potential organizational members.
- Creating clear policies, processes and resource to ensure the board recruitment and selection process prioritizes inclusion of diverse populations eliminates the "usual suspects" trap. According to the article *Beyond Political Correctness: Building a Diverse Board*, "So often, board members approach the "usual suspects" - their best friends or individuals who travel in their same social circles and networks - resulting in a pool of candidates without much variation."
- According to the Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action, of the currently 74.2 million children under eighteen years old in the United States, 46% of them are children of color.
- Lack of diversity within the library profession itself is an issue. To put an action plan in place for the YALSA Board to include ongoing diversity on its board is one way to help with this cause. According to a ALA Diversity study updated in 2012, out of 118, 666 credentialed librarians only 5% were African American, less than 3% Asian & Pacific Islanders, 3% Hispanics, and less than 1% Native American, including Alaskan. In addition to giving a voice to diverse groups, YALSA will also be paving the way for future members and professionals to see that they have a place within the organization as

well.

- According to Dr. Robert K. Ross, President & CEO, The California Endowment, "Diversity is best achieved when it is understood, prioritized, and integrated into the operations of a foundation as a tool for effectiveness in, and responsiveness to, the communities being served."

### **Additional Considerations**

When giving consideration to the diversity of the YALSA Board, YALSA must not only consider cultural diversity, which is a significant factor to be implemented in the definition process, but also the make-up of the profession itself. Areas of value for YALSA include:

*Professional Diversity:* A mixed variety of representative from various organizational compositions with consideration to a wide geographical reach.

- School Librarians
- Public Librarians
- Other library staff serving teens
- Non-library/ Other teen/youth services organizations
- Urban/suburban/rural communities
- Small/medium/large library systems
- City funded/privately funded libraries
- Nonprofit/For profit
- Advocates in other fields who can contribute diverse skills as mentioned below to compliment the board
- Other

*Cultural, Ethnic and Racial Diversity:* Representation of various cultural groups, being especially mindful of growing populations served by libraries and youth organizations.

- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Multi-racial

*Diversity of Skills & Roles:* Distinction of a wide range of skills, expertise and the roles that can be contributed to the appointed role.

- Marketing
- Development
- Management
- Finance
- Grant Writing
- Strategic Planning
- Research
- Fundraising

*Other*

- age
- disability
- sexual orientation
- educational background
- economic status
- sex

**Proposed Taskforce Name and Charge:**

Board Diversity Taskforce: to ensure adequate and ongoing diversity on YALSA's Board of Directors. Develop a definition of diversity for adoption by the Board and inclusion in the YALSA Handbook. Analyze the current board recruitment and selection policies, procedures and resources and recommend improvements to ensure a strong focus on diversity. Activities include, but are not limited to, reviewing the Governance Nominating Committee's: function statement; language in the bylaws; current processes and tools the Committee uses to identify, recruit and select candidates; and reviewing the appointments process for selecting Committee members. *Size:* 5-7 virtual members with a strong commitment to diversity, at least 1 of which should be a current or past board member. *Term:* from March 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

**Requested Board Action**

The Board approves the establishment of a Board Diversity Taskforce as presented in this document and directs the President to appoint the group by March 1, 2015.

**Additional Resources**

- Mega Issue document from Annual 2014 <http://ow.ly/GWTIm>
- YALSA Governance Candidacy Form [www.ala.org/yalsa/governance-candidacy-form](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/governance-candidacy-form)
- YALSA Bylaws  
[www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BYLAWS\\_2014approvedchanges.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BYLAWS_2014approvedchanges.pdf)
- YALSA Governance Nominating Committee Description  
[www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/committees/nominatingcommittee](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/committees/nominatingcommittee)
- Beyond Political Correctness: Building a Diverse Board  
<http://www.bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Hiring-Nonprofit-Leaders/Recruiting-Board-Members/Building-a-Diverse-Board.aspx> - .VJo6yALcIA
- The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action  
<http://bit.ly/1n6PoKS>
- ALA Diversity Counts Study <http://bit.ly/1feMhh2>
- YALSA Strategic Plan <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan>
- National Council of Nonprofits diversity resources  
[www.councilofnonprofits.org/resources/resources-topic/boards-governance/diversity-boards](http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/resources/resources-topic/boards-governance/diversity-boards)
- Nonprofit Information on diversity <http://nonprofitinformation.com/tips-for-achieving-diversity-on-nonprofit-boards/>