

YALSA Board of Directors
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta
January 19-24, 2017

Topic: Proposal to Expand Symposium Events

Background: During the Fall Executive Committee meeting, a discussion arose to around the need to think more holistically in regards to YALSA ticketed events and award programs at conferences, especially given two factors: 1) the Symposium is now an annual event and pulling 500 attendees consistently, and 2) attendance at Annual and Midwinter has been declining. Ticketed events at conferences generate revenue that is used to provide services and resources to members. Trixie Dantis and Todd Krueger have presented the following proposal for the Board's consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Current Ticketed Author & Award events

- Morris/Nonfiction Award (Midwinter)
- Edwards Award (Annual)
- YA Author Coffee Klatch (Annual)
- Printz Award (Annual)
- Authors' Luncheon (Symposium)

Proposal

- Seek *School Library Journal's* support in moving the Edwards award event from Annual to the Symposium for a two-year trial period in 2018 – 2019, and then evaluate the pilot to determine a future course of action
- Establish a member group to investigate the best strategy for recognizing member award winners to raise the profile of members and their achievements

Rationale

- YALSA has offered numerous author events at the ALA Annual Conference, but attendance figures (both at the overall conference and at ticketed events), and therefore revenue, have been decreasing over the past number of years. Having three ticketed author events take place at the Annual conference is a challenge for members because:

- there is a limited amount of time for conference-goers to attend the three events, given all the other activities going on at Annual
- there are limits as to how much conference-goers can afford to attend at one conference
- Moving one awards event out of Annual can alleviate the issue of there being too many ticketed events at one conference for attendees to afford and/or have time to attend
- Moving one event out of Annual can free up space for new activities, such as a member award event, or for existing activities to move to a prime Sat. time-slot
- Currently members who win YALSA awards are recognized as one part of the 30 minute Membership Meeting at the Annual conference. Creating an event just for award winners can help to elevate the awards and better recognize the winners
- The symposium has just one ticketed event at this time. With YALSA reliably drawing 500 individuals to its symposium each year, there is an opportunity to expand that.

Proposed Charge for Taskforce

Member Award Recognition Taskforce

Examine successful practices from the association community, and gather and use YALSA member feedback (including feedback from past award winners) to determine the most desirable and appropriate method(s) for recognizing member award winners, including the feasibility of an award event at an ALA conference or YALSA's symposium. Submit a recommendation to the board for consideration at their June 2017 meeting.

Financial Considerations

- Moving Edwards to the Symposium site, normally a smaller city with smaller banquet costs, could result in better attendance and lower costs.
- Creating a Member Award event could be revenue neutral, revenue generating, or incur expenses, depending on how it was designed
- Member time to explore options for recognizing award winners
- Staff time to explore revenue opportunities for the symposium

Evaluation

- Reports produced by taskforce and staff will determine action steps, and depending on what those are, a plan for measuring results can be created

Recommended Board Actions

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Item #39

- The Board directs the YALSA ED to contact *School Library Journal* to determine whether moving Edwards from ALA Annual to the YA Symposium is something that *SLJ* would support, and if so, move forward with piloting the Edwards event at the 2018 and 2019 symposia.
- The Board directs the YALSA ED to work with YALSA's Program Officer for Conferences and Events to develop a proposal for expanding ticketed event and/or revenue generating opportunities at the symposium, taking past attendee feedback into consideration, and to submit a proposal to the board for their June 2017 meeting
- The Board directs the President to assemble an ad-hoc work group to come up with a recommendation as to how best to move forward with recognizing members who win YALSA awards

Additional Resources

- Annual 2016 Midwinter Board Document #38 “ Events and Conferences Update”
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/EventsReport_AN16.pdf
(includes data on attendance at Annual ticketed events)