YALSA'S YOUNG ADULT SERVICES SYMPOSIUM
St. Louis, MO November 10–12, 2023
#YALSA23
ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT FOR YALSA’S SYMPOSIUM, A CONFERENCE FOR THOSE WORKING WITH TEENS IN LIBRARIES!

If this is your first Symposium we are happy to welcome you to this exciting conference. If you have been before, welcome back, we know this year’s conference will be as rewarding as past Symposia! The theme, “Gateway to the Best: Connecting, Creating, and Celebrating Young Adult Services”, shows off the innovation of today’s teen services library workers and offers an exciting opportunity to connect with colleagues and authors alike.

We welcome YALSA members, non-members, students, administrators, librarians, library workers and anyone who has an interest in bettering the lives of teens in their library community! The Symposium is our time to focus without distractions on how we can best serve our teens, by bringing together experts in our field and future experts, including yourself. We all share a passion for developing the resources and skills our teens will need to develop and grow to future leaders. It’s our space to come together and support one another through networking, sharing ideas, and most importantly having fun! While at the Symposium, join me and our YALSA President-Elect, Yvette Garcia, with our YALSA leaders and staff to talk about how you can get involved with YALSA.

This year’s lineup of programs covers a wide range of issues that we are facing working in libraries today, as well as insight from our favorite authors. We have gathered from the various libraries we work in from school to public, from urban to rural. Most importantly, we will discover the resources that will help encourage our teens to be library advocates and spread the message that libraries allow people to find their stories. Libraries and the access they give those in our community, including the access to the important stories found in YA literature, better our society. Reading and the stories we uncover can free us from hatred by giving us empathy, and as we all know, “free people read freely”. Here at the 2023 YALSA Symposium, we celebrate that freedom to read!
Highlights of our program this year include our opening session on Friday featuring a fun-filled discussion of romantic comedies, a tour of the St. Louis Public Library and the Margaret A. Edwards Award Luncheon honoring Jason Reynolds on Saturday, and our closing session on Sunday showcasing a lively panel about fantastic places, magical quests, and uncharted worlds will indeed provide a gateway to the best of YA literature.

Our ever popular Book Blitz and Galley Grab will also be on Saturday, at the end of the day. For the Book Blitz, each attendee will receive three tickets that will guarantee them a signed copy of a free book from our participating authors. Attendees must wait in line to receive the signed copy of the book and present the ticket at signing. Sometimes, at the last minute an author may not be able to attend the Symposium. In that case we will have a volunteer at the table to hand you a book at the presentation of your ticket. Our galley grab features a wide variety of generously donated galleys by our participating publishers. There’s no limit on how many galleys you can grab, but you may only take one copy of each title.

I’d like to give a huge thank you to this year’s Symposium Planning and Marketing Taskforce who volunteered their time to come up with a perfect theme, review all the program application submissions, develop the program schedule, troubleshoot with presenters, review stipend applications, and helped connect attendees with local information and social events in St. Louis. Chair, Amy Ojserkis, Atlantic County Institute of Technology in Mays Landing, NJ; Heather Love Beverley, Cook Memorial Public Library District, Vernon Hills, IL; Scot Smith, Robertsville Middle School Library in Oak Ridge, TN.; Caroline Aversano, Edison Public Library, Edison, NJ; Asuncion Cora, New York Public Library, Bronx, NY; Ginny Edwards, Irondale Public Library, Irondale, AL; and Meagan Looney, Deschutes Public Library, Bend, OR. An additional thanks goes out to YALSA President-Elect, Yvette Garcia, for stepping up and helping the task force out this year, especially with the pre conference planning.

I’d also like to congratulate the two Symposium stipend winners: J Hodnett, Churchill County Library, NV and Valerie Tohom, San Jose State University, CA. Every year YALSA provides up to two stipends for Symposium attendance. Both stipends offer up to $1,000 in funds for travel and registration. One stipend is awarded to a library worker who works directly with young adults, with one to ten years’ experience and the other is awarded to a student enrolled in an ALA-accredited MLS program at the time of the Symposium.

Thank you for showing up and giving your support to YALSA. I am excited to be here with you, as there is a different energy at a YALSA symposium than at other ALA Conferences– We all know what it feels like when we find our people. My best advice for you is to make sure you make time to network with your colleagues, catch up with old friends and make some new ones. I’m excited to see what the future will bring from this gathering here in St. Louis!

Colleen Seisser
YALSA President, 2023-2024
Meeting Space/Symposium Location
The 2023 YA Services Symposium will be held at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis Arch on the second floor.

Health & Safety
The Hyatt Regency St. Louis Arch is committed to keeping our meeting space safe through extensive cleaning methods. Please take precautions as you see fit throughout your stay. If you need additional information, visit the YALSA registration table.

Author Book Signings
Each attendee will receive 3 tickets for book signings during Saturday’s Book Blitz.

Lost and Found
Please check with YALSA staff at the registration area if you have lost or found articles.

Complimentary Internet
Complimentary wireless internet access is available in the hotel guest and meeting rooms. In the meeting space, use wireless network “Hyatt_Meetings.” The access code is “YALSA2023”.

Symposium Evaluation
You will be emailed a link to complete the Symposium Evaluation. YALSA and the Symposium faculty would appreciate your feedback.

Persons with Disabilities
Visit the registration area or seek out YALSA staff to get assistance onsite. You may also email yalsaevents@ala.org in advance to discuss.

Social Media at the Symposium
Photos and updates will be posted on the YALSA blog at yalsa.ala.org/blog. If you are using Twitter or posting photos to Social Media, please tag your posts with #yalsa23.

YALSA Optional Events/Tours
- **Friday Evening Dine-Arounds:** Sign up at the YALSA registration table for a dinner at a restaurant of your choosing; it’s a perfect way to meet new attendees.
- **Saturday Edwards Award Luncheon:** Honoring Jason Reynolds. Pre-registration is required.
- **Saturday Evening Tour at the St. Louis Public Library:** Sold out event.

Photography Consent
Registration for, attendance at, or participation in YALSA’s YA Symposium and other activities constitutes an agreement by the participant to allow YALSA to use and distribute (both now and in the future) the registrant’s or attendee’s image or voice in photographs, video, electronic reproductions, and audio of such events and activities.

No Photos or Videos During the Edwards Luncheon
ALA and YALSA are aware of growing concerns related to the safety and security of library workers across the nation. Due to the sensitive nature of this session and the wellbeing of its participants, please refrain from capturing and sharing photos, videos or other identifying information from this session. However, we welcome and encourage all to share their experiences and excitement for the YALSA Symposium on social media throughout the weekend.

Food and Beverage
YALSA will provide beverages at the scheduled coffee breaks. We suggest that you might bring snacks if you get hungry throughout the day. There are many options close to the hotel for breakfast and lunch as well as onsite options.

Not a Member of YALSA?
Join today! Visit ala.org/yalsa/join. Adding YALSA to your ALA membership costs only $62 a year.
SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE
A full schedule with room locations and descriptions can be found on page 16.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10

8:00 am – 6:30 pm
- Registration (2nd Floor Coatroom)

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- Supporting Teens in their Right to Read

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
- Level Up Your Graphic Game with GameRT and GNCRT

4:30 pm – 5:30 pm
- Opening Authors Panel: Meet Cute in St. Louis: Rom-Com’s for Today’s Teens

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm
- Opening Reception
- Author Book Signing

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

7:15 am – 5:30 pm
- Registration (2nd Floor Coatroom)

8:00 am – 9:00 am
- Devorah Heitner “Digital Coming of Age”
- Self-Care for the Underappreciated, Burned Out, and Censored
- AI Literacy for Libraries

9:00 am – 9:30 am
- Coffee Break (PreFunction)

9:30 am – 10:30 am
- Beyond “American Born Chinese”: Advancing Change through Asian Representation in Graphic Novels
- Book it! Non Traditional Ways to Integrate Books into YA Services
- How to Navigate Book Challenges in the Teen Services Space

10:30 am – 10:45 am
- Transition Break

10:45 am – 11:45 am
- How the Graphic Novel Making Contests Reveals Emotional and Mental State of Teens Through Art
- Sheila Michaels, Margaret A. Edwards Award for Literature Program-Book Bag
- Partnerships & Programs for Building Safer Comm. Spaces

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
- Margaret A. Edwards Award Luncheon: The 2023 Margaret A. Edwards Award luncheon will honor Jason Reynolds for his novels When I was the Greatest, The Boy in the Black Suit, and All American Boys.

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm
- Authors to Watch: Debut Writers with Morris Potential
- Mix-It-Up: Teen Culinary Programs In a Post-Covid World
- Creating a Teen Artist-In-Residency Program at Your Library

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm
- Coffee Break (PreFunction)

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm
- Gateway to Employment: Teen Volunteers as Workforce Development
- All Teens Need Queer Books
- Using Graphic Memoir to Connect with Teens

4:15 pm – 5:15 pm
- Author Book Blitz/Galley Grab: With Alexene Follmuth, Ari Tison, Samantha Markum, Margaret Owen, John Schu, Edward Underhill, Terry J. Benton-Walker, Deb JJ Lee, Sarah Myer, Thien Pham, and Victoria Ying

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
- St. Louis Library Tour
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

8:00 am – 1:30 pm
  • Registration (2nd Floor Coatroom)

8:00 am – 9:30 am
  • Fostering Civic Engagement
  • Teen Engagement: Building Successful Teen Programming and Advisory Boards

9:30 am – 10:00 am
  • Coffee Break (PreFunction)

10:00 am – 11:00 am
  • Publishers Book Buzz
  • Roll for Accessibility
  • Creating Programs that Attract New Teen Library Users

11:00 am – 11:15 am
  • Transition Break

11:15 am – 12:15 pm
  • Youth Homelessness: Understanding the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
  • Getting Teen Voices Heard: Increasing Teen Engagement
  • Books Clubs as Early Activism

12:15 pm – 1:30 pm
  • Transition Break

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm
  • Closing Author Panel: Gateway to Exploration: The Quest for Stories

1:30 pm
  • Symposium Conclusion
MARGARET A. EDWARDS AWARD RECIPIENT

Jason Reynolds is the recipient of the 2023 Margaret A. Edwards Award honoring his significant and lasting contribution to writing for teens for *When I was the Greatest*, *The Boy in the Black Suit*, *All American Boys*, *Ghost* and *Long Way Down*. YALSA announced the award during the ALA’s LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience held Jan. 27-30, in New Orleans.

In his writing, Jason Reynolds presents teens with authentic mirrors and windows to the world. Each of Reynolds’ books creates opportunities for discussion and reflection among teens. “Reynolds shows teens that life is full of choices. His immense respect for teens is obvious and many will feel ‘seen’ in his stories,” said Edwards Committee Chair Dr. Joni Richards Bodart.

OPENING SESSION AUTHORE PANEL
Meet Cute in St. Louis: Rom-Com's for Today's Teens

Edward Underhill (he/him) is a queer trans man who grew up in the suburbs of Wisconsin. He began writing (very bad) stories as a kid and wrote his first (also very bad) novel in his teens. In college, he earned a master’s degree in film music composition. After a few years living in tiny apartments in New York, he moved to California, where by day he writes music and by night he writes stories, which aren’t as bad as they used to be. When not doing either of these things, he’s probably gardening or hanging out with his cat. He is the author of *Always the Almost*.

Lynn Painter writes romantic comedies for both teens and adults. She is the author of *Better Than the Movies*, *Mr. Wrong Number*, *The Do-Over*, and *Betting on You*, as well as a regular contributor to the Omaha World-Herald. She lives in Nebraska with her husband and pack of wild children, and when she isn’t reading or writing, odds are good she’s guzzling energy drinks and watching rom-coms. You can find her at LynnPainter.com, on Instagram @LynnPainterKirkle, or on Twitter @LAPainter.

Mason Deaver is born and raised in a small town in North Carolina, an award-nominated, bestselling author and designer living in Charlotte. Their debut novel, *I Wish You All the Best*, was named a Junior Library Guild Selection and an NPR Concierge Book. Besides writing, they’re an active fan of horror movies and video games. You can find them online at masondeaverwrites.com.

Crystal Maldonado is a young adult author with a lot of feelings. She is the author of romcoms for fat, brown girls. By day, Crystal works in higher ed marketing, and by night, she’s a writer who loves Beyoncé, glitter, shopping, and spending too much time on her phone. Her work has been published in Latina, BuzzFeed, and the Hartford Courant. She lives in western Massachusetts with her husband, daughter, and dog. Follow her everywhere @crystalwrote.

Alexene Farol Fallmuth is the author of the young adult rom-coms *My Mechanical Romance* and *Twelfth Knight*. As Olivie Blake, she is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Atlas Six*, *Alone with You in the Ether*, *One for My Enemy*, and *Masters of Death*. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband, goblin prince/toddler, and rescue pit bull.

Kasie West is the author of many YA novels, including *Places We’ve Never Been*, *Sunkissed*, *The Fill-in Boyfriend*, *P.S. I Like You*, *Lucky in Love*, and *Listen to Your Heart*. Her books have been named ALA-YALSA Quick Picks, JLG selections, and ALA-YALSA Best Books for Young Adults. When she’s not writing, she’s binge-watching television, devouring books, or road-tripping to new places. Kasie lives in Fresno, California, with her family.
USING GRAPHIC MEMOIR TO CONNECT WITH TEENS

Deb JJ Lee is a Korean American artist currently living in Brooklyn, NY. They have appeared in the New Yorker, Washington Post, NPR, Google, Radiolab, PBS, and more. Books they have illustrated include The Invisible Boy by Alyssa Hollingsworth and The Other Side of Tomorrow by Tina Cho. They enjoy reality tv, sparkling water, and pretending to be an extrovert.

Sarah Myer is a comic artist and illustrator hailing from a ten-acre farm in White Hall, Maryland. An old-school cosplayer and anime fan, Sarah has attended anime/comic conventions as a fan and artist alley participant since 1999 and has constructed and worn more than fifty costumes. They graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design with BFA and MFA degrees in sequential art and taught foundation studies classes at the college for three years. They are the author of Monstrous: A Transracial Adoption Story, which debuted this year.

Thien Pham is a graphic novelist, comic artist, and educator based in Oakland, CA. He is the author and illustrator of the graphic novel Sumo and did the art for the middle-grade graphic novel Level Up, written by Gene Luen Yang, and is an ongoing comic contributor to Eater SF. Currently Pham is working on his next graphic novel, teaching, and eating. A lot. Follow Thien on Instagram @thiendog.

Victoria Ying is an author and artist living in Los Angeles. She started her career in the arts by falling in love with comic books, which eventually turned into a career working in animation and graphic novels. She loves Japanese curry, putting things in her shopping cart online and taking them out again, and hanging out with her dopey dog. Her film credits include Frozen, Moana, Tangled, Wreck-It Ralph, Big Hero 6, and Paperman. She is the illustrator of the DC Comics graphic novel Diana: Princess of the Amazons and the author and illustrator of her original graphic novels City of Secrets and Hungry Ghost.

WILLIAM C. MORRIS AUTHOR PANEL

Terry J. Benton-Walker grew up in rural Georgia and now lives in Atlanta with his husband and son, where he writes fiction for adults, young adults, and children. He has an Industrial Engineering degree from Georgia Tech and an MBA from Georgia State. When he’s not writing, he can be found gaming, eating ice cream, or both. Connect with Terry on Twitter at @tjbentonwalker, Instagram @icecreamvicelord, or at tjbentonwalker.com. Blood Debts is his first novel.

Ari Tison is a Bribri (Indigenous Costa Rican) American and African descended poet and storyteller. Her poems and short works have been published in Yellow Medicine Review, The Under Review, Rock & Sling, and POETRY’s first ever edition for children. She was the winner of the 2018 Vaunda Micheaux Nelson award for a BIPOC writer with Lerner Publishing. She currently is the annual broadside editor for Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop where she gets to collaborate with the Minnesota Center for the Book Arts to bring incarcerated voices into the world. Saints of the Household is her debut novel.

Dale Walls (they/them) is a Black queer culture writer, curator, and art historian based in San Francisco. They are currently pursuing an art history PhD and are a Knight-Hennesy Scholar at Stanford University. Dale has written for Teen Vogue, Artsy, and Google Arts and Culture and is a 2022 Lambda Literary Fellow. The Queer Girl Is Going To Be Okay is their debut novel. They identify as queer non-binary.

Federico Erebia is a retired physician, woodworker, author, and illustrator. Pedro & Daniel is his debut novel. He serves on the SCBWI Impact & Legacy Fund Steering Committee, and is a member of several writing groups. He enjoys the intersections of his neurodivergent, gay, and Latino identities. He lives in Massachusetts with his husband and their furry bubbies.

Jamie Jo Hoang, the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, grew up in Orange County, CA—not the wealthy part. She worked for MGM Studios and later, as a docu-series producer. Now she writes novels and blogs full time. When Jamie’s not writing, she’s wandering, pondering, and chasing experiences. Her self-published first novel, Blue Sun, Yellow Sky, is a Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year.
CLOSING SESSION AUTHOR PANEL
Gateway to Exploration: The Quest for Stories

Margaret Owen was born and raised at the end of the Oregon Trail and has worked in everything from thrift stores to presidential campaigns. She is the author of the instant Indie Bestseller Little Thieves, which received five starred reviews and was a Kids’ Indie next pick and YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults Selection. Her debut, The Merciful Crow duology, was an NPR Best Book of the Year, a Tor.com Best of the Year, and a YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults Selection.

Kelly Andrew lost her hearing when she was four years old. She’s been telling stories ever since. Kelly lives in New England with her husband, two daughters, and a persnickety Boston Terrier.

Sharon Cameron is the author of the international bestseller and Reese’s Book Club pick The Light in Hidden Places and the critically acclaimed thriller Bluebird. Her debut novel The Dark Unwinding was awarded the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators’ Sue Alexander Award for Most Promising New Work and the SCBWI Crystal Kite Award and was named a YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults selection. Sharon is also the author of its sequel, A Spark Unseen; Rook, which was an Indiebound Indie Next List Top Ten selection, a YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults selection, and a Parents’ Choice gold medalist; and The Forgetting, a #1 New York Times bestseller and an Indie Next Pick of the List selection, as well as its companion novel, The Knowing. She lives with her family in Nashville, Tennessee, and you can visit her online at sharoncameronbooks.com or follow her on Instagram @sharoncameronbooks or on Twitter @CameronSharonE.

Saraciea J. Fennell (co-editor) is a Black Honduran American writer, founder of The Bronx is Reading, and creator of Honduran Garifuna Writers. She is also a book publicist who has worked with many award-winning and New York Times bestselling authors and the editor of the anthology Wild Tongues Can’t Be Tamed: 15 Voices from the Latinx Diaspora. She lives in the Bronx with her family.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Pre-Conference Course
Supporting Teens to Fight For Their Right To Read (PreRegistration Required)

Attempts to ban books from school and public libraries continue to rise at an unprecedented level across the country. These challenges disproportionately include young adult books and reflect the experiences of marginalized communities. Now more than ever teens are inspired to engage in intellectual freedom advocacy and make their voices heard. Join members of Brooklyn Public Library’s Books Unbanned team to hear how your library – regardless of size, location, or budget – can help teens develop their civic engagement skills to become strong library and community advocates and leaders. Turn your teen advisory group into a teen advocacy group!

PRESENTER: Karen Keys is Coordinator of Young Adult Services at Brooklyn Public Library where she oversees programs and services for teens. She advocates a for-teens-by-teens service model and provides training, mentoring, and coaching to young adult services staff. Karen is part of the team named LJ’s 2023 “Librarians of the Year” for their Books Unbanned anti-censorship campaign.

1:00 am – 4:00 pm

Pre-Conference Course
Level Up Your Graphic Game (PreRegistration Required)

Your graphic novel or games collection is close to greatness - you’ve been ordering whatever you can find, and your teens are checking them out in record numbers. But how do you bring it to the next level?

This joint YALSA, GNCRT, and GameRT session will provide insight, inspiration, and support for many common struggles surrounding graphic novels and games. Panelists will share advanced collection development resources and strategies, positive positioning for materials challenges, and actionable program concepts that can be applied to any size community. This isn’t a “how to start” your collection; this is a “how to connect” your collection to your teens and level up!

4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Opening Author Panel
Meet Cute in St. Louis: Rom-Coms for Today’s Teens

The Symposium’s Opening Panel will feature Edward Underhill (This Day Changes Everything), Lynn Painter (Betting On You), Mason Deaver (Okay, Cupid), Crystal Maldonado (The Fall of Whit Rivera), Alexene Farol Follmuth (Twelfth Knight), and Kasie West (Borrow My Heart). Join these fabulous authors and other members of YALSA for an entertaining panel discussion.


6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Opening Reception

Regency A & B
PROGRAM SCHEDULE & DESCRIPTIONS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

▷ 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Digital Coming of Age

Devorah Heitner, PhD, author of Growing Up in Public has spent the past decade talking with teens about their digital lives. She will share the digital milestones young people are facing so that librarians can lean into their support for digital wellness and mental health. Devorah will share her research and interviews about the digital milestones young people are facing: First Google search. First time on a public gaming server. First smartphone. First group chat. First social media account. How can libraries support digital wellness and mental health by supporting young people in learning the crucial skills they need to navigate these digital milestones and thrive in digital communities?


Regency F

AI Literacy for Libraries

This project examines the role of the library as a community catalyst to enable economically underserved youth to 1) have access to core knowledge about AI, and 2) play an active role in designing AI technologies for their communities. It follows a pedagogy built upon a critical race theory that views students from socially underserved communities not as people with deficits but as people with "community cultural wealth" (Yosso, 2005). By using participatory design methodology, 10-14 year old students in this project will utilize their own assets to co-design AI technologies for their community.

PRESENTER: Kahyun Choi and Hee Rin Lee. Hee is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Media and Information at Michigan State University. Their research centers around the participatory design of robots and AIs, with a specific emphasis on developing intelligent systems for promoting social good.

Regency E

Self-Care for the Underappreciated, Burned Out and Censored

In the rapidly evolving landscape of libraries, information professionals face numerous challenges that can impact our well-being and ability to serve our communities effectively. Our knowledge and value as information professionals is being challenged, and we can’t help but take that personally. Some of us experience aggressions daily while others witness them constantly and consistently. Burnout, stress, and anxiety often results from such environments. Self-care is the prescription of the day, but what does that really mean? By prioritizing self-care, we can empower ourselves to be better poised to provide quality services, particularly to the young adults in our libraries.

PRESENTER: Edith Campbell, an Associate Librarian in the Cunningham Memorial Library at Indiana State University. She is a member of WeAreKidlit Collective, and Black Cotton Reviewers. Edith has served on the Printz Award, Sibert Informational Text Award, Walden Book Award, and the Walter Award. Edith blogs to promote literacy and social justice in young adult literature at CrazyQuiltsEdi.

Regency C & D

▷ 9:00 am – 9:30 am

Coffee and Networking Break

Prefunction

YALSA’S 2023 YOUNG ADULT SERVICES SYMPOSIUM #YALSA23
9:30 am – 10:30 am

Beyond “American Born Chinese”
Advancing Change through Asian Representation in Graphic Novels

This panel discussion aims to equip librarians with tools to select graphic novels that accurately and skillfully portray Asians/Asian Americans, helping to combat racism in the U.S. while considering the real challenges America faces with Asia today. We will discuss acclaimed titles like *Banned Book Club*, *The Magic Fish*, *Displacement*, etc., and explore authentic representation as discussed in *Stories Matter: The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children’s Literature* by Dana Fox and Kathy Short.

**PRESENTERS:**
- Joe Monahan (moderator).
- Stephanie Mahar and Xuejiao “Judy” Li are third-year Washington State University Ph.D. students studying youth graphic novels.
- Nancy Hope, M.Ed., M.F.A, M.A., is the Executive Director of the Freeman Book Awards, recognizing quality literature on East and Southeast Asia for young adults and children.
- Katherine (Kat) Kan, Isaiah West, and Andrew Woodrow-Butcher.

How to Navigate Book Challenges in the Teen Services Space

Join YALSA and Booklist to get tips about how to navigate book challenges in the teen services space. We’ll hear from a panel of teen service librarians who have experienced book challenges first-hand and who can offer resources and advice about how others can find support and assistance against community push-back and censorship attempts.

**PRESENTERS:**
- Colleen Seisser, 2023-2024 YALSA President and Assistant Director at the Westmont Public Library in Westmont, Illinois.
- Kathleen Breitenbach, the 2022-2023 Rainbow Round Table Past Chair and has been the Teen Librarian at the Hamilton Township Free Public Library in Hamilton, New Jersey.
- Rachel Colias, teen librarian at the Niles-Maine District Library.
- Sheila Michaels, librarian for Nixa Public Schools in Missouri.
- Shannon Vanderhyde, youth librarian at the Krause Memorial Branch of Kent District Library with a focus on teen programming in an inclusive supportive environment.

Book it! Non Traditional Ways to Integrate Books into YA Services

Books are the most common item associated with libraries. All libraries independent of size and budget have access to books. How do you get the most out of this readily available resource in library services for teens? In this session, we will share new ways to integrate books into day-to-day library services that will appeal to teens and change the way you use this valuable resource.

**PRESENTERS:**
- Rebecca Baldwin and Sarah Carpenter.
  Sarah has worked for several years in teen services and has been in youth services for nearly ten years. Currently, Sarah is serving on the Amazing Audio Selection List blogging team and in 2022 she served on the Margaret A. Edwards Award committee.

10:45 am – 11:45 am

How the Graphic Novel Making Contest Reveals the Emotional and Mental State of Teens Through Art

In its 15th Year, San Jose Public Library’s Graphic Novel Making Contest offers creatives of all ages to submit their original graphic novel for a chance to win and be featured in our catalog as a published work of art. What it reveals is the current mental and emotional status of teens through art. This was telling during the pandemic where themes of isolation and the toilet paper shortage were integrated into their graphic novels. When teens are unable to verbally express how they’re feeling, they utilize art to make their thoughts and feelings known.

**PRESENTERS:**
- Jessica Lundin and Alyssa Mendoza. Alyssa is a Library Clerk at the San Jose Public Library and current MLIS student at San Jose State University.
10:45 am – 11:45 am (continued)

Sheila Michaels, Margaret A. Edwards Award for Literature Program
“Book Bag”

Participants in this session will learn about the award-winning summer reading program “Book Bag,” which was developed to meet the reading needs of students while also addressing nutrition and hygiene equity. During the school year, students have the opportunity to access free or reduced lunch, weekend food bags, and hygiene items in addition to library books. But many students struggle during the summer when school resources are unavailable. This idea was born out of the desire to provide students with what they need under the umbrella of a reading program, which helps remove the stigma of asking for hygiene items or food. Combining these fundamental needs in one program bloomed into a community wide summer resource that had a big impact for families. Questions, answers, and discussions will center on the program's success and how to carry the ideas back to participants' home libraries.

PRESENTERS: Sheila Michaels
Regency E

Partnerships & Programs for Building Safer Community Spaces

This session will highlight different ways St. Louis Public Library has promoted the library as a place of safety in communities experiencing violence. It will discuss how SLPL has worked with community organizations to create partnerships and host events such as ‘Stop, Lock, and Drop It: Cancel Gun Violence’ rallies as well as piloting teen mediation programming. It will also address how to make changes within existing library spaces to create more opportunities for teens to hangout, such as modifying our Creative Experience hub to create ‘gaming labs’ during after-school hours.

PRESENTERS: Becky Smith and Zenique Gardner-Perry
Becky Smith is the Teen Services Coordinator at the St. Louis Public Library. She has worked with kids and teens at SLPL for 5 years.
Regency F

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Margaret A. Edwards Award Luncheon (ticketed event)

The 2023 Margaret A. Edwards Award luncheon will honor Jason Reynolds for his novels When I was the Greatest, The Boy in the Black Suit, and All American Boys. The 2023 Margaret A. Edwards Award Committee noted that in his writing, Reynolds presents teens with authentic mirrors and windows to the world. Attendees will have lunch and then hear Jason Reynolds deliver his acceptance speech for the award.

To support the safety and security of your peers, please refrain from recording and photographing this event.

Regency C & D

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Authors to Watch
Debut Writers with Morris Potential

The Morris Panel gives debut YA authors the opportunity to share and discuss their first publications and has been traditionally moderated by an author whose whole debut work received recognition from the Morris Jury. This panel celebrates new voices in YA literature and allows YALSA members to hear the stories behind the authors’ first books

PRESENTERS: Caroline Aversano (moderator), Terry J. Benton-Walker, Ari Tison, Dale Walls, Federico Erebia, and Jamie Jo Hoang.
Regency C & D
Mix-It-Up: Teen Culinary Programs in a Post-Covid World

Family and Consumer Sciences, formerly known as Home Economics, is waning in the American education system, with a reported 34% of Generation Z wishing they’d learn how to cook in school. In addition, trends post-COVID show that today’s young adults are drawn to cooking their own food. Integrating culinary literacy into library programs can build community, reinforce traditional skills and bring teens to the library by appealing to their stomachs. In this session, we will share culinary literacy programming successes, including hands-on learning, food safety education, and best practices for implementing culinary literacy programs.

PRESENTERS: Sarah Carpenter and Rebecca Baldwin. Rebecca has over a decade of teen services experience. She has served on the Amazing Audio Selection List blogging team for two years and chaired the 2021 Margaret A. Edwards Award committee.

Creating a Teen Artist-In-Residence Program at Your Library

This presentation will discuss the Carmel Clay Public Library's Teen Artist-in-Residence Program. This unique program offers teen artists their own studio space and materials, as well as space to exhibit their work and teach art classes. It seeks to connect teen artists to other teen artists, help them develop their skills, improve their opportunities, and provide community support for their work. Attendees will learn strategies for starting and evaluating a Teen Artist-in-Residence Program.

PRESENTER: Michael Cherry, a Teen Librarian and the Teen Artist-in-Residence Coordinator at the Carmel Clay Public Library. In addition to obtaining a Masters of Library Science, Michael completed masters degrees in the arts and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts.

Gateway to Employment
Teen Volunteers as Workforce Development

Want to strengthen your library’s teen volunteer learning experiences and enhance your community’s workforce development outcomes? Learn to develop teen volunteers every step of the way from recruitment and initial application to celebration of their newly formed habits. Build your teen engagement supervisor toolkit with interviewing tips and tricks, training methods, and potential volunteer duties that assess, strengthen, and reinforce your teens’ workforce readiness. Apply adolescent brain development research and trauma-informed social and emotional learning practices to level up your volunteer engagement. Involve your staff as mentors to develop teens as leaders in your community with this scalable model.

PRESENTERS: Heidi Port and Emily Williams. Emily is the Teen Services Manager for the Metropolitan Library System in Oklahoma County. She has 25 years of library experience and is a passionate advocate for teens in libraries and for library workers in teen services.
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm (continued)

All Teens Need Queer Books

LGBTQIA+ students are everywhere! We must encourage, support and defend their rights to read books and materials that matter to them. All youth should have the opportunity to use these books as “windows, mirrors and doors” to explore and engage with LGBTQIA+ characters. We will not only share exemplary examples of books your library must have, but we will also give you strategies to collect, circulate, and celebrate these books and the youth who read and need them.


Using Graphic Memoir to Connect with Teens

The Symposium’s Graphic Memoir Panel will feature Deb JJ Lee, Sarah Myer, Thien Pham, and Victoria Ying. Sarah Myer is a comic artist and illustrator, author of Monstrous: A Transracial Adoption Story. Deb have illustrated include The Invisible Boy by Alyssa Hollingsworth and The Other Side of Tomorrow by Tina Cho. Thien is the author and illustrator of the graphic novel Sumo and did the art for the middle-grade graphic novel Level Up, written by Gene Luen Yang, and is an ongoing comic contributor to Eater SF. Victoria is the illustrator of the DC Comics graphic novel Diana: Princess of the Amazons and the author and illustrator of her original graphic novels City of Secrets and Hungry Ghost. Join these fabulous authors and other members of YALSA for an entertaining panel discussion.

PRESENTERS: Deb JJ Lee, Sarah Myer, Thien Pham, and Victoria Ying

4:15 pm – 5:15 pm

Author Book Blitz

Attendees receive tickets for book signings.

PRESENTERS: Alexene Follmuth, Ari Tison, Samantha Markum, Margaret Owen, John Schu, Edward Underhill, Terry J. Benton-Walker, Deb JJ Lee, Sarah Myer, Thien Pham, and Victoria Ying

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

St. Louis Public Library Tour

Meet in the 1st floor lobby near the front doors (by the restaurant) to walk together. It is a 15-20 minute walk.
PROGRAM SCHEDULE & DESCRIPTIONS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11

8:30 am – 9:30 am

Fostering Civic Engagement
Join us as we delve into the dynamic partnership between the library and the Youth Commission, empowering young people and effecting positive change in local government. Explore how the library actively engages the Youth Commission, providing platforms for youth to voice their perspectives and ideas. Discover how these collaborations extend beyond library services, influencing municipal code and enhancing youth’s role in local governance. Learn how we integrate the Youth Commission into library programming, including creating the San José Teen Civics Summit. Gain valuable resources and tips for implementing similar programs and amplifying youth voices for a more inclusive community.

PRESENTER: Megan Maloy, a librarian at TeenHQ and the young adult fiction selector for San José Public Library. She worked on youth civic engagement with SJ Engage, digital inclusion through SJ Access, and is the San José Youth Commission coordinator. She received the California Library Association Young Adult Services Award in 2023.

Teen Engagement: Building Successful Teen Programming and Advisory Boards
Building a successful and sustainable teen following (aka Teen Advisory Board) can be a challenge! Throughout this session Dianna will share her success, tips and ways to revamp your libraries’ teen services to create a successful teen following in your library.

PRESENTER: Diana Manasse has worked in youth services for over 5 years and has primarily focused on teen services. Her main passion has been engaging teens in literacy and their communities through a variety of unique, fun and educational programming. She believes teens are the next generation of library users, and works daily to make sure they have great experiences in libraries.

9:30 am – 10:00 am

Coffee and Networking Break

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Publishers Book Buzz
YA Publishers will share their upcoming releases.


Roll for Accessibility
Participants will walk away with a better understanding of RPGs and their importance to the library setting and how they help strengthen community for your teens. Participants will learn how to make their RPG settings accessible for all teens who are interested in participating to enhance the spirit that libraries are truly all for.

PRESENTER: Paige Wilson

Creating Programs that Attract New Teen Library Users
This session will introduce four programs the Nashville Public Library Teen Center has created that attract teens who are not regular library users, including Teen Volunteer Days, Homeschool Teens, Teen Activists: Then and Now and D&D Club. Attendees will brainstorm new program ideas for teens in their community.

PRESENTERS: Chelsy Melvin and Lauren Gilpin. Chelsy is a librarian at the Nashville Public Library Main Library Teen Center, where she leads weekly snack-based programs and
monthly volunteer days and collects the new YA books from the basement so she can snag all the contemporary fiction.

### 11:15 am – 12:15 pm

**Youth Homelessness**
**Understanding the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

Federal education law requires every school district in the US have a point-person for assisting students who are experiencing homelessness. In this session, participants will learn how to connect with their local McKinney-Vento liaisons to support teens experiencing homelessness. Participants will watch a live demonstration on how to find school district McKinney-Vento liaisons, use their own devices to search for themselves, and discuss ways to connect with liaisons in their community to support teens. Additionally, this session will review how teens identified as “unaccompanied homeless youth” can apply as independent students on their FAFSA applications, increasing their financial aid.

**PRESENTER:** Vikki C. Terrile, an Assistant Professor at Queensborough Community College, CUNY. A librarian for more than twenty-five years, Vikki received her PhD from SUNY, the University at Buffalo in 2023. Her dissertation explored how understandings of “the library” and “the homeless” impact library services to families experiencing homelessness.

**Regency F**

### 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

**Closing Author Panel**
**Gateway to Exploration: The Quest for Stories**

The Symposium’s Closing Panel will feature Margaret Owen (Painted Devils), Kelly Andrew (Your Blood, My Bones), Sharon Cameron (Artifice), and Saraciea J. Fennell (The Black Girl Survives In This One: Horror Stories). Join these fabulous authors and other members of YALSA for an entertaining panel discussion.

**PRESENTERS:** Ellen Oh (moderator), Margaret Owen, Kelly Andrew, Sharon Cameron, and Saraciea J. Fennell

**Regency F**

### 1:30 pm

**Symposium Concludes**
Jason Reynolds is the recipient of the 2023 Margaret A. Edwards Award honoring his significant and lasting contribution to writing for teens for *When I was the Greatest*, *The Boy in the Black Suit*, *All American Boys*, *Ghost* and *Long Way Down*. YALSA announced the award during the ALA’s LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience held Jan. 27-30, in New Orleans.

In his writing, Jason Reynolds presents teens with authentic mirrors and windows to the world. *When I was the Greatest* depicts how Ali, Needles, and Noodles’ new friendship changes as they navigate their busy, vibrant Brooklyn neighborhood. Matt is *The Boy in the Black Suit*, a teen whose job in a local funeral home helps him begin the healing process after his mother’s death. *All American Boys*, coauthored by Brendan Kiely, addresses themes of police brutality and white privilege when Rashad is attacked by a police officer and Quinn has to decide whether or not to remain silent. *Ghost*, newest member of the Defenders track team, learns how to stop running from his past and start running toward his future. *Long Way Down* follows Will on his journey down an elevator while he considers avenging his brother’s death. Each of Reynolds’ books creates opportunities for discussion and reflection among teens.

**2022 Edwards Award Committee Members**
Joni Bodart (Chair), Sarah Carpenter, Candace Fox, Parma, and Celeste Swanson

**The Edwards Award is supported by the School Library Journal Sponsorship**

ALA and YALSA are aware of growing concerns related to the safety and security of library workers across the nation. Due to the sensitive nature of this session and the wellbeing of its participants, please refrain from capturing and sharing photos, videos or other identifying information from this session. However, we welcome and encourage all to share their experiences and excitement for the YALSA Symposium on social media throughout the weekend.
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