



June 15, 2009

TO: ALA Council  
CC: YALSA Board of Directors  
FROM: Sarah Cornish Debraski, YALSA President  
SUBJECT: 2008-2009 Annual Report for YALSA

This year YALSA continued to be the leader in young adult library services, providing its members with high quality support, programs, and information. It has been a year of increasing worries for the library community as the economy's impact is felt everywhere. YALSA continues to strive to meet members' needs through creative thinking and true responsiveness. The report below is organized by our five major goals: advocacy, marketing, research, member recruitment and engagement, and continuous learning. Below are YALSA's highlights for 2008-2009:

### **ADVOCACY**

YALSA continued its tradition of collaborating with a variety of groups within ALA, as well outside of ALA.

- Working with ALA's Public Programs Office, YALSA supported the implementation of a third round of Great Stories CLUB, a program where alternative high school libraries, public libraries and/or juvenile detention centers receive funds from Oprah's Angel Network to provide book clubs to troubled teens.
- YALSA helped staff the ALA booth at REFORMA conference, as well as presented a YALSA program "Reaching Spanish Speaking Teens with Alternative Media."
- YALSA helped staff the ALA booth at the IFLA Conference.

### **Legislative Advocacy:**

- In February YALSA's Advocacy Task Force and Legislation Committee sponsored "28 Days of Advocacy" with daily blog posts about how to be an advocate. A compilation of the posts is available as a pdf at [http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/28\\_days\\_full.pdf](http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/28_days_full.pdf)
- YALSA, ALSC and AASL worked together and met with policy and decision makers at Library Legislative Day.

**Media Relations:** With the help of ALA's PIO, we continued to actively promote YALSA, library services to teens, young adult and school librarians and teen literature in the media with interviews in newspapers, on radio and on television.

**White Papers:** Two new white papers were published by YALSA. "The Benefits of Including Dedicated Young Adult Librarians on Staff in the Public Library" and "The Importance of Young Adult Services in LIS Curricula" are available at [www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/profdev/whitepapers/whitepapers.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/profdev/whitepapers/whitepapers.cfm)

## MARKETING

### New Awards and Products:

- The first William C. Morris Award was presented at the 2009 Midwinter Meeting. The recipient, Elizabeth C. Bunce, will be honored at the Annual Conference at the Morris Award Presentation/YA Author Coffee Klatch for her novel *A Curse Dark As Gold*.
- Morris seals have been designed and are available for purchase.
- Free bookmarks are available that feature YALSA's 2009 book & media award winners: [www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/marketing/bookmarks\\_awards.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/marketing/bookmarks_awards.pdf)

### 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Teen Read Week™ Oct. 12-18 2008:

- 4,927 individuals registered to participate in TRW (last year 4,680)
- YALSA had 7 Promotional Partners and one Corporate Sponsor, Mirrorstone Books. The total cash donations were \$58,500 and the total in-kind donations were over \$50,000.
- Sales of TRW products were down about 10% from last year. We sold about 8,200 items.
- YALSA sponsored one national kick-off in Chicago at the Juarez High School featuring Mirrorstone's author Kimberly Pauley.
- More than 1,000 teens voted during the event to choose the 2009 theme-Read Beyond Reality.
- More than 8,000 teens voted during the event to choose the Teens Top Ten (<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/teenreading/teenstopten/ttt2008.cfm>)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Teen Tech Week™ March 8-14, 2009:

- 1,687 librarians and educators registered to participate.
- Promotional partners included Evanced Solutions, Galaxy Press, Rosen Publishing, Simon & Schuster, Tutor.com, and the Verizon Foundation. DoSomething.org was a 2009 Nonprofit Supporter.
- The Verizon Foundation provided twenty mini-grants of \$500 each to libraries with innovative Teen Tech Week programming.
- Over 500 teens voted online for the 2010 theme and chose "Learn, Create, Share @your library" which will be celebrated March 7-13, 2010.

### Support Teen Literature Day, April 16, 2009:

- For the second year YALSA worked with Readergirlz to implement Operation Teen Book Drop (TBD), which provided books to hospitalized teens.
- These groups, along with twelve YALSA volunteers, worked with publishers to have over 8,000 books donated and delivered to twelve children's hospitals nationwide

### **Wrestlemania Reading Challenge, April 4, 2009:**

- The third nationwide Wrestlemania Reading Challenge was held in Houston, TX at the Houston Public Library.
- More than 50,000 teens and tweens from more than 1,800 libraries participated in this year's competition. Participants read 10 books, magazines or graphic novels over a period of 10 weeks, and then created a slogan and bookmark design that promoted reading at their library. The regional finalists were chosen by a jury comprised of YALSA members.
- Co-sponsored with World Wrestling Entertainment and hosted by the Houston Public Library, the Challenge offered five regional winners from the middle school category and five regional winners from the high school category a trip to Houston for a chance to compete for ringside seats at Wrestlemania XXV. Winning contestants earned a free trip for two to Wrestlemania, spending cash, and \$2,000 for their library. The grand prize winners were Stephanie Diaz and Christian Cervantes.
- Building on YALSA's successful relationship with the WWE a new pilot project is being launched in summer 2009 called **SummerSlam Reading Jam**. 500 libraries will participate in this program, which is designed to encourage summer reading.

### **Reaching Members**

YALSA continues to embrace new technologies to reach its members and promote its services, using a variety of web 2.0 tools, while at the same time continuing with successful tried and true methods, such as list-servs.

- YALSA has 2,475 followers on Twitter. Twitter updates come from the YALSA Blog, YALSA's Communication Specialist, and members.
- There are 3,200 subscribers to the YALSA-BK listserv.
- The YALSA Board selected Heidi Dolamore as its new Blog Manager. She began June 1, 2009.
- YALSA maintains a Facebook page, which has 2, 106 "fans".

### **RESEARCH**

- At the 2008 Annual Conference the YALSA Board approved creating an online research journal. YALSA's Research Committee has created a mission statement and refereeing process for the journal, which was approved at the 2009 Midwinter Meeting. YALSA is now in the process of establishing a website and finding an editor.

- YALSA's Frances Henne Award for Research was awarded to Amy Alessio and Marc Aronson. Their project aims to determine what nonfiction literature teens enjoy reading and why. YALSA worked with the award's sponsor, VOYA, to double the amount of the cash prize, which is now \$1,000.

## **MEMBER RECRUITMENT & ENGAGEMENT**

Although YALSA's rate of membership growth has slowed, it does still continue to increase. As of April, membership was 5,748 (+1.6% over this time last year).

- During February a Member Recruitment Campaign ran in which members were encouraged to recommend YALSA to friends or colleagues. Those who did were entered into a contest to win a Flip video camera. YALSA gained 50 new members during the contest.
- To better meet the needs of our growing membership Letitia Smith's position was officially changed from Administrative Assistant II to Program Coordinator for Membership.
- The Board voted to sponsor two ALA Emerging Leaders for 2009-2010.

This year the presidential theme was "Engaging the YALSA Community", so there was an emphasis on trying new ways to allow members to participate and to reach out to them. It all began with a survey in the summer of 2008, the results of which showed that members did want to be involved but needed more opportunities and also to be made aware of those opportunities. Events related to "Engaging the YALSA Community" included:

- Conducted membership wide survey, results of which were analyzed by the Division and Membership Promotion Committee, which made several recommendations to the YALSA Board.
- Road Trip '09: The goal is to have a YALSA presence at a library conference in every state in 2009. Members could participate by hosting a social event, presenting a programming, or staffing an exhibit booth. Thirty-three states signed up to participate!
- Economy Chat: Responding to members worries about the economy and its impact on teen services and library jobs, YALSA hosted an online chat in June as a forum for members to discuss these issues.
- Committees have been encouraged to self evaluate to see if they would better meet the needs of the membership as an interest group or discussion group. Several groups have been mandated by the Board to make this transition already. As a result, petitions to form interest and discussion groups are being filed and YALSA expects to see greater participation in these areas, especially as many members have had to curtail conference travel.
- The Leadership Development meeting at the Midwinter Meeting was revised to allow member leaders to truly develop leadership skills. Attendees participated in mini sessions about a variety of leadership topics. Additionally, a series of podcasts was developed to educate member leaders about the association.

## **CONTINUOUS LEARNING**

A new position was created at YALSA --the Program Officer for Continuing Education. This much anticipated position will allow YALSA to better manage, expand, and implement its online e-courses, institutes, and other continuous learning opportunities. Amy Gelbman began in May.

### **Young Adult Literature Symposium:**

The first ever Young Adult Literature Symposium, sponsored in part by the William Morris Endowment, was held November in Nashville, TN. Over 600 attendees participated and the luncheon and preconference were sold out. For this symposium YALSA offered a stipend to two people to attend the event. The winners of the stipend were Lisa Lintner-Sizemore and Laura Anne Lowe.

“Beyond Good Intentions: Diversity, Literature, and Teens” is the theme of the second symposium, which is being planned for November 5-7, 2010 in Albuquerque, NM. Proposals for papers and presentations, as well as applications for the 2010 stipends, are now being accepted at [www.ala.org/yalitsymposium](http://www.ala.org/yalitsymposium).

### **Opportunities to Learn are Increasing:**

- YALSA continues to offer multiple sessions of e-courses per year. Courses include “Boys and Books,” “Pain in the Brain,” “Tech Tools for Teen Leadership,” “Power Programming for Teens.” Additional courses continue to be developed, developed including one on tweens and another on serving diverse teens.

### **YALSA Publications**

- *Young Adult Library Services*, YALSA’s quarterly journal was honored with an Award of Excellence from APEX, in the category of magazines and journals over 32 pages. Editor Rosemary Honnold resigned and the Board of Directors selected Sarah Flowers as the new editor, to begin with Fall 2009 issue. Production of YALS was also transferred to Cadmus in February.
- YALSA continues to reach its members with its e-newsletter, *YAttitudes*, which directly emails full text to members email inboxes.
- YALSA has two new books in 2009. Out now is *Quick & Popular Reads for Teens*, which collects and annotates the Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers and Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults list and is edited by Pam Spencer Holley and published by ALA Editions. Out soon will be *Cool Teen Programs Under \$100*, edited by Jenine Lillian and to be published by YALSA.