YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Annual Conference, Washington DC  
June 24 - 29, 2010

Topic: Communications Update

Background: YALSA’s Communications Specialist has provided a communications report for the first three quarters of FY10. The report includes information about publications, which is a key revenue stream for YALSA. Marketing information is also included in the report, which is one of five goals in YALSA’s strategic plan.

Action Required: Information

Communications Report to the Board of Directors  
Stephanie Kuenn, YALSA Communications Specialist

YALSA Publications

Books

YALSA debuted two books at the start of this summer: Risky Business by Linda Braun, Jack Martin, and Connie Urquhart, which has nearly 40 books presold, and Multicultural Programs for Teens and Tweens, edited by Linda Alexander and Nahyun Kwon, which has more than 500 books in presale. Both books are published by Editions and will be out for ALA Annual Conference.

In FY11, YALSA will have a robust year for publishing. In September, Sarah Flowrs’ Young Adult Deserve the Best: YALSA’s Competencies in Action will come out through ALA Editions and in October, Neal-Schuman will publish Annotated Booklists for Every Teen Reader: The Best from the Experts at YALSA-BK, by Pam Spencer Holley and Julie Bartel.

In addition, YALSA won a Carnegie-Whitney publishing grant in January to support the publication of Teen Read Week and Teen Tech Week: The Best of YALS, edited by Megan Fink. This volume will collect articles on best practices, programming, outreach and more to form a manual for librarians planning activities for Teen Read Week and Teen Tech Week. In addition, it will mark the first volume in a Best of YALS series. YALSA is self-publishing this book with its grant monies, and we expect to debut it in January 2011, just in time for Teen Tech Week planning.

Work has begun on a new volume featuring the Outstanding Books for the College Bound list. Angela Carstensen will edit this volume, which will feature expanded annotations for the lists from 1999 to 2009, as well as contributed chapters on using the lists. This is expected to publish at Annual 2011.
Sales figures from ALA Editions, Neal-Schuman and our self-published books are attached to this report.

**Periodicals**

*Young Adult Library Services*

YALSA continues to experience excellent service and more robust production as it enters its second year of its contract with Cadmus Communications. Cadmus will be introducing software in 2010 that improves the editing and review process; YALSA may consider this software as it could reduce its current production time from a 10-week period to as little as 8 weeks.

FY2010 expenses for *YALS* are currently $23,856 (the costs of two issues, including but not limited to journal copyediting, typesetting, production and mailing). By contrast, expenses at this point in FY2009 were approximately $30,255. In FY2010, *YALS* expenses were budgeted at $62,434. Depending on costs of our final issue of the year, YALS will be $15,000-$18,000 under budget for this fiscal year, largely due to savings from moving to Cadmus (and this includes a 3 percent hike in production services, per our contract with Cadmus).

Advertising revenues are currently at $18,850, which is under budget. *YALS*’ advertising representative indicated that usual clients indicated the economy as a reason for falling advertising, but that things may turn around for the fall 2010 issue. Bill Spilman and I also worked together to revamp *YALS*’ advertising rate card into a robust, downloadable media kit that offers multiple opportunities across several platforms, including other YALSA publications and properties. Our hope is to encourage advertisers to use the multiple entry points and raise revenues across the board.

YALSA again nominated *YALS* for an APEX Award. We expect to hear from Communications Concepts regarding our status in July of this year.

In FY2011, I plan to work with Sarah Flowers to create a more robust online presence for *YALS*. For more details on *YALS*’ editorial operations, please see Sarah Flowers’ editor’s report.

*Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*

Jessica Moyer and I have been working with the Research Journal Editorial Advisory Board for a November 2010 launch of *JRLYA*. The issue will launch in conjunction with the 2010 Young Adult Literature Symposium and feature the four papers being presented at the symposium.

In addition, Jessica invited unsuccessful applicants for the paper presentations at the 2010 Young Adult Literature Symposium to send their articles for consideration and the board has evaluated three such submissions for inclusion in a future issue. A formal call for papers was issued in June 2010.

*YAttitudes*
YALSA Board of Directors – Annual ‘10
Topic: Communications Update

YAttitudes evolved from a quarterly email newsletter to a monthly e-newsletter beginning in April 2010. Editor Erin Downy Howerton finishes her term this month and we are grateful for her help. I will be editing the newsletter going forward, to use it more as an avenue for promoting awareness of YALSA news to the membership at large.

In addition, YAttitudes had a robust year for advertising. At present, ad revenues are at $3,000. By taking the editing in-house and increasing the frequency, YAttitudes costs will be kept to a minimum (largely data processing fees) while offering more opportunities for advertising. YAttitudes could grow into a significant revenue source, particularly as many advertisers turn to online advertising rather than in print.

For an update on YAttitudes’ editorial content, please see Erin Downey Howerton’s editor’s report.

YALSA’s Social Media

YALSA now has more than 3,000 fans on Facebook and 4,000 followers on Twitter.

The YALSA Blog continues its standard of excellence, achieving significant pageviews and averaging five posts a week. The YALSA Blog was also nominated for Best Group Blog in the Edublog Awards and is under consideration for an award from Salem Press. YALSA plans to create a commenting policy for the blog in the upcoming fiscal year. For more specific information on blog statistics and editorial content, please see mk Eagle’s blog manager report.

In Fall 2010, YALSA will launch a new blog focusing on teen literature. Sarah Debraski will be this blog’s manager. In June 2010, YALSA launched a contest (Name That Blog!) to select a name for the blog. The winning participant will receive a box of books and swag from YALSA.

In addition to its current strategic use (simulcasting blog posts, important announcements, and deadline reminders), YALSA has used its Twitter account to give away seats in its webinars and to advertise special pricing for Twitter users. While we haven’t been quite as successful as we hoped, our webinar giveaway resulted in 7 Twitter users accepting a free seat. We do intend to continue to use Twitter as a mechanism for contests and specials to encourage more of our followers to take advantage of these opportunities.

YALSA member groups have been using ALA Connect successfully for committee and group work, however we have had some trouble with the chat module. Big ALA is in the process of upgrading the chat module and we look forward to its launch and availability. Eve Gaus has taken up responsibility for planning the web chats and in the interim, we have used Meebo. Meebo is a fine workaround, but it lacks a) the ability for YALSA to restrict chats to members and b) the ability to download a full transcript, making our ability to post transcripts limited in the months we’ve been using Meebo.

YALSA Website
YALSA approved artwork for a website redesign in 2009. In March 2010, Jodi Bollaert of Blue Sun Works began work developing a new information architecture for the YALSA site. In April, she and I conducted a site walkthrough, in which I indicated the importance of various features from a staff perspective and discussed issues such as user needs and integration with social media. In May and June, she conducted a content analysis and interviewed YALSA members (public librarians, school librarians, and MLS students) regarding the YALSA website to better understand the needs of our primary audience. We continue to expect to launch the new IA and the new look for the website in late 2010.

In January 2010, YALSA launched a new forms engine and is still in the process of moving most of its forms to this new system. The forms are powered by PHP and use MySQL, rather than the formmail application that YALSA previously used (which is no longer supported by ALA ITTS). The forms are now built on a database that saves the data on an external server, allowing for more security and for easier download. The forms were built by Thiruchelvan Selvanayagam, a programmer and YALSA intern, and allow for easier use by YALSA members, both those who receive data from forms (as one can now download results in a spreadsheet) and for those filling out forms (as you can save form data to your computer and you receive a confirmation email upon successful completion). As ALA moves to a PHP-based content management system, this will make for easier conversion.

ALA will be moving to a new content management system in FY2011. ITTS expects to announce which service it will be in September, likely. Reportedly, Drupal is the front-runner.

Marketing

Marketing YALSA’s events and services remains a challenge as more and more librarians face limited budgets, particularly for face-to-face conferences and YALSA webinars. AASL, ALSC, and YALSA reached out to all youth division members in advance of Annual early bird and advanced registration to promote ticketed events and preconferences. In addition, YALSA sent email blasts to nonmembers who registered for Teen Read Week and lived within eight hours of Washington, D.C. and asked library associations in the same area to post information on its preconferences. YALSA also promoted special events (including the Printz reception, the Edwards luncheon, the Coffee Klatch, and the preconferences) through its usual channels – the YALSA blog, press releases, AL Direct notices, the YALSA website, listservs and other formats – but it has had little effect.

YALSA launched the Young Adult Literature Symposium website in April and notified members of its opening for registration in the April issue of YAttitudes. YALSA also sent the preliminary program to the New Mexico Library Association conference and the PLA National Conference. The preliminary program will be available at ALA Annual and YALSA will be reaching out to nonmembers within eight hours of Albuquerque who registered for Teen Read Week via email blast. In addition, the summer issue of YALS will include the preliminary program. Bill Spilman, YALS’ advertising manager, will be selling advertising in the event’s program book and email blasts to registrants through the summer.
YALSA launched its webinar series in March with a free webinar. Subsequent webinars have cost $39 for members and $49 for nonmembers, and while we have aggressively promoted it through multiple channels, attendance has been somewhat lower than anticipated. Based on member feedback, YALSA has announced upcoming webinars months in advance, in hopes of allowing potential participants time to plan and budget for the webinars. In addition, YALSA has expanded its media kit to include webinar sponsorship, in hopes that this can help support webinar revenues.

Media Relations

President Linda Braun was quoted in the March issue of *Family Circle* and will be featured in an article by the Associated Press on LGBT books for youth. Linda also conducted interviews with the *Houston Chronicle, Newsday, AnswerBag.com, Children’s Writer*, and Leap Books Blog.

YALSA hired Newman Communications, a publicity firm with significant experience promoting literature and nonprofits, to help promote the Printz awards, due to the 10th anniversary. With Newman’s help, Linda Braun was quoted in the *Sacramento Bee* discussing award-winning literature, as well as on Kansas Public Radio and with radio stations in Texas, Michigan, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia. Despite reaching out to upwards of 10,000 contacts, Newman’s staff indicated that interest in literature stories was adversely affected in January and early February due to high-profile news events like the Haiti earthquake and that many print publications had cutbacks in their newshole, resulting in less space for stories like the Printz anniversary.