

YALSA Board of Directors  
2021 Annual Conference, Virtual  
June 26, 2021

**Topic:** History of Four EDI Taskforces

**Background:** Approval of the creation of four EDI Taskforces was given at ALA Annual Conference 2019 and were established in Fall 2019 to support YALSA’s EDI Plan. There were many factors that impacted these volunteer groups’ work and original timelines. This document is brought forth by President, Amanda Barnhart, and Immediate Past President, Todd Krueger, and archives the progress and outcomes of that work.

**Action Required:** Information

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**Overview:**

As stated above, four EDI taskforces were established in Fall 2019 and included the following:

- **Task Force 1: Promoting Professional Success for Underrepresented Groups within YALSA.** Charge: Considering the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan, this task force will assess existing pathways to professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented groups.
- **Task Force 2: Encouraging LIS and iSchools to Include EDI Plan Elements in Curricula.** Charge: Considering the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan, this task force will work with LIS and iSchools to ensure that cultural competencies, equity, diversity and inclusion is included in all youth-oriented curricula.
- **Task Force 3: Modeling Services and Programs to Include EDI Plan Elements.** Charge: Considering the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan, this task force will provide models of inclusive and equitable services and programs to share on the YALSA Programming HQ and other avenues.
- **Task Force 4: Addressing Institutional Bias and Racism in Libraries.** Charge: Considering the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan, this task force will create and distribute materials to help members better serve diverse youth and to address issues of institutional bias and racism in their libraries.

Due to the pandemic’s impact upon member volunteers’ professional and personal environments, all four taskforces’ efforts were derailed. Group work reinitiated in Summer 2020. These taskforces had an original end of term date set at October 2020. In early October, YALSA leaders (Amanda Barnhart/President, Todd Krueger/Immediate Past President, Kelly Czarnecki/President-Elect, and Tammy Dillard-Steels/Executive Director) were informed that

these taskforces would require an extension. However, everyone was unaware of the potential administrative difficulties that would arise should an extension be granted beyond the end of term date of October 2020.

YALSA leaders checked in with the four taskforces and only *Task Force 2: Encouraging LIS and iSchools to Include EDI Plan Elements in Curricula* felt that an extension was not needed and submitted a final report and product. Board members started to be further impacted by the pandemic, which stalled many aspects of board work, including timely addressing the extension.

YALSA Board approved the extension at Midwinter 2021. Due to the delay, some taskforce members were no longer eligible to continue to serve on the taskforce: having already met the ALA policy limit of volunteering on three committees or their membership expired or they were no longer interested to serve. Due to this discrepancy all taskforces had thus reduced in size. *Task Force 3: Modeling Services and Programs to Include EDI Plan Elements* only had one volunteer member who was eligible, available, and interested to serve. YALSA Executive Director connected this individual with The Teen Programming HQ Manager to explore how this group's topic and charge can intertwine within the scope of the Teen Programming HQ resource. The YALSA Board is currently exploring the creation of an advisory board to support the Teen Programming HQ Manager and has encouraged this individual to apply as a volunteer for this group when it is open.

An extension of June 2020 was granted to the two other taskforces (*Task Force 1* and *Task Force 4*), who felt they would be able to meet their goals and continue their efforts with their remaining team members. Both would submit a final report for YALSA Board annual meetings. YALSA Board will need to discuss in greater detail the final reports from those taskforces who submitted one and incorporate findings into the updated YALSA Implementation Plan. It is recommended and being planned for that YALSA Board discusses and addresses the final reports at the start of the next volunteer term's monthly discussions.

YALSA EDI Task Force Recommendations – October 2020

### Taskforce: Encouraging LIS and iSchools to Include EDI Plan Elements

This report from the 2019-20 committee has two sections to help LIS and iSchools to Include EDI Plan Elements: recommendations and samples of best practices.

Based on research and due to unforeseen circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, the committee adapted its work to focus on what educators and students in the LIS profession need and on gathering samples of best practices in the field.

Additionally, in support of YALSA efforts to encourage LIS schools to constructively include EDI elements in their programs, the committee has developed a survey that these programs can use to self-assess where they are and plan next steps. Also we have selected a group of articles that can provide discussion topics.

### Recommendations for LIS programs

- Schools should examine percent of faculty BIPOC & establish practices for increasing those percentages.
- Creating community would help fight isolation & burnout
- Schools should focus on REAL logistics for increasing percentages of BIPOC faculty
- Active mentorships for faculty and staff

Ideas & examples of best practices in the field. Several examples of current programs are included:

- San Diego State has cluster hires & benchmarks to hire/actual target numbers.
- Spectrum LIS Scholars program supports community & fellowship (but might not lead to permanent positions).
- Student production of scholarly research at USM on the topics of EDI in LIS.
- EDI best practices examples taken from required coursework, including those for graduate certification in Youth Services & Literature.
- Another concern is what are supports for diverse faculty, how to deal with microaggressions by administration, fellow staff members & students

- We are concerned that “too many institutions still see diversity as a matter of recruitment, not climate and retention.”

### YALSA Task Force iSchools Survey – DRAFT 2020

Survey title: YALSA survey on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion elements in iSchool programs

**Opening paragraph: Thank you for helping YALSA by taking this survey. It will help YALSA understand how to support EDI practices.**

- Are you aware of any of the following YALSA documents that encourage Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) practices and/or cultural competency practices?
  - [YALSA Statement on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion](#)
  - [YALSA EDI Plan](#)
  - [Cultural Competence wiki](#)
  - [Serving Diverse Teens @ Your Library](#)
  - Other resource (write-in)
- Does the program at your institution incorporate any of the recommendations from those documents? (Select any that apply)
  - [YALSA Statement on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion](#)
  - [YALSA EDI Plan](#)
  - [Cultural Competence wiki](#)
  - [Serving Diverse Teens @ Your Library](#)
  - None
  - Don't know
- Does the institution where you work have an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion plan or statement? (Select any that apply)
  - Plan
  - Statement
  - None of the above
  - Don't know
- Does the program at your institution have any of the following? (Select any that apply)
  - Diversity Officer
  - Office of Diversity
  - Faculty diversity committee(s)

- None of the above
- Don't know
- . Does the program at your institution offer instruction/classes on any of the following? (Select any that apply)
  - serving/advocating for under-resourced students
  - serving/advocating for historically under-represented, marginalized populations
  - serving/advocating for diverse populations
  - serving/advocating for students/patrons who are differently abled
  - serving/advocating for learning challenges
  - equity/restorative justice actions
- . Does the program at your institution teach the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
- . Do classes and/or the program at your institution teach culturally relevant pedagogy?
  - Yes - specific courses
  - Yes - taught within courses
  - Don't know/unsure
  - No
- . What kind of resource would help you and/or the program at your institution to develop or practice Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion actions?
  - Checklist of best practices
  - Scorecard for quality indicators
  - narrative report for how institutions can practice Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
  - website/info clearinghouse

## Articles

Two articles on responding to microaggressions in the classroom

- <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/07/20/how-deal-microaggressions-class-opinion>

- <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-classroom-management/responding-to-microaggressions-in-the-classroom/>

Colleges Must Attend to 3 Crucial Areas In higher ed's pivot during COVID, let's focus on them to ensure quality and equity -- and avoid repeating past mistakes, writes Debra Humphreys. [https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/08/17/higher-ed-responds-covid-it-should-focus-three-areas-ensure-quality-and-equity?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=8edafc2c90-DNU\\_2020\\_COPY\\_03&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcbc04421-8edafc2c90-197470673&mc\\_cid=8edafc2c90&mc\\_eid=eda4ad9413](https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/08/17/higher-ed-responds-covid-it-should-focus-three-areas-ensure-quality-and-equity?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=8edafc2c90-DNU_2020_COPY_03&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-8edafc2c90-197470673&mc_cid=8edafc2c90&mc_eid=eda4ad9413)

Envisioning Higher Education as Antiracist Krishni Metivier provides a checklist of key actions that colleges and universities should take. [https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/07/02/actions-higher-ed-institutions-should-take-help-eradicate-racism-opinion?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=a9a082edcd-DNU\\_2020\\_COPY\\_02&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcbc04421-a9a082edcd-197470673&mc\\_cid=a9a082edcd&mc\\_eid=eda4ad9413](https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/07/02/actions-higher-ed-institutions-should-take-help-eradicate-racism-opinion?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=a9a082edcd-DNU_2020_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-a9a082edcd-197470673&mc_cid=a9a082edcd&mc_eid=eda4ad9413)

Lokko's letter has hit home with many academic women of color, working across fields, who say that too many institutions still see diversity as a matter of recruitment, not climate and retention. Roxane Gay, writer and associate professor of English at Purdue University, [said](#) that "Nearly every black faculty member in this country could resign like this." Monica Cox, associate professor of engineering education at Ohio State University and career consultant, [said](#) Lokko's story reminded her of how institutions "play" diversity without really engaging in it. [https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/10/13/spitzer-architecture-dean-quits-profound-act-self-preservation?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=6b552a1a1c-DNU\\_2020\\_COPY\\_02&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcbc04421-6b552a1a1c-197470673&mc\\_cid=6b552a1a1c&mc\\_eid=eda4ad9413](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/10/13/spitzer-architecture-dean-quits-profound-act-self-preservation?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=6b552a1a1c-DNU_2020_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-6b552a1a1c-197470673&mc_cid=6b552a1a1c&mc_eid=eda4ad9413)

Older Student Populations in LIS programs Ties to racism, sexual discrimination, and intolerance identified in sexism and agism in higher education. Actions colleges and universities should take in preventing reinforcing other types of discrimination.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/03/04/universities-should-not-minimize-influence-older-women-academe-opinion>

Examples from other organizations (curricula/programs/initiatives)

- UCLA core courses. <https://is.gseis.ucla.edu/media/MLIS-core-curriculum.pdf>
  - Classes include one titled “Communities and Values.” Program states: "Every core course includes issues relevant to our core concerns: ethics, diversity, technology, critical analysis, making, and methods (qual/quant)." (Mara)
- Skyline College SEED Committee. <https://skylinecollege.edu/seed/index.php>
  - The Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment and Diversity (SEED) Advisory Committee assists Skyline College in fulfilling its commitment to celebrate the intellectual, educational, and social benefits of diversity.
- University of Maryland iSchool - Specialization in Diversity and Inclusion plus an active student organization (iDiversity) <https://ischool.umd.edu/diversity-inclusion> (Natalie)
- Please see the link to a folder with multiple examples of diversity/ inclusion in USM’s coursework for LIS, as well as student and faculty published articles. (Jeannie)

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EYI5DEAnDX4cxIxU44WS\\_34W\\_OZquuXq?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EYI5DEAnDX4cxIxU44WS_34W_OZquuXq?usp=sharing)

## **YALSA Taskforce on Promoting Professional Success for Underrepresented Groups**

Drafted by the YALSA Taskforce on June 30, 2021

### **Introduction**

The primary charge of this taskforce was to assess and review existing pathways for professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented identity groups. The taskforce was initially formed in late 2019 and was created to examine equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) issues related to Young Adult (YA) professional development and, in particular, membership engagement and retention within YALSA. The taskforce began the work by discussing current conditions and impediments impacting YALSA member involvement and examining policies and practices that create exclusionary practices and barriers for library workers from marginalized groups. In fall 2020, the taskforce transitioned to examining outreach, recruitment, development, and engagement of YALSA members. The taskforce concluded their charge of assessing existing pathways to professional success and membership involvement by developing the working parameters of their recommendations.

### **Background**

Promoting Professional Success for Underrepresented Groups was one of four taskforces developed in fall 2019 by YALSA President Todd Krueger (2019-20) and YALSA administrative staff. The charge for the taskforce was to consider the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan. Additionally, the taskforce was asked to assess existing pathways to professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented groups. The taskforce consisted of seven YALSA members who identify as either African American, Latinx, and Asian American from across the country. Members of the taskforce included:

*David Wang, Chair*  
*Sylmari Burgos-Ramirez*  
*Edith Campbell*  
*Elisa Garcia*  
*Janice Newsum*  
*Shaira Rock*  
*Laura Tadana*

### **Goals and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion 2018-2020**

Over the next two years, YALSA seeks the following goals to move toward our Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Goals and strategies for equity, diversity and inclusion taken from YALSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan (2018): [http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/2018\\_YALSA\\_EDI%20Plan.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/2018_YALSA_EDI%20Plan.pdf)

1. Audit existing YALSA activities to create a more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming organizational environment.
2. Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership and cadre of volunteers at all levels in the organization.
3. Continue to align our policies, procedures and practices with our EDI vision.
4. Ensure that YALSA members know how to develop inclusive and equitable library spaces, services and programs.

Create and maintain formal and informal partnerships with other organizations around a shared commitment to redressing institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries.

### **Overview**

The taskforce first approached their charge by holding group discussions with taskforce members that centered on analyzing the problem and measuring equality, diversity, and inclusion around the topic of organizational health. This process was essential to understanding the dynamics and driving force explaining the disparities between active volunteers and overall membership statistics. The discussions led to the following conclusions:

- There are librarians of color who are actively engaged as members of YALSA in selection committees and taskforces, but the numbers are generally low.
- **Potential self-selection bias**
- Issues related to volunteer sustainability and limited support provided by YALSA leadership for committee chairs can lead to unpleasant experiences.
- Power and privilege play a significant role in the ability to volunteer on committees.
- Burn-out from a job or personal stress can lead to limited participation or volunteer disengagement.
- Factors such as available time, inclusive working groups, and outreach were reasons attributed to continued involvement with YALSA.

Volunteer retention is an organization's ability to keep and engage active volunteers for a given period of time. "Think of volunteer retention as the opposing factor of volunteer turnover (how quickly a volunteer stops participating in volunteer activities after joining your organization). High turnover rates directly impact retention."<sup>2</sup> Stable membership levels are a sign that the organization is functioning well. Public and transparent discussions on equality, diversity and inclusion ensure that members feel welcome in YALSA. When members are actively engaged, this demonstrates that they feel valued in the organization. High member engagement is a key indicator of the value that can outweigh membership dues<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Analysis of AmeriCorps study on volunteer retention. <https://www.galaxydigital.com/blog/volunteer-retention/>  
Accessed June 12, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> See YALSA Membership Data: <http://bit.ly/YALSAMembershipData>

### External impacting factors and Taskforce Timeline

The goal of the taskforce was to identify opportunities for improving YALSA as a membership organization. However, during this time, there were external factors that impacted the taskforce's work. During the taskforce's charge, members were working through the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>4</sup>, civil unrest<sup>5</sup>, and natural disasters that impacted communities across the nation<sup>6</sup>.

#### Timeline

<i>August - October 2019</i>	<i>Members selected and appointed to YALSA taskforce</i>
<i>November - December 2019</i>	<i>Taskforce chair convened the group and organized monthly meetups.</i>
<i>January - March 2020</i>	<i>Taskforce worked on charge and met monthly.</i>
<i>April - July 2020</i>	<i>Taskforce took a break from work due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</i>
<i>August 2020 - January 2021</i>	<i>Taskforce reconvened to work on the charge; monthly meetings resumed.</i>
<i>February 2021</i>	<i>Taskforce took a break due to winter storms.</i>
<i>March 2021</i>	<i>Taskforce lost members due to issues related to volunteer rules/communication breakdown.</i>
<i>April - June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining members of YALSA taskforce completed the charge and drafted the recommendations report.</i>

During COVID, the taskforce endured periods of inactivity. From late spring to late summer (2020), the taskforce did not meet for online meetings. Factors including the pandemic, civil unrest, and climate/weather impacts in the southwest presented the taskforce with difficult hurdles on moving forward and timely progress. Additionally, communication broke down between task force members and the YALSA administration.

The taskforce resumed work in August 2020 with revitalized motivation to examine membership development and engagement, especially for underrepresented groups of librarians. The taskforce analyzed YALSA scholarships and grant awards and discussed allying with partner organizations like BCALA, REFORMA, and APALA to work on outreach events together. The taskforce requested statistics and data on membership and invited guests from partner ALA and YALSA, including Amanda Barnhart.

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<sup>4</sup> Timeline: Who's COVID-19 response: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/interactive-timeline>

<sup>5</sup> 2020-2021 United States Racial unrest (Wikipedia): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020%E2%80%932021\\_United\\_States\\_racial\\_unrest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020%E2%80%932021_United_States_racial_unrest)

<sup>6</sup> FEMA Declared Disasters: [https://www.fema.gov/disaster/declarations?field\\_dv2\\_state\\_territory\\_tribal\\_value=All&field\\_year\\_value=2020&field\\_dv2\\_declaration\\_type\\_value=All&field\\_dv2\\_incident\\_type\\_target\\_id\\_selective=All](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/declarations?field_dv2_state_territory_tribal_value=All&field_year_value=2020&field_dv2_declaration_type_value=All&field_dv2_incident_type_target_id_selective=All)

The taskforce hit another roadblock in early March 2021 when the taskforce encountered a bureaucratic challenge associated with committee membership placements. Based on restrictions to committee appointments<sup>7</sup>, the taskforce lost roughly half of our taskforce and there was a lack of transparency through the process. The reasoning for the removal of taskforce members is listed below:

*"Due to the impact of the pandemic, there were administrative details that were delayed and are currently being corrected. Fixing these details affects those participating on a YALSA Taskforce whose term has been extended. As such, we will be updating your volunteer record to reflect your participation on the YALSA Taskforce.*

*Before we can update your volunteer records, we have encountered a few challenges that have made this process more complicated.*

- *Your current ALA committee participation limit has been reached.*

*Unfortunately, there is no workaround for this item. The [Member Service Policy](#) was established by ALA. This detail was our oversight and our mistake. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you. We will ensure that your name is appropriately credited on the final report submitted by your group. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out."*

The remaining members of the YALSA taskforce finalized the recommendations, which will be found on the following pages. It is important to note that every member of the taskforce played an intricate and important role in the final recommendations. This report would not be completed without the time, effort, and emotional labor provided by all the taskforce members.

### **Overview of recommendations**

#### **Scope of taskforce recommendations**

The taskforce focused on the first two goals of the YALSA EDI Goals and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion 2018-2020 report in combination with the taskforce charge.

- Goal 1: Audit existing YALSA activities to create a more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming organizational environment.
- Goal 2: Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership and cadre of volunteers at all levels in the organization.
- Charge: To assess and review existing pathways to professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented groups.

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<sup>7</sup> Reason for removal of taskforce members: ALA established the [Member Service Policy](#).

**Summary of approach to document**

1. Professional Advancement and Development: Inclusive EDI approach to committee assignments related to scholarships, grant assignments, board selection and other stakeholders/decision makers.
2. Outreach: Examine existing practices to identify and resolve exclusionary practices or unintentional barriers to membership engagement, learning opportunities, and outreach services.
3. Engagement: Energize current membership with a focus on underrepresented and inactive members through engagement campaigns like free training webinars, podcasts highlighting diverse YALSA current members, organizing virtual or in-person special events.
4. Partnerships: Partner with library affinity groups (e.g. Black Caucus, REFORMA, APALA, etc) to develop and promote events and webinars, with specific outreach to early career library workers from underrepresented groups.

**Recommendation 1: Committees, Scholarships, and Professional Development**

Recommend inclusive EDI approach to committee assignments related to scholarships, grant assignments, board selection and other stakeholders/decision makers. Assess and analyze YALSA scholarships and grant awards for guidelines, rubric (application process) and targeted audience. Determine if particular awards need greater marketing and exposure or rubric revisions. Transparency is essential to building a community of trust. Members need to believe that these grant awards and scholarships are within reach for every member regardless of their level of engagement, activity, or experience. The application process needs to be clearly outlined and should include training and information sessions.

Develop a pipeline to support the advancement of library workers of color who are engaged or are interested in youth services. Consider partnerships with affinity member groups, state library associations, MLIS programs, and with State Libraries to support and develop programs that support the advancement of library of colors.

Short Term Goals	Long-term goals	Notes
Identify barriers within the scholarship and grant process - includes examination of communication, marketing, and the promotion of scholarship and grant opportunities.	Streamline online application process to insure higher levels of participation and ease of access to the general membership. (see NEH guidelines)	<a href="https://www.neh.gov/grants/application-process">https://www.neh.gov/grants/application-process</a>

Ensure equitable opportunities within the evaluation process of scholarships and grants by updating selection criteria, guidelines, and rubrics.	Increase transparency in both application process and grants committee review by implementing a double blind process; working with partner associations or ALA committees to ensure impartiality.	
Identify areas for growth or improvement within marketing and promotion of scholarships, grant opportunities, and professional development via social media, members' emails, and networks.	Develop a communication and marketing plan that includes EDI initiatives to ensure an equitable approach to developing and implementing scholarship, grant, and professional development opportunities.	
Create a permanent process to address diversity, equality, and inclusion at the administrative and board of directors level.	Develop initiatives that support and enhance a pipeline of library workers of color who specialized in youth services.	

**Recommendation 2: Outreach**

Examine existing practices to identify and resolve exclusionary practices or unintentional barriers to membership engagement. Learning opportunities, and outreach services.

Short Term Goals	Long-term goals	Notes
Critically examine current policies, practices, and existing forms of outreach to identify potential barriers and/or exclusionary practices (ex. requirements/ term limitations, requirements, etc.).	Address structural exclusionary practices by developing new policies and procedures that work towards an inclusive future (virtual conference offerings at a discounted rate, free trainings, virtual meetups, etc.).	

Improve access to opportunities for community discussions between members and non-members and meet members/non-members where they are by offering free webinars, trainings, town halls, and community discussions.	Develop guidelines for multiple forms of volunteer engagement based on experience levels and commitment levels (selection committees, task forces, work groups, board member assignments, etc).	
Develop proactive outreach strategies helping improve members’ satisfaction by keeping levels of engagement high and providing professional development benefits.	Survey current members and nonmembers to determine areas for improvements and current and future membership needs (consider a focus group as a follow up).	Limited by budget and staffing issues.

**Recommendation 3: Engagement**

Energize current membership with a focus on underrepresented and inactive members through engagement campaigns like free training webinars, podcasts highlighting diverse YALSA current members, organizing special events either virtual or in-person.

Short Term Goals	Long-term goals	Notes
Restarting the YALSA mentoring program that includes a guided mentor-mentee one year training schedule.	Develop a coordinated membership program that tracks activity and engagement levels of all of its members.	
Diversify webinars: With the increase of diverse books entering the book market, let's continue to highlight those books by creating more webinars to promote those titles.	Survey YALSA members and nonmembers to identify webinars based on community needs and interests.	
Reach out to former YALSA members and ask them for reasons why they left YALSA.	Identify patterns of membership loyalty and retention. Research ways to address improving communication and engagement with both active and inactive members.	
Coordinate a leadership meeting to identify common goals and working opportunities.	Survey and keep track of YALSA members who belong to additional affinity groups, divisions or roundtables. They have invaluable insight and can help liaison	

	between groups.	
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**Recommendation 4: Partnerships**

Partner with library affinity groups (e.g. Black Caucus, REFORMA, APALA, etc) to develop and promote events and webinars, with specific outreach to early career library workers from underrepresented groups.

A significant issue associated with librarianship is connected to diversity and representation. There is an apparent shortage of librarians of color working in public, school, and academic libraries. One way to address this issue is through developing partnerships to enhance recruitment and advancement of library workers of color using training programs, leadership development and scholarships. By connecting with affinity library organizations that are working towards similar goals can help build and support a pipeline of library workers of color. YALSA should begin intentionally reaching out and create a partnership in future events and webinars and move towards planning and development meeting the needs of the most diverse YALSA members. The challenge is remaining committed to bridge-building and outreach work. Results will not happen overnight or even within a year but, in order to effect systemic change, YALSA needs to remain committed to working with other affinity groups and organizations.

Short Term Goals	Long-term goals	Notes
Open dialogue with affinity/partner groups	Create a working relationship with REFORMA, BCALA, APALA organizations, thereby allowing for crossover and collaborative events for membership.	
Communicate with traditionally progressive and historically diverse academic colleges and universities (library school programs)	Establish library school student to cohort mentor/mentee program as a collaborative partnership with other affinity groups.	
Create or re-create mentorship programs for library workers (both professional librarians and paraprofessional library assistants).	Streamline the grants and scholarship application process so that YALSA members can be more comfortable applying and accessing grant funding.	

## **Conclusion**

### **Limitations**

There is still more work to do in respect to EDI issues in the YA profession. The taskforce has only begun the process of examining areas of concern and possible review. Looking back at our taskforce work, there were roadblocks that delayed our progress. Factors including the pandemic, civil unrest, weather disturbances, and breakdown of communication between the taskforce and YALSA administration limited our ability to explore other areas of interest. Nonetheless, our passion and drive drove us to continue our much-needed work.

Review and analysis of YALSA membership data likely support many of the recommendations of this taskforce. Limitations based on data availability and communication may have been primary reasons for incomplete analysis of statistical data.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

The taskforce suggests focusing on re-examining and re-implementing the mentorship program. This is a difficult program to implement especially as an online pairing but, with grant support and possible follow-up at conferences both local and national, there is a practical learning service model built-in. The innovation of remote learning can be utilized to its fullest by having bi-weekly training sessions or inviting guests to speak and present on different career and workplace lessons. The ability to connect mid-career librarians with paraprofessionals and newly minted librarians will assist in establishing a tighter connection to YALSA.

The taskforce also suggests training webinars related to serving on selection committees and grant applications. Clear guidelines for volunteer involvement are critical. Many prescriptive rules and procedures are not spelled out and transparent. The demystifying and transparency of the procedures will invite those who might now have originally applied. It is important to note that burnout becomes more likely when member volunteers do not know where they stand in the organization.

Strong communication channels are essential. New YALSA members and volunteers are searching for ways to plug in and make a difference. The challenge for the organization is twofold. How do we keep members engaged on one level with different assignments and levels of responsibility while, at the same time, accounting for some member volunteers who are solely interested in particular types of assignments and interactions. In other words, some members may want to only serve on an award selection committee and some members may only want to be involved in the periphery..

The taskforce suggests focusing on adding EDI initiatives in YALSA's policies/guidelines. Including EDI initiatives will guarantee inclusive and inviting conversations for underrepresented groups. Currently, issues of equality, diversity and inclusion are fresh in the

minds of administrators and leadership. It is important to remember that addressing these issues involves continued attention, dedication and effort. For EDI issues to be resolved, we need it to be in the forefront of our minds so it does not become an afterthought.

## **YALSA Task Force: Addressing Institutional Bias and Racism in Libraries Teen Summit Template**

### **Members:**

Eric Schoenbaechler, Chair  
Suzanne Bishop  
Renee Tecco  
Kiera Vargas

### **Background:**

The above YALSA Task Force hosted a virtual teen summit on April 23, 2021, titled: *The Importance of Seeing "Me" Within the Doors of the Library*. The goal of the summit was learning from a diverse panel of teens -- some who are active patrons and some who don't use their library -- what they want and need from us. This document will serve as a template to provide suggestions and guidance to other committees and organizations which may be interested in hosting their own panel discussions. Examples used come directly from the April 23, 2021 program and may or may not apply to programs planned by other committees or organizations.

### **Planning:**

Organizers must first determine the purpose of the summit and how it fits into the charge or mission of the committee or organization. The charge of the above Task Force was: Considering the Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff and the EDI Statement and EDI Plan, this task force will create and distribute materials to help members better serve diverse youth and to address issues of institutional bias and racism in their libraries.

After multiple discussions of ways to address this charge, Task Force members felt the ideal way to learn about serving diverse youth and addressing the issues they face would be to invite teens from diverse backgrounds to offer direct suggestions and thoughts which libraries can then work to implement. In order to do accomplish this, the Task Force followed these suggested steps:

- Determine the audience, which could be (but is not limited to) one or more of the following:
  - Public libraries and library staff
  - General YALSA membership
  - General public and library users
  - School and Academic libraries and library staff
- If the chosen audience is staff, determine what type of resource could be useful or necessary.
  - Many staff resources exist which attempt to address these issues. What will make this one stand out?
- If the chosen audience is the public or teenagers, determine what type of resource could be useful or necessary.
  - A product for the public should be more dynamic than materials intended for library staff.
- Within the broader topic, determine the issues that might be the most important.
  - The committee must create the foundation in order to keep the discussion on track.
- Possible topics to address:
  - Does it matter if the staff is diverse? What would that diversity look like?
  - What kinds of materials would they like to see in the collections?
  - How would they see themselves represented?
  - What programs do they feel are essential to the library?
  - How could librarians learn the importance of practicing diversity and inclusion?
- Make sure teens participating in the discussion, as well as those who may simply be viewing, understand that the point is to make sure libraries and library staff are supporting them.
  - The discussion will be teen-led.
  - Students will be highlighted.
  - Teens will be talking to each other, as opposed to adults teaching.

## **Recruiting Participants:**

Finding teens to participate in the discussion may take the greatest amount of work. Determining who participates could hinge on the scope of the program: will this be a local program for a local audience, benefiting the library and community, or will this be intended for a wider audience beyond the local community?

- Local Audience
  - Work with YA librarian to discuss with teen patrons
  - Work with local middle and high school media specialists or teachers to discuss with students
  - Reach out to community organizations which have connections with teens
- Wider Audience
  - Use the same ideas for local audience
  - Reach out to national organizations or special interest roundtables which may be able to call for participants in blogs, newsletters or other media
  - Work with YALSA to call for participants in the blog or eNews (see example below)

**Example of Concise Call for Participants:**

Join other teens in a panel discussion of institutional bias in libraries. Share your stories and experiences, and your ideas for improving programs and services in libraries. In this program, you will have the opportunity to be the trainer, giving guidance to librarians and library staff on how to better serve patrons and make it possible for you to see yourself (and be seen) in our libraries.

**Example of Detailed Call for Participants:**

Do you see yourself reflected in the people, programs and materials when you visit your library? If you don't go to your library, why not? What can we do to support you and meet your needs? What do we need to hear from you so we can do better?

Join other teens in a summit about implicit bias and institutional racism in libraries. Share your stories, experiences, and your ideas for improving programs, services and what you can read (and check out) in libraries. We want you to be the trainer and teach librarians and library staff how we can better serve you and make it possible for you to see yourself (and be seen) in our libraries.

What: a panel discussion -- just teens

Who: you! We're looking for four or five teens to be part of a panel discussion. We want to best reflect our many communities, so join us and speak out!

Q&A: join the conversation!

We want you to participate in a one-hour panel discussion to discuss our topic of implicit bias and institutional racism from your point of view.

Why: we need to know how we can better serve you -- what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong

Where: virtually, of course! The discussion will be on Zoom so librarians and library staff from around the country can hear your voice

When:

Thanks! You will receive a letter thanking you for your contribution to the summit

Then what? We will put your ideas, thoughts, concerns, and likes/dislikes together and share them (and a recording of the summit) with all the members of our Young Adult Library Services organization throughout the country.

### **Promoting the Program:**

Promotion will again depend on the scope. Local options can be promoted in library print materials, eNewsletters, social media and other marketing materials which reach community members. Options outside of the community will depend on the audience. If YALSA members are the target, for example, the program can be promoted on the YALSA blog, eNews, or other YALSA marketing platforms.

### **Example of Promotion Text:**

Why do teens choose not to use our libraries?  
Are we practicing equality within the doors of our library?  
How do we make teens of all walks of life feel when they walk through our libraries?  
Are we holding ourselves responsible for including all teens despite our own interest?  
How can we help them feel seen when they step through our doors?  
What responsibilities do we have to help them feel comfortable and welcome here?

In the *Importance of Seeing “Me” Within the Doors of the Library* Teen Summit, we will ask a diverse panel of teens -- some who are active patrons and some who don't use their library -- what they want and need from us.

Topics they will address include:

- Does it matter if the staff is diverse? How would that look to them?
- What kinds of materials do they need to see in our collection? How would they see themselves represented?
- What programs do they feel are essential to our library?
- Individual topics to teach librarians the importance of practicing diversity and inclusion.

## Preparing the Panelists:

Teens who express interest will need to commit to the program and send biographical information in advance. The above Task Force used a Google Survey to collect information including:

- Name
- Email address
- City & state of residence
- School
- Future plans
- Hobbies
- Short biographical paragraph describing themselves
- Photo

Time permitting and considering the technology available to panelists, the planning committee could also ask panelists to create a short video or other tangible item which could be used to introduce them to the attendees.

The planning committee should also send questions in advance so panelists will have time to review and plan responses. When writing questions, try to avoid using library-jargon. Many words common to us will not be as common to library users.

### Questions used on the April 23, 2021 program were:

- What does a welcoming library look like?
- What kind of books, games and other resources do you like/want to see?
- What would get you and your friends to go to the library?
- Do you know people who don't use the library? Do you know why?
- What kind of programs do you like to attend?
- What does implicit bias look like?
- Tell about your experience in your library. If you don't go, why not?
- Tell us about a great experience you've had at your library?
- What was a not great experience? What made it that way?
- Is it important to see staff at the library that looks like you? Why or why not?
- Do you have ideas for ways libraries could work with other organization or your school to help you and your peers? How could we help? What could we do?
- Is there anything we can do to make our spaces and collections more appealing?
- What do you want to see in the library?

## Hosting the Discussion:

Prior to the launch of the program, ask participants to login 15-20 minutes early to ensure all technical issues are addressed. Depending on the scale of the program, it may be hosted by the local library, a community organization, or a regional or national committee. Communicate regularly with the hosting organization to ensure all detail are in place prior to the program.

Select a moderator. This may be a committee member, community member, or outside moderator with experience in the format. The moderator must be comfortable communicating with teens and prepared to keep the conversation moving. The moderator should also monitor questions to determine if they can be asked and answered within the discussion, or if they should wait until the question and answer period at the end of the formal discussion.

If possible, the program should be recorded. Depending on the scope and the hosting organization, it can be posted for future viewing on a website such as YouTube. For example, the April 23, 2021 summit was posted on the YALSA YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hplb9XYT7Q0>.

## Follow-Up with Panelists:

After the conclusion of the program, it is important to reach out to participants to offer thanks for participation and ideas. As some panelists may be interested in adding their participation to college applications, an offer to provide a formal thank you on letterhead would be beneficial. The thank you letter sent after the April 23, 2021 program is below:

Thank you for participating in the virtual teen summit, *The Importance of Seeing "Me" Within the Doors of the Library*, presented by the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association. Your insights and ideas were heard by dozens of librarians and library supporters across the country who can now take your suggestions and work to improve the services and environments in their own libraries.

The program was recorded and has been posted on YouTube, allowing those who were unable to attend to view the summit and continue the conversation in their own libraries and communities. Your involvement will make a difference in the ways libraries and their staff engage with and support teens from diverse backgrounds. We hope the summit was as fulfilling for you as it was for those who were and continue to be able to hear and learn from your perspective.

Again, thank you for taking the time to be a part of this conversation.

**Additional Resources:**

- EDI Plan Update from Annual 2019:  
[http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardDoc31\\_EDI%20Plan%20Update\\_AN19.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardDoc31_EDI%20Plan%20Update_AN19.pdf)
- EDI Taskforces Update Midwinter 2020:  
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/Update%20on%20EDI%20Task%20Forces.pdf>
- EDI Taskforces Updates Annual 2020: <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/2020-annual-conference-agenda-anddocuments> (Items 36-39)
- Extension of EDI Taskforces to Complete Projects from Midwinter 2021:  
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/Item%20%2331.%20Extension%20of%20EDI%20Taskforces%20to%20Complete%20Projects%20.pdf>