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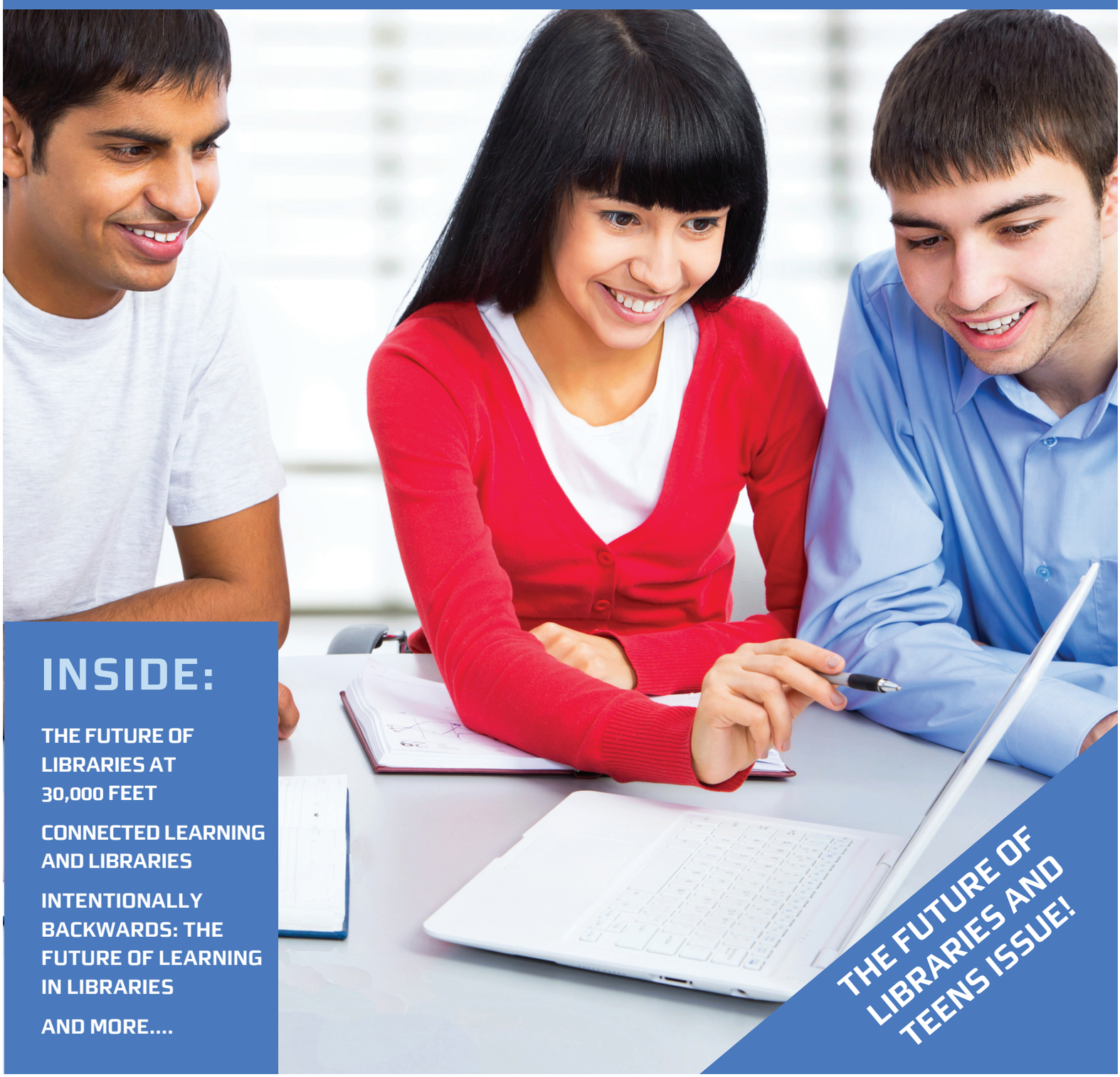

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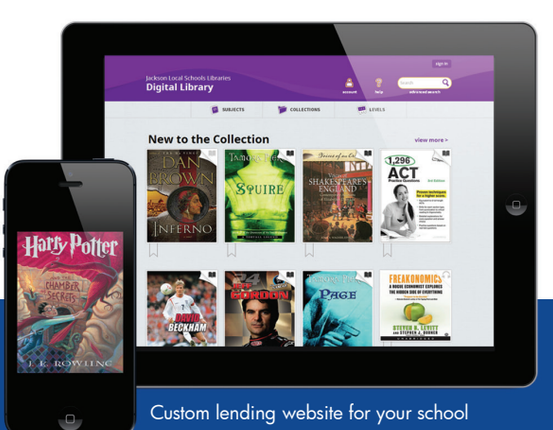

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About This Cover

This special issue of *YALS* focuses on the future of libraries and teens and is a companion to YALSA's year-long Institute of Museum and Library Services grant-funded project. Readers can learn more about the National Forum on the Future of Libraries and Teens on its website at http://ala.org/yaforum.

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Young Adult Library Services is the official journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association. *YALS* primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education for librarians serving young adults, ages twelve through eighteen. It will include articles of current interest to the profession, act as a showcase for best practices, provide news from related fields, publish recent research related to YA librarianship, and will spotlight significant events of the organization and offer in-depth reviews of professional literature. *YALS* will also serve as the official record of the organization.

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from the Editor

Linda W. Braun

The future—who knows what it's going to be? Anyone who has lived through the past 20 years realizes how difficult it is to see around corners. If you worked in libraries just ten years ago, would you have imagined that YA library staff would be supporting maker and hacker spaces, circulation of e-readers, programs via social media, and mentoring and coaching, to name just a few of the recent and emerging areas in which teen library staff are involved?

YALSA knows that we've just entered a time of exciting change and opportunity. That's why the association feels fortunate to have been awarded funding for an IMLS grant to research what future library service to teens can and should look like. This funding provided the association with an opportunity to bring stakeholders, library staff, educators, publishers, and academics together in January 2013 for a summit on the future of libraries and teens. Then, in the spring of this year, three virtual town halls were held where those not able to attend the summit had the chance to let YALSA know their thoughts on the future of teen library services. Analysis of data gathered, along with recommendations and a call to action, are slated for publication in late 2013, in a white paper written by a team of teen library staff, academics, and consultants.

This issue of YALS gives you a chance to delve into some of the topics that came to the fore over the past year. I think you'll be provoked, energized, and inspired by what Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Professor at the University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science, heard from faculty around the country about what they think youth services library education must embrace.

Not only do we need to think about how library staff is educated, we also need to think about how those working with teens in libraries can help young adults gain up-to-date skills and knowledge in both informal and formal learning settings. That's covered by Mimi Ito and Crystle Martin, from the University of California, Irvine, in their visionary article on libraries and connected learning.

Of course, teen service is just one component of the future of libraries that we need to think about. We can't simply work in a silo and not consider the broader picture of libraries in the future. That's what Alan Inouye, the Director of the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP), covers in his thought-provoking article. And high school librarian Wendy Stephens gives us her insightful take on how educational trends do, and will, have an impact on school libraries.

As we move into 2014 and beyond, there's lots to think about when it comes to the future of what we do and how we do it: staff

(continued on page 8)

from the President

Shannon Peterson

It's always been fascinating to me to hear from friends or colleagues about their innate fear of teens. Like so many of you, I'm in my element in a crowded, hormone-filled, slightly aromatic meeting room. Add a megaphone to the mix during a lock-in? You almost have to pry it out of my hands at the end of the night. The beauty of being in an association where others are comfortable with and "speak teen" is that we are among others who are really good at what we do. But do you know what I've learned through a lot of trial and error? We could be even better.

As a new librarian about a decade ago, I reluctantly admit to having been a bit of a renegade. Instead of working as a team or communicating greater needs to administrators, I very often operated just below the radar. I felt that I could take an appropriate risk, fail, move on, and try again more efficiently without having to think system wide, cross-departmentally, or on a broad scale...i.e., talk to other adults. While I was able to achieve some lasting successes this way (as well as some lackluster flops), one element that is so crucial to me now was missing: advocating for teen services by being able to effectively communicate not only what I was doing at the desk, with my collection or in all of those programs, but *why* I was doing it. Once I began to think in terms of *why*, not only was I able to broaden the reach and impact of what I was doing, but I was also able to be more purposeful with my services as well as something that all of us have in short supply, my time.

I risk embarrassing myself in this first message to you, because I suspect I am not alone in my experience. Working with teens means having to move quickly, to adapt, and to remain flexible in order to meet ever-changing demands and needs. It's a lot easier to focus on youth-centered relationship building (which is why many of us started doing what we do) than to go outside your own comfort zone or to change others' opinions or behaviors. It's a lot harder to communicate well to those you might not be comfortable with than it is to speak to your own people (whether they be teens themselves or passionate, creative, teen-loving colleagues). It's time consuming to determine what stories to tell about your teens and your library, whom to tell them to, and when in order to "sell" why you do what you do. The problem is, as those of us who have become slightly more seasoned can attest, long-term and large-scale growth is difficult to achieve in a silo, especially if our numbers are shrinking.

Now I know that YALSA members are smart, creative, and savvy. Many of you may have skipped the growing pains that I've felt in the last decade or learned those lessons much more quickly. But the reality is, stepping up our advocacy efforts is no longer someone else's job but an imperative for all of us to take on together. According to the most recent Public Library Data Service Statistical Report, the number of full-time staff dedicated to teen services has decreased a substantial 20 percent in the past four years.[1] There has also been an almost 7 percent drop in the number of school librarians from 2004 to 2011. The ability for libraries to effectively and strategically meet the needs of today's teens is in peril with numbers like these, and I implore you and all of YALSA's 5,000 + members to amplify the truths that we all know to be evident: teens need libraries and they need *us*. From everyday advocacy to the establishment of long-term advocacy goals, let's work together to reach out, increase our efforts, share our stories, and stand our ground. As my presidential theme *Amplified: Speaking Up for Teens and Libraries* begs, let's raise our voices together to make change.

Throughout the year, I look forward to working with individual members and member groups to highlight best practices, tools, and innovations in our own organization and beyond that will help us communicate the essential role that libraries and librarians can play in the lives of the teens that they serve. I'll lead your elected YALSA Board of Directors in prioritizing existing organizational advocacy efforts and exploring new ones. And maybe most importantly, I'll take every opportunity to speak to and learn from you. Thank you for electing me to serve as your leader this coming year, and as you'll see in this issue, the future of teens and libraries is here and it's up to us to ensure that our profession will grow and thrive in order to see it through. YALS

Reference

1. Public Library Association, Public Library Data Service Statistical Report (Chicago: PLA, 2012).

feature
The School Angle

For Every Learner, Everywhere, All the Time:

The Future of School Libraries

By Wendy Stephens

I've been on a covert mission for the past five years. When I meet smart youth services librarians stifled in the bureaucracies of large public library systems, I try to convert them. Imagine a place where you have your own budget, facilities, and staff, all to serve young people in the most innovative and creative ways you can think of … what I'm describing is an *ideal* school library. In this article I examine some of the changes in the education world as they relate to teens and consider how school library staff can take advantage of them to provide the best services possible to young adults.

A Focus On Individual Student Needs

More schools are beginning to profess to serve the "whole student," as they exist at this moment in time, instead of preparing them for some abstract future citizenship. Educational counseling will develop new measures to take into account each student's individual ambitions and lifestyle aspirations, as well as employment interests and skills. Entirely new educational settings, many online, will emerge in a movement away from larger schools and classes to a more individualized and immediate educational experience, especially for those students whose families can afford it—"boutique education," as it were.

Engaged as they are in improving human capital, libraries, and youth librarians in particular, are perfectly poised to serve the shift to the individual over the masses. I anticipate an increasing shift in all library settings away from concern over circulation statistics and other return-on-investment measures linked to materials expenditures. In its place, door count will better reflect an emerging use of library space. Documents uploaded, graphics generated, and contributions to online discussion might prove better indications of library vitality. Librarians will develop innovative ways to capture and examine traffic and usage patterns within different areas. That data could be used to expand staffing based around student need and use rather than leaving librarians hamstrung by traditional contractual hour staffing models.

Metrics about online resources use should be considered as well. Database access can be parsed by access on and off campus, revealing much about the nature of student inquiry. The reality is that many librarians will be less able to anticipate what students will be researching at any given point in time. data-driven instruction, problem-based learning, and an emphasis on real world skills are among the educational trends with the most potential for librarians working in schools. Over the next decade, a large number of secondary school students will face less mandated seat time. Partially driven by budgetary concerns, school reformers have sought to identify and eliminate wasted instructional time. Using adaptive tests to establish baseline scores, more students will be able to "test out" of basic requirements or "test into" advanced course placement, or into course sections where they can progress at their own pace rather than remain with a larger instructional group. Because of these shifts, many students will have specialized curricular needs based on their individual course work, needs that could easily lead to more "on demand" collection models like the per-use e-book pricing pioneered by BrainHive. With BrainHive, if users don't choose an e-book from their collection, the library won't incur any expenses,

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and libraries can set granular limits on expenditures based on users or limited by month, allowing for predictive budgeting.

The emphasis on cost-effective online education will involve school libraries curating and pushing resources to students off campus based on individual rather than collective needs. Secondary school librarians, in particular, can adapt the best practices identified to support students engaged in distance education, as there exists a vast body of literature related to library support for college students taking coursework away from campus. Tomorrow's school librarians will do less whole-class instruction, instead offering support for each student's own independent learning. Librarians can also learn from academic and public libraries that have devised successful approaches to providing individualized digital reader's advisory and reference services.

Changing Schools

As school choice programs expand, the proportion of students served by private institutions will increase and public school demographics will shift. Driven largely by the expressed curricular needs of business, industry, and a smaller military, requirements for high school graduation will become more flexible. In a differentiated environment, the very designation "school age" will expand to include younger and older individuals. The undeniable efficacy of Head Start and other school preparedness programs will lead to an economically wise expansion of pre-K education, demanding specialized library services for this age group.

Some sea changes will affect school climates adversely. With the availability of increasingly granular data, the neediest students will receive more individualized attention, and advanced students will gain more latitude over their educational process. But most students will have larger classes, and teachers will face increased accountability. Competition for already scarce resources will increase as the neediest children remain dependent on public school services. Whatever value-added measures for teachers emerge in a data-driven environment are unlikely to account for the input of added instructional services, such as libraries and counseling. These tend to be more difficult to quantify, due to the just-in-time and one-on-one nature of interactions, as well as the often confidential nature of those services.

Counseling is an apt professional affinity area for school libraries. No one who has seen the efficacy of a good school counseling program can deny its value in student attainment, yet the many variables at play can make tracing direct outcomes difficult. I anticipate that the one-on-one conferencing and advising model used by counselors will increase in school libraries. In new education settings, young people, on the whole, will have more chances to use their time in pursuit of their own interests in co-curricular work. Also, an increased number of young people are responding to economic uncertainty by taking gap years before heading off to college. These students are often looking for internship opportunities for practical experience in potential career sectors before beginning college coursework in a particular area, and school librarians can work with counselors and administrators in making connections between young people and prospective employers. On the whole, I anticipate libraries moving past an intimate knowledge of print and digital collections to a role involving cultivating connections and learning opportunities for young people in the community. Much of this is already in place through partnerships with agencies serving youth and other groups with whom we pool resources.

The move from the post-industrial educational model will push some students to be productive earlier, and many will begin gaining skills and experience through service learning coordinated through schools and other local organizations. I anticipate that more libraries will become involved in shifting hyper-local information into an optimal form for online access. The development of local history projects offers learning opportunities for students as they develop transferable skills related to digital publishing, multimedia design, and database construction.

As school days become more elastic in both duration and extent, modified academic calendars will offer librarians serving teens in both school and public library settings increased hours for potential programming. And I anticipate a boom in "passive" programming, opportunities for creative expression independent of place and time. Whether it's "art on a cart," like crown decoration for seniors (the "kings" of the school) or a mask-adornment opportunity project on Mardi Gras, asking $1 from each student toward tempera paint, jeweled stickers, feathers, and metallic pens, such projects can lead to a more colorful and celebratory school environment. The increased emphasis on "making" and offering hands-on learning of essential skills positions librarians as evangelists for increased self-sufficiency and ecological responsibility. Also, young entrepreneurs will need support for ethically responsible and sustainable manufacture and marketing of their products and crafts, advice that librarians can provide programmatically and digitally.

Technology in School Libraries

Librarians will continue to share, showcase, and demonstrate new tools to those in the learning community through

strategic programming, instructional collaboration, and effective modeling. School librarians need robust technology skills to play an active role in teacher professional development. Librarians must be the go-to people for online database suggestion, information about the range of applications, interfaces, and devices, much as they once were for text sources.

Once bound by the bar code scanner, school librarians will become increasingly location independent. I anticipate an intrepid wave of school librarians that will showcase mobile services in the far reaches of campuses: the locker room, the dugout, the field house. A number of library automation vendors already provide Android and iOS apps, not just for catalog access, but also to facilitate untethered mobile check out. Properly configured, a device camera can scan barcodes.

As spaces, school libraries will need to focus on providing access to the technologies that students are less likely to have at home or on the go. Anticipate more stations where students can use their mobile devices for file access and storage, but offer an alternative and more robust interface for more complicated projects. Workstations should be ergonomic and adjustable, and offer collaborative options for group projects. They are likely to have dual display monitors, dedicated audio visual equipment, and professional imaging equipment, such as scanners and cameras unmatched in their mobile devices. Knowing when to shift from a mobile interface to a more robust tool is an important new literacy that librarians can model for teens.

I anticipate more and more library automation vendors taking note of the algorithms at play in Amazon and Netflix's recommender systems to expand that sort of data mining to library catalogs. In the meantime, school librarians (and students) can embody the flesh-and-blood equivalent of those systems, offering an increased number of physical and virtual collections of themed and recommended resources, hyperlinked by evaluator ID and sortable by rating.

On campus, the school library will become a more important "third space" as students regulate their own learning away from traditional classrooms. I think the school library will also serve as a haven from a "too sexy, too soon" society, as high school libraries serve middle- and even elementary-aged students. The demand for electricity and connectivity will not abate anytime soon, and libraries are coming up with clever and economical solutions for charging devices, like elementary school librarian Melissa Techman's use of dish drainers to store iPads. I am sure we will soon see library environments where students can safely store and charge their technology as needed throughout the day. Even libraries that lack the connectivity to support student devices can become a nexus for sharing through lower-tech options like communal whiteboards, collaborative displays, and bulletin boards for spontaneous sharing in a more analog fashion. Opportunities for sharing reading recommendations, be they "literary crushes" on Valentine's Day or even sharing "favorite things to do here" for National Library Week (NLW) offer young people a sense of ownership and contribution to the library space. School libraries should embrace a sense of play, with toys and tools for creative expression.

Challenges For School Librarians

The future of school libraries is necessarily and inextricably linked to that of schools. It is easy to imagine school libraries squeezed out altogether in public schools balancing increased privatization, larger classes, and online learning, and as competency-based endorsements replace traditional seat hours.

For failing public systems, these shifts—when coupled with stagnant tax revenues—can seem like a doomsday scenario, as increasing federal oversight compounded with a standardized curriculum for core subjects provide schools less local latitude to determine staffing. Huge expenditures in curricular materials to support the Common Core State Standards and associated computer-based testing have strained school system budgets.

For school systems aspiring to 1:1 models, the school librarian should be the point person for homogeneous hardware and offer a triage system for troubleshooting, often relying on the expertise of students themselves. At Walnut Grove Elementary School in Madison County, Alabama, librarian Holly Whitt instituted a badging program for students to demonstrate competencies in library skills. Students who achieve the designation as helpers in areas like OPAC searching, materials location, document printing, and format conversion are showcased on a bulletin board that serves as a directory for those in the school community needing help. The very process of identifying a helper forces students to evaluate, articulate, and categorize their own needs, improving meta-cognition.

At the recent International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) conference, there was a definite sense that librarians who can't or won't do technology were the ones being displaced by attrition and elimination. Whether tech-savvy school librarians will be more likely to maintain administration support remains to be seen, but school librarians should embrace the opportunities technology provides to demonstrate their abilities and skills. Given the changing demographics and diverse backgrounds of

new teachers, school libraries are perfectly situated to support their learning, especially of those engaged in virtual teacher education programs.

Schools can be an emotionally grueling place, increasingly operating amid a creeping de-professionalism of education as deregulated charters and apprentice programs like *Teach for America* gain increasing traction. In school libraries, there is tremendous controversy in particular surrounding the amount of training professional librarians should provide for their paraprofessional replacements. I think we need to examine everything in terms of the students who will be affected. Keeping practical "librarian secrets" to ourselves will serve no one in the long term, and if our professional knowledge is so fungible, perhaps we should rethink our own role. What we can do, which will not adversely affect students, is document the opportunities lost because of the elimination of a second librarian, an instructional assistant, a part-time aide. In those settings, a librarian should keep a running tally as lost opportunities present themselves.

Opportunities For School Libraries

For librarians who long saw whole-class instruction as the holy grail, more individualized help will demand a shift in thinking. Robust computers and a friendly atmosphere in a school library will draw teachers in on their planning periods, which is the most authentic way toward effective instructional collaboration. We can collect professional resources that have proven helpful to our faculties—most teachers will be happy to contribute books and materials if they are ensured ongoing access. A professional collection can also support the graduate coursework many teachers must pursue as a component of alternative certification; a copy of Vacca and Vacca's text, *Reading in the Content Areas*, is standard curriculum in our area. Encourage teachers to pool their textbooks as well, using index cards on a small bulletin board where those hoping to sell their texts can seek local buyers, or offer a shelf as a clearinghouse for materials related to courses they no longer teach.

And, in cases where public schools have chosen to move away from school libraries, it is important to negotiate and make transparent the role that public library services have in supporting youth education and increasing overall level of literacy and student attainment. I recently spoke with a public library director who reported that local charter schools had been effectively "outsourcing" media services to his public library. His pointed out that this new demand was something not yet reflected in the budgetary priorities of public libraries, but suggested that the expenses to the library should be offset by the local education budget. The real issue, it seemed, was not a budgetary one, but that the school did not have air conditioning, which made the director reluctant to send a librarian there. Though he began by questioning the worth of school libraries, he saw disadvantages in allowing the public library to take on that role.

I believe that school library advocates should focus on youth who most need our resources, the students who rush to access the Internet to complete assignments before school, the enthusiastic readers who come from print-deprived homes. Because they serve the whole community, school librarians also have the rare opportunity to introduce a culture of library going to young people who might not have had this privilege before. As more students receive their education in quasi-private settings like charter and virtual schools, teachers and librarians working in more traditional public schools are bound to see more print-deprived students just as they will see more hungry students, more tired students, and more students needing instruction in basic skills. In settings where literacy and access to information are not valued, libraries can fall into the crosshairs in environments where they have the most potential to change lives. We will also be serving more emancipated teens, and need to have policies in place where young people can be designated as responsible for their own affairs rather than automatically requiring the assent of an older adult.

Yet, as teachers require more projects with online components, and as schools use the Internet to communicate grades and procedural information, any school librarian can tell you the extent and identities of students without online access at home. Increasingly, students may have online access only through a mobile device, which presents challenges in completing traditional assignments. Several educators recently emphasized how lower-cost and prepaid cellular carriers' increasing repertoire of smartphones and iOS devices will have a real impact on learning as students gain transferable skills that they will continue to use for formal and informal learning. More schools are adopting bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policies, but for many students in the current economic climate, devices will be hard to come by. Library-provided hardware can bridge this gap, even repurposing donated secondhand hardware generated through constant replacement cycles can help.

While allowing students' network access for their own hardware is an increasing trend that allows some students to use the devices with which they are most comfortable, BYOD policies can be problematic, in that some schools are largely abdicating responsibility for providing tools for students. Nonetheless, mobile technology penetration

often surprises educators, who often underestimate the hardware and access students do possess. The reality is that this is the only tenable form of technology integration in many school environments, and exposure to some technology for productivity and multimedia creation is better than none whatsoever. The librarian can play an important equity role in BYOD environments, in lending equipment, modeling skills and capabilities of hardware and software, and always keeping the focus on student learning independent of particular pieces of software.

We're All In This Together

Public education, in particular, seems poised to bifurcate in a potentially cruel and even unconstitutional way. Under recent budget stagnation, local funds have begun to make a real difference. As with other public services, some communities will invest to ensure that public resources remain available for all, while other communities will not contribute toward the ongoing development of its workforce.

Public libraries have a role to play in the future of school libraries. School libraries play an important role in the life of every student, and public libraries can provide institutional support and a powerful and informed voice in advocacy efforts for school librarians. However good the outreach, many children's families will never come to the public library, and eliminating local school libraries means many potential future taxpayers will be unacquainted with the full range of library services, eventually eroding support in the community for public libraries as well.

School librarians must retain a sense of positivity about the future, raising awareness about the important work that they do before the crisis of a gloom-and-doom scenario. School librarians will remain the chief generalists in their building, pulling together disparate content threads in organic ways and creating learning opportunities that students will remember long after a standardized test. School librarians possess unique tendencies related to organization and recall, skills just as important in electronic institutional environments as in physical ones. We also tend toward altruism, beyond that of our generous teacher peers. We need to value highly what we do, professionalize our role as much as possible, and learn what we don't know to serve our schools. In countless ways, school librarians remain integral to a culture of literacy and make the crucial difference between a school mired in an industrial model and one that empowers students to promote authentic inquiry. YALS

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from the Editor *(continued from page 2)*

management and administration; marketing to teens using new and emerging tools; evaluation of services; risk taking; and partnerships. You'll find all of these critical topics covered in this issue of YALS.

I hope you will be energized by this exploration of a future of libraries that focuses on connecting teens to what they want and need, when they need it, no matter where they are. We won't be doing that simply by handing young people a physical book—but by connecting with their interests and passions, taking risks, and working with a variety of stakeholders.

You'll no doubt notice that we made a slight change in *YALS* this issue: The "View from ALA" section is now titled "Your ALA." We think this better reflects the section's focus.

Don't forget to check www.yalsa.ala.org/yals each week to go beyond what you've read in the print journal. If you are interested in learning more about YALSA's IMLS project, check out that website at www.ala.org/yaforum. And keep your eye on YALS for more information on the publication, later this year, of the project white paper. YALS

feature
Your ALA

The Future of Libraries at Thirty Thousand Feet:

Strategy and Public Policy

By Alan S. Inouye

The "future of libraries" is now almost a cliché. On a daily basis, there is a new library development based on mobile technology, e-books, maker spaces, or some other innovation. ALA conference programs are chock-full of future of libraries sessions and meetings. However, these developments that we observe and engage in discretely comprise a larger picture that one typically does not contemplate.

This picture involves both strategy and public policy, the focus of ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP), which I direct. In the OITP context, strategy refers to supporting the deployment of these developments in an efficient, effective, and integrative manner by considering the needs and resources of the library community at large—rather than focusing on how one particular library adapts a particular development. Public policy refers to the engagement of institutions beyond the library community to facilitate progress on these strategies. These institutions include federal agencies, the U.S. Congress, federal courts, companies in the information industry, major foundations, the media, national advocacy and trade groups, and research institutions and think tanks.

In this article, I discuss four themes that drive strategy and public policy for the library community based on insights from my OITP work. For each theme, I discuss some of the current developments and future directions for our thinking, planning, and advocacy.

Theme 1: Declining Professional Control Over Decision Making

Library e-book lending is one of the most significant challenges we face. Indeed, you may have read the article, "E-books Are a Big Deal!," in the spring 2013 issue of *YALS* by Marijke Visser and Chanitra Bishop, which provides a good overview of the concerns involved in library e-book lending. And I imagine you've heard about these problems in other articles, conferences, or meetings, and hopefully about the work of ALA's Digital Content Working Group (YALSA is represented by Janet Ingraham Dwyer).

However, the focus on publisher contract terms obscures the larger phenomenon: the lessening of professional control by librarians. For print books, librarians are the deciders. We figure out what to purchase—and whatever we wish to buy, we can buy at reasonable prices and terms. When the books arrive, librarians determine how to display and organize them. Librarians decide who gets access to the books (or stacks) and under what conditions. Librarians decide on lending periods, renewal policies, and wait list procedures. Librarians determine long-term retention and preservation policies. Librarians have direct control over patron borrowing records and discretion for accommodations for people with disabilities—thanks to the copyright law.

By contrast—as we've painfully seen—with e-books, librarians do not make most of these decisions. Instead, they are specified in contracts. Of course, the phenomenon of contracts that specify digital information access is not new. Academic librarians have been dealing with electronic journals for decades, and all of us have been dealing with database subscriptions for some time. But for public and school libraries, the rise of e-books in the last few years is fundamentally changing the provision of a signature product—books.

Insofar as contracting for information access is a staple for the digital world, librarians need to develop and hone their skills in understanding, assessing,

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OITP and the Future of Libraries

The Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) advances ALA's public policy activities that help ensure the public's right to a free and open digital information society. It works to ensure a library voice in information policy debates and to promote full and equitable intellectual participation by the public. OITP conducts research and analyses, educates the library community, advocates for ALA interests in policy forums, and engages in strategic planning to anticipate technological change. The outputs from OITP activities are disseminated through policy briefs, perspective papers, books, *American Libraries (AL)* supplements, articles in a wide array of outlets, quotes in various media publications, and of course, through direct advocacy with decision makers and other influential parties.

The Future of Libraries

The fundamental changes that underlie the ways in which much information is now created, modified, disseminated, and accessed offer both opportunities and challenges for libraries and public access to information. ALA's Program on America's Libraries for the 21st Century (AL21C) focuses on monitoring and evaluating trends in technology and society to assist the library community in shaping its future to the maximum benefit of the nation. ALA members participate through OITP's AL21C Subcommittee, chaired by Marc Gartler of the Madison (Wisc.) Public Library. Larra Clark directs the AL21C Program for OITP.

and negotiating contracts. This has implications for professional training opportunities as well as for graduate school curricula. Moreover, librarians have opportunities for greater leverage with vendors if they pool or coordinate their purchases, rather than attempting to negotiate with vendors on a 1:1 basis, so improved skills in organizing and sustaining cooperative and collaborative arrangements are also necessary.

Thus, librarians will be operating increasingly in environments of growing complexity and uncertainty. Accordingly, librarians will need professional training and education to help them succeed in these evolving organizational contexts. There are obvious implications for library managers in the hiring of staff: particular skills and personality characteristics become more valuable in these new environments.

Theme 2: Technological Advance is the New Normal

Once upon a time, libraries had technological innovations. We implemented online public access catalogs, installed computers for public use, and provided Internet access. These initiatives were special projects, shiny objects. Now such innovations are mainstream; they are expected as a matter of course.

Hence, a key component of our future of libraries activity is working to ensure that we maintain existing programs for libraries and technology. At the federal level, this means primarily protecting the Library Services and Technology Act, the E-rate program, and what we are able to obtain in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To ensure these policies continue to benefit libraries, we ask ALA members to support requests for help, such as calling your members of Congress when asked.

This new normal means that pushing ahead, aspiring to the technological frontier, is more important than ever. A major initiative on our agenda is ConnectED, proposed by President Obama in June 2013. The main purpose of ConnectED is to ensure that libraries and schools have access to robust, affordable high-capacity broadband for many years to come. The main funding mechanism is the E-rate program, for which we are investing heavily in research, analyses, and advocacy to obtain a favorable outcome for libraries.

Consistent with the technology-as-the-new-normal stance, digital literacy has been a priority for us over the past few years. OITP organized an ALA intra-unit task force, which included YALSA representation. This task force produced a background report and conclusions and recommendations. The task force work provided the core of the information needed to undertake advocacy with the Federal Communications Commission, U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and other federal and non-federal organizations.

Understandably, the primary focus has been on basic digital literacy. Our general tendencies as librarians and the focus from federal programs naturally gravitated towards training for those with no or minimal digital skills.

One of OITP's priorities for digital literacy and related topics is to increase the focus on higher-level cognitive abilities. As technologies and services (and platforms, standards, and variations) continue to proliferate, the need for more sophisticated digital literacy skills becomes increasingly urgent. Patrons must not be trapped and directed by technology, struggling to just get by, preoccupied with the latest tweet or text. As librarians we have a responsibility to promote more substantive engagement, such as understanding and synthesizing information across multiple sources and services.

At the highest end of digital literacy, we promote activities that involve information synthesis rather than information gathering. Librarians also promote substantive engagement such as participating in a storytelling hour, reading a book or participating in a book group, working in a maker space, or otherwise. We discuss these issues in a published report on contemplation.

The overarching goal is the institutionalization of this new normal. That is, we are working so that national policy makers and opinion leaders naturally include libraries in new major technological initiatives as the natural and obvious course of action, which it should be.

Theme 3: Increasing Importance of Reaching Beyond the Library Community

The first two themes foreshadow the more general conclusion of the need for the library community to increase its outward orientation. Think back decades ago (OK, younger people will have to visualize reruns of *The Brady Bunch* in their brains). The sources for information for the Brady kids were sparse, and the local public and school libraries were among the few major resources available to them. Contrast their circumstance to today's situation: the myriad, almost mind-boggling number of information sources, growing every day, available via libraries and otherwise.

Now consider the diverse players involved in the provision of information sources, technologies, and services. We have the mainline publishers and national periodicals as we had decades ago, but we also have Google, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, Amazon, Apple, and a virtually uncountable number of other sources from multinational organizations to personal bloggers and self-published authors.

We also see the rise of large foundations and their impact on library and information services. And the public policy community, from the federal government to advocacy groups, has never been more involved in the decisions relating to how information is made available.

Then there is the set of decision makers and influential parties beyond libraries that have been relevant all along. For public libraries, there are mayors, city councils, boards of supervisors, county executives, editors of the local newspaper, and so on. For school libraries, there are principals, district superintendents, PTA leaders, school boards, and so on. As before, librarians and library advocates must engage these interests.

Our conclusion is that, for years to come, the library community needs to shift its strategic orientation towards the diverse set of stakeholders beyond libraries. Thus a major new initiative within OITP is to undertake a systematic assessment of how we do public policy and advocacy at the national level. Based on this work, we will be able to identify and engage promising directions and new partners to improve the strategic position of libraries. We have a high likelihood of grant funding for this effort and expect to launch it before the end of calendar year 2013.

In terms of specific areas of engagement, OITP expects to continue a major focus on digital content. Our advocacy with e-book publishers and distributors will continue and expand—more recently in an effort to recruit authors to stand with

Suggested Resources

ALA Digital Content Working Group
www.ala.org/groups/committees/special/ala-dcwg
ALA OITP
www.ala.org/offices/oitp
ALA Task Force Releases Recommendations to Advance Digital Literacy
http://bit.ly/digilit_recs
America's Libraries for the 21st Century
www.ala.org/offices/oitp/programs/al21c
AL, E-Content Blog
www.americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/econtent
Aspen Institute Launches Dialog on Public Libraries
http://bit.ly/aspen_dialogue
Authors 4 Library Ebooks Launches
http://bit.ly/authors4libebks
Complete Copyright for K-12 Librarians and Educators
http://bit.ly/complete_copyright
ConnectED and E-Rate Supporting the Multi-User Environment
http://bit.ly/1dUzKhn
Digital Content: What's Next
http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/7d9e3366
E-books Are a Big Deal
www.yalsa.ala.org/yals/e-books-are-a-big-deal-spring-2013
Maine State Librarian Touts E-rate Success at Congressional Hearing
http://bit.ly/me_state_lib
OITP Digital Literacy Task Force
http://bit.ly/digilit_tf
OITP Perspectives
www.ala.org/offices/oitp/publications/oitpperspectives
OITP Policy Briefs
www.ala.org/offices/oitp/publications/policybriefs
On the Front Lines of Digital Inclusion
www.districtdispatch.org/2013/01/on-the-front-lines-of-digital-inclusion
Restoring Contemplation: How Disconnecting Bolsters the Knowledge Economy
http://bit.ly/17ftA6i
United States House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to Hold First Hearing on Comprehensive Copyright Reform
http://judiciary.house.gov/news/2013/05152013_2.html

libraries. Beginning this fall, we expect that major copyright reform will rise on the policy agenda and demand our attention.

Theme 4: Future Role of Libraries in Society = Work in Progress

By now, you no doubt have concluded that OITP sees a library field in revolution. Of course, we are not the first to reach this conclusion. More to the point, this conclusion means that the fundamental role of libraries in society is now up for grabs. What is our niche? What is our competitive advantage? What is the articulation for why libraries must be a part of future society—in the nation's communities—as opposed to just a nice local resource to have?

We continue to consider and explore. We don't expect a magical moment of discovery, but it is important to articulate the rationale for a robust library system as best we can. Important and well-resourced stakeholders will not be so willing to invest or support libraries if we cannot articulate the value proposition for society.

One concept that we are now exploring focuses on libraries as centers of content production. The most visible relevant trend of late is the maker space craze. Less publicized but important components of the content production family include digitization of local historical and cultural content, management of community blogs, and other local digital content. Also under this rubric is the trend of libraries as publishers in their own right and centers for facilitating the archiving and access of self-published authors. Another thread relates to helping patrons organize their own personal digital content. Can some kind of conglomeration of digital content production yield a new compelling value proposition for libraries? We don't know, but continue our analysis and contemplation.

So what are some of our strengths or competitive advantages that may serve as the foundation for future libraries? Libraries are established as serving particular disadvantaged groups such as people with low incomes, modest technology resources, and low levels of digital literacy. Generally, libraries face little competition from businesses for this population segment as the profit potential is not great.

In a world of increasingly commercial content, libraries are one of the few major providers and advisors who are unbiased and widely recognized as such. Indeed, the public perceives librarians as one of the most trustworthy professions in the country.

Libraries across the United States represent an extensive infrastructure. The physical one is clear, with public and school library facilities embedded in communities. Libraries also have an extensive social and political infrastructure, as we are likewise embedded in communities in this non-physical way.

So OITP continues its work on the future of libraries in this way. Our Program on America's Libraries for the 21st Century has several projects underway, with new papers to be released by the end of 2013. Also, OITP is closely monitoring the new "Dialogue on Public Libraries" organized by the Aspen Institute and funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. ALA Immediate Past-President Maureen Sullivan is a member of the working group.

CONCLUSION

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness…."[1]

It is an extraordinary and exciting time to be in libraries. The possibilities are not just seemingly endless, but they truly are—limited only by our imagination . . . and bank account. Technological advances already have brought an avalanche of information to the doorstep of the average American with the state of information overload never more overwhelming. And of course new technologies and services only promise ever more information immediately, all clamoring for attention and response. Never more has society needed people to help organize, categorize, and prioritize information, whether directly or in developing policies, procedures, and systems to help people do it for themselves. Historically, such people have been called librarians.

It is also a disconcerting and risky time to be in libraries. In the 20th century, there were decades of relative stability and certainty about our processes and place in the world. We knew what success looked like today and for tomorrow. It is increasingly difficult to know what success looks like in libraries today, and we sure don't know what success looks like for tomorrow's libraries. What we do know about tomorrow is that hard choices are inevitable, as expectations and opportunities continue to grow, but resources are not keeping pace. Effective, strategic librarians will have to stop doing certain things and likely take heat for these decisions.

Young adult librarians have a special challenge—not only how to provide effective services today, but how to prepare their charges for an evolving and unknown future information service landscape in the years ahead. How can they (you) provide guidance and services that will truly serve young adults as they migrate to higher education and the workforce? This is a formidable, almost daunting, responsibility, yet it lies in front of us. OITP looks forward to working with young adult librarians—and all librarians—to create a course for the future. YALS

Reference

1. Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (San Francisco, Calif.: Ignatius Press, 2012), 5.

feature
YALSA Perspectives

Getting Out from Under the Radar:

Using YALSA's Teen Services Evaluation Tool

By Sara Ryan

YALSA's "Public Library Evaluation Tool" is described on the YALSA website as "a place to begin the conversation about what constitutes excellent public library service for teens."[1] But how do you begin that conversation? How can you use YALSA's evaluation tool at your library?

We recently used the tool at Multnomah County Library, a large urban system serving Portland, Oregon, and surrounding cities. I'm sharing our experience to help encourage other libraries to use YALSA's evaluation tool as well.

I'll break the process into four parts:

- Convince your administration that evaluating your teen services will benefit the library
- Conduct the evaluation
- Communicate the results
- Create change based on what the evaluation reveals

Convince

Managers are often interested in tools that make it easier to demonstrate the impact and tell the story of the library's work, particularly those aspects of the work that are more challenging to capture with traditional measures such as circulation or reference statistics. And many managers create strategic plans that define the top priorities for their libraries in a given period of time. Evaluating teen services using YALSA's tool will bring attention to what's working well and what can be improved at your library. In the context of a strategic plan, an evaluation can be an excellent way to identify projects that merit time and resources.

For example, let's say your library's strategic plan includes the goal "improve patrons' awareness of the library's electronic resources," and your teen services evaluation reveals staff lack knowledge of the devices most used by teens in your community. You could then propose a project where staff work with teens to learn more about their devices and how they use them, which would include recommendations about improving teens' awareness of the library's digital resources. In that case, your library has already set the goal of improving patron awareness of digital resources, and now you have a project that simultaneously addresses a goal from the strategic plan and a gap in teen services.

If you think you'll need to overcome resistance from your administration in order to use the evaluation tool, consider how your library currently measures its work. Can you reference evaluations of other aspects of your library? Maybe your library has investigated how well its services are connecting with the small business community, or seniors, or recent immigrants, and you can point to benefits that came from those projects. For more about how best to advocate with your administration, read Sarah Flowers's series on the *YALSAblog*, "What Your Manager Wishes You Knew" (http://bit.ly/flowers_manager), and her book *Evaluating Teen Services and Programs* (Neal-Schuman, 2012).

Conduct

Just looking at the teen services evaluation tool can be daunting. After all, the tool has multiple categories—Leadership and Professionalism, Knowledge of Client Group, Communication, Marketing and

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Outreach, Administration, Knowledge of Materials, Access to Information, Services—and multiple items to assess in each category. You may be overwhelmed, wondering how you'll possibly be able to come up with rankings for everything, and how you can be sure if your rankings are accurate. Here are some ways to make your teen services evaluation a manageable project.

- Involve multiple staff. When we used the evaluation tool at Multnomah County Library, the entire Teen Action Team (seven staff members) was actively involved in conducting the evaluation. We also consulted several additional staff members to deepen our understanding of aspects of overall library operations and policies that affect teen services. And we were especially fortunate to have the support and encouragement of our youth services director, Katie O'Dell, throughout the evaluation process.
- Divide and conquer. Like any large project, conducting a teen services evaluation becomes more manageable when you break it down into smaller tasks. We began by identifying sources of information that could help us determine our rankings. These sources could be documentation (statistics, reports) or individuals (staff in other departments, community partners). We assigned each category in the tool to a two-person team. The teams worked independently to determine the rankings in their categories, keeping track of their progress via shared Google Docs. Then we came back together as a full group to discuss the rankings.
- Discuss the rankings within the group working on the evaluation before you share them in a final form with management. It's an important and valuable part of the process. Don't be surprised if there's significant disagreement about what rankings are appropriate! Staff from different locations or departments may have very different takes. Similarly, the perceptions of staff who are newer to your library may not match those of staff who've been at the library for many years. Make an effort to see disagreements about rankings as opportunities for the group to get a more nuanced understanding of the state of teen services. With that said, you'll eventually need to get to consensus on your rankings. You may want to "elect" one person as the final arbiter.
- Recognize that the idea of "evaluation" can be scary, and figure out how to address staff concerns. Staff, including the staff working on the evaluation, may worry that their individual job performances are going to be judged. It's important to make sure everyone understands that the evaluation is about the overall picture of your library's teen services. Your group may also want to have a conversation about whether you're more interested overall in drawing attention to service gaps, for example, categories that would get a "Below Basic" ranking, or to "Distinguished" successes. Keep in mind that no library is going to be distinguished in every category, and on the other end of the spectrum, it's also unlikely that a library would come out below basic in every category.

Communicate

Now you need to share all the hard work you've done evaluating your library's teen services with your colleagues and administration. Some of these people may be your allies, others more resistant, still others—unbelievable as it may seem to passionate teen services advocates—may simply not ever have devoted much thought to how your library works with teens. This is another point in the process where your group can benefit from reading Sarah Flowers's "What Your Manager Wishes You Knew" series on the *YALSAblog*. You also need to think about how best to present the rankings. At Multnomah, we presented the information in three parts:

- A "long form" using the same format as the tool itself. For each category, we highlighted the ranking in red and included a brief rationale about how we determined that ranking. For example, in the Administration category, in the section Document YA Programs and Activities we ranked "Proficient" with the comment "To be distinguished we would need to report about our work with teens more frequently and publicize it more widely."
- A "short form" with just the categories and rankings, without supporting information.
- The most important piece for management: recommendations based on the rankings, "translated" into the language of the library's priorities, with a conclusion summarizing overall strengths and areas to develop. For example, one current strategic priority at Multnomah is "help the community flourish," which we connected to results from the Community, Marketing and Outreach category of the evaluation tool. Our recommendation tied to that priority reads: "To help the community flourish in our work with teens, we need to be a strong, visible partner for community-wide

initiatives and other youth-serving agencies that work to improve teens' capacity to succeed, outside the library as well as in. "With each recommendation, we included several concrete related activities, such as:" Create further capacity to support Cradle to Career's Ninth Grade Counts and Future Connect initiatives, e.g., participating in summer 8th–9th grade transition programs for youth at risk of dropping out of school."

Despite the length of this description, the document we presented to our executive management team, the short form plus the recommendations (with the long form available for those interested), was just five pages long. I strongly recommend being as concise as possible when sharing information with managers, who are always expected to divide their attention among numerous projects.

Before you present your evaluation, try to think about questions that colleagues hearing this information for the first time may have about your results and recommendations. You won't be able to anticipate everything, but it will help you feel more confident.

Create Change

This, of course, is the point of the exercise: to make changes that will improve your library's teen services. Almost certainly, you won't be able to implement every change you've recommended or start every new project right away, but you can begin to make shifts in the directions your evaluation recommends.

For instance, our evaluation recommended adding five dedicated teen librarian positions in locations that serve a high population of teens who live in poverty, are at risk of dropping out of school, and/or are learning English or who have parents/caregivers who are not strong English speakers. While competing budget needs made it impossible to add all five recommended teen librarian positions, we were able to add a .5 dedicated teen librarian position and convert an existing youth librarian position to focus on teen services. Of course, in order to continue building our teen services capacity, we'll need to effectively demonstrate the positive difference these staffing changes make. So one of the activities in our recommendations is: "Determine what statistics and stories best capture the work we do with teens on an ongoing basis and how to strategically share that information, including but not limited to teens' roles in developing and presenting programs, outreach with teens by staff both inside and outside of Youth Services, how teens use our electronic resources and social media, and the work staff does to mentor teens."

Including activities with each recommendation made it much easier for us to take concrete actions to improve our teen services. Our recommended activities are now included in the library's overall Youth Services Priorities. We're tracking our progress and holding ourselves accountable.

Whatever the results of your teen services evaluation, the process of conducting it will generate productive conversations and raise the profile of teen services at your library. Even small changes will help you move teen services out from under the radar and into the consciousness of library administration and stakeholders. YALS

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feature
Best Practices

Effectively Managing Teen Services Departments in Public Libraries:

Basic Steps for Success

By Elsworth Rockefeller

Whether you've dreamed of managing a teen services department since library school or you've been pushed into the role by circumstances outside of your control, leading teen services staff can be the highlight of your career. Managers charged with supervising teen services share the responsibility and joy of helping staff members develop into the best they can be. Through mentoring, coaching, leading, and advocating for these staff members, managers develop an environment that leads to happy and engaged teen services staff.

In this article I outline six key areas to successful management and support of teen services staff:

- Advocate to create an environment for success
- Help build skills
- Know what you have
- Know what you need
- Make the right hire
- Be involved

Advocate To Create An Environment For Success

Part of a manager's responsibility to staff is to lay the groundwork for success of teen services within the library. A significant piece of building this base is active advocacy. If you're not sure how to best advocate for teen services and your staff, or if doing so is new for you, think about ways to demonstrate your belief in and passion for what the teen services staff accomplish every day. Celebrate their work whenever you can to the library Board of Trustees, the director, the management team, administration, and other librarians and paraprofessionals within the library. When you have an opportunity to speak to the wider community, draw attention to what your staff offers teens and the impact services have. Try presenting a slide show of photographs from teen programs at a staff learning day or publishing the number of teen participants in summer reading in a local newspaper (and make sure to at least briefly describe the benefits the program has in combating the summer slide).

Use all the tools you have to promote services for teens. Collect and utilize statistics on use of the collection and teen area and keep good program notes. Put these records in reports and work them into board documents and any publicity about the library. Take pictures of youth in the library, using library materials, and participating in programs. Use these (as appropriate, and in compliance with your library's related policies and standards) to add a more visual component to written documents and publicity.

Raise awareness of teen services by moving programs into public parts of the library building. Simply holding teen events in areas visible to other age groups can help draw attention to your offerings and demonstrate your staff's success. Plan to run a program in the lobby, or in a different central location, and show off the great work the teen services staff is doing to all library visitors. Training teen volunteers in the public computer lab or facilitating a board game tournament in the building lobby could attract potential users who have no other exposure to age-specific library activities.

Help Build Skills

Solid management practices are important for building a good relationship between a manager and the teen services department. Put true effort into your

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staff members so they know you care about their performance. Create time for teen services staff to develop skills and network. Depending on resources available, this could mean attending a YALSA webinar; attending a local YA fiction book discussion group; or participating in regional, state, or national professional organizations. Investing in staff development not only ensures the continued success of your teen services department by strengthening skills and building knowledge, it can also increase job satisfaction and staff morale. Additionally, working to develop staff within your library allows you to better contribute to the field as these staff members grow and potentially pursue employment in other locations and parts of librarianship. It's one of the most powerful ways to show that you believe in your staff's abilities and want each individual to succeed.

Working with staff to build skills requires knowing what skill sets your staff has. Keep a current inventory of your teen services department's skills and specific library-related interests so you're ready to move forward when hiring opportunities arise or you need to make training decisions. Evaluate teen services staff regularly and give feedback frequently. Be active in work assessment; attend events and programs and see how your teen librarians interact with the teens in attendance. Do they know names and seem comfortable? Do teen program participants represent the demographics of the area? Do you see different genders, races, and abilities? Are your teen librarians bringing in and interacting with all types of youth? Are they having fun and providing exceptional service? Other work behaviors to consider in staff assessment are the willingness to staff any teen-specific service points (do you have a teen librarian on your team who always schedules meetings for 3:30 on school days?) and networking with peers at other libraries.

Quick Tips for Managers Too Busy to Read This Article:

- Create a shared mission and vision
- Be actively involved (it's far easier than trying to catch up later)
- Keep the big picture in mind, but focus on your community
- Advocate for the resources your teen service staff need and for the work they do
- Celebrate success

Base feedback on observed behaviors and don't hesitate to offer constructive criticism. The most useful feedback is often the most straightforward. Be direct, and say "I'd like to see more young women at gaming programs" or "it seems like it's hard to host events that draw both African American and white youth." Strategize with your teen services staff about how to increase diversity in teen audiences or make other changes, and give them the support they need. Never forget to praise good work, and don't assume that your silence will be taken as positive feedback. Be as direct with praise as any other response. "I really appreciate the way you facilitated the chess tournament last week, especially the way you made sure everyone felt welcomed by using name tags and introducing youth you knew to newcomers" will be more effective than "you have good programming skills." Praise publicly when appropriate.

Recognize that not all teen staff are "lifers." Some library staff have a lifelong passion for teen services and want to work with teens for their entire careers, others don't. Part of a manager's job is to expose your teen services staff to many different kinds of library tasks and cross-train in other departments if possible. Encourage teen service staff to look for promotion opportunities within your library system, and when staff members leave teen services, help them understand the importance of applying what they know about teen services in their new role and throughout their career.

Whatever your staffing situation is, creating and fostering a collaborative connection with all members of the department will serve you well. Make sure all expectations are clear, fair, and mutually agreed on. Mentor and coach teen services staff consistently. Stay accessible, and foster a connection with other successful teen service organizations in the area and around the nation so your teen librarians feel supported and informed. Articulate your vision for teen programming, but actively listen and discuss the ideas of your teen services staff as well. If there are serious disconnects in philosophy (you love to see participatory programming while your staff prefers passive programming) find a middle ground. Set targets for types of programs and evaluate the results with your teen service workers after a predetermined amount of time.

Show an authentic willingness to compromise, especially on things without a fundamental impact on teen services as a whole. If you prefer to give out tech toys as prizes for teen summer reading and your teen services staff wants to give out books as prizes, let them make their case and—as long as it makes sense—find a giveaway you can agree on (in this case, gift cards to a bookstore that also sells tech items might be perfect). Similarly, let your teen staff be the experts when you can. Does someone

need to attend a board meeting and talk about teen collections? Have a member of your team who purchases materials speak. Is there a need for some staff-wide training on teen behavior expectations? Let your staff take the lead. This will allow them to demonstrate skills, build confidence, and really understand that you believe in them and their work.

Some public library managers come from a background of teen services, and thus have a well-developed, practice-based understanding of the basic canon of teen literature, how programming is done, and what strategies work when providing reference and readers' advisory to teen customers. While this can make it easier to know what to look for in teen services staff and to create a vision for the services provided to teens, not having personal experience working with teens is not necessarily a significant obstacle to being an effective manager of a dynamic teen services department. YALSA and other library associations provide a wealth of information through websites, publications, and conferences, and there are many blogs, wikis, and personal websites to get you started.

Know What You Have

It's important for managers to have a clear understanding of what resources and skills they have in teen services, including both staff resources and traditional fiscal resources. Stay up to date on how monies are shared throughout the library. Managers who exclusively supervise teen service providers probably have a clear understanding of the staff and budget allocated to their department, but managers who oversee more diverse departments that include teen services (public service departments, children's and teen services departments, adult and teen services departments, etc.) may have a harder time knowing how their resource pool is designed to be used. Depending on the library, a manager might have total control over how to use their larger department budget or they might be bound to a predetermined budget set by administration. Either way, make it a priority to know how much (in actual dollars and as a percentage of your total budget) is allocated for teen services. If possible, keep ready access to a budget breakdown that includes collections, programs, summer/winter reading, teen volunteer programs, special projects, and other major expenditures. Compare these budgets to other service departments in the library, and note major discrepancies. If you find significant differences, explore these via statistics and institutional records; there may be a reason for different allocations. For example, if the children's department gets $9000 for summer reading and the teen services department only gets $1500 each year, is the difference because an average of 15,000 children participate annually while teen participation averages out to 450 each year? If there isn't a clear reason for large differences in resource distribution, explore the issue and see if this is an area for you to step in and advocate for more resources. Careful control of budgets is a basic management practice, but being a proactive advocate for equality in resource sharing will reinforce your commitment to serving your teen services staff, the youth you serve, and your community. If appropriate, include staff in discussions about budgeting and desired changes in resource allocation; doing so will give staff members a deeper understanding of how the library works and help them see what a significant part of overall services they represent.

Know What You (and Your Community) Need

As critical as staying abreast of current trends in teen services and teen literature are, maintaining an awareness of what's happening at your library and in your community is equally important. Know the programs your staff offers, several locally popular YA titles, and the details of your teen collections (physical locations, how current they are, and how they are used). Also be aware of community initiatives and events involving teens and look for ways your staff can be involved. (Could the local teen "battle of the bands" be held on the library grounds or could a teen librarian be a guest judge at a high school's speech contest?)

Work with your teen services staff to identify existing opportunities for teens in the community. Look for school-related offerings, clubs, sports and recreation opportunities, scouting groups, camps, and similar places that may draw youth. Note which activities are free and open to all youth. Use this assessment to craft your priorities and build partnerships in the community. Your community may need—or not need—services considered core library offerings.

By doing this you create shared goals and priorities with your teen services staff. Agree on a scope of offerings that mirrors the needs and wants of the community. Should the library's main role be recreational? Should you focus on providing volunteer opportunities for teens? What about dedicating the bulk of your resources to college and job preparation or supporting the local high schools' curricula? Don't ignore trends in library service, but stay committed to your specific community needs to increase your chances for enthusiastic program participants, possible partnerships, and overall community support. Encourage teen services staff to meet with community groups, school staff and teachers, and other entities that serve teens and assist them in scheduling and facilitating these meetings as needed. You may be able to call and schedule a meeting with contacts that staff may not have luck with. Help your staff decide what they need to get out of networking meetings and do some

preparatory role-playing if necessary. Follow up after meetings and discuss the outcomes.

Listen to all relevant feedback about teen services you receive. Even ideas that initially sound like they would be a disaster (like organizing teen fiction by Lexile or only purchasing "clean" books for teens) will help you understand what the community needs and wants. Discuss suggestions from outside the library with teen services staff and see what you can learn from them. Do you need to develop a system that helps customers look up Lexile numbers by title or create a "light reads" browsing section?

Make The Right Hire

Making the right hiring decisions for teen services positions is crucial for continued effective service. If you can write the job posting yourself (or with someone from HR or administration), make sure it is as specific to your needs as possible. Tone is an important tool in drawing the applicants you want, so craft your postings and descriptions carefully. Get input from existing staff about what they would like in a colleague, and consider their opinions when assessing applicants.

When hiring, aim to fill knowledge gaps and increase the potential for exceptional service. Avoid the temptation to look for a certain "type" of teen service staff member when interviewing. Recent emphasis on the aesthetics and style of librarians—especially teen service related—have created an expectation that the most desirable candidates are young, wear clothing typically not associated with professional positions, have piercings and dyed hair, or sport *Little Prince* tattoos. Of course some great staff do embody these trendy attributes, but others fall far outside the stereotypes. Great teen services staff can be any age, at any stage in their career, and wear any style of clothing.

Be Involved

The easiest way to maintain an effective and enthusiastic teen services department is to stay involved. All managers have tasks competing for attention, and many feel overburdened by all their responsibilities, but being an active participant in teen services will keep you in the know and equipped with what you need to make the best decisions for your library and community.

Pay attention and react to teen services-related happenings. If a book is banned at a local high school, read it. Ask the teen service workers what they think of the issue. Get materials recommendations from your department and follow through by reading, viewing, or listening to suggested items. Remind staff about upcoming YALSA initiatives and other large-scale events throughout libraryland, since participation in these events can connect staff to ALA and expose them to great programming ideas, as well as lead to improved networking through in-person and virtual discussion around shared programming experiences.

Have Fun!

Enjoy the challenges and opportunities unique to teen services, stay connected with your staff and community, and take pleasure in the day-to-day activities required of good management. YALS

feature
Best Practices

Top Ten Tips for Marketing to Teens

By Connie Urquhart

Every librarian has heard that libraries aren't good at marketing, but there has never been a better time to reverse that reputation. Free and low-cost options for most marketing tactics are readily available on the Web. By combining these resources with the talent and connections of an already established customer base, marketing library services to teens isn't as daunting as it once was. Follow these top ten tips, and have fun. (Don't forget to check out the YALS site, http://yalsa.ala.org/yals, for a list of resources and links that complement this article.)

1. Build Relationships

The most important part of marketing is not selling teens on a particular event or promotion. It's selling them on the *idea* of the library. Building that foundation by saying "I don't want anything from you, I'm just here" is what will make the library seem credible when it comes time to promote something tangible. This means visiting schools/classrooms, being part of community groups, representing the library in festivals and events where teens are likely to be—all without any expectation other than generating goodwill toward the library.

This also means not only being part of social media but using it in the same way people do with their friends: sharing something funny, posting photos, and commenting on other people's posts, tweets, and photos. Friend other local, teen-friendly organizations and businesses, and be part of their conversations. That organization may reach a huge segment of teens who never before considered using the library, and this is an excellent way to gain visibility with those groups.

2. Listen

A lot of time goes into building relationships, so staff should be vigilant to maintain that good reputation by listening to what is being said about the library. Teen advisory boards are great for this purpose, but one step further is for members of the advisory board to elicit feedback from their friends who *don't* use the library. Why not? What do those people think about the library?

It's unrealistic to think that all comments about the library happen within its walls or on its Web or social media pages. Google Alerts, not just with the name of the library but other important keywords such as staff names, events, and location-specific landmarks, help staff to know what people are saying about the library. Social media is not often covered by Google Alerts, but most social media sites have a search mechanism in which the same Google Alerts keywords can be entered. Users may not know the library's Twitter handle or what hashtags to use on Instagram, but that won't stop them from talking about what books they're reading or what they are doing at the library. If there's an appropriate place for the library in that conversation and a way to show that staff is listening, take advantage of it.

Finally, staff should Google the library regularly, entering several variations of possible searches teens might use (including incorrect spelling). What would a potential patron see if he or she Googled the library? The immediate page of search results is most often the first impression. What does it say about the library?

3. Keep It Simple And Succinct (KISS 2.0)

Learn from Twitter by pretending everything has a character limit. The message staff want to covey may be longer than 140 characters, but what would it look like if that was all they had? If further text is absolutely necessary, create a link to additional information (this goes for flyers, too). Face-to-face as well, staff should remember to keep facts and details brief so the most salient elements are remembered.

There is an exception, however, which goes for everything from in-person presentations to YouTube videos to flyers. Personality goes a long way; it's OK to tell a meaningful anecdote. If it's funny, the message can be a little longer—and may even go viral.

Need to say more? Say it with a graphic (see tip #4).

4. Let Images Do The Talking

Social media analytics reveal what teachers have been telling students for years: a picture

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is worth a thousand words. Users are much more likely to engage with a post if it is visual, whether in the form of a graphic, photo, or short video (15 seconds or less).

Tech-savvy teens have no trouble making gifs, face swaps, and memes. Library staff don't need to do these (but why not?!). However, they should be comfortable using some of the myriad resources available on the Web and via apps. Photo editing tools like PicMonkey (www.picmonkey.com/) and piZap (www.pizap.com/) are free and allow users to easily create collages of photos depicting recent events, contest winners, or random teens hanging out at the library. Animoto (www.animoto.com) and Vine (https://vine.co) are examples of fun, easy video creation tools to employ in getting the library's message out.

Staff should ask themselves: what is the intended result of the message being delivered? Sometimes the images being disseminated will be intended to promote an upcoming program, but more often than not it's to remind teens that the library is an option. That's all it needs to be. Not all images need be original content, either. The Internet is the land of sharing, reposting, and retweeting. Take some time surfing through image-based sites like Imgur (http://imgur.com), Pinterest (https://pinterest.com), and Tumblr (http://tumblr.com) to find memes and funny or relevant photos that relate to teens, books, reading, or libraries. As long as the teens know that image they're enjoying (and subsequently sharing) came from the library, staff have done their job.

But what about copyright? Memes and other viral images land in a murky area, as the very nature of such images is the intention that they be shared. However, the librarian can take a few steps to make sure the library is protected. If at all possible, credit the image creator and/or get permission for use. This is often not feasible, though, so the next step is to understand the "fair use" argument within copyright law. If the image is not used for financial gain, or if the image is transformed significantly, the library should be able to claim fair use. In her article "Social Media and Fair Use: Pinterest as a Case Study," attorney Mary Ann L. Wymore states, "Social media has become part of the fabric of our culture and is very likely here to stay. With a bit of careful thought and an ounce of caution, there is no need to shy away from it whether you are pinning, posting, tweeting, or liking for fun or to promote your business."[1]

5. Be Honest

This one is simple: truth in advertising. The library should never claim to be more

When to Go Old School

With instant access to customers via the Web and mobile devices, traditional marketing methods like press releases may seem outdated. However, they can serve a purpose when used appropriately. Staff should consult the library's public information officer for help in crafting a release, to make sure the library's logo and other necessary information is included, and to obtain a contact list of reporters, producers, and other key figures in media organizations. If the library has no designated media relations person, there is a wealth of press release templates online. It is beneficial for librarians to utilize a centralized contact list, sharing and updating the information regularly. Include the journalists at any local high school.

Following are three different types of formal releases staff might send to the media, and when each is most appropriate.

News Release

A news release is a message to news outlets about a change in library services, or if the library has something newsworthy to share. News releases typically have more content and provide enough information in case the media runs the story without following up with the library. Photos can be included. For example, if the library's teen advisory board holds elections for officers, issue a news release that gives the winners' names, titles, and photos. Include short bios of the winners, along with quotes from them as well as the staff advisor. A local paper could pick up on the story (especially high school newspapers), which may attract more teens to the advisory board.

Media Advisory

A heads-up that an event is happening. A media advisory doesn't have to be as extensive as a news release, but it does alert the press that there's an event coming up that they may choose to cover before the actual day. This is the choice for when librarians want to get more teens to attend. The intended outcome is that a story will run *before* the event, so staff should be aware of all press deadlines and send the media advisory several weeks before the publication deadline.

Photo Opportunity

A photo opportunity alerts the media that an event is happening. The purpose of issuing a photo opportunity is not to entice teens to attend the event; rather, this is an invitation to *the press* to attend. The goal is for photos to be posted after the event, showing other teens what they missed out on and reminding them that the library is an option. When issuing a photo opportunity, be sure to give actual, specific examples of the opportunities photographers will have.

than it can actually deliver. If teens are giving staff enough respect to show up and be engaged—staff should return the favor of delivering on the promises made through marketing.

Also, staff should be realistic about how teens are using the library. Why are they there? To do homework? Maybe, but more likely they are hanging out with their friends and using the computers. Appeal to this—the real reason why they are there, not the perception of why people think teens use the library. And if homework happens at midnight in a pair of pajamas, that's OK. The library has ways to help with that, too.

6. Be Consistent

Consistency is the key to any successful marketing campaign, and this is achieved through building the library's brand. While an important element of branding, logos and slogans aren't brands—they are part of the many marketing messages that support the brand. Branding is more about perception and how teens feel about the library.

Staff should take time to consider what it is they hope teens will feel about the library and then do everything possible to become that perception. They should be consistent in fulfilling it at all times. Generic, lofty ideas are much more difficult to fulfill than specific practices. For example, consistency can be easily lost if the library's brand is "opening the doors to discovery," while something like "making teens feel welcome" is much more tangible and can be executed in every aspect of library service. Brands should be based upon feasibility, not sentiment, and—as with tip #5—should never promise what can't be delivered.

Brands are built on experiences. Most teens will never have a conscious knowledge of what their library's brand is, but successful branding means that ten different teens would describe how they feel using the library and they'd all be somewhere in the same neighborhood.

7. Crowdsource

Utilizing loyal patrons to tell the library's story is one of the most important paths to successful teen marketing. Not every message needs to come from the library; in fact, teens are more likely to accept the word of a peer over an adult or organization. The best marketing campaigns gather a group of soldiers to spread the love and then let the magic of word-of-mouth marketing happen. If a friend is recommending a product or event, this carries more weight than if the organization itself is promoting its own services.

Why would people be motivated to market the library's services? As volunteers, teen advisory board members might feel it is their job to do so. As regular visitors, teens may want to be the one credited with turning their friends on to a new place to hang out (or they don't want to be there alone). Encourage these motives.

When the well of internal fulfillment runs dry, there's always monetary or material incentive. Offer a bring-a-friend promotion. For every new friend an existing card holder signs up for a new library card, the referrer gets $3 waived from their fines, or a coupon for free pizza, or anything that might turn regular customers into marketing soldiers.

Another way to crowdsource is by utilizing the expertise of library regulars when it comes to targeting specific groups. Have a gaming tournament coming up? Ask the group of teens always gathered around that same computer to help get the word out, and to provide ideas for other groups the library could target.

Finally, involve teens in the creation of videos, graphics, and viral marketing that deliver the library's message in a fun way. They may have ideas and expertise that staff hadn't even considered.

8. Don't Advertise

But wait, isn't that whole point of marketing: to advertise the library? In a way, yes—but don't think of it as traditional advertising. Without even consciously evaluating a Web page, most teens can immediately zero in on what is real content and what is a paid advertisement. Guess which gets ignored? When budgets are tight, it's best to spend time and resources on more subtle forms of marketing and save any traditional ads for the biggest events only once or twice a year—and only after the library has established itself as a listening friend. Subtle, free, or low-cost "advertising" ideas include:

- Maximize the library's Wikipedia page. Whatever the library wants to highlight should be on this page. This is an opportunity to provide solid, noteworthy information in a resource teens turn to as a place of authority.
- Post events on free, online community calendars. Most local newspapers and some community organizations invite the pubic to share events on their online calendars. These are often picked up in Google searches and by other media outlets. Sometimes radio stations will use the information from their website's online calendar to advertise events on the air, free of charge. The more the library's events for teens are out there, the greater the chance of the information trickling down to its intended audience. Community calendar entries can be time consuming, however; for this reason it is recommended to use volunteers for this task whenever possible.
- Hold an open house and make it a point to invite teens who have never been to the library before. Enlist sponsors from restaurants, retail stores, and coffee shops in the area that teens already frequent and where a relationship has already been established, and ask them to hand out invitations to the event.
- Outreach is a great marketing tool, but when hosting a table make sure it is interactive and fun. Those who

have ever attended a career fair, conference, or festival may have noticed that 90 percent of the tables have people sitting behind them looking hopeful and bored. The crowds of teens are at the other 10 percent, where there is a basketball hoop, makeovers being done, or where participants can pick up swag. Set up a trivia contest, and have prizes on hand for the winners. Show that not only is the library fun, but that working there is fun, too.

- Keep those eyes peeled at all times. Notice what works for other organizations, then see how it is adaptable for the library.

9. Get Staff On Board

Staff will make or break an event or new service. If they don't like it or simply don't care about it, they won't spread the word. If they are invested, they are much more likely to help promote it—not only at the library but off duty with friends and family. Before unveiling any new service for teens, hold a preview with staff. Show them all the benefits to this new service, and answer any questions they have in an open environment.

If a large-scale event or new service does require the approval and buy-in of administration, create a small-scale marketing plan. Many templates are available online and can be tailored to the scope of the project. This helps with funding and assures management that the librarian has planned for the project's success from start to finish. A great idea can flounder if no one learns about it. A marketing plan provides a road map to ensure the intended audience is engaged.

10. Back It Up With Great Customer Service

Library staff should be generous with their time and resources. Remember previous tips #5–7. All marketing should be backed up by a delivery on the promises made, whether the promise is for a specific event or for the way teens will be treated at the library. The best way to get new patrons into the library is to have them hear the testimonials of their friends. If customers get excellent customer service and walk away happy, they may tell their friends about it. If they are treated poorly, they will *definitely* tell their friends about it.

A good rule of thumb with any project is to constantly evaluate and make adjustments along the way. The same goes for marketing to teens. Not every tactic will work, but by trying different things and paying attention to their effectiveness, library staff should be able to hone a marketing approach that is crafted especially for their community. YALS

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feature
Best Practices

Being Diverse in Our Support for STEM

By Tiffany Williams

The United States has always been a culturally diverse country. However, many of the first immigrants came from European countries, and Caucasian males have traditionally controlled and governed. From a white majority, society has grown to favor Caucasian males in many areas, including within education systems. But, with the growing diverse population in the United States, we are at a tipping point when it comes to diversity in educational systems.

In 2008, the United States Census Bureau predicted that by 2023 more than half of the children in this country would be within minority populations. They also predicted that by 2042 current minority populations will outnumber the current majority populations.[1] Despite this, there has yet to be a significant shift in educational institutions that reflects the changing demographics of the United States. One area in particular where this is evident is in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. Minority students are severely underrepresented in these fields, both in academia and in STEM careers. This article looks at the ways racial and ethnic minorities are excluded from STEM fields; common perceptions of science, Eastern medicine, and indigenous knowledge; and how a multicultural point of view can be included in STEM classes. Throughout I've included ideas on how libraries can help bridge the minority gap in STEM.

Excluding Minorities From Stem

Several factors have led to a lack of minorities in STEM fields. Museus, Palmer, Davis, and Maramba defined eight factors that negatively influence minority students' success in STEM classes:

1. School district funding disparities
2. Tracking into remedial courses
3. Underrepresentation in advanced placement (AP) courses
4. Unqualified teachers
5. Low teacher expectations
6. Stereotype threat [e.g., a teacher who views female students as being bad at math]
7. Oppositional culture
8. Premature departure from high school[2]

In the public school system, funding is largely dependent on property taxes. This can give an unfair advantage to children who are born to parents that are more affluent. This disparity in school district funding leads to many of the other factors listed. Without proper funding, schools are more likely to hire inexperienced teachers or ask teachers to teach subjects outside of their degree area. There is less funding for AP classes, and poorer schools cannot offer the variety of AP classes that better funded schools can afford. In addition to having less experienced teachers, there are fewer teachers overall, which means that students receive less individual attention.

Lack of funding also means that schools are likely to not have up-to-date lab equipment and technology for students.

Unfortunately, there are limited options for public libraries to help with this type of problem. Library districts are often geographically similar to school districts. Therefore, if the local school has little money, it is not uncommon that the local public library also has little money. There are ways around these challenges however. Both public and school librarians can work to obtain grant money for updated technology and library materials. Library staff should also look at budgets to determine if they represent the best use of funds. Library staff may find a portion of the budget is going toward materials and services that are no longer necessary. These funds could be used for additional STEM materials and programs. Librarians can help locate speakers in STEM fields to talk to classrooms, particularly those where the teacher does not hold a STEM related

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degree. Library staff can arrange weekly meetings for teachers in STEM classrooms to participate in free online STEM courses.

Other factors identified by Samuel Museus et al. are also closely related to each other. Low teacher expectations of students can have the effect of lowering achievement in students. Joanne Yatvin labeled this the "Pygmalion Effect."[3] Demonstrated over four decades ago by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, the concept is that people tend to live up to expectations. Yatvin says, "Now, forty years later, the reality of the Pygmalion effect stands un-refuted by further research, while it is supported by considerable evidence from classrooms where poor and minority children have made great strides in their learning because their teachers believed they would."[4]

Similarly, many students of minority backgrounds fall victim to "stereotype threat," fearing that teachers will imbue them with the perceived negative traits based on the students' race or ethnicity. Compounding this issue is a tendency for minority groups to devalue the institutions of the majority in an effort to retain their cultural independence. This phenomenon is known as "oppositional culture." John Ogbu explains that his research has shown "Black Americans tend to code their experiences with White Americans and with social institutions in terms of race, and not class or gender."[5] They do not see education as an "upper class" institution, but a "white" institution that seeks to assimilate them into white American culture. Ogbu goes on to say that as a result of being forced to abandon their African language and culture, the black community developed their own ways of speaking in dialect and behaving that is "oppositional to the White way of behaving and talking."[6] The American educational system is largely Eurocentric in traditions and curriculum and thus becomes one of the institutions that black culture opposes. Schools work to change the way students talk, think, and act. Some black students interpret this expected change as assimilation into white culture and an abandonment of their own heritage. This can lead to dropping out of school before graduation, an act that nearly always excludes those students from STEM fields that require a higher education degree.

Libraries can counteract some of these effects. If teachers are aware of both the "Pygmalion effect" and "stereotype threat," they can monitor their own behavior in the classroom. Libraries can arrange for experts to come in and discuss cultural topics during in-service meetings and other forms of professional development. Library staff may also want to point out relevant research and summarize research findings for teachers. Yatvin explains that the Pygmalion effect "is also supported by countless stories of successful people who were struggling in school and life until some adult—a teacher, a boss, a family friend—saw something special in them and encouraged them to make the most of it."[7] Library staff are in a position to be that adult who encourages students to pursue STEM education, or education in general. By developing relationships with students, asking about their school work, and providing supportive responses regardless of race or expectation, library staff can encourage youth to live up to their own potential instead of someone else's expectations.

Often, differences in learning styles and definitions of success accompany cultural differences. As James Gaskell notes, in some cultures "the achievement of an individual is seen more as a reflection on his or her home, friends, and community."[8] This view is often in direct conflict with the way that "school science tends to emphasize the competitive achievements of individuals."[9]

Those who work in STEM fields compete for limited grant money. They compete for jobs. They compete to be the first to publish new research studies and theories. However, many of the minority

Online Resources for STEM Learning

MOOC: Massive open online course. These courses often have hundreds, if not thousands, of students and take several weeks to months to complete. They are usually taught by professors at accredited universities. While personal interaction with the professor is unfeasible with the large number of students, the students often form a community where they can find help and support from each other. You can find MOOC courses at:

- Coursera.org: Coursera offers a large range of classes from professors at top universities. The classes are taught asynchronously, with new video lectures, homework, and quizzes available each week.
- Udacity.com: One of the first MOOCs, Udacity offers classes that are strongly related to STEM subjects. Courses on Udacity are asynchronous, so students can sign up at any time and work at their own pace.
- edX.org: Similar to Coursera, edX is a not-for-profit organization developed by Harvard and MIT. The classes are asynchronous and cover a variety of disciplines.

iTunes U (www.apple.com/apps/itunes-u/): Apple provides app platforms for both taking and building classes. All the necessary materials (lectures, notes, assignments, etc.) are right at your fingertips. (If you have an Android device, check out TunesViewer – http://bit.ly/tunesviewer - and BeyondPod – http://bit.ly/beyondpod - to access iTunes U.)

TED (www.ted.com): TED talks provide a great way to learn something new in a short period of time. Each talk is less than 20 minutes and focuses on a specific concept. With apps for both iDevices and Android devices, you can insert education into your day-to-day activities from waiting in line to waiting for a movie to start.

cultures within the United States come from a more communal culture, where success depends upon working together as a whole to accomplish goals that benefit the greater good. These different cultures can clash, making it difficult for minority students to adjust to the competitive nature of STEM fields.

This is another instance where libraries can take the approach of educating teaching staff. Hosting a panel discussion about multicultural learning, highlighting literature that details the different values of local cultures, and providing annotated research lists for teachers are all ways to begin addressing this issue. Scheduling time for study groups to use the library is another way for libraries to add a community feeling to studying STEM topics. Presenting STEM programs at the library where students can work together to solve a problem is another option, particularly if the program coordinates with what teachers are covering in the classroom.

Exclusion from STEM fields does not exist only in educational settings. The hiring practices of STEM-related employers can sometimes benefit the majority more than the minority. As Yonghong Jade Xu points out in her research, women may have a hard time finding jobs in academia because hiring committees often do not include women faculty. While Xu's work focuses on women, correlations apply to other minorities as well. Once diverse staff are hired, STEM workplace-related challenges may include a work environment that may not inspire long-term employment at the institution. Intentional or not, minorities frequently find they make less money, have less support for research, a larger teaching load, and are expected to spend more time on committees. In the library setting, academic library staff should be aware of this trend and be sure to market their services to minority faculty members whenever possible. Even a small step such as this can make a faculty member feel that they have an ally on campus, which lessens feelings of exclusion.

Western Science Versus Native Knowledge

In recent decades, there has been a push to include native or indigenous knowledge under the term *science*. As many researchers have noted, instead of redefining science to include forms of local and native knowledge, society would be better served by acknowledging that these types of knowledge are as valid as science, depending upon the situation. The fact that Native Americans do not use the same scientific terms or methods that Western cultures employ does not negate the knowledge and expertise on the topic of nature that they hold. Today, we rely on many of the plants that Native Americans use for medicine in commercially produced pharmaceuticals. It is estimated that there are over 200 medications available that are based on information Native Americans have known for centuries. Once we include other types of knowledge under the term *science*, we must judge them by the standards of science. These knowledge bases would be better served by remaining an integral part of scientific inspiration without being considered science. Students should learn about the connections between native and indigenous knowledge and science. They should also learn how to determine which way of thinking is best for each situation.

For example, many cultures view medicine differently than mainstream Western cultures, focusing on natural cures and herbal remedies. Over the last few decades there has been an increased interest in these techniques, often referred to as "homeopathy," within Western cultures. Despite evidence that homeopathy can be effective, this knowledge about how nature works (that has been known for centuries by different cultures) is still differentiated from Western scientific discoveries.

Libraries are also guilty of continuing this bias through collection development choices and shelving schemes. There are ways that libraries can bring other forms of knowledge and science into the public's eye. The first step is to make sure to collect materials that represent a variety of "ways of knowing."[10] Libraries should highlight natural science materials at least as often as other STEM materials, through displays, booklists, reviews, and other forms of publicity.

If including native/indigenous knowledge under the term science is not common practice, how then will teachers bring that multicultural viewpoint into science classrooms? As researchers have asked, "How could we organize science education so as to not lose from sight its goals—as we understand them—and, yet, respect and empower students who come from cultural backgrounds other than the culture of science?"[11] The answer is that teachers need to approach science "in such a manner that [students'] culture is both respected and valued, and, quite importantly, can be present in the science classroom."[12] Students who feel that science is dismissing or disrespecting their culture are less likely to want to pursue STEM degrees or careers. It is important to make sure not to blur the lines between science and native/indigenous knowledge, but to compare the two in appropriate ways.

Culturally Relevant Science Education

As the previous section detailed, professional science often excludes many forms of cultural "knowledge." While I do not advocate including these other types of knowledge under the term *science*, there are reasons and ways to address these types of knowledge within the context of science. Reasons to do this include increasing student understanding and interest, and being more culturally inclusive. Various methods to achieve success include using culturally relevant problems and discussing links between native knowledge and science.

Teachers need to demonstrate that science is neither universal nor infallible.

One way to do this is to talk about science within the appropriate contexts. Researchers advocate that ". . . science teachers should not, indeed, favor a view of science as a hegemonic knowledge system, but must rather come to see that there are multiple legitimate ways of knowing that can enter the science classroom."[13] Just as science is appropriate in certain circumstances, local or native knowledge is appropriate in other circumstances. Educators need to be aware of when science is appropriate and be able to point out circumstances where local knowledge is a better choice for making decisions.

Another reason to look at culture when teaching STEM-related classes is that the incorporation of culturally relevant details can increase students' interest in the subject. Gaskell points out that creating a science curriculum that addresses the needs of the larger community can help alleviate feelings of alienation among minority students. Studies have shown that learning about social context does not detract from learning about STEM. Dale Winter conducted a study in which math teachers either taught using standard methods or taught by including social issues for students to solve mathematically. The study showed that while including real life social issues in the math classes did not necessarily increase mathematical comprehension, students did learn more about social issues without sacrificing any mathematical knowledge or understanding.[14]

One of the instructors involved in the study received an e-mail from a student that speaks volumes of the benefit of real life problems in a mathematical context.

"I wanted to thank you for all your help throughout the semester. I am amazed at how much I was able to learn despite the fact that I took pre-calculus in high school. Your class was always interesting, and I am still amazed at the things that I learned pertaining to the world at large, and not solely mathematics. I never thought that I would be informed about so many significant and often disturbing issues plaguing our world in a math class. . . . I hope that you already were aware that your students find your teaching techniques refreshingly innovative and helpful. If you weren't, I hope you know now."[15]

Using STEM to develop solutions to real world problems is a better way of being culturally inclusive than simply adding "multicultural names" to the same word problems. This approach also takes STEM subjects out of an educational vacuum where students only learn to pass the next test and then forget the material. Instead, students may be inspired to look at new career and degree opportunities instead of lamenting later in life about being unaware that STEM subjects were so widely used in society. Winter suggests using "Real situations and real information . . . situations that students might have encountered through news or other media sources but were unlikely to be well informed about . . . [and] descriptions of contexts that could generate controversy."[16] Winter also notes that the experimental group had a larger percentage of female and minority students.[17] The different instructional method could possibly be more interesting to these students, causing them to complete the class with an acceptable grade instead of dropping out or failing.

Library staff can help teachers by locating culturally diverse problems for students to solve. The can also provide background materials for both students and teachers. If teachers are not enthusiastic about this approach, or are unable to implement it due to educational restrictions on how they teach a subject, library staff could post these types of problems in the library or on a website and offer prizes for students who come up with solutions. Teachers might be convinced to offer extra credit in their classes for students as an added incentive. Another benefit of teaching STEM concepts in socially relevant ways is that educators are answering the eternal question of "When would I ever use this in real life?" This type of teaching helps to answer that ever-present student question.

In any classroom environment, it is important to respect the beliefs of students, even when those beliefs are in direct conflict with the material. Gaskell addresses several potential issues related to student beliefs in his research. For example, some students may not be willing to dissect animals in biology or anatomy classes. This belief is even more of a challenge because in some cultures, youth do not question older people out of a sense of respect and therefore do not speak up about their belief. A teacher may need to address this custom with students, emphasizing that the classroom is a place for inquiry and encouraging questions from all students, even questions that are seemingly opposed to what the teacher is saying.

Multicultural Contributions In Collections

Teachers and library staff should examine the materials they are using with students. There are many great resources about multicultural contributions to STEM fields, but not all materials are created equal. William Cobern and Cathleen Loving discuss the trend, beginning in the 1980s, of various groups publishing materials about scientific contributions of different cultures.[18] One example, published in 1987 by the Portland Oregon School District, is a collection of essays titled *African American Baseline Essays*. Despite the fact that there are several known problems with the essays, a lack of better material has caused many school districts to use this book, along with others like it. Often, these books will revise history, giving credit to ancient civilizations for discoveries that would have been near impossible for them to have accomplished with the available technology.

Educators need to take the time to check for realistic and more current examples of multicultural contributions

to science. This is a great way for library staff to get involved. They can find suitable materials that are relevant and accurate. They can create fiction booklists that feature historical fiction titles that look at multicultural contributions to scientific research. Biographies about STEM figures from a variety of backgrounds would also be beneficial. A library could use their website or display space to highlight comparisons between native/indigenous knowledge and modern science.

Other Factors in STEM Success

Museus, et al. pointed out six factors that have a positive correlation with success in STEM teaching and learning:

1. Parental involvement and support
2. Bilingual education
3. Culturally relevant teaching
4. Early exposure to careers in STEM
5. Interest in STEM subjects
6. Self-efficacy in STEM domains[19]

These are all factors that libraries can help educators implement or improve for students, particularly minority students. Library staff can find ways to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's school activities. This may include instituting family study sessions, providing tutoring for parents in the subjects their children are studying, or teaching parents how to find out about their child's educational progress, particularly if the parent's native language is not English.

Libraries may not be able to institute bilingual education, but they can collect materials in multiple languages to help students and parents better understand certain subjects. Learning a challenging subject is more difficult when also learning a new language at the same time. As mentioned before, libraries can provide culturally relevant materials to both teachers and students.

A great way to increase interest in STEM careers is to provide examples of STEM professionals for students. Libraries can host talks from STEM professionals, set up a mentoring program, and create booklists that feature STEM professionals, particularly those from a minority.

Conclusion

According to *US News and World Report* reporter Mel Schiavelli, STEM-related jobs have grown three times faster than non-STEM jobs and are expected to continue growing twice as fast as non-STEM jobs.[20] However, there are not enough applicants to fill these jobs. This deficit in applicants puts the United States at a disadvantage in terms of technology and innovation. Despite the fact that employees in these jobs earn more than many other jobs, students are not earning the necessary degrees, or even mastering the necessary skills, such as math, to compete in a STEM job market. Minority students are even less likely than the average student is to have the skills or degrees necessary for STEM jobs.

There are several reasons for this lack of minority STEM professionals that include a less rigorous early educational experience, lack of mentors, and a difficult work environment. Library staff can help alleviate many of these disadvantages through teacher education, thoughtful programming for students, responsible collection development, and collaboration in a professional environment. YALS

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Connected Learning and the Future of Libraries

By Mizuko Ito and Crystle Martin

During the month of May, we were part of a collaboration between YALSA and the connectedlearning.tv team at the Digital Media and Learning Hub at UC Irvine. Through a series of webinars and online discussion, we explored how libraries can leverage digital and social media to become hubs of connected learning—learning that is interest driven, socially connected, and tied to school achievement and real-world opportunity. We are both part of the MacArthur Foundation Connected Learning Research Network, and have been investigating what young people need in their communities and learning institutions to access connected learning experiences. Our month-long engagement with the YALSA community was an opportunity for those of us involved in the research on connected learning to learn about how many libraries and librarians are already embodying the principles of connected learning, and how we might help more libraries adopt similar approaches.

The month of webinars explored a series of questions that libraries need to address in order to support connected learning and effectively leverage digital and social media.[1]

- How does access to technology (or lack thereof) in school and public libraries impact teens' learning? Our fellow Connected Learning Research Network member Craig Watkins led the discussion, lending his expertise in equity research to the conversation. Through the discussion the major points came down to the recognition that providing technology is not enough, support and guidance for using the technology also needs to be provided, and it's imperative to make sure that youth know that libraries are a place where they can just "be" and explore.
- How can libraries effectively leverage social media for connected learning? Nichole Pinkard, founder of the Digital Youth Network and featured guest of the webinar, summed up measuring the effective use of social media. "From a 'success' standpoint, we also have to understand how we're helping youth take home what they're developing and learning in libraries, and making those connections back to their schools, their communities."
- How can we get library and IT administrators on board with social media? Danah Boyd, a senior researcher at Microsoft Research who studies youth and online privacy, argues that we need to shift the focus of the conversation away

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What Is Connected Learning?

Connected learning is both a form of learning, as well as an agenda for educational design, reform, and social change that leverages the affordances of new media to broaden access to educational opportunities. It is keyed to the needs of the 21st century learner and the challenges of equity in today's changing economic climate. Most young people navigate three spheres of learning that are often fragmented: interest-driven learning, learning with peers, and academic learning in schools. Connected learning happens when these three spheres of learning are integrated (see figure 1). Research has demonstrated that connected learning experiences tend to be centered on activities with a shared purpose, often center on production, and rely on openly networked infrastructures. This design model is laid out in more detail in table 1.

We have studied youth-connected learning practices in a variety of online and face-to-face communities ranging from StarCraft II to Ravelry (a community for fiber crafts) to fashion camps to professional wrestling fan communities. For example, Leo, a 16-year-old participant in Martin's study of professional wrestling fans, participates in a wrestling forum to improve his English, which is a second language for him. This learning in the interest and peer environment has led to gains in his English class at school. Young people can enter into a connected learning experience through their out-of-school interests, through their friends, or through their libraries and schools.

Connected learning does not require new technology, but today's digital and social media make these experiences much more accessible. With the rapid growth of online educational content, social media, and specialized online communities, young people have ready access to interest-driven learning and peers and mentors who share these interests. These forms of online media also have the potential to better connect learning institutions like libraries and schools to the social and interest-driven learning that is flourishing online.

from technology and towards young people and learning: "It's not just about restricting or not restricting; it has to do with questioning the role of the librarian in helping young people navigate a lot of this material. When you go into a mode of just restriction, you don't end up building out the ways of having trust and respect, or being able to create a meaningful educational opportunity."

- What are best practices for libraries to be part of connected learning? Buffy Hamilton, author of *The Unquiet Librarian,* stressed that librarians need to be connected learners themselves. "I think it's important to position ourselves as co-learners and try to diversify our own personal learning networks so that we can think a little bit more deeply."

Throughout the month, we heard many descriptions of connected learning taking place in libraries and of the steps librarians could take to utilize what the connected learning framework has to offer.

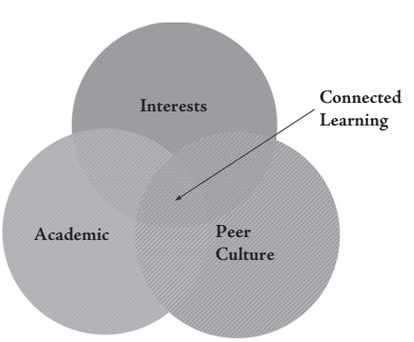
Libraries And Connected Learning

Educators, youth, and experts in diverse settings can be part of supporting connected learning by locating their efforts within this broader ecosystem of learning, and actively supporting connections to and from their programs and spaces. Libraries, which have long been centers of community activity, are uniquely situated to become a nexus of connected learning because their mission centers on personalized and interest-driven learning. They are also a third space—not school and not home—which allows activities and practices to meld together.[2] As guides to online information and technical literacy, librarians are often already guides to connected learning. Libraries are also perceived in highly favorable ways by nondominant populations as lifelines to learning, technology, and information. A recent Pew Internet & American Life study indicates that African American and Latino families are more likely than their White and Asian counterparts to place a high value on libraries.[3] This means that libraries are well positioned to not only connect formal and informal learning, but also to do this for the populations that are most marginalized in terms of traditional academic programs and indicators.

We already have many examples of how libraries are functioning as hubs of connected learning by building new linkages between youth interests and academic and career opportunity.[4] Here are some inspiring stories that came up during our month-long series:

The maker space in the Springfield Township High School library resulted from a collaborative design process between the students and Joyce Valenza, the librarian. She included the students in the design of the space; they put together a shopping list that included what they

Figure 1.



wanted in their space. The youth were also given the opportunity to name the space and chose the name Creative Commons. "Before I came on today, I asked about 100 kids what one word they would use to describe their learning experience here in the library. They came up with five words consistently: learning (feeling scholarly was a part of that feeling), creation (that was a number-one idea about libraries for them), acceptance (it's like "The Island of Lost Groups" here), access (intellectually and physically), and collaboration (this is the space we go when we want to work with others)." The students have access to a toolkit of both physical resources and intellectual ideas and support. The youth feel that "they can explore anything they want there 'in the library,'" which is important for connected learning. Joyce feels that the embeddedness of librarians is important, youth being able to ping her day and night to get access to her abilities as a librarian offers them a great advantage when they are pursuing their interests.

At the Evanston Public Library in Evanston, Illinois, Renee Neumeier uses a teen advisory board to engage youth in their library. Her board, a mix of middle school and high school students, holds regular meetings and gives her feedback on the types of programming they would like to see. Sometimes youth volunteer to lead their own program. For example, a couple of her teen advisory board members have led writing programs over the summer. Renee says, "It is a great way to tap into their resources, because they know what their peers want to do and also what appeals to them." She also supports having teens on the committee when designing or redesigning a teen space, because their opinions are invaluable and it gives teens more ownership over the space.

At the YOUmedia learning lab at the Harold Washington Library in downtown Chicago, mentors and librarians work with young people to develop projects, skills, and opportunities. In order to build shared purpose and relevance, mentors support group performance, production, and recognition, like a weekly open mic session, a gaming podcast published online, and opportunities to have design work showcased in real-world projects. Taylor Bayless, a librarian at the YOUmedia learning lab, worked with youth interested in gaming. When she saw their level of interest, she encouraged them to create a podcast about gaming, which the youth create content for and which has built a following well beyond the walls of the library. This podcast has turned into the *Library of Games*, an ongoing video game journalism program held at the YOUmedia learning lab (http://bit.ly/connectedlearning_casestudies).

Table 1. Connected Learning Principles

Peer-Supported	In their everyday exchanges with peers and friends, young people are contributing, sharing, and giving feedback in inclusive social experiences that are fluid and highly engaging.
Interest-Powered	When a subject is personally interesting and relevant, learners achieve much higher-order learning outcomes.
Academically Oriented	Learners flourish and realize their potential when they can connect their interests and social engagement to academic studies, civic engagement, and career opportunities.
Production-Centered	Digital tools provide opportunities for producing and creating a wide variety of media, knowledge, and cultural content in experimental and active ways.
Shared Purpose	Social media and web-based communities provide unprecedented opportunities for cross-generational and cross-cultural learning and connection to unfold and thrive around common goals and interests.
Openly Networked	Online platforms and digital tools can make learning resources abundant, accessible, and visible across all learner settings.

Connected learning is a framework under constant development that offers principles and examples to be adapted and remixed rather than a template for programs and activities. Putting connected learning into practice can range from a small addition to an existing program to a more complete redesign, like we saw with the YOUmedia learning labs in Chicago.

Bringing connected learning into a library may raise new kinds of concerns, and require changes in organizational policies and priorities. For example, offering opportunities for youth to use social media and publish work online may require policy changes for technology access. Creating spaces where youth can socialize with peers and engage in production and performance may also go against the grain of many existing library norms and policies. Opening up these possibilities are key, however, to making libraries into hubs of connected learning for diverse youth.

We hope that our research can support librarians who are making the case for these new kinds of policies and practices. For example, Boyd's research addresses many of the concerns about safety in youth sharing and connecting online, and the ongoing work of the Connected Learning Research Network advocates for youth programs that center

on production and support interest-driven and peer-to-peer learning.[6] We see tremendous potential in continuing the conversation that we began in our month-long engagement with YALSA, building stronger ties between libraries and the connected learning effort. It is only through these connections across practice, design, and research that we can hope to achieve the ambitious goals of the growing movement for connected learning. You can access a list of resources on connected learning and connected learning and libraries on the YALS site (http://yalsa.ala.org/yals). YALS

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Intentionally Backwards, the Future of Learning in Libraries

By Sarah Kepple

How do you get to work each day? Whether you walk, bike, drive, ride the bus or train, experience setbacks or have an easy path, at some point you set a goal to change your physical location, to get to work, and hit the road.

What goals do you have for the work you do with youth? What impact would you like to have in their lives? Imagine for a moment that you could make a decision to be an agent of change in their lives and turn that vision into reality. One way to do this is to transform your library into an active learning center using progressive education theories, backwards design, and outcome measures. Becoming intentional about the change we wish to see moves our brains from what is sometimes a traditional way of looking at things—focusing on surviving—and moving to a less traditional framework—focusing on thriving.

Thriving Libraries Are Community Learning Centers

As e-book circulation exceeds—or is poised to exceed—print materials, and customers look to us for higher level technical support, libraries are quickly moving from storehouses of information to facilitators of learning. From Chicago Public Library's YOUmedia to maker spaces to libraries as publishers to connected learning, everyone's buzzing about, in the words of Joan Frye Williams, the move from "grocery store to kitchen."[1] Instead of offering customers a chance to acquire knowledge in the form of physical materials, we are offering customers the opportunity to play with information and create and share new knowledge. Beyond just supplying the ingredients needed to fulfill a pre-existing recipe, we can now offer customers the space and support to work together as chefs.

This is hardly a new concept. Margaret Monroe encouraged librarians to be change agents in their communities, and noted how new technologies dramatically augmented potential for customer learning, as far back as 1976.[2] Libraries have been offering computer classes or some sort of technical assistance almost as long as they've had computers. Adults have been taking genealogy and resume writing workshops, children have been building literacy skills in storytime, and teens, well things are looking up for teens. The new era of learning in libraries perfectly aligns with teen development and the social nature of a teen's learning process.

Learning In Libraries In The 21st Century Is Active

Librarians have always been facilitators of learning. We have always helped people find the resources they need in order to acquire information…to learn. What has changed is our understanding of the role of the educator. Attendees of traditional schools may identify a teacher as the font of knowledge who pontificates, and the roll of students may be to listen and absorb. In that scenario, "learning" is equated to memorization and recitation. But, if we expand our view of the role of the educator to one who facilitates learning, we can include coaches, mentors, parents, peers, and, absolutely, librarians.

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After over 20 years of supporting schools, the MacArthur Foundation rethought their approach and definition of where learning was really happening. In 2004 they began investigating out-of-school-time learning and the transformative power of digital media and the Internet.[3] Out of this research, Chicago's YOUmedia was born and became a national model for connected learning—learning that is social, student driven, and ongoing. After the rousing success of the initial project, the MacArthur Foundation entered phase two, which has not only clearly identified libraries as community learning institutions, but dares to suggest that schools should adopt the approaches being employed by libraries using connected learning.

If you were fortunate enough to catch YALSA and connectedlearning.tv's recent series, you heard about some great strategies and examples of this trending method.[4] Connected learning is rooted in the work of progressive educators like John Dewey and Maria Montessori, who knew that to truly educate, we must provide a safe social environment for students to actively experiment and construct their own, personally relevant learning. We are their guides and cheerleaders as they try, fail, learn, discuss, and try again. Connected learning often incorporates digital media or takes advantage of technology to expand learning experiences and make them accessible to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Technology is not the focus, the learner is.

Other related educational philosophies, such as the broad scope of active learning and the more theoretically specific constructivism, also emphasize that the student should be "doing" the learning.[5, 6] Instead of receiving and regurgitating information, students should be actively participating in their learning; surrounded and mentored by peers and knowledgeable others. Rather than providing step-by-step instructions to complete a task, the effective educator scaffolds a student's learning by providing supports such as modeling, templates, examples, advice, and coaching. Just like scaffolding for a new building, layers are gradually added to stretch the learner to new heights then gradually removed as the supports are no longer needed. For example, when facilitating research, a librarian might start by introducing a database that works well with basic keyword searching, and then help students transition to more complex searching by comparing search features with a more in-depth database, using sample searches on a fun, popular topic as a guide to help students transfer knowledge. Once students make those connections, they are able to intuit how new research tools might work on their own. They are building their own understanding, helping each other and relying on librarians less for direct assistance. The librarian becomes a tour guide rather than a rescuer. Learning develops through discovery, experimentation, and collaborative projects and grows deeper through genuine interest.

Why is the method so important? To paraphrase Sir Ken Robinson in his now famous 2006 Ted Talk: children born today will be retiring in 2065, and no one has a clue what their future will hold, but we're meant to be educating them for it.[7] No longer are we the industrialized nation the traditional education system was designed to support. The world of work is changing so rapidly that futuristic educators are focusing as much on the how as the what. The 2010 National Education Technology Plan from the United States Department of Education asserts that, "Whether the domain is English language arts, mathematics, sciences, social studies, history, art, or music, twenty-first century competencies and such expertise as critical thinking, complex problem solving, collaboration, and multimedia communication should be woven in all content areas."[8] The Partnership for 21st Century Skills values these skills as equal and interwoven with core academic subjects.[9] Regardless of the work our youth will grow up to do, the global, interconnected world will demand these "4 C's" as much if not more than the "3 R's." Students need to be taught how to think rather than what to think. We must prepare them to be their own educators, to be lifelong learners.

"Without goals and plans to reach them you are like a ship that has set sail with no destination."[10]

Start By Identifying Learning Goals And Desired Outcomes

So now that we have a method, we need to decide the content. While we want learning to be student driven, we need to scaffold their choices by giving a framework and initial goals. As any parent knows, "what do you want for lunch?" could lead to some interesting and potentially less nutritious options, whereas "what would you like on your salad?" will meet with better results. Our youth may eventually deconstruct the salad and transform the whole concept of salads in the world, but for now, it is our role to ask the guiding questions and set the immediate goal.

The other reason we need to set learning goals is to assess how we're doing so we can do it better and get the funding to do it. We tend to think of goals and objectives as accountability measures, but what if we dare to think of them as targets that empower us to dream and to act on that dream?

Our partners in the nonprofit world have been using outcome measures for years. They've had to do so in order to demonstrate to funders the value of their programs. For instance, the mission of the Cleveland-based Esperanza is to "improve the academic achievement of Hispanics in Greater Cleveland by supporting students to graduate high school and promoting

post-secondary educational attainment."[11] They have gained ever increasing support from sponsors, government officials, and community members because Esperanza can demonstrate the change they are creating in the community. One of the desired outcomes indicated in the mission statement is to increase high school graduation rates for students in Esperanza. In 2011, Cleveland Municipal School District reported a 30 percent graduation rate for Hispanic students, yet of the families involved in Esperanza's program, youth attained a 90 percent graduation rate.

With traditional revenue sources continuing to be reduced or eliminated, libraries are increasingly turning to grants, corporate sponsorships, and private donations. Funders have limited dollars available, and want to ensure that awards go to organizations with proven track records. Additionally, as staffing levels and resources shrink, tough decisions need to be made regarding programs and services. One of the best ways to advocate for teen services is to show the effectiveness of the work we're doing. According to ImaginOn Teen Services Librarian Kelly Czarnecki, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library decided to implement outcome measures because:

"We got affected severely by budget cuts and needed a more meaningful way to tell our story and the impact the library was making to the community. Identifying and targeting specific programs (Operation College Launch, Studio i interns, and Teen Summer Volunteers) allowed us to do that. We can report that our programs are helping change behavior, knowledge, and prior beliefs and reaching the goals we set out to achieve."

Why do libraries want to report the amount of change that they are creating? One reason is because the level of change reflects the level of impact. If we don't measure and talk about how we are making a change in people's lives, how do we let others know the value of our services? If we're just maintaining status quo, we are not helping people grow. Learning requires change. A change has to happen for an individual to become a better employee, more employable, more knowledgeable, more skilled, happier, more engaged. Being able to articulate how we positively impact our communities is critical to inform decisions about library services and for continued investment in libraries.

Create Logic Models For Intentional Impact

Outcomes

Creating outcomes is part of a larger process of creating a logic model for a program. In a logic model, all of the components of the program are organized to meet the goals. The first step in the process is deciding the desired outcomes of the program or service. In 2008, after reading about the future local and national employment opportunities available to students strong in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), Cuyahoga County Public Library (CCPL) began looking for ways to help youth strengthen their STEM skills. An initial team of children's and teen librarians experimented with LEGO Mindstorms robotics. After gaining some experience with the technology and exploring various instruction methods, the team selected six main outcomes the new program, Robotix Blox, was to achieve:

- Youth view the library as a nurturing and welcoming environment where they can be themselves
- Youth gain knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence in STEM
- Youth will increase 21st century skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and information literacy
- Youth develop social and interpersonal skills including relationship skills and conflict resolution skills
- Youth develop positive relationships with library staff
- Youth will value the library as a resource in their lives

As CCPL's Robotix Blox team gained knowledge and experience, they realized, as shown in the bullet points above, that a program that was originally intended to meet one goal actually had the potential to move well beyond that goal of achieving academic knowledge in STEM, though that was certainly still a desired outcome. By moving to progressive learning methods (connected learning, active learning, scaffolding, etc.), the team members had the power to help students build their 40 developmental assets, 21st century skills, a passion for lifelong learning, and a positive relationship with the library. These things had been happening accidentally, and could be described anecdotally, but by identifying them as outcomes, they became an intentional part of the program design, and thus better supported and more likely to happen consistently.

Design Backwards To Reach Your Goals

After determining desired outcomes, the next step in the logic model is to design the program backwards from those goals. Backwards design is a term specifically attributed to Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins in their 1998 publication *Understanding by Design*. In a school setting, teachers using backwards design begin instruction design by determining the learning objectives and creating the assessments, then designing the activities to bring about the desired learning. In the public library environment, we would follow a similar process, but our assessments are not for a grade, but to measure the effectiveness of our methods toward meeting our intended outcomes.

Indicators

Let's take a look at one of the outcomes of the CCPL Robotix Blox program.

- Youth will increase 21st century skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and information literacy

On a survey created to assess progress toward this goal, students who attended a four-day Robotix Blox "camp" over the summer were asked to rate the following Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree:

- I'm good at planning ahead and making decisions.
- In this program, I am able to interact positively with others.
- During camp, my partner and I worked together to complete challenges.
- I can find information I need to complete challenges.

The statistics from these surveys can be used as indicators of the progress made toward the outcomes. So, for instance, if a funder wants evidence that this program does, in fact, improve collaboration skills as a prerequisite for continued funding, the preliminary results show that 100 percent of campers say that they at least agree that they were able to interact positively with others, and 50 percent of those say that they strongly agree.

Activities

So, how do we get to these numbers? The next step is to decide the activities, what will take place. In this case, CCPL librarians need to guide students through some basics of programming and robot construction, then they give students book-based challenges. For example, in the 2013 summer camp The HobBOT, based on the Tolkien classic, student teams had to shoot an arrow through Smaug's heart, release the dwarves from captivity by trolls, steal the ring from Gollum, and more. There are many possible ways to solve any challenge, so the learning is student-driven using creative problem-solving and critical thinking.

Inputs

Inputs are the "stuff" that will be invested to make the activities successful. These are things like staff time, training, physical space, marketing, and materials.

Outputs

Outputs are more or less the countable things that come out of the program, not the results, but the basic data. Libraries are *very* good at documenting outputs. These are things like the number of programs, the number of attendees, how many robots were built, and so on. Traditionally, libraries have reported these types of things to support our work. For instance, 25 teens came and made 47 pet blankets to be donated to the local animal shelter. This is fine and good, but was the purpose of the program really to make pet blankets? Or, was the intention for teens to feel that they contribute and are valued by the community? If the latter, the blankets are a product, an output of the program, but to measure how well we achieved our desired outcome, we would need to find a way to document how the teens felt about their work.

"Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail better."[12]

Failing To Meet Desired Outcomes

So what happens when teens don't feel that they are making a valuable contribution by making pet blankets, or youth in robotix don't demonstrate the knowledge in STEM that we hoped? Well, of course we're a little disappointed that things didn't work the way we hoped, but just as we're asking youth to constantly try and fail, and learn from their experiences, we must grow from ours. What must be remembered is that without our logic model and outcome measures we would have no idea where we stand. We would be spending time, energy, and money on something that isn't working. Instead, when our program or service with a logic model fails to meet our expectations, we've just spent time, energy, and money on what is essentially research to help us meet our goals better. Once we have data on what failed, we can dig deeper to why it failed and determine how to improve. Which part of the logic model needs to be realigned? In the future, the pet blanket activity might be successful toward the goal of creating a sense of community contribution if teens do research about what was needed and decide on this course. Perhaps the real activity needs to be facilitated research and assessment, and pet blankets (or whatever deliverable the teens create) become the output.

"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't—you're right."[13]

You Can Do This!

Yes, it takes time to create a full logic model, set outcomes and indicators, and plan backwards to reach them. Yes, it takes time to process assessments. It's true, and there's no getting around it. However, wouldn't it be nice to go into every project or program with a clear sense of purpose and direction? How satisfying would it be to fully and succinctly articulate the impact your work has on the lives of youth to your colleagues, administrators, government officials, community members, and other stakeholders. You'll also have supporting data to step away from ineffectual

partnerships or to redesign clunky programs and services, which will free up time and energy that was being wasted on ineffective or inefficient methods.

At this point, some readers may be asking, what's wrong with fun programs? The answer? Absolutely nothing. In fact, I would challenge you to come up with a program in which youth are truly, actively learning that isn't fun. In a 2003 *National Geographic* survey, 80 percent of youth surveyed said that learning is fun.[14] Fun is a natural output of learning. As librarians engaged in this conversation at Cuyahoga County Public Library, they discovered that even programs that they thought of as "just for fun" really had other intended outcomes, and fun was just a very notable by-product. For instance, many branches host summer reading kick-off parties. While these are definitely fun, the desired outcome might really be to increase reading engagement, and indicators might be that attending customers showed a renewed enthusiasm for reading, or an increased knowledge of new and popular titles or even increased knowledge of how to participate in the summer reading program.

Ultimately, our teens deserve this level of thoughtful, intentional effort. As I mentioned earlier, for years libraries have offered classes with specific learning goals for adults, and children's librarians have been working to improve early literacy skill development in storytime. It is now time to turn our focus to teens. We have the methods of active and connected learning, and we have the structure of logic models. With the fearlessness of the teen-serving professionals that we are, let us charge forward and lead our profession into a new era. This is the future of libraries. This is how we will go from simply surviving to thriving. Show the world and yourself just how much difference you can make. YALS

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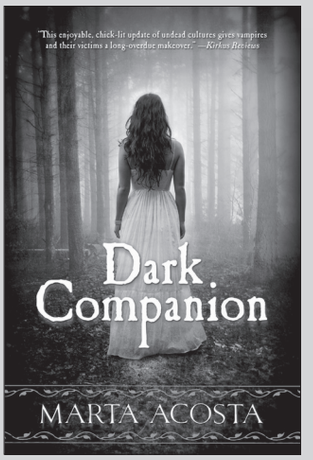

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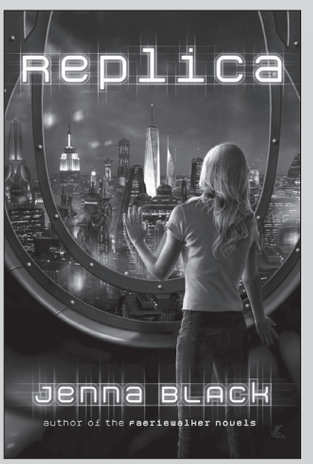

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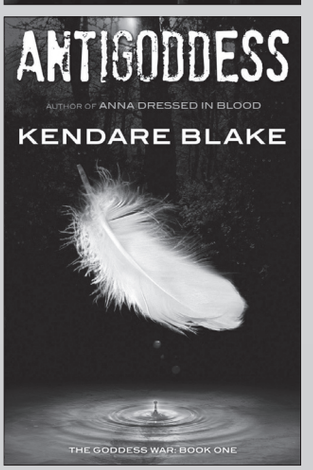

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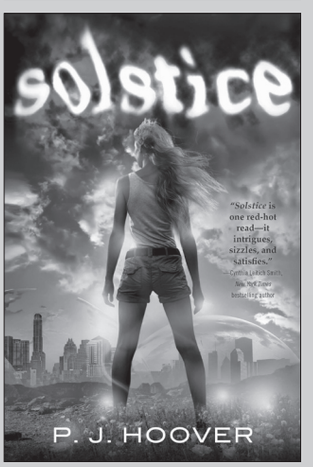

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Some Thoughts on the Future Direction of Library and Information Science Education

By Sandra Hughes-Hassell

As part of YALSA's year-long IMLS-funded National Forum on Libraries and Teens project, YALS asked me to ask Library and Information Science (LIS) educators to consider how LIS education needs to adapt and potentially change to better meet the needs of 21st century teens.[1] Thanks to our colleagues for taking the time to think about these questions and share their insights.

How Do You Think LIS Education Needs To Adapt or Change in Order to Prepare Youth Librarians To Engage With Today's Youth?

Denise Agosto, Drexel University: I would argue that current LIS programs do a fair job of preparing students to engage with youth, at least those students who take youth services classes. Most LIS programs offer at least one YA resources course, and many offer additional courses in youth services, youth programming, and more. That said, we certainly could do better, and we could do so by broadening our coverage of youth resources beyond just books to include a wider range of resources and, more importantly, by moving our educational approach away from a focus on youth resources to a focus on youth themselves.

LIS youth education has a long history of focusing on the study of information resources—paper books in particular—with the goal of teaching students to identify, collect, and recommend the "best" youth resources. "Best" is usually defined according to adult experts' opinions, with a heavy focus on award-winning titles. Certainly, we must continue to teach our students about youth resources and how to evaluate and collect them, but we need to move toward letting youth define "best" for themselves, based on interests, contextual factors, and personal tastes. We need to remember that books and other information resources are not just creative works to be appreciated for their literary and artistic qualities, but tools for meeting youths' varying needs and interests. We must also remember that most of today's youth spend many more hours online than they do reading traditional paper books or e-books. Although reliable figures are hard to find, most national surveys indicate that nearly all U.S. teens regularly go online, with some recent estimates indicating that the average U.S. teen spends seven or more hours per day using electronic devices.[2] From an educational standpoint, this means that we need to teach students about the full range of youths' media preferences and behaviors, moving away from promoting traditional reading as the holy grail of youth library services to teaching library students to become youth media educators, helping youth to become better educated, more thoughtful, more engaged media users, creators, and evaluators.

We also need to move from a resource-centered educational approach to a youth-centered educational approach, teaching students above all about youths' intellectual, social, emotional, physical, creative, sexual, and cultural needs, preferences, and development. In youth library courses, LIS educators should first teach students about teen behaviors and needs and then move on to show how information resources, library programming, library services, etc., can best be leveraged to meet those behaviors and needs. For example, rather than teaching a course about common types of library programs and how to

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implement them, in a youth-centered programming course the focus would first be on methods for identifying community needs, and second on how to design and implement innovative programs to meet those needs. This approach would mean teaching students first about youths' media behaviors and preferences, and then studying what media can best support them and how. It's a subtle difference, but a crucial one for enabling future librarians to best serve today's and tomorrow's youth.

Kafi Kumasi, Wayne State University: From my vantage point, libraries are already designed to serve youth from the dominant white culture. Whether we look at whom most of the books in the collection are marketed toward, or the racial/ethnic composition of the librarian workforce, or the rules for conduct in the library, most libraries are designed by and for whites. Therefore, I would like to focus my response on how LIS education needs to change to engage historically underrepresented youth of color, particularly African American youth.

We can use the recent verdict in the trial of George Zimmerman as a case study for teaching future youth services librarians about what it means to be a youth of color in today's America. I contend that unless today's majority white youth librarian workforce can put themselves into the shoes of today's youth of color, they will fall short of engaging youth of color like Trayvon Martin, the 17-year-old unarmed black boy killed by George Zimmerman, a 28-year-old armed Latino man.

I would argue that the not-guilty verdict that was rendered by a jury of six females, which included five white and one Latina, illustrated that we are far from the post-racial America that some might purport. To me, the verdict showed that we have a huge racial empathy gap that needs to be closed in order for today's youth of color to feel welcome enough to want to be engaged in libraries and with librarians. For some youth of color, libraries represent another in the cadre of racist infrastructures where their presence and sense of belonging is continuously subject to contempt, suspicion, and objectification. Just as Trayvon was suspected to be a criminal for merely wearing a hooded sweatshirt while walking on his way home from the store in the rain, many black male youth may feel this same level of surveillance when they walk into majority white library spaces. They are the outsiders who must prove they belong by following all the right (aka white) codes of conduct including being mindful of how they talk or dress and how they are perceived under the gaze of whiteness.

Ultimately, we need to educate the current and future youth librarian workforces on how to examine their own biases and prejudices toward nonwhite youth. We could start by asking them to put themselves in the shoes of parents of a youth like Trayvon Martin. Could they imagine living in a world where their child is seen as guilty until proven innocent? Can they imagine their teenage son going to the store to buy candy and never coming home because he was murdered by an overzealous neighborhood watch person who mistook him for a criminal? Can they imagine the mere presence of their child in an environment being seen as not only illegal, but also possibly lethal? These are the kinds of questions LIS educators need to consider if they wish to engage today's youth of color in libraries.

Don Latham, University of Florida: I think LIS educators, much like librarians, have long been responsive to the changing needs of their user groups, and, while I am probably biased, I think youth services faculty have often been particularly innovative in changing course content and instructional strategies in order to meet the needs of their own students, as well as the youth these students are preparing to serve. That said, I think LIS educators who teach youth services courses must continue to incorporate the latest knowledge in three key areas: youth behavior related to their informational, recreational, and developmental needs; social media, and how and why young people use it; and, to borrow a phrase from Eliza Dresang, "changing forms and formats," such as digital books, fan fiction, gaming, mobile apps, etc.[3]

Mega Subramaniam, University of Maryland: Today's digital, networked, and interactive media offer unprecedented opportunities for learning and pleasure that are highly engaged, personalized to youth interests, and part of their social communities and shared purpose. Youth are embracing new media for learning related to their social and recreational pursuits. However, there is still a disconnect between these informal forms of cyber learning and the learning that happens in formal education. Youth are turning to cultural institutions such as libraries and museums as venues for informal exploration.[4,5] I see these trends continuing, and this is a good thing for youth librarians. The big question is, are we ready for this? In the near future, the following three immediate changes need to take place in the young adult services education:

1. Begin embracing literature and expertise from other fields: education, learning sciences, improvement sciences, communication, human computer interaction etc. If LIS schools do not have faculty members with such expertise, there needs to be flexibility for LIS students to take courses from relevant departments and units, invite adjuncts to teach these courses, or encourage the co-development of courses that will be

co-taught by LIS faculty and faculty members from relevant disciplines.

2. LIS education needs to embrace and provide "evidence-based practices" or "design-based implementation research" experiences for the next generation of librarians. I am perplexed to find that many LIS education programs do not require such courses for their students. It is vital for all librarians but especially critical for youth service librarians to have the knowledge and skills to collect data and make iterative revisions to their programs and services.
3. LIS education must incorporate the concepts of diversity and inclusion in the courses offered to youth librarians. To meet the information needs of this increasingly diverse youth, the next generation of librarians needs to be culturally competent from the moment they graduate. This means being ready to work with youth diverse in race, language, literacy, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, education level, socioeconomic status, and other factors, which may be unique to the local community being served. The curriculum of LIS education has to adapt and evolve much faster than it has to ensure that our graduates are ready to serve every member of their communities. The vast majority of students graduating from LIS programs—nearly 80 percent—report that they did not have the opportunity to take even one class related to diversity.[6]

What Do You See As The Most Pressing Challenge LIS Education Faces When It Comes To Youth Services?

Subramaniam: The youth services landscape will continue to evolve. Changing the mindset of youth service faculty members to make changes to their courses, the bureaucracy that is involved in making these changes especially in offering interdepartmental courses or co-teaching with faculty from other disciplines, accreditation demands, the complexity of training and hiring the next generation of youth services faculty, and the need for youth services faculty to keep up with cultural and technological trends and pedagogical changes all coalesce as the most pressing challenge in youth services' education.

Latham: I think the most pressing challenge for youth services education is maintaining a sense of relevance among non-youth-services faculty. Many LIS schools and iSchools are gravitating away from public sector information services and toward private sector, "entrepreneurial" systems and services. Youth services educators need to advocate for the importance of public sector information services, especially for young people, and at the same time, figure out a way to tap into the entrepreneurial opportunities. Hollywood and Madison Avenue have known for a long time that there's a gold mine in marketing to teens. How can we, as youth services faculty, convince our non-youth-services colleagues that the same holds true for the information industries?

Kumasi: Ironically, youth services may very well be too "youthful" to garner the gravity and respect it should as a veritable area of research, teaching, and service. We see this youthfulness translated in a number of professional marketing programs, infographics and programming initiatives. Although we should not shy away from celebrating the vibrancy of the age group we represent, we should also strengthen our research knowledge base in order to be sure we have a seat at the table when weighty decisions are made about funding. To that end, one of our most pressing challenges is to help our students be able to effectively find and critically read research on the intersections of libraries and young adults. Once they are able to do this, they can become better advocates for the profession and take their rightful seat at the decision-making table when youth services positions, programs, and grants projects are being considered.

Agosto: Youth library services have been around for well over a century, and they're likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Education for youth library services, on the other hand, is in a somewhat more tenuous position. The challenge for library schools is to continue to seek and hire full-time, research-active faculty. Many ALA-accredited programs are increasingly using adjuncts and other part-time faculty to teach their youth services courses. Not only does this lead to the reduced production of youth services research and to the consequent thwarting of the academic study of the field, it also leads to reduced prestige for youth services concentrations within library schools. The reasons for the increased use of part-time instructors to teach youth services courses are complex and vary somewhat from institution to institution. In some colleges and universities, this shift is part of an institution-wide movement toward using more part-time instructors in order to save on costs. Another reason is an increasing emphasis on funded research in many U.S. universities. In these institutions federal and corporate research grants bring with them not just money but prestige and a greater likelihood of attaining tenure. This focus on funded research adversely affects the hiring of youth services faculty for whom there is little available research funding compared to faculty who focus on computing and technology research. Regardless of the many reasons for this trend, it will take strong arguments from current youth services faculty and from other LIS faculty

as well to fight for the continued hiring of full-time youth services faculty in order to ensure the robust future of youth services education and research.

What Are The Mos Exciting Opportunities For Youth Services/Teen Services LIS Education?

Latham: LIS educators now have great opportunities afforded by technology and social media. It's relatively easy now for students in LIS youth services courses to make connections with other youth professionals (teachers, counselors, other librarians) as well as with young people themselves. There are also numerous opportunities for research (for both faculty and students), much of which can be done virtually.

Agosto: I can think of many exciting opportunities, but due to space limitations, I'll just mention two: (1) educating library students to view libraries as community spaces, and (2) educating youth librarians to become digital information educators.

Particularly in the public library realm, libraries are moving away from the traditional role of libraries as information providers to libraries as community spaces. This is especially important for teens, who have few places other than school and home that they can call their own. Public and even school libraries can act as a "third place" for teens, a noncommercial public space where teens can gather both physically and virtually for social, educational, and leisure purposes.[7] Unfortunately, the U.S. public continues to think of libraries mainly as book providers.[8] Library educators can help their students learn to value libraries as community spaces for youth and teach them ways for broadcasting the important message that there is much, much more to librarianship than books and reading.

As a result of the great deal of time youth are spending online, the "texts" of their social, educational, and personal lives are less likely today to be traditional printed books, newspapers, and magazines, and more likely to exist in any of a variety of digital formats. Consequently, most of today's youth are able to read and interpret a wide variety of digital texts, provided that they are exposed to them at a young age. LIS educators are perfectly positioned to teach youth librarians to become digital information educators, helping youth to become better informed, more thoughtful, safer, and more responsible users of digital information and digital technologies.

Subramaniam: Opportunities are endless. I will mention two. Given the present-day economic atmosphere, youth services are welcoming participation from LIS students in any capacity at their libraries—as volunteers, as hourly employees, and even allowing students to plan, conduct and manage events. Some even allow preservice librarians to conduct events, with little oversight from the library staff, encouraging creative endeavors from students. LIS educational institutions should embrace such opportunities by working closely with their community youth services units and integrating experiential learning in course assignments and deliverables.

With the recently popularized revelation that youth "hang-out, mess-around, and geek-out" in public libraries, many nonprofits, foundations, and private entities are eager to conduct their programs in the libraries, such as FutureMakers (http://kidsmakethingsbetter.com) and AbleGamers (www.ablegamers.com), to mention just two.[9,10] However, youth services personnel are stretched thin and often cannot find the time to work with such partners. LIS educators can partner with these entities and their community libraries to allow students to co-manage these programs in their communities. Such partnerships benefit the students, the libraries, the outside partner, and the community it serves individually and collectively.

Kumasi: Social media holds a lot of promise and excitement for youth services in LIS education. We know that youth are very consumed with social media in their daily lives. I'm not sure, however, that we know how to leverage these teen's usage of social media to the fullest degree. I see opportunities for LIS educators to not only teach LIS students about what the latest social media sites are but more importantly to help them understand the essence of what these sites offer. For instance, we should be teaching students the difference between peer-based (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Vine) versus interest-based (e.g., Tumblr) social networking sites so these sites can be optimally utilized in our outreach and services to teens.

Understanding how these social media sites work also holds a lot of promise for teaching librarians how to help youth use this technology to become more actively engaged in the civic and political issues surrounding them. We saw how the 2008 presidential election was driven largely by the youth vote and what a powerful tool social media became in galvanizing youth around a political cause and campaign, with the election of President Barack Obama. Youth librarians need to be at the forefront of helping youth use social media to become more critically engaged citizens.

Given The Current Economic Environment, How Do We Continue to Recruit Students Who Are Capable Of Taking Leadership Roles in Defining the Direction of Youth Services?

Kumasi: Cultivating tomorrow's leaders will take a certain level of investment on

the part of the existing leadership in the profession. However, this investment does not necessarily have to cost a huge amount. With strategic planning and mentorship development among the existing professional members and leaders, a strong leadership program can be developed within our current organizational structure. For instance, I participated in a mentoring program as a graduate student, which has made a great impact on my success and professional identity. The program, "Cultivating New Voices" (CNV), operates under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English. We could utilize similar organizational resources that are already available to us through ALA/YALSA and create mentorship programs of this type. Readers who want to learn more about the CNV program can visit their website at www.ncte.org/research-foundation/cnv. I maintain contact with my cohort (see www.ncte.org/research-foundation/cnv/2006) and am proud to call such dynamic and successful people my colleagues and friends.

Subramaniam: We need to add color, abilities, culture, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) backgrounds, and many other diversity elements to the composition of the youth services profession. Lacking inclusiveness will dissuade underserved, underrepresented, or disadvantaged students to even consider the profession. We need to rigorously recruit students to join youth librarianship from nontraditional disciplines, such as engineering, basic and applied sciences, and computer science. We need to be proactive and creative in our recruitment strategies. Attending recruitment fairs, and advertising in the ALA publications is not going to get the leaders that we want in the profession. Packaging our courses to undergraduates in a way that will appeal to them (such as part of learning communities where undergraduate students take courses as a group or as part of first or senior year experience programs), offering undergraduates service learning opportunities in nearby libraries or after-school sessions working with disadvantaged youth, involving undergraduates in creative research projects that involve running DIY or maker spaces sessions in the library, and involving diverse undergraduates in brainstorming recruitment strategies in focus groups are some ways that come to mind that may have a better success rate than the ones that we have now. The key is to get candidates who are passionate about youth and their needs, rather than the money.

Agosto: To continue to recruit students interested in serving youth and to ensure that they become strong leaders and youth advocates upon graduating, we should focus recruitment messages on explaining to potential students that education for youth librarianship and youth librarianship itself are first and foremost about youth–learning about youth, learning from youth, working with youth, and championing youth rights. We must fight the "library-equals-books" oversimplification that is still so prevalent in the public mind.

With so many other exciting topics of study in LIS programs, how can we keep students in youth services after they begin working on their degrees? Of course, increasing the availability of youth librarian positions and increasing salaries for those positions would be helpful, but more important than the current economic environment in influencing students to continue to stay in the youth field is the relevance and currency of youth librarianship curricula. As youth library educators in the modern information environment, we must constantly ask ourselves, "What is the most important potential contribution of today's youth librarians and of youth library services?" One answer is that with so much information online and the relative ease with which most (but not all) youth can access it, the youth librarian's job now becomes less about teaching youth how to find information and more about teaching them how best to navigate and interpret the modern information world and how best to interact with others online. Another answer is that youth library services must move beyond information provision to supporting youths' broader needs and interests by providing social, intellectual, creative, and cultural opportunities, both online and in physical libraries.

Latham: It's important for all LIS students to gain education and experience in complementary areas. Students taking courses in youth services should, for example, also take courses in social media and media production. Flexible programs that allow and encourage students to develop skills in more than one area will better serve both students and the profession, and will also make it easier to recruit new students. Why not offer programs where a student can pursue tracks in youth services and app development, for instance? Why not youth services and health information technology? Regardless of where students end up working, having useful "crossover" knowledge and skills will serve them well. YALS

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Bring Your Dreams to the Library

By Ali Turner

Andre, age eleven, came into the library after school wanting to make his own archery bow. Instead of giving him a book, staff connected Andre to a craftsman in the neighborhood who made bows. A few weeks later, Andre was working alongside local artist Riley Harrison at the Hack Factory, making his dream come true.

The Hennepin County Library (HCL) is an active participant in a network of community organizations. This participation makes it possible for connections like Andre's to take place. We've found that by partnering with other public and private entities, we broaden the number of resources available to community members who are using the library. We are a trusted point of entry in connecting with information online, in person, and within the community.

At HCL we believe that being the best we can at what we do means not trying to be all things to all people by not trying to do it alone. We do this by using our resources, along with those of other community organizations, in order to fulfill the needs of those who visit the library. Through collaboration we strengthen our ability to serve as a connection point to customers, helping them find exactly what they need and want, wherever it is within the community.

This article explores why collaboration with the community is so important in library services to teens and provides one example of how this type of collaboration works at HCL.

The Importance Of Partnerships

HCL and the University of Minnesota (UMN) initiated a collaborative partnership between our library staff and the university's College of Education and Human Development's Learning Dreams (www.learningdreams.org) project in May 2012.

As the Learning Dreams website states: "Learning Dreams creates a culture of learning by providing intense home and community-based support for parents, children and youth to help them become active learners. Learning Dreams works with individuals' deepest motivations, their personal dreams and hopes for their own lives. Learning Dreams builds family members' strengths and continues to support them over time as they make progress realizing their dreams."[1]

Through actively supporting a culture of learning in homes and communities, Learning Dreams takes an innovative approach to creating a foundation for education success. And, because of our similar missions to foster lifelong growth and intellectual curiosity, HCL and Learning Dreams work together to strengthen learning in our community.

HCL partnered with Learning Dreams as a way to expand and enhance our homework support initiatives. Traditional learning has long been thought to be the domain of formal educational institutions. Schools take a lead in organizing learning and documenting achievement but have long acknowledged that parents are a child's first, best teacher. The network of resources—from early childhood education institutions to bookstores to public libraries—for those parents as teachers plays a vital role in supporting school success and a student's path to high school graduation.

Along with this, research from the Afterschool Alliance shows that a comprehensive and continuous approach

ALI TURNER is the Division Manager for System Services at Hennepin County Library in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has worked for Hennepin County Library for more than 18 years in service and management capacities. Ali currently oversees community connections, communication, the public website, and local friends groups. For six years she directed the award-winning Great Transitions collaboration between the Hennepin County Home School, Hennepin County Community Corrections, and Hennepin County Outreach Services. Ali's experience in both public urban and suburban library settings combined with her work with youth and families in transition provide a strong background in designing responsive communication and solutions for service delivery. Ali has an M.A. in Public Librarianship from the University of Iowa and an undergraduate degree from Macalester College.

to learning—extending beyond the classroom and into informal settings during afterschool hours—will help students traverse their academic lives and thrive in their personal lives outside of school.[2]

The type of passion-based learning accessed and promoted through Learning Dreams is a perfect example of the continuous approach to learning discussed by the Afterschool Alliance. The work of Learning Dreams has shown to positively impact a young person's engagement and connection to learning. Public libraries and community organizations should be included in this person-driven and continuous approach to learning. This inclusion can make all the difference in a teen's achievement.[3]

To be successful as a partner in supporting, fostering, and hosting learning, the public library needs to revise and perhaps reinvent approaches to working with students and families. Bringing in community partners, such as Learning Dreams, to serve students alongside library staff, and volunteers, allows the reach, scope, and impact of the connections to expand. HCL saw this when it rethought how it provides afterschool homework support.

A Chance To Re-envision Traditional Homework Support

Access to technology, basic skills, one-on-one tutoring, and library resources is traditional to many libraries' homework support services. At HCL providing strictly academic support has long been within the expertise and practice of our Homework Help volunteers and staff. Staff and volunteers sitting side-by-side students as they complete the day's assignments—even connecting them to seven-day-a-week online homework help—has had a positive impact on student achievement.

As part of Hennepin County's A-GRAD (Accelerating Graduation by Reducing Achievement Disparities) initiative, staff assessed our existing Homework Help model.[4] This evaluation, along with current research from the National Center for Student Engagement about the many factors that contribute to educational success, made it clear that a three-pronged focus was essential for our Homework Help.[5] Academic achievement had to be accompanied by support for both attendance and attachment. As defined by the National Center for School Engagement, "Promoting attachment involves establishing meaningful connections with youth and their families through caring, support, and mutually-defined expectations. It includes developing positive school climates, family and community engagement, and student-focused programs and activiites."[6] HCL believes that supporting academic achievement, attendance, and attachment is a natural fit for libraries.

With this in mind, the emphasis of the East Lake Library Homework Help Learning Dreams project takes a bit of a different approach than is traditionally seen in public libraries. In addition to focusing on skills and resources, we focus on relationships, attachment and human connections.

Where Learning Dreams Comes In

At the East Lake Library, Learning Dreams staff work alongside HCL staff and volunteers. This collaboration adds depth and increases impact to the Homework Help program, which serves over 300 families in the Longfellow neighborhood of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The library is considered a safe, friendly place. And all library staff have a role in making connections with young customers so they feel valued and known. But we don't offer basketball, or bow and arrow making, or cupcake baking classes. This is where Learning Dreams comes in. Partnering with the library to connect young people with learning resources and individuals that live and work in the community, staff from Learning Dreams can go above and beyond what library staff are able to do as a part of their daily work. They do this by signing students up (with parent permission) for learning connections and/or taking them to meet new people. Networks of people already following their passions, available through Learning Dreams connections, who in turn are willing to share their expertise, help library staff to convert isolated events into continuous learning. Learning Dreams staff are the ones who open the door, make the introductions, help shape the experience for student needs and abilities, and follow up to identify what's next and keep connections strong.

Initially, the youth-focused individual in-take with each person Learning Dreams works with focuses on solutions and outcomes rather than specific activities and events. For example, Learning Dreams employee and Youth Development Leadership graduate student Micaela Conlon was working with a teen who wanted to learn how to find a job. The boy was shy, and his older brother did most of the talking at first. Micaela spent time getting to know them both, and then took the boy, his brother, and six additional friends out into the community to practice requesting job applications from employers. Micaela introduced them to the Job Center at the East Lake Library, and she also took them to the Work Force Center so they could set up accounts. Assisting them in having the confidence to follow the practical steps that they learned from her, Micaela gave them the tools they needed for current and future job searches. Youth work both with library staff and a Learning Dreams mentor to determine their next actions.

The Learning Dreams partnership with HCL is designed to stay connected to families for months if not years. The opportunity to work with the library has allowed Learning Dreams to explore the impact of shorter-term connections that still have great impact.

What Are The Benefits?

Partnering with Learning Dreams has pushed the library to redefine how we think and operate. It has opened our eyes to how powerful providing wider connections to learning can be—and we do this without always taking on the role of providing direct instruction.

Learning Dreams and library staff have generated creative synergy as they've observed one another working and partnered side by side. To prepare for their work at HCL's East Lake Library, a team of staff from both organizations attended a variety of community events throughout the summer of 2012. Staff from both organizations went to busy public places to talk with passersbys about their dreams. Learning Dreams staff also hosted the second annual Learning Carnival where dozens of community partners had tables and booths where they supported people in following their artistic, intellectual, and sporting passions. Learning Dreams staff supplemented a school-based child care program with activities for students and their families. The library partnered in building learning maps with individual students and co-hosted learning events for families.

All organizations working with youth know that connecting with the child's family is an essential part of making a lasting impression. Working with new immigrant families and those less comfortable with formal education, and connecting with families at times and locations convenient to them, has been especially important. Child care program events and Homework Help events are held during program times, often close to school "pick-up" times. Parents and caregivers are invited to learn about their child's experience and also to explore their own dreams.

Learning Dreams has complemented the East Lake Library's afterschool programs by naturally fitting in, and becoming a companion, to existing programs. Students who are known by library staff are introduced to Learning Dreams staff and vice versa. Students who are at the library to do their homework can also talk about their personal interests, and students who may be at the library for non-academic reasons are encouraged to take advantage of other programs within the library.

Both organizations have the goal of connecting with individuals to identify passions and connect people with the resources to pursue them. What we observed in our work is that what librarians traditionally consider a "reference interview" is very similar to asking, "What is your learning dream?" This is something that Learning Dreams traditionally asks young people with whom they work. This starting point is not necessarily very specific, but instead allows for meeting the patron where they are in order to learn with them what information would be of interest. Librarians at East Lake Library have noted that they are rethinking their approach to the reference interview based on their experience and observations. One librarian said, "I learned a new question I can use during reference interviews—'who do you know who knows about this already?' which can lead the discussion in interesting directions." The lead youth services librarian at East Lake Library commented on the impact of the partnership with Learning Dreams on her professional development: "I'm learning to embrace spontaneity in a new way—I still like to plan things out in advance, but I am thinking about different ways that I can respond to someone's interest more quickly. Like, maybe I can plan to be a bit more spontaneous in anime club, book club, with all programs and situations where I have my 'librarian' hat on."

Learning Dreams staff also participated in staff development, tours, and orientations at several HCL locations. This increased familiarity with the depth and breadth of library resources has increased the repertoire of possible referrals by Learning Dreams staff. When we first met with Learning Dreams staff, they assured HCL staff that they were including a short booklist as part of mapping available resources for pursuing a client's Learning Dreams. After the orientation to library services, however, the booklist concept has expanded and might now include, "There's a grand piano at Minneapolis Central Library that you can use," "Let me help you register for a computer class at the library in your neighborhood," or even "My friend, Bill, who works at Nokomis Library, could help you with that!"

An example of how this has played out at HCL-East Lake is in response to the interviews about student and family member Learning Dreams. The library's response to a student's interest in making duct tape wallets or cupcake baking might be to offer a program or book on the topic. But, when Learning Dreams staff see these interests expressed, they may know a local artist or baker—or they will find one—who can give young people hands-on experience in a much more real-life fashion! Learning Dreams staff members have a knack for finding those who are willing to take time for those who are interested in learning. Micaela took a group of teens interested in becoming lawyers to the courthouse to watch trials, but also set up an appointment with an attorney who met with the girls after the trials to answer their questions.

Learning Dreams is a concept or approach more than a program. It focuses on connecting young people and their families with an entire learning ecosystem that goes beyond schools—community centers, libraries, museums, businesses, community members, and more. Youth-driven learning, based on curiosity and individual fascinations, is at the heart of public library service. For K–12 students, it lays the groundwork for a lifetime of self-directed, continuous learning. Students working with HCL and Learning Dreams have the skills they need to articulate their dreams and find community supports to pursue them. Together, HCL and Learning Dreams have become curators of learning.

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Guidelines for Authors

*Young Adult Library Service*s is the official publication of the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association. *Young Adult Library Services* is a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with young adults (ages twelve through eighteen) that showcases current research and practice relating to teen services and spotlights significant activities and programs of the division.

For submission and author guidelines, please visit http://yalsa.ala.org/yals and click on "Submissions."

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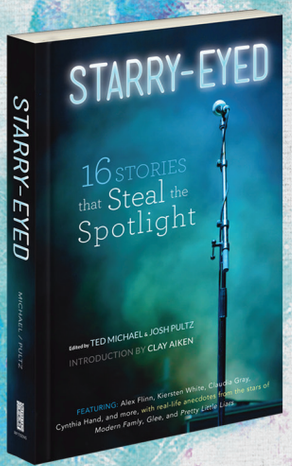

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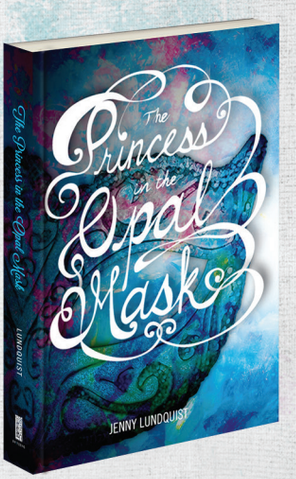

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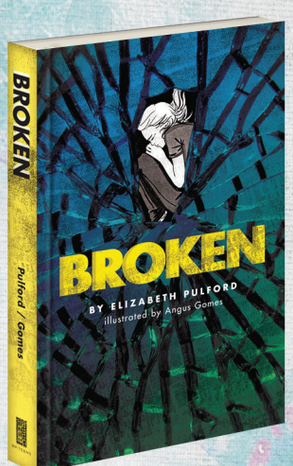

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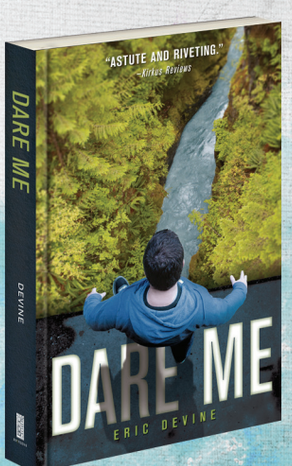

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

Find the latest YALSA news every Friday at the YALSA Blog, http://yalsa.ala.org/blog.

YALSA Announces 2013 Teen Read Week™ Grant recipients

YALSA announced the 10 recipients of its 2013 Teen Read Week Grant. The grants, generously funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, are $1,000 each and will be used by each library to fund their Teen Read Week programs and activities.

The recipients of the grant are:

- Dawn Abron, Zion-Benton Public Library, Ill.;
- Catherine Andronik, Brien McMahon High School Library, Norwalk, Conn.;
- Amy Jones, Ashe County (N.C.) Public Library;
- Jennifer Shureman, Gloucester County (N.J.) Library System;
- Staci Terrell, Anderson (Ind.) Public Library;
- Lindsey Tomsu, La Vista (Neb.) Public Library;
- Patricia VanArsdale, Hussey-Mayfield Memorial Public Library, Ind.;
- Deena Viviani, Central Library Of Monroe County, N.Y.;
- Molly Weeta, Lawrence (Kan.) Public Library;
- Bridget Wilson, Moss Memorial Library of Nantahala Regional Library System, N.C.

This is the third year that YALSA has been able to offer this grant, courtesy of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation. Teen Read Week is a crucial time to promote reading to teens and grants like the Teen Read Week grant allow for libraries-in-need to develop more comprehensive activities and programs that will attract teens and help them develop a life-long appreciation of reading.

This year, Teen Read Week™ will be celebrated October 13–19 with the theme "Seek the Unknown @ your library".

Teen Read Week™ is a national adolescent literacy initiative created by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). It began in 1998 and is held annually during the third week of October. Its purpose is to encourage teens to make time to read for the fun of it, because studies show that teens who read for leisure achieve more in school. To learn more about Teen Read Week, visit www.ala.org/teenread.

Committee Work Not Your Thing?

Volunteer For These Other Opportunities!

YALSA has many ways for members to be involved in the organization **other than committee service**. Many of these are virtual and less time-consuming than committee service. If these options interest you, please fill out the volunteer form located at http://ow.ly/pcOOR and someone will get back to you within 10 business days.

If you would like to volunteer for committee service as well or instead of these options, please use the Committee Volunteer Form in YALSA's Handbook available at www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook. Thank you for your interest in helping YALSA advance our mission to make all libraries awesome for teens!

YALSA 2014 Election Slate

YALSA's Awards Nominating and Governance Nominating Committees have assembled the following slate for 2014:

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Rob Bittner
Franklin Escobedo
Lalitha Nataraj
Ann Pechacek
Elsworth Rockefeller
Brooke Young

Any individual interested in being added to the slate as a petition candidate can do so by submitting a completed Petition Candidate form via the YALSA website by no later than Oct. 28th, 2013. Elections open March 19th, 2014 and close April 25th, 2014. Any individual whose membership is current as of Jan. 31, 2014 is eligible to vote in the election. Ballots are emailed to members by ALA.

New! *Practical Programming: The Best of YA-YAAC* Offers Tried And True Ideas For Teen Programs

Teen services practitioners from around the world coalesce on YA-YAAC, a discussion list from YALSA. There they chat about things like cool STEM ideas; share teen programming successes; and solicit suggestions for challenges like uptight managers, tight budgets and programming brain freeze! YALSA's *Practical Programming: The Best of YA-YAAC*, a new book available in the ALA Store, provides librarians and library workers with a wealth of tried and true programming ideas for teens.

Author Monique Delatte Starkey culled the best ideas and compiled them into this easy to read resource. Whether you're on a tight budget or just need to implement an engaging program quickly, you are sure to find helpful ideas and advice in this dynamic new book. Highlights include examples and how-to guides for active programs, educational and technological programs, pop culture programs, culinary programs and new ideas for marketing, outreach and collaboration.

Practical Programming: The Best of YA-YAAC by YALSA is available at the ALA Store at www.alastore.ala.org/ or by calling 1 (866) SHOP-ALA. The book is $36 for ALA members and $40 for nonmembers. To learn more about the YA-YAAC email discussion list, visit http://ow.ly/oDVW2.

YALSA's Updated Teen Book Finder App Now Available in the Apple App Store

YALSA launched an updated version of its free Teen Book Finder app that now includes all titles that appeared on YALSA's 2013 lists of recommended reading and/or that were honored by one of YALSA's six young adult literature awards.

The Teen Book Finder app is free for download through the Apple App Store. Through the Teen Book Finder App, users can access YALSA's recommended and award-winning titles from the past three years with just a touch on their mobile device. Compatible devices include iPhone, iPod, or iPad. Funding for an Android version of the app has been secured and a release is planned for early 2014.

The Teen Book Finder's features include:

- The ability to search for books by author, title, year, genre, award, and list title;
- A Find It! button, powered by the OCLC WorldCat Search API, that shows users where to find a book in a nearby library and the book's format, including audiobook and e-book;
- Three "Hot Picks," featuring different titles from the database, refreshed each day;
- A favorites button, to create an individualized reading list;
- The ability to share books from the Teen Book Finder on Twitter and Facebook.

YALSA's Teen Book Finder is available thanks to generous funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

2014 Summer Reading Grant Applications Now Available

YALSA is offering libraries the chance to apply for funds that will aid in implementation of the library's overall summer reading program.

Courtesy of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, YALSA will be giving out two types of grants. The Summer Reading Teen Intern Grant will award $1,000 to each of 20 libraries for the purpose of hiring summer teen interns to assist with summer reading activities. The Summer Reading Resources Grant, will award $1,000 to each of 20 libraries in need to help them purchase reading materials to bolster their teen summer reading program.

To learn more about how the grants support summer reading programs, view a brief video at http://ow.ly/oD5YU. Interested applicants may apply now through Jan. 1, 2014 at http://summerreading.ning.com/. Recipients of the grants will be announced the week of Feb. 17, 2014.

To be eligible for the grant, a library must be in compliance with the ALA's Library Bill of Rights in regards to material selection, and be within 20 miles of a Dollar General store. To find out if there is a Dollar General store within 20 miles of your library, use the Dollar General store locator available at www.dollargeneral.com/storeLocator/. This grant opportunity is a member benefit for YALSA members; therefore, the applicant must be a personal member of YALSA. All criteria must be met in order to be considered for the grant.

Apply For Nearly $125,000 in Grants And Awards From YALSA

Deadline: Dec. 1

The deadline to apply for the following grants and awards is December 1, 2013.

- ABC-CLIO/Greenwood/ YALSA Service to Young Adults Achievement Award
- Board of Directors Fellowship
- BWI/YALSA Collection Development Grant
- ALA Annual Conference Grants
- Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant
- Great Books Giveaway Competition
- MAE Award for Best Teen Literature Program
- National Library Legislative Day Stipend
- Volunteer of the Year Awards (one each for: Chair, Committee Member, or entire Committee)

To learn more or to apply, visit www.ala.org/yalsa, and click on "Awards and Grants for Members."

YeLL (YALSA e-Learning Library) Offers Members Complimentary Access To Its Collection

YALSA's e-Learning Library (YeLL) offers YALSA members complimentary access to over 40+ webinar recordings providing professional guidance on teen services trends. Experts from the field walk you through hour-long sessions that you can put into practice at your library immediately. YALSA's webinars are relevant to both new and veteran library staff, with content areas including collection development and readers' advisory, programming, technology, and YA service delivery.

For those who are not YALSA members, these webinar recordings are available on demand and cost $19 for an individual webinar and $49 for a set of three. A group rate is available for $99 per webinar. The group rate gives libraries unlimited access to the webinar for six months. Webinars-on-Demand are available for purchase two months after the webinar takes place. Once purchased, you may view the webinar immediately.

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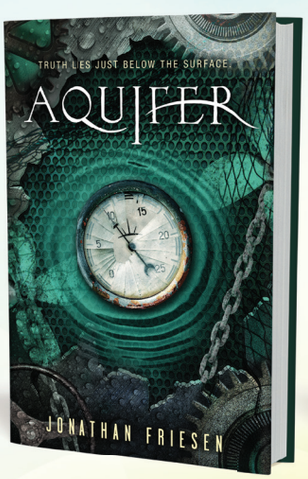

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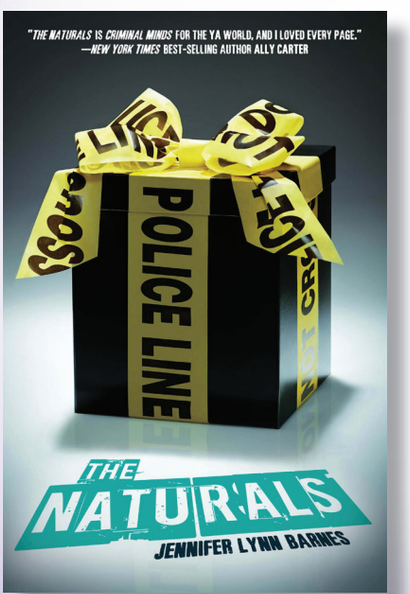

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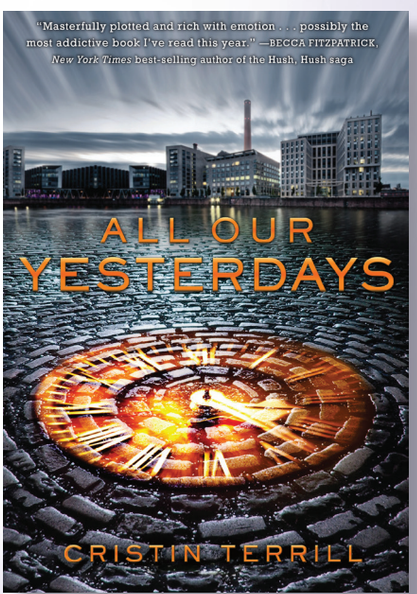

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