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young adult library services

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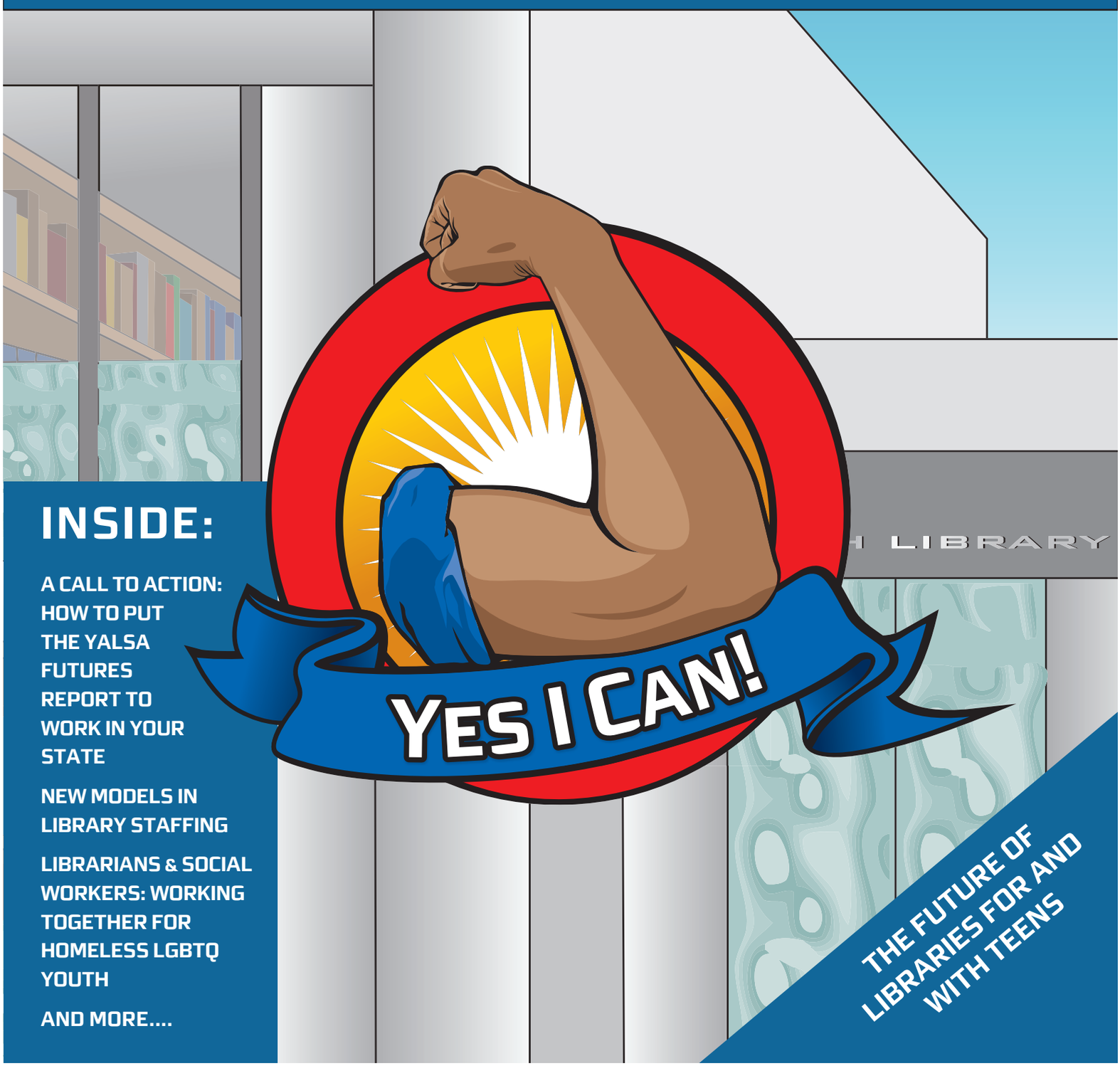

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A CALL TO ACTION: HOW TO PUT THE YALSA FUTURES REPORT TO WORK IN YOUR STATE

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LIBRARIANS & SOCIAL WORKERS: WORKING TOGETHER FOR HOMELESS LGBTQ YOUTH

AND MORE....

THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES FOR AND WITH TEENS

All Teens Deserve a Bright Future:

Libraries can Give them One

Last year, experts and practitioners from across the U.S. discussed the future of teens and libraries. The result? Some straightforward and achievable recommendations for engaging and empowering teens. This report captures findings from the 2013 meeting about how libraries can connect with youth-serving groups and community organizations to help the nation's teens succeed in school and prepare for careers.

The report is available for free at ***www.ala.org/yaforum***

Read the report to find out how your library can change teens' lives for the better and join the discussion on Twitter with **#act4teens**.

Find other resources or connect with the Young Adult Library Services Association at **www.ala.org/yalsa**

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About This Cover

All of the articles in this issue of *YALS* demonstrate how libraries are moving into the future outlined in YALSA's *Future of Libraries for and with Teens* report. You can read the report and learn more about YALSA's efforts to support library staff working with teens as they plan future-forward initiatives at www.ala.org/yaforum.

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Statement of Purpose
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

YALSA released its report *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action* in January 2014 (available at www.ala.org/yaforum/future-library-services-and-teens-project-report). Since that time the association and its board have worked to determine the best ways to help library staff implement the future envisioned in the report. YALSA staff and board members know that moving forward with that vision isn't necessarily an easy thing to do. But, they also know that in order for libraries to remain relevant to teens in 2014 and beyond, the ideas in the report outline the kinds of innovations we must embrace.

That's why in this issue of *YALS*, the focus is on the future and on how library staff working with teens are already grabbing onto the future outlined in the report and running with it. One key discussion point in the YALSA report is rethinking library staffing models and the role that library staff play in the community. In this issue of *YALS*, readers learn how at the Free Library of Philadelphia, K-Fai Steele and her team looked at new ways to staff teen services, with Maker Mentors, in order to provide the program of service required to help teens develop the skills they need for the 21st century.

Libraries can't always do what they need to do on their own, a fact that's brought forth loud and clear in the YALSA report. That's why in this issue of *YALS*, you learn how YOUmedia in Chicago partnered with the National Veterans Art Museum to give teens the chance to tell their own stories through reading, viewing, and discussing narratives of those who have been through a war.

Amanda Kordeliski, a school librarian in Oklahoma, was so energized by her participation in the development of the ideas of the YALSA report, that she and her colleagues across Oklahoma organized a preconference based on the report for teen library staff in school and public libraries. The event helped library staff formulate ideas on how to develop great teen services in their libraries.

In addition, YALSA has a task force responsible for developing materials for library staff to use as they try out new models of service with teens. You can read about those resources in the article by Corey Wittig, Jack Martin, and Adrienne Strock.

It's an exciting time for libraries and for teens in communities around the country. YALSA invites to you to take part in building the future. If you have questions about how to make this future work, or have ideas and experiences to relate to others, Tweet about them with YALSA's hashtag: #act4teens.

A couple of YALS items to note: With this issue, we relaunch the journal website featuring postings related to the articles in each issue; you can check it out at http::://yalsa.ala.org/yals. Also, starting with the winter 2015 issue, in order to continue to highlight the great work that library staff and others are doing to support the lives of teens, YALS will launch a new column titled #act4teens. YALS

from the President

Chris Shoemaker

Another phone call rolls into voicemail. Another e-mail languishes in an inbox. Another missed opportunity to connect face-to-face. It's a situation that blocks many a good outreach project, and I know I've crashed into that wall on several occasions. It would be easy to stop trying, but teen library staff are tenacious, always seeking to make all things possible. And, it's important to have that dedication.

With 95 percent of Americans agreeing that the resources available at the public library are an important piece in giving everyone a chance at success, we are the connection between community agencies and mentors for teens that can radically change youth's lives.[1] Even when the first, third, or tenth attempt to connect with a potential or current partner doesn't lead to immediate success, it's vital to keep trying.

Partnerships are key to success in serving teens. In looking at the table of contents for this issue of *YALS*, I'm excited to see so many different ways passionate library staff members and others have worked to create valuable opportunities for teens. From rethinking staffing to building new partnerships, they are addressing why libraries are critical to teens and communities and why libraries do not remain the same from day to day or generation to generation.

As this is a strategic planning year for YALSA, the board and I are looking to ensure that YALSA can do everything it needs to move teen library services forward and continue to provide amazing resources to members. The standing committees of the board are looking at YALSA's organization to see what structural changes may be necessary to help advance the findings in the YALSA report *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*. All of the association's 73 committees are making sure that this report is one that can lead us into the future.

There are also fantastic conversations coming up at the Young Adult Literature Symposium in November, at Midwinter Meeting in Chicago, and in my President's Program in San Francisco. Start thinking now about how you want to change teen services at your library, how you can incorporate the YALSA report on the future of teen services into your programs and partnerships.

Your continued dedication helps YALSA move forward and guarantee that teen library services give teens what they need to be their best selves. YALS

Reference

1. Kathryn Zickhur, Lee Rainie, Kristen Purcell, and Maeve Duggan. "How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities." Pew Internet Libraries RSS. December 13, 2013. http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/12/11/libraries-in-communities/ (accessed August 10, 2014).

feature
YALSA Perspectives

Library Service for Teens:

Who Are We? What Are We? And, Where Are We Going?

By Corey Wittig, Jack Martin, and Adrienne Stock

Did you miss it? We hope not. January 2013 marked a momentous occasion. It was the first step in a sea change for library teen services. You might ask, what happened? YALSA hosted the first-ever Future of Teens in Libraries summit, which led to a comprehensive report entitled *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*. This report brought about a wide array of discussions in libraries big and small and library associations across the country. It's a big deal. If you did miss it, this is your opportunity to catch up.

What does the report say? First, it focuses on connected learning. Connected learning is the idea that young people—in this case, teens—learn best by focusing on topics that they are passionate about. For example, a teen will easily learn about Japan because of a personal interest in manga. Libraries have a strong role in connected learning because they can help teens connect to people and resources that support their personal formal and informal learning interests.

Second, technology plays a huge role—a different role—as a learning tool. Thanks to the Internet and a variety of digital tools, youth can find virtually any information they need anywhere. Up until the dawn of social web-based tools, youth in high-needs environments or from low-income families may not have had the money, support, or awareness to connect with other youth with similar interests and likes that were outside of their immediate physical environment. Now, with technology and the Internet, armed with an array of devices, youth can connect with peers and adults across the globe. We know that youth are learning all over the place in a variety of forms including fan fiction, Twitter, blogging, and YouTube. But youth need support and guidance on how to best use the tools available, and this is where libraries must play a vital role.

Third, libraries need to shift in scope from being a repository of information to a place where teens come together, think together, do stuff together, make stuff together, and learn together. As a result, the physical library is not transaction based—reference question asked and answered, book sought and found, and so on. Instead, it's activity based, where library staff and teens work together to learn and create and make meaning out of the world we all live in.

Fourth, the YALSA report points to a paradigm shift as a result of technological, sociological, and economic factors that bring society into a new age where 21st century skills—both soft and hard—are in demand. With this new age, literacies are expanding and libraries must support literacy and learning in new ways to best meet the needs of learners. The literacies that teens need are not just print reading and writing-based but include media literacies, information literacies, digital literacies, and so on.

What Does It Mean to Libraries and Teens?

As libraries begin to engage with the ideas and practices of future library service for teens, it's easy to

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get nervous about what it means for your professional practice. Is YALSA suggesting you toss your books and study AutoCAD instead? Hardly. But that doesn't mean you don't need to reexamine the core values of teen library services. Our goal is to transform the library into a place where teens, as stated on page 18 of the report, "become who they want and need to be." We do that by embracing the library services values discussed in the report.

The values we must hold in library service to teens include adaptability, respect, and collaboration. Holding these values as a part of the service provided gives libraries serving teens the framework to address the interests and needs of the audience. For example, if we value and respect what teens are interested in, then we will be sure to work with them to develop programs and services that support their interests. To do this, library staff do need to be able to learn with teens and facilitate that learning as a guide, not as an expert. For example, a teen might be interested in a topic that library staff know nothing about. But, that doesn't mean the staff can't help. Staff working with teens can work through a process with the teen to help her connect to resources, people, and other types of materials so she can learn what she is passionate about.

This may be a role that those working in public libraries didn't plan to take on, but it's one that has to be embraced. Public librarians aren't educators in the explicit, classroom teacher sense, but we are educators in the way our informal environment demands—encouraging explorers, as information professionals who are driven to connect their users with information they can use. We are engaging our users in educative practices any time we deliver a well-designed program or service.

Teen library staff who understand the library as a connected learning environment will play a part in connecting teen users to their community through their role in the library. It's time to promote our own services and programs not only to teen users but also to community partners. Let's connect teens to others in the community who can also support them in their movement to adulthood. As community anchor and hub, we should. We're serving our teens best when we allow them to be part of the conversation by helping to design (even facilitate) their own library and greater community experience. When teens take the lead, library services are immediately relevant.

Using the Report as a Road Map to Leverage Library Services for Teens

The *Future of Library Services for and with Teens* is an excellent road map for reimagined teen services for library staff at all levels as well as for library supporters and stakeholders. It's also a great tool to utilize to engage with skeptics and to discuss with others questions and concerns about moving forward. It provides a rationale for a shift in services, provides data regarding demographic shifts taking place in the United States that strengthens the need for change, points to new literacies that libraries should help teens navigate through, introduces connected learning, and paints an image of what libraries will look like when services are reimagined.

This road map will challenge us to stretch beyond our traditional roles. We will need to redefine and take risks in our own learning, experiences, and service models. We will need to embrace flexibility and learning through failure (not failure, really, but through trial and error) while developing new services, if we are to push our teens to do the same. What will this look like? It might require the flexibility to prototype new programs and services with teens and analyze and tweak those that aren't successful on the first attempt. We will have to let go of our need to be experts in order to let teens and others lead so that we can push services and learning ahead. This might require that staff co-learn with teens. If teens are interested in coding or animation, try out the basics with them together using a tool like Scratch. Our environments will need to be more adaptable and collaborative in terms of staff, partnerships, and volunteer experts, and in how we define spaces and locations for services.

We need to take bold steps such as moving from output to outcome-based assessments to ensure that our programs and services meet the needs of our learners. This requires some reflection, perhaps with teens, in order to determine what it is we want our learners to achieve and to determine how we will measure it. It may be in the form of pre- and post-workshop questions designed for users to self-report their learnings. For more tangible and skill-based learning, this may be achieved with badges or other methods of tracking progress. Fortunately, the YALSA report already provides a solid list of outcome categories.

How YALSA Continues to Help Library Staff Move Forward

The report also provides readers with next steps in the form of recommendations and questions to guide assessment and planning locally. A new YALSA task force, the Future of Teens and Libraries Task Force, is working on some exciting next steps to empower the library community. Look for this group to

provide support through YALSAblog posts, articles in other publications, conference sessions, and a selection of support materials such as canned presentations for anyone to use to spread the word. The Task Force will also work on one-page fact sheets targeted at specific audiences. We will collect success stories from the YALSA community and create a network for communication designed to empower libraries to act for teens. (Check out Twitter for related posts using the #act4teens hashtag, and feel free to use the tag yourself as you create and implement future-oriented services for and with teens.)

YALSA has and always will be a leader for teen library services. The association has developed amazing resources: the Printz award, the Makerspaces in Libraries Toolkit, and more. Now we're helping to reenvision the future of libraries and teens even further. YALS

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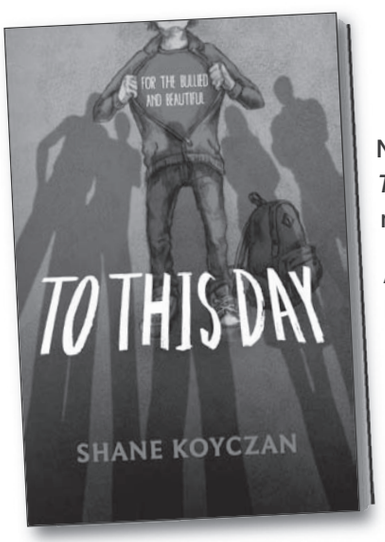

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feature
YALSA Perspectives

A Call to Action:

Creating Conversations in Your State Using the YALSA Futures Report

By Amanda Kordeliski

In January 2013, I was privileged to attend the YALSA national summit on libraries and teens that took place before the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle. This summit began a year-long discussion on teens and libraries and culminated in the report titled *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*. I returned to my library energized with a passion to open the same dialog at my state level that I had experienced at the YALSA summit. The dialogue in Seattle changed my perspective on the things I should be offering in my library and even how I approach the students in my school. I wanted to share my experience with others and create an opportunity for these conversations to take place at a more localized level. At the end of the YALSA summit, participants discussed things we would like to see happen as a result of the event. One of the ideas discussed was to duplicate the conversation across the country on the state and/or regional level.

The Enthusiasm Spreads: Making the Pitch for a State-Based Teen Summit

I am currently a middle school librarian in a large suburban school district in Oklahoma. Shortly after my return from the YALSA summit, I had the opportunity to share what I learned at a district librarian meeting. As I described my experience, I threw out the idea of how incredible it would be to continue the momentum of the national discussion within our own state. Was something like this even possible at the state level? Would Oklahoma librarians come to an event like this? I had the good fortune of working in a district with two incoming chairs within the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA). Calypso Gilstrap, one of our district high school librarians, was currently serving as chair-elect for the Oklahoma School librarians division (OKSL) and Maureen Goldsberry, a fellow middle school librarian, was chair-elect to our Children and Teen Services (CATS) Roundtable.

As fellow teen librarians, both shared the desire to create a program to promote collaboration and discussion between teen librarians in the state. From that the idea of the Oklahoma Teen Summit was born. Our school district coordinator facilitated meetings with the Oklahoma Library Association and found time in the schedule for us to hold brainstorming meetings. We participated as a group in the three YALSA-sponsored virtual town halls. These town halls were a part of YALSA's information gathering process in preparation for releasing the *Future of Library Services for and with Teens* report. The town halls focused on a series of themes, and library staff from across the country as well as community organizations were invited to participate.

The first town hall covered partnerships between types of libraries, out-of-school-time organizations, and museums. This was very helpful to our group as we brainstormed possible participants for our summit. The second town hall sparked a great deal of discussion about teen learning environments and the need for a flexible library space. We crafted discussion questions that encouraged out-of-the-box thinking on what a dream teen space was and also what most libraries actually have and how to use your existing space in a more teen friendly way. The final virtual town hall discussed the future of library services for teens and directed us back to the big picture idea of what we hoped to accomplish with our summit. All

AMANDA KORDELISKI is the Teacher Librarian at Irving Middle School in Norman, Oklahoma. She is passionate about creating a library space where teens want to hang out and always feel welcome. Amanda is active in YALSA, AASL, and her state library organization. You can follow her on twitter @akordeliski.

three town halls brought great ideas and discussions into our committee and because they were taped, allowed us to share the discussion with other members and even potential participants in our own summit.

Along with participation in the town halls, we shared and discussed the series of YALSAblog posts on the future of library services for and with teens, discussed potential outcomes for our project, and recapped conversation from the YALSA summit. I shared my reading lists from the summit and we had our own district-based discussions about how to better serve the needs of our teens. All of these together helped to narrow the focus and determine the desired outcome for the Oklahoma summit.

Creating a Timeline and Choosing a Venue

A realistic timeline was set to create a summit that was open to the entire state. We needed time to plan and recruit speakers but also wanted to take advantage of the publicity YALSA had already generated about teens and libraries. The state library conference would take place in early April 2014. This date was just a few months after the release of the official YALSA report, and the ability to access and discuss the final report was ideal for the conference we had in mind. We planned to use the report as a starting point for the event and continue the conversation beyond the initial YALSA findings. We also identified several key issues that were relevant to Oklahoma and began to concentrate on how to foster conversations about those topics.

The summit was cosponsored by OKSL and CATS to reach both school and public librarians. Invitations were extended to after-school program directors, museum education departments, church youth programs, and tribal education departments. Our committee began looking for in-state speakers who could speak to the areas we targeted. To utilize the conference space already available and take advantage of a potential audience, it was decided that a one-day preconference would be held before the annual state conference in spring 2014.

Choosing a Focus

Like a great deal of the country, libraries in Oklahoma have suffered drastic cuts in funding over the past several years. It is not uncommon for public libraries in Oklahoma to not have a dedicated teen librarian. Instead, one or more library staff wear the "teen librarian" hat and organize teen programming as one of many job assignments. School librarians are often split between multiple schools, have more and more responsibilities other than the library, or are isolated as the only librarian in the district. Often, small rural public libraries and school districts are limited in the professional development they receive or in their ability to take advantage of discussing best practices with other librarians due to distance and/or a lack of technology. All of these factors limit the ability of the librarian to collaborate and work with other librarians or teen services professionals. Professional development opportunities for public and school librarians working with teens are not a common offering and became a focus for the preconference.

Our Focus for the Preconference

1. To provide professional development about how and why teens use the library and open a discussion about the need for the paradigm shift suggested by YALSA in the report on the future of library services for and with teens.
2. To foster successful partnerships between school and public libraries, after-school programs, museums, and other organizations that work with teens.
3. To build a network of informed librarians across the state who will continue the conversation about teens and libraries.

The ultimate goal of the summit was to facilitate discussion between organizations and librarians to enable them to create an environment that is an ideal library for teen patrons. Opportunities for discussion and collaboration were important to the success of the summit and we focused a great deal on building collaboration time into the day. The Oklahoma Teen Summit was promoted on the state association website as a one-day preconference. It was necessary to charge a fee to cover the cost of the room, lunch, and access to technology at the conference, but costs were kept as minimal as possible in order to make the opportunity affordable for librarians. We promoted the summit through social media, message boards, e-mail lists, word of mouth, and mailers.

The Summit Structure

We had 60 participants in our summit, including school and public librarians and youth workers from across the state. The day started with an icebreaker designed to get everyone up and moving and meeting new librarians around the room. Every participant had digital access to the YALSA report, and YALSA provided hard copies and the executive summary of the report for each table. We began the day with a Skype visit with Linda Braun, one of the authors of the report and a key participant in the YALSA summit. Linda highlighted interesting aspects of the report and started the conversation off about how to best serve teens and what successful teen services look like.

After a short question-and-answer session about the YALSA report, we introduced the concept of the world café format. This format encourages deeper conversations using targeted questions relating to a specific aspect of a topic. Flip charts and markers were provided, and every group was encouraged to write down their thoughts and answers to the questions on the chart to share with the larger group. We used this format to break into groups and discuss six sets of questions relating to teens, information use, and libraries. (You can learn more about this format at www.theworldcafe.com/articles/STCoverStory.pdf.)

The committee designed the questions to facilitate meaningful discussion about the topics addressed in the YALSA report. The first five world café groups were designed to mix up the participants and encourage brainstorming and discussion about teens and libraries. Each table had the same set of questions and took notes on what they discussed to share with the larger group at the end of the morning.

Questions covered current adolescent trends, diversity and the changing makeup of patrons, digital literacy, college and career readiness, access to technology, opportunities and challenges librarians face when dealing with teens, and emerging technologies/maker spaces. Each discussion lasted 10 minutes and contained two to four topic-related questions. By beginning the day with a directed discussion, participants were able to discuss library philosophies, trends, and attitudes in a broad big picture sense and then delve deeper into the topic as we broke up into these same groups throughout the day to discuss more specific topics in depth. For example, in the initial world café setting, we discussed attitudes of library staff toward teens in the library and what we think teens want out of the library. We discussed the same topic again later in the day after a presentation on how teens use libraries and how to effectively advocate for teens in libraries.

Two of our target goals for the day were to create a network of librarians and to foster collaboration between libraries. To facilitate these goals in our last world café–style session we divided participants by region to encourage relationships between libraries and organizations in similar areas of the state. Participants were encouraged to work with this group during discussions for the remainder of the day.

After a short break, Jeremy Davis, a media/technology teacher from a local high school, spoke to participants about teens and technology. His comments about the need to allow teens to create their own content and express themselves through multimedia echoed the YALSA findings. Mr. Davis gave us hands-on examples of products that his teens were creating including fan fiction and mashups/remixes. He also addressed the effectiveness of informal learning in teen-focused environments. Discussion between participants about potential use of these ideas and how to effectively offer these to teens through a library setting continued into the lunch hour and created tangible excitement amongst summit attendees.

The afternoon began with author and family literacy specialist Michael Sullivan speaking on the importance of advocating to administrators for teens. "Teens need services, not programs," he said. Sullivan spoke of the importance of giving teens in the library independence and control over the types of activities for the age group in libraries, as well as the importance of allowing teens to create, discover, and even fail on their own. His ideas and presentation went hand in hand with the YALSA report and allowed summit attendees to delve deeper into the report and explore ways to effectively set expectations with fellow library staffers and teachers about what goes on in a space for teens in the library.

Discussions about library noise level, types of activities, the importance of teens seeing more than one friendly adult face in the library, and defending a teen patron's need to "just hang out" in the library all became part of the group discussion after Mr. Sullivan presented. A brainstorming session followed, and library workers began to map out real-world solutions to staff development about teens, teen friendly policies, and the obstacles each type of library faces when creating a more welcoming and user-friendly environment for young adults.

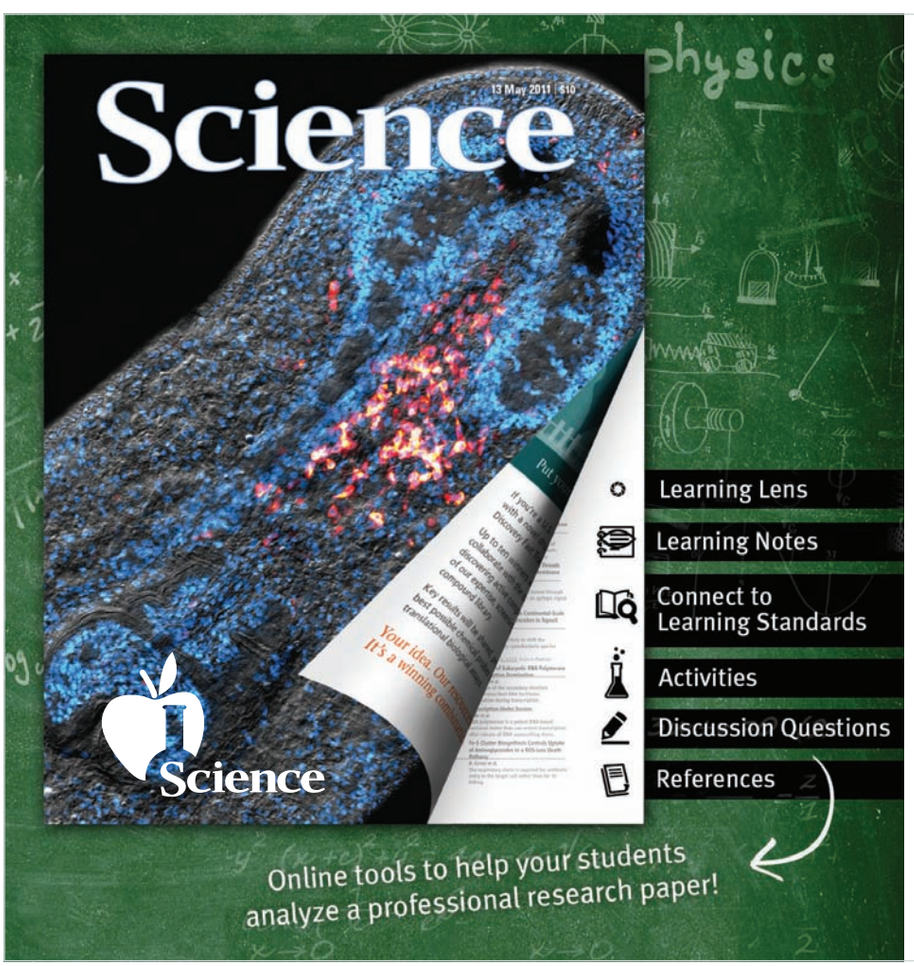
The final speaker of the day was a real-world example of how museums and school and public libraries can all collaborate on a project that allows teens to research, create, present, and put their own stamp on history. Sarah Dumas, educational curator at the Oklahoma History Center, discussed educational opportunities available to libraries across the state, with a special focus on the National History Day competition. Ms. Dumas highlighted the roles of all types of libraries—public, school, special, and academic—in the completion of a National History Day project. These in-depth research projects allow students to create a project using a wide variety of mediums and focus on a specific historical theme announced yearly by the National History Day Foundation. Dumas spoke of the importance of partnerships with libraries from a museum perspective and how exciting it is for educational curators in museums to see a report from another entity encouraging collaboration with them.

The day finished with a final collaboration time for the regions and a last sharing session on what we learned and wanted to implement in our own libraries. Creating partnerships was a key takeaway from the YALSA report and a goal of the state summit. Encouraging

all types of libraries to work together to create strong ties to each other through collaboration and teamwork benefits everyone—strong partnerships build strong communities.

Evaluating and Post-Summit Observations

Feedback from the summit was positive, and the committee believes we accomplished our goals of creating awareness and discussion about teens and libraries within our state. The opportunity to actually have time to work and plan with others to establish a working partnership for teens generated extremely positive feedback and excitement from participants. Discussion about teens and libraries continued throughout the state conference and has carried over into a very preliminary planning state for another teen summit in the future. The committee met for a final time in June to review conference evaluation forms and experiences and examine what to improve on in the future. A goal for future conferences is to gather a larger group of nonlibrarians who work with teens into the discussion. Larger participation from after-school programs, museums, and tribal departments, and a teen panel to share their library experiences, are goals for future teen summits. Ultimately, the desire to generate a passion for teens and libraries, teamwork, and a shoestring budget were all that was needed to begin a great conversation about the future of library services for and with teens. Start a conversation in your state; it is worth the effort. YALS



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feature
Hot Spot: Yes I Can

The Future of Libraries and Nontraditional Staffing Models

By K-Fai Steele

The Maker Jawn Initiative (http://makerjawn.org) at the Free Library of Philadelphia brings together a team of artists, engineers, designers, and thinkers who work in libraries. We are united in our dedication to mentoring nondominant youth in creative technology at Philadelphia neighborhood libraries. We cheerlead latent enthusiasts by providing resources, tools, and an encouraging space for interest-driven projects that develop skills, build persistence, and open up new trajectories. Maker Jawn experiments with creating replicable, scalable spaces and programs that prioritize the creativity, cultural heritage, and interests of diverse communities, embedded directly within the fabric of the library.

Maker Jawn also holds professional development workshops for Free Library staff. We were invited to lead a breakout session during All Staff Day 2014, a professional development workshop that happens once a year for the 700+ employees at the Free Library of Philadelphia. The Maker Jawn team managed one of the breakout sessions, an hour-long "Maker Sampler" where all departments, from custodial to development to executive, were invited by 14 Maker Jawn mentors to engage in activities staff had seen teens and youth involved in at their neighborhood libraries; they soldered together their own artbots, created a DIY version of the MaKey MaKey, contributed to an interactive pencil drawing, and participated in a green screen video where they ran alongside Rocky, through the Italian market and up the art museum steps. It has been amazing to see how this STEAM-focused, community-embedded innovative programming has grown in Philadelphia since its start in 2013—and, without librarians having a hand in running any of these maker programs.

The Maker Jawn Initiative is built on a model that differs from youth service programs in other libraries. We have received many questions about how we develop and staff our maker program, as well as questions about institutional logistics, particularly after presenting a program, *Teaching Teens How to Fail*, at the ALA Annual Conference in 2014 in Las Vegas. All Maker Mentors are artists, musicians, designers, and educators. They work for 20 hours a week in 10 library locations, primarily in North and West Philadelphia, teaching community youth how to combine technology with crafting and storytelling.

The Maker Mentor position is part-time/temporary and is city funded (with the exception of two or three work study students and interns). I hold a grant-funded position at the Free Library of Philadelphia, and I am the only one on the Maker Jawn initiative who is full time. No Maker Mentor has a degree in library science. People who ask us questions want to know: Why weren't librarians a part of the program from the start? Why aren't librarians running it? How does this program integrate with library services as a whole? How did an initiative like this get started without the help of librarians? Is this "legal" in the library world? Will librarians be replaced by self-check-ins, MOOCs, Google, and… artists?

The answer to that last question is "no," but the very existence of the Maker Jawn initiative in Philly raises interesting points that the YALSA report on the future of library services with and for teens also addresses: the notion of embracing a nontraditional staffing model, and the shifting roles not only of libraries in the

K-FAI STEELE is an artist who managed the Maker Jawn initiative at the Free Library of Philadelphia. She is an advocate for creative technology education for both youth and library staff in community libraries.

community but of librarians themselves and the traditional role that they have served. I cover some of these changes in roles of librarians and libraries in the following discussion.

Expanded Literacy, Expanded Librarians

One of the important aspects of Maker Jawn and the way that mentors work with youth is how young people develop literacy skills in ways that are meaningful to them. The definition of literacy has shifted. It is no longer just about the ability to comprehend and express oneself through written language, it is about the ability to construct meaning through a much wider range of platforms that includes things like YouTube videos and social networks. As the YALSA report on the future of library services for and with teens notes, "This expanded definition of literacy impacts the types of service, programs, and collections that libraries provide, as well as the nature of the work that library staff perform." Librarians need to understand how they can leverage technology to support acquisition of literacy skills by youth, particularly to help youth more easily locate a wider range of resources and information. Library staff also need to be able to guide teens as they learn literacy processes for themselves.

Librarians also need to think of literacy as a social practice that is fluid—one that changes in terms of the cultural context of a community. Not all teens are going to be interested in the programs that a librarian creates for them. Programming should start from and with the population that the librarian/library serves. This enables a participatory design process that ultimately ensures more authentic learning and engagement, and directly reflects youth voice and interest. Design that is participatory empowers teens to think that their opinions are powerful and meaningful. This also means less guesswork for the librarian and more time for helping teens make meaningful connections to their passions and interests. Most importantly, it democratizes the informal learning process; a teen can be a teacher to another teen, a teen can teach a librarian. With Maker Jawn programming, many of the workshops are youth-driven and interest-driven; the Mentor is there to introduce new materials and to cheerlead participants as they play with tools and explore concepts, and ultimately shape the program's direction.

What happens when a library acknowledges teens as experts within this participatory design and facilitation framework? Do the teens end up with stronger ties to their libraries as adults and parents? As the YALSA report states, "it will be critical for library staff to establish themselves in the role as co-learner and to be comfortable working alongside young people to learn together." This is the case because when this is true, teens do build stronger ties and confidence in their own abilities and futures.

Getting Staff Involved

In many communities, teens have no connection to their library outside of school-related work or free Internet access. "This lack of engagement results in fewer opportunities for teens to connect to resources that support their personal independent growth." The library should be a place for teens to connect to near-peer mentors, engage at their own speed in activities (in Philadelphia's case, maker programs), participate in a college readiness program, and hang out with friends. All of these activities require dedicated staffing, not only to manage programming but to support it. And this involves all level of staff, from security to executives understanding the value of the work being done for and with teens. All staff must work together to support and encourage teen engagement and learning.

Staff must have an intimate understanding of and a stake in teen development at their libraries. A security guard at one of the libraries in North Philadelphia saw a group of teens working throughout the week on green screen projects. The guard was curious and asked if he could be shown how it worked. The teens encouraged the guard to step in front of the camera and afterward showed him how to edit the image. All this was done informally, and with a lot of laughter.

This library employee was not required to engage in this program. He was not required to even speak to the teens at his library. However, he connected with this group of teens by being willing to learn from them, and through his participation acknowledged that their program was interesting and meaningful. Now, instead of being a potential obstacle to youth workshops, he understands what they're doing and can encourage other staff to engage as well. As stated in the YALSA report, "Library staff must connect with teens as individuals… Many teens don't have relationships with non-supervisory adults… Teens need more adults who are not 'in charge' of them." And maybe they need the adults who are "in charge" of them to be willing to play as well.

Why Are Mentors Important?

How does the mentor model address the shift outlined in the YALSA report on the future of library services for and with teens? The mentor model takes pressure off of librarians to know it all and do it all. It establishes a dedicated role for developing programming, conducting research on effective programming, familiarizing oneself with technical skills, handling administrative duties (materials sourcing, purchases, youth

sign-in, documentation), and connecting to the outside library and educator world through blogging, presentations, and social media. Ultimately, the librarian is the big picture thinker and visionary. Much of the value in the near-peer relationship that the Free Library shows through this nontraditional staffing model occurs through spending time with a teen and slowly developing a relationship (this goes for teen to teen, and if you think about it, human being to human being).

With Maker Jawn, our primary focus is on mentorship and giving youth in Philadelphia the opportunity to connect to interesting, creative, caring adults who are invested in the youth's goals and interests. One of our primary (yet simple) rules for beginning mentors is to quickly learn the names of everyone involved in the program. This goes a long way. Over time, what Maker Jawn has done is create a culture not only of making but of mentorship. Teens involved in the program find meaning in the program and are interested in becoming mentors themselves (we're working on this).

Another thing new mentors must be able to do is build a trusting relationship with the participants. We have found that this happens naturally over time and can't be forced or rushed. Working on a project together certainly helps expedite the process. Any project that requires a good amount of time and physical craft works, and my personal favorite is e-textiles. Like a quilting circle, with e-textile projects, conversation happens naturally.

Innovation Does Not Equal iPads

Maker programming is not about tech fetishization. In the YALSA report on the future of library services for and with teens, a participant in a virtual chat is quoted saying, "Success isn't having the most numbers of computers per student… it's a combination of the social practice, the technology, the goals, and the interaction with mentors."

We have seen enthusiastic librarians geek out with a small handful of dedicated youth about a very specific, particular use tool or technology (e.g., the Raspberry Pi). Although claiming that you're teaching a small number of teens how to code looks great to outsiders, this can be alienating for other teens who are reluctant participants, and I would challenge those librarians to stretch themselves further and see how they can make a larger impact on more teens at their library through a variety of technology and nontechnology programs and services. It's important that the librarians/mentor staff be conscious of providing tools and technology that can accommodate a wide range of youth with a wide range of interests. This will also ensure that programs have a higher chance of being interest driven by youth, rather than by the librarian and a select group of teens who are already well served.

In Philadelphia, our programs are situated within some of the most underserved communities in the country. North Philadelphia, a predominantly African American and Hispanic neighborhood, has been decimated by poverty (65.46 percent of households earn less than $25,000) and crime (584.66 cases of aggravated assault/100,000 people) with less than 2 percent of adults employed in professional, scientific, and technical services (2011 U.S. Census). We are working with many youth who lack home Internet (an estimated 55 percent of Philadelphians without home Internet in 2013).

These are the youth who think that the only technology for them is in the form of smartphones, torrented music, and a potential laptop for—potentially—college. The idea of de-blackboxing technology (opening up an electronic device like a phone to see what's inside, tinkering with it, and learning how it works) does not exist yet for these youth.

These are precisely the youth who need to be shown, in a simple, accessible way, how technology can be something that can be enjoyably and easily played at. They are typically in no-frills schools that lack arts classes, never mind creative computing classes where they are taught to be producers and tinkerers of technology and media, and frequently they don't know how to use the Internet as a learning resource.

Most youth who do use technology and the Internet to its full potential are in schools that have STEAM clubs and have teachers who are integrating connected learning into their learning frameworks. As Mimi Ito, from the University of California at Irvine, says in the YALSA report, "…it is generally educationally privileged youth with effective learning supports at home who are able to take full advantage of the new learning opportunities that the online world has to offer and translate these opportunities to their academic and career success." I would argue that the same goes for librarians and library staff who are deep in their roles and who are resistant to learning new things. Part of the 21st century librarian's job is to lower the knowledge barrier. The most exciting part of this is that you can do it alongside teens.

We have done this in Philadelphia through our own staff professional development. We have weekly "Tinkering Tuesday" sessions specifically for Maker Mentors. These 90 minute informal learning sessions allow mentors to play with technology in the same way that participants play. One mentor guides the session, which is typically structured by a tool or theme with multiple entry points (e.g., with artbots the participants can learn to solder, use wire strippers, play with different motors, or manage the esthetics

by selecting colored pencils, markers, or colored LEDs combined with a long-exposure photo). The lead mentor for the session is mostly hands-off after the initial welcome and description. His or her job is to recognize when people get "stuck in the mud" and encourage other participants to troubleshoot problems as a group. We also offer this type of tinkering on a larger scale for library staff (e.g., All Staff Day).

Sharing with the Library World

We need to change as a library community and redefine standards of being an open network of practice. When you go to a conference and are asked to share what you have been doing at your libraries, it is tempting and flashy to say that your teens have access to a 3D printer and have learned how to program using the Raspberry Pi. But how does that contribute positively to our national community? What have you shared besides making you and your library look good?

My challenge to librarians is contribute to the community in a more meaningful way. Instead of focusing on numbers of participants and photos to post on your library's Facebook page, think about what you're actually teaching, what you're learning, and what your participants are learning over time. Blog about it. Have your teens blog with you. Think about your big questions: how are you doing getting nondominant youth, the ones with no support at home, the ones who are reluctant learners in your workshops? What about other library staff? How are you figuring out a way to lower the barriers to entry for everyone, not just the select few who walk through the library doors with a high level of expertise?

One national network that the Free Library is part of is the YOUmedia network, a group of 30 libraries and museums who received an IMLS/MacArthur Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums planning grant (some other network members include the Pima County Public Library, the Kansas City Public Library, the Nashville Public Library, the Chicago Public Library, the Carnegie Public Library, and many more). It is a place to share, troubleshoot as a community, and engage in conversations about the practicalities of connected learning (a type of learning model that identifies the links between a youth's personal interests, supportive peer groups, and academic or career goals). Sharing and getting used to stepping outside your role as simply facilitator is essential to the future of teen services. As the YALSA report states, "[Librarians and library staff] must broaden their skills beyond programming and book talking to include training others, public speaking, collaboration… These professional skills… must be taught in library and information science graduate schools and are necessary for continuing education for librarians already working."

The most valuable learning and community building that we have seen in maker programming at the Free Library of Philadelphia did not happen because of an expensive dedicated teen center with multiple 3D printers and dozens of new laptops loaded with software. It happened because the executive staff have a vested interest in teen learning. They have opened up positions that can help point teens in the direction of articulating their interests and connecting those to school, jobs, or some way of enriching their lives, whether it's creatively, intellectually, or socially. This type of job requires hiring responsive, creative people who can think in innovative terms and ask questions rather than give answers. The fact is that none of the people hired are librarians.

Perhaps library schools and libraries themselves need to change, establishing a critical mass to encourage more artists and creative thinkers to become librarians. I acknowledge that there clearly are artist/librarians, just not enough of them, and not enough who are in decision-making positions. And, furthermore, there are a great many librarians and library staff who embrace this model of innovative, community- and individual-centered service, but not enough where this type of service is the standard. So perhaps instead of the reference interview, we need to start thinking about collaborative inquiry and embedded librarianship, and maybe that's what the future of libraries for teens will look like. YALS

Reaching Beyond Library Walls:

Strengthening Services and Opportunities through Partnerships and Collaborations

By Adrienne L. Strock

Earlier this year, YALSA released *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*, which addresses the need for a paradigm shift in the way libraries serve teens. It calls for libraries to modify the way we work with others by being a connection between teens and other local agencies, strategic partnering, and embracing the facilitator rather than expert role. In this article I'll explain why making these modifications is so important to the success of library services to teens.

Partnering can relieve us of the burden of being an expert in all things as we push the realm of library services to provide more dynamic opportunities for teens in order to provide them with necessary 21st century skills. Megan Ebert, Youth Services Manager at the Meridian Library District in Idaho, found this to be true when she partnered with parks and recreation, the Boys and Girls Club, local bike shops, the state, school libraries, and other community organizations. Ebert defines a partnership as "working together with another organization or entity to accomplish a common goal that is mutually beneficial to the mission of all involved."

Why Partner?

Partnerships and collaborations have their own set of advantages. For example, they:

- **Increase access to resources while saving money.** Working with organizations that have materials, equipment, and technology you lack is an inexpensive way to introduce teens to new skills and learning opportunities. An added bonus is that you can test drive equipment and teen interest before investing in a purchase.
- **Increase program offerings.** As library workers are pulled into additional tasks and projects that stretch our traditional roles, partnerships can provide opportunities for teens that expand into the connected learning realm in ways that library staff cannot do on their own.
- **Expand library skill-sets.** Perhaps the interests of your teens have exhausted your knowledge and experience, or maybe your community is pushing for increased STEM and technology skill-building. Partnering with community agencies or volunteers from specific industries or backgrounds is a great way to increase participation and provides a base for collective knowledge. Partnerships can also serve as opportunities for staff to learn.
- **Strengthen your personal and library network.** Developing positive relationships with other organizations broadens your reach for future projects, resources for library users, and helps you serve your community better through increased knowledge and connections.

The Avondale Public Library in Arizona, for example, strives to partner with other organizations as a way to strengthen services and community connections for customers. Their teen librarian, Laura Truman, notes, "The most important aspect of partnerships is

ADRIENNE L. STROCK is the Teen Services Coordinator at the Nashville (Tenn.) Public Library. She is also the Chair of the YALSA Future of Library Service for and with Teens Task Force.

the ability to share resources, and each brings new and exciting things to the table. Community is so important to everything we do and we need to make those connections." She has partnered with many local organizations, including a local theater to teach improvisation and filmmaking, the Maricopa County Workforce Connections to teach job and life skills, and Gangplank Avondale to engage teens in maker projects.

What's In It for Teens?

Collaborating can help deepen the experiences you provide teens. They increase learning and engagement opportunities. Expanding our reach through partnerships also provides teens with new opportunities to create, share, develop new interests, and develop new skills. We expose our teens to positive adult role models and mentors for their future. Partnerships also strengthen your teens' network of learning spaces. Openly networked communities and online spaces are a key design principle of connected learning that reinforces learning and opportunities for teens. According to the Connected Learning Alliance (http://clalliance.org), "Connected learning environments link learning in school, home, and community because learners achieve best when their learning is reinforced and supported in multiple settings. Online platforms can make learning resources abundant, accessible, and visible across all learner settings." In an openly networked community, learners can build upon learning opportunities across learning institutions, such as schools and libraries, home, and throughout the community.

Where to Begin

Many libraries have established different strategies and models for successful partnerships, but most will agree that communication and flexibility are the key ingredients to any successful partnership. Partnerships should be mutually beneficial for all parties involved. At the forefront of any partnership should be shared benefits and outcomes for the teens you serve.

- **Make expectations and limitations known.** Once a potential partner is identified, each organization should clearly communicate its expectations and limitations for partnering. Getting on the same page early is the best way to prevent future misunderstandings.
- **Develop a shared vision and guidelines.** Once partners understand what each one can and cannot bring to the table, develop a shared vision and plan complete with goals, guidelines, and outcomes. When miscommunications or disagreements occur, revisiting a shared plan can often realign partners.
- **Continue to plan together.** As your collaboration develops, continue to plan together and clearly define who will be handling what. Create and maintain task lists and timelines together. When necessary, create marketing tools collaboratively and cross-promote them across both organizations.
- **Meet and communicate regularly.** If you aren't regularly communicating with each other, essential tasks can slip through the cracks. It is also easier for unintentional redundancies, misunderstandings, and shifts from your shared plan to occur. You must be able to invest a fair amount of time in continued meetings and communication. Reflecting on the importance of making time, Truman states, "Making partnerships and collaborations work can be time consuming but the connections you make in the long run are worth your while. None of us feel like there are enough hours in the day, but through partnerships we can spread the wealth around."
- **Set a time to evaluate the partnership, revisit and redefine its vision, and assess outcomes.** This is your opportunity to reflect on the partnership status to ensure it is still beneficial. Evaluating and reflecting will help determine when partnerships should end or be rebooted. Not all partnerships are ideal. That's why it is important to communicate expectations and limitations prior to formalizing a partnership. Do a gut check. If it doesn't feel right, be comfortable saying no or not at this time. Or collaborate on a trial basis to get a better feel for each other. Deciding on an end or reevaluation date is important. This can allow you to end or modify the formal relationship without burning any bridges. Not every partnership will work out and most are not perfect, but focusing on the plans, communicating often, and remembering the benefits for teens will ultimately keep things moving in a positive direction.

What Are the Options and Types?

There are numerous types of partnerships out there to explore that come in different lengths and types. Some partner organizations will easily fall into specific categories based on their strengths and limitations and your shared benefits. Others may evolve and grow over time. While not an exhaustive list, highlighted below are different types of partnerships.

- **The embedded partner.** These are regular, fully-invested, long-term partnerships that are integrated into library programs and services.

Examples include organizations that teach recurring workshops, grant-funded or volunteer mentors, or geeks/artists-in-residence, or tutoring groups that offer their services in collaboration with the library.

- **The short-term activity or special event collaboration.** These tend to be centered around a special project, event, or culminating experience with a specific end date. Examples include performances, art shows, making or design challenges, or college and career fairs.
- **The community-wide initiative.** These are great opportunities for the library to embed itself into community culture. Examples include civic city-wide initiatives, pop-up events, and festivals. In terms of the connected learning realm, the Cities of Learning (http://citiesoflearning.org) where partner institutions come together to badge learning opportunities for youth is a powerful example of a community-wide initiative. Equally powerful are Hive Learning Networks (http://hivelearningnetworks.org), which use the connected learning model to create collaborative networks and partnered learning opportunities for youth. Both serve as great models for replication.
- **The active one-off or host site.** Because we are free, public spaces, we can be a hot spot for others that want to bring their event to a public space. When the fit is right, getting involved as partner can lead to future projects while providing dynamic teen events. One-off partnerships also fit nicely into regular program series and the library's mission.
- **The passive one-off or host site.** We are public spaces, and we have teens. We are the perfect spot for others to visit to promote their services, which is an added benefit to library teens. Examples are informational tables or sessions for jobs and internships, free financial aid services, or informational tables from other youth-serving organizations about their program.

What Is the Difference Between Partnership and Collaboration?

Partnerships are formalized relationships that center on specific projects or programs with a specific timeframe that is highlighted across organizations. Partners may be funders, other government agencies, learning institutions, or community agencies. With a partnership, you will have created a shared plan, possibly a memorandum of understanding, and you might have decided on whose logo goes where on shared websites and promotional materials.

Collaborations tend to be more informal in nature and are short-lived relationships, where each organization works as a team to achieve a specific goal with minimal efforts needed by all agencies involved. For example, in smaller cities, government departments such as libraries and parks might collaborate to create a shared newsletter of events happening at both organizations in order to cross-promote activities while saving money. They might again collaborate on a week-long community food drive. A library might collaborate with another organization to host a one-time event, like an active one-off or host site type of event. A school and public library collaboration might occur when the public library works with the school to get the lists and make those books available; a partnership might come about if the public and school libraries work together to develop a joint book discussion or culminating project based on some of the titles on the list.

The YALSA report on the future of library services for and with teens highlights the importance that partnerships can play in bringing in new expertise into the library to broaden learning opportunities for teens. They strengthen the library's offerings, enhance staff skill sets, and raise the library's place in the community. They can also allow us to step back to see what services we might need to begin, modify, or eliminate in our libraries. They can challenge us to learn new skills to supplement the partnership, but not replicate it. They supplement our work in ways we cannot do ourselves. If you don't know where to begin, look to your teens' interests and match those with a partner organization. Or look to your library's strategic plan or the YALSA report to get started. YALS

feature
Hot Spot: Yes I Can

A Partnership Tale:

YOUmedia and the National Veteran's Art Museum

By Christine Bespalec-Davis

I joined the National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM, www.nvam.org) as the Education Coordinator shortly after it relocated from the South Loop to the Portage Park neighborhood of Chicago in November 2012. The museum collects, preserves, and exhibits art inspired by combat and created by veterans. The artwork showcased at the museum provides unique viewpoints on the controversial subject of war. I was given the task of establishing an education program to support and promote the museum as well as to build connections between the art and narratives in the collection and the community--educators, community members, youth, military personnel and families, and civilians alike.

One of my first assignments was to become active in the Hive Chicago where I met a tight-knit group of organizations from around the city that shared a common purpose for building hands-on learning pathways by thinking outside of the box. A key purpose of Hive is forging partnerships between learning institutions throughout its home city. (Hive collaborations exist in cities across the country and were started by Mozilla and the MacArthur Foundation.) It was through Hive that I became connected to YOUmedia and Adrienne Strock. Adrienne put out a call to groups with interesting projects who were looking for space to work with teens. The National Veterans Art Museum is housed on the northwest side of Chicago, making it difficult to reach out to youth in other neighborhoods. Since YOUmedia is centrally located and near major Chicago transit lines, this was a tremendous opportunity for NVAM to expand our outreach.

NVAM began to host weekly drop-in workshops in YOUmedia and YOUmedia teens and staff made a series of field trips to NVAM. With the help of YOUmedia staff member Marcus Lumpkin, our teaching artist, Carolyn Hoedermann began to meet with youth and adopted a "one-teen-at-a-time" approach to engaging teens.

Since YOUmedia is a less structured "hang out" maker space, we needed to change the way we got teens to participate in our activities. Rather than setting up clear workshop times, we adapted to allow youth to drop-in, start a project, and return to it later or add onto it over several weeks. Ways in which we connected our exhibits with teens included encouraging them to listen to the audiobook that correlates with the permanent exhibition *The Things They Carried* at NVAM, inspired by the book of the same title by Tim O'Brien.

Teens were asked to look at and respond to examples of artwork from the NVAM collection and online interactive sites that supported the story told by O'Brien. As a way to make the connection even stronger, Marcus and Carolyn asked the teens to consider what they carried and why. Slowly—bit by bit—evidence

CHRISTINE BESPALEC-DAVIS joined the National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM) in November 2012 to serve as the education coordinator for the museum. Bespalec-Davis graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with a Masters in Art and Art Education and was drawn to the NVAM because of her research on the role of personal narratives and art making in creating transformative educational opportunities. She is a practicing artist that actively shows her sculpture and installation work around the city of Chicago. Her goal is to expand the education programming at the NVAM to build strong sustainable community collaborations and outreach to area schools and education professionals.

of learning and connection to the artwork from the museum emerged. When I came to the YOUmedia after a few weeks of programming, the space was filled with photographs depicting what different teens carry in their purses and bags (www.flickr.com/photos/youmediachicago/sets/72157644926001556/). The images generated interest and conversations connecting teen lives to the lives of the veterans from O'Brien's story and the art at the museum.

When YOUmedia teens took their first field trip to NVAM in February (highlighted here: https://learni.st/users/349298/boards/65970-youmedia), their connection to the work of the museum grew stronger and even more powerful than we anticipated. They toured the museum and were introduced to Erica Slone, a veteran and artist whose onsite studio was part of *Esprit de Corps*—an exhibition highlighting the act of creative resilience. As a part of their connection to Erica, the teens spent over an hour making collages based off the theme of identity and how it can be portrayed, altered, and shared through art. When finished, the teens' collages were put on display in the studio for an informal critique. What astonished me was the ability of these teens to be so candid about their work and their willingness to share the narratives found within the artwork they constructed. Stories shared were both intimate and powerful.

For example, one young woman addressed expectations of beauty found in society. She responded to this confidently with the work she produced. And, she showed a refusal to be bent to an ideal other than her own. Another teen admitted to being a person that does not like to share feelings or emotions with others, but then shared his finished work, which expressed his love of art and music. A young man in the group related the violence of war to his own experience of gang violence in his neighborhood. The artwork created by this teen showed him hunkered down behind a wall constructed from symbols of creativity—graffiti and music. This symbolic wall kept him away from the violence on the streets, a gun going off nearby and a lit fuse attached to the wall. He depicted the gradual, steady approach of danger and the risk of death. His art was a powerful testament to living with, but rising above, fear, a theme that resonated throughout and connected to other artworks in the museum's collection.

I have worked with visiting groups and drop-in programs for many years, and it is rare to have a group participating in a workshop share such personal experiences so soon after beginning the programming. I credit this to the fact that--while not all of these teens were friends--they shared the connection of YOUmedia. It is a relationship built from trust and time invested in support of their ideas and creative potential that make it possible to build a meaningful experience in a relatively short period of time, demonstrating a very successful partnership between the library and the museum. YALS

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.

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Hot Spot: Yes I Can

Librarians and Social Workers:

Working Together for Homeless LGBTQ Youth

By Jama Shelton and Julie Winkelstein

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) youth make up only 5 to 7 percent of the general youth population, yet up to 40 percent of the population of youth experiencing homelessness.[1] Many LGBTQ youth—regardless of whether they are homeless or not—face harassment, victimization, violence, social stigma, rejection, and discrimination in their families, schools, employment, and social settings.[2]

The Human Rights Campaign's *Growing Up LGBTQ in America*, a groundbreaking survey of more than 10,000 LGBTQ-identified youth ages 13 to 17, provides important information regarding how LGBTQ young people experience life in their communities. Nearly half of LGBTQ youth (47 percent) surveyed said they do not "fit in" in their community, while only 16 percent of non-LGBTQ youth reported feeling that way. Furthermore, 63 percent of LGBTQ youth stated that they will need to move to another part of the country in order to feel accepted.[3]

For LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness, community rejection is often compounded by family rejection. Based on a survey conducted by the True Colors Fund and the Williams Institute, top causes of homelessness among LGBTQ youth include: (1) family rejection resulting from sexual orientation or gender identity; (2) physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; (3) aging out of the foster care system; and (4) financial and emotional neglect.[4] Family rejection leads to a host of additional risk factors for LGBTQ youth, regardless of their housing status. For example, according to the Family Acceptance Project, LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are more than eight times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers with little to no family rejection.[5] While homeless, LGBTQ youth are also at greater risk for traumatic experiences including: engaging in survival sex that often results in sexual assault; being bullied and victimized; and dropping out of school.[6] Over time, ongoing exposure to traumatic stresses, particularly during childhood and adolescence, can become toxic and impact physiological, emotional, and cognitive functioning as well as identity formation.[7]

JAMA SHELTON, LMSW, PhD, is a nationally recognized leader on the issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth homelessness, with more than 14 years of experience working with LGBT youth, the last 10 of which were focused specifically on the issue of homelessness. Shelton is currently the True Colors Fund's Forty to None Project Director. In this role, Shelton is engaged in systemic change efforts directly informed by years of direct practice experience. Shelton is also an Adjunct Professor at the NYU Silver School of Social Work and the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College. After 20 years as a public librarian, JULIE ANN WINKELSTEIN, MLiS, PhD, returned to school and completed her PhD in 2012 at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she is currently an Adjunct Professor and Postdoctoral Researcher. Her research interests focus on the intersection of public libraries and social justice issues, such as youth homelessness, accessibility, and inequalities caused by social disparities. Winkelstein passionately believes in public libraries as essential partners in the creation of safe and vibrant communities. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The unique experiences of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness require unique interventions—prevention efforts, education and awareness campaigns, and community-based strategies to ensure the health and well-being for the thousands of homeless LGBTQ youth in our country. Libraries and librarians are potential resources for both LGBTQ youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and also communities that may be struggling with how to solve the problem of LGBTQ youth homelessness.

We hope the following personal stories will inspire you to be those resources, by reaching out to local service providers, exploring some of the recommended materials, and becoming part of the caring community these young people need.

Our Stories

Julie's Story: When I left public librarianship after 20 years, I was headed for an LIS doctoral program with diversity on my mind. However, over the first two years, I gradually became interested in the topic of homelessness and public libraries—a topic rife with controversy, stereotypes, and unanswered questions. Then one day my advisor handed me a newspaper clipping (a real paper one) about homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth. I was shocked to learn that up to 40 percent of the 2.1 million unaccompanied youth in the United States identified as LGBTQ. I wondered if they were using libraries, and I wondered how they survived on the streets, where they were getting their information, how they stayed safe, and how I could help. When I thought about the triple challenge of being young, being LGBTQ, and being homeless in a country that is in general so judgmental about poverty and homelessness, I wanted to know more. And so my doctoral research became about these young people and public libraries.

I interviewed public librarians, service providers who worked with these youth and the youth themselves. I learned about the challenges these young people face every day—living on the streets or in various kinds of temporary housing. I discovered many of them were spending long periods of time in public libraries. Libraries were places where they could blend in, be out of the disapproving public eye, and at the same time gain access to much-needed information about housing, education, employment, meals, and medical and social services. They were also readers, and where better to be a reader than a library?

However, I also discovered that overall they kept their library presence as hidden as possible. They were reluctant to engage with staff, attend programs, ask questions, or in any way draw attention to themselves. They were in a way at cross-purposes with the library staff, because by remaining invisible they were not getting the help a librarian could provide. But they were using the public space of a library.

As librarians, we sometimes resist the idea of a library being a safe and temperate place where someone experiencing homelessness can find shelter. In fact, we create rules and policies that can prevent some from using the library this way. We have rules about the size of baggage. We require a permanent address to get a library card, and we require a library card to use the Internet computers. We enforce no sleeping policies. Some libraries are flexible, but many are not. These rules are designed to create a particular atmosphere at the library—an atmosphere that is welcoming to those who can arrive showered, rested, well fed, and interested in the library as only a resource. However, they are unwelcoming to those, like the youth I interviewed, who do not belong to that group. As one service provider put it when asked about the library and the young people he works with:

"They don't feel welcomed…they are LGBTQ street youth and there's a stigma to that.…This one young person said it very accurately, 'We're not offered the same services as someone who comes in dressed nicely and smells good.'"

One of the young people I interviewed, Theresa, also described feeling unwelcome at the library:

"There's a sense that you're doing something wrong…by being in places that aren't meant for homeless. You know, the general perception of the library isn't, it certainly isn't a homeless drop-in center.… So, I think there's that same feeling, you know, that 'I might not be welcome here. They might not want me here. If they see me, they might throw me out.'"

This feeling of being an unwelcome guest in the library and of being on the verge of being ejected creates an unwillingness on the part of the homeless youth to reveal their housing status. Cedar, another young person I interviewed, told me he loved the library and spent as much time as he could there, mainly reading. However, when he arrived in the city, his backpack was stolen at the bus depot and so he ended up with only one set of clothes and a small student-like backpack. Since he had few belongings to carry with him and since he could shower and store his one blanket (given to him at the shelter) at the emergency shelter for youth, he could "pass" for housed. But because he wore the same clothes every day, he worried the library staff would notice and deduce he was homeless. So, even though he wanted to, he did not go to the library every day. He was embarrassed to be without the continuity of permanent shelter, and he was ashamed to be on his own.

It is traumatic to be kicked out of a family house for being who you are, and

this trauma is a part of the lives of these young people. Homeless LGBTQ youth need acceptance; they need to experience an environment that supports them for being themselves. They need caring adults who learn their names and ask how they are. They need what every library user wants: a place to receive the information services they need in a non-judgmental, welcoming and respectful way. This is challenging when one's very existence has been stigmatized.

The further I got into my research, the more I became aware of the barriers libraries create for homeless LGBTQ youth. Besides the public conduct policies and the various rules, many of these young people also fall into a crevice in library services that has not really been addressed. Since their ages range from 12 to 24, some of them are between the ages of 18 and 22. Many have "aged out" of foster care and, unfortunately, they have also aged out of young adult library services. Yet, like their housed counterparts, their needs are unique to their ages. They are what has been called "emerging adults," a term that could certainly be applied to LGBTQ homeless youth. In many ways they are old beyond their years, in other ways they have some catching up to do.

I am on one of the YALSA listservs and every day I read about another wonderful program addressing the needs of the younger young adults. And of course there are services particularly for younger ages, including sections devoted to children, with creative furniture, bright colors, learning stations, reading nooks, and all the other ways in which libraries support literacy and books and childhood.

But what about these young people? Where are their spaces? Who has asked them about their needs and lives? As I finished my degree, these are the questions I asked myself.

After graduating, I was hired as the postdoctoral researcher on a three-year IMLS grant that provides continuing education on this topic to public librarians. As part of the LAMBDA (Library Anchor Models for Bridging Diversity Achievements; lambda.sis.utk.edu) project, I attend conferences to present information about these young people and how librarians can make a difference in their lives.

In 2013, I had the opportunity to be on an ALA GLBTRT (Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Round Table of the American Library Association) panel at the ALA annual conference. I was the moderator, and the panel consisted of me (the librarian), and a combination of professionals who work with homeless LGBTQ youth and some youth themselves. Called "Safe in the Stacks: Community Spaces for Homeless LGBTQ Youth" (www.ala.org/glbtrt/tools/homeless-LGBTQ-youth), the panel offered librarians the opportunity to hear from this community. It also brought Dr. Jama Shelton into my life, and for that I will always be grateful.

Like me, Jama had recently received her PhD. Her topic overlapped beautifully with mine, since she had looked at homeless transgender youth. Jama came from a social work background, rather than a library one, so we were like a perfect Venn diagram—our shared interest in homeless LGBTQ youth brought together two fields that can—and sometimes do—work together to address social justice issues like this one.

Since then, Jama and I have co-presented two more times. Both presentations were outside of the professional library world. One was at the "Beyond Housing" Conference in New York City in January 2014, and the second was at the 2014 National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's "Creating Change" conference in Houston, Texas. For each of these we included a local librarian, because we wanted to emphasize the possibilities of working with libraries. We also created a worksheet for each attendee to fill out—listing an issue related to homeless LGBTQ youth, how the library could help, a barrier that might be encountered, and a suggestion for addressing that barrier. These worksheets offered attendees the opportunity to consider how a library could make a difference in their work and inspired some meaningful exchanges among audience members and the panel. Participants were enthusiastic about the possibilities and shared some of their ideas. We have included some of these at the end of this piece.

This interest in collaborating supported what I found in my research. Both the service providers and public librarians said they would be willing to work together to address LGBTQ youth homelessness—although in most cases this was not something they had previously considered. The service providers were surprised librarians would be interested in these young people—many of them were used to the stereotypes of libraries as quiet places where people read. They were unaware of the myriad resources and services available at a public library and of librarians' commitments to equal access and relevant resources. The service providers were also protective of the youth and wanted to be assured they would be treated well. They were unsure *how* to work with the librarians and how much time it would involve.

The librarians wanted to know more about how they could be of assistance. Like the service providers, they were concerned about time and safety—in their case, the safety of library patrons and staff. However, neither group saw these as insurmountable barriers. They saw possibilities in working together and were interested in pursuing them.

I am going to end with a message from the youth themselves. Although reluctant to reveal their presence at libraries, these

young people had great respect for libraries and were excited to know that librarians care about their lives and their needs. They wanted you, the librarians, to know how much it means to them to be at your libraries. How access to books about their lives and how being greeted by a warm and friendly person who cares makes all the difference. As one service provider explained, when asked about the needs of homeless LGBTQ youth: "There's different needs, but usually the most support they need is someone to believe in them. I mean if you're looking at every young person that walks through this door, if you look at what increases their quality of life, it is belief in their abilities, number one."

Jama's Story: When I was first invited by Dr. Julie Winkelstein to join the panel *Safe in the Stacks: Community Spaces for Serving Homeless LGBTQ Youth* at the American Library Association's annual conference, I thought, "Hmmm, interesting. Librarians? LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness? What will I talk about?" That question quickly faded. 60 seconds into my first planning call with Julie and it was clear that we had a lot to say. Libraries and librarians can play an important supporting role in the federal government's plan to end youth homelessness by the year 2020.

I spent nine years in an agency providing direct services to LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness in New York City. The work was crisis oriented. At the end of the day, my job was to make sure the basic needs of the young people were being met, even though the resources for doing so were scarce. At present, I am the Director of the Forty to None Project at the True Colors Fund. Our mission is to raise awareness about and bring an end to LGBTQ youth homelessness. We work on systemic change efforts and translating those efforts into practical resources that have the potential to impact the daily lives of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness and support the service providers with whom they work. A core part of this work is innovation. I am constantly asking: What resources are we not utilizing? What partnerships have we not yet considered? Or what potential partners have we written off due to preconceived notions about their willingness to embrace LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness?

I believe that libraries are an untapped community resource for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness and those at risk of experiencing homelessness. As a community institution, libraries can be at the center of community mobilization and change. And that's what we need if we are to end LGBTQ youth homelessness. We need engaged communities committed to changing the way we think about homelessness and about LGBTQ youth.

Though not an exhaustive list, here are some examples of ways libraries and librarians can help:

- Be a visible advocate within the community for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness.
- Participate in your community's annual Point-in-Time count of people experiencing homelessness.
- Train library staff on ways to create inclusive and affirming spaces for LGBTQ youth, and to understand the unique needs and experiences of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness.
- Create a system for granting library cards to LGBTQ young people who may not have a permanent address.
- Engage in community education efforts to raise awareness about the issue of LGBTQ youth homelessness and the impact of identity-based rejection.
- Develop linkages with local service providers and advocates working on the issue of LGBTQ youth homelessness.
- Provide free meeting spaces to local providers and advocates.
- Use meeting spaces to hold meditation/relaxation groups for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness so they have a safe place to rest.
- Visit your local shelter to help youth clear library fines.
- Join the Forty to None Network, an initiative of the True Colors Fund's Forty to None Project, connecting individuals across sectors to end LGBTQ youth homelessness.
- Visit the LAMBDA website at lambda.sis.utk.edu to find resources particularly for librarians, as well as service providers, families, and youth experiencing homelessness.

Final Thoughts from Jama

I have been working with LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness for over 10 years, and not once did I stop to consider the role that libraries can, and often do, play in the lives of these young people, nor did I think of librarians as a captive audience to which I could speak about the needs of homeless LGBTQ youth or the daily challenges they face. I was mistaken. YALS

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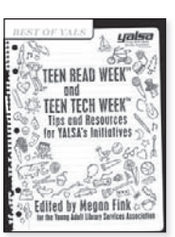

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feature
Hot Spot: Yes I Can

Measuring Outcomes for Teen Technology Programs

By Johannah Genett

What life skills do teens gain from participating in technology programs in the library? How can the library measure whether teens are gaining life skills? What information do funders want in order to successfully evaluate program success? How can we gather assessment data for multiple libraries delivering similar, but not exactly the same, programs? These are questions that all libraries need to address. Answers to the questions help library staff ensure programs are successful. It also helps staff go beyond the numbers (outputs) to the impact (outcomes) of programs they provide. Not only that, library funders are increasingly requesting these types of answers. We have to be ready for those requests. That's why Hennepin County Library teen librarians are currently working on these questions in order to identify and measure meaningful outcomes for its Teen Tech Squad programs.

What Is the Teen Tech Squad?

The Teen Tech Squad are paid teen workers who deliver technology-based programs to their peers in the library. Hennepin County Library currently has three Tech Squads each with three to five teens participating at a time. Technology for these programs is defined broadly—programs range from those that might be seen as more high-tech and require technology for activities like creating music videos, to less expensive, lower-tech options, like making a structure out of wooden dowels.

The Teen Tech Squad began in 2006 when staff at the former Minneapolis Public Library (now Hennepin County Library) hired its first group of teens for this program. Teen workers received training in a variety of software programs and with many different tools. In addition to this, teen workers learned along with the program attendees, fostering collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Currently each squad has four teen workers supervised by a youth services librarian. The librarian leads the group and provides valuable feedback to the teens. For example, after observing workshops, staff give teens suggestions to improve their leadership and communication style based on what was observed. Giving teens this feedback not only improves the teens' leadership and communication skills, it also prepares teens for work environments—accepting and adjusting based on feedback is a necessary job skill. New workshop ideas often emerge from those who attend Tech Squad workshops. Teen workers review new workshop ideas with their supervisor who helps determine how any new content could be turned into a workshop. Workshops take place in meeting rooms or at tables in the public area of the library, depending on what is available at a given library.

Before a workshop, squad members meet and create an outline for a workshop. They also create tip sheets for the technology they are using, prepare examples, and gather any needed materials. After each workshop, the teen workers de-brief with their supervisor and discuss successes, challenges, and changes needed.

Some of the hardware used for the high-tech workshops include MAC laptops, iPads, midi controllers, studio monitors, which are used with music and video production software and apps.

JOHANNAH GENETT is an acting coordinating librarian for Hennepin (Minn.) County Library, supervising 14 libraries including urban, suburban, and small town locations. She became interested in measuring outcomes for library services in her previous role as Senior Programming Librarian for Hennepin County Library. She received a certificate from the University of St. Thomas in Program Outcomes.

Figure 1. What Youth Gain as a Part of the Teen Tech Squad

- Empowerment to create and produce digital media content
- Ability to follow their interests and build a community of learners and content creators
- Pathways to success
- 21st century literacy skills through collaboration with peers, youth mentors and adult 21st century professionals
- Ability to express oneself with technology
- Technological fluency
- Ability to collaborate, communicate and work in teams
- Ability to solve complex problems
- Ability to develop, plan, execute complex projects
- Self-esteem and self-confidence
- Opportunities for self-expression and artistic creation
- Confidence from positive recognition by mentors, educators and community member
- Awareness of educational and career opportunities and supports in arts, music, film and other related professions
- Engagement and connection with community
- Leadership and employment skills

Those in workshops at the Minneapolis Central Library have access to an even greater amount of tools because they take place in the Best Buy Teen Tech Center that opened in January 2013. This center is part of the Intel Computer Clubhouse Network, an international network of after-school programs.

How Do We Measure Teen Tech Squad Success?

The Hennepin County Library is seeking to expand the Teen Tech Squad program, currently funded by the Friends of Hennepin County Library. To successfully fundraise, though, the Friends need more information about what skills teens are gaining from the program and they tasked library staff with gathering this information. While hiring an outside evaluator was an option considered, we decided to preserve as much of the allocated funding as possible for program operation and therefore are managing the evaluation ourselves.

Library staff decided that the first step for measuring the effectiveness of the Teen Tech Squad is to identify what teens gain by participating. Professional evaluators refer to skills patrons gain through library programs as outcomes. Measuring outcomes is a new idea for many librarians. In the past, libraries have most often focused on measuring outputs; that is, quantitative measures like the number of patrons who attend a program or the number of books checked out from a library. Measuring outcomes is about measuring the social and sometimes emotional impact that a library makes in its community.

For the Teen Tech Squad, library staff identified the outcomes (seen in figure 1) as what teens can gain by participating in the Squad and its programs. The key to developing good outcomes is to identify measurable impacts. For example, think about what teens gain or reduce by participating in a program. A good tool to use to develop measurable outcomes is a logic model. The Teen Tech Squad actually emerged out of several different projects, so we had several older logic models to start from. For a good overview on how to create a logic model, take a look at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide (www.smartgivers.org/uploads/logicmodelguidepdf.pdf).

In looking at all of the possible outcomes teens may gain from the Teen Tech Squad, we needed to narrow our focus and hone in on those teens are most likely to achieve. Each youth services librarian was asked to think concretely about the Teen Tech Squad program: What do teens do or create? How do they interact with one another? What do they gain by learning in this format? What skills do the squad members develop? By asking these questions, library staff narrowed the outcomes listed in figure 1 and identified the top three outcomes that teens in the program are most likely to achieve. Outcomes that had the most votes were identified as most important to measure. The group agreed upon the following outcomes:

Outcome one: Youth increase their creation of digital content. This outcome was chosen because it is the main activity that teens and library staff focus on in each workshop.

Outcome two: Youth increase technology skills and their ability to express themselves through technology. We assume that by creating digital content (outcome one), teens are increasing their technology skills (important job skill for the 21st century economy) and increasing their ability to express themselves through their digital creations (an important step for youth in developing maturity). This outcome helps to prove that this is the case.

Outcome three: Youth increase self-confidence. This outcome was chosen because library staff overwhelmingly

Figure 2. Teen Tech Squad Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Indicators	Questions
Youth increase technology skills and their ability to express themselves through technology.	Youth learn skills that they wouldn't be able to learn at school or at home.	Can you use any of these tools that you used today at home or at school?
	Youth gain skills in sharing, critiquing, and analyzing technology and its capabilities.	Did you share any of your work with other teens today?
	Youth gain skills by using technology that interests them.	What tools were you most excited to use today? Do you feel more comfortable using these tools after today's workshop?

noticed teens who participate in the program became more confident in their ability to use technology and more self-assured by being able to express themselves through their interests.

Outcome four: Youth increase leadership and employment skills, including: clear communication, problem-solving skills, resiliency, and team work. This outcome was chosen because library staff see growth in the teen tech workers. Over time, workers improve their ability to articulate directions to peers and feedback to staff, show a greater ability to solve problems with less staff interaction and a greater ability to turn to their fellow teen workers or teen attendees to find a solution.

The librarians then began identifying indicators; that is, how would they know if a teen achieved the outcome (See figure 2). For example, the librarians were asked how they would know that youth increased their technology skills and their ability to express themselves through technology. The librarians said they would know this outcome was achieved if the teens indicated that they gained skills by using technology that is of interest to them. What this looks like in the workshop is when teens seek out technology they have seen or heard about and follow through in learning and using the technology.

The next decision was on how to gather information from teens. The group considered a few tools. Staff could develop quizzes to test the youth's knowledge on the technology they used, but we agreed that would be too time intensive. Staff could host focus groups to gather info from teens, but they agreed that would require a lot of staff involvement to recruit teens, host the sessions, and then compile the data. Staff could be unobtrusive observers who take notes throughout the workshop and tally when they see indicators; again, this would require too much staff time. The group agreed the easiest tool to use would be surveys—a survey with fewer than five questions would be short enough that most teens would complete and also give us the information we need. With teen participants, paper surveys could be easier to use than online surveys because online surveys would require enough computers for every teen to participate or force teens to wait for a computer. The librarians agreed that online surveys through Survey Monkey for the teen workers would be easiest because the teen workers are more likely to be completing the surveys individually so not as many computers would be needed.

The librarians then developed questions to measure each indicator (see figure 2, row 3). Asking yes or no questions provides quantifiable data on whether the outcomes were achieved, and open-ended questions provides anecdotal data that enhances final reports. The librarians drafted questions and then asked teen patrons for feedback—does the wording of the question make sense? If no, what words don't make sense? How can we word it differently? The teen patron feedback was interesting—teens had small language changes that library staff would not have considered. For example, one question was phrased, "Did you share any of your work with other teens today?" This question is being asked to measure outcome two. Teens asked what was meant by "share." When it was explained that it meant that they showed or discussed their work to another teen, they suggested that the following wording

would be clearer: "Did you show or share any of your work with other teens today?"

The librarians' final step was to create the paper and online evaluation forms using Hennepin County Library's Survey Monkey account. Staff are now using these evaluations to track outcomes for the programs. At each workshop, staff distribute paper surveys to the teens. Teens fill out the surveys, and staff input these surveys into Survey Monkey so that all survey evaluation is gathered in one place. Outcomes are gathered by teen workers by having them complete a pre and post online survey. The pre-survey is completed when they are first hired. The post survey is completed after three months of employment.

Staff will compile survey results quarterly and report them to the Friends of Hennepin County Library. Staff will also use these results to gauge whether programs are successful in developing life skills and look for feedback they can use to improve the program. If the program is expanded, new staff will be trained in how to use these tools with the program. YALS

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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Become a Friend of YALSA

Friends of YALSA (FOY) was created to ensure excellence in the Association's traditional programs and services to library workers serving teens and to support growth in new directions as our profession meets the exciting challenges of the 21st century.

Each year, FOY funds are used to support over $16,000 in member scholarships, grants and stipends, including a Spectrum Scholar and Emerging Leader. Funds also support areas such as advocacy, continuous learning, research, planning for the future and teen literacy & young adult literature.

Become a friend in any giving category by making your tax-deductible donation via credit card or sending a contribution by mail.

Visit *www.ala.org/yalsa/givetoyalsa/give* today.

YALSA's Third Thursday Webinars

60 minute webinars on timely topics. Presented by experts. Commercial free.

See what we'll be talking about this spring at ***www.ala.org/yalsa/webinars.***

Live webinars are available only to members and they are free as a member benefit.

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All archived webinars are free for members. They're posted after the live presentation in the *For Members Only* section of the website and nonmembers can buy access for $19 at ***www.ala.org/yalsa/webinarsondemand.***

the YALSA update

ASSOCIATION NEWS

YALSA Announces 2014 Teen Read Week™ Grant Recipients

YALSA announced the 10 recipients of its 2014 Teen Read Week Grant. Each recipient receives a $1,000 grant, generously funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, to fund their Teen Read Week programs and activities.

The recipients of the grant are:

- Jennifer Blair, Covina (Calif.) Public Library
- Sara Brunkhorst, Lemont (Ill.) Public Library District
- Ellen Dodsworth, Eastern Senior High School; Washington D.C.
- Kayla Kuni, New Port Richey (Fla.) Public Library
- Alyssa Newton, Onondaga Free Library; Syracuse, N.Y.
- Sarah Owen, Coffeyville (Kan.) Public Library
- Natasha Payne-Brunson, Richmond (Va.) Public Library
- Heather Stewart, Johnsburg (Ill.) Public Library
- Rachel Sweany, Louisville (Ohio) Public Library
- Gail Zachariah, Keene (N.H.) Public Library

This is the fourth year that YALSA has been able to offer this grant, courtesy of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

This year, Teen Read Week took place from October 12–18, 2014 with the theme of Turn Dreams into Reality @ 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 be regular readers and library users. To learn more about Teen Read Week, visit www.ala.org/teenread.

YALSA 2015 Election Slate

YALSA's Awards Nominating and Governance Nominating Committees have assembled the following slate for 2015:

President-Elect
Sarah Hill

Division Councilor
Todd Krueger

Board Member-at-Large
Diane Colson
Crystle Martin
Kate McNair
Adrienne Strock

2017 Edwards Award Committee
Betsy Crone
Jeanette Johnson
Joy Millam

2017 Nonfiction Award Committee
Meaghan Darling
Jennifer Longee
Loren Spector
Ellen Spring

2017 Printz Award Committee
Jonatha Basye
Marianne Follis
Janet Hilbun
Melanie Koss
Jeanne McDermott
Kefira Philippe
Katie Richert
Edwin Rodarte
Jessi Shulte-Honstad

Any individual interested in being added to the slate as a petition candidate can do so by submitting a completed Petition for YALSA Ballot form via the YALSA website at http://tinyurl.com/ballotpetition no later than November 2, 2014. Elections open March 24, 2015 and close May 1, 2015.

Android Version of Teen Book Finder App & Updated iOS App Now Available

YALSA launched its Android version of its popular Teen Book Finder app. Android users can download the app for free through the Google Play store. The app allows users to access YALSA's recommended reading and award winning titles from past years with just a touch of a button on their mobile device. An updated version of the iOS app is also now available through the Apple App Store.

The Teen Book Finder app's features include:

- The ability to **Search** for books by author, title, award or list year, genre, award title, and booklist title
- A **Find It!** button, powered by the OCLC WorldCat Search API, that

shows users where to find the book in a nearby library and a book's available 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** titles from the Teen Book Finder on Twitter and Facebook

YALSA's Teen Book Finder app for Android and iOS are available thanks to generous funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

YALSA Opens up 2015 Applications for Summer Reading and Teen Intern Program Grants

Eligible YALSA members can now apply for the 2015 Summer Reading Resources and Teen Summer Intern Program grants.

Through generous funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, two grants are available, the Summer Reading Resources Grant and the Teen Summer Intern Program Grant. The purpose of the grants is to help libraries combat the summer slide.

20 summer reading resources grants, worth $1000 each, will be awarded to libraries in need and will allow them to purchase resources that better equip them to serve struggling readers and/or teens who are English language learners. 20 teen summer intern program grants, also worth $1000 each, will be awarded to libraries to support the implementation of summer reading/learning programs while also providing teens a chance to build hands-on job skills.

Interested applicants are invited to apply for the grants if they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must be a YALSA member at the time the application is submitted
- Summer reading/learning program must be administered through a library
- Summer reading/learning program must be open to all teens in the community
- Must work directly with teens
- Library must be within 20 miles of a Dollar General store

Eligible applicants can apply now through **January 1, 2015 at** http://summerreading.ning.com/. Recipients will be notified during the week of February 16, 2015. For information about joining YALSA, visit www.ala.org/yalsa/join

To learn more about the grants and to apply, please visit our Summer Reading & Learning website at http://summerreading.ning.com/

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation Awards Youth Literacy Grant to ALSC/YALSA

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded a Youth Literacy grant, the Everyone Reads @ your library grant, in the amount of $246,806 to the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). The Everyone Reads @ your Library grant allows ALSC and YALSA to support important literacy programs across the country.

With the grant, YALSA will continue its mission to build the capacity of libraries and librarians to engage, serve and empower teens through its Teen Read Week™, Summer Reading & Learning, and Teens' Top Ten initiatives.

"We are extremely thrilled and appreciative of Dollar General's continued support towards our literacy initiatives," said YALSA President Christopher Shoemaker. "Summer reading and learning, Teen Read Week™, and the Teens' Top Ten are pertinent programs for our teens to further develop their literacy skills and enhance their futures."

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation's Youth Literacy grants are awarded to public libraries, schools and nonprofit organizations to help students who are below grade level or experiencing difficulty reading.

Since its founding, Dollar General has been committed to supporting literacy and education. To further this support, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation was established in 1993 to improve the functional literacy of adults and families by providing grants to nonprofit organizations dedicated to the advancement of literacy.

For more information about the Dollar General Literacy Foundation visit www.dgliteracy.org.

2015 Teen Tech Week Theme

Libraries are for Making (_____) is the 2015 theme for Teen Tech Week. Libraries are encouraged to fill in the blank with a word or phrase that best describes the type of "making" that takes place at their library or institution. Teen Tech Week is a great opportunity for libraries to make time to showcase the great non-print resources and services available to teens and their families. Use the week to demonstrate the value of your library in the community by offering teens a space to extend learning beyond the classroom, where they can explore, create, and share content. Libraries can customize the making theme to illustrate the specific ways they support making in their library—from baking cupcakes to building robots.

For more information, please visit www.ala.org/teentechweek.

YALSA Opens Proposals for 2015 Symposium

Program proposals and paper presentations for YALSA's 2015 Young Adult Services Symposium, Bringing it All Together: Connecting Libraries, Teens & Communities are open for submission until December 1, 2014. The symposium for 2015 is to be held Nov. 6–8, 2015, in Portland, Ore.

The Symposium will gather together librarians, educators, researchers, young adult authors and other teen advocates to discuss the role of libraries in connecting teens to their community and beyond.

In 2015 the YALSA Symposium goes beyond YA literature and becomes an annual event. Programs will cover the entire spectrum of topics related to providing services for and with young adults, including readers' advisory and maintaining young adult literature collections. Proposals are sought in the following categories:

- Programming
- Collections
- Digital and Print Literacy
- Youth Participation
- Spaces (physical and virtual)
- Partnering/Collaborations

Interested parties should propose 90-minute programs centered on the theme, as well as paper presentations offering new, unpublished research relating to the theme. Applications for all proposals are available at http://www.ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium. Proposals for programs and paper presentations must be completed online by Dec. 1, 2014. Applicants will be notified of their proposals' status by Feb. 1, 2015.

New! *Intellectual Freedom for Teens: A Practical Guide for Young Adult & School Librarians* Offers Guidance on Intellectual Freedom For Teens

Year after year a majority of the titles on ALA's Banned Books list, which compiles titles threatened with censorship, are either YA books or adult books that are frequently read by teens. It's important for YA librarians to understand the types of challenges occurring in libraries around the nation and to be ready to deal with such challenges as they occur. YALSA has tailored this new book, *Intellectual Freedom for Teens: A Practical Guide for Young Adult & School Librarians*, now available in the ALA Store, specifically for these situations, providing much-needed guidance on the highly charged topic of intellectual freedom for teens. Among the issues addressed are

- How to prepare yourself and your staff for potential challenges by developing a thoughtful selection policy and response plan
- Resources for help when a challenge occurs
- The art of crafting a defense for a challenged book, and pointers for effectively disseminating your response through the press and social media
- The latest on intellectual freedom in the digital realm, including an examination of library technology

Using examples of censorship battles in both school and public libraries to illustrate possible scenarios, this guidebook gives YA librarians the foreknowledge and support to ensure intellectual freedom for teens.

To purchase this product, please visit www.alastore.ala.org.

Bring YALSA to Your Neck of the Woods!

YALSA can bring face-to-face training to you! You provide the attendees and the space; we'll provide training materials and a content expert. The following full-day workshops are available for licensing from YALSA:

- Beginners' Guide to Teens and Libraries
- Get Graphic @ Your Library
- Power Up with Print
- Speak Up, Stand Up, Step Up: Advocating for Teens
- Teens & Tech: Current Trends

To learn more, including pricing information, visit www.ala.org/yalsa/face-face-training or contact Nicole Gibby Munguia at nmunguia@ala.org or 312.280.5293 YALS

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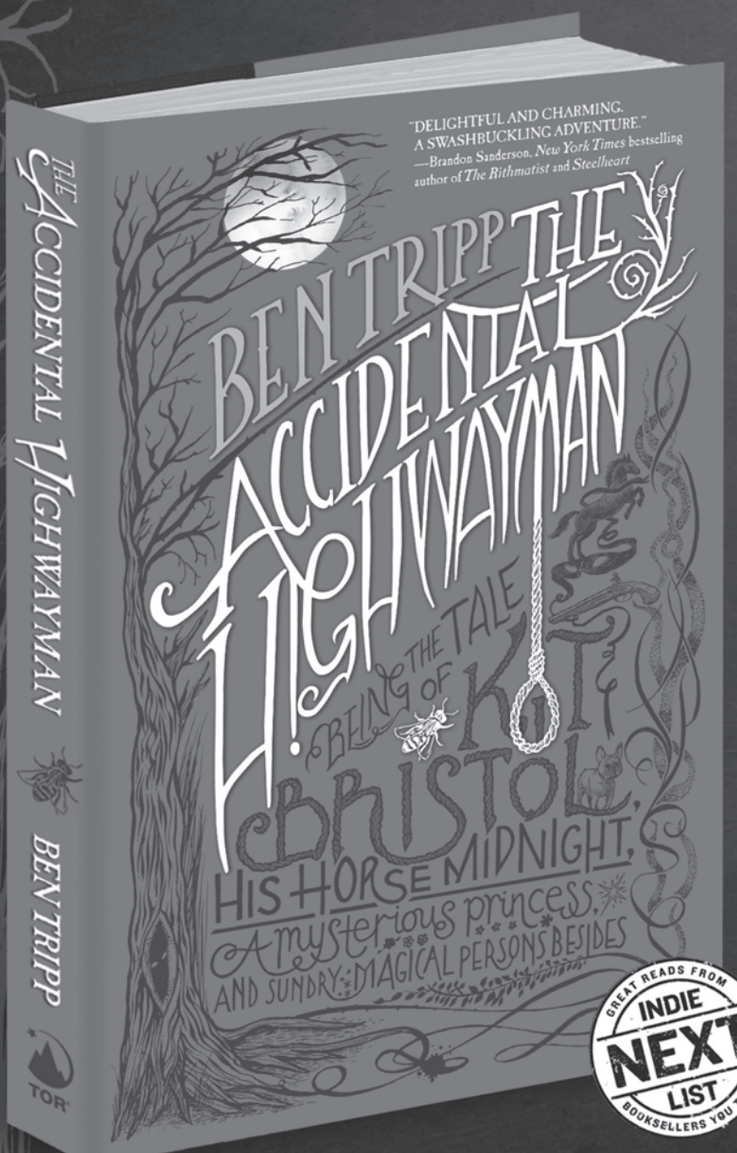

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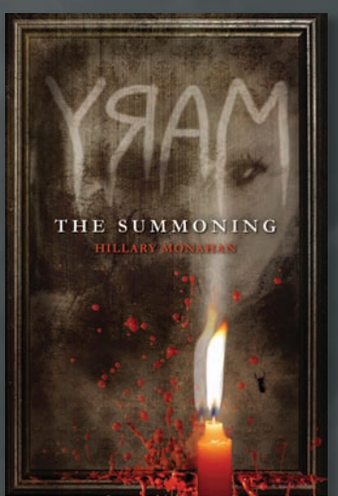

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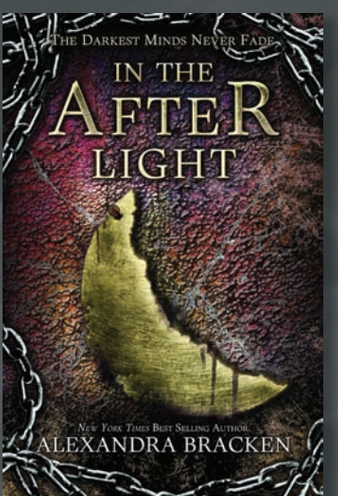

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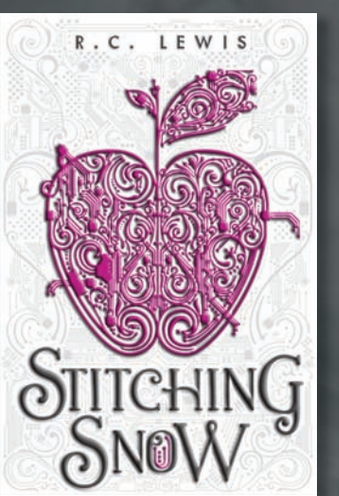

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