CAREER ADVENTURES
CAMP: CREATING POSSIBILITIES & PATHWAYS

LIBRARIES READY TO CODE: WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

YALSA 2019 BOOK AWARDS RECAP

NEXT STEPS: PREPARING TEENS FOR GROWTH AND SUCCESS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
JOIN US as we explore how libraries can effectively help teens navigate a challenging world.

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## CONTENTS

### HIGHLIGHT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>YALSA BOOK AWARDS RECAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>YALSA EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FEATURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>CAREER ADVENTURES CAMP: CREATING POSSIBILITIES AND PATHWAYS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS</td>
<td>Gwen Owen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>NEXT STEPS: PREPARING TEENS FOR GROWTH AND SUCCESS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE</td>
<td>Camila Jenkin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXPLORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>RESEARCH ROUNDUP: COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TEENS</td>
<td>Yolanda Hood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TRENDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>LIBRARIES READY TO CODE: WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?</td>
<td>Caitlin K. Martin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PLUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>FROM THE EDITOR</td>
<td>Crystle Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>FROM THE PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Crystle Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS INDEX TO ADVERTISERS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>THE YALSA UPDATE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### YALS ON THE WEB

- Want more YALS? Members and subscribers can access the latest and back issues of YALS digitally on the YALSAblog at http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/yals/, as well as browse supplemental YALS articles and resources.
FROM THE EDITOR

Crystle Martin

T

his issue of YALS explores what library staff who serve teens can do to help prepare teens for their future. It specifically focuses on preparing teens for thinking about their future and the role that a community college can play in that future. The Features section includes articles that look at careers and community college. Gwen Owen, from the Dayton Metro Library, describes Career Adventure Camp, which connects middle school students with possible career pathways focusing on growing sectors in their region. Camila Jenkin, Outreach Librarian at El Camino College, discusses how to prepare teens for growth and success at community college.

The Trending Section includes an article from Caitlin Martin, the external evaluator for Phases II and III of the ALA Libraries Ready to Code initiative. This article summarizes the Libraries Ready to Code Phase III evaluation and highlights how and why libraries can implement and facilitate computation thinking activities for youth in their communities. In the Explore Section, Yolanda Hood presents a Research Roundup, which features community colleges and teens related research articles. The Highlights sections, which features YALA related articles, features the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion plan that was published late last summer, and a recap of the YALSA 2019 Book Awards.

Don’t forget that the YALSAblog includes additional materials that complement the print YALS. You’ll find that content at: http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/category/yals

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.
In this column, I am going to highlight some of the work that YALSA is already doing that relates to this theme of community colleges and those who work for and with teens in libraries. For a number of years, YALSA has been thinking about what we need to do to support teens as they prepare for their future. It became a major focus of the organization with the release of the IMLS funded report, The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: a Call to Action.

In the section that describes paradigm shifts for the field, the report highlights Connected Learning, economic and social factors impacting teens, and workforce development, all of which emphasize the importance of supporting teens as they plan for their futures.

This work helped to set the stage for the Future Ready with the Library grant, funded by IMLS. This work is entering year four and preparing to accept applications for its fourth cohort of participants. This project focuses on building the capacity of small, rural, and tribal libraries to provide college and career readiness services for and with middle schoolers. YALSA and the Association for Rural and Small Libraries are working with library staff to build needed skills while also developing, testing, and refining turnkey resources, which other libraries can adapt for their own use. The resources developed will help other librarians who serve teens, even in areas that are isolated, have implementable ideas about how they can expand their students’ horizons and help them to develop skills for their futures.

YALSA has also released a new set of competencies called Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff. The Competencies have Dispositions and Content Areas.

Dispositions:
• Shows warmth, caring, and respect for all teens and their families
• Recognizes and respects the diversity of teens and their families, and understands this diversity impacts all areas of practice
• Recognizes the systemic inequities that exist in our institutions and communities and strives to dismantle them and to provide equitable access for and with all youth

(continued on page 6)
YALSA Book Awards Recap

ALA’s 2019 Youth Media Awards took place on January 28 in Seattle, Washington. Below are the winners and finalists of YALSA’s book awards. Learn more about each book award at tinyurl.com/yalsa-bookawards.

Book Awards

Alex Awards:
- *The Black God’s Drums* by P. Djèlí Clark
- *The Book of Essie* by Meghan MacLean Weir
- *Circe* by Madeline Miller
- *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover
- *Green* by Sam Graham-Felsen
- *Home After Dark* by David Small
- *How Long ’Til Black Future Month?* by N. K. Jemisin
- *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison
- *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik

Edwards Award:
- **Author:** M. T. Anderson
- **Titles:**
  - *Feed*
  - *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: The Pox Party*
  - *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves*

Morris Award:
- **Winner:** *Darius the Great Is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram

Finalists:
- *Blood Water Paint* by Joy McCullough
- *Check, Please!: #Hockey* written and illustrated by Ngozi Ukazu
- *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi
- *What the Night Sings* written and illustrated by Vesper Stamper

Nonfiction Award:
- **Winner:** *The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees* written and illustrated by Don Brown

Finalists:
- *The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor* written by Sonia Sotomayor
- *Boots on the Ground: America’s War in Vietnam* written by Elizabeth Partridge
- *The Faithful Spy: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Plot to Kill Hitler* written and illustrated by John Hendrix
- *Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction* written and illustrated by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

Odyssey Award:
- **Winner:** *Sadie* by Courtney Summers and narrated by Rebecca Soler, Fred Berman, Dan Bittner, Gabra Zackman, and more.

Finalists:
- *Du Iz Tåk* by Carson Ellis, narrated by Eli and Sebastian D’Amico, Burton, Galen, Laura Fott, Sarah Hart, Bella Higginbotham, Evelyn Hipp, and Brian Hull
- *Esquire! Space-Age Sound Artist* by Susan Wood, narrated by Brian Amador
The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson, narrated by Cherise Booth
The Poet X written and narrated by Elizabeth Acevedo

Printz Award:
• Winner: The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo
• Finalists:
  • Damsel by Elana K. Arnold
  • A Heart in a Body in the World by Deb Caletti
  • I, Claudia by Mary McCoy

Best Fiction for Young Adults:
• A Heart in a Body in the World by Deb Caletti
• Darius the Great Is Not Okay by Adib Khorram
• Dread Nation by Justina Ireland
• Foolish Hearts by Emma Mill.
• Frankie by Shivaun Plozza
• Monday’s Not Coming by Tiffany D. Jackson
• Neanderthal Opens the Door to the Universe by Preston Norton
• The Cruel Prince by Holly Black
• The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo
• What If It’s Us by Becky Albertalli and Adam Silvera

Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers:
• The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo
• Speak: The Graphic Novel by Laurie Halse Anderson, illustrated by Emily Carroll
• Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald
• Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction written and illustrated by Jarrett J. Krosoczka
• #MurderTrending by Gretchen McNeil
• Track series (Sunny [vol. 3] and Lu [vol. 4]) by Jason Reynolds
• Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed
• Animal Zombies!: And Other Blood-Sucking Beasts, Creepy Creatures, and Real-Life Monsters by Chana Stiefel
• Sadie by Courtney Summers
• The Prince and the Dressmaker by Jen Wang

Selected Book Lists Top Tens
Below are the top ten titles from each of our 2019 selected book lists. Learn more and view the full lists of each at tinyurl.com/yalsa-bookmedialists.

Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults:
• Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor, read by Yetide Badaki
• Educated by Tara Westover, read by Julia Whelan
• I Have Lost My Way by Gayle Forman, read by Nicole Lewis, Michael Crouch, and Sunil Malhotra
• Lu by Jason Reynolds, read by Guy Lockard
• Quidditch Through the Ages by J. K. Rowling and Kennilworthy Whisp, read by Andrew Lincoln
• Sadie by Courtney Summers, read by Rebecca Soler, Fred Berman, Dan Bitner, Gabra Zackman, and a Full Cast
• Sunny by Jason Reynolds, read by Guy Lockard
• The Assassination of Brangwain Spurge by M.T. Anderson and Eugene Yelchin, read by Gildart Jackson
• The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo, read by Elizabeth Acevedo
• Thunderhead by Neal Shusterman, read by Greg Trembley
• My Brother’s Husband, Volume 2 by Gengoroh Tagame
• On a Sunbeam by Tillie Walden
• Royal City, Volumes 2 and 3: Sonic Youth and We All Float On by Jeff Lemire
• Silver Spoon, Volumes 1-4 by Hiromu Arakawa
• Speak: The Graphic Novel by Laurie Halse Anderson, illustrated by Emily Carroll
• The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees by Don Brown
• Anne Frank’s Diary: The Graphic Adaptation by Anne Frank and Ari Folman, illustrated by David Polonsky
• Crush by Svetlana Chmakova
• Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction by Jarrett Krosoczka
• Illegal by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin, illustrated by Giovanni Rigano
• My Brother’s Husband, Volume 2 by Gengoroh Tagame
• On a Sunbeam by Tillie Walden
• Royal City, Volumes 2 and 3: Sonic Youth and We All Float On by Jeff Lemire
• Silver Spoon, Volumes 1-4 by Hiromu Arakawa
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FROM THE PRESIDENT
(continued from page 3)

• Values creativity and imagination in learning, and promotes those attributes in teens and in themselves
• Takes an asset-based approach to working for and with teens and their families
• Recognizes that quality library services support teens and families, and bridge the gap between school and home
• Values the importance of collaboration and engagement with youth development stakeholders, community members and organizations, and local decision-makers

Content Areas:
1. Teen Growth and Development: Knows the typical benchmarks for growth and development and uses this knowledge to plan, provide, and evaluate library resources, programs, and services that meet the multiple needs of teens.
2. Interactions with Teens: Recognizes the importance of relationships and communication in the development and implementation of quality teen library services, and implements techniques and strategies to support teens individually and in group experiences to develop self-concept, identity, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with peers and adults.
3. Learning Environments (formal and informal): Cultivates high-quality, developmentally appropriate, flexible learning environments that support teens individually and in group experiences as they engage in formal and informal learning activities.
4. Learning Experiences (formal and informal): Works with teens, volunteers, community partners, and others to plan, implement, and evaluate high-quality, developmentally appropriate formal and informal learning activities that support teens’ personal and academic interests.
5. Youth Engagement and Leadership: Responds to all teens’ interests and needs, and acts in partnership with teens to create and implement teen activities and to foster teen leadership.
6. Community and Family Engagement: Builds respectful, reciprocal relationships with community organizations and families to promote optimal development for teens and to enhance the quality of library services.
7. Cultural Competency and Responsiveness: Actively promotes respect for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful library atmosphere that embraces diversity.
8. Equity of Access: Ensures access to a wide variety of library resources, services, and activities for and with all teens, especially those facing challenges to access.
9. Outcomes and Assessment: Focuses on the impact of library programs for and with teens and uses data to inform service development, implementation, and continuous improvement.
10. Continuous Learning: Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best library practices and policies for teen services.

Content Areas 4 and 6 highlight the importance of supporting teens in preparing for their future. Content Area 4: Learning Experience (formal and informal) described the content and importance of this area as:

Libraries have always been associated with learning. Library staff provide formal and informal learning experiences for teens, resulting in teens’ ability to construct their own learning about topics that are important to them, build non-traditional and “non-tested” skills and literacies, develop 21st-century skills, content knowledge, and expertise, engage in peer-supported learning, and connect with a broader community of others interested in the same topics.

Content Area 6: Community and Family Engagement described the content and importance of this area as:

Teens carry out their lives in multiple settings including parks, out-of-school-time organizations, schools, public libraries, places of worship, jobs, and home. To create seamless opportunities for gaining social and life skills, through formal and informal learning, library staff work with community organizations, schools, and families. To do this, staff implement culturally competent practices to connect teens and their families to the information and resources they need.

Enjoy this issue that helps expand your knowledge about helping teens connect with their potential future and what community college can offer your teens.
YALSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan

Foreword
The purpose of this plan is to affirm YALSA’s commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and to highlight the equity, diversity, and inclusion-related strategies that the YALSA board is taking in the organization’s Strategic and Implementation Plans. Given the predominant whiteness and femaleness of the profession and the diversity of the populations served by the profession, it is crucial that equity, diversity, and inclusion are at the forefront of our members’ minds and that we as an organization are working to make the YALSA a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. The document provides YALSA’s Mission; Vision; Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for 2018–2020. The strategies section lists five goals with their supporting strategies. Each strategy is embedded in the Strategic and Implementation Plan and will be evaluated as it is completed. It is a living document that the YALSA board will revisit and revise as necessary and during future strategic planning processes.

Acknowledgments
We wish to thank the Advancing Diversity Task Force for laying the groundwork for this plan. The task force members included Nicole A. Cooke (chair), Amanda Barnhart, Shaunte Burns-Simpson, Veronica Rey, Alice Son, Valerie Tagoe, and Julie Winkelstein.

YALSA Mission
Our mission is to support library staff in alleviating the challenges teens face, and in putting all teens—especially those with the greatest needs—on the path to successful and fulfilling lives.

YALSA Vision
Our vision is that all teens, from a variety of backgrounds including, but not limited to, ability, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion and power-differentiated groups, will have access to quality library programs and services—no matter where they occur—that are tailored to the community and that create new opportunities for all teens to promote personal growth, academic success, and career development, while linking teens and staff to resources, connected learning opportunities, coaching, and mentoring.

YALSA Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are ideals that the Young Adult Library Services Association seeks to affirm in all facets of the organization. As a professional organization dedicated to enhancing library services for and with teens, YALSA recognizes that all teens, and particularly teens from underserved and marginalized communities, need and deserve to see themselves reflected in the library staffing, policies, signage, website content, and much more. Therefore, YALSA seeks to address the cultural mismatch between today’s increasingly diverse teen population and the librarian workforce, which remains overwhelmingly white and female.

Although achieving greater representational diversity is an important component of YALSA’s EDI goals,
there are two equally important issues that YALSA is committed to redressing on an institutional level: equity and inclusion. Attending to issues of equity and inclusion are important because they help move the organization away from mere platitudes about diversity and demand measurable actions to redress the systemic power asymmetries that have kept certain groups of people on the periphery of the organization. When YALSA attends to inequities in the organization, there is a direct benefit to all of the nation’s teens who are more apt to feel included and empowered in library and information spaces, both physically and virtually. Moreover, an explicit EDI statement can help undergird cultural competence training and professional development for the library staff charged with serving the diverse needs of all teens.

Further, YALSA affirms and supports the American Library Association’s (ALA) EDI-related policies, as outlined in the ALA Policy Manual, sections B3–B8.

—Adopted by YALSA’s Board of Directors, October 17, 2018

YALSA Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The vision for YALSA is to be a diverse, inclusive, and equitable organization that flourishes on the exchange of ideas from different perspectives. We believe the diversity of viewpoints that comes from different life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, and more enables YALSA to better achieve its mission to support library staff in alleviating the challenges teens face, and in putting all teens—especially those with the greatest needs—on the path to successful and fulfilling lives.

We Are Committed To:
- Increasing diversity, which is expressed in myriad forms, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, culture, national origin, age, disability status, ideology, religion, power-differentiated groups, and professional skill and experience levels, across the organization, including among our members, leadership, staff, and partners.
- Working actively to redress institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries that affect our society, to challenge bias, harassment, and discrimination, and to provide equal opportunity for all persons.
- Deliberately pursuing efforts to ensure that YALSA is an inclusive place where differences are welcomed, where different perspectives are respectfully heard and responded to, and where every individual feels a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Goal 1: Create an Inclusive, Equitable, and Welcoming Organizational Environment

Strategies
- Expand current YALSA board member leadership training to include high-quality education and experiences in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Provide professional development experiences for YALSA staff focused on related topics such as cultural competency and handling diversity, equity, and inclusion issues
- Provide training for committee, task force, and jury chairs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion both as part of their onboarding process and as continued leadership support
- Leadership and staff will apply what they learn from EDI-related training and implement it in member engagement, recruitment, and retention
- Provide feedback mechanisms for participants in webinars, listserv discussions, committee meetings, and conference programs to ensure they are inclusive and respond to incidents of bias, harassment, discrimination, and intolerance if necessary
- Offer ongoing opportunities for YALSA members, leaders, and staff to discuss EDI and what it means
- Conduct yearly surveys and periodic focus groups with YALSA members and potential members to help the association understand EDI perspectives related to YALSA’s organizational environment
- Offer conference buddies for first-time attendees
- Ensure events and experiences at conferences, including networking opportunities, are inclusive
- Continue to encourage diverse participation in activities such as the weekly Member Spotlight in the eNews

Goals and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion 2018–2020

Over the next two years, YALSA seeks the following goals to move toward our Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:
1. Audit existing YALSA activities to create a more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming organizational environment
2. Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership and cadre of volunteers at all levels in the organization
3. Continue to align our policies, procedures, and practices with our EDI vision
4. Ensure that YALSA members know how to develop inclusive and equitable library spaces, services, and programs
5. Create and maintain formal and informal partnerships with other organizations around a shared commitment to redressing institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries
Goal 2: Recruit, Retain, and Develop a More Diverse Membership

**Strategies**
- Develop a recruitment campaign targeted at library staff from underrepresented groups
- Encourage ALA to investigate alternative dues structures
- Assess existing pathways to professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented groups
- Provide support for members from underrepresented groups such as a mentoring program, networking opportunities at conferences or in ALA Connect, grants to attend YALSA’s symposium or other events, and other opportunities.
- Continue to reach out to and engage with individuals representing underrepresented groups to serve on the YALSA board, committees, task forces, and juries, and to present at conferences.
- Continue to provide guidance for committee appointments and volunteer opportunities to include and increase diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Continue to expand member involvement in YALSA committees, task forces, and other volunteer activities that do not require conference attendance.
- Promptly respond to volunteers who fill out the volunteer form.
- Implement a member referral program aimed at individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Partner with other organizations to recruit diverse members.
- Ensure recruitment materials prominently feature YALSA’s commitment to EDI.

Goal 3: Align Our Policies and Practices with Our EDI Vision

**Strategies**
- Institute a practice to ask ourselves these questions: How does this policy, practice, or partnership support YALSA’s equity, diversity, and inclusion vision? Does it support equitable and inclusive access and opportunity? Is it neutral? Does it stand in the way of our vision?
- Audit existing policies, procedures, and practices to align them with YALSA’s EDI vision.
- Use an equity lens to create messaging, resources, services, and programs.
- Require that all proposals that come to the board include a section on attention to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Hold ourselves accountable through annual internal review of all strategies in this plan, our values, and YALSA policies and adjust as needed.

Goal 4: Ensure that YALSA Members Know How to Develop Inclusive and Equitable Library Services and Programs

**Strategies**
- Continue to provide professional development experiences for YALSA members of all job types, including support staff, focused on cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Embed cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion in all YALSA professional learning opportunities no matter the topic focus.
- Create a clearinghouse or speakers’ bureau of people with expertise in equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Provide models of inclusive and equitable library services and programs.
- Create and distribute materials, such as toolkits, to help members better serve diverse youth and to address issues of institutional bias and racism in their library.

Goal 5: Create Formal and Informal Partnerships with Other Organizations Around a Shared Commitment to Redressing Institutional Inequities and Systemic Power Asymmetries

**Strategies**
- Work with library and information science (LIS) and iSchools to ensure that cultural competencies, equity, diversity, and inclusion is included in all youth-oriented curricula.
- Identify potential partners whose mission is in alignment with YALSA’s EDI vision and build opportunities to move our work forward through the partnership.
- Identify potential funding agencies who make diversity, equity, and inclusion central to their missions and philanthropic efforts.

Implementation

The strategies listed in this plan have been and will be embedded in YALSA’s current and future Strategic Organizational and Implementation Plans.

Evaluation

Each of the strategies will be evaluated separately as part of its individual implementation. The YALSA president will present a progress report at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference at the end of year one of this plan. For the ALA Annual Conference in 2020, a two-year annual report will be presented to give an update on the status of this plan, as well as an updated plan for the following two years.
**New Webinar Subscription Opportunity!**

Non-YALSA members can now attend YALSA's monthly webinars through a paid annual subscription.

**Subscription Rates:**
- $59 - Individuals
- $129 - Groups

*YALSA members will continue to receive free access*
For some time now there has been a push among businesses and universities to have students prepared for the future, a desire for teens to be equipped with skills that will give them solid footing in the workforce and a foundation for the start of university. Yet, as stated in the 2014 YALSA YA Forum Report, “The Future of Libraries for and with Teens: A Call to Action,” the skills required for young adults to succeed in the workforce have changed drastically; and, unfortunately, schools struggle to keep up with those changes. A review of the literature does show a trend in community outreach and collaboration among high schools and community colleges as a way of addressing the gaps in skill building.


Prince George’s Community College in Maryland partnered with the Prince George’s County Public Schools by actually creating a high school on campus. Students who attend the high school have an opportunity to also take courses at the community college. Many of those students graduate with an associate’s degree as well as their high school diploma. A collaboration like this one allows easier access to everyone, and curriculum alignment is definitely at the forefront of the high school.


Guth acknowledges that this generation of teens often have an entrepreneurial spirit, and community colleges are taking advantage of that spirit by creating programs that encourage entrepreneurialism and collaboration with high schools. The community colleges are encouraging teens to take advantage of their fab labs to create projects that might, ultimately, shape themselves into a business. New York’s Bronx Community College has created Start-Up CEO, which allows students to...
earn twelve college credits while learning how to apply real-world business skills.

Pierce highlights programs in Florida’s Seminole County that place an emphasis on college-ready partnerships between the Seminole County Public Schools and the Seminole State College of Florida. One way to improve the gap between attaining skills and graduating from high school is to be sure that K–12 schools align their curriculums with the expectations of community colleges and universities. Seminole State College and North Dakota’s Bismarck State College do this by ensuring that instructors from both the colleges and the high schools meet on a regular basis to discuss the curriculum and the best practices to ensure that the curriculums align. Although not a new idea, Pierce also highlights the practice of dual enrollment. Many students can take community college courses in their high schools. And, while taking courses on the community college campus might be a bit inconvenient, Pierce emphasizes that spending time on a college campus can give teens a better understanding of how college works and what is expected of them as community college students.

Pierce discusses the practice of dual enrollment among high school students across the United States. Although dual enrollment programs are run differently across states, most states agree that teens receive significant benefits from participating in dual enrollment programs. Teens have, in some cases, graduated from high school while also receiving an associate degree. One benefit of dual enrollment programs is that students have momentum to continue with their studies. Another is that some students leave high school with a viable skill set that will garner a career with a living wage. Dual enrollment programs work differently in every state and, even, county. Some students have to be present on the community college campus, whereas others can take the community college courses at their high schools.

In their research, Rosenbaum, Ahearn, and Rosenbaum offer four lessons about the role of community colleges in the lives of teens: community colleges provide a path to future success, community colleges have different academic standards, curriculum alignment is very important, and college scorecards can provide information on college outcomes. Community college credentials will give teens an advantage over those who only have a high school diploma. Those with community college credentials not only report higher wages but also report more satisfaction with their careers. Teens who choose to go to a community college have an opportunity to acquire the skills necessary for university learning without the large price tag. And, those teens who attended high schools with curriculum alignment have a better chance of succeeding once out of high school. Finally, it is important to look at college scorecards. Teens will have a better sense of the success rates of those who graduate, their salaries, and career trajectories.
There is growing recognition that computational thinking (CT), including being able to think algorithmically and analyze information, is critical for civic engagement and participation in the future workforce. There are stark inequalities in opportunities for youth to develop CT skills, with lower socioeconomic and marginalized youth being underserved.

The necessity for building skills in CT and inequalities among youth are two reasons the American Library Association launched the Libraries Ready to Code initiative (sponsored by Google). The mission of the initiative is to support library staff to facilitate CT opportunities for youth in ways that are grounded in research, aligned with library core values, and that can broaden participation. The vision is for all youth to have access to high-quality informal and formal opportunities from pre-K–12 to engage in CT as a critical literacy, developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to take advantage of and make informed decisions about their future.

But what does this look like in practice? In 2017, twenty-eight libraries were awarded grants of up to $25K to facilitate youth CT opportunities in their community and collaborate with each other over the course of one year on a collection of CT learning and implementation materials for libraries. The cohort included twenty-one public libraries (75 percent), six school libraries, and one tribal library. There was equal representation of libraries classified as small, medium, and large, and that served urban, suburban, and rural communities. The libraries facilitated CT opportunities that served preschool through high school youth and included drop-in events as well as sustained multiweek workshop series and clubs. Fifty-seven library staff from the funded libraries participated in the Libraries Ready to Code community of practice that included weekly webinars and regular exchange of content and ideas using online collaboration tools.

Through library CT implementation and staff collaboration, much was learned about supporting library staff and about the ways in which libraries are uniquely positioned to connect youth to quality CT opportunities.

By Caitlin K. Martin

Computational Thinking Resonated with Libraries

Misperceptions about CT may be limiting facilitation of CT learning in libraries. Most libraries that applied for funding equated youth CT opportunities with technology equipment and coding activities, both of which were connected to perceived barriers. Three hundred ninety-three libraries applied for the Libraries Ready to Code grant. Nine out of ten applicants (90 percent) proposed coding and computer programming activities. Eight out of ten applicants (82 percent) requested technology equipment as a budget line item. In those same applications, lack of technology and limited staff coding and computer programming content knowledge were two of the three most frequently described challenges to offering opportunities at their library.

When CT was explored and understood in more detail, it resonated with libraries. Through collaborative discussion and professional learning opportunities during the Libraries Ready to Code community of practice, the twenty-eight cohort libraries articulated CT
in their own youth activities and practices, recognized CT facilitation opportunities that did not require technology equipment or advanced staff knowledge of programming and coding, and identified CT as a critical literacy. Over the course of the project, a definition of CT for libraries was established that (see sidebar) encapsulated the big ideas in language that resonated with library staff and that explicitly connected to library practice. This definition built on existing definitions disseminated by industry and education professionals and incorporated input and feedback from library and information science faculty and library staff. CT became an overarching theme for cohort library program design, implementation, and advocacy efforts. It provided a framing for why coding and computer programming is relevant and allowed for expanding possibilities beyond these go-to activities, often including unplugged activities that require no technology.

Cohort library staff advocated for CT in libraries in response to current thinking about literacy and learning and as a matter of equity, highlighting the responsibility of libraries to provide access and associated opportunities to all. At the start of the project the majority of cohort libraries (84 percent) considered CT to be a critical literacy, but even so they agreed significantly more at the end of the project. Increases were greater for those library staff more involved in the Libraries Ready to Code community of practice. Ongoing conversations about CT, a regular part of the community of practice, were key in supporting individual confidence and broader recognition and appropriation of CT for library settings.

A Community of Practice Was Essential

While the cohort appreciated ideas for specific resources such as books, lesson plans, games, and equipment, all cohort library staff valued the Libraries Ready to Code community of practice as a way to gain skills, knowledge, and confidence. It was seen by many as the most valuable resource they encountered during the course of the project and one of the most important outcomes resulting from the initiative. For many, this community was new; only 26 percent identified a strong professional network associated with youth services and technology-related learning prior to the project. Opportunities for learning and discussion, direct contribution through presentations and shared materials, and synchronous and asynchronous participation were key. Ways to connect with others may be especially important for those with limited local networks, such as staff in rural and tribal libraries. Cohort library staff working in rural communities started below their peers in terms of familiarity and experience with computational thinking, connected learning, and youth voice but

Libraries Ready to Code Defines Computational Thinking

Computational thinking (CT) refers to thought processes used to formulate problems and their solutions (Wing 2006). These include breaking down problems into smaller parts, looking for patterns, identifying principles that generate these patterns, and developing instructions that computers— machines and people—can understand. It is an approach to critical thinking that can be used to solve problems across all disciplines (Google’s Exploring Computational Thinking, n.d.).

The cohort provided me with another learning community that I find essential to my work with kids and families. Living and working in a small town, I have to look virtually for professional peers who I can discuss ideas with. Virtual opportunities to talk in real time and develop new professional relationships have been key for me, especially when introducing new kinds of library work involved with CT. —Claudia Haines, Homer Public Library, Homer, AK
showed the biggest gains over the course of the project.

Activities for Pre-K-2 Learners Emerged as an Unexpected Area of Excitement

Almost three in four applications proposed CT activities for middle-school-aged youth (72 percent) while only 38 percent proposed activities for pre-K–second grade learners. While CT opportunities for pre-K–second-grade youth were the least proposed or facilitated, cohort library programs, events, and activities for this age group were highly successful and resonated with the community of practice in multiple ways. Six cohort libraries designed and facilitated CT opportunities for preschoolers. Established early literacy and library initiatives like Every Child Ready to Read were associated with potential CT strategies and activities, including simplifying key elements of CT (e.g., decomposition, pattern recognition, algorithm design, and abstraction) and repeating themes through short creative activities. In particular, story time was recognized as an existing library practice that could be (or already was) integrated with CT, such as short collaborative sequencing or puzzle activities. Those working with older youth and teens appreciated the strategies of approaching CT in discrete parts and utilizing existing library structures and activities to emphasize CT concepts and practices, using those strategies in their own planning and facilitation. Early learner CT activities were also identified as an advantageous way to introduce library staff to CT concepts and facilitation in that they were approachable (addressing issues related to staff confidence) and brief (providing an entry point and options for further scaffolding within what was often limited time for professional development).

Libraries Ready to Code Facilitation Themes Emphasized Ways Libraries Can Lead

In collaboration with library staff, LIS faculty, and researchers, the Libraries Ready to Code initiative developed five key themes to facilitate learning for youth (see sidebar for a definition of each theme). The themes reflect how libraries are optimally positioned to impact learning, especially in ways that schools cannot. The twenty-eight cohort libraries demonstrated this position. They showed how libraries, serving as community anchor institutions, can help to broker
learning across spaces—evaluating the landscape of CT opportunities and gaps in a community and taking action through partnerships, facilitation, and advocacy. They highlighted how library access to youth and intergenerational families over years allows libraries to envision CT trajectories over time. They revealed how libraries, without constraints of prescribed learning standards, can be highly responsive and innovative in their design of youth services, including multi-age activities and open-ended youth-driven production projects. Cohort libraries evidenced multiple unique strategies for implementing the five facilitation themes in practice, and also revealed challenges they faced.

**Broaden participation**
Cohort library efforts to broaden participation included attention to multiple underrepresented groups, including girls, underresourced communities, races and ethnicities that are underrepresented in computing fields, students with intellectual disabilities, those who do not consider themselves interested in STEM, those who do not thrive in traditional learning environments, and people who do not regularly attend library programs. While there were challenges to broadening participation, including accurately documenting who is participating in library activities and difficulty recruiting and retaining youth and families, especially those who do not regularly come to the library, cohort libraries did develop strategies for reaching and encouraging these groups to take advantage of library CT opportunities. These included: (1) Intentional and inclusive design of recruitment and promotional materials (e.g., careful choices about images and language); (2) Development of activities and opportunities especially (or only) for specific populations (e.g., a speaker series for girls only); (3) Partnering with youth-facing organizations to expand youth opportunities (e.g., working with the local United Way to recruit youth or hosting a library activity that enables Girl Scouts to earn their robotics badge); (4) Connecting youth to recognizable models and possible futures (e.g., recruiting mentors and guest speakers who have backgrounds and experiences similar to those of youth in attendance); (5) Embedding CT in existing nontech programs or classes (e.g., including a project to design and implement a CT activity for preschoolers within a teen course in child development).

**Connect with youth interests and emphasize youth voices**
The cohort libraries recognized this theme in their existing practices in youth services. Challenges within this theme included finding the time to learn about individual youth interests when facilitating large groups and facilitating collaboration and decision-making when there are many, sometimes conflicting, youth voices at the table. Strategies used by cohort libraries to connect with youth interests and emphasize youth voices and to mitigate challenges included: (1) Providing time and space for open-ended exploration and relationship building to allow youth to find their connection to the organization, people, and tools and to allow staff to learn more about what youth are interested in; (2) Connecting computational concepts and practices to other topics (sometimes referred to as CS+X) that are of interest to young people, including CT activities linked to cooking, gaming, social media, civic engagement, and music; (3) Supporting personalized design and production projects (e.g., a tween who is crazy about cats developing a system to dispense cat food when no one is home and another who is obsessed with drawing designing their own sprite characters for use in a storytelling animation sequence); (4) Positioning youth as experts through showcase events, peer-mentoring/teaching, and ways for youth to advise/impact library youth services and activities.

**Engage with community**
While all cohort libraries recognized the benefits of engaging with community, many faced challenges related to making new connections with and getting commitment from people and organizations. The cohort evidenced four primary strategies in

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### Libraries Ready to Code Facilitation Themes

**Broaden participation:** Intentionally providing equitable and inclusive CT learning environments that reach diverse youth.

**Connect with youth interests and emphasize youth voices:** Leveraging the interests of local youth and offering children and teens ways to guide, select, and contribute to and through CT activities.

**Engage with community:** Working with community members, organizations, and a variety of stakeholders to understand mutual goals and share resources, and expertise in planning and implementing youth CT activities.

**Engage with families:** Inviting families to be involved in library CT activities and designing activities for families to support each other and learn together.

**Achieve impact through outcomes:** Articulating intended outcomes for library-facilitated CT opportunities and developing and carrying out evaluation and/or measurement in ways that can inform facilitation and advocacy.
overcoming challenges and building connections with community:
(1) Establishing venues (e.g., public forums) and mechanisms (e.g., surveys) to hear from the community in ways that can impact library services; (2) Showcasing library activities to build community interest and support (e.g., inviting city officials, staff from other libraries, industry members, or school staff to visit during library-facilitated CT activities and events); (2) Bringing expertise in to supplement library capacity (e.g., inviting people from industry and universities into the library as guest speakers or program members); (3) Utilizing community spaces to extend youth access (e.g., field trips, offering library programs at community centers to serve different learner populations, using space and equipment at school makerspaces as part of a library activity); (4) Establishing opportunities for community collaboration (e.g., projects that require youth to interview or get feedback from community members, cross-advertising and recruiting programs with organizations that may serve different populations, coproduced local events with community leadership such as hosting library-facilitated CT activities at a local city-sponsored festival).

Engage with families
For the cohort, the theme was primarily recognized as involving parents in the learning of their child or teen and it was less universally implemented than other themes. Twelve of the twenty-eight libraries identified parent involvement in their CT activities. Challenges included communicating the value and intention of CT programming in libraries to parents in ways that mattered to them, recruiting families to attend programming together, and finding ways to involve parents of middle and high school learners. Strategies for success in engaging families included: (1) Showcase events inviting parents to be an audience for their child’s work; (2) Parent-child sessions that invited parents to work/play alongside their child, including story time activities for younger children and maker-space-type activities for older youth; (3) Communication materials, such as

One of the African American girls is really into fashion so we decided to develop a book bag using Python, 3D printing and soldering, and an Under Armour book bag. Another girl is into social media so we are working on Twilio and she is developing a social app. Their passion is going to lead them to work through the problems they are going to face with the coding. — Kent County Middle School library staff, Chestertown, MD
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**TRENDING**

flyers, for parents to build understanding about why opportunities for CT and building fluency with technology are important for youth and for their community; (4) Supporting parents to extend their child’s learning by sharing CT learning opportunities at and beyond the library, suggesting ideas and activities to do at home, and loaning out kits and materials. There is opportunity for libraries to reconceptualize the family unit in more inclusive and expansive ways that go beyond parent-child sets.

**Achieve impact through outcomes**

There was substantial variation across cohort libraries in terms of the metrics identified to determine success and how to measure them. These spanned from how many people attended, to changes in youth interest and confidence with technology or CS related topics and careers, to program quality and staff knowledge gains. Challenges to even looking at impact through outcomes included finding time to collect data and document programming, lack of clarity about what should be measured or what success might look like beyond attendance numbers, and a need for library-friendly measurement tools and approaches, especially when evaluating outcomes that are continuously shifting and developing such as youth interest and engagement. Strategies for defining and measuring outcomes included the development of planning tools, such as logic models, formal quantitative data collection strategies such as attendance records and surveys (comparing youth answers before and after activities or collecting youth feedback about activities), and qualitative data collection strategies such as program observations and reflections (from youth, staff, mentors, and parents).

**Want to learn more?**

Check out the Libraries Ready to Code Collection with materials developed and curated by cohort members and tools to use to get started or enhance and expand CT activities provided by your library.

Editor’s Note: This article summarizes the Libraries Ready to Code (RTC) Phase III evaluation highlighting how and why libraries implemented and facilitated computational thinking activities for youth in their communities. This is one of several resources that will be published over the next few months. Materials developed by an RTC task force will be geared specifically toward ALA’s three youth divisions (ALSC, AASL, and YALSA). Additional materials will be produced for decision-makers at the national, state, and local levels.
By Gwen Owen

Creating Possibilities and Pathways for Middle School Students

Q: “What did you learn about yourself, your community, or other people today?”
A: “I like aerospace way more than I thought.”
“Construction can make you a lot of money!”
“Manufacturing isn’t as boring as I thought.”
“I love electrical.”
“I’m pretty good at steering a virtual airplane.”
“People in manufacturing are cool to hang with.”

– Seventh- and eighth-grade Career Adventures Camp students

In the summer of 2017, representatives from the Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, and Learn to Earn Dayton (a cradle-to-career organization) gathered at a table to share ideas for addressing workforce issues in the region. The goal was to create an experience that would demonstrate for middle school students the many rewarding and exciting career opportunities that exist within the community.

Like many cities across the nation, Dayton is increasingly faced with a dwindling supply of skilled, qualified, and reliable workers. While many career programs are geared toward high school and college students, a pivotal age group—middle school—was being overlooked.

“Workforce development begins early,” said Diane Farrell, Dayton Metro Library’s Director of External Relations and Development. “We believe that the more employment options children are exposed to, the more likely they’ll find something that speaks to them and sets them on a path to success.”

From those early conversations, the plan for a weeklong day camp took shape, and in June 2018, Dayton Metro Library’s first-ever Career Adventures Camp welcomed thirty eager
middle school students to explore a variety of in-demand careers, up close and personal.

**Each Day a New Adventure**

Each day of Career Adventures Camp focused on a different growing sector in the Dayton region: manufacturing, health care, construction/skilled trades, aerospace and logistics, and technology. The campers began and ended each day at the Main Library in downtown Dayton, and traveled by bus to businesses and community partners representing each sector. These host sites gave the students tours and offered in-depth learning experiences designed to bring career possibilities to life in compelling, engaging ways.

“IT was all about hands-on, experiential learning,” said Farrell. “We wanted the kids to do more than passively learn about jobs they may not have heard of before. We wanted them to really get a feel for what working in these fields might be like. We wanted to plant ideas, spark enthusiasm, and set them on a path they may not have envisioned for themselves otherwise.”

In the morning on Healthcare Day, for example, the group toured Dayton Children’s Hospital, talked with a physical therapist in sports medicine, and watched a radiologist demonstrate magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). In the afternoon, they visited the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery, where they not only saw the museum’s ancient mummy up close but also saw an MRI scan that had been performed on it by Dayton Children’s. The museum provided a number of interactive science experiences as well.

For Construction/Skilled Trades Day, the group went to Miami Valley Career Technology Center, a two-year public joint vocational school offering forty career tech programs for high school juniors and seniors. They watched welding demos, wired their own electrical panels, and built their own toolboxes to hold tools they were given as keepsakes. In the afternoon, the library provided an active construction site—its own West Carrollton Branch Library, then under construction. The students wore hard hats and safety goggles, climbed into heavy equipment, and toured the site to study the electrical, data, plumbing, and HVAC systems normally hidden from view.

On Aerospace and Logistics Day, Cassie Barlow, Chief Operating Officer for the Southwestern Ohio Council for Higher Education (and formerly Wing Commander at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base), led the group on a tour of the National Museum of the US Air Force. There they “flew” their own virtual reality aircraft, then worked in teams to build a CubeSat, a simple experiment on withstanding the rigors of space travel.

The campers had a truly unique experience on Technology Day when they toured the Emerson Helix Inno-
vation Center, a 40,000-square-foot facility for developing solutions to industrial, commercial, and residential challenges. The group explored a fully functional, furnished, and connected home within the Helix, where external elements can be controlled to study residential comfort. They also saw a complete and functional industrial kitchen in the Helix, built to test ambient temperature and humidity levels in a commercial setting as well as food-waste-to-energy conversion technology.

Before and after their field trips, the students engaged in activities at the Main Library, from crafts and games to lessons in the library’s tech lab.

“Camp participants were exposed to careers in library science as much as any of the other careers featured during the week,” said Farrell. “They spent a great deal of time at the library, with a variety of staff members, learning library skills they can use for life.”

Borrower Services staff led the students on a tour of the recently expanded, extensively remodeled Main Library facility and its technology. They learned how to search the catalog, reserve items for themselves, and use self-checkout stations, twenty-four-hour holds lockers, and laptop lending machines. Teen Services staff taught them how to use Career Cruising software on the library’s website, so they could learn more about pursuing the careers that interested them. They experimented with circuits, coding, stop motion photography, and music using library maker kits; a favorite activity was Make Your Own Lunch using the Kitchen Science Maker Kit for DIY savory waffles, smoothies, crepes and pizzas.

“It was definitely a fast-paced, busy week for these kids,” said Farrell, “but we were careful to build time into each day for socializing, fun, and reflection.”

To encourage reflection, journaling was an important element of Career Adventures Camp. On the first day of camp, each student received a journal and a four-color ink pen. Poet educator Sierra Leone talked to the group about “Journaling the Journey.” She provided prompts and encouragement for documenting their experiences in words and art. Each day ended with quiet time for journaling.

A hot breakfast, healthy lunch, snacks, T-shirts, backpacks, and water bottles were also provided to each camper. Participation was completely free to the students, but applications were required, along with approval and a commitment of support from parents or guardians.

On the fifth and final day of camp, families and friends were invited to a graduation ceremony. Students worked in small groups to prepare multimedia presentations about their camp experiences. One group created a video using the recording and editing equipment in the library’s Green Screen Room. Another group made a PowerPoint presentation, and a third group relied on their journal entries to perform a spoken word recap of the week.

Diane Farrell addressed the students during the ceremony: “Remember that you have now built a support network of adults in this community who care about you, and who are here to support you through the remainder of your journey, as you continue to learn about yourself and explore the person you want to become,” she said.
Implementation

“The success of Career Adventures Camp is based 100 percent on partnerships. You cannot go it alone,” said Farrell. The three original planning partners—Dayton Metro Library, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, and Learn to Earn Dayton—determined which employment sectors would be the focus of their efforts, then reached out to professional associations that represent each sector. Enthusiasm for the project was quickly shared by the Dayton Region Manufacturers Association, the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association, Associated Builders and Contractors of the Miami Valley, and the Southwestern Ohio Council for Higher Education. These associations became Day Chairs, selecting the appropriate host sites and helping to coordinate meaningful experiences for the campers each day.

“The library’s role was as lead convener and daily host, but it was our partners who drove the content and messaging of each day,” said Farrell. “Most significant was the administrative oversight provided by Montgomery County Educational Services Center. They gave us a level of curriculum expertise and education experience we needed for success.”

Community partners including Big Brothers/Big Sisters, East End Community Center, and Branches of the Dayton Metro Library system helped identify and invite promising young students to participate.

“We were looking for rising seventh and eighth graders who demonstrated motivation and promise, but who also faced socioeconomic disadvantages,” said Farrell. “It was important to us that Career Adventures Camp would welcome kids who didn’t have other opportunities for this kind of experience.”

Parental support was imperative to ensure that the participants would attend each day.

“We had a couple of students drop out before the week started, but we had others eager to fill those spots, and everyone who started on the first day completed the entire week,” said Farrell.

Key funding for Career Adventures Camp was provided by Levin Porter Architects, the State Library of Ohio, SOCHE, and The Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce. A daily support team included the FoodBank, House of Bread, Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority, Dayton Children’s Vista Program, and Dayton Metro Library staff.

“Individually and collectively, these businesses and organizations made our first Career Adventures Camp possible,” said Farrell. “They shared our enthusiasm and willingly joined us in providing our campers the opportunity to make, create, explore, learn, do, and dream big.”

The Bigger Picture

Career Adventures Camp is an outcome of Dayton Metro Library’s Strategic Planning. The library is a committed community partner in growing a ready workforce in the
Dayton region. In 2016, the library launched a monthly Job Seekers program for adults in career transition. Since its inception, more than three hundred job seekers have benefited from the program. In 2018, the Adult Career Path and Learning Expo brought expert presenters, free one-on-one coaching sessions, and over forty exhibitors to the Main Library, all focused on helping adults enhance their job skills, explore career options, and better position themselves for professional advancement.

Dayton Metro Library is also a key partner in education, committed to supporting community-wide kindergarten readiness, third-grade reading proficiency, and out-of-school/after-school learning. In 2018, a branded initiative called The Middle Ground was launched. The Middle Ground brings the library’s services for educators together in one convenient program, with a special emphasis on supporting those who work with difficult-to-reach middle school students.

Career Adventures Camp is a natural outgrowth of these partnerships. As lead organizer of Career Adventures Camp, the library increased its visibility among prominent businesses, high-powered partners, and organizations. It also forged deeper connections to an underserved student population—middle school students just beginning to seriously consider their future.

“If we can jump in at this point and offer these students exciting, attainable possibilities, we can make a world of difference in their lives,” said Farrell. “The students, the library, and the community at large will all reap the benefits.”

Going Forward
The first year of Career Adventures Camp was, by all accounts, a great success. “We managed to get it about 80 percent right the first time,” said Farrell, “We were so fortunate. This summer we’ll fine-tune the experience before expanding the program further.”

Once again, thirty students will be enrolled, but plans call for the group to be divided into smaller groups with an adult mentor for each. These adults will develop more personal knowledge of each student, and will keep parents and guardians informed of their child’s
Eventually, a second week of camp could focus on completely different employment sectors, and participants could choose which track appealed to them. Twice as many students could participate during the course of a summer. During the inaugural Career Adventures Camp, students were able to travel to new places, meet new friends, learn new skills, and imagine their futures in entirely new ways.

On the way home from camp one day, a student announced to her mother that she intended to become a mathematician, “and here’s what I need to do to get there.” Her mom said, “Math has always been her thing. Now she knows she can make a living doing what she loves! You are truly changing lives this week. She’s already a different kid!”

“It’s amazing what can happen when caring organizations with passionate people come together to collaborate for the good of our community—and especially for the good of our youth,” said Farrell.

For more information about Career Adventures Camp, contact Diane Farrell, Director of External Relations and Development, at (937) 496-8582 or e-mail DFarrell@DaytonMetroLibrary.org. There is a video about the camp at https://youtube/EsOuZO4XD88.

Gwen Owen is Content Writer for the External Relations Department at the Dayton Metro Library in Dayton, OH.
Academic Growth and Personal Success

Taking those next steps to college can be an empowering, exciting, and completely overwhelming experience! For many teens, community college is their next destination: a place to save tuition money, live closer to home, and balance academic and life responsibilities. However, as most community colleges are entirely commuter schools, teen students can easily struggle to find their bearings both on campus and within new academic expectations.

Entering community college means being presented with a host of new academic expectations and support systems that are very different from expectations in high school. Teens have the chance to manage their own class schedule for the first time, complete self-directed work outside of class, and find a support system that makes sense for them. They are suddenly expected to read and write at college level, and in the California system, are no longer placed into remedial English classes but are placed directly into college-level transferrable English.

Each student entering also has personal choices before them—namely, how do they define their own personal version of success? Each teen will craft a vision of success that suits their values and responsibilities, but getting there requires support and self-awareness. Teens need input from their community—teachers, librarians, guardians, and friends—in deciding what their success will look like. Are they interested in transferring to a four-year university? What about completing a Career and Technical Education certificate? Being “successful” at community college has an amazing diversity of meanings. The sooner our teens can visualize their personal version of success, the more intentional they can be with their education, time, and money.

As librarians, educators, and community members, we want more for our teens than to simply find their bearings; we want them to flourish. What follows is a brief breakdown of what librarians and teens can do together to prepare for community college, and what those next steps will look like.

Navigating the System

Support Networks

Whether at the reference desk or in library instruction sessions, I always try to ask of my students, “Hey! How many of you are here directly from high school?” Usually a large number raise their hands, and after welcoming them specially, I continue with the tour or lesson. Welcoming our new college students who have come straight from high school and are still teens is a way for me to show I recognize the specific stress they may be experiencing. Having myself been a community college student at the same college I now work at, I definitely remember the task of learning a new system without having yet found my support network.

Finding that support network early can be a huge boost in confidence for community college students. Support networks in community college include clubs or preprofessional societies, study groups, tutoring groups, and cohorts such as First-Year Experience or culturally based cohorts. Even
Next steps can be tough, but teen librarians and community college librarians have a unique chance to guide our teens’ growth into vibrant and successful college students.

teens who are skilled at finding their networks through extracurriculars in high school are prone to struggle with the process at their new college. Having a conversation about finding support groups and talking about our own is a way to model the process for our teens.

One of the most library-specific benefits of having a support group within a class is hearing by word of mouth about textbook reserve collections. Students often say they are feeling isolated in a class, and when that isolation is combined with the requirement of purchasing an expensive textbook, the student is faced with a frustrating barrier. I have seen students flourish who actively create support groups within classes for the purposes of studying together and using reserve textbooks together.

College-Level Reading, Writing, and Research

As librarians, a desire for our teens to successfully read and write at the college level falls naturally within our area. Many colleges will offer tutoring services dedicated to reading comprehension as well as a form of writing center where students can work on their style and content. Just knowing to ask for these services would already put teens on the right track, but many enter college unsure of how to ask for help and tap into the wealth of resources available to them. Let teens know to ask for help! Most times, there is center on campus devoted to answering the particular question they’re struggling with.

Alongside reading and writing, most students will be asked to complete a formal research paper within their first couple semesters at community college. Approaching this common assignment can be a major academic leap for many teens. Even if they have completed research papers before, using an academic library may be a new experience. In library orientation sessions, librarians will walk students through the Library of Congress classification system and the digital resources used in academic libraries, most of which students have never had access to before. However, there is a great way to bridge this jump in research expectations—by reminding teens of how they use keywords to search public library catalogs. This exact same skill they have been building since childhood will help them in college. Learning to use keywords effectively is a process that will enable students to navigate an academic library with mastery and reduce frustration.

When teens enter college, chances are this will be their first time using academic library resources, especially digital resources. If teens are comfortable with platforms like OverDrive and Libby, that is a huge step toward being comfortable using the e-book collection at their new college. In my experience, teens oftentimes still struggle to visualize how print and digital material intersect unless they have a strong history of experimenting with digital platforms at their public library or in the classroom. Likewise, their new college will subscribe to a wide variety of databases, some scholarly and some geared toward certain fields or types of information. The nub of these skills lies in being able to distinguish between the tools we use to access information and the information itself. Teens who understand this difference are well placed to start engaging in college-level research!

Contributing Their Voice

Teen librarians are perfectly placed to encourage teens’ exploration of their strengths and the development of a unique voice. Each student entering community college hopefully knows the immense value of their contributions in the classroom, but the truth is many do not. Students, especially those from marginalized identities, are more likely to have been treated according to a deficit thinking mindset throughout their time in education. Many community colleges are making it their mission to dismantle deficit thinking, which assumes that students from any background not considered the “norm” are at a disadvantage (Heinbach, 2019). As more colleges turn away from a deficit-thinking mode, hopefully more teens will enter community college with an assurance that their voices are important contributions to the classroom and campus community.

In a similar vein, first-generation college students make up a significant part of incoming community colleges classes. At El Camino College, the most recent estimate from our First-Gen Institute on campus is that 51%
of our students identify as first generation (“First-Gen Initiative”). Talking to first-gen teens about their transition to college could provide support and experience sharing that they may otherwise not find until well into their college experience.

**Ideas for Getting our Teens College-Ready!**

**Sharing Experiences**
- Have a panel or roundtable discussion about college experiences, especially geared toward first-generation students. Teens who identify as first generation often worry about fitting in, finding their version of success, and navigating family pressures (“The Struggle”, 2016).
- Talk with teens about how to ask for help and share times you have asked for help. Everyone can benefit from support in college, whether academic or personal. Students who know how to ask for help find it easier to navigate confusion and setbacks, and in the process often discover the huge number of faculty and staff rooting for their success! A natural link between public library and academic library is to specifically encourage use of the reference desk. The librarians at their new college will be ready to help them!
- Encourage teens to join a club or find a study group soon after entering college. The social support will make a huge difference in combating stress! Many students struggle with facing academic stressors alone, especially in navigating grades, research, and reading comprehension. A support network can help teens successfully deal with the steep learning curve of college life.

**Skills and Resources**
- Textbooks are EXPENSIVE. Talk about Fair Use copyright and check together to see if some classes are offered with open educational resources. Help teens have a plan for that first week of school when they don’t have their textbook yet. Most community college libraries will have a textbook reserve collection where students can recurrently borrow textbooks throughout the semester.
- Help teens learn to talk about how they find information. What tools do they prefer? Do they know how to differentiate the tools for finding information from the information itself? Knowing how to talk about finding information will give them an edge in library orientations and introductory research classes!
- Talk about what the Internet is, how it works, and how it can be used to their best advantage. Teens who understand, for example, that Google is not a source but a search engine to find sources are preparing to approach college-level research successfully.
- Introduce teens to the Library of Congress classification system. Their college library will help them continue to learn the system, but having a sneak peak will help teens grow confidence and start building mastery.

**Mindset**
- Many colleges are on a mission to end deficit mindset thinking. Helping our teens realize the amazing skills they bring to any college class will deeply impact their experience and sense of belonging. Each student brings a perspective and a voice that are valuable contributions to the college, and no one comes from the “wrong culture” needed to succeed in school (Abdi, 2016). Many teens have been socialized to believe that they bring nothing of value to academia, and starting a conversation early about all the skills and perspectives they absolutely contribute can be an empowering experience!
- First Generation and Proud! There is no doubt that navigating a college system for the first time is daunting. Added to this, a large percentage of teens identify as first-generation college students. While some students had family members or guardians to guide them through the college process, first-generation students can easily feel overwhelmed without the context needed to successfully navigate the system. The good news is that community colleges are increasingly committed to celebrating first-generation students! If more teens can enter college knowing their first-generation status is celebrated and supported, they can ask for help earlier on (“First-Generation,” 2017).

**Knowing They Belong**
At El Camino College, we hosted a Library Open House event to help our new and returning students navigate library services. The event, held during the third week of the semester, involved a passport-stamp tour of our Library & Learning Resources building followed by pizza and socializing with faculty and staff. Almost two hundred and fifty students attended, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. The most recurring comment from students was a variation of, “I wish this event had happened last year when I was a new student, I would have gotten off to a better start!”

The purpose of our event was to help students claim ownership of their library space and reaffirm that each of our students belongs in the academic space of the library. We found that fostering the same sense of belonging
and ownership in the academic library as many teens have in their public library is critical to supporting their academic and personal growth. Next steps can be tough, but teen librarians and community college librarians have a unique chance to guide our teens’ growth into vibrant and successful college students.

References

Camila Jenkin is the Outreach Librarian at El Camino College in Torrance, CA.

Guidelines for Authors

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

For submission and author guidelines, please visit http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/yals/submissions/.

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2019 Teens’ Top Ten Nominees

Encourage teens to read the nominees and vote for their favorites August 15 - October 13!

www.ala.org/yalsa/teenstopten

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The YALSA Update

2019 Teens’ Top Ten Nominees Announced
The official 2019 Teens’ Top Ten nominees have been announced. View a list of the 25 nominees, along with annotations, at www.ala.org/yalsa/teenstopten. Encourage teens to read the nominees over the summer so they can vote starting August 15.

Registration Open for 2019 Symposium
Registration for our 2019 YA Services Symposium is now open. The symposium will take place Nov. 1–3 in Memphis, TN, with the theme: Show Up and Advocate: Supporting Teens in the Face of Adversity. YALSA members receive the best registration rate. Not a YALSA member? Join YALSA and ALA before registering to save. All are welcome to attend.

You can also apply for the travel stipend for a chance to receive up to $1,000 to offset travel expenses to the symposium. Two grants are available: one for library workers and graduate students. Apply by June 1.

Learn more about the symposium, registration rates, deadlines, and the travel stipend at www.ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium.

New JRLYA Research Journal Articles
The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults® has published a special themed issue, Movements that Affect Teens, Vol. 10 N.1, featuring the following articles:
• Disability Narrative Theory and Young Adult Fiction of Mental Illness by Diane Scrofano
• One, Two, Three, Four! We Don’t Want Your F**king War: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement in Young Adult Fiction by Dr. Deborah Wilson Overstreet
• What’s Going on Down Under? Part 1: Portrayals of Culture in Award-Winning Australian Young Adult Literature by Kasey L. Garrison

Read and download the new articles now at www.yalsa.al.org/jrlya/.

Download the 2019 Best of the Best Bookmarks
This year’s Best of the Best marketing materials (bookmarks, spine labels, and logos) for YALSA’s book awards and lists are now available for download. Use these materials to promote the year’s best young adult literature with the teens in your library, school or afterschool program! Bookmarks are available for the following awards and book lists:
• Award Winners (Alex, Edwards, Morris, Nonfiction, Odyssey, Printz)
• 2019 Top Ten Amazing Audiobooks
• 2019 Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adults
• 2019 Top Ten Great Graphic Novels for Teens
• 2019 Top Ten Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers

Download the materials now for free at www.yalsa.al.org/best. Don’t forget to also visit our Teen Book Finder Database, which was also recently updated with all our 2019 book award and lists, as well as ALA’s affiliates, to create your own recommended lists for your patrons.

Apply by June 1 for Funds to Present a Paper at the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting
One successful applicant will receive up to $1,500 to defray the cost of travel to Philadelphia, PA to present a paper that addresses one or more priorities in YALSA’s Research Agenda. The paper will also be published in an upcoming issue of YALSA’s peer-reviewed, open source Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults. Learn more and apply at www.ala.org/yalsa/awardsandgrants/mwpaper.

Join YALSA at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference
YALSA has big plans for Annual 2019 – join us in Washington, DC, June 21–25 for four action-packed days with an abundance of opportunities for learning, networking, and face-to-face interactions with your favorite authors and experts in the teen services field. For a complete listing of YALSA events, please visit: tinyurl.com/yalsa-ac19.

To register, please visit www.alaannual.org. Advance registration rates end June 15, 2019 at noon. Already registered? Add special events such as the Printz Program (on a new day, this year only—Monday, June 24) or Edwards Award Brunch, which will honor winner, M.T. Anderson, to your existing registration in two ways: (1) by phone: Call CompuSystems at 866-513-0760 and ask to add the Edwards Award Brunch, which will be held? Join us for brunch and listen to the 2019 winner, M.T. Anderson, speak about his writing. The award honors an author’s significant and lasting contribution to writing for
teens. The annual award is sponsored by School Library Journal. Tickets – $39
• **YA Author Coffee Klatch**  
  **Sunday, June 23, 9–10 am**  
  This informal event gives you an opportunity to meet authors who have appeared on one of YALSA’s six annual selected lists or have received one of YALSA’s five literary awards. Every 3 or 4 minutes, a new author will arrive at your table to talk about their upcoming book! Tickets – $25. Coffee, tea, and a continental breakfast included. See the full list of authors participating at tinyurl.com/yalsa-ac19.
  
• **YALSA and Booklist Present: The Michael L. Printz Program and Reception**  
  **Monday, June 24, 8–10 pm**  
  (Please note that due to scheduling conflicts, this year the program will take place on Monday)  
  End your Annual Conference by attending the Michael L. Printz Program and Reception! Listen to speeches by the 2019 Michael L. Printz award-winning author, Elizabeth Acevedo (the 20th recipient of the award!) and honor book authors: Elana K. Arnold, Deb Caletti, and Mary McCoy. The program will be followed by a reception. The annual award is sponsored by Booklist magazine. Tickets – $39.
  
  Advanced registration ends June 15, 2018. Register in advance and save on onsite registration costs.
  
  Find more details about registration and housing at the ALA Annual website, www.alaannual.org. For more information on YALSA’s Annual Conference schedule, visit the YALSA Annual Conference wiki page, tinyurl.com/yalsa-ac19.

**YALSA Seeks Nominees for 2020 Slate**  
YALSA is currently seeking candidates for the following board positions: President-Elect, Board Members At-Large, and Fiscal Officer. Elected board members will begin their work at the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago.

If you have an interest in putting your name on the ballot for one of these positions, it is recommended to first learn about the expectations of board or committee members. These resources can help:

• Talk to current board members to learn more about board service: www.ala.org/yalsa/board-directors and read about board service online: www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/election

If you think you have both the necessary experience and time available to serve on YALSA’s Board, please contact the Board Development Committee Chair, Sandra Hughes-Hassell, sm-hughes@email.unc.edu, to express your interest.
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