A Message From the President

Unprecedented times. Zoom fatigue. Quarantine Brain.

These are some of the terms I hear (or say) almost daily. Especially at my weekly Zoom youth meetings while wearing a wig.

We have gone through a lot in the past 3 months. When I last wrote to you, we were excited for what our successes at 2020 Advocacy Day would bring. Now we are thrilled at static funding.

With all the uncertainty, your 2019-2020 YSS Board voted to keep the current slate on for a re-do. We are blowing off the dust on the cartridge and hitting restart on 2020 to bring you #forever21. I’m thrilled to be your unprecedented two-term pandemic president.

Along with our school library counterparts, we are raising a new type of library user. YSS and SSL have long partnered on initiatives and a pandemic will not stand in the way. We have a brand new Virtual Battle of the Books initiative and our NYLA Youth Advocacy Committee has a great new twitter account. Please check them out!

Summer reading is also taking a new form. In a recent survey from School Library Journal, most libraries are only planning on doing virtual programs. Through the New York State Library, all libraries in the State have access to READSquared software. You can create missions, log reading and link to your programs. Even if you aren’t very tech-savvy, you can group your program with other libraries in your region to create an easy to manage program.

The way we are collecting data will also change. Do we count clicks? Views? Likes? How about how many people watch it between certain hours of the day? Is it just our patrons that can view it or can we open it up to the whole State? Country? World? How do we measure our impact locally in a virtual world?

As of the writing of this article, we still plan to offer some great programs (both virtual and in person) for NYLA 2020. More information will be coming this summer. Our
#bestconferenceever will be as unique and flexible as you are!
I have likely left you with more questions than answers, but let’s ask the tough questions and find the best answers, together!
Wash your hands, wear a mask and be well!
Amanda Schiavulli

YSS Board Update
Hello Youth Services Colleagues and Friends,

Due to the unprecedented times we are currently experiencing the board voted at their May 14th meeting to keep the current board members in their positions for another year. All board members will remain the same for the 2020-2021 terms.

We look forward to being able to recruit candidates for 1st Vice President/President Elect, 2nd Vice President/Membership Chair, and the 2023 Spring Conference Director next year. If you’d like to run for any of these offices in 2021 please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your only two term Pandemic Past President
Lisa Neuman
neumanl@albanypubliclibrary.org

Update from Yancey Yak
Like many of us, Yancey has been working from home during the shutdown and attending lots of the Zoom meetings. The new “Library Takeout” service has been keeping him busy lately. Despite everything going on, Yancey has somehow found some time to decompress by catching up on some of the items in his reading pile and watch list.

What is helping you manage during these strange times?

Top Right: Yancey picking up Library Takeout at the Petit Library. Yancey takes wearing his mask very seriously.
Bottom Left: Yancey participating in a Zoom meeting
Bottom Right: Yancey unwinding after a long day
Legislative Committee Update

Briana McNamee, NYLA Director of Government Relations and Advocacy, and NYLA Executive Director Jeremy Johannessen continue to work shrewdly and diligently to clarify libraries’ position in the shifting sands of the pandemic. Their priority, as always set by the membership, has been to position libraries to have the maximum flexibility to make local decisions about reopening. In this state of 750 public libraries, some libraries will move slowly to reintroduce services, while some libraries are offering services now. As in most things, there is no one-size-fits-all. Local control within a flexible schedule is the most desirable outcome.

The various sources of information about libraries and reopening and the sometimes unexpected release of details makes this operating environment akin to the Wild West. I won’t detail where we currently are as it’s likely to change between my writing and your reading. Do know that Jeremy, Briana, the NYLA Legislative Committee, and NYLA leaders are all working carefully to keep the membership informed. Please continue to read the messages on NYLINE on reopening updates; they will be your best source of current information.

There are other critical issues still unresolved, including the first of three potential funding cuts. Reviews of the State income on April 30, June 30, and December 31 create opportunity for the Governor and Legislature to reduce funding specified in the enacted budget. At this writing, there is now news from the April 30 review as the State is awaiting information on federal aid. The Legislature is back on session, and there will surely be other legislation that affects libraries. I’ll continue to update YSS members on big items. Again, please keep up with the NYLINE messages from Briana and Jeremy.

Mary Fellows
NYLA Legislative Committee, YSS Liaison

YSS Marketing Committee

Summer reading will look a little different for everyone this year. Let’s help each other deliver the best services we safely can to our patrons. Do you already have your virtual summer reading programs planned out? A guest speaker or performer who hosted a great virtual program? A reading challenge you’re really excited about? Share it with us and other YSS members on our social media pages!

Send your content in via email to the Marketing Committee’s chair, Lindsay, at jankovitzl@gmail.com.

Be sure to follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest to stay up-to-date on all YSS news and updates, and for daily inspiration and relevant articles.
Message to the Members

It is the time of the year when we would be putting a pin on the wonderful ideas learned, and colleagues we connected with from attending the 2020 YSS Conference and setting our sights on our summer reading programs. We are instead emerging from a two and a half month shelter from home to do our part in lowering the spread of Covid-19.

Many of us have been working from home, volunteering to make masks for essential workers, family, friends and ourselves. Many have taken to Facebook and YouTube to meet via story times, LEGO club, even anime club! In the midst of all of us reinventing our positions for social media, there have been many other aspects of life that have been thrown off-kilter.

We must remind ourselves that we are a network of thoughtful, resourceful, librarians who have chosen to dedicate our lives in serving the enrichment of young minds. We are unable to physically introduce a new book to our young patrons or ease their anxiety, stress or provide a safe zone. While the Nation and our industry determines how library service will adapt to the age of the pandemic, we must not forget to take the time to practice self-care.

The boundary of work-home life has always been thinly veiled for many. Now more than ever each and every one of us has to COMMUNICATE:

- Care for yourself
- Open yourself up to receive change
- Meditate to keep calm
- Model the behavior you wish others to do
- Unite with friends in a socially distanced friendly manner
- Never give up hope
- Immerse yourself in a new skill
- Catch up with professional training
- Advocate for the importance of libraries and safety of library staff
- Talk with someone about how you are holding up
- Encourage others to follow other library’s program content

The YSS Committee values all our members and colleagues serving children. We wish you all a safe return to your buildings at some point this summer, and look forward to your comments on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Chinasa Seyse
2nd Vice President - Membership
NYLA Annual Conference 2020: “Strengthen Our Core”
Saratoga Springs, NY - November 4 - 7

YSS Conference Sessions Include:

- YSS Membership meeting featuring author Barbara Dee - speaking on the importance of addressing “tough topics” in middle grade fiction
- Little Treehuggers presented by Melisa McCarthy, Brooklyn Public Library
- Storytelling Off the Page! presented by Jessica Espejel, New York Public Library
- Tackling Sex Ed in the Public Library presented by Rakisha Kearns-White, Brooklyn Public Library
- Teen Mental Health Resource Collaboration presented by Mary Gotham, West Genesee High School and Alyssa Newton, Onondaga Free Library
- YSS Table Talks* include:
  - 2021 Summer Reading Crafts
  - Beethoven, Bach, & Bronx Tweens
  - For Felt’s Sake
  - Quirky Programs for Quirky Teens
  - Reach for ‘Hired Ground’ by 2020 Pied Piper Award winner
  - other programs TBD
*Table Talks are about 15 minutes each and are repeated so that attendees are able to see three different presentations during the session!

Don’t Forget!

Join us for the Ann Gibson Scholarship Reception Wednesday evening from 8:00pm-10:00pm. We will have free desserts, fun raffles, and a cash bar. Food, friends, and fun!

Stop by the YSS Booth for cool raffles, chat with fellow Youth librarians, and find out how you can be more involved with the Youth Services Section (YSS) of NYLA

We hope you’ll join us for #NYLA2020 -- the #BestConferenceEver!

Due to the potential COVID-19 closures, this information is subject to change at any time. Visit NYLA.org for up to date information.

Amy Relyea
Fall Conference Curation Committee Chair
YSS Spring Conference Update

Adaptability is a skill we youth services librarians keep in the top tray of our professional toolbox. We modify our storytime on the fly when the crowd skews younger. We shelve a craft when our teens would rather play a game. We move our programs online and reimagine our summer reading program when we can't offer in-person library service. We assess the situation, let go of our plans, and then make the necessary changes.

Making the decision to cancel the YSS Spring Conference this year was a necessary change. Many thanks to the 2020 conference planning committee and YSS board for their input and support, and to everyone in the YSS community for your patience as we start evaluating what we can do for next year's conference.

As of today, we are planning to hold the 2021 Spring Conference in the same beautiful location - CLAYTON! – on Friday, May 21. The program slate may look different. So might the conference itself, depending on what the guidance on large gatherings will be. It’s hard to plan for the unknown.

Hopefully, we'll be able to come together and share with each other everything we've learned over the last year - how we forged new partnerships, tackled new platforms, and let go of our plans to make way for what was needed to best serve our communities while keeping them safe. I hope to see you all then.

Angela Newman
2021 Spring Conference Director
Spring Conference Scholarship Award Winners

The purpose of the Spring Conference Scholarship Award is to encourage continuing education in the field of library youth services. Two awards are given annually: one to a veteran librarian and the other to a newer member of our profession. The scholarship is designed to cover registration fees and up to $250 reimbursement for hotel charges, meals, and transportation costs for attending the Youth Services Section’s Spring Conference. Cherilyn Wise and Amy Holland are this year’s Spring Conference Scholarship winners. The 2020 Spring Conference Scholarships will be used for the 2021 Spring Conference in Clayton.

Cherilyn Wise: Youth Services Coordinator - Cuba Circulating Library
Cherilyn has worked hard in her community to encourage fun and educational programming for children, tweens, and teens. She makes outreach to local schools and homeschool groups a priority and her enthusiasm for building relationships in her community has encouraged many new families to visit the library.

Amy Holland: Children’s Services Librarian - Irondequoit Public Library
Amy has been an integral part of the youth services community both in her home community of Irondequoit and at a state level. Amy has shown great dedication to serving children and families in her community through her enthusiasm to form new, enriching partnerships, providing excellent programming and reader’s advisory services, and by making sure each child she speaks with knows they are valued in the library.

Pied Piper Award Winner 2020

We are excited to announce that the Pied Piper Committee has selected Joan K. Rosen of Haverstraw King’s Daughters Public Library as the 2020 winner of the YSS Pied Piper Award for her program "Reach for ‘Hired’ Ground"! This outstanding program series offered high school juniors and seniors five workshops designed to help them get the jobs they want. Activities included learning about different types of careers, creating resumes and cover letters, and practicing job interviews.

Joan partnered with a local credit union. She was awarded grant funding from them, part of which was used to purchase a video camera to record the practice interviews. Then, one of their staff members came to a workshop to conduct the interviews! Joan added a lot of thoughtful touches to the program, including a graduation ceremony and meaningful and useful gifts to the participants along the way.

You can replicate “Reach for ‘Hired’ Ground” in your library! Joan has provided a detailed narrative about her program which is accessible on the Pied Piper webpage. She is even preparing a webinar about her winning program for the YSS community. We recognize that youth services librarians across the state are being especially innovative and responsive in their programming during the pandemic, and we look forward to hearing about your amazing program produced this year. Please visit the webpage for details about how to submit an entry for the 2021 award!

Congratulations, Joan, and thank you to all the Youth Services librarians who submitted their top-notch programs!

Respectfully submitted,

Lyla Grills, Pied Piper Award Committee Chair
Ann-Marie Helldorfer, 3rd Year
Sarah Brown, 1st Year
Empire State Award Winner

Greetings from the Empire State Award Committee!

First presented to Maurice Sendak in 1990, the Empire State Award is given annually to an author or illustrator currently residing in New York State, acknowledging their significant contribution to the field of literature for young people. Nominations are made by librarians across the state, and the winner is selected by a 3-person committee. Please consider submitting a nomination for your favorite author or illustrator by using the online form on the YSS page of the NYLA website. Your input is invaluable!

As chair of the 2020 YSS Empire State Award Committee, I am beyond honored to announce that the winner of the 2020 Empire State Award for Excellence in Literature for Young People is Rita Williams-Garcia.

When Rita Williams-Garcia was a child, most of her kindergarten classmates wanted crayons, coloring in pictures on their papers. But Rita wanted a pencil, so she could shape stories. By the age of 12 she was sending stories to magazines, only to be rejected. At 14, she sold her first story to Highlights. And that was just the start.

Rita Williams-Garcia is the best-selling author of 9 books for middle grade and young adult readers. Her books have won numerous awards, including the Coretta Scott King Award, a Newbery Honor, Junior Library Guild, National Book Award Finalists, and the Scott O’Dell Prize for Historical Fiction.

Her website states that she likes to be excited by the story she’s dying to write, and I’m excited to hear the stories she’ll tell.

Rita Williams-Garcia will be honored at the Empire State Award luncheon during the Annual Conference in November in Saratoga Springs, NY. We hope you’ll plan to join us at the Empire State Award Luncheon to celebrate Ms. Williams Garcia and her significant contribution to the kidlit world.

The ESA Committee
Alexandria Abenshon, Empire State Award Committee Chair
Mallory Marinaro, 3rd Year
Gail J. Brown, 1st Year
Spring into Summer!
Sign up for Summer Reading at Your Local Library!

- Students can register online NOW for Summer Reading at New York Libraries if your local public library has READsquared. Check your library website to sign up!
- During the summer months, you can track all the books and e-books you read over the summer, access virtual programs, and be eligible to win badges and prizes.
- In 2019, 2.5 million New York State kids and teens participated in Summer Reading and Learning – let’s work together to make 2020 even bigger and better.
- You can find your local library here: http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/publibs/index.html
- And find out more about Summer Reading at New York Libraries here: http://www.summerreadingnys.org/

This year’s Summer Reading slogan is “Imagine Your Story.” Come join the adventure through your school and public library to learn new skills, explore great ideas and share your story! Check your local library website for information on reading and learning activities for the whole family over the summer months – don’t miss out on all the library has to offer!
Teen Video Challenge Announcement 2020

Ask your librarian about the
Summer Reading 2020
Teen Video Challenge

Create a Summer Reading Video!

- Show off your skills! Winning videos are posted to the CSLP and NY State Summer Reading sites.
- You could win a $200 cash prize and $50 worth of summer reading materials for the sponsoring public library.
- Open to all New York State teens, aged 13-18.
- Create a short video that showcases a unique interpretation of “Imagine Your Story” for 2020.
- Students can collaborate by connecting through their school and public library!

For more information and entry forms, visit: www.summerreadingnys.org/teens/teens-video-challenge/ or ask your public librarian.

Submissions accepted from June 1-August 7 2020!
Summer Reading Resources

NEW COVID-19 Additional Resources for "Imagine Your Story" from CSLP

A small task force of CSLP members has worked hard to provide an additional resource packet for libraries to use as they re-imagine their summers. The hope is for these documents to inspire and help support libraries for the 2020 Summer Reading and Learning program.

Online access to these resources is available at https://www.cslpreads.org/

A PDF version is located on the front page of the CSLP site for easy printing and download capability. For a more editable version, CSLP members are encouraged to sign into their CSLP account and access content from the online manuals.

Once logged into the Online Manual
1. Scroll down to the “Artwork and Program Files” section of the manual
2. On the right-hand sidebar locate the “Summer 2020 Reimagined” category
3. Click on the checkbox to the immediate right of “Summer 2020 Reimagined” to bring up a list of all the files, or
4. Click on the “+” icon to the right to bring up the age group categories.

NEW resource: “Read Up!”

Read Up!, a mini-manual for non-library summer feeding sites, was created by the CSLP Child and Community Well-Being Committee (CCWB). It’s now available for download on the CSLP website: https://www.cslpreads.org/libraries-and-summer-food/#resource

Read Up! is a free 26-page resource for Summer Food Service Program sites and other feeding sites outside of libraries, featuring easy-to-implement enrichment activities that support reading, creativity, and fun. The activities are adapted from the 2020 CSLP manual. A section on Reading and Literacy Basics, written by the team, guides sites on how they can organize literacy-supportive activities even with no books on hand, and how they can partner with libraries, involve teens, and collaborate with other community entities.

NEW: 2020 Summer Reading Champion videos in English and Spanish

Files for the English and Spanish versions of the 2020 Summer Reading Champion promotional videos (by author Carmen Agra Deedy) can now be found on the CSLP site (you need to login to access) at https://www.cslpreads.org/manual-downloads/.

Performers and Programs Database Updated

The Performers and Programs Database lists entertaining and educational programs by region. A category listing virtual programs and presenters was recently added to assist libraries searching for virtual program options https://www.performersandprograms.com/.

DayByDayNY

DayByDayNY is a wonderful resource for librarians and community members alike. Each day you will find a rhyme, picture book, and other resources for further learning. A link has been added to the DayByDayNY sites to connect the English and Spanish versions. See http://daybydayny.org/ and http://daybydaynysp.org/.
New York State Battle of the Books

The NYLA (YSS-SSL) NYS Battle of the Books (BOB) Planning Committee would like to help provide resources for you and your patrons during this time. We are working on providing BOB resources for virtual battles, for libraries to use for summer reading and beyond!

So how can you help us help you?

1. **Does your library/system/region have a Battle of the Books?** If so please forward this email to your Committee Chair/ President. Easy!

2. **We want your past BOB questions!** We are working on collecting as many BOB question banks as we can, so libraries can choose books/questions based on what online books they have access to for their patrons. If you are able, please share your past year's question banks with us. We are also collecting practice and in-house battle questions.

3. **Does your BOB have a handbook/rulebook?** We'd love to see it! We are creating a NYS Virtual BOB Handbook and want to be able to link to all in-person BOB handbooks, as well as incorporate aspects of BOBs from all across NYS!

4. **Have you or anyone in your library done any type of virtual trivia game?** We are trying to figure out the best way to incorporate "buzzing" and team collaboration into a virtual BOB event. We'd love to hear any and all ideas that have worked or not worked! This does not have to be from a Battle of the Books competition- we welcome information from all library staff who have done any trivia online.

We are hoping by gathering these resources we can put out enough information for libraries to use BOB in their suddenly-virtual Summer Reading Programs. This will be a great chance to try out BOB, keep your eager teams practicing, help kids/teens stay connected and work in teams or just do a fun one-off for the summer! Obtaining all of this information will also help us moving forward towards our ultimate goal of an in-person state-wide Battle of the Books competition one day.

See our flyer attached, and keep an eye on the NYLA website, as we get this information to you.

**Please send information to (and feel free to reach out with any questions to) nysbattleofthebooks@gmail.com**

Thank you all for your help and be well!
Best,
Elizabeth Portillo