A Message From the President

Happy Winter! I hope everyone had a wonderful #BestConferenceEver last month in Syracuse! This was the first “in person” library event I’ve attended since the pandemic started, and I was thrilled to see friends and colleagues. Presenters brought their “A” game to programs, and I came away with new ideas which I’m excited to use in my library. I’m grateful for the all the hard work the Conference Curation team did to bring us an Annual Conference under challenging circumstances.

In light of the many changes at NYLA and to fulfill our mission of transparency in our Section, we updated our by-laws and added a new position to the Executive Board at our 2021 Membership Meeting. The new position is YSS NYLA Council Representative. The person in this position serves as our section representative to NYLA Council. This is a three-year term, and one must have previously served as an officer, committee member or liaison for YSS. When we call for a new slate of board members, we’ll be looking for someone to fill this position. If you are interested, please fill out the Active Member Form.

This year has seen a dramatic surge in book challenges at libraries, especially for books that focus on race and LGBTQ+ communities. It seems like every time I check the news, I see another story about schools and librarians being pressured to remove and censor materials for children. YSS supports our colleagues in schools as they face challenges. The New York Library Association recently released a statement adopted by NYLA Council: “[NYLA] stands firmly opposed to the restriction, removal, and/or censorship of books and other library materials in an attempt to limit the freedom to read or obstruct intellectual freedom.” I encourage you to be extremely familiar with books in your collections, learn your collection development policies, and create a detailed plan for responding to challenges.

Winter is cozy season, and I hope you draw inspiration when planning programs and services to your young
patrons. Whether it’s Gingerbread Houses with kids, Candle Making with teens, a snowy StoryWalk, or ALL the gnomes in your Take and Make crafts (SO cute, I can’t stand it!), there are so many wonderful ideas. Did you know YSS has a Pinterest page? Check it out for programming ideas!

Speaking of awesome library programs and services, share them at Library Advocacy Day! This year it will be virtual. Join #LibraryAdvocates across the state on March 2, 2022 from the comfort of your home or office. Share stories with leaders in the Legislature of why your library is important in your community. Trustees, friends, students and patrons can also lend their voices! You can find more information on NYLA’s website.

With 2022 right around the corner, we face another unpredictable year. By now, we’re all experts in virtual storytimes and programming, and with 21 months of experience in quickly changing gears, we can do anything. I mean, youth services staff are champions in planning! With all we do in service of others, I hope you are taking care of yourself first. You can’t pour from an empty cup. Personally, this has been an emotionally difficult year, and my mental health is a priority above anything. If that means stress baking (who will eat all these cookies?!), reading, binge watching Netflix, taking a walk, enjoying a cup of tea, or taking a nap, I do it and ignore thoughts of “I should be doing X…” Tell that inner voice to shush! Respect your self-care. And if you need some happy news, our Spring Conference will be in person, and that is something that makes me excited for 2022. I look forward to seeing you in Schenectady on April 8!

Jenny Burke
President
2021 NYLA Annual Conference Recap

We did it! We survived NYLA 2021. Where’s my T-Shirt? I hope everyone had fun and got something out of the amazing workshops!

Our Virtual booth did pretty well. We had a total of 32 visitors, and only half of them were me. (Haha, just kidding. They were all me.)

We were also able to meet in person this year! It was very exciting, unless you hate being around people. I loved being able to see my fellow Youth Services librarians in person. I really missed these in-person conferences. I also enjoyed walking around downtown Syracuse while enjoying a slice of pizza from Pavone’s.

We had a great booth with amazing raffles that were created by a very talented and wonderful person. ;) We raised $727 selling raffle tickets! I hope everyone who won is enjoying their prizes! If you did not win, don’t give up! Maybe next year will be your year to win!

Considering we are still in a pandemic, the attendance for the YSS programs was really good! Did you have a favorite program?

- YSS Table Talks: 52
- Creating Dandy Displays for Library Lovers: 42
- Lessons Learned from School Shutdown: 28
- YSS ESA Luncheon: 78
- Talking to Kids about Race: 81
- When We’re all in, Kids are in: 45

This gives us a total of 326 (Unless I did my math wrong) people attending YSS programs! I enjoyed the ones I attended.

I especially enjoyed the YSS Luncheon with Brian Selznick. He was kind, funny and very handsome. Overall it was a very good talk. I enjoyed listening to him speak and the surprise appearance from his husband. I definitely plan on revisiting *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* (which he won the Caldecott Medal for). It has always been my favorite book of his.

Finally, I would like to remind you to fill out the conference program evaluation form. This is very important to our presenters as well as committee members as we use the evaluations to plan future conferences! We want to make sure you are satisfied and these conference are meeting your needs. The form will remain available until Friday, December 30th. Filling out the form also gives you an opportunity to win a free registration to the YSS 2022 Spring Conference in Schenectady. [https://bit.ly/nyla2021yss](https://bit.ly/nyla2021yss)

Sarah Heukrath
2022 Fall Conference Curator
SAVE THE DATE!!!

YSS '22 SPRING CONFERENCE

MAY THE ODDS BE EVER IN YOUR FAVOR

Conference registration will go live on Jan. 3rd!
The ALA has named eight of his young adult books “Best Books for Young Adults,” and four of his books appeared on Booklist’s Best 100 Books of the 20th Century. Crutcher has received the ALAN Award, the NCTE SLATE Intellectual Freedom Award, the Margaret A. Edwards Lifetime Achievement Award, and Writer Magazine’s Writers Who Make a Difference Award. In addition to writing, Crutcher works as a therapist and child protection advocate. His life experiences in rural Idaho, in urban Oakland, in education, and in mental health keep his fiction rooted in real life.
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:30-9:00AM
Registration & Breakfast

9:00-10:15AM
Welcome and Keynote "Stotanic Verses" by Chris Crutcher

10:30-11:30AM
workshop session 1 (pick one)

1A: Spark Creativity With Google’s Applied Digital Skills
  Mary Carrier, Mohawk Valley Library System

1B: Censorship from All Sides
  Chris Crutcher, Author, Keynote Speaker

1C: Screen Free Week
  Gail Brown, Voorheesville Public Library

1D: Go “All-In” On Teens [Table Talk Presentations]
  DIY Teen
  Beth Bomba, William R Sanford Public Library
  Not Another Teen Volunteer Program
  Emily Dowie, Greenburgh Public Library
  Got Game?
  Mary Klucznik, Chittenango High School Library
  Shutter Squad
  Emma & Kevin Rogan, Crandall Public Library

REGISTER @ NYLA.ORG/YSS

Registration opens 1/3
**CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

11:30AM-12:00PM
Autograph Table & Open Door Bookshop

12:00-1:15PM
Networking Lunch & Raffle Drawings

1:30-2:30PM

workshop session 2
(pick one)

2E: Welcoming LGBTQ+ Patrons
Stephanie Markham, Jarvis Public Library

2F: Censorship from All Sides
Chris Crutcher, Author, Keynote Speaker

2G: Make It Real: Partner with Local Businesses to Tackle the Digital Divide
Christolin Michel, Albany Public Library

2H: The Roadmap to Reading Starts at the Library!
Marion Waldman, Teach My Kid to Read

**REGISTER @ NYLA.ORG/YSS**

Registration opens 1/3
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2:30-3:00PM
Autographing, Networking, & Snack Break

SNACK BREAK
Help yourself to coffee, cookies, & brownies next to the YSS Booth!

3:00-4:00PM
workshop session 3
(pick one)

3J: The Magic of Music
Diana L. Kane, M.Ed., Creative Connection

3K: Censorship from All Sides
Chris Crutcher, Author, Keynote Speaker

3L: We Need Diverse Books
Maggie Gall Maynard & Alyssa Newton, Onondaga Free Library

3M: Empowering Teen Leaders & Teen Leadership Councils
Elissa Valente, William R Sanford Public Library
Jennifer Gay & Jane Enkler, Patterson Library

REGISTER @ NYLA.ORG/YSS

Registration opens 1/3
LODGING & SERVICE PROJECT

The Landing Hotel
at the Rivers Casino & Resort
21 Rush Street Schenectady, NY 12305
To reserve a room for Thursday night:
To reserve a room for Thursday & Friday nights:
[Our conference rate is $120/night]

2022 YSS Conference Service Project
Things of My Very Own
249 Green Street Schenectady, NY 12305
https://thingsofmyveryown.org/

Things of My Very Own, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides crisis intervention services to children impacted by extensive abuse and/or neglect and at-risk of a Child Protective Services intervention. Their goal is to keep children together with non-abusive family members and out of the foster care system, whenever possible. Things of My Very Own, Inc. recognizes the need for children to have basic necessities and things of their very own as soon as possible, so they can begin their healing process.

We will be collecting BABY and KIDS hygiene products (body wash, shampoo, lotion, toothpaste, etc.) on the day of the conference.

REGISTER @ NYLA.ORG/YSS

Registration opens 1/3
Interview with YSS member Tonia Burton

**MJS:** Hi Tonia. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your job?

**Tonia:** I am the Children’s Services Consultant for the Monroe County Library System. My job consists of a variety of things. I serve the children’s librarians in the county system, providing professional development, helping with grant proposals and rules of conduct, or supporting them in any way I can. I support the Children’s Center at the Central Library, helping with school visits and regular programming, and sometimes just working the desk. I also support early childhood educators, like Head Start sites and private day care providers, in conjunction with organizations like the Child Care Council and WXXI’s Education Team. I go to outreach events, providing activities and information for parents. The Rochester Public Library has a Raising a Reader program, of which I am the coordinator, which involves a lot of community engagement, providing books every week to kids in classrooms and early literacy training to staff at the sites as well as the parents.

**MJS:** Any new initiatives you wanted to mention?

**Tonia:** Our newest initiative is Talking is Teaching. Through the collective impact organization ROC the Future (note: she’s on a couple of committees there, of course) I was able to get many child serving organizations on board to offer Talking is Teaching. We’re trying to get a more coordinated effort so we can help children get ready for kindergarten.

**MJS:** It’s a shame you don’t have anything to do. I understand you just won an award. Can you tell me about it?

**Tonia:** I just won the Jacque Cady Advocacy for Children award. Members of the ROC the Future collaborative voted it on. Jacque Cady was a woman who fought for kids every day. When she talked, everyone listened. It’s so humbling to mentioned in the same sentence as her. It shows the recognition that what the Rochester Public Library does is important.

**MJS:** What do you feel like you’ve gained by being a member of YSS?

**Tonia:** There’s an unlimited resource in the people who are members. No matter what conference or workshop I go to, it’s learning from the people in the room, hearing what other librarians around the state are doing, what’s working, what isn’t working. It provides validation. It’s great to get different perspectives.

**LIGHTNING ROUND!**

**MJS:** What’s your favorite new children’s book?

**Tonia:** *The One Thing You’d Save*, by Linda Sue Park.

**MJS:** How about picture books?

**Tonia:** *I Heard a Sound*, by David J. Ward.

**MJS:** Your favorite food?

**Tonia:** Coffee (That’s a drink! MJS). Bagels.

**MJS:** Favorite holiday tradition?

**Tonia:** Every Saturday night, the boys and I watch a different holiday movie together. My favorite tradition to watch my sons do is, every day they hide a LEGO mini figure in
the LEGO holiday party. The other one has to find the figure, and make up a story about why the figure is there.

**MJS:** Favorite holiday movie?

**Tonia:** *Miracle on 34th Street* (the old one), tied with *It’s a Wonderful Life* (a movie this interviewer cannot stand.

**MJS:** Is there anything else you’d like to say?

**Tonia:** I think it’s important that we mentor each other and take care of one another. Children’s librarians are used to doing big programs, with big numbers. COVID hit and changed that. It’s hard on the ego. We have to remember this is just for a season. People will come back. This is a world of supply and demand. We have the supply of great stories, and emotional ties to families. Families need a refuge for their kids. We need to take care of each other, and take care of our profession.

Mary Jo Smith  
2nd Vice President

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**YSS Marketing Committee**

Welcome new committee members Anna and John! The Marketing Committee is working hard to keep all members up to date as we head into winter. Be sure to stay up-to-date on all YSS news, announcements, trends, and inspiring topics by following YSS NYLA on social media. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram!

Have an upcoming program you’d like to share? An interesting New Year display or activity? Tag @YSSNYLA to be featured on one of our social media pages. Photos can also be emailed to committee chair, Jennifer at huntjennifer25@gmail.com (please be sure to have permissions to share the photo!).
Time to Apply for the Pied Piper Award

Wouldn’t it feel great to start 2022 with an award? Wouldn’t it be even better if it were an award for work you’ve already done? Don’t forget about the Pied Piper Award! The Pied Piper Award recognizes excellence in the creation of an individual program that promotes service to the young people of New York State Libraries and is replicable at other libraries. Applicants must be YSS members working in a public library, school library, or library system anywhere in New York State, and they must have created and implemented the program between December 1, 2020 and November 30, 2021. The deadline for entries is January 31, 2022. YSS will present the winner with the award and a $200 gift card from Barnes & Noble at the YSS 2022 Spring Conference.

Pied Piper Committee Chair Anne Nelson says that YSS members who run programs should certainly apply, and notes that it could be the perfect opportunity for an experienced professional to help a promising early career colleague get involved in the wider profession. “If two or more staff members cooperated on a single program and would like to apply together, they may do so as long as one is a current YSS member. We’ve all been scrambling to rethink how we can safely run our youth programs. If you worked on a particularly memorable program with someone who has good ideas but isn’t yet a YSS member, you should consider applying together.” She adds, “The application form is short and will be available at www.nyla.org/pied-piper-award until January 31, 2022.”

The Pied Piper Award Committee judges programs on originality, implementation, content, and marketing. If you’ve put together a program you believe other YSS members could easily reproduce or adapt at their own libraries, the Committee invites you to apply at www.nyla.org/pied-piper-award by the deadline of January 31, 2022. Anyone looking for programming inspiration can view the winning entries from previous years there.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Nelson, Pied Piper Award Committee Chair
Sarah Brown, Third Year Committee Member
Michelle Waldenmaier, First Year Committee Member
Apply for the Spring Conference Scholarship now!!!

Apply today for one of the scholarships to attend the 2022 YSS Spring Conference on Friday, April 8, 2022. There are two scholarships available. Each of the scholarships is designed to cover registration fees and up to $250 reimbursement! Deadline is February 1, 2022!

The purpose of Spring Conference Scholarships is to encourage continuing education in the field of library youth services by participating in the annual YSS Spring Conference. Two awards are given annually. The first is the New Member Spring Conference Scholarship. It is given to a new member of our profession. The second is the Lisa C. Wemett Spring Conference Scholarship. It is given to a highly motivated established librarian who has had a significant impact on youth and youth services in her/his community.

How do you apply? You can send the committee chair your application or go to the Spring Scholarship website!

Please address applications to:
Rickele Bello, Librarian
YSS Scholarship Committee Chair
Crandall Public Library
251 Glen Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 792-6508 x 4
rbello@sals.edu

Take Your Child to the Library Day

Mark your calendars! The 11th Annual Take Your Child to the Library Day (TYCttLD) will be on Saturday, February 5, 2022. This international initiative encourages families everywhere to take their children to their local library. Any library – no matter the size, location, or population – can participate. Want to celebrate, but the date isn’t convenient? No problem! You can celebrate on any date in February – it’s up to your library. Your library isn’t doing in-person programming yet because of COVID? That’s okay, too! There are many ways you can celebrate safely. Read on for details!

What does your library have to do to participate? Whatever you want! That’s why this program is so easy. You can celebrate however you like, as long as it encourages caregivers to take their children to the library. Put up decorations, have a special event, like a performer or storytime, offer a craft project, scavenger hunt, or have prizes just for stopping into the library. For specific ideas, downloadable promotional materials, and additional information, check out the TYCttLD page.

Why should your library join TYCttLD? It’s easy and flexible. It’s a fantastic way to demonstrate the importance of what Youth Services AND your library does for the community. Have a book display! Do you circulate unique items, like STEM kits or Launchpads? Are you doing customized book bundles? Showcase these to families! It’s a great way to market your library to new families.

Many libraries still aren’t offering in-person programming for children. There are plenty of safe ways you can participate in TYCttLD! Provide Take and Make Crafts for patrons to pick up at the front desk. Create a Virtual Escape Room (2021 Pied Piper Award Winners, Katie Brand and Jessica Leviness of The Smithtown Library, created a Fractured Fairy Tale Escape Room and you can see how by checking out the link above). Have a book character party on Zoom. Do a giveaway on Facebook or Instagram. The ideas are endless! Start planning your TYCttLD event now!
New York State Library Announcements

CSLP and Summer Reading 2022: Libraries are already busy planning for Summer Reading 2022 and Oceans of Possibilities! The online manual access code is available to public libraries and has been distributed to Youth Services Consultants in each system, so they can share with their member libraries. Remember that the CSLP online manual has information for all ages of Summer Reading, from young children through adult. And remember that the code can also be shared with schools and school libraries if they are collaborating with a public library on Summer Reading. It’s not too early to reach out to schools and school libraries in your communities to begin conversations about outreach and working together on Summer Reading in 2022.

The 2021 national Teen Video Challenge results were recently announced by CSLP and New York state had FOUR winning entries from teens in our state! Watch the winning videos and find out which libraries and systems were represented by going to the TVC page of Summer Reading. Congratulations to all winners! Note: CSLP will not be coordinating or sponsoring this national teen competition next year, but the State Library encourages libraries and schools to host something similar in their region to encourage teen participation in summer library programs.

READsquared training sessions including how to wrap up your Summer Reading online program are available at http://www.summerreadingnys.org/readsquared/

The first annual CSLP Summer Reading symposium was held on December 2, and there were many informative sessions presented along with tips, ideas and strategies for giving a boost to your Summer Reading program. Recordings of the sessions when available, along with accompanying materials will be housed on the CSLP site at https://www.cslpreads.org/summer-symposium-2021/

Summer Meals update – After experiencing a significant decrease in library participation in 2020 due to pandemic restrictions, the Summer Meals program has made a strong comeback in 2021! Hunger Solutions New York reports that 39 library sites were approved to serve summer meals this year. The State Library hopes to see the number of meal sites go up again in 2022 as we continue to grow this important partnership. If you have any questions related to Summer Meals, please reach out to Krista Hesdorfer by emailing her at krista.hesdorfer@hungersolutionsny.org Find information and resources to help promote Summer Meals at www.summerreadingnys.org/hunger-solutions/

The State Library truly appreciates the efforts of all public and school libraries and systems as they continue to meet the daunting challenges of offering Summer Reading and Learning during a time of continued uncertainty. We don’t know what the coming year will bring but we do know libraries will continue to keep students engaged and learning over the summer months and throughout the school year. Do you have any ideas for Lunch and Learn Summer Reading presentations for 2022? Please send your ideas to nyslyouth@nysed.gov

The State Library has “vintage” Summer Reading bookmarks available! These are Explore NY bookmarks from past years with selected NY related titles on the back. They are very colorful and printed on heavy card stock, and were designed by a member of the NYS Museum’s graphics dept. We still have a substantial quantity to give away and would be happy to ship them out to any interested library systems. Requests can be emailed to nyslyouth@nysed.gov
A new flyer is available to help promote the Programs and Performers database: https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/resource.htm Also, a “Virtual – All” category has been added to the search criteria. View the recording of the October Performers webinar at https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/webinars/index.html

**Transforming Teen Services/T3 training update:** The NY State T3 team of trainers met in December to debrief after the national T3 YALSA wrap up in Reno in early November. There continues to be high interest in offering more professional development to library staff on enhancing teen services and ways to involve more teens in library programs. Additional training modules include Computational Thinking and Educational Equity. The YALSA grant ends in December 2021, so options are being explored to offer T3 training beyond that date. The State Library will share more information as it becomes available and/or as YALSA provides more updates to participating cohorts.

**One More Story** a part of the DayByDayNY Family Literacy Calendar just added some new features! The My Word List feature is designed to improve reading fluency and allows young readers to tap on a word to hear pronunciation and add those words to a list that can be reviewed at the end of the featured book. The Build a Word feature allows readers to choose from common letter groupings, and then add a letter at the front of each grouping to create new words. Those words can then be clicked on to be heard. Be sure to try out these new features and share them with your library patrons and communities!

**Professional Development:** A webinar sponsored by the State Library on the inspiring topic of Story Walks® took place on November 9 and was attended by 179 people! The recording and list of resources will be posted at https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/webinars/index.html Previous Ready to Read early literacy and other State Library webinars are also indexed on this page.

Do you have ideas or suggestions for future State Library Youth Services webinars? Please email nyslyouth@nysed.gov with your suggestions. Webinars are now being planned for spring and fall of 2022.

Questions about Summer Reading at New York Libraries, Transforming Teen Services or Ready to Read at New York Libraries may be directed to Sharon B. Phillips, Youth Services Program Manager at Sharon.Phillips@nysed.gov or by emailing nyslyouth@nysed.gov
Looking Ahead to Summer 2022:
What NY Libraries are Saying About Summer Meals

As families and communities strive to recover from the widespread impacts of COVID-19, consistent access to healthy food is more critical than ever, yet recent projections show 1 in 5 New York kids may be struggling with food insecurity. Over the summer months, more than one million low-income children and teenagers in our state lose access to school breakfast and lunch, further threatening their health and wellbeing, and exacerbating learning loss.

The good news is that many schools and community-based organizations – including libraries! – across the state provide free meals for children through the Summer Food Service Program to help fill the gap when school meals are not available.

We recently surveyed NY libraries about their experiences with summer meals. Respondents shared these (and many other!) enthusiastic comments about the benefits of summer meals for libraries and the communities you serve:

"[Summer meals] fosters community and trust between patrons and staff."

"It is easy to manage, brings in new library users, and is the right thing to do."

"It’s a real draw for families who may not otherwise visit the library or participate in programming."

Interested in getting involved in summer 2022? There are a variety of meaningful ways to do so. Libraries can share information with families about meal sites near them, promote summer meals on your website and social media channels, partner with local sites to provide reading activities alongside their meal service — or even consider serving meals right at the library. Visit SummerMealsNY.org to learn more, and subscribe to Hunger Solutions New York’s email list to stay updated on webinars and new resources planned for the spring.

Questions about summer meals or other ways to nourish your community? Email Krista.Hesdorfer@HungerSolutionsNY.org.