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American Library Association

Youth Media Awards

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>> Welcome, everyone, to the American Library Association Youth Media Awards. Please take your seats. Our program will begin shortly.

(Captioned video).

>> Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the ALA Youth Media Awards. Please welcome today our emcees for today's event and opening remarks from ALA executive director, Dan Montgomery.

(Cheers and applause).

>> DAN MONTGOMERY: Good morning. Thank you for that welcome. And it is a great welcome. I think this is the first time I've been in front of a big crowd of ALA members and librarians since I've been the executive director since November. So I really appreciate the welcome. Welcome to warm balmy Chicago. (Laughter). (Applause.)

I am Dan Montgomery. I am the executive director of the American Library Association, and I'm really thrilled to be here to welcome you to the 2026 Youth Media Awards. I'm a former English teacher, high school English, and a father of three kids who are grown now, but let me tell you, young adult and youth literature was really near and dear to my heart. While this is incredible energy in the room, it's incredible that you're here; we love it. And we have you --

we all have front row seats to reveal the most outstanding new books and media for children and teens, carefully selected by librarians and other literature and media experts. These awards are recognized worldwide for the high quality they represent: The Newberry, Caldecott, Printz, Stonewall, Pura Belpre, Coretta Scott King, and so much more. It's all here.

So thank you to everyone in the audience and those watching at home and yes, folks are watching via our website, ALA.org, for being part of the celebration. We welcome you all.

So this year's YMA ceremony also kicks off the 150th anniversary of the American Library Association. Yes. (Cheers and applause).

That's an applause line.

(Applause.)

150 years. It's really incredible. For 150 years, the ALA has connected communities and readers of all ages with the stories they love. Brought to life by writers and illustrators who fill us with wonder and change how we think and view ourselves, our neighbors, and the world.

the Youth Media Awards are crucial to that connection. The works that we celebrate here open new worlds and invite everyone to think, explore, and imagine.

ALA's 150th anniversary, our sesquicentennial -- you can say that after me -- no, you don't have to -- and the YMAS give us an opportunity to celebrate and to reflect on our shared commitment to libraries, literacy, learning, for the next generation of readers. And that's just the start.

this celebration continues actually beyond today, throughout -- after the YMAS and throughout this whole year. As I said, it's a whole year. Next month, on February 10th, the ALA will host our new virtual event. I hope you all come in and register, Recharging in Challenging Times, you didn't know that, that we're in challenging times, did you? Well, we are. And Recharging in Challenging Times. I think it's going to be really amazing fruitful. There's incredible guests coming in. Please look for that on our website and sign up. It's an opportunity to pause and connect and find renewed energy for the work ahead.

in March, the ALA will announce the 2026 winners of the I Love My Librarian Award, honoring ten librarians around the country, nominated by their communities. And one of our favorite celebrations, National Library Week, April 19th through 25th, it's being led this year by award-winning librarian and new host of Reading Rainbow, Mychal Threets. (Cheers and applause). A popular choice.

And in June, thousands of library workers from around

the world and all of you, I know, will descend upon Chicago for ALA's annual conference. I hope to see you all there. It's going to be a celebration to remember. And I guarantee you, it will be warmer. It will be warmer in June. It wouldn't be hard.

All right. So celebrate with us as we mark 150 years of the American Library Association championing access to information, defending the freedom to read, and upholding the power of libraries to transform lives.

Now, let's get on with this show. I'm pleased to welcome a very good friend of mine, someone who is not only a terrific librarian in Iowa City and rents the book mobile there and other programs, but is an incredibly devoted leader of this organization, talented, gifted, thoughtful, President Sam Helmick.

(Cheers and applause).

>> SAM HELMICK: Good morning, beloved. Are my readers here today?

(Cheers and applause).

How about my library patrons, are they here today?

(Cheers and applause).

How about my library worker, are we here today?

(Cheers and applause).

Oh, wonderful. Good morning again. I am Sam

Helmick, president of the American Library Association, and I will not say sesquicentennial, centennial. I will let us all celebrate that together and pronounce it together for the next 12 months. But today I want to welcome you to the 2026 announcement of the American Library Association's Youth Media Awards. It is a pleasure, a cold pleasure, to be here in Chicago to share with you what has become a premier event for the recognition of books and media for children and young adults. In fact, among the highlights of serving as the ALA president, being with you all here today, and having this unique opportunity to participate in today's announcements, as well as being one of the first to know -- y'all keep your secrets. You're very big about confidentiality, librarians, but to be the first to know the titles and artists who have been chosen to be the best of the best in materials produced for youth. And I would like to welcome members of our media, welcome members of media, our publishing colleagues, and especially all of the young people, kids and teens, watching in your libraries, or maybe in your homes in your pajamas, or in your classrooms. We are so thrilled that you're here to join us and celebrate today. (Applause.)

And on behalf of the American Library Association, its executive board, I want to thank our YMA committees who have worked diligently and so hard to select today's

recipients. I'm making eye contact with you all and thanking you for your months and months and months of wonderful diligent reading. Your hard work will assist in our goal at the ALA to foster the next generation of avid readers through individual opportunity but also community progress.

And this year we will announce 22 awards that recognize the best selection in books and media for children and young adults. So please note that due to the short production time notice between the selection of the award recipients and this morning's announcements, presentation slides will include information that has -- from the copyright page and cited from there and from the covers of the selected media.

So in some cases, beloved, cited information may have changed since the material was published or produced. And in such cases, publishers and producers will have an opportunity for us to update their information after our announcements. We're all librarians, so I thought I should mention the citation. (Laughter).

Also due to the time constraints, we will only announce titles during today's event, but we will also be providing a brief summary of our winning titles with an award press materials and web pages which were posted at ALA.org after today's announcements.

Now I would like the profound pleasure to introduce Cassy Leepo, president of the American Indian Library Association, who will begin today's awards with announcements with the American Indian Youth Literature Awards.

(Cheers and applause).

>> CASSY LEEPOT: Thank you, Sam. Boozhoo. Hello all of my relatives. The American Indian Youth Literature Awards honor the very best writing and illustrations by and about American Indians and Alaska Natives. Books selected present American Indians in the fullness of their humanity in present and past contexts.

The awards are announced in even years and are administered by the American Indian Library Association, an affiliate of the American Library Association.

Yay. Yay, sesquicentennial! (Applause.)

Our first American Indian Youth Literature Award category is for best Picture Book. The committee has selected five honor titles.

(Cheers and applause). Including Braided Roots by Pasha westbrook, Chickasaw Nation and Choctaw Freedman, illustrated by Madelyn good night, Chickasaw Nation, and published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Fierce Aunties, written by Laurel Goodluck, Mandan, Confederated Tribes and published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers an imprint of Simon

& Schuster Children's Publishing division.

For a Girl Becoming, written by Joy Harjo, Muscogee Nation, illustrated by Adriana Garcia and published by Norton Young Readers, an imprint of W.W. Norton & Company.

Raven's Ribbons, written by Tasha Spillett, Cree and Trinidadian, illustrated by Daniel Ramirez, Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan and published by Little, Brown and Company.

We Weave, written by Daniel W. Vandever, Navajo and Irish, illustrated by Deonoveigh Mitchell, Navajo and Black American, published by south of sun rise creative.

The 2026 Picture Book winner is Chooch Helped, by Andrea L. Rogers, Cherokee Nation, illustrated by Rebecca Lee Kunz, Cherokee Nation, and published by Arthur A. Levine, an imprint of Levine Querido.

Our next category is for best middle grade book. The award committee has selected six Middle Grade Book Honor titles. Jo Jo Makoons and The Super-Scary Sleepover, written by dawn Quigley, Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, illustrated by Tara Audibert, and published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Lost at Windy River: A True Story of Survival, written by Trina Rathgeber, Peter Ballantyne Cree nation, illustrated by Alina Pete, Little Pine First Nation, and Jillian Dolan, Kapawe'no Cree First Nation and published lie

Orca Book Publishers.

Outfoxed, written by Elise McMullen-Ciotti, Cherokee Nation, and published by Scholastic, incorporated.

Red Bird Danced, written by dawn Quigley, Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. The Ribbon Skirt, written and illustrated by Cameron Mukwa, Anishnaanbe, published by graphics, an imprint of Scholastic, incorporated.

The Summer of the Bone Horses, written by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, illustrated by Steph Littlebird, Oregon's Grand Ronde Confederated Tribes, published by Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS.

The 2026 American Indian Youth Literature Award for best Middle Grade Book is Buffalo Dreamer by violet Duncan, Plains Cree and Taino from Kapawe'no and Cree Nation, and published by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

Our last category is the American Indian Youth Literature Award for best young adult book. The committee has selected five tight honor titles. Sheine Lende, A Prequel to Elatsoe, written by Darcie Little Badger, Lipan Apache, illustrated by Rovina Kay and published by Levine

Querido. *Sisters in the Wind*, written by Boulley, Sault Ste. Marie tribe of Chippewa, published by Henry Holt books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

Super Indian, Volume 3, written and illustrated by Arigon Starr, Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, published by Wacky Productions Unlimited.

The Unfinished, written by Cheryl Isaacs, Kanyen'keha and published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Where Wolves Don't Die, written by Anton Treuer, Ojibwe, and published by Levine Querido.

The 2026 American Indian Youth Literature Award for young adult books is *Legendary Frybread Drive-In: Intertribal Stories*, edited by Cynthia Leitich Smith, Muscogee nation, and published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

I would like to thank the American Indian Youth Literature Award co-chairs, Joy Bridwell, Chippewa Cree Tribe, and Cassandra Osterloh, Cherokee Nation, and the rest of their committee for their hard work in making today's selections possible. Will you please stand and be recognized? It might just be Joy.

(Cheers and applause).

Now I would like to introduce Jaena Rae Cabrera, past president of the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, who will announce the Asian/Pacific American awards for literature, miigwech.

(Applause.)

>> JAENA RAE CABRERA: Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Cassy.

The Asian/Pacific American award for literature is an award that promotes Asian/Pacific American culture and heritage and is awarded based on literary and artistic merit. The award offers three youth categories and committees, including Picture Book, Children's Literature, and youth or young adult literature.

The award is administered by the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, or APALA, an affiliate of the American Library Association.

So for our first award, the Asian/Pacific American award for best Picture Book committee has selected two Pacific a Picture Book honor titles. *Filo's Butterflies*, by Litea Fuata, illustrated by Myo Yim and published by Hardie Grant children's publishing, an imprint of Hardie Grant publishing, and *White Sunday* by Litea Fuata, illustrated by Myo Yim and published by Hardie Grant children's Publishing, an imprint of Hardie Grant Publishing.

This year's Pacific a Picture Book winner is
Kaho'olawe: The True Story of an Island and Her People.
Illustrated by Harinani Orme and published by Millbrook
Press.

The Asian/Pacific American award for best Picture
Book committee has selected two Asian American Picture Book
honor titles, Every Peach is a Story, written by David Mas
Masumoto and Nikiko Masumoto, illustrated by Lauren Tamaki
and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint
of ABRAMS.

And A Vaisakhi to Remember, by Simran Jeet Singh,
illustrated by Japneet Kaur and published by Kokila, an
imprint of penguin Random House.

This year's Asian American Picture Book winner is
Many Things at Once, written by Veera Hiranandani,
illustrated by Nadia Alam, and published by Random House
Studio, an imprint of penguin Random House. I would like to
thank Asian/Pacific American award for literature Picture
Book chair Joy S. Shioshita, and will you please join me in
thanking the committee for all their hard work.

(Applause.)

The Asian/Pacific American award for Children's
Literature committee has selected two honor titles. The
Queen Bees of Tybee County, written by Kyle Kacie Chu and

published by Quill Tree Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, and Fresh Start, written and illustrated by Gale Galligan and published by Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, incorporated. The Asian/Pacific American award for Children's Literature is Hungry Bones, by Louise Hung and published by College Scholastic Press, I would like to thank Asian/Pacific American award for Children's Literature co-chairs Jenny Yap and Julia Wright. Will you all please join me in thanking the committee for all of their hard work. (Applause.)

The Asian American American award for young adult literature committee selected one honor title, Tall Water by SJ Sindu, illustrated by Dion MBD and published by HarperAlley, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

The Asian/Pacific American award for young adult literature is The Red Car to Hollywood, by Jennie Liu and published by Carolrhoda Lab, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group.

I would like to thank Asian/Pacific American award for young adult literature chair, Jerry Dear. Please join me in thanking the committee for all of their hard work. (Applause.)

I would also like to thank the Asian/Pacific American award for literature co-chairs, Jamie, Candice Mack and Zoe

McLaughlin for their hard work within all three categories.

Will you all please join me in thanking the committee for all of their hard work?

(Applause.)

Now I would like to introduce Dr. Melanie Koss, chair of the Association of Jewish Libraries' Sydney Taylor Book Award, who will announce the Sydney Taylor Book Award.

(Applause.)

>> MELANIE KOSS: Thank you, Jaena. Boker Tov, everyone. Good morning. The Sydney Taylor Book Award is presented annually to outstanding books for children and teens that authentically portray the Jewish experience. Presented by the Association of Jewish Libraries, an ALA affiliate since 1968, the award encourages the publication and widespread use of quality Judaic literature. Gold medals are presented in three categories, Picture Book, middle grade, and young adult.

The committee selected three Picture Book honors.

The Book of Candles: Eight Poems for Hanukkah. (Applause.) Written by Laurel Snyder, illustrated by Leanne Hatch, and published by Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

The Keeper of Stories, (Applause.) Written by Caroline Kusin illustrated by Selina Al co, published by

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an I am print of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

And My Body Can (Applause.) Written by Laura Gehl, illustrated by Alexandra Colombo, and published by Apples & Honey Press, an imprint of Behrman House Publishers.

This year's Sydney Taylor Book Award winner for Picture Book is Shah bat shalom, Let's Rest and Reset. (Applause.) Written and illustrated by Suzy Ultman and published by rise by penguin workshop, an imprint of penguin Random House.

The committee selected one middle grade honor book, Beinoni, written by Mari Lowe, and published by Arthur A. Levine, an imprint of Levine Querido.

The Sydney Taylor Book Award winner for middle grade is Neshama (Applause.) Written by Marcella Pixley and published by Candlewick press.

The committee selected one young adult honor book. The Rebel Girls of Rome, (Applause.) Written by Jordan Taylor and published by HarperCollins children's books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers.

The Sydney Taylor Book Award winner for young adult is D.J. Rosenblum Becomes the G.O.A.T. (Applause.) Written by Abby White and published by Arthur A. Levine, an imprint of Levine Querido.

Our last award is the Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award. The Association of Jewish Libraries' Sydney Taylor Book Award committee chooses a Body-of-Work Award winner every two to four years -- we already have a preview -- and recognizes an author or entity who has made a substantial contribution over time to the genre of Children's Literature.

The 2026 Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award winner is Uri Shulevitz. (Applause.) Recognized as a foundational voice in Jewish Children's Literature, Uri Shulevitz created picture books that illuminate Jewish culture and reflect universal experience. His masterful storytelling and evocative illustrations have inspired generations and continue to influence the way Young Readers encounter Jewish stories. Zichrono livracha. May his memory be for a blessing.

I would like to thank the Sydney Taylor Book Award committee for their hard work. Will you all please stand and be recognized?

(Cheers and applause).

>> SAM HELMICK: Thank you, Dr. Melanie.

I am now pleased to announce the Schneider Family Book Awards. (Applause.) The Schneider Family Book Awards, donated by Dr. Katherine Schneider, honored author or illustrator for a book that embodies an artistic expression

of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences. The award, administered by the American Library Association, is given annually for the best younger children, middle grades and teen books, which honor an author or illustrator for the artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences.

The committee selected two younger children's honor books.

Bat and the Business of Ferrets, written by Elena K. Arnold, illustrated by Charles Santoso and published by Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. And *I Hear the Snow, I Smell the Sea*, written by Janice Milusich, illustrated by Chris Raschka, and published by Anne Schwartz Books, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of penguin Random House.

The recipient of the Schneider family book award for younger children's book is *Wanda Hears the Stars*: A blind astronomer listens to the universe, written by Amy S. Hansen with Wanda Diaz Merced, illustrated by Rocio Arreola Mendoza and published by Charles bridge.

The committee selected two middle grade books as well. *Octopus Moon*, written by Bobby Pyron and published by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

And The Strongest Heart, written by Saadia Faruqi,

and published by Quill Tree Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

The recipient of the Schneider family book award for Middle Grade Book is Where Only Storms Grow, written by Alyssa Colman and published by Farrar Straus and Giroux books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan publishing group. The committee has selected two adult honor books, The Golden Boy's Guide to Bipolar, written by Sonora Reyes and published by harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. And The Poetry of Car Mechanics, written by Heidi E.Y. Stemple and published by Wordsong, an imprint of Astra books for Young Readers, a division of Astra publishing house.

The recipient of the Schneider family book award for young adult book is Whale Eyes: A Memoir About Seeing and Being Seen, written by James Robinson, illustrated by Brian Rea and published by penguin workshop, an imprint of penguin Random House.

I would like to thank the award jury co-chairs, Susan Hess and Dr. Trish Bandre' and the jury for their hard work. Will you please stand and be recognized?
(Cheers and applause).

Our next award is the Stonewall Book Awards, Mike Morgan and Larry Romans Children and Young Adult Literature Award. These are sponsored by our Stonewall Book Awards,

children's and young adult committee and the Rainbow Round Table. This award is given annually to English-language books of exceptional merit, related to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender experience.

The committee has chosen four children's honor books. *Call Me Gray*, written by Andrew Larsen and Bells Larsen, illustrated by Tallulah Fontaine, and published by Kids Can Press. *The Ink Witch*, written by Steph Cherrywell and published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group incorporated. *Ollie in Between*, written by Jess Callans and published by Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan publishing group. And *Woods & Words: The Story of Poet Mary Oliver*, written by Sara Holly Ackerman, illustrated by Naoko Stoop and published by Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. And the Stonewall Children's Literature award goes to *Halfway to Somewhere*, (Applause.) Written and illustrated by Jose Pimienta, and published by RH Graphic, an imprint of Random House children's books a division of penguin ran tomorrow house.

It's so much good, my heart's so full. The committee also chose four young adult honor books. *Devils Like Us*, written by L.T. Thompson, published by Bloomsbury YA, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing. (Applause.)

He's So Possessed with Me, written by Corey Liu and published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group, incorporated. Hick: The Trailblazing Journalist Who Captured Eleanor Roosevelt's Heart, written by Sarah Miller and published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of penguin Random House and Sometimes the Girl, written by Jennifer Mason-Black and published by Carolrhoda Lab, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, incorporated. And the winner of the 2026 Stonewall young adult literature award is One of the Boys, written by Victoria Zeller and published by Arthur A. Levine, an imprint of Levine Querido.

I would like to thank the award committee co-chairs, Elisa Gall and Charlie Roos and the committee for today's selections. Will you please stand and be recognized?
(Cheers and applause).

It just keeps going so good. I would now like to introduce Kacie Armstrong, the chair of the Coretta Scott King book awards round table.

(Cheers and applause).

>> KACIE ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Sam. I think we all agree our hearts are full as well.

The Coretta Scott King book awards celebrate and honor Mrs. Coretta Scott King for continuing her husband's

work to foster peace and unity among all people. The Coretta Scott King book awards round table administers the awards annually.

Our first award is the Coretta Scott King-Virginia Hamilton award for lifetime achievement. The award is presented in even years to an African American author, illustrator, or author/illustrator for a body of published books for children and/or young adults who has made a significant and lasting literary contribution.

The award is named in memory of award-winning children's author Virginia Hamilton, who wrote more than 35 books throughout her career and received numerous awards, including the Coretta Scott King book award, the Newberry Medal, and a host of others.

The recipient of the Coretta Scott King-Virginia Hamilton award for lifetime achievement is Kadir Nelson. (Cheers and applause).

I would like to thank award chair Dr. Andrea Jamison and the Coretta Scott King-Virginia Hamilton award for lifetime achievement committee who made today's announcement possible. Will you all please stand and be recognized? (Cheers and applause).

Next are the Coretta Scott King book awards, which honor African American authors and illustrators of

outstanding books for children and young adults that promote the understanding and appreciation of all people. The committee selected one Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe new talent award. This year's recipient for new talent author is Arriel Vinson for *Under the Neon Lights* (Applause.)

Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, an imprint of penguin Random House.

The committee selected two illustrator honor books, *Andre: Andre Leon tally*, a fabulously fashionable fairy tale, illustrated by Lamont O'Neal, and written by Carole Boston Weatherford and Rob Sanders and published by Henry Holt and Company, an imprint of Macmillan publishing group. *And City Summer, Country Summer*, (Applause), illustrated by Alexis Franklin and written by Kiese Lamon and published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

The Coretta Scott King illustrator award goes to *The Library in the Woods*, (Applause.) Written by Calvin Alexander Ramsey and published by Carolrhoda Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group.

Our last award is the Coretta Scott King author award. The Coretta Scott King book awards committee chose three author honor books. *The Incredibly Human Henson Blayne*, (Applause) written by Derrick Barnes, and published by Viking, an imprint of penguin Random House. The Library

in the Woods, (Applause) written by Calvin Alexander Ramsey, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie, and published by Carolrhoda Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc. And Split the Sky, written by Marie Arnold, and published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group, Inc.

I am pleased to announce the winner of this year's Coretta Scott King author award is Will's Race for Home (Applause), written by Jewell Parker Rhodes, published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group, Inc.

I would like to thank Dr. Sujin Huggins and the Coretta Scott King book awards jury, who made today's announcement possible. Please join us in recognizing their hard work. Please stand.

(Cheers and applause).

I would now like to introduce young adult library services association president, Amber Creger, who will introduce today's YALSA award selections. Thank you. (Cheers and applause).

>> AMBER CREGER: Thank you, Kacie. So I just want to tell everybody, I'm super excited to be here to tell you about all these awesome books and share in the book joy and love. So let's just give -- let's stand up for a second.

I'm sorry. This is impromptu. We've been sitting a long time, and it's cold in here, so let's reach up high, reach down low, wiggles, all right. Cool. All right. Everyone have a seat. Thank you. All right. Okay. So through networking, advocacy, and professional development, the young adult library services association empowers all those involved in the profession to provide equitable, diverse, and inclusive teen services.

Now, on with the announcements of today's awards. So I'm going to start with the Alex Awards, which are one of my favorites, I'll be honest. The Alex Awards are given to ten books written for adults that have special appeal for young adults, ages 12 to 18. Sponsored by the Margaret A. Edwards trust and administered by the young adult library services association, the awards were first given annually between 1998 and between -- and became the official ALA award in 2002.

The awards are named after Margaret Alexander Edwards, who was also called Alex, by her friends. Edwards was a pioneer in young adult librarianship, working with teens for many years at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. She served as an inspiration to many librarians who served young adults.

This year's ten winning titles are, The Favorites, by

Layne Fargo, published by Random House, an imprint and division of penguin Random House. The Girls Who Grew Big, (Applause.) By Leila Mottley, published by Alfred Knopf, a division of penguin Random House. Harriet Tubman: Live in Concert, by Bob the Drag Queen, published by Gallery Books an imprint of Simon & Schuster. Hole in the Sky, by Daniel H. Wilson, published by Doubleday, a division of penguin Random House. Insectopolis, A Natural History, by Peter Kuper, published by W. W. North often and Company. Plum, by Andy Anderegg, published by Hub City Press. Sonita: My Fight Against Tyranny and My Escape to Freedom, by Sonita Al Sada, published by HarperOne, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. These Heathens, by Mia McKenzie, published by Random House, an imprint and division of penguin Random House. What Kind of Paradise, by gentleman Nell Brown, published by Random House, an imprint and division of penguin Random House. And The Whyte Python World Tour, by Travis Kennedy, published by Doubleday, a division of penguin Random House.

I would like to -- love to thank the Alex award chair Brooke Young and the members of the Alex award committee for making this award possible. Please join me in recognizing their hard work. And if they're here, please stand. (Cheers and applause).

All right. Awesome. Okay. So now we're on to the Margaret A. Edwards award, which is established in 1988 and honors an author and specific titles by that author for significant and lasting contribution to young adult literature. The award recognizes an author's work in helping adolescents become aware of themselves and addressing questions about their role and importance in relationships, society, and in the world. And it's sponsored by School Library Journal. This year's winner of the Margaret A. Edwards award for significant and lasting contribution to young adult literature is Candace Fleming.

(Cheers and applause).

So Candace Fleming has written *Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*, *The Family Romanov: Murder, rebellion and the fall of imperial Russia*, *the great and only Barnum*, *The Tremendous, Stupendous Life of Showman P.T. Barnum*, *Murder Among Friends: How Leopold and Loeb Tried to Commit the Perfect Crime*, and *The Rise and Fall of Charles Lindbergh*, all published by Anne Schwartz Books and Schwartz and weighed books, imprints of Random House children's books, a division of penguin Random House. *Crash from Outer Space: Unraveling the Mystery of Flying Saucers, Alien Beings and Roswell*, published by Scholastic Focus an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.

Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life, published by Atheneum books for Young Readers an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing division, and Presenting Buffalo Bill: The Man who Invented the Wild West, published by Roaring Book Press, a division of Holtzbrinck publishing. I would also love to thank the Margaret A. Edwards committee chairs, Jessica Hilbun Schwartz, and members of the committee. Please join us in recognizing their hard work. Are you guys here too? Yes? (Applause.) We're watching, so yay (Applause.)

All right. The William C. Morris Award honors a book written for young adults by a first-time previously unpublished author. This award's name sake is William C. Morris, an influential innovator in the publishing world, and an advocate for marketing books for children and young adults. William, called Bill by his friends and colleagues, left an impressive mark on the field of children's and young adult literature. He was beloved in the publishing field and the library profession for his generosity and marvelous enthusiasm for promoting literature to children and teens. The William C. Morris Award committee selected five finalists in December. All the Noise at Once, written by DeAndra Davis. And published by Atheneum books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's

Publishing.

First Love Language, written by Stefany Valentine, and published by penguin workshop, an imprint of penguin Young Readers, a division of penguin Random House. Love, Misha, written and illustrated by Askel Aden, and published by First, Second, an imprint of roaring book press, a division of Holtbrook Publishing. Red Flags and Butterflies, written by Sheryl Azzam, and published by DCB Young Readers, an imprint of Cormorant Books, Inc. And You and Me on Repeat, written and illustrated by Mary Shyne and published by Henry Holt books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

Okay. You guys ready for the winner? Yeah, all right. Okay. So the winner of the 2026 William C. Morris Award is All the Noise at Once, (Cheers and applause), written by DeAndra Davis and published by Atheneum books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster and children's publishing. I would also love to thank the William C. Morris Award committee chair, B. Allison Gray and members of the committee. Please join me in saying thank you and doing a great job. (Applause.)

All right. The excellence in nonfiction award honors -- yes, right, nonfiction. Woo-hoo -- honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults ages 12 to 18 each

year. The award committee selected five award finalists in December. *American Spirits: The Famous Fox Sisters and Mysterious Fad that Haunted a Nation*, written by Barb Rosenstock and published by Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra books for Young Readers, a division of Astra publishing house.

The death in the jungle, murder, betrayal, and the lost dream of Jonestown, written by Candace Fleming and published by Anne Schwartz Books, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of penguin Random House.

White House Secrets, Medical Lies and Cover-ups, published by Gail Jarrow and written by Gail Jarrow. She didn't publish it. And published by Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra books for Young Readers, a division of Astra publishing house.

white Lies and How the South Lost the Civil War Then Rewrote the History, written by Anne Bausum and published by Roaring Book Press, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

And A World Without Summer: A Volcano Erupts, a Creature Awakens, and the Sun Goes Out, written by Nicholas Day, illustrated by Yas Imamura, and published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of penguin Random House.

And the winner of the 2026 excellence in nonfiction award goes to *Death in the Jungle: Murder, betrayal, and the lost dream of Jonestown*, written by Candace Fledge and published by Anne Schwartz, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House.

I would love to thank the YALSA's excellence in nonfiction committee chair Dr. Barbara A. Ward and members of the committee. Please join us in recognizing their hard work. (Applause.)

All right. On to Michael L. Printz award for excellence in young adult literature. Yay, all right. So this award was first given in 2000, it's 26 years old. Can you believe it? What? Right. It's named for the Michael L. Printz, a Topeka, Kansas, school librarian who had a passion for books and reading and a commitment to finding the right book for the right student. The award, which was created in partnership with Booklist Magazine is administered by YALSA. The committee chose four Printz honor books. Cope Field by T.L. Simpson and published by Flux, an imprint of North Star Editions, Inc.

(Applause.)

The House that No One Sees, written by Adina King, and published by Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. (Applause.) Sisters in the

Wind, written by Angeline Boulley and published by Henry Holt books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

And Song of a Blackbird, written and illustrated by Maria van Lieshout and published by First Second, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group.

And now I am pleased to announce that the winner of the Michael L. Printz award for excellence in 2026 is Legendary Frybread Drive-In: Intertribal Stories, edited by Cynthia Leitich Smith and published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. (Applause.)

I would love to thank the Michael L. Printz award committee, Jodi Kruse, and the members of her committee. Please stand and let's be recognized for your hard work. (Cheers and applause).

So now the next award is the Pura Belpre award, which honors Latinx writers and illustrators whose work best portrays, affirms and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in outstanding works of literature for children.

I would love to introduce Edwin Rodarte, vice president of REFORMA, the national association to promote library and information services to Latinos and Spanish speaking who will announce the awards in both English and Spanish. Thank you, everyone.

(Cheers and applause).

>> EDWIN RODARTE: Thank you so much, Amber. Good morning. It is a pleasure to be here with you today the Belpre Award is co sponsored by ALSC, YALSA, and REFORMA, an affiliate of the American Library Association. REFORMA works to recruit bilingual and bicultural library professionals and support staff and supports the development of library services and programs that meet the needs of the Latino community.

Now on with today's announcements, which I will present in both English and Spanish.

The committee chose two Pura Belpre honor books for illustration. (Speaking in Spanish).

A to Ztec, a bilingual alphabet book. (Applause.)
(Speaking in Spanish).

The Invisible Parade, (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish).

And now I am pleased to announce the winner of the Pura Belpre award for illustration. (Speaking in Spanish).
Popo the Xolo.

(Cheers and applause).
(Speaking in Spanish).

Now the committee selected three Pura Belpre honor books. (Speaking in Spanish). A Hero's Guide

to Summer Vacation. (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish). The Island of Forgotten Gods. (Applause.) And A Sea of Lemon Trees: (Speaking in Spanish) (Applause.)

This year's Pura Belpre award for children's author is (speaking in Spanish). The Pecan Sheller. (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish)

Now the committee chose three Pura Belpre young adult author honor books. (Speaking in Spanish) Rosa by any other name. (Speaking in Spanish) Silenced Voices: Reclaiming Memories from the Guatemalan Genocide. (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish). The Story of My Anger, (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish). Now, this year's Pura Belpre award for young author is (speaking in Spanish) On the Wings of La Noche. (Applause.) (Speaking in Spanish). Will the Pura Belpre award chair Gia Ruiz and the committee please stand and be recognized for your hard work?

(Cheers and applause).

Thank you for your work. (Speaking in Spanish).

I would now like to introduce dues Dr. Claudette S. McLinn, president of the Association for Library Services to Children, who will announce the remainder of today's awards. (Applause.)

>> CLAUDETTE MC LINN: Thank you, Edwin. Give him a, everyone a round of applause. (Applause.) The Association

for Library Service to Children, also known as ALSC, supports its members in engaging communities to built healthy, successful futures for all children.

I'm pleased to share the ALSC Children's Literature lecture award. Each year an individual of distinction in the field of Children's Literature is chosen to deliver a distinguished lecture on behalf of ALSC. The lecturer prepares and presents an original paper that makes a significant contribution to Children's Literature.

The 2027 ALSC Children's Literature lecture award will be delivered by Kwame Alexander.

(Cheers and applause).

Thank you to the ALSC Children's Literature lecture award for their work. Will chair Sue McCleaf Nespeca and the committee please stand and be recognized?

(Cheers and applause).

Next is the Mildred L. Batchelder award, which honors a United States publisher for the most outstanding children's book originating in a country other than the United States and in a language other than English and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States.

There are four Batchelder honor books. This year's honor books are The Adventures of Cipollino (Applause.) Published by Enchanted Lion Books, written by Gianni Rodari,

illustrated by Dasha Tolstikova and translated by Antony Shugaar. (Applause.)

From Memen to Mori, published by Yen Press, written and illustrated by Shinsuke Yoshitake and translated by Ajani Oloye. Picking Tea with Baba, published by Charles bridge, written by shoe bin, illustrated by Yu Yin, and translated by Shan Chen. (Applause.) And Pilgrim Codex, published by Em Querido, an imprint of Levine Querido, written by Vivian Mansour, illustrated by Emmanuel Valtierra and translated by Carlos Rodriguez Cortez.

This year's Mildred L. Batchelder award goes to Croco, published by Tapioca Stories, written and illustrated by Azul Lopez and translated by Kit Maude. I would like to thank Mildred L. Batchelder award chair, Dr. Wendy Stephens, and members of today's committee for making today's selections possible. Would you please stand and be recognized?

(Cheers and applause).

I would now like to present the Robert F. Sibert medal. The Sibert medal honors the author and illustrator of the most distinguished informational book for children. Informational books are defined as those written and illustrated to present, organize, and interpret documentable factual material for children.

The committee chose five Sibert honors. At Last She Stood: How Joey Guerrero Spied, Survived, and Fought for Freedom, written by Erin Entrada Kelly, and published by Greenwillow Books, an imprint of HarperCollins publisher. Go Tell It: How James Baldwin Became a Writer, (Applause.) Written by Quartex Harris, illustrated by Gordon C. James, and published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group, Inc. The History of We, written and illustrated by Nikkolas Smith, published by Kokila, an imprint of penguin Random House.

Silenced Voices: Reclaiming Memories from the Guatemalan Genocide, (Applause.) Written and illustrated by Pablo Leon and published by HarperAlley, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. A World Without Summer: A Volcano Erupts, a Creature Awakens, and the Sun Goes Out, written by Nicholas Day, illustrated by Yas Imamura and published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of Penguin Random House.

And now I am pleased to announce that the winner of the Robert F. Sibert medal for the most distinguished informational book is Alberto Salas plays Paka Paka con La Papa, written by Sara Andrea Fajardo, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal, and published by Roaring Book Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing.

I would like to thank Robert F. Sibert medal chair, Sam Bloom, and the committee for today's selection.
(Cheers and applause).

Would you please stand and be recognized?
(Cheers and applause).

Now I would like to present the Odyssey Award, given annually to the producer of the best audio books for children or young adults, available in English in the United States. The Odyssey Award is jointly administered by the association for library service to children and the young adult library services association, both divisions of the American Library Association and is sponsored by Booklist Magazine the committee chose four odyssey honor audio books. The Dead of Summer, produced by Zane Birdwell and Paul Gagne for Scholastic Audio, written by Ryan La Sala and narrated by the author and a full cast. Legendary Frybread Drive-In: Intertribal Stories, produced by Sydney Mathieu, of Eljin Productions, incorporated, for Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins, edited by Cynthia Leitich Smith, and narrated by a full cast. Soundtrack, produced by Dan Zitt and Brian Ramcharan, for Listening Library, an imprint of Penguin Random House Audio Publishing Group, written by Jason Reynolds and narrated by a full cast. Whale Eyes: A Memoir About Seeing and Being Seen, (Applause.) Produced by Iris

McElroy and Olivia Langen for Listening Library, an imprint of Penguin Random House Audio Publishing Group, written and narrated by James Robinson. Illustrated by Brian Rea.

I am pleased to announce the winners of the Odyssey Award for the best audio produced for children and for young adults. The children's award goes to *Clack, Clack! Smack!*, a Cherokee Stickball Story, produced by around I Cardillo and Debra Cardillo for Live Oak Media, written by Traci Sorell and narrated and illustrated by a -- excuse me -- and illustrated by Joseph Herd and narrated by the author and a full cast.

>> The players shout, everyone's ready. The leader tosses the ball high. Sticks, reach, clack clack, his long arms miss the grab. (Applause.) The young adult award goes to *trans history* from ancient times to the present day, produced by iris McElroy and Juan Garcia Ticoulat, for Listening Library, an imprint of penguin Random House Audio Publishing Group, written by Alex L. Combs and Andrew Eakett and narrated by the authors and a full cast.

>> Learning about historical people and events, try asking yourself the following questions. Why do certain stories from history get repeated over and over while others are not at all. Who is telling the story? Why? Who is the intended audience? What does the story reveal about the

point of view of who is telling it? What are the motivations for acquiring it.

(Applause.)

>> I would like to thank the Odyssey Award committee for their efforts to select today's honorees. Will Odyssey Award chair, Eva Thaler-Sroussi and the committee please stand and be recognized?

(Cheers and applause).

Next up the excellence in early learning digital media award is given to the producer of the most distinguished digital media for an early learning audience produced in the United States during the preceding year.

the committee selected two excellence in early learning digital honor titles. *Reading Rainbow*, produced by buffalo Toronto public media, PBS and Kidzuko (Applause.) And *Terrestrials*, produced by WNYC radio lab. (Applause.)

And the winner of the excellence in early learning digital media award is *Weather Hunters*, produced by Weather Hunters, Inc., and Silver Creek Falls Entertainment. I would like to thank the excellence in early learning digital media award co-chairs, Deanna Romriell and Keary Bramwell and members of their committee for today's selections. Would you please stand and be recognized? (Applause.) I am now pleased to share the announcement of the Children's

Literature legacy award which honors an author or illustrator whose books, published in the United States, have made, over a period of years, a significant and lasting contribution to literature for children through books that demonstrate integrity and respect for all children's lives and experience.

This year's recipient is Candace Fleming.
(Cheers and applause).

I would like to thank Children's Literature legacy award chair Eric Carpenter and members of the committee for their work in making today's selection possible. Please stand and be recognized.

(Cheers and applause).

Our next award is the Theodor Seuss Geisel award. The Theodor Seuss Geisel award honors the author and illustrator of a book for beginning readers who demonstrate great creativity and imagination in their literary and artistic achievements to engage children in reading.

The award committee selected three Geisel honor books. *Earl and Worm: The Big Mess and Other Stories.* (Applause.) Written and illustrated by Greg Pizzoli and published by Alfred A Knopf, an imprint of Random House children's books, a division of Penguin Random House.

I Like Hoops, written by Juwanda G. Ford, I will

illustrated by Jada Jeni Bennett, and published by Holiday House. (Applause.) And The Tunneler Tunnels in the Tunnel, written and illustrated by Michael Rex, published by Simon Spotlight, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

This year's Theodor Seuss Geisel award goes to Stop that Mop, written and illustrated by Jonathan Fenske and published by Simon Spotlight, an imprint of Simon & Schuster's publishing.

I would like to thank Theodor Seuss Geisel award chair, Liv Hanson, and members of the committee for today's selections
(Cheers and applause).

Please stand and be recognized.
(Cheers and applause).

And now for the announcement of the American Library Association and the Association for Library Services for Children's oldest and most widely known awards, the Caldecott and Newberry medals.

(Cheers and applause).

First awarded in 1938 in honor of the 19th century English illustrator, Randolph Caldecott, the Caldecott medal is awarded to the artist of the most distinguished American Picture Book for children published in the United States

during the previous year.

The committee has chosen four Caldecott honor books.

(Applause.)

Every Monday Mabel.

(Cheers and applause). Illustrated and written by Jashar Awan and published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. Our Lake, illustrated and written by Angie Kang and published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House. Stalactite and Stalagmite a Big Tale from a Little Cave, illustrated and written by Drew Beckmeyer, and published by Atheneum books, for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing division. And Sundust, illustrated and written by Zeke Pena and published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House. And the winner of this year's Randolph Caldecott medal for outstanding illustration of a children's book is Fireworks

(Cheers and applause). Illustrated by Catia Chien, written by Matthew Burgess, and published by Clarion, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

I would like to thank the Randolph Caldecott medal chair, Jewel Davis, and members of the committee. Please stand and be recognized.

(Cheers and applause).

And finally, the John Newberry Medal. First awarded over 100 years ago in 1922 and named after 18th century British bookseller, John Newberry, this medal is awarded annually to the author of the most distinguished book for children published in the United States during the previous year. Four titles have been named Newberry honor books.

The Nine Moons of Han Yu and Luli, written and illustrated by Karina Yan Glaser and published by Allida, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

A Sea of Lemon Trees: The Corrido of Roberto Alvarez, written by Maria Dolores Aguila and published by roaring book press, a division of Holtzbrinck publishing.

The teacher of know mad land, a World War II story, written by Daniel Nayeri and published by Arthur A. Levine, an imprint of Levine Querido. And The Undead Fox of Deadwood Forest, written by Aubrey Hartman and published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hatchette Book Group, incorporated.

And now the winner of this year's John Newberry Medal for the year's most distinguished contribution to American literature for children is All the Blues in the Sky, written by Renee Watson and published by Bloomsbury children's books, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing.

I want to thank the John Newberry Medal chair, Ramona

Caponegro, and the committee. Please stand and be recognized.

(Cheers and applause).

And now back to you, Sam.

>> SAM HELMICK: Y'all made me so happy. Thank you all so much more joining us today. And can we all thank the wonderful youth media award's committees and chairs for making today's announcements possible.

(Cheers and applause).

Congratulations on a job well done. Thank you so much for sharing and celebrating stories with us today. For a complete list of today's winners, please visit the ALA Youth Media Awards web cast page at ALA.Unikron.com. Additional award information and links to award press releases will also be posted at Ilovelibraries.org later today. Thank you all and happy reading.

(Cheers and applause).

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