



News from the American Philatelic Center

Home of the

American Philatelic Society and American Philatelic Research Library

Contact: Gretchen Moody

e-mail: gretchen@stamps.org

American Philatelic Center • 100 Match Factory Place • Bellefonte, PA 16823

814-933-3803 ext. 239

814-933-6128 (Fax)

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The Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship: What It Is, and How You Can Support It



Among the most innovative of the stamp hobby initiatives supported by the APS Board when it met in Hartford, Connecticut, August 13, is the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship.

Everyone supports the principle of growing the stamp hobby and ensuring its future by finding and nurturing young collectors. However, the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship (YPLF) goes an important step further, encouraging development of the next generation of stamp hobby leaders — young men and women who will mature into the writers and collectors, exhibitors and dealers, who will hold high the banner of philately tomorrow and for many years to come.

For years, many of the brightest and most energetic young collectors have found that, while they are welcomed into philately and encouraged to begin, there is no ready way for them to enter into and learn on a long-term basis from the world of organized philately — very much an adult world, and one that can appear cold, unreceptive, and intimidating to young people. YPLF exists to break down that wall — to enable young people who already have shown a sustained interest in stamp collecting to have an enriching and dynamic experience with a specific aspect of the stamp hobby, selected by them in partnership with a series of adult mentors.

YPLF has two age groups: Junior Fellows, ages 13 through 17, and Senior Fellows, ages 18 through 25. Junior Fellows participate in the Fellowship for one year, and Senior Fellows participate for two years. Junior and Senior Fellows, after an introduction to the program, will choose one of three tracks on which to focus: a Dealer Track, an Exhibitor Track, or an Author Track.

The Fellowship is the brainchild of Alex Haimann, and is an answer to the problems he confronted in his formative years as a precocious young philatelist who sought access to a more advanced experience within the hobby. Alex began collecting in second grade and had his first dealer table at a local stamp show at age 12. In 2001, Alex became the youngest national dealer with a booth at the APS STAMPSHOW in Chicago. In 2004, Alex worked with Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries and, since 2005, he has worked as the Collections Department's Philatelic Specialist and as a program consultant for the Arago® Project at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Stamp Dealer Association (ASDA) and is chief philatelist and managing director of Mystic Rare Stamps, a division of Mystic Stamp Co. A first-rate ambassador for philately, Alex promoted APS STAMPSHOW with engaging local television appearances in Portland in 2007 and Hartford in 2008.

The American Philatelic Society believes in Alex's vision and is working with him, through its Education Department, to make his program a reality. Alex's Tiffany Dinner speech at the APS AmeriStamp Expo 2008 in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he introduced the YPLF concept, can be heard through a link on the home page of the APS website, www.stamp.org

The APS invites all stamp collectors to join in this effort. There are several ways for you to get involved and make a difference.

1. Buy and Sell to Benefit the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship

Through eBay Giving Works, collectors who wish to support the program can sell items on eBay and allocate a portion of the proceeds — from 10% to 100% — to benefit the YPLF. Buyers can support the program as well, by bidding on these items. The benefit to sellers is that buyers may seek out their wares on eBay to support this worthy Fellowship.

Sellers who participate through eBay will be recognized in APS publications including *The American Philatelist*, as well as on a soon-to-be-established YPLF website. All this will allow sellers to promote their businesses while enjoying the satisfaction of supporting the YPLF.

Remember: just as important as selling on behalf of YPLF is bidding on or buying items that are designated to support the Fellowship!

2. Direct Sponsorship of the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship

Societies, organizations, or individuals can sponsor a Fellow for one year for \$5,000. The sponsor's name will precede the word "Fellow" in all introductions of that young person throughout his/her involvement in the Fellowship, as in "American Philatelic Society Fellow John Doe."

3. Mentoring of the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellows

The Program also seeks the active involvement of professionals throughout the stamp hobby willing to become YPLF Mentors, who will meet with a Fellow to guide and instruct the young collector in his or her chosen track. Mentors should have demonstrated expertise as a dealer, exhibitor, or author within the stamp hobby, and be willing to help a young person achieve his or her goals over the year-long period of the Fellowship.

4. Direct Contributions to the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship

Every contribution — large or small — helps the YPLF get under way. Those who wish to show their support of this innovative program to secure the future of philately have opportunities to make tax-deductible donations.

Further information on the opportunities to buy, sell, contribute, and getting involved in support of the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship can be found at <http://www.stamps.org/yplf>

Wanted: 2009-2010 YPLF Fellowship Applicants!

The American Philatelic Society is looking for a few good young men and women ages 13-25 to take their places as the inaugural class of Young Philatelic Leaders Fellows for 2009-2010.

Beginning January 1, applications for Young Philatelic Leadership Fellows will be accepted until the deadline of March 31, 2009. Fellows will be selected by May 2009, and will begin the program in August 2009. The first class of YPLF Fellows will be introduced at the 2009 APS STAMPSHOW, which will take place August 6-9, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Fellowship applications will be available shortly at <http://www.stamps.org/yplf>, or contact APS Director of Education Gretchen Moody for more details at 814-933-3803 or via e-mail at gretchen@stamps.org.