



## Book to Action 2021 Case Study

**Library: Monrovia Public Library**

### **Book to Action 2021 Summary & Impact Reflection**

*Please summarize your Book to Action 2021 public programming series. Write for an audience that has never heard of your library, your community, or the Book to Action concept. Start by introducing your library and community. Be sure to show how the Book to Action topic and titles met a specific community need or aspiration. Be sure to highlight your community partners, explain significant, innovative, or new models for public programs, and show how this program impacted your community. Limit 2-3 paragraphs.*

Monrovia Public Library believes in the importance of life-long learning, and our services and programs aim to reflect this belief. The Library is a part of a beautiful, historical, and culturally diverse community that benefits from the advantages of a local natural environment which was gravely impacted on Sunday, September 6, 2020, when the Bobcat Fire ignited in Bobcat Canyon of the San Gabriel Mountains, just north of the City of Monrovia. Over the subsequent weeks, the wildfire burned over 278 acres of the Monrovia Hillside Wilderness Preserve and much of our beloved 80 acres of Monrovia Canyon Park. With such powerful fires getting closer to home, community members had a new thirst for knowledge surrounding what the community can do to prevent such catastrophic events from reoccurring in their community. With this in mind, the Library selected the Sustainability theme for Book to Action and chose the book *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer for a community wide read.

For Monrovia's Book to Action series, community members were encouraged to read the book along with us and to participate in our event series to learn more about caring for our community and the planet. Due to the restrictions of a pandemic, our team sought to encourage reading, community discussion, and action in a safe and innovative way. This led to the inclusion of virtual discussions and Q&A over Instagram Live and Zoom, virtual activity demonstrations on composting and native plants, and a passive, atemporal discussion of the selected book's themes and takeaways. We looked to local experts in Community Partners which included the Monrovia Canyon Park Hillside Wilderness Preserve, Monrovia Public Works, Monrovia Community Garden, Arlington Garden in Pasadena, MPWR Foundation, FoodEd, and Monrovia Fire & Rescue. These Community Partners enriched the program by fostering discussions on infrastructure, sustainability, and community-minded action through Instagram Live interviews.

This program impacted Monrovia in two ways. For one, it highlighted local resources for community members. This included a neighborhood composting program, a local endangered plant species to support, and many volunteer programs that community members can take action in. This program also brought awareness to a different approach to wildfire--one that embraces traditional fire practices to mitigate the impacts of large-scale wildfires and understands that not all wildfires are bad. As the community recovers from a recent brushfire, this new perspective offers a positive approach to a fact of life in California.

## Community Member Quotes

*Please enter 1-2 community member quotes from surveys or public comments that may be anonymized and used in future grant applications and program model sharing.*

“It was so informative and engaging. So nice to hear from local city staff and experts on what's happening in my community. I feel more connected to all that is happening in Monrovia.”

“I will educate myself about Indigenous people and the land we live in. I will do actions that will be respectful to our land.”

## Impact on Professional Development

*Please summarize how participating in the Book to Action 2021 initiative impacted you and your team's professional development. As a result of participating in this program, what skills did you or your team learn? What professional takeaways would you share with others looking to improve community engagement with adults & intergenerational groups?*

As a result of participating in this project, the following skills were gained:

- Conducting live interviews and Q+As
- Budgeting
- Developing and maintaining relationships with community partners
- Hosting virtual activities
- Project management
- Reimagining the standard in-person book discussion for a virtual environment

To improve engagement with adults & intergeneration groups, we recommend working with a beloved community organization to get community members interested and involved. In our case, Monrovia Canyon Park is a beloved symbol of the city and the people who live in it. Canyon Park is a strong example of the importance of sustainability, and it demonstrates what the city values. It made the theme more real, hence more engagement.

## Final Words of Advice

*What brief bit of advice (1-2 sentences) would you give to library staff members interested in coordinating a Book to Action or similar community engagement series for adults and intergenerational groups in their community?*

Aim to partner with community organizations/professionals with a strong social media/community presence. Their comfort with speaking publicly, especially virtually, will result in lively interactions. Also, their preexisting social media heft/community connections will in turn benefit program attendance and your overall reach for Book to Action.

**Total # Programs:** 15

**Total Attendance at Programs:** 1,452

**Book to Action URL(s):** **Book to Action Images:**

[Monrovia Public Library Book to Action Website](#)

[Monrovia Public Library 2021 Book to Action YouTube Playlist](#)

Please attach 1-2 images (.jpg or .png files only) that best represent your Book to Action 2021 series  
Sample File Name: BTA 2021 San Leandro Library Image 1.jpg

Image 1 File Name: Community partner.jpeg

Image 1 Caption: Dropping off books with community partner

Image 2 File Name: Participant.jpeg

Image 2 Caption: A participant sharing Book to Action on Instagram

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May others contact you with questions?  Yes  No



Image 1: Dropping off books with community partner



Image 2: A participant sharing Book to Action on Instagram

California Center for the Book is a program of the [California Library Association](#), supported in whole or in part by the [U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the [State Librarian](#).