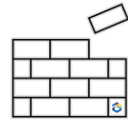


Library Leaders: Building a Strong Foundation



2025 MSL Fall Workshop

September 15-16, 2025

Heritage Inn - Great Falls

Why Attend?

Workshop attendees will

- Learn leadership and communication skills
- Learn about services, strategies, and resources to help your library lead and serve!
- Connect with directors, trustees, and MSL staff from across Montana.

Who Should Attend?

Directors and Trustees

Outcomes

Workshop attendees will

1. Build leadership, planning, and communication skills
2. Receive training that assists libraries in meeting the current public library standards.
3. Gain knowledge of the defined roles of directors, trustees, and local government officials and how those roles support the functions of a public library.
4. Learn about MSL's public library development services and resources.

Questions?

Colet Bartow

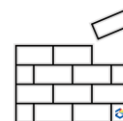
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Library Leaders: Building a Strong Foundation

2025 MSL Fall Workshop



Monday
September 15

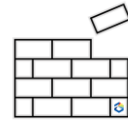
Session Details

Presenters

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Opening Plenary 9:00-10:30 | <p><i>Welcome and Opening</i></p> <p>Being Brave in the Everyday</p> <p>When you think of being brave, what comes to mind? Probably someone doing amazing acts of heroism or engaging in death defying feats. But being brave is not limited to the daredevils and adrenaline seekers in this world. Being brave does not require us to be fearless; it does not require us to be a thrill seeker. We can be brave in hundreds of ways every day in our lives if we are willing to lean into the discomfort, vulnerability, and uncertainty that comes with leaving our comfort zone and stepping into the unknown. What would it look like to be brave in this season of your life? What are the doubts and questions that keep you from being braver with your life? Being brave in your everyday is the most uncomfortable thing you can do, but it is also the most freeing and life changing!</p> | <p>Mazi Robinson</p> |
| Morning Connections 10:30-10:45 | <p>Break Time to Connect with Colleagues</p> | |
| Morning Breakout Sessions 11:00-12:00 | <p>Braving the Pathway to Excellence</p> <p>In a scarcity-informed culture, it takes courage to imagine what could be possible and to ask for what we need to move in that direction. In this session we are going to explore the Montana State Library's Elective Roadmap to Library Excellence, and then we are going to brainstorm how we can take real steps towards creating the future that we want for our libraries and our communities. Attendees will emerge from this session with a practical initial plan and concrete next steps.</p> | <p>Cara Orban</p> |
| | <p>Being an Effective Board</p> <p>Library boards in Montana hold an important and unique responsibility. This session will discuss responsibilities of the public library board including the role of the board chair, board bylaws, and state laws trustees should know. Learn best practices and what resources are available to help trustees be successful in this important role.</p> | <p>Corey Sloan</p> |
| Plenary/Lunch 12:00-1:30 | <p>Can't We All Just Get Along?: Integrating Boundaries and Kindness in Our Relationships</p> <p>As much as we are wired for connection, connection is not always easy. Whether in our personal or professional lives, we are all going to encounter people that bug us, frustrate us, or even hurt us. How do we healthily engage with others when the relationship is not what we want it to be? We do so with boundaries and empathy. In this presentation, attendees will learn when and how to set boundaries in their relationships in order to hold onto who they want to be yet still practice empathy and kindness towards others.</p> | <p>Mazi Robinson</p> |
| Afternoon Breakout 1:45- 2:45 | <p>Navigating Performance Conversations with Grace</p> <p>It's easy to give positive feedback. Challenges arise when you need to discuss a performance or behavioral issue that is negatively impacting you, the library, or other people. This session will discuss why we avoid hard conversations, the consequences, and how we can be more successful when we need to give someone negative feedback.</p> | <p>Tracy Cook</p> |
| | <p>Open Meetings and Public Engagement</p> <p>Board meetings- they're open to the public, and the public is a-talkin'! Get a refresher on Open Meeting Law and learn best practices around public comment, then apply it in scenarios.</p> | <p>Corey Sloan and Cara Orban</p> |

Library Leaders: Building a Strong Foundation

2025 MSL Fall Workshop



Monday
September 15

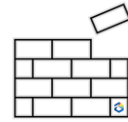
Session Details

Presenters

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| Afternoon Connections 2:45 – 3:00 | Break Time to Connect with Colleagues | |
| 3:00-4:30 Afternoon Breakout | <p>The Power of Narrative – Storytelling for Library Leaders</p> <p>This session will equip participants with essential storytelling skills, empowering them to articulate the profound value and community impact of their libraries.</p> <p>The Critical Need for Compelling Library Stories - In an increasingly competitive landscape for resources and attention, the ability to effectively communicate the unique contributions of public libraries is paramount. Library directors are not just administrators; they are advocates, visionaries, and community connectors. To secure funding, engage stakeholders, and foster deeper community relationships, they need more than just statistics; they need compelling narratives.</p> <p>This workshop addresses a critical need: to instill in library leaders the confidence and practical skills to share powerful stories about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Value Creation: How their libraries tangibly improve lives, foster literacy, and provide essential services.• Community Connection: How libraries truly understand and respond to the specific needs and values of their local communities. <p>By honing their storytelling abilities, librarians can transform abstract concepts of "public service" into relatable, impactful human experiences, demonstrating the indispensable role their institutions play in Montana's communities. This confidence in narrative will enable them to advocate more effectively, build stronger partnerships, and ensure their libraries continue to thrive as vital community hubs.</p> | Marc Moss |
| End of Day Plenary 4:30 - 5:00 | <i>Reflection and Sharing Activity</i> | |

Library Leaders: Building a Strong Foundation

2025 MSL Fall Workshop



| Tuesday September 16 | Session Details | Presenters |
|---|--|---|
| Opening Plenary 9:00 – 10:30 | Releasing Control and Reclaiming Your Agency We are wired for a lot of things in life, but we are definitely wired for control. We like to be in control. Even the most spontaneous and carefree among us like the control of not being controlled! But our desire for control can actually keep us stuck not pursuing what we really want in life, trying to change people that won't change, and anxious about the many things we can't control. We can find more freedom, confidence, and peace when we learn to detach from other people's approval and expectations of us, self-doubt, and trying to change people and systems that are out of control. When we learn to detach, we can then step into the power of our own agency to create the life we want, increase our resilience, and invest our energy and time into living in such a way that brings fulfillment and purpose. | Mazi Robinson |
| Morning Connections 10:30-10:45 | Break Time to Connect with Colleagues | |
| Morning Breakout Session 10:45-12:00 | From learning to action: connecting with local government officials Sessions at this year's fall workshop have focused on communication, storytelling, and the internal work that helps us build strong relationships. Let's apply what we have learned by creating an action plan for connecting with local government officials. Attendees will focus on their unique community and what they want to achieve. | Tracy Cook |
| Plenary/Lunch 12:00-1:30 | It's About Time! Effective Strategies to Manage Your Life and Your Time Do you ever feel you are rushing from one appointment to the next? Does your to-do list seem to grow throughout the day rather than shrink? Do you ever wish there were more than 24 hours in the day? When we feel that our lives and schedules are out of control, we feel stressed and overwhelmed. Everyone has 24 hours in a day. How are you going to spend your "24"? Learning to manage your time so that it doesn't manage you is the first step in using your "24" more effectively and living a life that reflects your priorities, goals, and values. | Mazi Robinson |
| MSL Programs and Services 1:30 – 2:30 | MSL Wagon Wheel Each MSL Program will have a table to share information and answer questions as attendees move around the room. | Tracy Cook Cara Orban Corey Sloan Bobbi DeMontigny Jennifer Birnel Amy Marchwick |
| Closing Session 2:30 – 3:00 | <i>Reflections, Planning, Evaluation</i> | |