

This program fosters opportunities for librarians to give back to their communities and to interact with their patrons and future patrons outside the library space – while also increasing awareness of the specialized skills and knowledge that librarians possess. Hopefully, these volunteer efforts will expand the community who supports and advocates for librarians and libraries. (What better way to be known in your community than to share what you can do with those who don't already know!)

Misconceptions About Librarians

One of the best possible ways to educate our communities about the skills of librarians and library staff—and, by extension, our value—is to work with people within our communities, **using those skills**. If people see us outside of the context of libraries, working with technology, teaching, or doing any one of the many things we do that go beyond books, they will adjust their views of us—and of our value to the community.

2. How does LBC work?

There are several models for hosting “Librarians Build Communities” (LBC) in your area.

1) A state- or local-level librarian volunteer day.

An easy way to get LBC started at the local, state, or regional level is to hold a volunteer day in conjunction with a library conference. Step one is to identify community organizations, non-profits, and libraries in need of volunteers with librarian skill sets.

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you can get a list of all of the non-profits in your area. If the United Way does not have such a list for your location, you can work with other community service organizations, such as the [Rotary](#), [AARP](#), and [Lions Club](#), to generate the list.

Look through your list to see if any organizations appeal to you and seem likely to want volunteers with library skills (teaching, cataloging, organizing, creating programs, processing/preservation, technology, etc. are pretty far-reaching skills; organizations could use at least one of these!). If so, contact the group by writing them an email or a letter. You can even use one of our **template letters**, or, if you have one that you'd be willing to share, let us know in a comment or by [emailing us](#)!

6. Creating the website

Your chapter/state/city is going to want some kind of localized information page, to show to both librarians and to prospective community organization partners. A wiki or Google Site would work well, to keep information organized and easily shared among the various parties involved in your LBC program. It does not need to be complicated, though features like [Google forms](#) for volunteer sign-up could be utilized.

[Here is an example wiki page](#), which you can use for ideas.

7. Choosing the date(s)

We recommend planning LBC to coincide with your state's/region's annual conference, if at all possible. However, it is more important to have sufficient lead time. x0 ETBT/F2 12 Tfr01-9 g 9TB

your experience an LBC program, we'd also love for you to write about that along with how many volunteers you had, what they did, what went well, and what you learned.

We really hope that everyone doing LBC, or really any library-skills-based volunteering, will blog about their thoughts, with photographs, so that we can share it with the wider community!

