**Best Small Library in America 2015: Belgrade Community Library**

**Learner Guide**

**Event Description:** With just six staff members serving a community of 12,700 outside of Bozeman, MT, the **Belgrade Community Library** won this year’s *Library Journal*[Best Small Library in America Award](http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2015/01/awards/the-loaves-and-fishes-library-best-small-library-in-america-2015/#_). This award, cosponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was created in 2005 to encourage and showcase the exemplary work of libraries serving populations under 25,000. What is Belgrade’s secret award-winning sauce? With a robust volunteer base, they have reimagined library services and aggressively developed new outreach efforts to meet the community’s changing needs. The result is intense engagement and support from the community and an impact beyond Belgrade’s borders through leadership to small libraries throughout the state. Learn how to replicate and adapt Belgrade’s ambitious outreach efforts on a small-library budget.

Presented by: **Gale Bacon**, Director, **Rebekah Kamp**, Children and Youth Services Librarian and **Keiley McGregor**, Public Services Librarian, all at the Belgrade Community Library; and **Meredith Schwartz**, Executive Editor, Library Journal.

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |

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| **Activity 1** |
| In terms of **technology**, what assets does your library have to offer and what are your current limitations? List three **organizations/potential partnerships** that could help you overcome these limitations. Include the asset(s) your library would bring to each partnership.1. 2.3. |
| **Discussion/Reflection Question 1** |
| High-speed internet access is limited in rural Montana and many users access the web via smartphones. The Belgrade Community Library addressed this challenge by creating a mobile website through a WordPress plugin. **What small changes could you make** to better serve your community’s technology needs? |
| **Activity 2** |
| Identify an **underserved group** in your service area. Are there other organizations that have contact with or provide services to this group? Brainstorm three ways the library and these other organizations can **collaborate** to expand your services.1. 2.3. |
| **Discussion/Reflection Question 2** |
| Belgrade Community Library has worked to bring multiple organizations to the table for **continuing partnerships** that achieve mutual objectives over time. For example, “Here Comes Kindergarten” fulllfills a need for school transition services by bringing together many partners interested in early childhood and thriving families. **In what ways can you foster relationships** that will persist beyond one-time events? |
| **Discussion/Reflection Question 3** |
| Looking to the future is essential for success, but innovation must be guided by a well thought out plan. The Belgrade Community Library has built its strategic plan based on **community conversations** with stakeholders and partners. **What organizations and individuals in your community** would you invite for a conversation?  |