

MCLS Virtual Dialogue
Back in Business Mid-COVID
July 17, 2020 – 11:00 am EDT

Participants were placed in small groups in the breakout rooms for 15 minutes of conversation.

1st Breakout Room Conversation Questions:

Whether you are in Michigan or Indiana, you are in some phase of re-opening, as are libraries all across the country. Reflecting on your own library's re-opening, tell a story about your absolute best moment during re-opening, whether with a patron, a co-worker, or community partner. What happened during that moment? What made it so great? How did your work environment contribute to your best experience?

- 11:22:11 From Jenna - Kendallville PL : For both of us, the theme seemed to be surprise. Mary Beth's highlight was the popularity of the activity boxes they put together. It allowed them to partner with a packaging company, and they continue to be popular - 700 given out so far! My highlight was walking out one day and meeting someone who was just walking around in front of the library when we weren't open. We offered to run in and get them materials, and they were so surprised and excited that we would do that! It's the simple things.
- 11:24:21 From Scott Garrison : Some themes: allowing limited staff back in building, very strange not being able to see everyone, doing custom masks, "hack your mask" with ear/nose bridge savers, making masks makes one feel productive!
- 11:24:27 From Nicki Kirchoff : We talked about the greater connections we've been making with staff with the pandemic and shut down.
- 11:24:47 From Teresa Natzke : We are open for curbside only and my 100 year old patron was one of the first to return, remotely. She calls us, we pull items and deliver them to her home. We are a small community so we have offered delivery but she's the only one who took us up on the service.
- 11:24:49 From Todd Reed : HELped an elderly patron print out tax forms and I met him at the post office to help him sign them correctly. Because, of course, I was also sending my taxes out on July 15.
- 11:24:55 From Mary Rueff : Plymouth Public Library (MI) transitioned their annual in-person Author Fair into a virtual one, getting the authors to use their own social media, in addition to the library's to promote it, and had 16,000 engagements on social media -- very successful!
- 11:25:11 From Scott Garrison : Helping community where they may need things they can't get anywhere else, affordably.
- 11:26:46 From Stephanie Olson : Lovely Princess Child picture shared with local media (she was returning her book to the library...toddler/preschool/grade school take home kits made facebook as people did the craft and took pictures...air hugs welcoming back people to those who could open...Facebook growth...pick-up procedures working well...little to no push-back on the mask issues...video storytimes very [positive and attended well....excitement for those who could open.
- 11:27:53 From alexis.shirk@cuaa.edu : I need to hack mine to stop fogging up my glasses!
- 11:28:13 From alexis.shirk@cuaa.edu : But I can't sew.
- 11:31:02 From Crown Point Library : I also have loved all the pictures that our patrons have shared on our Facebook page of the finished products of the many craft kits we've had available for all ages.

Participants were then asked to complete an activity.

*Imagine every experience is as positive as the best moment you've had since re-opening.
What does that look like? What resources or support do you have?*

*For the next 5 minutes, in as creative a way as possible, draw an image that captures the essence of your ideal mid-COVID work environment.
Drawing skills don't matter, stick figures are perfectly acceptable. But be as creative as you want!*

Participants were then placed in small groups in breakout rooms for small group conversation.

2nd Breakout Room Conversation Question:

In your small groups, describe your images to each other.

As a group, discuss which images do you find most inspiring and why?

- 12:02:42 From Scott Garrison : Ample resources: funding, connections between people (includes communication and building happiness), and PEOPLE - especially those who wear masks, and have empathy toward others!
- 12:03:51 From Jan Davidson : Just wanted to share - my boys are watching Sesame Street while I do this meeting, and the episode today is called "Love My Librarian" <3
- 12:03:54 From Mary Beth Schlabach : Many of our images were different versions of groupings and/or circles. Working together, whether it be with the community or with staff. Finding ways to grow, change, and evolve... and do it with enthusiasm and hope.
- 12:04:24 From Stephanie Olson : I got most out of it with REMOTE WORKING ACTIVITY ...many see a definite change in how they work and appreciate people and animal companionship...not to mention some great views from a screened in porch...one person really new in her job.

Participants were then asked a final reflection question.

What's one small step you can take to realize your dream of your ideal mid-COVID work environment?

- 12:09:10 From Scott Garrison : Staying connected with my colleagues, like today!
- 12:09:39 From Gwen H : Flexibility and focus.
- 12:10:00 From C. L. Quillen : Finally get my desk cleaned off and more organized.
- 12:10:07 From Mary Beth Schlabach : Continuing to work towards doing the best we can do with what we have.
- 12:10:14 From Pam S : Block of more of my calendar so I can focus on a single task and my calendar doesn't fill completely with meetings :)
- 12:10:25 From Stephanie Olson : Seeing the people at the branches feeling safe and productive....no issues with masks or politics ...
- 12:10:41 From Michelle Bradley : listen to more music
- 12:10:48 From Mary Rueff : Set up a more permanent office at home, in case I end up working from home longer.
- 12:11:00 From Amy : More staff collaboration and sharing of ideas, they are great resources of information and live in the community (I commute in from another area).

12:11:00 From Jenna - Kendallville PL : Staying focused on how we used to do things, and how we can change things as we move forward.
Completely rebranded the newsletter during this time!

12:11:07 From Mary Beth Schlabach : Yes! to more music!

12:11:15 From Donna Clark : Sharing with others from MCLS, LOM, Lakeland Library Cooperative, local officials, businesses, patrons...after all,
it is WE THE PEOPLE, our destiny and hope is in our grasp...we must be engaged and participate in the world, community we
want to live in and pass on to the generations after us.

12:11:28 From Lissa Krull : Bringing more beauty and things I love into my workspace.

12:11:37 From C. L. Quillen : Lots more collaboration with others

12:11:52 From Jan Davidson : Actively taking time to be grateful - at end of each day, writing down one thing I'm grateful for that day

12:12:51 From Scott Garrison : Using PERMAH: permahsurvey.com

12:12:59 From Lissa Krull : These all so good and inspiring. Makes my day!

12:13:03 From Nicole Brock (ISL) : Schedule a day off to do the personal things that have been distracting me, no matter where I'm working.

12:13:18 From Pam S : @Nicole Yes!

12:13:21 From Scott Garrison : Thank you, MCLS team!

12:13:56 From Crown Point Library : Thank you!

12:14:06 From Gwen H : Boosting Workplace Wellbeing link: <https://store.mcls.org/index.php/boosting-workplace-wellness-527.html>