MEDIA RELEASE

Santa Barbara Central Library Invites the Community to Read, Discuss, and Act on Food Insecurity

SANTA BARBARA, CA – Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Throughout the month of May, during the Santa Barbara Central Library’s Book to Action programming, the Library is partnering with local organizations and leaders to invite the community to engage in learning about food insecurity in Santa Barbara through reading, discussions, and actions.

Santa Barbara is often framed as a paradise, and there are many things to be celebrated about the region, but not all community members have equal opportunities and access to resources. According to the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey, 21% of Santa Barbara County residents reported experiencing food insecurity in the past year. The percentage is even higher for those who earn less than $35,000 per year (39%) and who identify as Hispanic (31%). As well, these numbers have been increasing steadily each year since 2013.

Food insecurity is a complex issue that overlaps with other issues such as food production and availability systems, living wages, affordable housing, transportation availability, and discrimination. This intersectionalism is covered in the Central Library’s Book to Action selection for 2019, The Unending Hunger: Tracing Women and Food Insecurity Across Borders by Megan Carney.

Based on ethnographic fieldwork from Santa Barbara, California, Carney’s book sheds light on the ways that food insecurity prevails in women’s experiences of migration from Mexico and Central America to the United States. Using personal interviews and in-depth research, Carney "unveils the harsh indignities and structural causes of their food insecurity as well as their creative and defiant struggles to eat and live well."

Supported by the California Center for the Book, Megan Carney will be at the Santa Barbara Central Library on Saturday, May 4 at 5:00 PM for a conversation about The Unending Hunger and food insecurity. Free community copies of The Unending Hunger will be available on a first come, first served basis at this event.
Following the Book to Action author talk the community is invited to a discussion of the book at the Central Library’s Social Justice Book Club on Tuesday, May 21 at 6:00 PM.

At the end of the month, on May 29 at 6:00 PM, the Central Library will host a panel with representatives from Santa Barbara organizations working on food insecurity and related issues. Attendees will gain insight into the realities of those experiencing food insecurity, learn about various initiatives and work being conducted, and hear ways in which they can take action in the local community and the larger world.

One of the most important aspects of the Book to Action programming is moving from learning into action. To this end, the Central Library is encouraging community members to become involved through the following events:

- Family Day volunteering, Saturday, 5/4, 9:30am, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County
- Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive (watch your mail for info from the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County), Saturday, 5/11, your front door
- Santa Barbara Public Library’s 2nd Annual Volunteer Fair, Saturday, 5/11, 10:00am - 12:00pm, Central Library
- Picnic in the Park volunteer training with Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Monday, 5/20, 5:30pm and Thursday 5/30, 12:00pm, Central Library, For more info and to sign-up >> https://foodbanksbc.org/programs/picnic-in-the-park/

The Central Library is thankful to community partners who helped contribute to the formation of the Book to Action programming, whether through their input or partnered implementation: Community Environmental Council, Explore Ecology, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Santa Barbara Foundation, UCSB CalFresh, and UCSB Sustainability.

The Santa Barbara Central Library is one of 25 California libraries chosen for Book to Action 2019, funded by the California Center for the Book. 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.

About Book to Action

Book to Action is a program framework that takes the basic book club concept and expands it to create a dynamic series of events for adults and multigenerational groups. Librarians work closely with a community partner. Community members read and discuss an engaging book on a current topic, attend author or speaker events, and put their new-found knowledge into action by participating in a community service project or civic engagement activity related to the book.

In 2019, 25 libraries were selected to participate in creating a Book to Action series. 48 locations across California and more than 50 community partners will be involved. The full list of libraries, program coordinators, title selected, issue/theme, and community partners are listed at calbook.org/programs/bta/.

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The Unending Hunger
TRACING WOMEN AND FOOD INSECURITY ACROSS BORDERS
Megan A. Carney