

Adult Literacy Library Services 2013-2016

Project Number: 0340 -14 -4618

Project Title: Adult Literacy at MHLS Libraries

2015-6 Narrative

Synopsis: The purpose of the project was to use mini grants to support 4 libraries in the continuation of their successful adult literacy programs to enhance workforce development services in their libraries, and improve adult literacy on the job and in the home. These libraries have strong relationships with adult literacy providers, and have institutional infrastructure support (such as a PCC; a literacy office in the library; the library is in a designated Literacy Zone). The literacy partners brought the necessary instructional experience to implement the curriculum for the workshops for tutors and adult literacy training for students. 688 programs were conducted with 1,412 attendances and many of the students, and tutors, continue to use library resources. 100% reported that their library benefitted from the collaboration with their Literacy Partner Agency.

Need: Libraries have the need to insure that the community benefits from their operations and that the word gets out about library offerings, as well as the obligation to support the literacy development and workforce readiness of individuals in their community. Literacy providers in the region need to widen the breadth of their reach into the community in order to meet the great need for adult literacy services, by recruiting new tutors, having additional locations for service that have expanded hours, and additional ways to get the word out about their services. Potential adult students in the region need to have enhanced ways to find out about existing programs that are accessible to them for regional workforce development and to improve literacy on the job and in the home.

Target Audience: To reach the ultimate target of regional adults in need of literacy services, this project provided 2015-6 New York State Library's Adult Literacy Library Services grant funds to 4 libraries who had successful results with programs and services supported by 2013-4 and 2014-5 funds, and who continued to strengthen their partnerships with adult literacy providers to develop and expand adult literacy programs which will improve adult literacy on the job and in the home. Partnerships between public libraries and literacy providers expand opportunities for residents as well as strengthening the local impact of each institution.

Direct Coordination with Agencies: As part of this program, individual member libraries partnered with various local public schools and other organizations which are operating similar adult literacy programs in their communities. The cooperating agencies in this project are 4 libraries and their literacy partner agencies: Adriance Memorial Library

partnering with Literacy Connections; Grinnell Library partnering with Wappingers Falls Central School District; Kingston Library partnering with Ulster Literacy Association; Patterson Library partnering with Key to Computing. **PLANNING:** The libraries met and planned programs with their literacy partner agencies that further developed and expanded existing adult literacy programs. Together they shared their knowledge of the community, developed a baseline of statistics and a plan for OBE. **PROJECT ACTIVITIES:** Literacy partner agencies bring the necessary instructional experience and are the lead agency for project activities including implementing the curriculum for the instructional workshops for tutors and adult literacy training for students. The library supports this through providing space and materials, and marketing the programs. **EVALUATION:** The literacy partner agencies collect information from students and tutors for evaluation of the program and of the student progress, as well as tracking attendance. The library collects information on the circulation and distribution of materials.

Accomplishments: The 4 participating libraries continue to improve the provision of library-based adult literacy opportunities and enhanced relationships with literacy professionals based on experiences in Year 1 and 2 of the program, resulting in advancing the shared goals of the library/literacy partner institutions. 100% of participating libraries reported that they benefitted from this collaboration with the literacy partner agency, and 100% reported that the literacy partner agency benefitted from the collaboration with the library ([Exhibit A](#) – comments from literacy partner agencies about the project). Participating libraries developed a tip sheet for other libraries on ‘Developing Public Library Partnerships, Programming & Services that will enhance workforce development and improve adult literacy on the job and in the home’ ([Exhibit B](#)). Adults in the MHLS region had expanded opportunity to improve their skills through adult education and literacy programs, with a 19% increase since Year 1 in the number of users served ([Exhibit C](#) – areas of assistance and how support is provided). Non-library users were brought in to the library because it is where the classes were held, and exposed to additional community assistance and support. Many of the students, and tutors, continue to use library resources. 100% of participating libraries reported that information collected from their program attendees indicated that they: acquired new skills or strategies in the workshops/programs; found that the suggestions and strategies offered in the workshops/programs were practical and useful; have increased confidence and/or skills in job application or work related areas; believed that they had benefited from these workshops/programs and that other people would do so as well; were likely to use the library or the library website to find further information; use new services at the library; have an improved perspective on coming to the library. [Exhibit E](#) includes comments from attendees about the program.

How has your library or system shared project results with others in your region and statewide? Project results are shared at county Directors meetings with other libraries in the county of the participating library; at MHLS Outreach Council meetings; at Ulster County and Dutchess County 'Bringing Agencies Together' (grassroots forums that meet bi-monthly in their respective counties developing cooperation among non-profits) meetings. The tip sheet developed by participating libraries for other libraries on 'Developing Public Library Partnerships, Programming & Services that will enhance workforce development and improve adult literacy on the job and in the home' ([Exhibit B](#)) will be distributed to the MHLS Directors Association and to the NYS Public Library System Outreach Coordinators.

Describe any problems or surprises you encountered in working toward the objectives for this project. What would you do differently? We did not encounter issues in Year 3 in working towards the objectives of the project, and would not do anything differently. We observed that the total number of workshop/program participants declined, while the number of programs increased, and have attributed this to the one-on-one training that is becoming more of a standard in this content area.

Briefly describe evaluation methods used: An important aspect of evaluation for this project is the success of the library/literacy agency partnerships to develop and expand adult literacy programs which will improve adult literacy on the job and in the home. Partnerships between public libraries and literacy providers expand opportunities for residents as well as strengthening the local impact of each institution. 100% of participating libraries reported that they benefitted from this collaboration with the literacy partner agency, and 100% reported that the literacy partner agency benefitted from the collaboration with the library. Number of participating sites: 4; Hours of service per week: 60; Total number of users served: 8,590; Number of workshops/programs: 688; Total number of workshop/program participants: 1,835; Total number of materials circulated: 1,412; Total number of materials distributed: 50,641. [Exhibit D](#) includes the system's evaluation instrument (p. 1-5) as well as samples from the participating libraries. Participating libraries set evaluation methods with their literacy partners that tracked participation and user satisfaction including: Tutor Training Evaluation (p.6) and Student Survey (p. 7-8) from Kingston Library partnering with Ulster Literacy Association; Library Program Evaluation (p. 9) and Library Open Computer Help Evaluation (p. 10) from Patterson Library partnering with Key to Computing; Adult Literacy and Employment Program Participation Evaluation (p. 11-14) from Grinnell Library partnering with Wappingers Falls Central School District; Literacy Connections Student Survey (p. 15), Spanish Computer Class Survey (p. 16-18) and Community Resource Speaker Session Evaluations (p. 19) from Adriance Memorial Library partnering with Literacy Connections.

Explain any increases/decreases in budget expenses: N/A. [Final Expenditure \(FS-10\) Form](#)

List additional funds used for this project and where funds were obtained. Estimate the in-kind costs incurred by the library and cooperating agencies. In-kind costs incurred by the libraries and cooperating agencies is estimated at a total of \$232,482. This is comprised of \$68,800 for room rental (688 programs at \$100); \$101,282 for publicity materials (50,641 materials at \$2 each); \$62,400 library and literacy partner staff time (60 hours / week x 52 = 3,120 annual hours of service at \$20).

3 Year Summary:

Please add here a brief summary of activities and outcomes of the entire 3 year cycle of the program: Mini grants were used to support libraries in the continuation of their successful adult literacy programs to enhance workforce development services in their libraries, and improve adult literacy on the job and in the home. These libraries had strong relationships with Literacy Partner Agencies prior to Year 1, and this program brought additional strength to these partnerships. The Literacy Partner Agencies brought the necessary instructional experience to implement the curriculum for the workshops for tutors and adult literacy training for students. 100% of participating libraries reported that they benefitted from this collaboration with their Literacy Partner Agency, and 100% reported that the Literacy Partner Agency benefitted from the collaboration with the library. Adults in the MHLS region had expanded opportunity to improve their skills through adult education and literacy programs, with a 19% increase since Year 1 in the number of users served. Non-library users were brought in to the library because it is where the classes were held, and exposed to additional community assistance and support. Many of the students, and tutors, continue to use library resources. Over 3 years 5 libraries were involved; a total of 24,835 users were served; 1,709 workshops/programs were offered; there were a total of 9,637 program participants; 4,368 materials were circulated; 106,493 materials were distributed.

Project Continuation: Yes MHLS plans to continue this project after the three year literacy program cycle is complete, as long as funds through the NYS Adult Literacy Library Services Grant Program are available. In Year 1 of the 2016-2019 funding cycle, the 4 libraries participating in Year 2 and Year 3 of the 2013-2016 funding cycle will be continuing, as the continuity of these adult literacy opportunities is key to long-term success, and an additional library has been added.

[Project Statistics](#)