

**BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION**  
**STAYING CONNECTED II GRANT PROGRAM**

*Final Report for*  
*Staying Connected II Grant Program*

*from*  
**The New York State Library**

**Grant Number 39389**  
**Grant Time Period: June 2005 – September 2008**

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## Part A – Executive Summary

Please answer the following questions regarding your three-year Staying Connected grant:

**Of the four Staying Connected program areas—hardware upgrades/replacement, internet connectivity, training support and technical support—which were most helpful in helping you meet the Staying Connected goal of ensuring that public access computing services in libraries are sustainable over the long term?**

The State Library works in partnership with New York State’s 23 public library systems, which service 1100 library buildings, and depends on them to provide professional development and training for their member library staff and trustees.

Although public-access computing has been greatly expanded in recent years with the help of initiatives such as the Gates State Partnership Grant Initiative, New York’s cultural and geographic diversity continues to challenge the state’s ability to sustain public-access computing. The communities served by the state’s public libraries range from congested urban neighborhoods with large numbers of non-English-speaking residents to small rural hamlets separated by great distances. Most libraries have already experienced significant cuts in local funding and now face the possibility of further cuts. Many rural communities have small libraries with inadequate staffs and collections, or even no library at all.

The state’s 23 public library systems, particularly those in rural areas, face many obstacles in providing technology training that can effectively address the wide variety of staff skills in member libraries.

To help fill both the universal and the specific needs for training statewide, training funded through the 2005-2008 Staying Connected Grant Program included both statewide and regional components. Training grants were offered to all 23 public library systems. Outcome-based evaluation training was offered statewide to help libraries plan technology training projects and help them measure the impact of such projects; online training was offered through a pilot program entitled “Training on the Go”; workshops addressing state of the art” social interactive software such as Web 2.0 were offered at the State Library; training on electronic databases was made available through NOVELny – a pilot project for the Statewide Internet Library; and a teleconference series concerning technology training and management was offered statewide through the College of DuPage.

The State Library, through the employment of statewide and regional training funded through the Staying Connected Grant, can help maintain public access computing services in New York libraries for the long term. Over 10,000 library staff were trained in a variety of topics through various training formats. Many staff have indicated they plan to employ “Train the Trainer” methods to ensure that future new staff members are familiar with the technology skills necessary to maintain public access computing in their libraries.

**As applicable, summarize any realignment of funds between program areas. How and why did you reassign funds? For instance, if you realigned funds from technical support to hardware, how much did you reassign and why did you make that change?**

There was no realignment of funds. All funds were spent on activities related to technology training, as indicated in the State Library’s grant application proposal.

## PART B – TRAINING SUPPORT

*Supporting the development of public access computer training programs for the state's public libraries. Funds for training could be used to pay for a variety of costs associated with the design and delivery of training.*

### I. Program Outputs

Complete the following table to summarize your program's outputs during the grant period.

	Total # Planned	Total # completed	% Completed in grant period	Notes
1) Training Sessions Offered (if online, report online course registrations)	583	1551	100%	
2) Library Staff Trained	3167	10,069	100%	
3) Library Buildings Represented in Training Sessions	913	1100	100%	

### II. Program Outcomes

For each anticipated program outcome (i.e. the effect of your program's activities on the participating libraries or library staff), summarize the results, including outcome indicators and data sources. Please add additional tables as necessary.

<b>Outcome #1</b>	Library staff were trained in emerging technologies, such as Web 2.0, a variety of Microsoft software applications, web page design, wireless networks, Adobe Photoshop, security software, gaming in libraries, RSS, chat reference, and social networking sites, to better enable them to teach and assist patrons.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5841 public library staff completed 610 training sessions</li> <li>• Individual library administered surveys indicated that 50-88% of the participants felt at least 50% more confident and capable in using the computer applications and software offered in the training sessions</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation forms and questionnaires generated by individual library systems from training sessions</li> <li>• Follow-up surveys by the library systems of participants in the training sessions</li> <li>• Participant comments</li> <li>• Direct observation by trainers</li> <li>• Technology training needs assessment done by library systems</li> </ul>
<b>Results Summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	Based on technology training needs assessments done by many of the library systems, training was offered in emerging technologies including, but not limited to Web 2.0, Microsoft software applications, RSS, gaming in libraries, web page design, wireless networking, MySpace, XML, chat reference, blogs, web conferencing, Adobe Photoshop, and instant messaging. Participants responded that they will use the information and skills gained for their work and professional growth. They either have trained or will be training other staff. Attendees felt that the workshops empowered them to help their patrons with their technology related needs and they no longer felt intimidated by the new technologies. Some libraries have begun to offer workshops for their patrons utilizing some of the new technologies, and communicating with their patrons through blogs.

<b>Outcome #2</b>	Novelny—the pilot project for the Statewide Internet Library—is an online library of hundreds of magazines, newspapers, maps, charts, research and reference books that are available to every New Yorker, free of charge. A total of 1077 library staff were trained (total of 228 workshops) in the use of the Novelny databases to encourage increased usage by library staff and patrons. As staff felt more comfortable and confident in their knowledge of the databases, they in turn were able to teach library patrons how to access and use the databases.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A pre-test was given to determine participants' current skill-level and familiarity with the Novelny databases.</li> <li>• A post-test was given to determine participants' ease in handling patron queries and conducting successful searches while utilizing newly learned skills.</li> <li>• Usage of Novelny databases increased from 11% for some libraries to 67% for other libraries over a year's time.</li> <li>• 1077 public library staff completed 228 workshops.</li> <li>• 94 library staff participated in 6 webinars.</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation forms generated by individual libraries were completed by participants</li> <li>• Follow-up forms from the individual libraries</li> <li>• Each library system gathered usage statistics for databases taught in the workshops.</li> </ul>
<b>Results Summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	Training of library staff in the use of the Novelny databases increased patron awareness resulting in an overall increase in usage statistics for the online resources. Statistics from post-tests showed more efficient use of the databases through an increase in connect time for searching, but fewer pages searched to achieve results. In 2008, the State Library introduced the use of NOVELny database training through webinars. 6 webinars were given in 2008 with a total of 94 participants. The NOVELny usage statistics increased by over 200% from 12,717,000 searches in June 2005 (at the beginning of the grant period) to 29,605,940 searches reported in June 2008.

<b>Outcome #3</b>	Library staff participants, in workshop sessions given by library systems, were better able to troubleshoot basic computer hardware problems, perform routine maintenance, to recognize when to update hardware, and became well-versed in technology terminology.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 188 staff were trained in 120 sessions or workshops</li> <li>• Of those participants responding to the systems' surveys, 69% to 100% of participants reported feeling more confident in understanding basic troubleshooting commands and instructions</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-test and post workshop evaluations</li> <li>• Telephone surveys</li> <li>• Survey and needs assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Results Summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	All participants benefited in some way from the workshops. Participants gained confidence in many crucial areas including a greater understanding of what is involved in maintaining public access computers. Surveys showed that anti-virus software on computers was updated and kept current on a more regular basis than before the workshops. Schedules for updating and upgrading computers and software were developed. Participants reported less down-time of computers.

<b>Outcome #4</b>	Participants in training sessions at the Queens Borough Public Library and the New York Public Library gained a basic knowledge of out-come based evaluation (OBE) techniques and were able to apply them to the planning of their technology training sessions and other programs to ensure reportable, measurable results. Participants who write competitive grant applications for funding will use the OBE in their applications. Library staff across the state trained by the State Library became familiar with OBE evaluation techniques.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 222 classroom participants and 105 on-line registrants</li> <li>• 100% of participants scored over 70% (standard being 70%) on the classroom test, with 87% being the average score</li> <li>• Dollar value of successful funding grants increased 10-fold from 2005 to 2007 according to survey indications</li> <li>• OBE techniques were incorporated into grant applications administered by the State Library</li> <li>• OBE techniques were incorporated into State Library internal processes</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation reports for public programs</li> <li>• Successful grant applications</li> <li>• State Library reporting processes</li> </ul>
<b>Results Summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	Training session participants from the New York Public Library and the Queens Borough Public Library who organized and coordinated programs used the OBE scientific approach to plan, and evaluate their programs for impact. The number and value of successful funding grant applications increased from 2005 through mid-year 2007. The State Library reported that OBE evaluation was incorporated successfully into grant application requirements.

<b>Outcome #5</b>	Library staff was able to take technology training courses online through "Training on the Go", a web-based program that offered participants a variety of courses from WebJunction and Element K.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registrations</li> <li>• Course access codes issued</li> <li>• Evaluation survey completed by participants</li> <li>• 366 public library staff participated and 482 access codes were distributed</li> </ul>
<b>Data sources</b>	A survey was completed by participants that indicated that the majority of survey responders were satisfied with the courses they were able to take through "Training on the Go".
<b>Results summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	"Training on the Go" was in operation from July 2006 – July 2008. The project was carried out in partnership with the New York Library Association (NYLA) who managed and promoted the project.

<b>Outcome #6</b>	Library staff statewide were able to participate in teleconference sessions given through the College of DuPage and become familiar with library issues regarding emerging technologies and trends.
<b>Indicators</b>	Survey results indicated that library staff were satisfied with the video presentations and information presented through the College of DuPage. Anecdote: "It is very helpful to see how libraries are implementing changes to accommodate our new more active roles in the communities we serve."
<b>Data sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registrations</li> <li>• Follow up surveys</li> </ul>
<b>Results summary for the 3-year grant period</b>	2,375 library staff in 244 individual library buildings attended 6 video presentations from August 2006 – May 2008

### **Narrative**

**Provide any additional summary narrative to describe the impact of training programs in your public libraries. Include discussion of the challenges the state library and/or individual libraries faced in implementing the training programs and address your next steps for working with local libraries to ensure retention of the skills gained from the training you conducted, and to provide additional opportunities for continued skills development for library staff.**

The following is a list of challenges reported by the individual libraries and library systems in implementing the training support program:

- Time available to attend workshops or training sessions
- Travel distance to attend workshops or training sessions
- Acquiring equipment for web conferencing
- Keeping training relevant, interesting, and interactive
- Participants unfamiliar with new technology and hesitant to use new technology
- Rapid staff turnover
- Getting new faces to attend
- Overly confident staff that feel they don't need training
- Trying to accommodate varying skill levels of workshop participants
- Data collection

The State Library will take the following next steps in working with individual libraries and library systems to ensure retention of the skills gained from the training and to provide additional opportunities for continued skills development for library staff.

- Conduct periodic surveys to assess the use of new skills and determine further training needs
- Create online tutorials
- Create and increase the use of webinars
- Create and increase the use of blogs and wikis
- Facilitate "refresher training" through cooperation with library systems