

# **New York State Library**

## **Family Literacy Library Services Aid Program**

**2013-2016 Theme: *Summer Reading at New York Libraries***

### **Final Project Summaries**

#### **Brooklyn Public Library—Ready, Set, Kindergarten! Summer Reading Program (\$64,587)**

Ready, Set, Kindergarten! (RSK) is BPL's popular six-week school-readiness program for preschoolers ages 3-5 and their caregivers. During each session families enjoy stories and activities designed to encourage the development of early literacy practices. Children explore literacy and science and math through music, stories, art and play. Over the course of the funding cycle, BPL greatly expanded its Summer Reading and RSK programs, engaging new audiences each year, offering exciting and interactive programs, and deepening the alignment among BPL's summer literacy programs. BPL was able to expand RSK by offering a summer series at branches throughout the borough while also refining outreach strategies and practices to reach diverse and underserved communities. Enrollment in Summer Reading quadrupled in Brooklyn's economically disadvantaged neighborhoods of Bedford Stuyvesant, East Flatbush, East New York and Brownsville. Between 2013 and 2015, overall youth enrollment in Summer Reading rose from 72,073 children and teens to 107,080. RSK enrollment increased significantly by 533% from 605 children served at 14 branches to 3,223 served at 30 branches. Attendance at all programs was 469,259 and at programs for those serving ages 0-5 attendance was 362,410. In addition to reaching more children, youth, and families, BPL refined its RSK activities to include components of Summer Reading, such as booklist recommendations and Summer Reading-themed activities and began incorporating science and math into lesson plans.

#### **Buffalo and Erie County Public Library—Ready to Read at New York Libraries through Public Library Systems (\$36,168)**

The purpose of this project was to help motivate children and families to read during the summer, supporting educational success for the following school year and beyond. The B&ECPL offered a variety of programs during the summer months and each of the 37 libraries and their communities benefited from the State funds. During the three-year project cycle, over 4,000 Summer Reading programs were held at system libraries, with attendance of 129,616. Programs served children from

infancy through teens, including storytimes, STEM programs, reading trivia contests, and performances that all contributed in their own way to upholding the positive reading message. During all three years, reading was measured either by minutes read or books read, using paper reading logs, the online reading contest, and the Read Down Your Fines program. In the three-year period, the 4,097 children and teens recording by minutes read for 2,928,002 minutes. For children who recorded by books read, 3,623 children and teens read 34,650 books. One of the most significant benefits from this program is the importance of working with community partners. The Ready to Read at New York Libraries through Public Library Systems project strengthened the B&ECPL's ability to carry out motivating, substantive Summer Reading programs, helping children and their families so they can maintain reading skills over the summer and cultivate a love of reading.

**Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System—Join in the FUN@: Summer Reading at New York Libraries (\$23, 251)**

The purpose of this project was to assist the 36-member libraries and two branches of the Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System (CCLS) in conducting an effective Summer Reading program and increase participation by providing programming, advertising, and promotional materials such as reading records, posters, and bookmarks. A fun and stimulating program helped the disadvantaged families of the system's service area prevent the "summer slide" by providing a vehicle by which the children can keep their reading skills up to grade level. CCLS provided each member library with a performer each year to enhance their offerings to the community and to attract more participants to their Summer Reading Program. A puppet show, a folk musician, and a magic/comedy show were contracted to provide a program for each member library. These programs were very well received, with 96.2% respondents indicating on the Participation Survey that they enjoyed the programs. 98.2% of the respondents to the Satisfaction Survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Summer Reading Program offered by their library. Overall for CCLS, the average increase in participation has only been 3.3%, but the number of member libraries that have shown an increase yearly; 36% of member libraries increased participation in the first year, 43% in the second year, and 47% in the third year. The total number of programs provided increased 15.3% over the three years and the attendance at those programs increased 13%. The number of member libraries that have seen an increase in teen participation has gone up by 40%.

### **Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System—CEFLS Family Reading Project (\$23,251)**

The Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System's (CEFLS) Family Reading project was planned to support a well-rounded menu of Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) themed Summer Reading activities for teen and juvenile readers in the system's service area. Project materials and activities made possible under this project successfully targeted children, teens and parents through 22 participating libraries and reading centers. Activities undertaken with project funds helped CEFLS and member libraries offer a targeted program of materials and special events. Due to limited budgets for "extras" and extremely limited staff resources, local public libraries and reading centers continue to rely on assistance from the System for consultant services, CE training, and shared collections of books and non-print materials. Thanks to a Department of Environmental Conservation grant from the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts, the system also sponsored storytelling with music programs at ten libraries in Clinton County and various JCEO (Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties, Inc.) sites throughout the county. CEFLS leveraged a small amount of funding into big benefits for young readers of all ages at member libraries throughout the system's service area. Cumulative project statistics show that reach. Over the course of the project, over 1200 programs for children and teens were offered for 16,189 participants. There were 2856 children and 258 teens registered over the course of the three years.

### **Finger Lakes Library System—Engaging Summer Readers via Unbound Media to Build Digital Literacy and the Common Core @ Finger Lakes Library System (\$23,251)**

The purpose of the first year of this project was to connect children and families with Unbound Media that aligned to the Common Core Standards, making use of Playaway devices with their interactive media capabilities. The New York State Library's Talking Book and Braille Library (TBBL) also provided resources in connecting with young learners. Year two focused on ways to connect children and families by creating a foundation with technology using tablets in storytimes, and the system offered staff training titled "New Media in Storytime" to learn how to use tablets in storytime. The system purchased 13 iPad Air Tablets with cases and an Apple TV and this iPad Lab was made available to member libraries, circulating 13 times in the first year. The purpose of the final year was to connect children and families with their library through outreach with mobile gaming. A staff member was able to develop a workshop for using Nintendo 3DS devices as a way to attract new users into their libraries. Twenty-nine 3DS systems were purchased and distributed to the 28 participants of the workshops. 230 gaming events were conducted with 3,246 attendees. 119 of these programs were intergenerational.

Thirty-one new library cards were distributed as a direct result of this program. To meet education standards, many schools are embracing new technologies and in some cases, the children and their caregivers do not have access at home. This project helped to bridge the digital divide by introducing families to emerging technologies, providing access and showcasing how to incorporate these devices to cultivate English language arts and literacy, as well as emphasizing the joys of reading.

**Four County Library System—Summer Reading PACT (Parents and Children Together) (\$23,251)**

The project allowed libraries to design a program to bring parents and children together to read and engage around reading during the summer. Funds were provided to member libraries to purchase materials that inspired parent and child activities or supplies for parent and child programs or to hire a presenter that would bring families into the library to engage around reading. Supplies/materials also supported family STEM/STEAM learning throughout the summer. Over the three-year cycle, the Four County Library System awarded 81 mini-grants to member libraries to support them in their Summer Reading Program efforts. Libraries added STEAM components to many of their programs, and they also included activities designed to promote language acquisition. Many parents and caregivers responded positively to being involved with their children's education in this manner, and they observed strategies that they could use to continue that learning at home. Libraries also made great strides in forming relationships within their communities by reaching out to different agencies to provide programming for their patrons. Several libraries also created partnerships with schools, childcare centers, and summer programs; staff did outreach visits to schools and hosted field trips, and a few libraries even formed partnerships to provide programming for the students on a regular basis all summer long. The system also used State funds to provide an online calendar with a consolidated listing of events at all of the member libraries. This tool was used by member libraries as a way to publicize events, and it has been appreciated by parents and caregivers.

**Mid-Hudson Library System—Summer Reading at MHLS Libraries (\$36,168)**

In the first year of the project, mini-grants of \$400 each were awarded to 27 libraries that were required to collaboratively plan the projects with a new community partner agency before submitting the project to MHLS, and 34 new community partnerships were developed. 3,644 programs were offered by libraries in the system with a total attendance of 63,827. For the second year, similar mini-grants of \$500 each were awarded to 19 libraries with 19 new community partnerships being developed and expanded in the second year. 17 libraries received mini-grants of \$526 each for a Phase 2 Continuing

Collaboration project for the final year to determine the effect of multi-year partnerships, as well as how libraries would build on previous partnership success. The total number of programs systemwide for children increased during the summer (from 2,738 in Year 1 to 3,063 in Year 2 and 3,174 in Year 3), with an increase in total attendance at these programs (from 55,608 in Year 1 to 58,875 in Year 2 and 62,299 in Year 3). 100% of the libraries reported that their collaborations were successful, that they benefitted, that families in their community benefitted, and that their community partner agency benefitted from the collaboration. 88.5% of the libraries reported that the collaboration with their community partner was responsible for the increase in family involvement in their Summer Reading programs.

### **Mid York Library System—Family Literacy Grant (\$23,251)**

The primary focus of this project was to provide professional development to member staff and support programs and activities that directly relate to family literacy. The system provided mini-grants to member libraries for all three years to support the Summer Reading Program. The Mid York Library System chose to use the same process each year of the three-year cycle: professional development and professional literacy resources with mini-grants to member libraries. The system offered 117 trainings to member library staff, with over 822 staff in attendance. Over the three years of the project, 2,712 programs were offered, and 64,374 library users participated. Children and teens read more than 39,000 titles and read for more than five million minutes. The system completed 70 projects for printing and distribution through the 2013-2016 funding cycle.

### **Mohawk Valley Library System—Summer Reading @ the Library (\$23,251)**

The Mohawk Valley Library System's project helped its 23-member libraries and branches support and carry out activities related to the Summer Reading Program (SRP). Some of the activities for library staff and volunteers were designed to aid in understanding the educational value of SRPs. This was done through SRP planning, science, and customer service continuing education workshops. Special events at member libraries were arranged that explored the fascinating world of STEM; family library initiatives introduced children of every age to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) experiences relevant to everyday life, as well as introduced and supported parents with Common Core learning and understanding. Training and sharing best practices highlighting STEM learning and customer service for summer learning summarize activities during the three years of the Family Literacy Library Program. Two additional areas that have gained wider acceptance in the system's libraries were Picture Book City and 1000 Books Before Kindergarten. 13 libraries and branches have Picture Book Cities and others are

reviewing their current setup collections. MVLS purchased the Beanstack software. This software allows for tracking of individual titles that have been read for both Summer Reading and 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten programs. By promoting this software, children's reading can be tracked online by parents and caregivers, promoting reading as a Common Core summer learning.

**Monroe County Library System—Summer Reading @ Monroe County Libraries (\$36,168)**

Over the three years, the system provided a variety of learning experiences for youth services staff, caregivers, and children. The funding supported staff training, which gave staff a greater understanding of how to incorporate literacy into family programs. Funds supported that through visiting artist programs and the purchasing of supplies used for family literacy programs. The system offered training with Saroj Ghoting, Early Literacy expert and Every Child Ready to Read trainer. Carole Peterson shared music literacy information and gave librarians tools to integrate music into their storytimes. Steve Sheinkin shared his writing and research process and talked about the influences Common Core has had on nonfiction books for children. The training gave the system the ability to help member library staff with continuing education, a requirement for new librarians. It also gave library staff who offer storytime the opportunity to gain critical knowledge and techniques that benefit their early literacy programs and help them support early learning in their communities. Member libraries purchased storytime items while the system purchased non-print materials for older children and young adults. This project allowed flexibility for member libraries to gain materials or programs relevant to their communities and gave staff the information needed to provide early learning opportunities throughout the system.

**Nassau Library System—Family Literacy through Summer Reading at New York Libraries in Nassau Public Libraries (\$36,168)**

Nassau Library System worked to promote the Summer Reading at New York Libraries program. The system developed and expanded Summer Reading services and programs in our member libraries and increased the participation of young people and their families and caregivers in the Summer Reading Program. In each year, the system worked to promote the program at member libraries, increase the participation by young people and their parents and caregivers in the program, and educate youth services staff in our libraries about early literacy skills so they could incorporate them into their programs and services. Additionally, the system held an early literacy training presented by an outside trainer who spoke about an aspect of early literacy that library staff would be able to use in their work. The system also publicized the program in all digital movie theatres in Nassau County.

In the first two years, the system purchased a book that the libraries gave to parents and caregivers to read to their babies and young children (both in English and Spanish) and in one year, the system purchased stacking cups that promoted play and early STEM activities. Each year, more than 50% of librarians (and in two of the three years, it was 100%) attending the early literacy workshop reported new knowledge and increased skills. They were able to identify at least two early literacy skills that young children need and were able to incorporate at least one new component into an existing program or offer a new early literacy program to parents.

### **The New York Public Library—Summer Reading Program (\$64,587)**

Through its Summer Reading Program (SRP), NYPL fights to eliminate the “summer slide,” the sharp decline in academic achievement that can occur when students are away from a structured learning environment during summer vacations. This decrease in literacy is particularly noticeable among children and teens from low-income families. By engaging young readers with free educational resources and literacy-enriched programming, NYPL ensures that all students have equal opportunity to learn and grow literacy skills which creates communities of readers throughout its neighborhoods. To support these efforts, NYPL has allocated State funds in each of the three years for the printing of reading lists and book logs for babies and young readers up to Grade 5. The Library encourages children and teens to use the Library's Summer Reading website to register and track their progress throughout the summer, as well as learn about the many programs at their neighborhood library and offered specific, age-targeted reading lists. The SRP Kick-Off celebration has continued to grow in size and has been held in a different library each year. NYPL has had an extremely successful SRP program with participant numbers increasing from 44,037 in summer 2013 to 82,351 in 2015. Better planning Library-wide has resulted in increased branch staff training and preparation for the program before summer starts. Over the last three years, the Library has introduced exciting new programming initiatives during the summer, including Programs-in-a-Box. The SRP's new focus on STEAM fields with recommended book lists and related public programming has made the Program increasingly educational and enriching for participants.

### **Nioga Library System—Get A+ for Active Learning During Summer Reading (\$23,251)**

The Get A+ for Active Learning During Summer Reading project was designed to educate librarians about Common Core State Standards through workshops, provide kits for programming, and educate parents about early literacy. Over the three years of the project, 12 workshops were held for librarians related to early literacy and common core standards with 198 people attending. There were 65 A+ kits

compiled over the three years and they have circulated 713 times with another 36 kits scheduled to circulate in the summer of 2016. Interns from the Grigg-Lewis Foundation have been trained and presented 254 programs at system libraries over the 3 years, reaching an audience of 4,893 people. They were scheduled to present 71 programs during the 2016 summer. There have been 30 programs presented at the Henrietta G. Lewis School - Wyndham Lawn Campus for 327 students and 18 more were scheduled for the summer of 2016. Three “Community Night Out” programs (at low income housing units) were held with over 750 people attending. Library information was distributed at these events. Over 12,000 fliers, and other informational brochures were distributed to librarians, parents, and community members during the course of this project.

**North County Library System—Partners in Learning, Partners in Teaching: A Family Literacy Project (\$23,251)**

The North Country Library System’s (NCLS) Partners in Learning, Partners in Teaching project was meant to improve the skills of member library staff so that they could provide quality programming to children and caregivers at their libraries during the summer months. During each year of this project, NCLS planned and implemented professional development workshops for member library staff designed to improve library service to children and families in the form of summer workshops, guest speakers, and early literacy education. NCLS also awarded mini-grants to member libraries to augment summer programming and created and distributed materials that support youth literacy. NCLS also provided supportive materials such as reading list bookmarks for summer and circulating early literacy trunks to supplement library programs throughout the year. The number of children's programs offered throughout the system increased by 11 percent and attendance at these programs increased 19 percent over the same period.

**Onondaga County Public Library—Summer Reading Program at Onondaga County Public Library (\$36,168)**

The primary objective of the Onondaga County Public Library Summer Reading Program (SRP) was to motivate children and teens to read during summer vacation, thus helping prevent summer learning loss. The SRP was designed to attract children, teens, and families to their local libraries by offering special events and prizes throughout the summer both for reading and completing specific activities. The project funded three programs: Zoo to You for the suburban libraries, MOST Traveling Science Show for all the libraries, and a Library Family Field Trip for four libraries in low income areas. Themed plastic bags and pencils were also purchased for all the libraries to give to the children when they reported on their

first book. In the first year of the project, participation decreased slightly from the previous year, but the number of books read increased substantially, by more than 5,700. In the second year, participation increased by 4% over the previous year, while in the final year it increased by 2% with 103 more children attending programs. State funding provided supplemental programs to all of the member libraries from outside presenters and provided OCPL with two wonderful community partnerships. Offering system-wide programs allowed smaller libraries to offer the same programs as larger libraries. The system purchased a booth at the Family Times Summer Camp Expo and promoted Summer Reading throughout the county. This activity was a huge success and helped OCPL understand that the staff needs to think outside of the box when it comes to promotion.

### **Pioneer Library System—Family Literacy Library Services Grant (\$23,251)**

This project provided programming opportunities for libraries in the Pioneer Library System, enabling libraries to offer summer performers that supported the NYS Summer Reading themes. All 42 libraries received programming from “Wildlife Defenders,” a local animal ambassador group. In addition to Wildlife Defenders, 15 libraries also received programming from "Wondermakers" a local storytelling group and Magician David Moreland. The libraries were thrilled to be able to offer quality programs to their patrons. The majority of PLS libraries are small, rural libraries and would not have been able to offer any programs, if not for this State funding. The project was a huge success. Many families visited several of the libraries in the system in order to see the performers a second time. By publicizing the summer performances, the libraries were able to attract new families who otherwise may not have come to the library. The Family Literacy Project enabled libraries to offer quality family entertainment without worrying about cost or scheduling. This is something that small, rural libraries greatly appreciate!

### **Queens Borough Public Library—Queens Library Summer Reading Initiative (\$64,587)**

In the first year of the project, Queens Library conducted professional development training for its Early Learners and Children’s librarians, with Saroj Ghoting, an early literacy specialist, who conducted professional development sessions for staff on Make Your Summer STEAM-Y! and ECRR2 Everyday. Additionally, Queens Library’s SRP also took place in several Queens County shelters in collaboration with the NYC Department of Education’s Office for Students in Temporary Housing in each of the three years of the project. Over the three years, library staff developed and sustained libraries in five Queens shelters and presented summer programming in three shelters. Thousands of books were distributed to family shelters throughout the borough of Queens using State funding, and the library issued over 180

library cards to shelter residents—a huge step in connecting this underserved population with library resources and services. Parent participation in the shelter SRP increased over the course of the project. These programs served over 400 children and parents and guardians. During the first year, parents of early learners expressed an interest in taking their children to other cultural institutions. In response, the Library intentionally focused on cross-promoting summer programs with many local organizations and government agencies. The SRP for Early Learners incorporated STEM learning by introducing families to science and math concepts such as shadows and balance through hands-on STEM activities and program presentations. With this project, Queens Library parent and child and early learning programs have expanded. Because the project focused on this age range of 0-5, Queens Library convened and continues to support the NYC Early Learning Network.

**Ramapo-Catskill Library System—Family Literacy Through Summer Reading in Ramapo Catskill Libraries (\$36,168)**

This project enabled Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS) and its member libraries to develop opportunities and expand summer literacy resources for the youth and families or caregivers in our service area and to help youth services staff from RCLS member libraries find new and creative methods to increase the participation of young people and their families or caregivers. The focus for the first year was pre-readers and their families, while for the second year it was elementary-age readers and their families and in year three it was tweens, teens and their families. Activities included special Summer Reading program planning workshops for member library staff and mini-grants enabling member libraries to offer a myriad of new programs and activities, enhance existing programs and activities and develop new community partnerships. In all three years training for librarians was provided, geared to that age group on the topics of Boom Fizz Popping with Saroj Ghoting, Serious Fun: Put Gaming in Your Summer Reading with Amanda Schiavulli, and Game Changing Summer Programming for Teens and ‘Tweens with Chrissie Morrison. Each of the workshops was well attended and each met with enthusiastic responses. RCLS-provided booklists were supplied to member libraries for distribution for each year of the project.

**Southern Adirondack Library System—Families Read, Play, Sing, Talk, Engage (\$23,251)**

The Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) and its member libraries encouraged youth, families and caregivers to read and engage throughout the summer through educational and recreational programs and activities designed to make reading fun and appealing. 18,048 children and teens registered for the SRP and 83,093 youth with 25,006 parents or caregivers attended 3,503 programs

during the three years. In total 7,273 new library cards were issued between July 1 and Labor Day. Library staff continued to develop new partnerships with school districts and community non-profit agencies or businesses to enhance student learning outside of school. 100% of participating member libraries collaborated with community partners to present Summer Reading programs or increase attendance at summer programs. Likewise, 100% of the participating member libraries offering partnership programs reported that they plan to continue to develop programs in partnership after the summer. Library staff reported new knowledge and increased skills after attending the Summer Reading Workshop, which enabled library staff to plan summer educational and recreational programs and activities to make reading fun and an appealing activity for youth. 100% of member library staff attending the SRP Workshop reported that they would use the information within the next 12 months and developed at least one program from it and/or the NYS Performers and Programmers database.

### **Southern Tier Library System—Summer Reading at New York Libraries Through Public Library Systems (\$23,251)**

Six training sessions were held for member library staff in the first year of the project: eResources: a Formula for Success (blogging and blogs); RSS; Common Core and YOU, the Public Library; Patrons More Alike than Different; Summer Reading Workshop and a NYLA Institute: Fantasy Cons. The trainings offered were different than originally planned but were very successful. Project activities were designed to provide training and/or increased awareness in both basic and trending library services. In the second year, training was offered in basic services such as reader's advisory and trending services such as media mentorship and self-directed programs. The short-term goal of increasing participation in Summer Reading programs was realized as registration increased by 1,324 over the previous year: a 27.7% increase. In the final year of the project, skill sets were reinforced and more outreach activities into the community were encouraged, with an emphasis on activities that enhanced the library's year-round programming efforts. The goal of this project was to grow participation in summer library activities especially reading programs and related activities and in turn, translate summertime success into more participation programs and activities throughout the year. Over the course of the 3 years, this project has moved from activities that were just gaining notice in the library news and are now pretty much mainstream library services. And these services are not just for the biggest libraries but for all sizes –large to very small.

### **Suffolk Cooperative Library System—Dig into Summer Reading (\$36,168)**

This project promoted the value of Summer Reading to all children and teens in Suffolk County and trained library staff in providing programs and services to families, emphasizing the importance of strong family literacy programs. The overarching goal of all three years of the project was to strengthen Summer Reading Programs (SRP) in the system's member libraries. Project activities included professional workshops for staff, along with the creation of summer science kits for libraries to borrow that promoted the Summer Reading club themes. The system created several early literacy giveaways with an informational card and purchased stacking cup sets to encourage families to read and play with their young children. The system also purchased copies of a bilingual ABC book and a color and vegetable concept book to encourage families to read with their young children. The value of Summer Reading was displayed via cooperative information advertisement played in Long Island movie theaters during the height of SRP registrations. Perhaps the biggest success was ten Science Buddies kits and eight Maker Kits that were created and put into circulation thereby offering equal opportunities for all of the libraries to experience new trends in STEAM and maker programming. The kits circulated a total of 331 times.

### **Upper Hudson Library System—STEM-Sell: Inviting Families into Science, Math, Engineering and Technology Activities through Summer Reading Program (\$36,168)**

STEM-Sell: Inviting Families into Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Activities through Summer Reading Program (SRP) helped member libraries develop community collaborations, conversation and creation around STEM. Library staff engaged families in more STEM activities through the SRP. Libraries received a marketing guide and assistance with STEM programming ideas to use as they collaborate with a community partner. Libraries also received books for babies and toddlers, K-Gr. 1 and a choice of books for Gr. 5-7 to use in STEM programming and give to families. Libraries approached their local elementary/middle schools to include these books in the school Summer Reading list. Each summer, a third of the libraries brought STEM performer Jeff Boyer to offer a program on engineering/inventing. A collaborative youth services online program calendar was created which included summer STEM programming in the libraries which was promoted by the libraries to the public. The primary activities for this project included fostering widespread interest in STEM, by giving libraries training, marketing, and programming ideas to connect the books provided to families. UHLS motivated libraries to form a partnership with at least one other community agency to support library STEM programming. UHLS measured improvement in the ability of library staff members to plan and

conduct STEM programming and the rise in their comfort level in including STEM activities in library programs with a three-year target of 75% and reaching 98%.

**Westchester Library System—Learning Ambassadors for Summer Reading (\$36,168)**

State funding was directed towards the training, transportation, and evaluation of the ongoing Learning Ambassadors program, a youth employment readiness initiative that trains and directs teens in support of library Summer Reading programs serving children and families. It gives Grade 9 students the opportunity to develop workforce skills, perform active community service, and enhance their experience with libraries as dynamic centers for learning. During the 3-year time period, eleven libraries hosted 62 teens. The system also offered training for librarians focused on early literacy, the use of science and math in programming, and strategies to engage teens effectively as new workers. Training sessions for participating teens focused on how to engage young children in literacy-based programming, as well as library and workforce skills. The teens conducted children’s programs ranging from story-craft activities and sidewalk storytelling, to theater workshops and scavenger hunts. Assisted by a program evaluator, WLS staff used surveys, interviews, and document reviews to learn about librarians’ and teens’ experiences and understand the program’s impact. Participating teens learned about basic workplace expectations and gained work-related and interpersonal skills, such as collaboration, planning, and communicating effectively with adults and children. The teens also gained an appreciation for libraries and the wide range of services libraries offer.