

**BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION
U.S. LIBRARY TRAINING PROGRAM**

*Final Report for
Library Training Program Grant*

from the

New York State Library

Grant Number NY-97-12230-00-C

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Grant Administrative Contact: Mary Linda Todd

Address: New York State Library
Cultural Education Center
Room 10B41
Albany, NY 12230

Phone: (518) 486-4858

Fax: (518) 486-5254

E-mail: mtodd@mail.nysed.gov

TRAINING PROGRAM GRANT FINAL REPORT

Part A:

In 2002, the New York State Library received a Library Training Program grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in the amount of \$257,700, grant number NY-97-12230-00-C. The State Library and the state's 23 public library systems used this grant to develop and implement a program to provide technology training to librarians and library staff in public libraries throughout New York State and enable them to meet the information technology needs of their patrons.

Training Delivery Process

All participants in the Library Training Program agreed on a plan that would develop teams of skilled trainers who would train library staff at several levels, increasing their technical expertise and enabling them to provide improved service to the public. Training needs throughout the state ranged from very basic skills through the advanced skills required by only some library staff. The program was successful in training more than 2,000 participants in more than 500 training sessions.

New York's 23 public library systems support more than 1,000 public libraries and neighborhood branches. The Gates Library Training Program built on the strengths of the system structure by providing training to public library system librarians who could then provide training to their peers and to staff in the individual member libraries within their systems. It also permitted the systems to tailor the content and the means of delivery of the training to the needs in their area and in keeping with their system Plans of Service. For example, the training needs of librarians in small, widely separated rural libraries are frequently different from those of urban librarians.

The first phase of the training consisted of "Train the Trainer" sessions. These training sessions developed a statewide corps of expert trainers within the systems, preparing them to train others. Nine "Train the Trainer" sessions were held in different regions of the state to make the training accessible to all the library systems. Jane A. LeClair, Ed.D., of the Adult Learning Connection, provided this training.

The second phase of the training consisted of "Train the Library Staff" sessions, in which the statewide corps of experts trained librarians, library managers, and staff in all the public library systems throughout the state. These sessions, which took place at either the library system headquarters or in the member library buildings, trained 2,199 library staff members in 537 training sessions. Trainees represented 777 buildings, including library system facilities, public libraries, and branch libraries. (This number far exceeds the original goal of 1,100 participants stated in the grant proposal.)

All library systems offered staff training specifically in how to train library users. A primary focus of this training was to enhance their skills in communicating how to use electronic information resources and the technology tools available in their libraries. Other common topics were productivity software (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint), basic computer operation and troubleshooting, and Internet access, including the use of browsers and e-mail. Many library systems also provided sessions on database use, increasing the effectiveness of library staff in teaching patrons how to use the databases offered by the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL) as well as the databases offered by the individual libraries. Other subjects included by some library systems were information literacy and web-page design.

See Attachment A for more on training delivery and content.

Although the "Train the Library Staff" sessions were very similar in structure, several library systems used creative techniques to train their staff effectively. Buffalo and Erie County Public Library put online tutorials on their Intranet to provide training to staff members who were unable to attend the training sessions. Queens Borough Public Library did the same, creating online PowerPoint presentations. Mid-York Library System had success in encouraging staff members to participate in training through incentives such as refreshments, prizes, and other items. The trainers also found that putting "mind candy," such as baby pictures of a staff member's new daughter, on their system's Intranet provided an incentive for staff to learn. Along with print copies of the training-session

handouts, Nassau Library System also provided staff members with CDs that contained all the forms and worksheets found in the training manual.

Training Outcomes

The most important outcome is that through the Library Training Program, New York's libraries and library users gained more than 2,000 library staff members with the skills needed to assist patrons with their information technology needs. The training sessions demonstrated the success of the two-phase training method used, including "Train the Trainer" and "Train the Library Staff" sessions. This method affords an effective tool for statewide information dissemination and training that has already been used in other projects, including the Gates Staying Connected grant program. An additional outcome of the training sessions was that many library staff members attending "Train the Library Staff" sessions brought back training materials to their own libraries to aid in training their peers as well as patrons.

Overall, the participants in the training sessions found them to be highly valuable. In the systems that provided quantitative responses, most reported that between 90 and 100 percent of the participants found the sessions valuable. A participant from the Nioga Library System wrote, "It really is important that librarians keep learning in the area of technology and how to use it most effectively to meet patron needs. These classes help so much."

Of those participants who answered survey questions regarding the training materials, most participants found the materials useful at the actual training sessions, and about 50 percent found them valuable enough to take back to their own libraries for use there. Although we do not have many quantitative responses regarding how the participants grew as trainers themselves, the qualitative responses were very positive. A participant from Buffalo and Erie County Public Library wrote, "This session helped us anticipate as many needs, techniques, and learning styles as possible. It helped reinforce what one may already think of in training and raised awareness of factors one may not have considered."

Other participants in "Train the Trainer" sessions reported that they felt more confident about their ability to interact with those they would be training and to communicate the importance of ongoing training; more aware of the importance of training as an ongoing responsibility; more proficient with computers, networking, and software applications; and better able to plan and evaluate training techniques and results.

Participants in "Train the Library Staff" sessions reported a better appreciation of the importance of ongoing training for themselves and an understanding of their responsibility to train library users. They also gained proficiency with computers, networking, and software applications.

Ongoing Training

The New York State Library and the public library systems are currently implementing the Gates Staying Connected grant. Phase one of this grant included updating/replacing equipment for public-access computing in three urban library systems, as well as expanded technology training statewide. In phase two of the Staying Connected grant program, New York State has opted to devote all grant funds to technology training.

Other activities to sustain technology training include the following:

- To support the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL), the New York State Library has implemented a NOVEL Invitational Grant program. Through funding provided through the federal Library Services and Technology Act, the State Library has awarded a total of 62 competitive grants to library systems to help them educate and train their patrons in the use of NOVEL databases. This program builds on the database training provided through the Gates Library Training Program. In addition, the most innovative and successful projects in the NOVEL Invitational Grant program will form the basis of an important training module in the second phase of the Staying Connected program.
- Many public library systems use LSTA money awarded by the State Library to implement projects in the category of Technology Training.
- The State Library is currently implementing a statewide program of training in Outcome-Based Evaluation. The plan, approved by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, is providing OBE training to staff in all types of library systems throughout the state.
- Many of New York's public library systems use their own funds to support active training programs for system and member library staff.

Part B:

“Train the Library Staff” Sessions

Class Title*	Hours per Class**	# of Classes	Projected # Attendees	Actual # Attendees	# of Library Buildings
Brooklyn Public Library		7	20	37	37
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library		26	75	149	52
Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System		7	20	38	18
Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System		4	10	22	15
Finger Lakes Library System		12	40	84	27
Four County Library System		7	30	59	33
Mid-Hudson Library System		20	65	134	72
Mid-York Library System		19	65	128	35
Mohawk Valley Library System		7	30	62	14
Monroe County Library System		14	55	110	18
Nassau Library System		2	30	59	32
Nioga Library System		3	25	48	15
North Country Library System		75	35	65	59
Onondaga County Public Library		36	60	124	27
Pioneer Library System		71	45	92	23
Queens Borough Public Library		2	15	30	21
Ramapo Catskill Library System		5	25	46	21
Southern Adirondack Library System		10	65	129	44
Southern Tier Library System		41	45	91	27
Suffolk Cooperative Library System		2	30	56	29
The New York Public Library, Branch Libraries		29	115	233	85
Upper Hudson Library System		85	155	312	35
Westchester Library System		53	45	91	38
Totals		537	1100	2199	777

*The class titles varied from system to system. The names of the hosting library systems are provided instead.

**These data were not requested in the original reporting form from Gates and were not collected.

“Train the Trainer” Sessions

Workshop Location	Hours per Class	# of People	Date	Region
Utica (Mid-York Public Library System)	Full day	Average of 15	12/3/2002	Central
Buffalo (Buffalo & Erie County Public Library)			12/4/2002	Western
Painted Post (Southern Tier Library System)			12/12/2002	South Central
Canandaigua (Pioneer Library System)			12/13/2002	Rochester
Albany			12/17/2002	Capital District
Poughkeepsie (Mid-Hudson Library System)			12/18/2002	Southeastern
Farmingdale Public Library			12/19/2002	Long Island
New York City (Metropolitan New York Library Council)			12/20/2002	METRO
Potsdam (Northern New York Library Network Headquarters)			3/28/2003	Northern

Attachment A

**Gates Foundation Library Training Program
Content and Delivery**

To reach to greatest possible number of staff members, the training provided through this grant occurred in two phases:

Phase I—“Train the Trainer”***December 2002–March 2003***

Nine one-day regional training sessions for 150 people selected by the public library systems:

- Training in how to train others, including outcome-based evaluation techniques
- The 3Rs of technical skills—reviewing, refreshing, and refining

Phase I prepared a statewide corps of expert trainers. Systems selected individuals for training on the basis of existing training experience and expertise, current technology skills, willingness to take on the responsibility for ongoing training, appropriate personality and enthusiasm for the task, and working at a location convenient for training staff in area libraries.

Phase II—“Train the Library Staff”***January–June 2003***

Sessions conducted within the systems by those trained in Phase I:

Basic Skills:

- How to train library users
- Information literacy
- Basic computer operation and troubleshooting
- Access to the Internet and electronic resources
- Productivity software, such as Microsoft Word

Beyond Basic Skills:

- PC troubleshooting and maintenance
- Introduction to networking
- Productivity software, such as Microsoft Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher
- Introduction to Internet accessibility for people with disabilities and for non-English-speakers

The intent in Phase II was to train at least one staff member from each of the state’s 984 main library buildings (including 23 system facilities and the branches of the New York, Brooklyn, and Queens Borough Public Libraries).

Grant funds were allocated to the library systems based on the number of library buildings per system. Systems were permitted to tailor training sessions to the needs of their system member libraries and the training component of their Plans of Service.