

New York State Adult Literacy Library Services Program

2016–2019 Projects

Workforce Development at New York Libraries Through Public Library Systems

August 2016

New York State's 23 public library systems will offer expanded access to literacy services through the New York State Adult Literacy Library Services Program. State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries Bernard A. Margolis, announced today that the State Library has approved the 2016-2019 projects, one project for each of New York's 23 public library systems. These three-year projects begin July 1, 2016 and end June 30, 2019.

Education Law 273 provides statutory funding of \$200,000 annually for the Adult Literacy Library Services Program. The FY 2016/2017 State Budget provides an appropriation of \$187,133. Funding is allocated to each system based on a formula. Please visit <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/literacy/allocation19.htm> to see the State funds allocated annually to each library system for the 2016-2019 projects.

"New York State's Adult Literacy Library Services program helps library systems and libraries offer services to improve adult literacy on the job and in the home. Projects are aimed at helping adult students over age 16 who are not in school take advantage of library resources to continue their education and improve their job skills," said Mr. Margolis. "The program's theme for 2016-2019 continues the 2013-2016 theme of *'Workforce Development at New York Libraries through Public Library Systems.'* This allows public library systems to expand upon programs begun in 2013 to offer training and resources to help New York's workforce increase literacy levels as well as the skills and tools needed for successful jobs and careers."

Adult Literacy Library Program projects include programs for adults 16 or older who are unemployed or underemployed; unfamiliar with technology; have low job skills and/or low literacy skills with the opportunity to develop strong workforce, literacy and/or digital literacy skills. Program participants prepare for high school equivalency tests such as TASC; acquire citizenship information and improve English language skills. Training and resources are offered by library systems and libraries working in partnership with a wide variety of education, workforce, literacy and other community-based and government organizations.

For more information about the New York State Adult Literacy Library Services Program, please visit the State Library's website at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/literacy/> or contact Karen Balsen, Program Manager, Division of Library Development, New York State Library at Karen.Balsen@nysed.gov or at (518) 486-2194.

Following are brief summaries of the 2016-2019 New York State Adult Literacy Library Services Program projects.

Brooklyn Public Library– “Business English” Brooklyn Public Library's project will offer career-related discussion workshops at four highly used library locations between 2016 and 2019. The Business English program will target immigrant professionals, entrepreneurs and high-level English-language learners seeking to improve their fluency in English. The library will offer weekly discussion sessions conducted by contracted facilitators centered upon business and the world of work to help participants proficiently communicate in professional settings.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library– “Workforce Development at New York Libraries through Public Library Systems” This project will both increase awareness of library resources available to job seekers, local government, nonprofits, and community workforce agencies and teach the use of library resources to increase workforce literacy among the unemployed and individuals looking to increase existing skills. Over three years, the project will expand to reach out to aspiring entrepreneurs and existing for-profit small businesses in Erie County and the growing immigrant/refugee community who will benefit from workforce, entrepreneurial and citizenship resources that libraries can offer. With regularly scheduled programs and events, along with the solid partnerships formed, the library system will reach expanded populations and elevate the perception of the library as a solid provider of employment and workforce information.

Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System– “Lifelong Literacy: A Collaborative Approach to Comprehensive Adult Literacy” The library system will partner with both Erie-2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES and Jamestown Community College to strengthen life-long learning, continuing education, literacy, numeracy and cultural competency programs for the unemployed, under-employed, under-educated, educationally disadvantaged and other diverse and special populations aged 16 and up. Skills will be taught through a digital platform with opportunities for face-to-face interactions such as employment recruitment fairs and group projects.

Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System– “CEFLS Adult Literacy” The library system, in collaboration with local literacy agencies, county offices, and member libraries will provide a variety of resources and related digital learning tools to increase job search skills of area residents. Two libraries each year will receive the resources necessary to function as local Job Information sites. The project includes comprehensive evaluation and promotional components to help member libraries identify and cultivate local agency partnerships and plan effective service responses for continued service.

Finger Lakes Library System– “Career Success in Seneca County: Building Technology & Workforce Development Skills” Through this project the Finger Lakes Library System, Seneca County Workforce Development & Youth Bureau, and the Seneca Falls Library will join forces to reach and provide workforce preparation resources to Seneca County residents in need of basic computer and technology literacy skills. A key tool, Learning Express - a database of test preparation and workplace skill-building resources, will be available to all patrons located in its five-county service area.

Four County Library System– “Workforce Development & Training” This program seeks to improve job and literacy skills in the Four County area through training and access to the Brainfuse JobNow suite of resources. Public library and partner organization staff will first be trained in using the skill building components of this online tool. They will then be available to help all residents navigate Brainfuse JobNow resources including tutoring in basic job related skills, resume review, interview coaching, and TASC preparation.

Mid-Hudson Library System– “MHLS Adult Literacy Mini-Grant Program 2016-2019” This program will build on the 2013-2016 Adult Literacy Program to support the efforts of local libraries who have strong new or existing relationships with adult literacy partners and have institutional infrastructure support to further develop and expand adult literacy programs and increase participation of adults in library literacy programs which will improve their career and educational opportunities.

MidYork Library System– “Adult Literacy and Access to Technology” Lack of access to high-speed Internet and personal computers, and the skills needed to use these resources, creates an obstacle for adults seeking employment throughout the area served by the Mid-York Library System. This project will help start a laptop and hotspot lending program to reach residents of high need communities. Individual public libraries will partner with local organizations to target users and provide necessary instruction.

Mohawk Valley Library System– “2016-2017 Adult Literacy Grant” This program will fund up to three projects developed by member libraries to serve adults 16 and older, living in Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady, and Schoharie Counties, who are in need of workforce guidance, digital literacy, basic English or English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy skills, or entrepreneurial skills.

Monroe County Library System– “Mobile Learning Labs” This program focuses on building computer literacy for those with limited or none of these skills so necessary in the job market of today. The Monroe County Library System will develop and provide portable computer labs for loan so

libraries, regardless of size or remote location, can offer technology training sessions and other workforce development activities.

Nassau Library System– “Member Library Mini Grants” The program will target the underemployed and the unemployed in Nassau County to provide them with the skills necessary to successfully enter or return to the workforce. Member libraries will partner with local literacy and community organizations and submit proposals to receive funding for projects aimed at improving adult workforce literacy in their communities.

The New York Public Library– “Adult Literacy Library Services Grant 2016-19” This program will allow consultants from the Literacy Assistance Center (LAC) to lead critical lesson development workshops and training sessions for ESOL and ABE staff and instructors. These workshops will offer extensive training related to a contextualized curriculum, as well as instructional methodology to improve literacy skills for non-native English speakers. Funding will also enable NYPL to outfit 20 classes of 20 students with books that promote the development of students as workers, parents, and citizens.

Nioga Library System– “Job Resource Database” This project will create literacy-related activities for both member libraries and patrons using the database JOBNOW (distributed through Brainfuse). These activities will coincide with the System's current focus on providing resources for job seekers, both the unemployed and under employed.

North Country Library System– “Workforce Readiness in North Country Libraries” This project is designed to provide free job-preparedness resources to unemployed or under-employed individuals in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. Individuals seeking to obtain digital literacy skills will have the opportunity to take scheduled training sessions or visit the library for one-on-one assistance. Individuals who are seeking to prepare for a high school equivalency exam will also be able to take weekly classes at the library. The North Country Library System will partner with a Public Computing Center (PCC) library and the local BOCES and contract with a trainer to provide digital literacy instruction throughout the system. Programs and classes will focus on drawing non-library users into the library to utilize the job-readiness resources and assistance available to them. The goal of this program is not only to assist individuals with their job-readiness needs, but also to create life-long library users and to help promote the literacy resources available in the library.

Onondaga County Public Library– “Workforce Development at the Library” Onondaga County Public Library will partner with Visions for Change on 'Workforce Development at the Library' to address the needs of job seekers through staff training, targeted workshops and materials, and access to High School Equivalency, TABE, and digital literacy training. The jobs drop-in program at the Central Library will be expanded and will add access to educational resources through online

preparatory programs. Professional development for library staff will include a poverty simulation and training in creative job seeking and resume development to help better serve our diverse patron base. Targeted job search workshops and materials will address the differing needs of patrons. Access to online study will be available to patrons of all libraries in our system, to our project partner members, and through patron loan of mobile hotspots and Chromebooks.

Pioneer Library System– “Workforce Development Mini-Grant” This project will provide funds to Pioneer Library System's member libraries to offer programs and services that will help adults with low literacy enter or return to the workforce. To be eligible for funds, libraries must demonstrate an ability to improve the job readiness of community members and must also demonstrate commitment from a community partner.

Queens Borough Public Library– “Job Readiness Skills for English Language Learners Curriculum” The Queens Library Adult Learner Program offers ESOL classes in 35 of its 63 community libraries and through its seven Adult Learning Centers (ALCs) throughout Queens County. In addition to ESOL programming, the Library also provides ABE and Pre- HSE classes, as well as HSE testing. Queens Library's Workforce Development Initiative has created a curriculum that offers digital literacy and career planning to ESOL students who are preparing to enter the job market. The "Job Readiness Skills for English Language Learners" curriculum has been developed and implemented over the past three years as a result of an initial needs assessment and successful pilot. This project will allow Queens Library to continue implementing and refining the curriculum over the next three years, targeting intermediate and advanced ESOL students who participate in the Library's Adult Learner Program.

Ramapo-Catskill Library System– “Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP)” The Ramapo Catskill Library System will partner with local workforce development facilities and local career counselors to permit twenty-three libraries to host the Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) project for the next three years. The CTAP program, designed to offer services that combine human interaction and technology, has become the most comprehensive local resource for the job seeker. The CTAP project will assist individuals in building the job search skills necessary to find employment that matches their knowledge, abilities, and values. It provides one-on-one job search assistance and increases networking opportunities, peer support, and information sharing in the community by hosting Job Club gatherings.

Southern Adirondack Library System– “Libraries Mean Business” Member libraries of the Southern Adirondack Library System will offer programming and workshops to strengthen attendees' skills relevant to small business operations, cottage industry success, self-employment & entrepreneurship. They will partner with the Washington County Economic Opportunity Council, the Saratoga-Warren-Washington Workforce Investment Board, and the Warren County Employment &

Training Administration to promote and offer the program to the underemployed, unemployed, and those in need of updated skills due to evolving technologies.

Southern Tier Library System– “HIRE: Helping Individuals Reach Employment” Southern Tier Library System will strengthen workforce development practices in the region through a program called, "HIRE: Helping Individuals Reach Employment". HIRE is an employment preparedness initiative that provides Southern Tier residents with training and resources to improve their cognitive and digital abilities to obtain lasting employment through the support of their local public library. This program will incorporate the library system, local library and multiple agency partnerships and offer much needed outreach to unemployed or underemployed community members.

Suffolk Cooperative Library System– “Work-focused alternative educational program for newly arrived 17-21 yr. old immigrants” This is a pilot project created by the Patchogue-Medford Library and the Patchogue-Medford Union Free School District for an alternative educational program directed at newly arrived immigrants ages 17 through 21. This project will provide a school/community-based alternative educational model consisting of ESOL classes, digital literacy training, unlimited computer access at the Patchogue-Medford Library, and social work case management. The program is designed to meet the real-world education, employment, and acculturation needs of young adults and recent immigrants. The Patchogue-Medford Library will provide a network of support, through non-time-limited computer access and bilingual librarians to assist students.

Upper Hudson Library System– “Get a Job! Strengthening Public Library Partnerships in Regional Workforce Development” This project is based on the expertise available through a formalized partnership among member libraries, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board, and ACCES-VR that will increase and improve overall services to job seekers and expand library staff members’ skills and expertise when assisting job seekers in the library. The goal of the program is the delivery of improved, consistent, sustainable library services to job seekers across the entire Upper Hudson Library System and the strengthening of cross-referrals for job-readiness services.

Westchester Library System– “TASC Connect! Outreach and Tutoring”

This program expands the Westchester Library System’s TASC Connect!, assistance for county residents seeking a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, by added additional resources for workforce readiness that will include a Job Search Tool Kit and information about the tools available on a “plain language” web portal FirstFind.org.