

New York State
Adult Literacy Library Services Program
2016- 2019 Theme: *Workforce Development at*
New York Libraries through Public Library Systems
Final Project Summaries

Brooklyn Public Library- Business English (\$60,101)

Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) offered Business English classes that served 810 people with a cumulative attendance of 2,909. Classes were offered at seven branches including BPL's flagship Central Library, Kings Highway, Sunset Park, Marcy, Pacific, Ulmer Park and Macon Libraries. A total of thirty-six 11 to 12-week workplace-centered discussion series have been offered for a total of 411 instructional classroom sessions. Business English classes supported those looking for their first job in the United States, to those who are seeking promotions, or looking to start their own business. Partnerships made over the three-year period include Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center (operated by the State University of New York), Workforce1 Career Center, Make the Road, Literacy Partners, Queens Library, New York Public Library, Upwardly Global, the Literacy Assistance Center, NYC Regional Adult Education Network and community-based organizations including Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, CAMBA, STRIVE and Brooklyn Jewish Community Center.

Buffalo and Erie County Public Library - Workforce Development Mini-Grant (\$25,355)

The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (BECPL) project increased awareness of the free resources available to job seekers, the public and partnering agencies on how to use the library resources, thus enhancing their work skills and ability to find a new job or career. With monies provided in this project, BECPL was able to update the Central Library's Job/Civil Service, Small Business Development, and English as a Second Language (ESL) collections and create smaller core collections and special collections for individuals in prison to help with re-entry into society after serving time. In addition, BECPL was able to present 20 programs aimed at the 18 to 24-year-old demographic and reach 500 participants. With help of this project, BECPL has created solid workforce development and ESL programs that are responsive and flexible to the public's needs.

Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System-Lifelong Literacy: A Collaborative Approach to Comprehensive Adult Literacy (\$14,085)

Working with Erie 2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES and Jamestown Community College (JCC), digital literacy classes were presented in Years 1 and 2 offering continuing and lifelong learning opportunities to Chautauqua-Cattaraugus communities. Three hundred and seventy individuals attended digital literacy classes or QuickBooks classes and received certificates indicating that they attended in the first two years of the project. Businesses were present at the final class meeting to

talk about employment and conduct interviews. A job interview skills lab and practicum was held at JCC, Jamestown campus, with 48 in attendance and 22 leaders volunteering to come and conduct mock interviews. In addition, JCC, Jamestown campus, held job expo/fairs. Additionally, an Adult Education/TASC Expo was held at Chautauqua Opportunities in Jamestown in the first year, while during the second year an educational opportunities event was held at JCC, Olean campus. In the final year, working with the Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County and Cattaraugus Community Action, Inc., individualized tutoring was provided to adult literacy students in five member libraries. Certificates were given to students at the end of the classes and 38% of those who received certificates stated that the program assisted with their current job knowledge. Ten individuals stated that the certificate helped them find a job.

Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System- CEFLS Adult Literacy (\$14,085)

The goal of this project was to connect residents in Clinton, Essex, and Franklin Counties with information about job searching. This project enabled Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System (CEFLS) to support member libraries in their efforts to provide new adult learners in their communities with much-needed resources on this topic. As a result, eighty-seven percent (87%) of CEFLS library directors reported that they were confident or very confident in their ability to assist these adult learners. Due to the rural nature of the CEFLS service area and limited transportation options, many community members have difficulty accessing job services and resources. Thanks to collaborative efforts with Literacy Volunteers of Clinton County and the member libraries, the library system was able to more effectively and efficiently reach an audience of unemployed and underemployed individuals seeking job placement and career building services. By providing information online, in strategically placed book benches, at partner locations, and in job search kits, CEFLS was able to effectively assist area residents in overcoming these obstacles.

Finger Lakes Library System- Career Success in Seneca County: Building Technology & Workforce Development Skills (\$14,085)

The Finger Lakes Library System (FLLS) partnered with the Seneca Falls Library and Seneca County Workforce Development to create a series of classes to help adults in the area improve their computer literacy and job seeking skills. The funds were split between a trainer for classes for the public at the Seneca Falls Library and partially funding the Learning Express database subscription. There were 18 sessions with 11 attendees which had usage of 41 in the first year. Learning Express attendance was low because the Seneca Falls Library was already doing an excellent job of meeting the computer needs of its patrons. The Learning Express database was determined to be a lackluster database with too few resources. In December 2017, FLLS discontinued the classes at Seneca Falls Library and switched the database subscription from Learning Express to JobNow from Brainfuse. In the first 6 months, JobNow usage totaled 1,255, a 1,692% increase as compared to the Learning Express for a similar time period. There were also 14 live tutoring sessions reported. The total usage for the JobNow database from implementation in December 2017 to June 30, 2019 was 2,931 with 36 live tutoring sessions. The database has essentially created a virtual career center at every library, has successfully increased partnerships between the career centers and libraries, and has increased awareness of library services.

Four County Library System- Workforce Development & Training (\$14,085)

During the three-year project cycle, community partners included Workforce Development and Literacy Volunteers of Otsego and Delaware counties. The project highlighted a valuable resource (JobNow) that provided support for many New Yorkers seeking employment including resume help and skill building. Contracted trainers offered free training in the JobNow resource to libraries, schools, and other community agencies. In addition, the project saw an infusion of print and digital materials on various topics under the umbrella of workforce development. The physical materials were distributed to one library in each of the four counties and are available to anyone via interlibrary loan. The digital materials were added to the system's Overdrive collection and are available to any library card holder in the Four County Library System.

Mid York Library System- Adult Literacy and Access to Technology (\$14,085)

Over the three years, Mid York Library System (MYLS) was able to collaborate with over 15 member libraries and close to a dozen community partners to equip high need communities with access to high speed internet, computers, and the training and skills they need to be successful in the workplace. Using the Pop-up library model, Mid York used individual outreach events in the community with partners to target new library users and bring library services and internet access to underserved areas. At many of these events, the library system staff were able to connect with patrons and additional potential partners, also helping to connect library patrons with needed services in their local communities. During the three-year project, numerous card signups and renewals, reference questions, one-on-one and class training sessions, and hundreds of visitors utilized these services. Partnerships with Rescue Mission; Cherrywood Community; St. John's Episcopal Church; Kirkland Senior Center; Stone Presbyterian Church; Town of Georgetown; BOCES; Literacy Coalition of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, and Herkimer ARC Park were formed. It is believed that the pop-up model was overall a success in establishing new outreach services to underserved populations.

Mid-Hudson Library System- MHLS Adult Literacy Mini-Grant Program 2016-2019 (\$25,355)

During the project, the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) provided a total of \$25,355 to 21 member libraries through mini-grants. Three new partnerships were created with literacy partners, and 18 existing partnerships with literacy organizations were strengthened. A total of 1,880 group sessions and a total of 12,064 one-on-one sessions were held at the participating libraries over the project timeframe. 26,667 people attended adult literacy programs and workshops at the participating libraries, 3,118 adult literacy materials were circulated, and 106,609 pieces of adult literacy materials were distributed. One hundred percent of the funded libraries said that the mini-grant they received enabled them to develop and expand adult literacy programs and that this program strengthened the partnership with their partner organization. Attendees reported that they learned new skills and strategies in their sessions, felt they had a better understanding of how to

apply for a job, learned how to navigate online applications and use flash drives, developed interview skills, and increased their conversational skills.

Mohawk Valley Library System- 2016-2019 Adult Literacy Project (\$14,085)

Funding from the Adult Literacy Project allowed the Mohawk Valley Library System (MVLS) to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, digital literacy classes, and enhance the job application process through career coaching and resume evaluation for 1,972 adults, 16 and older, in Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady, and Schoharie Counties. Additionally, 137 materials on job applications, cover letters, basic digital literacy, and ESL materials, and two computers and a printer, were also provided for public use to enable people to apply for jobs.

Monroe County Library System – Mobile Learning Labs (\$25,355)

Over the course of the project, the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) purchased two mobile learning labs that each include 8 laptops, typing software, and an HP Printer; one lab also includes a projector. The system purchased 516 eBooks, audiobooks, and print resources that focus on a variety of workforce development topics. Eighteen MCLS member libraries used the two mobile learning labs that allowed for a total of 80 classes that focused on resume writing, job searching, coding, keyboarding, email basics, typing skills, and the use of excel. Over 400 people attended these classes and the member libraries partnered with the Rochester City School District, University of Rochester, The Rochester Education Foundation, and Literacy Volunteers of Rochester to conduct these classes. The 516 eBooks, audiobooks, and print materials that were purchased have circulated 2,169 times since January 1, 2017.

Nassau Library System- Member Library Mini-Grants (\$25,355)

During this project, the Nassau Library System (NLS) provided mini-grants to 14 member libraries to develop and execute 20 projects that offered training and resources to help the local workforce the skills and tools needed for successful careers. By the end of this project, 1,316 Nassau County residents participated in workforce development or adult literacy programming coordinated by a public library in conjunction with a local partner. Additionally, learners benefited from enhanced physical and digital materials collections. Library staff gained experience and insight into how to support a wide scope of community members as they navigated a shifting job market. They also increased their confidence in the practical skills required to plan responsive, community-focused programming, develop and sustain partnerships, and evaluating program results. The most meaningful aspect of these mini-grants was the strengthened relationships between library workers and people who participated in these projects. Every library that developed projects with mini-grant awards indicated a willingness to continue providing workforce development and adult literacy initiatives for their communities.

The New York Public Library Adult Literacy Library Services Project 2016-2019 (\$60,101)

Over the project period, The New York Public Library's (NYPL) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program has diversified its offerings to cater to a student population with a wide range of abilities. NYPL's formal ESOL instruction program has grown to current capacity, with 15,000 students enrolled in FY2019, up from 14,110 in FY 2017. A calendar of elective topics complements classroom instruction, consistently drawing full enrollment and ranging in topic from citizenship test preparation to computer basics. On average, over the past three years, 50 percent of students enrolled in the formal program made at least one level of educational gain per 100 hours of instruction. These are significant gains considering that the average intensity level of instruction is six hours per week. The library significantly developed its informal instruction program over the project as well, offering training and resources that empower branch libraries to design informal ESOL programming that accommodates the needs of their unique neighborhoods. In FY2017, the program had 20,175 participants, and at the close of the project, it served 23,796, an average of 200 students per week at 15 active sites. NYPL has strengthened its partnerships with a number of community-serving organizations such as partnerships with the Immigrant Justice Corps and other providers which allowed the Library to connect more than 500 immigrants with free support for citizenship and immigration status issues over the past year. Growing partnerships with New York City agencies such as the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development helped increase the program's capacity and participation in the career readiness curriculum facilitated partnerships with the NYC Workforce Development Board and the NYC Department of Small Business Services, particularly their Workforce1 Centers.

Nioga Library System- Job Resource Database (\$14,085)

The purpose of this project was to create literacy-related activities for both member libraries and patrons using a job resources database JobNow. These activities coincided with the system's current focus on providing resources for job seekers, both the unemployed and the under employed. As part of this program, the Nioga Library System partnered with local Department of Labor Offices and some municipal facilities. These partners helped to promote the classes as well as handle patron registration for each workshop. They also promoted workshops with posters, website postings, and newsletters. Success was found with this three-year project, however, Nioga Library System will discontinue the subscription to the JobNow database and will instead allocate funds to individual libraries for more localized projects related to employment.

North Country Library System- Workforce Readiness in North Country Libraries (\$14,085)

During the three-year "Workforce Readiness in Libraries" project, the North Country Library System (NCLS) conducted 38 digital literacy workshops in 12 libraries throughout the system's service area. One hundred and forty-eight participants attended these workshops of various topics from computer basics to resume writing. Nearly all of these participants gained the skills and confidence (that they reported lacking) upon completing the workshop(s). In addition to the digital literacy workshops, NCLS also partnered with the Jefferson Lewis BOCES and contracted with a trainer to conduct Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) prep workshops. Over the project

timeline, 238 TASC prep sessions were conducted serving 33 students. Several of the students that participated in the library trainings became active library users after their classes ended. During the project period, NCLS was able to increase the awareness of its online workforce readiness resources through the purchase and deployment of the Cypress Resume database and marketing materials (posters, table toppers and banners) throughout the member libraries.

Onondaga County Public Library- Workforce Development at Your Library (\$25,355)

The “Workforce Development at Your Library” project was successful in providing Higher Secondary Education (HSE) to members of the community with a need for access to instruction outside of a traditional classroom. The goal of this project focused on meeting the gaps in services in Onondaga County, such as Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) instruction for residents who cannot attend regular classes due to childcare needs, work schedule, or other commitments that make them unavailable for regularly scheduled classes during the day. Over the project, 16 participants reported passing the TASC exam. Opportunities to borrow a hotspot/Chromebook kit allowed learners, without internet at home, to use the learning management system as well as other learning tools available on the internet that were previously difficult to obtain. The Onondaga County Public Library (OCPL) purchased new Chromebook/hotspot kits to further address the digital divide in Onondaga County. Two poverty simulations gave participating system staff an opportunity for insight in the effects of poverty that a large percentage of the patron base copes with on a daily basis. Feedback from the poverty simulations was overwhelmingly positive, with staff reporting that they learned much that could be applied in their daily work at the libraries. OCPL partnered with Vision for Change to provide adult literacy services to Jamesville Correctional Center inmates participating in the TASC classes and encouraged these students to come to the library and enroll upon their release. Finally, OCPL was able to strengthen existing partnerships with adult literacy providers who are members of the Literacy Coalition of Onondaga County to continue to reach out to potential adult learners.

Pioneer Library System- Workforce Development Mini-Grant (\$9,407)

Pioneer Library System (PLS) awarded State funds in 2018 and 2019 to support three projects in member libraries. The first project supported the online resource JobNow and built the library's relationship with the county literacy organization. The second project was a collaboration of eight libraries in Livingston County to increase access to workforce-related titles as well as to provide community members access to consultations with staff from the Workforce Development office. The 2019 project funding was used to purchase equipment, to build a job application staff, and build an information kiosk used by job seekers. PLS partnerships included Ontario County Department of Workforce Development, Department of Labor, the Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturers' Enterprise (FAME), GW Lisk Co, Finger Lakes STEM Hub and Second Seasons Consignment Shop. The Library System was unable to participate in the Adult Literacy program during 2017.

Queens Borough Public Library- Job Readiness Skills for English Language Learners Curriculum (\$60,101)

Queens Borough Public Library's Job and Business Academy (JBA) conducted job readiness workshops and classes. JBA conducted a series of three job readiness workshops with a total of 241 students in attendance. More than 60% of participants reported that they felt better prepared to talk about their work skills, understand work-related information, how to present their work experience, and understand what information should be on a resume. During Year 2, JBA conducted job readiness workshops for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at 16 community libraries. Workshops provided 1500 hours of work readiness training from fall 2017 through summer 2018. Each library provided an 8-week series, and the program served more than 500 English Language Learners. More than 75% of students reported that they felt better prepared to talk about their work skills, understand work-related information and how to present their work experience. During Year 3, JBA conducted job readiness workshops in ESOL classes at 13 libraries. The workshops provided 1752 hours of work readiness training during Fall 2018, Winter 2018, and Spring 2019 semesters. Each library provided either a 4 or 6-week series, depending on program room schedule availability, and the program served 835 English Language Learners. Overall, the majority of the participants reported that they felt more confident.

Ramapo-Catskill Library System- Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) (\$25,355)

Twenty-four member libraries hosted the Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) project from July 2016 to June 2019. The CTAP program was developed out of several workforce development workshops and counseling sessions offered in several communities to a diverse population. The CTAP project benefitted individuals with providing one-on-one career assistance and increased networking opportunities, peer support, and information sharing in the community by hosting "Job Club" gatherings. The project helped 844 individuals, a 66.5% drop from the 2013-2016 project, which reflects the unemployment rate decrease published in January 2019. Ramapo-Catskill Library System (RCLS) partnered with the Orange County Youth Bureau to add member library career resources to the 2019 Orange County Youth Bureau Directory. Over the past three years, RCLS learned that finding a full-time job is difficult because businesses and nonprofits prefer to hire part-time employees to save on the cost of benefits. Consultants, library staff, and career counselors have spent as many as 2 to 3 hours assisting one person with an online application for a single part-time position. In addition, RCLS provided support to not only young people looking for an internship or first job after graduating from college, but also helped the career-changer who wants to find a new job in a different industry.

Southern Adirondack Library System- Libraries Mean Business (\$14,085)

The "Libraries Mean Business" initiative was launched in 2016-2017, to help the Southern Adirondack Library System's (SALS) member libraries support small businesses and entrepreneurs. Since its inception, three libraries hosted five workshops on a range of topics (e.g. Introduction to

WordPress, Social Media & Marketing, Etsy Success). According to the evaluation used after each workshop, 80% felt more knowledgeable about what it takes to establish a business, 77% felt more confident establishing a business, 93% intended to apply what they had learned, and 100% were more aware of resources and services provided by the library. When SALS realized its member libraries were struggling to draw people to the turn-key programs, it invested in a day-long training for member library staff, drawing more than 45 people. Ninety-nine percent of the staff who attended reported that they learned a new skill they could apply at their job. To support small businesses and entrepreneurs in the region, SALS used Adult Literacy Program funds to provide training for member library staff to become a Notary Public. There are now 20 Notaries Public in 16 member libraries, and together they have notarized more than 1,500 documents for the public. Lastly, to provide material support to small businesses and entrepreneurs when and where they needed it, SALS developed the Libraries Mean Business Overdrive collection. The 170 titles purchased over the past three years have circulated 2,982 times. Community partnerships include SUNY Adirondack Community College, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership.

Southern Tier Library System- HIRE: Helping Individuals Reach Employment (\$14,085)

Over the course of this project, the Southern Tier Library System (STLS) was able to offer 28 training sessions to 299 library staff to improve the way their local libraries deliver job seeking and workforce development services. Additionally, an average of 12 library sites offered digital literacy classes specific to job seeking and workforce development skills with 177 community members participated. Some 5,500 informational brochures were distributed to assist community members in finding job seeking resources throughout the STLS five-county area. Partnerships were strengthened with Cattaraugus-Allegany Workforce NY, and Chemung, Schuyler & Steuben Workforce NY to aid in agency referrals to local libraries. A total of 164 referrals were made over 36 months. These referrals were the result of 12 meetings hosted by STLS for agencies and libraries to better understand their roles in supporting community members in developing job seeking skills and resources. Finally, 78 library materials were added to local library collections to support community job seekers.

Suffolk Cooperative Library System- Work-focused Alternative Educational Program for Newly Arrived 17-21 year-old Immigrants (\$25,355)

The goal of this Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) project was to present newly arrived immigrant students ages 17 through 21 with an alternative educational program which would strengthen their English as a Second Language (ESL) skills, enhance their job readiness skills, and provide opportunities to adapt into the larger English-speaking community. This project provided a total of 488 hours of ESL, digital literacy, and academic support classroom instruction, with a total attendance of 1,419 students. During the 36 months, a partnership with the Patchogue Medford Union Free School District helped provide summer program services to recently arrived students while school was not in session and facilitated the creation of a school district funded program for ELL students.

Upper Hudson Library System- Get a Job! Strengthening Public Library Partnerships in Regional Workforce Development (\$25,355)

The “Get a Job! Strengthening Public Library Partnerships in Regional Workforce Development” project targeted unemployed and underemployed adults in the Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS), which covers Albany and Rensselaer Counties. The events scheduled provided adults with the skills necessary to successfully enter and/or return to the workforce. It also provided an opportunity for member library staff to attend digital literacy workshops from the community partnerships formed through Careers in Transition, Your Career Fit Matters, One Stop Career Centers and Acces-VR to enhance their own skills. UHLS encouraged all 29 member libraries to participate in this program and to schedule workshops with the contracted trainers. Over the three-year cycle, 17 libraries provided 82 workshops with over 400 patrons in attendance and 36 locations received materials on resume writing and career search, and access to the resume database. These libraries provided training and access to materials in many aspects of preparing for employment such as writing resumes and cover letters, filling out job applications, honing interviewing skills, and improving digital literacy.

Westchester Library System- TASC Connect! Outreach and Tutoring (\$25,355)

The Westchester Library System (WLS) project focused its efforts on providing clear advice and direction for those seeking a high school equivalency diploma (and those needing to build the core literacy skills that can get them there). WLS delivered more than 100 information sessions that reached over 250 individuals and fielded more than 250 Helpline inquiries. WLS also implemented a bus-ad campaign that garnering more than 11,000 impressions daily for the 60 days of posting during the fall of 2018. Some 3,000 copies of a Higher Secondary Education (HSE) guide were printed; distribution is ongoing and includes area libraries and an array of service agencies. WLS had an average of 7,000 visitors annually to the English language learning portal (FirstFind.org), which hosted HSE guidance. Partnerships for awareness building and for recruitment of tutors that provide one-to-one support was a key to WLS's success. These partnerships included promotion through 38 member libraries, Northern and Southern BOCES programs, Westchester Community College, immigrant service organizations, employment/one-stop centers, reentry service organizations, substance abuse clinics, and community agencies such as YWCA, Head Start, and Communities That Care network.