

**Mohawk Valley Library System
Outreach Advisory Council
June 12, 2019**

Minutes

2016-2019 Adult Literacy Project – 3 years

Purpose: To improve skills of those 16 and older for Basic English and English as a Second Language, digital literacy, or workforce or entrepreneurial skills in order to become better job candidates. Accomplished by allowing up to 3 libraries to submit mini-grant applications.

YEAR 1

Schenectady County Public Library – Bornt Branch and Literacy Center worked with Washington Irving Adult Education Center to provide classes for ESOL learners.

- Found 2 levels of learners- literate in their own language and those who weren't- needed two levels of classes – not anticipated at outset.
- Presidential emphasis on immigrant status caused fear and anxiety and extra measures had to be taken to reassure people.
- 67 people in program. 52% of people attending made a gain in 6 areas of life skills* after 81 hours of instruction as evaluated by Best Plus test.
- 77% of attendees remained in the program. Many learners and their families have gotten library cards.

Amsterdam Free Library established a job center to provide information and one-on-one assistance for career and digital literacy inquiries. Partnered with Horace Inman Senior Center.

- 6 people got jobs (food service, healthcare, retail, custodial); 48 people were helped with a workforce inquiry

The **2016 Adult Literacy Grant** provided 118 sessions with a total attendance of 1094 for SCP and AMS.

*determining dates, costs, phone numbers; writing checks; addressing envelopes; reading transportation schedules; definitions in context and reading and writing.

YEAR 2

Schenectady County Public Library – Bornt Branch and Literacy Center worked with Washington Irving Adult Education Center to provide classes for ESOL learners.

- 56 one-on-one sessions held; total attendance 729

- Of 56 learners, 50% made a gain in the six areas of life skills after 81 hours of instruction as evaluated by the Best Plus test.

YEAR 3

MVLS organized and coordinated career counseling programs and one-on-one sessions at Schenectady County Public Library- Central and Bornt Branches, Johnstown Public Library, Gloversville Public Library, and the Schoharie Free Library.

So far, there have been 13 programs and 39 one-on-one sessions. A total of 82 people have been helped with career counseling concerns. Four more programs are scheduled at SCP-Mont Pleasant through June 2019.

While some expressed the need for more print materials, evaluations from participants were overwhelmingly positive. These aspects were highlighted:

- **Renewed confidence** - Feeling more knowledgeable and confident about career seeking and being hopeful, feeling that skills are valuable, more self-assured; Glad to be able to ask someone knowledgeable
- Evaluation of needs and desires in terms of **job satisfaction**; consideration of transferable skills
- **Identifying and improving personal strengths** and ways to highlight those through an “elevator speech”, resume development, non-work accomplishments; how to approach difficult situations, better organization
- **Targeting research and using more effective search methods** to find new resources
- **Development of new skills and techniques** for interviewing, resume writing, job searching, and finding references
- **Developing strategies** for specific employers
- **The importance of networking** to lead to information about job qualifications, how others achieved their goals, and hearing about job possibilities and using non-paying position to gain experience
- **Thinking “outside the box”**
- **Development of entrepreneurial skills** – have a clearer understanding of how to continue with a new business

“I love this class, it really opens up many windows for me. This is my second time attending, but I always come out feeling more confident.”

2019 – 2022 ADULT LITERACY PROJECT

Purpose: To improve skills of those 16 and older for Basic English and English as a Second Language, digital literacy, or workforce or entrepreneurial skills in order to become better job candidates.

MVLS will oversee projects and budget. OAC will discuss project and make suggestions about the project and allotting funds. \$5000 but \$4730 is actual amount.

- **SCP –MTP** will focus on job skills and financial literacy and will partner with Schenectady Works. SW is a division of the City Mission. This program is committed to bridging the gaps between the individuals who find themselves unemployed or underemployed and the businesses within the community who benefit from their contribution.

MTP new- neighborhood-in-transition many residents are in and out of drug and alcohol rehab, some on parole, and some out of mental health treatment. stressful living in poverty- esp, single parents. *Job skills and financial literacy* (previous experience- need) needed, as well, as the Central Library in downtown Schenectady.

- **SHO & MID** are working together to *focus on job skills and digital and financial literacy*. They will work with the A.C.E.S. Program (Assistive Competitive Employment Services), part of the Catskill Center for Independence, which helps people with mental illness find jobs.
- **JOH** will work with Fulton, Montgomery, Schoharie Workforce Career Center to provide *job coaching and skill building*. Workforce offers self-paced learning.

Budget-Expenditures will be adjusted as needed

\$750 for Schoharie's Financial and Digital Literacy programs
\$1000 for Schenectady's Wealth Education Exchange Programs
\$2980 for Johnstown's Your Career Matters programs

COMMENTS

Denelle offered these suggestions for additional connections to financial literacy programs. There is no fee for these offerings. Lois will call to get more information.

- Schenectady- CASH Connection and the "Y" offers programs through the Schenectady Community Action Program. Contact Andrea.
- Schoharie County – SCAAP offers an Employment Training Center. Mary Holmes is the contact.
- The Vita program is also a possible connection. Tracy Randle at the United Way is the Vita Manager but she will be taking another position in the agency at the end of June.

Denelle has agreed to present a financial literacy workshop for the member libraries. There will be an all-day workshop at SCPL on Thursday, September 19, 2019 entitled Assets, Savings and Hope. She will forward more details.

Sarah spoke about E-WIC, which needed extensive training on the agency's part, but provides an easier way for people to use and be aware of their benefits. There is also an app which offers lots of supplementary information such as grocery store locations.

Library Moon Walk

Partnered with National Network of Libraries of Medicine to promote MedlinePlus, accurate and current consumer health information.

This project was very important as a tool to educate library staff, community health organizations, and the public about accurate and current consumer health information. It provided this education in ways appropriate for each group.

- Library staff gained knowledge w/o travel
- Community Health organizations – more exposure to community
- Public programs- people relaxed and interacted with others in non-threatening way to discuss health issues. Several people mentioned making progress on their health goals, such as, losing weight, getting better at an exercise or start using a food and activity log to set goals.

Website- 4210 people from 147 zip codes moved 76,897 miles toward better health and at least 759 people attended 187 programs. Project Outcome evaluations from 404 people showed that:

- 98 % Learned something new
- 96 % Felt more confident about what they learned
- 95 % Intend to apply what they had learned
- 91 % Were more aware of resources and services provided by the library

NNLM Consumer Health Special Advisory Group.

NYSCA

The new series is called Pen & Ink: Life and Literature. There are 18 book discussions scheduled and Schenectady, FTP, and SHO will be offering literary programs as well. SHO is working on a day-long writing conference with multiple authors and group interaction.

Corrections

Re-Entry Day- the facility has changed its focus to a more structured program, work release, that offers a job when people leave the facility. It now has a larger population and due to the program change, there is more interest in our material and more interaction.

Sharon Springs Free Library- Schoharie Human Services Coordinating Council Grant

Human Services Coordinating Council – SHS received funding for chairs for story time so they don't have to borrow from Head Start.