

## 2009 Renew Washington Grants

### Final Narrative Report Cover Sheet

Date September 24, 2010 Contract # G-4308 Grant # 09-TC-023

Library Whitman County Library

Title of Grant Whitman County Library Occupation Resource Connections (WORC)

Amount Awarded \$48,160

#### Grant Period

Start Date August 19, 2009 Through August 13, 2010

#### Reporting Period

Start Date August 19, 2009 Through August 13, 2010

Submitted by Erica Willson, WORC Program Coordinator

#### Signatures Certifying the Final Report

We certify that all of the information contain herein is correct to the best of our knowledge. We certify that 17 of 17 **objectives** of this grant have been achieved. We certify this report includes an analysis of each objective of this grant and an evaluation of the impact this grant has made on our services. We certify \$ ~~47,088.69~~ \$46,476.66 has been claimed and \$ ~~48,160.00~~ \$1,683.34 of the amount originally awarded was not used and the reasons are explained in this report.

Signatory \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Agent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Signatory:** Defined as the person who would sign the grant contract and whose signature will be a representation that the legal entity submitting this report has authority to enter into the grant contract; and that the signatory has the authority to sign the grant contract on behalf off the legal entity.

**Fiscal Agent:** Defined as an individual authorized by the Grantee's governing body to obligate it to the financial liabilities and accountable to the Grantees governing body for the integrity of the official accounting system and the financial statements that the system provides.

Submit this form and the Final Narrative Report to: **Anne Yarbrough  
Grants Program  
Washington State Library  
Post Office Box 42460  
Olympia, WA 98504-2460**

In addition, email electronic copy to: **anne.yarbrough@sos.wa.gov**

## Final Narrative Report

1. Do you feel this grant has helped you provide better service to your customers?

x	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Please explain:

The **Whitman County Library Occupation Resource Connection** program provided enhanced career services to Whitman County residents. This program addressed the unique needs of Whitman County residents and was able to provide countywide outreach programs, additional library hours, increased computer time, enhanced collection development, and individual assistance. Grant funding provided staff time for the grant coordinator, educator, technical support, and branch manager staffing. Together they were able to better serve the communities by conducting library programs, market the library as a career resource, and make valuable relationships with partnering agencies.

2. Summarize the project, the situation it was intended to address, and the objectives of the project.

The **Whitman County Library Occupation Resource Connections** provided a series of collaborative skill building instructional programs, comprehensive career guidance and increased computer access to resources addressing the current employment crises. Collaborative programs taught computer skill development, interview basics, resume and job application completion and career development. The WORC program has encouraged self-empowerment and taught skills to achieve career objectives.

The economic crisis has greatly impacted rural communities throughout Washington State. Whitman County has suffered from unemployment, low paying jobs, displaced people, the return of individuals to the workforce, career changes, and the increasing need for additional training or education. The rural geographic area of Whitman County contributes to the library's ability to address this economic situation. Whitman County Library has the opportunity to address these issues as it located in all Whitman County incorporated communities, is a community hub, and viewed as a non stigma program center. In speaking with area organizations, that address Whitman County's economic, employment and career guidance, WCL found that none had the ability or were prepared to work with people outside of office locations in Pullman or Colfax. To compound these problems these agencies have very limited staff and resources such as computer centers that can easily

accommodate individual needs. Often those Whitman county residents that have the greatest need are located in very communities and could not travel or do not have the means to travel to use other agency resources.

The objective of the WORC program was to implement a comprehensive career program, providing career resources, outreach education, and career assistance to Whitman county residents. The WORC programs goals included specific career education, employment assistance, additional career resources and much needed increased computer time district wide. A part-time grant funded position was created to help provide outreach education and program support. In addition, the grant allowed the staffing of the grant coordinator to facilitate the WORC program

3. Summarize the results of the project, including activities accomplished, and any problems or unexpected outcomes encountered.

Whitman County Library is now viewed as a career resource center thanks to the Renew Washington initiative. The grant provided the ability to address Whitman County residents' economic issues. Upon receiving the grant Whitman County Library advertised for the temporary project educator and created designated staff time to assist county residents in accessing and utilizing career resources. Andree Marcus was hired as grant educator. WCL was very excited to welcome Andree, as she holds a Master's in Social Work and has extensive knowledge of agency support, conducting community programs, and teaching experience. WCL felt she would be an excellent fit and source of information and could be a liaison to community partners.

Together, Erica Willson, grant coordinator and Andree Marcus made key community contacts, developed career resources, worked with community partners, branch managers, community members and library patrons in an effort to address current needs.

The program provided extensive career resources and programs. Countywide, fifty workshops and training sessions were conducted in the areas of computer basics, job search skills, resumes, cover letters and the application process. A WORC website was created uniting online career related resources and agency links. In addition, the valuable online databases Bridges and WOIS were provided for the duration of the grant cycle with WCL contributing the other prorated costs of the subscription in beyond the grant cycle.

WCL WORC program staff connected individuals with additional partnering agency support including a wide range of local and community resources; this includes WorkSource and Community Action Center. The WORC website provides links to partnering agencies. A collaborative relationship between Whitman County Library staff, project partners and county residents was further developed through project information sharing activities and cross-referrals. County residents now have a wide range of easily accessible professional resources including the WORC website and individualized assistance to better address the economic crisis.

The library prioritized this project to train all library staff on the available WORC resources and the implementation of the program referral system; this included all staff training at the annual meeting. In addition, Andree trained WCL staff while she visited branches.

Key to the success of the project was the massive marketing blitz. This too was a learning experience and an assessment of our target markets, media coverage, and marketing tools helped us modify our marketing strategy. Attending the Renew Washington training workshop. This in part helped us develop the referral card after seeing the handout of another grant recipient and learning from other libraries about their projects.

The referral system became an integral part of the WORC program. This was a modification the WORC program made to address the unique needs of county residents. It became obvious that a referral system would better serve individual needs. The referral system works by patrons or individuals seeking career related assistance or information being given a referral card. Initial contact library staff explains the program and can encourage participation. Library staff then emails the contact information to the WORC program email with the contact information and needed assistance. Next, trained grant staff contacts the individuals within a week, providing career assistance or resource support. This enables trained staff to assist each person's unique interests and needs. The referral system is especially helpful with in the Whitman County Library system as many branch managers have limited skills and the branches are open on very limited hours.

The delay in the grant contract signing greatly influenced the timing and program of work. The hiring the grant-funded position moved activities into November, winter and the holiday season. This was critical in staff training, program scheduling, and seeking a web site builder. Winters in Whitman County are both busy and endure poor driving conditions. Branch libraries had scheduled programs months in advance and with limited hours it was difficult to schedule additional WORC programs.

The website development proved to be very educational, frustrating and exciting. Both grant staff had limited website development experience. It was determined to hire a local firm to build the website. This would support Whitman County business and the local business we selected had experience working with ALA. After meeting with the business, Andree and I were asked to research websites that we liked, given website recommendations, requirements, and asked to research information links for the website. Through the website development process, we learned extensive knowledge of available online resources, government agencies, and the web writing process. It was a very labor-intensive process to accomplish the website in a short amount of time. Our website go live date had to be extended due to the massive undertaking, technical requirements, and scheduling issues of the web team. In the end however, the website went live and provided an excellent tool and reference. Much of the information we learned was transferred to WCL staff during training sessions and used in programs.

The Economic Hard Times website became the backbone of information and a jumping off point to extended services. While the WORC website was not complete and WORC programs were conducted, we relied upon The Economic hard Times resources for much of our programming.

Specific programs such as the Computer Basics workshop attendance were not large, however, program participants learned valuable skills and received more direct instruction. The value of the direct or individual assistance program participants received is noted in one individual follow-up emails, he wrote, "The little Library that could, well served my job search and other correspondence needs. I now know how truly valuable public libraries can be."

Another key influence in how the WORC program, was the WCL headquarters remodel. The project to install an elevator and to meet ADA requirements in the outdated building led to an extensive library remodel. The library was able to remain open by moving to a neighboring cramped bank building. It was great that WCL could stay open but programming was greatly reduced due to limited space and computer access. The library's portable laptop lab was essential in providing computer availability during WORC programs.

The extensive goals and comprehensive program of the WORC program made it difficult to predict how much money would be spent on travel, salary and resources during the grant writing process. All library staff including branch managers were asked to note time sheets when WORC related activities were conducted. In one quarter report 18 different staff members duties had WORC related hours. This created a massive amount of paper work and time to oversee the grant budget. The referral card system made travel more specific and thus reduced how much grant staff traveled to outlying communities. We felt this was a better management of time and resources. These factors contributed to not claiming all grant funds and a grant remaining balance of \$1,071.31.

4. Quantify, where possible, the results of the project, including how many people have directly used the new services and resources provided by the project.

The results of the project include Whitman county residents having a valuable resource to help meet their career needs. This includes enhanced library programming, more computer time including 144 hours of additional branch library hours countywide, individual assistance from trained staff, increased resource collection addressing the economic situation, and the library's recognition of being a credible career resource.

The number of participants and Bridges statistical report can measure the quantitative analysis of the WORC program. Countywide during the grant period 86 people participated in the WORC programs. These programs included the following content areas and documented services provided:

<b><u>Program Services</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Services Provided</u></b>
• Computer Basics	13
• Set up email	8
• Resume/Cover Letter	13
• Applications	8
• Interview Skills	6
• Job Search	15
• Career Exploration	7
• Education/Retraining	4
• Community Resources	10

The WORC program provided USB drives and daily planners to program participants. These resource tools were very helpful to program participants. Approximately 120 USB drives and 85 daily planners were used during the grant cycle. The remaining USB drives and planners are made available to residents countywide who are in need of a storage device and organizing planner. Library reference staff and branch managers can offer them to people as reference support and for people working on career related activities. For many patrons the USB drives were very helpful in saving their documents such as resumes and job application. Furthermore, several participants learned what a USB drive is.

The extended programs provided Whitman County residents more high-speed internet computer time in their local communities. During this time, 144 extended computer hours were provided countywide. These extended hours gave grant educator Andree the opportunity to travel the county providing, designated help sessions and staff training. The extended hours also proved important in assessing just how effective communicating the WORC program had been within the library staff. Andree found that the majority of the staff had very little knowledge of the WORC website and career resources. It was determined that emailing information and thinking that massive marketing would encourage more staff to learn the WORC resources, however we found that people simply didn't adventure to the online resources.

The honest evaluation of staff knowledge helped develop the pre-workshop training Scavenger Hunt. All WCL staff were asked by library Director Kristie Kirkpatrick to complete the scavenger hunt in preparation for the staff training day. This encouraged staff to take the time and learn the WORC resources in greater detail. The Scavenger Hunt provided an education tool for Andree to work with while training branch managers on an individual basis. The Scavenger Hunt and questions were addressed and used in the all staff training day as a guide to important key resources and frequently asked WORC related questions. The staff's training results are as follows:

## WORC Career Resources Staff Survey and Training Summary

### Staff Pre-Training Survey Summary

In April of 2010 all staff were sent a pre-training survey

# of pre-training surveys sent = All branch staff plus HQ staff

# of pre-training surveys returned = 13 returned by branch staff to WORC program for data collection

Summary of Pre-Training Questionnaire: For each question the number of people who responded in each ranking category are listed

Participants were asked about their level knowledge in a variety of areas:

0 = none/cant figure it out, 1= none/could figure it out, 2=have done once or twice and can easily remember, 3 = use often

4=could teach with a little notice, 5=could easily teach skill

Question	Knowledge Area	Ranking	0	1	2	3	4	5	
# 1	WORC website	X	X	X	X	X			
# 2	Work Source	X	2	8	2		1		
# 3	On-line applications	X	2	3	5	2		1	
# 4/5	Resume assistance	X	3	3	5	1	1		
# 6	Job search resources		X	2	4	4	2	1	
# 7	Education and training resources			X	2	5	4	1	1

#### Summary of results:

Overall the majority of branch managers indicated they had a limited and/or basic understanding of WORC resources

## Staff Post-Training Survey Summary

In May 2010 all WCL Library Branch Managers received individual training on WORC website resources.

# of branches/staff = 13

All WCL staff received a WORC website resources group training

# of staff = 24

Prior to the all staff training a WORC resources scavenger hunt was sent to all employees as a pre-training engagement activity (see attached)

# of scavenger hunt questionnaires sent = ?

# of scavenger hunt questionnaires returned = 17

At the all staff training a post-training survey was distributed to all staff present to assess learning and training effectiveness (see attached survey)

# of post training questionnaires = 24

Summary of Post Training Questionnaire: For each question the number of people who responded in each ranking category are listed

Participants were asked if their knowledge had increased: 1= not at all; 2 = Limited; 3 = Some; 4 = A great deal

	Knowledge Area		Ranking	1	2	3	4		
Question	X	X	X	X	X				
# 1	WORC website		X		11	13			
# 2	Work Source	X		4	8	12			
# 3	On-line applications		X	1	3	14	6		
# 4	Resume assistance		X			12	12		
# 5	Job search resources			X			13	11	
# 6	Education and training resources				X		1	11	12
# 7	Training helpful		X		1	12	11		

Overall training participants found the training to be helpful and knowledge in all areas increased.

### Summary of comments:

Overall after the training, participants found the group training helpful but thought they might have more questions when actually assisting a patron. Participants found the individualized training very useful and expressed that they felt more confident after the training assisting patrons to use the resources on the website.

Two subscription databases were used for the WORC program WOIS and Bridges. Statistical numbers are available for the career online resource Bridges. These include a count of:

- Page Views 10,776
- Portfolios 58
- Sessions 647

These numbers indicate that during the grant cycle 58 individuals created portfolios and accessed Bridges for career and training information. These portfolios allow individuals to assess interests, research careers/training programs, compare careers and education programs, write resumes, and store document digitally online. During the grant cycle there were 647 online sessions logged in, with a total of 10,776 page views.

An informal partnering agency verbal survey was completed at the conclusion of the grant cycle. An overwhelming majority of participants found the library's resources to be beneficial and would recommend WCL as a career resource center.

The following are some WORC program success stories:

1. Janie is a 78 year old woman who first attended a computer basics workshop held in Pullman, WA. She was interested in learning how to use the computer to search for work. After reviewing her current skills and needs this is the story she shared with us about how she came to be looking for work at 78 to supplement her Social Security. Janie had her bachelor's degree in teaching and taught for 10 years in Alaska in her twenties. She subsequently left teaching to pursue her passion in conservation and ecology focusing on working in the outdoors. She worked seasonally for the US Forest Service for most of her life. Although she spent all of her adult life working she did not accrue retirement nor did she earn enough to have a very substantial social security income. She lives in subsidized housing and works with a case manager. Unfortunately, she still needs to work to augment her social security to help with gas and maintenance for her car and other assorted items such as clothing, hygiene products, etc. She had most recently done yard work and through the COPES program drove a disabled elderly woman to appointments. This employment had ended and she now needed to find other work. She would go to the Work Source office in Pullman, WA some 20 miles from home on a weekly basis to look for work by reviewing the job listings. Unfortunately, no one had ever taught her to use the computer to search for employment nor had they shared with her that she could use resources, such as the library, in her own community. We worked with her on three separate occasions to assist her to access the computers at the local library. She learned; the basics of how to log onto the computer, mouse basics, how to log on to and use the Work Source job search database, and do general searches on the internet. We were also able to assist her to explore other social service options within the community. Janie got a temporary 2010 Census position and is currently engaged in that employment. Overall the WORC program served as a way that Janie could receive high quality individual assistance specific to her needs and was able to job search at her local library rather than traveling 20 miles from home. In addition she is now familiar with the local branch library and the manager and uses the library as a resource on a regular basis.

2. Mary is a 60 year old woman who came to the WORC program for help updating her resume. When she started her resume was on a sticky note. She subsequently met and worked with the WORC educator five times and had several other contacts via email. Mary had worked in the home/assisted living health care industry her entire life. She had incurred several injuries during that time as a result of the extremely physical nature of the work and was no longer able to continue in the field. Although her husband was retired she needed to continue to work due to the expense of his declining health and the care that was required. Mary started off with a strictly chronological resume. Although her resume highlighted her long-term work experience it focused strictly on her job duties as a health aide. We worked closely with Mary to identify the additional skills she had gained through her employment that would be applicable in other professions. We also helped her re-do her resume into a combination style that would not only highlight the fact that she had an excellent work history but also a great diversity of skills. As we continued to work with Mary we explored other areas related to job search. She learned to how to apply for job on-line, write an effective cover letter, and practiced interview skills. In addition she received advocacy services related to employment security. Mary was able to apply for many different jobs not just because she had a more diverse resume but also because she was able to identify and vocalize to employers the skills she had in addition to home health aide. We are excited to learn that she has found employment at a local business where she can use some of the new skills she has learned working with our program educators.
3. Ruby recently moved back to the area from Louisiana. Prior to moving back she had obtained certifications in a variety of office functions and worked as temporary employee in a variety of office settings. She moved back to the area to be closer to her family and regroup as a single mother of two. After she arrived she began applying for office assistant positions throughout the county but was not having much luck. She connected with the WORC program when a WORC program coordinator at a Cub Scouts meeting referred her. She utilized the services available through the WORC program on regular basis. We worked closely with Ruby to assist her in making her resume appear more professional. She had never written a cover letter and we were able offer a great deal of assistance in this area. Ruby was able to acquire the skills necessary to write her own professional cover letter and resume. We also spent a good deal of time talking about the job search process and helping her to identify other means of searching for work other than posting her resume on Monster and Careerbuilder. She was able to register with Work Source and learned about local classified ads as well as other available resources. Ruth continued to attend any WORC programs until she moved back to Louisiana to take her children back to be closer to their father. In discussing with here how the program has benefitted her she has commented that she very “happy to have a great looking resume to take with and have the free service available to her while she was isolated in a small community.” Her story is indicative of marketing going outside of the library. Also, hopefully her skills will help support a young family beyond Washington and she will be moving to an area that requires her to be more marketable and job ready.

As part of the WORC program 37 resource items were added to the collection. The resources were selected to address issues surrounding economic hardships and the Renew Washington initiative goals for example teaching: teaching economic responsibility, and personal management. Items added such titles as; Eating Well on a Budget, Managing Your Stress in Difficult Times, Suddenly Frugal and Do I Need It or Do I Want it. Many of these resources were purchased late in the grant cycle due to our lack of shelving space available within the library remodel. On the grand reopening, the Renew Washington collection was displayed and within minutes several of the items were checked out. Furthermore, referral cards and daily planners were given out promoting the program.

A story of how the Renew Washington project is helping families is evident in one mother's enthusiastic tale of her son's money related questions. She wanted assistance finding books to answer some of her eight-year old son's money questions, as he had been trying to save money. She was assisted by the staff and checked out two books relating to money and banking. She packed the books to his doctor's appointment for him to read during the wait and he was so excited he never put it down during the whole appointment she said, even through his allergy shots. "Now he has been saving his lawn mowing money to get a savings bond and not a skateboard." This is an example of how the Renew Washington project's is creating and inspiring economic awareness for the next generation.

5. Did the project meet its stated **objectives**? Compare the project objectives to actual accomplishments.

The WORC program met all stated objectives. A major note to the objectives is that the proposed timeframe altered from the grant application. Additionally, the countywide implementation of the program was very substantial within the confines of the grant.

The WORC collaborative program has provided a series of programs benefitting job seekers throughout Whitman County. The WORC programs and services have included the accomplishment of the following tasks for Whitman County residents:

- Collaborating partner involvement including; web site development, program referrals and host sites.
- WCL has conducted thirty 50 programs/training session in fourteen locations with the support of collaborating partners.
- WCL staff has been given extensive WORC program training, including individual branch manager training sessions.
- Increased county wide library hours, designated to address the Renew Washington initiative and the WORC program goals.
- Referral program created and implemented.
- Provide career development and job search services to rural locations.
- Program modification to better accomplish grant goals, one program does not fit all and thus working with participants on an individual basis is of primary importance. We were able to provide services to a wide range of individuals with multiple needs. Working with a variety of education and skill backgrounds has been one of the more challenging and rewarding aspects of the project.

- Computer skills have been taught to those seeking new basic skills. This includes learning Office, typing, saving documents, setting up email, using Google Documents, attaching files, printing, and internet search.
- Work programs include activities such as; assessment of work interests, education programs, and possible education programs.
- Job preparation and the application process has taught; job search skills, resume building, cover letter writing, and resource research.
- Program participants have received resume help. This includes having tangible accomplishments such as a professional resume both in printed format and saved to a USB drive.
- Participants can locate jobs and complete the online job process.
- WORC web site offers user friendly online resources to assist Whitman County residents.
- WCL WORC grant representatives attended the Renew Washington Training.
- Massive marketing to inform residents of WORC programs and the Renew Washington initiative.
- Continued program evaluation conducted, especially pre and post staff training.
- Items for collection development purchased and cataloged
- Statistical report of Bridges, however none available for WOIS
- Follow-up evaluation of collaborative partners completed.
- Thank you letter sent to partnering agencies for their support.

In comparison to the grants accomplished objectives and to actual accomplishments, most significant note is the actual involvement of partnering agencies. Initially it seemed that the WORC program would have more support from these agencies, however, due to multiple reasons it just did not happen. Over the course of the grant cycle the reality was the partnership operated as an information referral. A statistical analysis of WOIS database is not available, however the program was used in multiple training sessions.

The success of many of the WORC program participants, the lasting knowledge of individuals learning to accomplish their career goals, and the continuation of Whitman County Library working to provide career services, makes WORC far exceed the programs objectives. Knowing that Whitman County residents are better able to get help and succeed is very rewarding.