



2009 Renew Washington Grants

Final Narrative Report Cover Sheet

Date September 29, 2010 Contract _____ Grant # G 4301

Library Whatcom County Library System

Title of Grant Steps on the Path: Connecting Partners, Building Community / Pasos en el camino: Companeros conectados, Construyendo Comunidad

Amount Awarded \$50,000

Grant Period

Start Date Oct. 30, 2009 Through September 24, 2010

Reporting Period

Start Date Oct. 30, 2009 Through September 24, 2010

Submitted by Joan Airoidi

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 all 18 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 \$ \$49,914.04 has been claimed and \$ \$85.96 of the amount originally awarded was not used and the reasons are explained in this report.

Signatory Joan Airoidi (hard copy signature) Date 9/30/10

Fiscal Agent Kyle Teeter (hard copy signature) Date 9/30/10

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:

This project far exceeded my expectations in library outreach, welcoming new users to the library, increasing staff awareness of the issues involved in reaching new populations, and improved relationships and collaboration with agencies serving low income and minority populations in our area.

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

The project was originally conceived as a hard times effort, as the LSTA category was originally titled. The purpose was to target low income and job seeking residents including underserved minority populations with library outreach, demonstrating the support and resources available through their local library.

The primary objectives of the project required people--adequate and skilled staff to carry out the project led by the Outreach Project Coordinator with a Project Advisory Committee to guide it. In addition to the project coordinator, staffing included teen and youth focus personnel as well as a web assistant hired to develop a virtual toolkit for online use and print on demand materials. Other objectives centered on planning, finding virtual and print resources, developing trainings, programs and events at the branches as well as training for library staff. The desired outcome was increasing awareness of and skills in using library resources for the low income and non-English speaking residents of Whatcom County to help support them on their path to education, employment and success. Using the project year as a demonstration of how the library could accomplish this outcome and involve staff in planning for sustaining this work were also purposes.

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

RESULTS

A. Job Shop Results and Related Activities

To address job search needs of the local communities, WCLS developed "job shops" in each of the Whatcom County library branches. The job shops were initiated with Open

Houses and featured computers, books connected to the job search, binders with local employment information and planned training sessions on both individual help with software such as WCLS' Resume Maker and Learning Express, and job related links and information on the library's website, as well as group events on these topics. Individuals who began resumes and other projects were given thumb drives for storing their work for use at a later time including future library sessions.

40 participants at Open Houses

Uncounted individuals continuing to use the resources during regular library hours.

B. Ongoing Community Classes

| | | |
|--|---------|-----------------|
| 1. Citizenship | Lynden | 17 participants |
| 2. Basic Computer Skills in Spanish | Everson | 8 participants |
| 3. Basic Computer Skills and the Job Search -Maple Falls | | 8 participants |
| 4. Talk Time (ESL practice) | Lynden | 10 participants |

TOTAL 36 participants

Throughout the month of July the following workshops were available at the job shops in the Lynden, Blaine and Deming branches:

- **Computer Basics** **10 participants**
Individualized basic computer instruction on using a mouse, setting up email, becoming familiar with word processing, etc.
- **Resume & Interviewing Basics** **6 participants**
One on one help with resumes and cover letters, interviewing techniques, searching the internet for job prospects.
- :
- **Resume Assistance** the Opportunity Council also held a Resume Assistance workshop in Blaine **5 participants**

C. Programs

El Dia De Los Niños- On May 1st the Lynden Public Library held "El Dia de Los Ninos, Dia de los Libros" Celebration-a celebration of children, books and the Hispanic community. Spanish, English and bilingual books were displayed and a bilingual book was read with the group. There was a bilingual puppet show, a children's play, and a hands-on session of making Mexican crafts. Over 100 people attended-a huge increase from previous years where there had been less than 10. This large increase was attributed to this grant and the outreach that has been done with the Hispanic community.

WSMC (Washington State Migrant Council)-End of school year celebration. WCLS participated in this event with library information, books, library card applications and the presentation of a bilingual puppet show. There were over 100 people in attendance. The library programs at WSMC have been a great opportunity for outreach with the Hispanic community.

Spanish Family Night at the Everson Library – In correlation with the "Computer Class in Spanish" being taught by WCLS staff at the Everson Elementary School, an event was planned at the Everson Public library. The participants of the computer class came to the library with their families and were trained on the library computers. Most of the members of the class did not have library cards-so they filled out applications and received their first cards.

Growing Your New Business- Ferndale May 15 and Deming Public Library-July 17

5 participants

A free small business workshop with Jack Kimmes from SCORE.

Family Fiesta Day-Ferndale Library- August 21

25 participants

A day to celebrate Hispanic culture. Crafts, stories (in English and Spanish), a bilingual puppet show, food, sign up for library cards.

Ferndale School District "Back to School Event"- August 25

300+ participants

WCLS participated in the Ferndale School District "Back to School" event- a giveaway of school supplies and clothes to low income families. WCLS had a booth with books and information as well as presenting a bilingual puppet show.

Fiestas Patrias-Ferndale-Sept. 18

200 participants

A celebration of Mexican Independence Day. WCLS had a table with information about upcoming classes, books in Spanish.

WCLS Staff Training

55 participants

On September 16th and 17th; WCLS staff were trained by staff from the Literacy Network of Washington based in Tacoma, on "Intercultural Communication in the Library". Comments from the evaluations included "I thought it wouldn't be a lot to learn, but I was wrong, there is a lot!" "I'm more aware of how culture can influence patron behavior, have better clues and tools to communicate with non-native English speakers." Because of the very positive evaluation of staff, these presenters are being invited to again give this workshop to another group of public services staff in April 2011.

D. Community Networking

Opportunity Council-now will be coming to branches to have informational tables and help members of the community fill out Food Stamps and Energy Assistance applications (branches currently involved: Blaine, Everson, Deming, Lynden, Ferndale)

SCORE has been coming to branches to have informational tables and help members of the community fill out Food Stamps and Energy Assistance applications (branches currently involved: Blaine, Everson, Deming, Lynden, Ferndale, Sumas) as well as other programs and community resources. As a result of this networking, SCORE has committed to giving workshops 4 times a year at the WCLS branches. They are also interested in providing small business start up assistance.

Worksource has helped with materials for teaching computer skills as well as job search and is considering the possibility of doing outreach at the branches.

Goodwill is interested in doing outreach with job search/computer skills at the branches in the future.

Everson Elementary School is partnering with WCLS to have a computer class in Spanish (they are providing the computer labs and participants-WCLS is providing teaching materials and staff)

Others:

Whatcom Community College
Service Alternatives (job coach, mock interviews)
PMI (Project Management Institute)
Whatcom Volunteer Center
School districts (Kendall, Lynden, Ferndale)
WWU

*

New Community networking contacts made in July, August, September:

- **Reaching out 542 Program: Bellingham Technical College- Brandi Gist**

This new program from BTC reaches out to the East County by offering math and English course at reduced rates to residents of the Deming and Kendall areas. We met with Brandi Gist, who is managing the program, to see how WCLS might partner with the Reaching Out Program, as the grant has a similar target population.

- **Watered Garden-Gretchen Hoyt**

The Watered Garden has ESL programs that target the Hispanic population in the Everson area. Their programs will be drastically cut this year so we met with Gretchen to see how the library might partner with them.

- **Whatcom Volunteer Center-Katy Nydam**

Met with WVC and attended a session about using local volunteers to help with WCLS HTG projects.

There have been numerous meetings/contacts made throughout these months. Listed here are the main organizations that are now partnering with WCLS

- **Service Alternatives-** This organization works with job related issues. Their “Community & Employment Services” division provides a multitude of services designed to support people in finding and keeping meaningful employment in their communities. Services are provided to people with a range of disabilities, as well as to people who are moving from reliance on public assistance to employment. Supports may include resource development, assessment of vocational skills and goal development, job development, work experiences, job coaching, employment retention support, volunteer placement and assistance to overcome barriers that prevent successful employment.

They have agreed to give a total of 16 workshops at WCLS locations.

- **WWU-Service Learning-**Service learning is learning through experience. It combines academic instruction with community-based learning through service projects that meet community needs. From numerous meetings with different staff members participating in this project a contact has been made to have students from one of the Spanish classes partner with the Lynden library to facilitate the Family Literacy Nights beginning on October 7, 2010.

E. PROBLEMS AND UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES

The biggest problem was the objective to develop a Virtual Toolkit; an online “toolkit” with community resources related to job searching, retraining and other financial help.

Unfortunately, the individual hired to carry out the virtual toolkit, although seemingly very talented and capable, had very poorly developed work habits and voluntarily resigned from the WCLS position due to job abandonment in the midst of the work. Another individual was sought and picked up the pieces as long as the calendar allowed, which was a shorter timeframe than would have been ideal. Therefore, the toolkit was not completed in time and budget changes were necessary. The hard copy of this project evaluation packet contains printouts of the toolkit at this time.

With the lack of the virtual toolkit when needed, funds were necessary to develop additional training materials so that classes could be most effective—interest of attendees at programs, better understanding of what materials would be most helpful based on questions and needs of those attending. The WSL was notified of the problems and the proposed solutions via email. The virtual toolkit is close to being live and is now on a test server, with additional support by WCLS staff. In the end this will be a good product and since it is intended to be kept up to date, will continue to be maintained and improve over time under the direction of the WCLS Website Coordinator.

A budget and timeline Amendment was requested and authorized in June 2010. The primary change was adding funds for the staff training and extending the deadline to accommodate the greatest number of attendees. The contract staff was the Virtual Toolkit design work and was hired as temporary rather than contract staff. This change was also documented on the project Amendment.

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.

Using the specific outline of programs in # 3 B & C above, the total number of people who benefitted from the services and resources of the project is estimated at 1000 persons. In addition, a Hispanic Public Services Assistant is now on staff for the first time, serving as a

permanent ambassador between the Hispanic Community and the library, bringing in new families weekly with her enthusiasm, knowledge, and charm. The number of new cardholders from the target population is not available.

An unexpected positive outcome is the enthusiasm for this project from staff at all levels and particularly from the Library Board. One board member has volunteered to contact our state and federal legislators to express appreciation for the opportunities that this grant has provided the low income and disadvantaged populations in Whatcom County as expressed briefly in the following selected stories.

Citizenship Class Participants: Yenith, Ferndando, Mayella

These three participants from the Citizenship Class offered in Lynden this past year have now success fully passed their citizenship tests. All three participants stated that it was because of the library's classes that they were able to confidently take and pass the test.

Talk Time Growth

The numbers of the participants in the Lynden Talk Time has grown dramatically in the last months. There are approximately 15 different people (not counting their children who attend with them) who come to the Talk Times. The participants are primarily Hispanic, but to date there have been 3 members from the Punjabi community who have joined. After each class I have seen these families checking out books for themselves and for their children. Most of them did not have library cards before attending these classes.

The following is a synopsis of an event in Everson written by the Teen librarian, Aubri Keleman.

In Mexico Mother's Day is celebrated May 1st. It felt like a day of celebration as Spanish Speaking mothers poured into the Everson library with their children on Monday evening. A class of 7 Spanish speaking mothers has been meeting with Ann at a local school for several weeks to learn basic computer skills. Monday night the class was scheduled to meet at the Everson Library, and they were invited to bring their families. Twenty adults and children attended the open house in all. Eileen gave a tour, Susan and Aubri worked with 4 teens before the event so that they would be ready to help teach new Spanish speaking library users how to check out books and sign on to computers. There was a demo of Mango and Tumblebooks and a couple of dozen tarts and pastries were eaten before the evening was done. Without Ann's connections to Spanish speakers in the community it is questionable whether we would have gotten a turn out for an open house. The Hard Times Grant felt an awful lot like the Good Times Grant on Monday night.

WWU Service Learning

In addition to the underserved populations being reached with this grant, there has also been community connections made that would not have previously existed. The students from the Service Learning program at Western are learning Spanish, but for the most part have not had any contact with the Hispanic community. Now as they are beginning to participate in the Family Literacy Nights there is a new community connection being formed that helps both cultures to understand each other more and to have real cultural exchange take place.

Support and interest of branch managers and staff

Most of the WCLS branches are now planning programs related to the HTG for Fall, 2010. As the second year of LSTA funding begins, a second round of staff meetings will be held with the director and outreach project coordinator to brainstorm community specific issues. There has been a marked renewed interest and awareness of possible programming that will reach the target populations following the staff training and due to the success of first year programs. The branch managers are including outreach work in their branch plans for 2011 and WCLS is brainstorming ways to carry outreach as a theme for the 2011 budget year.

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

- *Solicit WCLS staff representing branch libraries and representatives of partnering agencies to serve as the Project Advisory Committee.*-Branch managers and branch staff as well as a representative from Whatcom Community College met monthly to guide and monitor the steps of this project, serving as the Project Advisory Committee.
- *Develop final job description for Project Coordinator*—Job description is attached to the hard copy evaluation for this project.
- *Complete contract documents* Accomplished as scheduled
- *Post job description for Project Coordinator* —posted in December 2009
- *Hire and provide training for Project Coordinator* Project Coordinator--Applicants interviewed and selected individual began work in mid January 2010.
- *Develop criteria and priorities for web work*—Both the Project Advisory Committee and the Outreach Project Coordinator worked together on this work during March-June.
- *Advertise and contract web work*--As stated, the individual was hired as a temporary employee not a contract employee. The position was posted in April and two candidates were interviewed.
- *Conduct ongoing regular meetings with Project Advisory Committee to monitor activities and evaluate progress*—The Outreach Project Coordinator as well as the System Director and Community Relations Coordinator met with the Committee on a monthly basis. The Web Assistant attended several meeting as well.
- *Develop plan and carry out outreach visits in each community* The Outreach Project Coordinator's work is documented in the outline of programs and classes above.
- *Identify program needs within each community and work with partners to plan programs* One of the most successful areas of this project, with local branch staff and community groups participating.
- *Plan Youth and Teen Services support* Youth and teen services staff attended a number of programs and interacted with families and children as well as conducting special programs as documented in # 3C above.
- *Determine effective communication tools and project marketing plan*-- A variety of tools were used to reach the target audience including newspaper and radio ads, posters, personal contact and announcements at community meetings such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The bonus and benefits of the Washington State Library's Communication Training and Support Program (GMMB) are a separate evaluation and added a higher level of marketing and outreach than anticipated when this objective was written and certainly contributed greatly to the project's success.
- *Schedule and carry out programs at branch libraries*—Accomplished. Because of the diverse nature of Whatcom County, there are more needs within certain communities than others. The focus was on those communities having the greatest number of low income and minority populations: Everson, Lynden, Ferndale and Deming, with all communities having some level of programming and of course all resources including Job Shops.
- *Complete quarterly progress reports and submit reimbursement requests*-Accomplished
- *Carry out marketing plan*—The marketing as indicated above included the GMMB project and continued throughout the project year beginning with the announcement of the grant award.
- *Produce online tool kit as resources are developed*—as stated in the problems section above, the online tool kit is nearly finished and will continue to be maintained and added to as resources are developed throughout the year ahead.
- *Evaluate programs*—accomplished in a variety of ways, including evaluation forms. Individual contacts, and soliciting regular verbal and written feedback.
- 8. *Evaluate project ; Submit all remaining reimbursement claims and final report; close out project*—Accomplished.