



New York State Library Announces 2011-2013 Adult Literacy Library Services Grants October, 2011

44 public libraries, branch libraries and public library systems will offer expanded access to literacy services through the New York State Adult Literacy Library Services program. Deputy Commissioner for the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education and Acting State Librarian, Jeffrey Cannell, announced that nine grants have been awarded to public libraries and public library systems totaling \$156,497 for the first year of the two-year cycle. Projects begin shortly or in some cases have already begun.

"New York State's Adult Literacy Library Services grants to libraries help adult students over age 16 who are not in school take advantage of library resources to continue their education. Many of the projects focus on opportunities to acquire workforce skills," said Mr. Cannell. "Projects are developed to help adults who need to learn basic literacy skills. Projects may focus on improving English language proficiency, computer literacy and job preparation among other basics.

Some examples of library literacy projects include programs to help increase literacy services to adults who read below the sixth-grade level, adults who have learning disabilities, and adults preparing for the general equivalency diploma examination (GED). Libraries will also serve immigrants through English Language Learners programs that teach citizenship preparation as well as English language skills.

For more information about the grant program, see <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/literacy/index.html> or contact Cassandra Artale, Library Development Specialist, New York State Library / Division of Library Development, 518-474-1479 or cartale@mail.nysed.gov.

Following are the public libraries and public library systems that are receiving NYS Adult Literacy Library Services awards for 2011-2013: NOTE that award amounts listed are for 2011-12 only.

Brooklyn Public Library (Kings County) - \$18,266 *English Conversation Groups Expansion Project*

Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) currently conducts weekly classes at 18 BPL locations throughout the borough which are focused on English language conversational skills. This project builds on the library's current offerings by expanding the existing English conversation groups to include locations in 28 library branches. The drop-in format of the classes complements BPL's more formal ESL classes. All conversation is in English so that participants are challenged to gain English language self-sufficiency. The expansion of BPL's *English Conversation Groups* will deepen BPL's existing partnerships with CAMBA (Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, Inc.), Brooklyn College Adult Literacy Program, Literacy Assistance Center, and the Mayor's Office of Adult Education.

Finger Lakes Library System (Tompkins County) – \$18,255 *Computer Literacy in Tioga County: Teaching Skills to Job Seekers and Beyond*

Finger Lakes Library System partners with Literacy Volunteers of Broome/Tioga, Inc., the Apalachin Library and the Waverly Free Library to provide up to 18 classes per year in each library, with the potential to reach up to 432 adults. Activities will focus on basic computer literacy, web searching and resume/cover letter writing for underemployed and unemployed adults in Tioga County.

Greater Poughkeepsie Library (Dutchess County) – \$16,904 *Community Learning Plaza*

The Community Learning Plaza's focus is on helping participants with the job search, resumes, cover letters, interview skills, benefit and tax forms, workers' rights, appropriate work behavior, telephone skills, and basic computer skills. One project goal is to build self-sufficiency among participants and their families. The Community Learning Plaza includes information about health, housing, schools and colleges, library services, and immigration/citizenship. Program outreach will target the Latino community and library staff will build capacity to serve Latinos.

Guernsey Memorial Library (Chenango County) - \$17,878 *MP3 Connections: Motivating Positive Performance and Productivity*

MP3 Connections serves two Chenango County target populations: 1) out-of-school young adults, ages 16-21, whose literacy skills fall below a 6th grade level and 2) out-of-work adults in need of literacy skill improvement who are seeking employment. Participants attend an eight-week session focused on skills needed to: enter educational programs; begin job training; and beginning a job search. Literacy Volunteers of Chenango County, CDO/WIA Workforce Center/WIA Youth GED Program, Afton Adult Education Program and Chenango County Department of Social Services will partner with the library to identify, recruit and enroll participants.

Hempstead Public Library (Nassau County) – \$18,209 *Focus on Citizenship*

Focus on Citizenship helps train library staff in the most current citizenship and ESL resources available as well as new technology to optimize student learning. The core activity of the project is the group citizenship class. The project will coincide with, and implement, the new national citizenship program announced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service.

James Prendergast Free Library (Chautauqua County) - \$13,719 *A Triple for Literacy*

A Triple for Literacy promotes cooperative efforts by Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES, Gateway Center/Gateway Family Literacy Zone, and the Prendergast Library Public Computer Center. Together partners will offer a series of professional skills classes and implement a model

readers program. The project provides free public access to training and materials for vulnerable populations with a focus on literacy, basic life skills, workforce preparation and personal development. Project partners and other local agencies will refer potential clients to the project. Lifelong library use by project participants will be fostered.

The New York Public Library (New York County) – \$18,221 *Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities: Building a Professional Foundation for Successful Interventions*

The NYPL's Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities project implements a two-year staff and tutor training initiative to improve and enhance services provided by the library's adult literacy programs. NYPL's literacy instructors will learn about the issues that cause underdeveloped literacy competence to ensure that appropriate skills are being taught. The project will bring experts in literacy education and learning disabilities treatment together to offer a menu of staff training opportunities.

Patchogue-Medford Library (Suffolk County) - \$18,266 *Working Towards Community*

The Working Towards Community project targets new immigrants in Suffolk County. Collaborative partnerships with Suffolk County Community College, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York State Department of Labor's One-Stop Employment Center in Patchogue and the Incorporated Village of Patchogue will improve workforce preparation. Programs such as work-specific ESL classes, resume preparation and job interview skills workshops are planned. The library will also offer free naturalization application assistance with the help of accredited immigration attorneys. One expected outcome is increased participation in the workforce and local government process by new immigrants.

Queens Borough Public Library (Queens County) – \$16,779 *Professional Development Series -- Training for Adult Education Professionals and Volunteers*

Queens Library's "Professional Development Workshop Series" for adult literacy professionals and volunteers will provide participants with tools and resources to assist adult learners. Access to information, lesson content and leveraging resources will be among the topics covered. Workshops will also address areas such as needs assessment, strategic planning, and incorporation of new technology into library programs and adult literacy programs for people who have a disability.