Appendix C: Local Library Case Studies

Digital literacy is a community issue, and as the resource center of many communities, libraries are challenged to provide valuable digital literacy and information technology services in an increasingly complex field. Three public libraries in each project partner state were chosen for a digital literacy case study.

Illinois

- Carbondale Public Library
- Chicago Public Library
- Naperville Public Library

Mississippi

- Columbus-Lowndes Public Library
- Jackson-George Regional Library System
- Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System

West Virginia

- Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library
- Mary H. Weir Public Library
- Raleigh County Library

Together, they highlight different approaches to addressing community needs, and surface various challenges to expanding local library services. The case studies in this appendix capture the following information: quick facts about the library, community needs assessment, digital literacy at work, making it happen, librarian insights, and a look to the future.

Illinois: Carbondale Public Library

Staff Size: 10 full-time and 10 part-time

Community Size: 25,597

Desktops: 4 online catalog, 9 for public Internet, 2 non-Internet

Laptops: 10 in lab and 3 for check out

Personal Devices: In library: 3 laptops, 3 eReaders, and 4 iPads for Project Next Generation Program

For Check Out: 12 Kindles

Training Labs: 10 laptops

Training Topics: Open Help Model: There are scheduled blocks of time when patrons can go to the library to ask technology related questions and receive assistance with learning new skills; workshops on various technology topics for adults and youth

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Training Offerings, Technology Capabilities and Training Facilities

Location: Carbondale, Illinois

Number of Buildings: 1

Summary

Making recent technologies accessible to students who have limited access to technology, the Project Next Generation (PNG) program has been a great fit for Carbondale Public Library. They are leveraging this program to increase their technology training capacity for the often overlooked 5th–8th grade demographic.

Community Needs Assessment

Prior to starting the PNG program in 2004, the Carbondale community didn't have any technology programs tailored specifically to 5th–8th graders. The library recognized this as a need and applied for a grant made available to libraries in Illinois by the state library and funded by the Secretary of State of Illinois.

More about Project Next Generation

Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian, is widely regarded for his committment to improving the lives of youth in Illinois. In order to continue these efforts, Secretary White implemented a revolutionary new mentoring program in various public libraries in Illinois. This program, known as Next Generation, was initiated in 2000 to encourage students to become technology-savvy by providing hands-on experience with the latest technology tools. The goal of Next Generation is to bridge the digital divide by making recent technologies accessible to students who have limited access to computers. This program has been extremely successful and continutes to move into new areas of the state each year.

The Carbondale Public Library Director comments, "This program is at the top of our list because it is a successful ongoing program. It has been very well attended. Kids come back to participate again and again while they're in the middle school age range, and then their younger siblings come of age and participate as well. That tells me that the kids are getting something out of the program. The kids are happy with it and so are their parents. PNG is a fun way to supplement education, and to provide a social learning opportunity."

> **"PNG is a fun way to supplement education, and to provide a social learning opportunity."**

Digital Literacy at Work

Imagine a room filled with fifteen 5th–8th graders, all focused on building a webpage or learning about to use the freeware version of Photoshop. This happens twice a week for an hour and half at the Carbondale Public Library. Young people are learning digital literacy skills and making social connections they often do not get through their school classroom.

The first 30 minutes of each session are dedicated to socializing and having free time on the computers. Many of the program participants come from different schools in the area and from different social settings. Their common bond is that they are

interested in learning more about technology in a safe place. The rest of the session is spent focused on learning a specific technology related skill. Program skill-building topics range from Internet safety to web page development to online research skills.

One common theme for all sessions is that participants are challenged to figure out what they would do if they needed to learn the skill on their own. This encourages an ongoing learning process outside of the program. Participants gain self-esteem with Internet-enabled technologies and the courage to try new technology skills.

Program Details:

- Three 8-week sessions per year (Spring, Fall, and Summer)

- 15–30 students per session

Hardware: 10 laptops, 4 iPads, 2 Powershot cameras, Smartboard, Wii, Xbox Kinect (coming soon) extremely successful and continues to move into new areas of the state each year.

> **"Participants gain self-esteem with Internet-enabled technologies and the courage to try new technology skills."**

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—The library depends on grant funds to offer the Project Next Generation program. Grant funding is made available through the Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White. While amounts vary for each grant cycle since 2004, the library currently has a $32,000 grant to spend over 3 years. These funds support part of the program coordinator's salary, and hardware, software and supplies.

Human Resources—The library has a dedicated program coordinator who spends 10-12 hours per week on program-related activities. She is responsible for developing curriculum, and scheduling and delivering the bi-weekly sessions.

Partnerships—The library participates in an active statewide community of other PNG grantees. The group has a listserv for sharing ideas and annual regional meetings. This grantee community has been invaluable for sharing curriculum ideas along with general planning challenges and successes.

Space Planning—The Carbondale Public Library does not have a dedicated computer lab. With a recent reconfiguration, they ensured that both meeting rooms and public meeting spaces were wired for electricity so that large groups can easily gather and power up technology almost anywhere in the library.

Librarian Insights

The current program coordinator at Carbondale Public Library has been administering Project Next Generation for over six years.

She shares the following advice for any library considering a similar program:

1. Hardware/Software Maintenance—Be sure to allocate part of your budget for hardware upgrades and software updates. These often overlooked expenses are critical when trying to deliver regular programming. The library also installed Smartshield software to wipe the computers after each session to avoid viruses and other problems.

2. Flexibility—Know your audience and continuously gauge their interest. You will likely have to adapt your lesson to capture and maintain participant interest. Don't force a topic that the participants are not interested in learning.

3. Fun!—Make the learning environment fun for participants. Allow time to socialize.

4. Snacks—Always provide snacks for participants, especially if sessions are scheduled right after school.

Looking To The Future

There will always be room for growth with the PNG program at Carbondale Public Library. The library would like to offer bigger projects that involve making movies or animation. They're also interested in having a makerspace. These offerings typically require costly hardware and the creation of a green room or studio. Transportation is the other need for the PNG program. Having access to a van or bus would allow participants to go on field trips related to the session topics. from turning on the computer to using the Internet safely, to sending email and using productivity software.

Illinois: Chicago Public Library

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Number of Buildings: 76 Neighborhood Libraries + Central Library + 2 Regional Libraries (North and South end of City)

Staff Size: 1,000 total dedicated to service. (Support services such as custodial, security, and building maintenance are managed by the City of Chicago)

Community Size: 2,896,016

Desktops: 2,500 public access computers

Laptops: 350

Training Labs: 2 with 16 computers each. One is dedicated and one is also used for public access computing.

Mobile Devices: Laptop lending program at all locations for using laptop within library walls; there is also device lending within programs such as YouMedia for gaming, recording music, etc.

Maker Lab: Computers, 3D printers, laser cutter advanced 3D modeling and production software

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Trainers and Coaches, Partnerships

Summary

Chicago Public Library (CPL) had a very strategic approach to operationalizing projects and creating partnerships. This has led to clear decision-making processes and increased capacity on relevant projects. They've also integrated their grant funded CyberNavigator program as a standard part of how they support the digital literacy efforts in their community.

Community Needs Assessment

Chicago Public Library has direct access to community digital literacy needs from their 45 CyberNavigators (CN) that are in the field every day, listening to and addressing the digital literacy needs of patrons. The manager of the CNs compiles field reports to look for trends and develop programs accordingly.

Digital Literacy at Work

Setting Strategic Priorities

Chicago Public Library began offering public computing services almost 20 years ago with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that supported free and open access to the Internet. The library applies a strategic framework to how they address technology needs in their library system. Programs and projects fit into three broadly defined categories: incremental, expansion, and emerging.

1. **Incremental** improvements are funded out of the general budget, which is provided for by City dollars. Examples of incremental improvements include increasing bandwidth or the number of computers, or implementing a laptop lending program. The library believes that if something is relevant to core business, then they need to figure out how to include it in the operating budget.

2. An example of **Expanding** on an existing initiative is providing a different type of technology, such as moving from PCs to Mac computers. Depending on how new the initiative is, funding for such projects will typically come from a combination of private and/or public dollars. Another example is the use of public dollars augmented by private dollars to send staff to a conference to augment learning or private dollars to engage in train-the-trainer opportunities.

3. Chicago Public Library dedicates new private funding to game-changing ideas and **Emerging Technology** projects that are future focused. The projects typically come with a bigger risk, but also potential for great innovation. Private grants afford the library opportunities to experiment and learn about what may make sense to operationalize in the future. An example of this is the YOUmedia program. Though it was originally grant funded, it has been so successful as a youth-focused program, that many parts of it will become operationalized. In the interest of long-term sustainability, CPL is now reflecting on parts of the program that can be managed internally by CPL teen librarians rather than outside experts.

CyberNavigators

Through technology training and mentoring, one-on-one assistance and public classes, CyberNavigators work with library patrons to teach computer basics, resume writing, word processing and Internet searching. This enables patrons to access employment opportunities, health and education benefits, and other vital resources.

Started in 1998, and significantly expanded in 2008, this program is funded by The Chicago Public Library Foundation. The Foundation supports collection development, programs and technology initiatives that connect library users to their community and to the world and ensure that all Chicagoans have the freedom to read, to learn and to discover at the Chicago Public Library.

Staffing

- 45 part-time foundation staff work 20 hours per week, dedicated to 45 of CPL's 76 branches.
- One person is dedicated to overseeing this program from the Chicago Public Library Foundation. This individual analyzes the CyberNavigator field reports to identify trends in community needs. Once a CyberNavigator is assigned to a branch, s/he is supervised directly by the Foundation representative.

Partnerships

Commissioner of Chicago Public Library, Brian Bannon, views partnerships as a lever that an organization pulls to accomplish a defined goal. "They are important and are often complex. Partnerships are tools for getting things done, experimenting, or deploying service, not the end product."

Chicago Public Library currently has four categories of partnerships:

Internal/Thought Partner—A good way to solve problems is to create small groups inside your organization. These groups can help to think through and explore problems and eventually come up with recommendations.

External Expertise—When you have a new question to answer you may need to look externally for an expert in the field. An example of this was when CPL looked to the STEM program at Northwestern University to help them with building capacity in the library's youth STEM programming. The Northwestern researchers focus on how teens learn, STEM subjects, and out of school learning. This group was perfect for what the library needed because the library had a very specific need that the group could address.

Building Reach—Partnering with an organization that has an existing community and programming is very helpful when you are working to build your reach. In this scenario you are partnering to scale your program, not test something new. For example, CPL partnered with the Museum of Science and Industry for their Summer Learning Challenge to reach more people and to inject their program with specialized programming.

Crowdsourcing—A fourth, non-traditional type of partnership is one with your full community. When you have a problem to solve that requires input from many people, you can turn to crowdsourcing. A current example of this is the New York Library Menu Project—transcribing historical restaurant menus, dish by dish, so that they can be searched by what people were eating back in the day (http://menus.nypl.org/).

> "They are important and are often complex. Partnerships are tools for getting things done, experimenting, or deploying service, not the end product."

Chicago Public Library is developing a model and common vocabulary for defining library partnerships through a grant-funded project. The current thinking is that the desired outcome will influence who you will partner with, the expertise you need, how you structure the partnership, and how long you work together. This is as important as identifying specific partners. CPL is creating a model that guides you through a proactive process of identifying a problem and finding the appropriate partner(s) for scale, experimentation, or capacity.

Librarian Insights

1. Be clear about who you are. Know your mission. Have clarity about purpose. You should continue to think about why libraries exist and what has changed about how we deliver services over time.

2. Understand your core customer and what they value and need. From there you can start translating that value and need into services.

3. Strike a balance between scaling what works and maintaining a space in the organization for experimentation.

Illinois: Naperville Public Library

Community Size: 144,560

Desktops: 281

Laptops: 40

Personal Devices: In library—12 Nook Simple Touch Readers, 3 Kindles, 4 Kindle Fires, 4 Sony Readers, 4 Sony PRST1 Readers, 5 iPod Nanos, 8 iPads

For Check Out: 60 Nook Simple Touches—preloaded by genre, 6 preloaded Nook Tablets

*Preloading devices has been a workaround for the library since they can purchase titles that are available for purchase that are not available for use in the eLending environment.

Training Labs: 23 desktops at 95th Street location, 21 training laptops at Nichols location

Training Topics: Microsoft productivity software (basic, intermediate, advanced), iPad basics and new features, eBooks workshop, financial literacy classes (FAFSA, managing investments), business workshops (startup, planning, marketing), job search workshops

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Trainers and Coaches, Training Offerings

Location: Naperville, Illinois

Number of Buildings: 3

Staff Size: 76 full-time, 205 part-time (189 FTE)

Summary

When Naperville Public Library suffered severe budget cuts between 2009 and 2012, they had to get creative with how to continue to offer digital literacy services to their community. The library developed new ways of providing individual support to their patrons beyond the standard training classroom and created consecutive in-depth training sessions for specific learners.

Community Needs Assessment

Naperville Public Library lost $2.25 million in property tax support between 2009 and 2012. The library was forced to cut their technology training programs. As a result, the community was eager to provide input about getting the classes back and about the types of classes they would like to see offered at the library. Some of the requests were for classes the library hadn't previously offered. To track the request data, an internal mechanism was put in place, that included simple hash marks to record each time a person requested a type of training. This transformed into a sheet with specific course listings and correlating numbers of requests.

Once the library identified existing staff to do trainings, they were able to provide surveys at the end of each class asking participants what other classes they would like the library to offer.

A key finding in all of their assessment methods was that the library had to rethink HOW they were offering their classes. They had to offer more levels for each topic, and provide one-on-one support for specific needs such as creating pivot tables and using Microsoft Access beyond an introductory level. A secondary finding was that there was a segment of their community that could benefit from a whole course on digital literacy, starting with turning on a computer, to using the Internet safely and sending email and using productivity software.

Digital Literacy at Work

The library made three significant changes to how they offered technology training.

Advanced Levels—Multiple levels for Microsoft training was straightforward and addressed the community's desire for more advanced trainings.

One-on-One Help—Relying on their robust IT team to answer the call, the library started offering a service for patrons to schedule one hour sessions of one-on-one time with an IT professional. Patrons can schedule a session covering basic computing

skills or something specific like creating a database in Access. These sessions cost $10 for library card holders and $20 for non-card holders. The library charges the fee because it encourages people to show up for their scheduled time. The limited revenue is allocated to Library Fines and Fees and is not earmarked for any specific purpose. The sessions are very popular and tend to fill up quickly, with less demand during the summer months and December.

Adult Computer Camp—Offered twice a year, this camp is two hours per day for 4 consecutive days. It is designed to provide adults who are new to the technology environment with the whole picture. The skills build from one class to the next so that by the end of the camp the participants have a holistic understanding of how to navigate the digital universe. One participant took the camp with her husband and was thrilled to see him feel comfortable using the computer after several years of frustrated attempts. Another woman was very excited by the camp and said it was "just what she needed", as her grandchildren didn't have the patience to teach her! Several participants were excited to learn how to use email to stay in touch with relatives near and far, and lots of people appreciated the information on how to use the Internet safely while shopping and using email.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—Naperville Public Library found the best financial approach for bringing training back to their library was the reallocation of their budget. When the PC replacement line item came in under budget, the additional dollars were used to purchase eBooks. In 2008, they qualified for a $77,848 Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Smart Investing Grant. This grant went to improving financial literacy in the community by creating online video tutorials on the use of financial databases, improving the accessibility of investing research tools on the library's Web site, training adult services librarians in investment research strategies and providing high school and college students with money management skills in preparation for financial independence.

Human Resources—The talent required to deliver the digital literacy services to the community already existed in the library. The team that worked in the lab to support consultants teaching classes before the budget cuts were prepared to lead classes and to provide one-on-one support. There is a unique team at the library called the "Overdrive Bunch" and they manage all of the programs related to eBooks and eReaders. They've also helped to train staff so they are confident in helping patrons with their questions about these devices.

Partnerships—The library director identified three types of partnerships Naperville has found successful in their community:

Partnership for Outreach—When the library partnered with a local school district to share the cost of purchasing databases, both groups were able to increase the number of online resources. The databases cover a large scope of subjects; social studies, history, geography, science, animals and the encyclopedia. The library also partners with retirement centers to provide training on how to use preloaded eReaders to the community.

The library has developed a unique partnership with the City of Naperville. They have embedded librarians known as "Liaisons" assigned to each city department. Their role is to get to know the staff of the department and understand the needs and concerns of that department. In turn, the city departments have a single point of contact for training needs. A prime example of how the library has been able to meet the needs of the City include the Procurement Department receiving in-depth training on using four databases. Additionally, the Finance and Procurement departments have used the library's web conferencing equipment on many occasions to facilitate web conferences with several of their vendors. The library's IT staff assisted the departments in learning how to operate the equipment and how to make and maintain the web connections.

In an odd twist of fate, the City had a sustained network interruption in Fall 2012 that essentially cut them off from an outside Internet connection for several months. The library set up a satellite workspace for them at their Nichols location, which is close to the Municipal Center. This workspace was equipped with eight laptops, fax machine, dedicated phone line, access to a copy center, and color printing for the duration of the outage. The Liaisons were a tremendous communication resource between the library and the City during this period.

Partnership for Expertise—The library partnered with the community career center to have the center provide workshops on job searching skills. In return, the library goes to the career center to offer training on library resources.

> **"Adapt—You may not do everything right the first time, but that doesn't mean the goal isn't worth pursuing. Learn from mistakes. In this quickly changing world of digital literacy we are all in uncharted territory. Tweak it. Re-examine it. And avoid analysis paralysis!"**

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Another example is a partnership with the Naperville Historical Society (Naper Settlement). In 2007 the Society secured a $8,997 grant from the Illinois State Library, a division of the Secretary of State's office, to create the Naperville Heritage Collection. In 2008, the library secured a complementary $11,000 grant from the City of Naperville. The library partnered with Naper Settlement and NCTV17 on both projects. The Naperville Heritage Collection contains primary source material about Naperville's history that is stored on Illinois State Library servers and part of the Illinois Digital Archives.

Commercial Partnership—The library partners with Best Buy, Verizon, and Barnes and Noble to have them bring in equipment and respond to questions from patrons about devices. The only requirement is that there is no hard sell. The benefit to the companies is that they get free advertising. In this scenario, the library believes that as long as there is value for the community, the partnership is beneficial.

Space Planning—The training lab has been completely reconfigured so that all computers are facing the same direction rather than having computer carols. This allows for more space for people to work together on projects.

The library has also created spaces for "digital petting zoos". In these spaces, it is important for people to have room to move from device to device comfortably.

Librarian Insights

Library Director John Spears[1] and his team identified several areas of focus for digital literacy success.

1. Flexibility—It was only through flexibility that the library was able to bring training back to the community. If they had been rigid and insisted on doing things the way they had always been done, their current programs may never have been brought to the community.

2. Adapt—You may not do everything right the first time but that doesn't mean the goal isn't worth pursuing. Learn from mistakes. In this quickly changing world of digital literacy we are all in uncharted territory. Tweak it. Re-examine it. And avoid analysis paralysis!

3. Let Go—Just because an internal practice or procedure exists doesn't mean it makes sense. In this case, the library had to redo their staff scheduling to make training possible. Barriers to success were not technology-related.

4. Plan for things that you can't do yet; be ready for unexpected opportunities. If a grant opportunity or other funding comes your way, have ideas on hand for ways to improve what you are already doing.

Looking To The Future

Taking their own advice, the Naperville Public Library has pursued a partnership with the local children's museum that already offers STEM and Maker Space programming. They are seeking funds to bring these programs to the library. From an operational perspective, the library would like to be able to offer more one-on-one sessions and remodel the library space to be more usable for digital literacy services.

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1 Mr. Spears has since moved on to become the director of a different library.

Mississippi: Columbus-Lowndes Public Library

Location: Columbus, Mississippi

Number of Buildings: 4

Staff Size: 16 total

Community Size: 59,658

Desktops: 41

Laptops: 14

Training Labs: Mobile lab with 14 laptops

Training Topics: Computer Basics, Basic Internet (accurate searching), Basic Email, Resume Building and Job Searching

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Technology Capabilities and Training Facilities, Trainers and Coaches

Summary

Careful planning combined with harnessing content opportunities resulted in the successful deployment of a mobile training lab and relevant technology training for this Mississippi community.

Community Needs Assessment

Word of mouth is the most powerful form of feedback for Columbus-Lowndes Public Library. If a staff person gets feedback or suggestions from conversations with patrons, they pick up the phone to let someone on the training team know, drop a note in one of their mailboxes, or send them an email.

Word of mouth was how the library learned that their patrons were interested in computer classes! Patrons knew there was training happening in other libraries and they asked about getting similar training at their library.

The library has also employed formal methods for garnering feedback. From the beginning, the training team provided evaluation forms at the end of each training session. One of the questions asked is what other classes the participants would like to see.

In addition, library staff also reflect on what's happening in the community and assess what they can do to help. In light of the recession, there is a lot of joblessness which has created a need for workforce training.

Digital Literacy at Work

Careful planning was at the heart of the library's approach to meeting the needs of their community. Rather than jumping in feet first, they took two imperative steps:

1. Borrowed a mobile training lab from the Mississippi Library Commission. This gave them the ability to better assess the training needs of their community, as well as participation levels, without making a big up-front financial investment.

2. Trained staff on how to deliver technology training. Through a skills development grant from the Mississippi Library Commission made possible with LSTA funding, they hired a consultant to provide train-the-trainer classes that covered how to teach basic computer and Internet usage.

These two steps proved to be valuable in shaping and growing the program. The library borrowed the lab for 3 three-month periods and obtained feedback from all training class participants. They started with offering basic computer classes that brought in about 75 participants for the first three-month period. Based on participant feedback, they added basic Internet training and grew to about 135 participants in the final pilot three-month period. Possibly the greatest outcome of this approach was a $20,000 LSTA-funded grant to purchase their own mobile laptop lab with 14 laptops. The library made the case for this grant based on their direct experience and training participant demand.

As the need for workforce development support was identified, one of the library staff applied for and received a scholarship to attend the national Project Compass training held in April 2012. This training program was led by WebJunction and the State

Library of North Carolina and was funded by IMLS to support public libraries' efforts to meet the urgent and growing needs of communities impacted by the economic downturn. The Columbus-Lowndes Public Library started offering resume building and job searching classes based on the lessons and resources from Project Compass.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—The library's budget has been stagnant since 2008. Leveraging the Mississippi Library Commission's training equipment was a 'no cost' way for the library to build the case for its own mobile training lab. The library then successfully applied for a $20,000 LSTA-funded grant to fund the equipment purchase.

Human Resources—A group of five library staff participated in a skills development program made possible by a grant from LSTA. Through a train-the-trainer model, these library staff then conducted similar training for all staff in the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library. This model of learning and teaching one another has worked well for the library. While there is not a dedicated technology trainer, all library staff have responsibility for scheduling training classes, delivering training, and setting up and breaking down the mobile lab.

Space Planning—Having a mobile lab allows the library to use existing space to conduct training. They use their all-purpose meeting room that seats up to 75 people for their training sessions. This means they have to set up and break down the laptop stations before and after each class.

Librarian Insights

Library Director Erin Stringer has some great nuggets of advice if you are considering a mobile lab for your library.

- Borrow a training lab to assess the training needs in your community, in terms of class topics and level of demand.

- Find a way to get to know the digital literacy needs in your community. Some topics may not be identified through formal assessments. Spending time in the community and being thoughtful about how you address community needs with digital literacy programming is important.

- Train-the-trainer programs are a great model for learning how to offer a specific training class to your community in a professional way. And you can replicate this model within your library so you can grow your training team.

> **"Spending time in the community and being thoughtful about how you address community needs with digital literacy programming is important."**

Looking To The Future

The Columbus-Lowndes Public Library would like to expand its training offerings to meet additional community needs. To help address the high dropout rate at the local high school, the library would like to offer GED classes. Their patrons are also interested in additional training topics such as how to use an eReader and tax preparation. The library needs to find training resources for these topics, as well as preparing staff or partnering with local organizations to deliver training.

Mississippi: Jackson-George Regional Library System

Location: Pascagoula, Mississippi

Number of Buildings: 8

Staff Size: 83

Community Size: 155,600

Desktops: 146

Laptops: 7

Training Labs: 2 with 16 computers each; one is dedicated and one is also used for public access computing

Training Topics:
www.jgrls.org/computerclass.htm

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Trainers and Coaches, and Training Facilities

Summary

The Jackson-George Regional Library System (JGRLS) training program illustrates the value in having a professional technology trainer on staff enables them to clearly understand community technology training needs, and address these needs by levergaging in-house staff in conjunction with a state-funded technology training partnership, they have also been creative with their space in order to provide training without having a dedicated training lab in every building.

Community Needs Assessment

As a formal method of needs assessment, JGRLS distributes an evaluation form after each training session. Participants use this form to give input on classes they would like the library to offer. Two classes that have been added to the curriculum as a result of this evaluation are Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint.

Front line public service staff are also a great resource. Because they are responsible for assisting patrons with technology questions on public access computers, they are keenly aware of patron needs. Front line staff have reported that patrons have requested help with iPads and a variety of e-readers. As a result, the library has held classes specifically on these topics to meet the demand. The professional technology trainer has also provided individual training on these topics on occasion.

Through both formal and informal methods, information from staff is regularly shared with the technology trainer. When a patron requests something from a front line staff member, they email the trainer immediately to let her know about the request. The branch manager in each location often sends the trainer an email about requests as well. The trainer also solicits feedback from staff members when visiting the branches.

Another key asset when assessing community needs is having a professional trainer who visits the branches more than any other administrative member, other than their daily delivery driver! She has the opportunity to observe patrons and patron-staff interactions daily and can identify needs first hand. Library Director Carol Hewlett commented, "I think this gives us better information than any survey could!"

Digital Literacy at Work

To address the technology training needs of their community, JGRLS offers training classes ranging from introductory level word processing classes, to social media classes such as Twitter and Pinterest, to iPad demonstration classes. With this range of content, JGRLS addresses a myriad of training needs for users of varying abilities. One quantifiable benefit is that these classes often bring in patrons who have not previously been library users. Since they advertise on local radio, TV and in newspapers, as well as in the library branches and on the website, they reach a broad audience.

The library training team fills a critical need in their community. When a local job center did not have a trainer for several months, JGRLS stepped up to the plate to assist job-seekers. The library trainer developed a class on how to search for online job postings,

fill out online applications, the basics of cover letters and resumes, and email tips such as opening a free account and attaching a document.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—When JGRLS received a public access computing grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 1998, one of the requirements was to have a technology trainer for the first year. This kickstarted their focus on training and they've never looked back. It is now a core part of their services, and the technology training position is a line item in their budget. When the library was faced with the prospect of having to cut back and offer training in only 2 of their 8 branches, they leveraged their e-BEAT (Extension Broadband Education and Adoption Team) Partnership (see Partnerships), which made it possible to offer trainings in all 8 branches.

Human Resources—The foundation of the JGRLS training program is having a professional technology trainer on staff. This person is responsible for developing, scheduling and delivering technology training sessions. She is also the point person responsible for training partnerships such as the e-BEAT partnership highlighted in the Partnership section.

Partnerships—JGRLS points to their e-BEAT partnership as a successful relationship for building capacity in delivering technology training to their community. e-BEAT was created as part of a grant from the Mississippi Governor's office to help Mississippians use broadband and information technology to further community and economic development opportunities. Funding was made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and is managed through the Mississippi State Extension Service. This relationship provides a trainer to the library on various technology topics.

Having this resource has expanded the variety of training options and the availability of workshops at their sites. Examples of training topics beyond the core, traditional offerings include Facebook, Facebook for churches, Twitter, Intro to iPad, Pinterest and Google 101, which trains patrons to use Google tools other than searching.

The library's technology trainer partners closely with the e-BEAT trainer to ensure that the integration of training topics and scheduling is seamless. It is so seamless that the community sees the e-BEAT workshops as just another workshop that the library offers, rather than something separate or different.

Space Planning—Being creative with their space has allowed JGRLS to provide more training. For example, when there are fewer people in the library, they use public access computers for training classes.

Librarian Insights

Library Director, Carol Hewlett, identified several areas of focus for digital literacy success.

1. Library Staff Digital Literacy—She strongly recommends that you train staff first on new technologies and get them comfortable with potential questions from patrons. Because it is impossible for staff to know all the answers, it is important to provide them with information on where to find answers, or how to refer questions to someone else.

2. Patron Training Solutions and Tips:

- Be creative with your training space. Don't be afraid to use public access computers for training classes. Offer these classes when there are fewer people in the library than normal.

- Always call and remind those signed up for classes of the date and time the day before the class.

- Be open to walk-ins the day of the class if space is available.

- Provide evaluation forms at each training session and ensure that forms are reviewed by administrative staff.

- Train and review your trainers. If you don't have a professional trainer this is even more important, so that you know that the standard for training is maintained. Not all tech savvy folks make good trainers, and not everyone good at public service is also good at training.

> **"Be creative with your training space. Don't be afraid to use Public Access Computers for training classes. Offer these classes when there are fewer people in the library than normal."**

Looking To The Future

The two services that JGRLS would love to expand would be their professional training staff and their web presence.

Another full-time trainer would provide the capacity for one trainer to focus on staff training and the other on public training.

Keeping the community informed and engaged would be much easier with a team member dedicated to keeping the website and social media sites full of fresh content.

Both of these needs could be met with appropriate long-term funding.

Mississippi: Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System

Location: Waynesboro, Mississippi

Number of Buildings: 1

Staff Size: 4 full-time, 7 part-time

Community Size: 20,654

Desktops: 16

Personal Devices: iPad and Kindle Fire to train staff on how to use eBooks

Training Labs: 10 HP TouchSmart Machines and Hearing Impaired machine with webcam for communicating with sign language; 6 Gateway computers in the Reference Section

Training Topics: www.wwcls.lib.ms.us/services/technical-services/

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Technology Capabilities and Training Facilities, Trainers and Coaches

Summary

Through a state-funded program, Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System is providing their community with an online job search experience that is not available elsewhere in their county. To support the specific needs of job searchers, the library staff employs a one-on-one model to help patrons.

Community Needs Assessment

Informal requests from patrons have led to focused programs at Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System. Aside from offering two levels of basic computing classes, Facebook, Pinterest and Internet classes, the library recognized that the community would benefit from robust job search resources. Understanding this need is what led to the library seeking designation as an E-WIN (Workforce Investment Network) Job Center Access Point.

Digital Literacy at Work

While paging through the morning paper, the library director for Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System learned about a library with an E-WIN Job Center Access Point. She contacted the Mississippi Department of Employment Security to schedule an evaluation of her library that included hardware, software, and library size. The library was then officially designated an E-WIN Job Center Access Point, serving as an alternative and convenient site for job-searchers to perform a job search and the unemployed to report their job-hunting activities. Local business owners can also post job openings in Wayne County from the library's customized E-WIN web page.

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security provided a two-hour training for the entire library staff on the services available through their agency, and how to navigate their electronic resources. They also configured all of the computers in the library with the E-WIN icon so users can quickly get to the resources they need. By clicking on this icon, users can link to the state's employment webpage, search for jobs by zip code, find information about building resumes, and tips on how to dress for an interview. In Mississippi, unemployment verification can no longer be done by telephone, it must be done online. If an individual is receiving unemployment, the library will fax verification to the state for the job seeker.

When patrons who use the E-WIN portal have questions, the library staff provides one-on-one support. This is because the requests are very specific to the job searcher and often involve confidential information. As a result of having this resource in the library, there are plans to start offering resume writing workshops, including how to attach an electronic resume to an email.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—E-rate has been critical in bringing high speed Internet access to the library. The library currently has two T-1 lines at a cost of $1,458/month with E-rate covering 90% of this cost. State library grants funded some hardware and minor capital improvements that created a better environment for computer access.

Human Resources—Library staff attend as many workshops for professional development as possible. One person is dedicated to providing the trainings in the computer lab, and the entire staff has received training on the E-WIN resources.

Partnerships—The Mississippi Department of Employment Security has been a strong partner for bringing employment resources to the library. They have provided training, posters, and other outreach materials to the library. Patsy Brewer, the Library Director, has spoken at conferences around the state promoting this service in libraries. Many libraries were not aware that they could become an E-WIN center.

Two other meaningful partnerships are with county organizations. As the third oldest county in Mississippi, Wayne County receives a number of requests for genealogy information from around the country. Currently the library has the Wayne County News from 1902– 1998 on microfilm. In a partnership with the Wayne County Genealogy Organization, the library received a private donation to digitize their microfilm and other resources that are not currently indexed.

In a social media marketing effort, the library partners with the Wayne County Extension Service to cross promote one another's services and events on Facebook.

Space Planning—Moving into a former Wal-Mart building in 2003 made it possible for the library to innovate the services they offer. They are using 17,000 square feet of a 36,000 square foot building. They have been able to put in a computer lab, fireplace, gift shop, bookstore, and Internet wireless café. Through a grant from the Mississippi Department of Transportation, the library is in the process of building out the remaining space as a museum.

Librarian Insights

Library Director, Patsy Brewer, offers several tips for general training and job center training.

1. Remember the Basics and Ask Questions—Always remember that you are starting from the beginning when teaching computer basics. Don't assume that your learners know anything about computers. Also ask a lot of questions up front to assess what the learners know. Simply asking if they have a Facebook account or an email address will tell you a lot about their experience.

2. Job Center Coaching and Support

- Your staff needs to know how to navigate job center resources with proficiency to provide support.

- There is often a lot of confidential information involved with job searches and filing for unemployment. Encourage job seekers with low computer skills to bring a friend to help them with typing and using a mouse.

- Allow additional time when possible for job seekers. They may need it for resume building and online job applications.

> **"There is often a lot of confidential information involved with job searches and filing for unemployment. Encourage job seekers with low computer skills to bring a friend to help them with typing and using a mouse."**

Looking To The Future

Raising the library's visibility through advertising, publicity and social media is an area Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System would like to improve in the future. The library would also like to offer more technology training classes on a wider variety of topics. In terms of space, they would like to have a designated job center area with dedicated computers and resources for job searching.

West Virginia: Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library

Location: Martinsburg, West Virginia

Number of Buildings: 4

Staff Size: 28 full-time, 18 part-time

Community Size: 104,169

Desktops: 65

Laptops: 20

Personal Devices: 9 Kindles and iPads

Training Labs: 24 desktops at main library; laptops are used for training in branches

Training Topics: Self-paced learning software from LearningExpress and Universal Class on a variety of topics from basic computing to Microsoft Productivity Suite; examples include: Mouse Tutorial, Computer Skills, File management, Exploring the Web, Email basics, Basic/Intermediate Word Processing, Basic/Intermediate Spreadsheets, Basic/Intermediate Presentations

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Training Offerings

Summary

With a belief that learners have individual needs and often learn at a different pace, Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library offers a self-paced technology training model. This model is supported by technology helpers in the computer lab.

Community Needs Assessment

This library system offers instructor-led technology training with their mobile laptop lab at their branches, and they used to offer instructor-led training at their main library. For all of these classes evaluation forms are provided. Along with these forms, the library relies on word of mouth and staff observation.

The key findings through all three methods of needs assessment have been that the learners are most interested in basic computing skills and connecting the dots between what they are learning and how this knowledge will help them either get a job or get a better job. Library staff have also observed a need for an Internet safety training to help their patrons use better discretion when they are online.

Digital Literacy at Work

With the community needs assessment information in mind, the library has moved to a self-paced technology training model at the main library where most of the training takes place. The branches still have instructor-led training from time to time. To implement this model, the library purchased two Tech Media software subscriptions for use in the computer lab as well as Universal Class for use in the library or remotely with a library card. Additionally, the library promotes LearningExpress to their patrons, which is offered statewide by the West Virginia Library Commission for use anytime, anywhere, with a library card.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—When Pam Coyle started as library director 11 years ago, she started talking about technology. Her library was the first in West Virginia to have eBooks available to patrons. All departments have made a move towards technology using annual operating funds. The library has allocated $100,000 of their $300,000 materials budget to electronic resources, such as eBooks, downloadable audio books, and electronic databases. While LearningExpress is made available at no cost through the West Virginia Library Commission, the library elected to build out a more robust self-paced learning program by purchasing two other online learning catalogs: Tech Media and Universal Class.

Human Resources—The library director has found that the best staffing model for self-paced training is having a tech-savvy IT team. The head of the team has extensive experience in computer science. He has a team of 3 associates that provide support in

the training lab at the main library. Each of the branch libraries also has a tech-savvy person on staff that can deliver in-person training.

Partnerships—Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library has successfully built partnerships that are mutually beneficial and create value for the community.

One example is a workforce development project funded by a grant from the West Virginia Library Commission and Workforce West Virginia that funded four workforce computers dedicated to job searching. They are configured to mirror a computer someone would find at the unemployment office with links to job sites and resume builder software. The library fully supports the community in its use of these workforce computers. A staff person prints out job listings once a week and posts important job application information near the computers so patrons can quickly scan for jobs they are interested in and easily apply online. The staff also provides one-on-one help with resume writing as requested by patrons.

In another partnership, Blue Ridge Community and Technical College (BRCTC) donated 10 laptops to the library for their students to use for research, paper writing, and test taking. As a result, BRCTC doesn't have to maintain a physical library for their students and the library has greater traffic. Because the students are typically non-traditional students, they also bring their children to the library to take advantage of the children's programming.

The library is also partnering with Literacy of the Eastern Panhandle, which covers the three-county region of Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan. The staff members of the literacy organization are physically located in the library. They recently received a $15,000 grant to purchase laptop computers that will have literacy software for both new readers as well as English as Second Language (ESL) learners. The laptops will travel around the three-county region to provide literacy programming in the main Martinsburg library as well as other non-library locations. Because these programs are associated with the library, participants become more comfortable with the library and the services that are offered.

Space Planning—To bring the self-paced learning model to life, the library created a separate training lab with 24 desktops. The lab is supported by a technology trainer during the dedicated training sessions.

Librarian Insights

Library Director Pam Coyle provided some key tips for implementing a successful digital literacy program:

1. Staff Buy-In—Start early when getting staff buy-in. Be sure they understand the plan for the services the library will provide.

2. Community Needs—Pam cannot stress enough how important it is to understand the needs of your community. Consider individuals and what they need. "You won't solve digital literacy by doing massive classes! Reach people one-on-one. It's what libraries have always done well."

> **"You won't solve digital literacy by doing massive classes! Reach people one-on-one. It's what libraries have always done well."**

Looking To The Future

As the library considers future community needs, it's clear that they would benefit from additional staff on the technology team who can provide more hours of support in the training lab. To expand public access to technology, the library is trying to figure out how to securely lend personal computing devices to patrons. In addition, the library would like to have a "technology mobile" to bring technology and training directly to their significantly rural population.

West Virginia: Mary H. Weir Public Library

Location: Weirton, West Virginia

Number of Buildings: 1

Staff Size: 6 full-time, 10 part-time

Community Size: 24,333

Desktops: 48

Laptops: 7

Training Labs: 10 desktops

Training Topics: Microsoft Office Suite

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Trainers and Coaches

Summary

By leveraging the national AmeriCorps program, the Mary H. Weir Public Library significantly expanded digital literacy capacity in their library.

Community Needs Assessment

As part of their technology planning process, the Mary H. Weir Public Library held focus groups in 2012 to obtain community input. The community recommended updating equipment and software as well as additional training on how to use technology, including eBooks, email basics, and productivity software. These focus groups helped the library with long-term planning and the staff also regularly gathers input by word-of-mouth through conversations with patrons that help to inform immediate programming and support for digital literacy training.

Digital Literacy at Work

AmeriCorps has been a great resource for building digital literacy capacity at the library. There are currently two AmeriCorps members on staff; one member works with children and technology services while the other addresses the graphics and document printing needs of the public. In addition, the library had an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer helped the library develop and launch their collection of Foundation Center of New York databases.

To hire people through AmeriCorps, the library worked with LifeBridge, which screens candidates and manages members and volunteers. The library had to complete a formal application that described the work responsibilities and the value to the community, along with a plan for supervising the volunteer. After the library's application was approved, the library director conducted outreach to make the position more visible to potential AmeriCorp members and volunteers and to encourage these individuals to look at the opportunity and apply for the positions. The AmeriCorp members and volunteers make a one-year, full-time commitment to the position.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—The library is a United Way grantee, receiving approximately $15,000 annually. These funds are typically used to support purchases such as workbooks for computer classes and computer software. The library also uses these funds for a subscription to the online Careers Internet Database which helps users understand career options, explore schools and professional associations that offer programs for that occupation, and find relevant periodicals for the profession.

To support the AmeriCorp program in the library, the library dedicated matching funds for their AmeriCorps members, at $5,000 each per year, and VISTA volunteer at $1,700 per year.

Human Resources—For digital literacy services, the library relies on a community volunteer who offers business computer classes as well as the AmeriCorps members.

Librarian Insights

Library Director Richard Rekowski believes strongly in staying in front of community needs. He suggests putting yourself in a position to talk to community members in new ways and getting involved with local planning commissions and development offices. It's also important to tailor your story of what the library can offer to specific groups.

The library has also looked for opportunities to build and expand valuable partnerships with the National Council on the Aging, Goodwill Industries and Workforce West Virginia to help with patron needs.

"It's also important to tailor the story of what the library can offer to specific groups."

Looking To The Future

The library wants to keep up and possibly get in front of technology trends and changes. This requires training and education for library staff on new technologies and software. It also means considering creative learning opportunities like having volunteer college students support patrons in using the public access computers

West Virginia: Raleigh County Library

Location: Beckley, West Virginia

Number of Buildings: 4

Staff Size: 36

Community Size: 79,220

Desktops: 40

Laptops: 7

Training Labs: Portable laptop lab

Training Topics: Basic computer skills,

eReader training with Wi-Fi and OverDrive access, resume writing, digital media lab for young adults

Digital Literacy Support Categories: Training Offerings

Summary

In 12 short months, the Raleigh County Library has gone from being mainly a book depository to a dynamic community partner. Through a keen focus on educating patrons coupled with bringing their technology up-to-date, the library is raising the level of digital literacy in their community.

Community Needs Assessment

The library has conducted two rounds of surveys. In each round they gave an online survey and a paper based survey to their patrons. The key question they asked was about what type of technology classes the community would like to have offered at the library.

This community is very proficient in using their cell phones and can use Facebook but there seems to be a gap in basic computing skills, like creating and using an email account, Internet searching, and basic productivity software. To take this a step further, there is a clear need for patrons to learn how to access job and government information online. The library is also working to help patrons overcome their fears about using the Internet safely.

Digital Literacy at Work

When the library first began offering classes, they started with Microsoft Office, but quickly realized that they had to take a few steps back to address basic computing skills. The library pivoted to address the community needs by offering two levels of Basic Computer Skills in lieu of the Office classes. They have creatively woven Internet Searching and Internet Safety into these classes.

Making It Happen

Financial Resources—The library director brought a strong focus on technology when she started two years ago. She began by reallocating the collection development budget to increase funding for digital resources like databases and eBooks, while reducing purchases of nonfiction and reference books. The library also invested in a portable training lab that could be easily moved to branch libraries for training. With a grant from the Beckley Area Foundation and support from Friends of the Library, the library purchased a portable laptop lab complete with seven training laptops, an instructor laptop and a charging cart.

Human Resources—The library director recognized that she needed to hire more staff with strong technology skills and expertise. She recruited and hired staff with library degrees who could provide technology training to patrons. A number of other employees are enrolled in school or professional development programs to improve their expertise and skills.

Partnerships—As the library transforms into a digital learning center, the library director is exploring partnerships that would benefit the community. One possibility is partnering with the Commission on Aging to offer computer classes at the senior center or to bus seniors to the library to take classes.

The Head of Information Services will begin school visits this fall to teach students how to use the public library's databases for their homework. To coordinate this, the library contacted the school librarians who then facilitated connections with the English teachers. One of the goals of this partnership is to increase usage of the library's databases by students writing research papers.

Space Planning—To create a more open and inviting space to access computers, the library is taking down the walls of the existing computer lab. They use a conference room for providing training with the portable laptop lab. The multi-purpose conference room holds about 50 people and can be scheduled for use by other nonprofit community organizations.

Librarian Insights

Library Director Amy Lilly said it's critical to understand the community's perception of the library. This provides a valuable starting point for creating a concrete marketing plan for digital literacy services.

Looking To The Future

The library has identified a number of community needs that it would like to address in the future. First, patrons and training participants often ask questions about their home computer hardware and software. The library team would like to develop a model for responding to these requests. The library also sees a need for assistive technology given the significant senior population and time spent helping patrons with basic mouse navigation. In addition, the library would like to provide 24/7 community access to its Wi-Fi network to support the near 50% of the population that does not have Internet access at home. Lastly, the library has identified a need for staff training on navigating government websites and accessing federal forms to better respond to patron requests and information needs.

This Appendix is part of the State Library Guidebook: Support for Digital Literacy in Public Libraries which was created under a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The guidebook was created in partnership between WebJunction and the Illinois State Library, the Mississippi Library Commission and the West Virginia Library Commission.

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