

6: LOCAL PROGRAMS : THE HEART OF THE MATTER

A key purpose of this study was to explore the current and potential leadership roles of state library agencies as a force for strengthening and developing the environment in which local library literacy programs function.

But the local adult literacy programs themselves are at the heart of the entire study—their service...their basic structures and philosophical orientation...the population groups they reach and the numbers of adults they serve...their operating circumstances...the problems and barriers they face in an increasingly unsupportive and hostile world...and the strengths and difficulties they experience, if any, specifically *because* they operate within a library culture. This section of the report looks at these issues.

The programs that took part in the study are not, in a statistical sense, representative of public library literacy programs because the sample (63) is too small for drawing valid national conclusions. But because

of the criteria by which they were chosen for participation—nominated or selected based on longevity and an established and recognized track record—information about their programs and problems is especially instructive. It is also consistent with other findings in this study and jibes with what is known about trends in adult literacy generally.

The returns give a useful reading of what is going on among some of the best library literacy programs in the country and some of the most stable. Moreover, if *these* programs have certain problems in common, it can be assumed that other programs have or face many of the same ones, perhaps to an even greater degree.

PURPOSES & GOALS

Table LP1 shows the stated purposes and goals of the participating programs. Collectively the capsule statements attest to great diversity, yet certain shared characteristics stand out.

LP1. Please describe briefly your program's overall purposes and goals. (Note: Number of years in operation is indicated in parentheses at the end of each description.)

AL LVA Anniston /Calhoun County, Anniston Calhoun County Public Library: We provide one-on-one tutoring to adults in Calhoun County over 19 years old. Free lessons in reading and writing and free materials, free training to literacy tutors but ask that they volunteer 50 hours back into the program. (10)

AR Literacy Council of Hot Spring County, Hot Spring County Library: Reading education and literacy (REAL) recruits and train tutors for the adult literacy program and for peer tutoring in county school districts. The goal of REAL is to reduce the rate of illiteracy in adults and children by offering volunteer services of tutoring one-on-one. Cooperation between agencies and organizations is nurtured. Volunteerism of people and organizations is promoted. Library materials, consumable and collection, are purchased. Information is disseminated. (6)

Arkansas River Valley Libraries for Literacy - Reading Together, Arkansas River Valley Regional Library: To assist each person enrolled in the program to reach his/her fullest potential toward becoming a self-sufficient person in terms of decision making, securing employment, providing stable family settings and making worthwhile contributions to the community. (23)

CA Adult Literacy Program - Project Upgrade, Napa City County Library: Provide ESL instruction using volunteer tutors, provide materials collections for basic literacy and ESL, provide reference and referral services, advocate and promote community awareness, offer self-education opportunity through audio/ videotapes and computers. (12)

Adult Literacy Program, Alameda County Library, Fremont: Provide learner-centered reading and writing help to English-speaking adults and families through library programs. We provide one-to-one and small group tutoring, tutor training, materials, computer-assisted instruction, family workshops, and pre-reading activities for young children. We have programs in eight libraries of the County and also work with incarcerated adults in the Alameda County jail system. (11)

Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library: Partners in Reading enables English-speaking adults to improve their basic literacy skills so they may function more effectively on the job and in society, achieve their goals, and develop their knowledge and potential. Through learner/tutor partnerships, our program uses a variety of methods designed to meet individual learning

Table LP1, cont'd

needs. As a library literacy program, Partners in Reading helps learners acquire skills that enable them to use the services of public libraries more effectively. (6)

Commerce Public Library Adult Literacy Program: Our adult literacy program serves adults aged 16 and over who wish to improve their basic reading, writing, and math skills. Trained volunteers tutor adults in one-to-one or small group settings. Our goal is to help at least 60 students a year move toward their various goals. (12)

LVA Marin County, San Rafael Public Library: Provide reading, writing, and communication skills for adult students to enable them to achieve their goals on the job and in society. Maintain a literacy curriculum based on learner-centered goals. Train and support volunteer tutors. Match tutors and learners one-on-one or small groups. Empower parents to become a child's first teacher. Provide materials for diverse literacy needs. Develop cross-cultural awareness that creates a sense of community. (10)

CO Adult Reading Program, Mesa County Public Library District: The Program provides free, confidential, individualized reading and writing instruction for adults 16 years of age or older, not enrolled in a regular school program and reading below the 6th grade level. Trained volunteer tutors from the county meet at 35 public places with private meeting space at various times of the day or evening to meet the student's schedule. (10)

CT LVA-Greater Waterbury, Silas Bronson Library: Provide family literacy programs to caregivers of young children. Provide basic literacy and ESL training to adults. (21)

DE Project READS, Sussex County Literacy Council, Sussex County Department of Libraries: Project READS' goal is to help reduce and eventually eliminate adult illiteracy among residents of Sussex County. Its goal is to help increase literacy skills of Sussex County residents by providing basic reading skills training. (6)

LVA-Wilmington Library: LVA/WLA provides free one-to-one tutoring for adults in basic reading and conversational English skills. The student/tutor teams meet twice a week at a time and place convenient for both. A computer lab, Adult Literacy Learning Center, and family literacy services are also provided. (13)

FL Project LEAD, Miami-Dade Public Library System. Project LEAD has a mission to reach adult learners who speak English, but read below a 3rd-grade level, and bring them up to 5th-grade reading level. At that time, they are referred to the County Adult Education classes to go on and get their GED. (10)

Table LP1, cont'd

Panhandle Library Literacy Consortium, Jefferson County Public Library: Our program is half family literacy in-house and half outreach to find one-to-one tutors and students. (8)

Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System: Provides one-to-one tutoring in basic literacy and ESL. (10)

Literacy Program, Brevard County Library: Our goal is to assist any resident of our county in reaching his/her personal educational goals. (10)

Lifelong Learning Services, Broward County Public Library: Serving the needs of individuals and families in our community by creating, promoting and implementing environments and tools which support the lifelong learning goals of our patrons, including access to our print and databased materials. These book-based learning services, materials, and tools will be consistent with library traditions of free and open access, self empowerment, and learner control. Trainings to duplicate library learning services are provided to libraries, community agencies, grass roots organizations and volunteers. (15)

Center for Adult Learning, Jacksonville Public Libraries: The goal of the Center for Adult Learning (CAL) is to provide functionally illiterate adults the opportunity and resources with which to "function successfully on the job and in society, achieve [their] individual goals and develop [their] knowledge and potential." We also provide a bridge between one-to-one tutoring programs and the GED classroom. Using computer-assisted instruction enhances the learning process and increases the self-confidence of the students. We also provide a New Reader Collection in the Main Library and all branch libraries in the system. (10.5)

GA Learning Center, Athens-Clarke County Public Library. Our program is geared to promote lifelong learning. We firmly believe that if we equip adult new learners with the skills necessary to participate in society, whether it be on a social or economic level, then this will ultimately lead to the eradication of illiteracy. As adults become more literate they will pass on their love of education to their offspring who in turn will strive to make positive impacts on society. We strive to instill "all adults successful" and provide the tools necessary to make that come to pass. (8)

Literacy Program, DeKalb County Public Library: To increase the level of literacy in DeKalb County, the library assists community literacy efforts by providing materials, space, and referral services. (10)

IL LVA-Elgin, Gail Borden Public Library. Provide adult literacy education in a non-threatening environment. (12)

Table LP1, cont'd

Family Literacy Partnership, Bensenville Library: Family Literacy Partnership existed [as a formal program] 92/93 & 93/94. Family literacy focusing on parent/child skills. Literature based. (2)

Libraries for Literacy in Lake County, Waukegan Public Library: Our mission statement says "...to extend educational opportunities to Lake County adult students and their families." (10)

IN Literacy Program, Michigan City Public Library: Our program provides individual tutoring through volunteer tutors for adult non-readers, low-level readers, intermediate readers who want to get a GED or go to college, and newcomers to our country who need to learn conversational English. We also offer a family literacy program aimed at helping parents read to their children. Recently we opened our program to children who are tutored both at the library and at school. Numerous requests from parents for such help moved us in this direction along with the fact that adult enrollment has dropped due to greater job availability at present. (8)

Library Literacy Program, Anderson Public Library: We're in the business of helping adults over the age of 16 who are not in school improve their reading and writing skills through the use of volunteer tutors in one-on-one or small group instruction. We also help adults who are learning ESL in the same way. We offer phonics and computer instruction, as well. (10)

Knox County Literacy Program, Knox County Public Library: To promote the Library as a lifelong learning center. To promote public awareness and community involvement in solving civic, social, educational, health, and employment problems. To provide basic reading, writing, spelling, and math help to adults and families. To provide tutor training services, as well as materials for students and tutors, adult new-reader and circulation literacy collection. To develop cooperative links with area businesses and community/social organizations also interested in working with adult nonreaders or beginning readers, etc. (4)

KS Project Finish, Johnson County Library, Shawnee Mission: Provide learning opportunities for adults 16 years of age and older who are no longer enrolled in school and have not obtained a functional basic education. Instruction is directed toward mastering competency skills in English, including speaking, reading and writing English, and basic math skills. In addition, preparation for the GED exam is provided. (10)

MA Read Write/Now Program, Springfield City Library-Mason Square Branch: To provide adult basic education and a family literacy program using a whole language-based model. Curriculum is developed based on learners' interests, needs, and goals. (8)

Table LP1, cont'd

Center for New Americans, Jones Library: To facilitate access, communication, and linkages with newcomer groups and institutions, employers, and agencies in the Pioneer Valley. Accommodate the varying needs/schedules/interests of students by providing a choice of study options (classroom, one-to-one tutoring, computer-aided instruction) and support services (advocacy referrals, job search, childcare, counseling). (9)

Newcomer Family Literacy Project, Lawrence Public Library: The Library's ESOL-based family literacy program integrates language and literacy studies with parenting skills and library skills development. Curriculum is grounded in exercises that use the library to increase the ability of newcomers to communicate in English, develop independent learning skills, gain exposure to technology, and become more effective parents. (8)

Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public Library: To provide instruction in basic reading and writing to adults in order for them to meet their needs and reach their goals. (10)

MD Project Literacy, Howard County Library: Project Literacy provides free one-to-one instruction by volunteer tutors to any adult who lives or works in Howard County. Clients come to learn how to read, improve their reading/writing/speaking skills, learn English, learn functional math skills, and learn how to function in a literate society. (8)

MI MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public Library: Our program] provides one-to-one tutoring to adults in Montcalm County having 0-8 grade reading or math skills, and teaches ESL to ethnic minorities with limited English-language proficiency. (9.5)

MN Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community Library, Minneapolis Public Library: Provide free, flexible, self-paced instruction to adults aged 16 and older who read, write, and compute below a 12th grade level. [Basic goals are] to serve 450 learners a year, improve skill levels in 35% of enrollees, recruit/maintain 60 tutors a year. [Another goal is] to collaborate in at least 4 multicultural, multi-agency presentations (sic). (7)

Linking Libraries & Literacy for Lifelong Learning, Lexington Branch Library, St. Paul: Develop an active partnership between the library and the Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning of the Saint Paul Public Schools, creating a successful link for adult learners with the free and easily accessible resources of the library. Staff training for the organizations includes hands-on training in new CD-ROM products, joint orientations, and sessions to address the needs of adult learners. Hubbs staff and students will help the library select new adult reading materials. A direct computer link to the library on-line catalog and its "information kiosk" will be installed at the Hubbs Center. (1)

Table LP1, cont'd

NC Community of Readers, Glenwood Library: Library directs Community of Readers, a network of over 50 organizations and agencies working to promote reading and literacy. Three branches offer classes in the library (GED, ESL). All libraries provide materials. (6)

NE Platte Valley Literacy Association, Columbus Public Library: In cooperation with Central Community College, [the Association] provides ABE at no cost to students 16 years or older, and not enrolled in school. This includes English as a second language classes, preparation for GED testing, basic adult literacy self-study, and living skills. In addition, PVLA offers tutoring for adults and a family literacy program for adult students and their families and at-risk families in the community. We are located in the public library and receive in-kind support, but do not receive funding through the City or the library. (15)

NJ Basic Skills for Reading & ESL, Elizabeth Public Library: Our program's overall purposes and goals are to improve the basic skills for English, reading, and math for adult residents of Elizabeth. (9)

Literacy for Non-English Speakers, Paterson Free Public Library: Our overall purpose is to empower our students [to take control of and be able to] change their own lives. We follow a student-centered approach, allowing learners to focus on what they feel they need to learn. We encourage them to progress from learning how to read to reading to learn. We hope they'll take a more active interest in their own community. (5)

NM LVA-Socorro County, Socorro Public Library: Provide basic reading, ESL, computer literacy and family literacy programs. (6)

NY Library Literacy Center of Prendergast Library, Jamestown: The Library Literacy Center is a library-sponsored, Laubach-affiliated, adult basic literacy program which, using adult volunteer tutors, provides one-to-one literacy help to adult learners who come to us for help. Although our primary focus is the teaching of reading, we also try to work with the student's other literacy needs such as math, spelling, GED preparation, if we are able and if the student wants that kind of help. (3)

Literacy Program, Brooklyn Public Library: To teach adults how to write and read and navigate life intelligently using technology and all resources available to all citizens. (18)

Centers for Reading and Writing, New York Public Library: **Population Served:** As part of the NYC Adult Literacy Initiative, [we fulfill our] commitment to neighborhoods throughout the City by providing culturally diverse populations opportunities for lifelong learning. The Library is committed to serving adult

Table LP1, cont'd

learners who have a range of personal, professional, and occupational goals. Within the NYC provider network, the libraries are mandated to offer literacy instruction to adults who are at the beginning stages of their reading development (0-4.9). Without [our] program these learners would have limited access to instruction as they would test too low on standardized tests to enter Board of Education or Community College programs. In addition, budget reductions have forced the Board and CUNY to reduce the number of pre-GED classes offered. **Program Development:** The Centers are committed to remaining current in instructional methodology, assessment procedures, curriculum development and the implementation of new program initiatives. **Volunteer Training:** In NYC, the Library literacy programs are funded as volunteer programs. New York Public Library is committed to the recruitment and training of volunteer tutors, who are the primary providers of direct instruction. **Collection Development:** Part of our funding is allocated to develop collections of print materials for adult new readers. These collections, located at CRW sites, can be borrowed by all students enrolled in the program. The Library also makes these resources available to practitioners at other NYC literacy programs, in the form of deposit collection loans. Instructors may visit a site and select materials appropriate for their classes. Over the past 12 years, the Library has established Lifelong Learning collections at all 82 branch libraries. These are available for borrowing by the general public. **Technology:** Computer instruction is used in the 8 CRW programs. We have been working since FY94 to upgrade hardware and software to enable students to capitalize on multimedia advances in educational technology. **Family Literacy:** We have embarked on a system-wide initiative to expand family literacy. As a result of a series of workshops in early 1995, we are currently engaged in developing a Families Writing curriculum. (11)

OK Moore Literacy Council, Cleveland County Library: The Council provides free, confidential one-on-one tutoring to any adult in the area who wants to learn to read or to improve reading skills. (5)

Great Plains Literacy Council, Southern Prairie Library System: To provide individual tutoring to low-level literacy and ESL adult students in order to raise the literacy level of our country and enable people to become more competent employees, parents, and citizens. We target families through special parent reading programs and the workplace through a business site ESL class. (10)

Literacy Council of LeFlore County, Buckley Public Library: To provide tutoring in reading and the English language to adults in the 1,510 square mile county; train tutors and trainers; promote the interest and cooperative efforts of other groups in the community; work cooperatively with other literacy providers in the state and nation. (10)

Table LP1, cont'd

OR LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library: LEARN (Literacy Education and Referral Network) draws a variety of people and agencies together to solve problems of common interest regarding adult basic and bilingual education, serves as support services for volunteer tutors and their organizations, provides books and materials to all county libraries and volunteer groups, recruits volunteers and students, referring them to appropriate education or other resources. (10)

PA Reader Development Program, Free Library of Philadelphia: The RDP enhances the Library's role of provider of support for learners of all ages by locating, evaluating, purchasing, and distributing to Philadelphia literacy agencies and to individual adults the best learning materials written on a low reading level on a wide range of subjects. RDP serves adults of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and learning needs. RDP also stocks a wide range of low-reading-level leisure reading materials, providing adult new readers with popular genre books written on the 8th grade reading level or below. RDP also provides limited amounts of GED materials to satisfy state funding mandates. (28)

Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library: The goal of our Literacy Program is to reduce illiteracy in Bradford and Wyoming Counties. The Literacy Program trains volunteer tutors and provides free and confidential one-to-one tutoring for adults and teenagers. It recruits, trains, and supports volunteer tutors. It also provides support for its adult literacy students. (15)

RI LVA Kent County, Coventry Public Library: Our literacy program provides tutor training in Basic Literacy (reading and writing) and ESL to help functionally illiterate adults to improve reading, writing, and conversational English skills. (15)

SC Literacy Program, Greenville County Library: For many years we have provided materials, a board member for the local literacy agency, tutoring space, and encouragement to the community effort. Now we are becoming more directly involved by designating space at a new branch to be used by that community literacy association. We have also conducted an award-winning literacy awareness campaign, always working very closely with the Greenville Literacy Association. (?)

TX LVA-Sterling Municipal Library: Teach adults to read and/or speak English in 0-5 reading level. Orient these adults to all library services. Prepare adults to succeed with their tutors by teaching basic study skills. Create lifelong independent library users. (10)

Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library: The Center assists individuals of all ages find the services and resources they need to learn how to read and write, to become legal residents or U.S. citizens, to obtain their ED, to become computer literate, to know how to use

Table LP1, cont'd

the library, and to help them achieve their goals and develop their knowledge and potential. Since 1989 the Center offers five areas of service free to the public: information and referral, a materials collection, instruction services, community outreach and promotion, and research and development. We provide computers for self-paced instruction, recruit and train volunteer tutors and match them with students, offer library facilities to outside agencies and volunteer tutors for small group literacy and ABE education. (6)

Proyecto Adelante, Weslaco Public Library: To teach ESL, pre-GED, and GED to help any person from the area who wants to study. (7)

Literacy Programs, Harris County Public Library: To increase opportunities for adults in the surrounding communities of 11 branch libraries to receive individual or small group instruction in literacy or ESL using trained volunteers and materials. (8)

Andrews Adult Literacy Program, Andrews Public Library: We try to meet everyone's goals. We provide ESL, pre-GED, GED, citizenship, and of course, basic literacy for those who can't read at all. Many of our students have graduated from high school, but do not have skills to attend college. Some just need special skills, such as typing. We assist them in filling out forms or studying for special projects at work. Our biggest classes are pre-GED level: those reading at a 5th-8th grade level. (10)

UT Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library: We provide one-on-one literacy and ESL instruction to adults in Cache County (northern Utah). Instruction is provided by trained volunteer tutors, and is free and individualized. Curriculum is closely tied to individual goals and needs, especially goals relating to parenting, jobs, or personal skills. (8)

VA Literacy Program, Newport News Public Library: There are four (4) components to the Newport News Library System's Literacy Program. We provide individual tutoring, workplace literacy and pre-GED classes, and also family literacy programs. Our focus is to provide a skills enhancement program that will diminish the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy. (10)

WA Project READ, Longview Public Library: Family literacy program—offers literacy tutoring to address the needs of the adult learner and at the same time teach the adults the skills and attitudes they need to help their children and grandchildren be successful learners in school. The focus is intergenerational learning and support. (9)

Library Literacy Program/Lifelong Learning, Seattle Public Library: Our literacy programming includes services for both native English speakers and limited English speakers. We operate a Literacy Action

Table LP1, cont'd

Center where one-to-one tutoring takes place, and where we provide an in-house lending library, computer access for students, and a mentor program for volunteer tutors. The Center is a special project of Washington Literacy. The Library collaborates with the Literacy Center in a family literacy program called Start Smart, which is coordinated by the Children's Librarian. Other programs/services include Born to Read (for mothers with newborn or very young children), The Reading Place (space in the Central Library and 10 branches where students and tutors may use books and other information for the new adult reader), and various ESL services including direct instruction, audiocassette technology and a special ESL reading collection. (9)

WI LVA Chippea Valley/Eau Claire, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library: An affiliate of LVA national, we serve as the national LVA liaison for the state of Wisconsin. LVA-CV provides literacy services to adults and families in a regional area where some 60% of the population lives on farms or small communities. We provide one-to-one tutoring and recruit and train volunteer tutors for the program. Sharing the mission of our national parent organization, we strive to develop strong local partnerships...create community awareness...develop effective funding strategies...undertake effective student and tutor recruiting and instruction...provide facilities conducive to learning...operate family literacy programs...support workplace education programs...and pursue "cutting edge" developments in techniques and materials, including greater use of technology where appropriate. Based on the work of a Strategic Planning Committee, we have adopted a long-range plan to further develop our outreach and effectiveness. (10)

WV Literacy Program, Monroe County & Peterstown Public Libraries: To provide a comprehensive literacy program that serves all segments of the population of Monroe County. To promote family literacy in reading, writing, and math. To develop and implement a training program for tutors of math. To remove barriers that prevent a rural population from participating in literacy programs. (6)

The overarching purpose of most of the programs is to help low-skilled, out-of-school adults acquire the reading, math, and ESL proficiency needed to meet their personally determined functional goals.

Respect for students, for the process of learning, and for individualized curricula and teaching pervades the thinking.

A focus on one-on-one and small group tutoring—with heavy use

of volunteers in the instructional role—is strongly in evidence.

The majority of programs concentrate on serving the most poorly skilled adults (often expressed in 5th-6th grade-equivalency terms)—although GED-preparation and ESL services are standard program features as well.

Another common thread is a serious and growing interest in family literacy.

Many of the programs are LVA and Laubach affiliates housed in the local public library. [Note: While this is only suggested by the Table LP 1 profiles, explanatory comments in several tables of the background data book validate the observation.] Some are obviously programs of other kinds of community-based organizations. A few have employment as a goal of instruction. Others are programs actually staffed and operated by the libraries.

POPULATIONS SERVED

The point that needs emphasizing most is that in providing basic

literacy services to adults at the lowest end of the proficiency spectrum, public libraries are giving educational access to people most in need of help and most likely *not* to get it from schools and traditional ABE programs.

The profiles make it clear that this service focus is the most unique and defining feature of public library adult literacy programs.

Demographic and program data supplied in LP 2 and LP 5 reinforce the point. For example, of the approximately 53,000 students served by these 63 programs in FY95, more than half (55%) were members of economically and socially disadvantaged minority groups (32% Hispanic, 23% Black). Some 36% were unemployed, and, conversely, 50% were employed either part-time or full-time. A full 93% were between 17 and 59 years of age.

Too little data was given to produce corresponding percentages for those on public assistance and those who had not completed high school, but notes included in the background data book indicate

LP2. By percentage, indicate the makeup of your adult student body in FY95 by age, ethnicity/race, gender, employment status, whether on public assistance, and other demographic variables you consider important. [Q4 only]

Gender	<u>Male</u> 45%	<u>Female</u> 55%	(Of approximately 53,000 students)			
Ethnicity/Race	<u>Black</u> 23%	<u>White</u> 30%	<u>Asian</u> 11%	<u>Hispanic</u> 32%	<u>NAmer</u> 1%	<u>Other</u> 1.5%
Work Status	<u>Employed</u> 50%		<u>Unemployed</u> 36	<u>Retired/Other</u> 14		
Age Group	<u>16 & Under</u> 3%	<u>17 to 25/29</u> 22%	<u>25/29 to 44/49</u> 55%	<u>45/49 to 59</u> 15%	<u>60+</u> 6%	

Note: Most programs did not give data on the number of students on public assistance or on education attainment (many apparently do not collect it). But notes added to the data supplied indicate a heavy school noncompletion rate among the adult literacy students of the programs, as well as heavy public assistance rates.

LP3. How many years has your program been in operation? [Q4 only]
LP4. How long have you been in your present position? [Q4 only]

On Average, Years Programs in Operation	9.9 years
On Average, Years In Present Position	6 years

LP5. Please indicate the size of your program in FY95 with respect to the following indicators:

	A <u>All Programs</u>	B <u>Without 3-6 Programs That Seriously Skew</u>	
# Full-Time Staff	Range: 1 to 25 Total: 138.25 Average: 2.2	Range: 1 to 6 Total: 79.25 Average: 1.34] a
# Part-Time Staff	Range: 1 to 34 Total: 196 Average: 3.1	1 to 8 Total: 110 Average: 1.9] b
# Paid Staff (FT & PT)	Range: 1 to 55 Total: 320.25 Average: 5	1 to 8 Total: 144.25 Average: 2.62] c
# Voluntary Staff	Range: 1 to 900 Total: 6,623 Average: 105	1 to 243 Total: 4,063 Average: 73] d
Operating Budgets	Range: \$2,500 to \$1,189,013 Total: \$5,713,011 Average: \$92,145	\$2,500 to \$176,000 Total: \$2,765,403 \$44,134] e
#Students In FY95	Range: 11 to 28,636 Total: 53,242 Average: 858	Range: 11 to 600 Total: 8,537 Average: 152] f

- a Excludes NYC & Broward County (FL) programs
- b Excludes NYC and 2 LVA programs
- c Excludes NYC, 2 LVA, & 3 Other Programs
- d Excludes 6 programs whose volunteers number between 300-900
- e Excludes 5 programs w/budgets \$250,000+, incl. New York & Brooklyn @ \$1,032,000 & \$781,000
- f Excludes 5 programs with students of 1,500+, incl. RDP (Phila.) @ 28,636 & DeKalb County (GA) @ 8,448

that the rate for both in FY95 was very high. Moreover, a disproportionately high percentage of students in voluntary and CBO adult literacy programs generally are known to have these characteristics.

PROGRAM LONGEVITY

The programs included in this survey are about ten years old on average (LP 3). But, as the background data book shows, only thirteen of them (21%) have been in existence for thirteen years or more—predating the time (around 1983) when the national adult literacy movement began to gather full steam. This means that some 80% of the programs appear to have come into being as a result of that movement.

Interestingly, the background data book shows that about 74% of the programs have been in operation ten years or less, corresponding to the time period in which LSCA Title VI grants have been made (the first round was awarded in FY86). This fact has great importance in considering the heavy dependence the programs have on federal funding (see LP 6). At the time of questioning, some 65% of

LP6. What are your principal sources of funding? Check all that apply, giving relative percentages if possible. [Q4only]

Q4 Local Programs (63 of 63 responded, 100%)

	<u># (%) of Respondees Indicating This Source</u>	<u>% Of Total Funding</u>
Federal grants	41 (65%)	39%
Local government	40 (63%)	28
State government	25 (40%)	10
State library system/agency	24 (38%)	8
Foundation grants	16 (25%)	4
Individual donations	29 (46%)	3
Local/state business & industry	19 (30%)	2
Other*	20 (32%)*	6*

* The main source cited under Other was the United Way. Also included, although infrequently, were such sources as Veterans of Foreign Wars/Chamber of Commerce, Friends of the Library, special projects such as spelling bees, the regular library budget, service organizations, LSCA, and local government in one form or another.

program budget was about \$92,000 (ranging from a low of \$2,500 to one at \$1.2 million).

Looked at another way, using Column A averages, in FY95 there were:

1 full-time staff member for every 390 students

1 paid staff for every 172 students

1 volunteer tutor for every 8 students

\$107 spent during the year per student

Column B probably provides a more realistic picture, however, because it omits the three to six very large programs that skew Column A results.

According to Column B, in FY95 the programs had only 1.34 full-time staff members and 1.9 part-time staff, for an overall average of 3.2. Of this total, 2.6 (81%) were paid staff, the others donated their services. The average number of volunteer tutors in the programs was 73 (the range extends from 1 to 243). The average number of students served was 152 (ranging from 11 to 600). And, the average program budget was about \$44,000 (ranging from a low of \$2,500 to a high of \$176,000).

the programs surveyed had partial federal funding, with federal grants accounting for some 40% of their total overall funding. (State funding was very small at 10% of the total.) This relationship is just another indicator of how the muscle, perhaps the survivability, of so many of the programs will be affected by the loss of LSCA Title VI funding (unless an adequate level of federal funding is retained in some other form and earmarked for library literacy).

It is interesting to note in passing that directors of

the programs have, on average, been on their jobs for about six years (LP 4), long enough to have their fingers solidly on the pulse of local literacy needs and to fully understand the pressures under which their programs operate. But only about one-third of them have been in their positions long enough to know firsthand what life was like before LSCA Title VI.

GETTING BLOOD FROM A STONE

The findings of Question LP 5 underscore once again just how much library literacy programs

have been doing with extremely limited resources. In this respect, they are like the SLRCs.

As Column A shows, in FY95, the 63 programs included in the survey had, on average, only 2.2 full-time staff members and 3.1 part-time staff, for an overall average of 5.3. Of this total, 5 were paid staff (94%), and the rest donated their services. The average number of volunteer tutors in the programs was 105 (the range extends from 1 to 900). The average number of students served was 858 (ranging from 11 to 28,636). And the average

LP7. In which size population area is your program located?

Q4 Local Programs (61 respondees of possible 63, 97%)

	<u># Programs</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Under 1,000		0%
1,000 to 2,499		0
2,500 to 4,999		0
5,000 to 9,999	3	5
10,000 to 24,999	6	10
25,000 to 49,999	5	8
50,000 to 99,999	15	25
100,000 to 249,999	13	21
250,000 to 499,999	5	8
500,000 to 999,999	8	13
1 million plus	6	10

LP 8. Which of the following are regular services/features of your library literacy program?

Q4 Local Programs (61 responses of possible 63, 97%)

Provide/develop book collections for adult new readers	97%
Provide/develop student/tutor learning materials	97
Provide space for classes/meetings of other groups	90
Provide information and/or referral services	94
Provide tutor training/direct instruction with own staff	89
Use computer technology for program management purposes	83

LP 9. If your program provides direct tutor training and/or instruction, which of the following components does the instructional program have?

Q4 Local Programs (56 responses of 63, 89%)

One-to-one tutoring	89%
Regular collaboration with outside agencies/providers	88
ESL	79
ABE	79
Use computers for instruction/training	79
Use TV/video for instruction/training	71
Family literacy	64
Small group tutoring	64
Off-site instruction	57
GED	34
Workforce/workplace literacy	25

LP 10. If your program provides direct tutor training and/or instruction, please indicate the basic educational philosophy that guides it, indicating the curricular & instructional approach taken (e.g. whole language, phonics).

Q4 Local Programs (53 responses of 63, 84%)

Whole language base	40%
Phonics base	28
Eclectic/Other	32

On average, then, in all but the largest programs, there were in FY95:

1 full-time staff member for every 114 students

1 paid staff for every 47 students

1 volunteer tutor for every 2 students

\$290 spent during the year per student

Whether one prefers either of the above measures or others that could be derived from the data given, the basic point is clear: adult literacy programs and services offered by public libraries do so by rubbing pennies. No other part of the educational world is given so little to work with.

**STABLE FUNDING:
A SURVIVAL ISSUE**

That library literacy programs are a clear financial bargain is a positive feature to be recognized in any future effort to more clearly articulate their unique role and purpose.

But the downside is that where everything humanly possible has already been wrung from inadequate budgets, even a small funding cut can spell disaster.

So, again, thousands of library literacy programs appear to be facing a bleak future: if present funding trends continue most will lose muscle from their programs and many will be forced to close.

(Section 4 of this report, in questions F2 and F3, was very clear on this point where loss of federal funding is concerned—although local program respondees don't seem to recognize this as fully as the other three respondent groups do.)

The responses to question LP 13 make the point in more specific terms: Lack of stable funding and equitable access to it is the most widely perceived barrier to future program success and survivability. But in LP 13 the programs also point to overburdened staffs...the shrinking pool of volunteer tutors (*necessitating more paid staff*)...long tutor and student waiting lists...lack of space...and weak state and national commitment—common refrains throughout this study and essentially problems of funding.

OTHER PROGRAM FEATURES

Questions LP 7 - LP 11 reveal a variety of other

LP11. If your program provides its own instruction and/or tutor training services, what percentage of the instructional/training staff are:

Externally-recruited ABE professionals and/or volunteers	81%
Librarians/library staff	14
Other	4

LP12. Please check any of the following services that your program receives regularly from the following four sources.

Q4 Local Programs (61 responses of 63 possible, 97%)

	State Library Agency	Regional Library	SLRC	Other Entity
State advocacy	50%	33%	44%	23%
National advocacy	23	15	28	33
Public awareness	28	57	43	43
Policy development & planning	8	46	23	11
Statewide conferencing	41	15	46	41
Professional staff development	25	38	54	38
Program development	15	44	26	34
Curriculum development	2	26	26	31
Evaluation/assessment	13	21	23	36
Training tutors and/or trainees	7	31	20	41
Applying research to practice	7	15	18	21
Fundraising/resource dev.	8	41	15	31
Data collection & analysis	23	28	28	26
Lending library resources	26	54	31	13
Grant funds	49	31	15	41

program characteristics, some of which confirm findings suggested earlier and some that raise other interesting issues which invite future research attention:

The 63 public library literacy programs included in this study represent towns and cities of virtually every *population size* (LP 7). That they have a great deal in common is obvious.

The provision and development of *book collections and learning*

It is quite significant that the average life of most programs in this study (with the exception of the pioneer programs) is about 10 years. To me, this shows the correlation between Title VI funding and the establishment of new programs. The end of Title VI will be "crunch time" for many of them. Over and over and over again throughout the survey is the cry for solid, stable funding. Part of the problem comes from the communities themselves which have chosen to rely on "soft money" because it has always been there. Library literacy programs have not been solidified in the library budget...and are always looking over their shoulder to avoid a disaster "next year." Of course the problem is not unique to library literacy programs. (Shelley Quezada, MA)

materials for students and tutors is the most consistent service feature across all programs, regardless of size, population base, or type (LP 8). A full 97% of the

local public library literacy programs provide such materials.

Some 89% of the programs provide direct tutor training and instruc-

tional services using their own paid staffs, but the data do not tell whether the programs are outside groups being housed in the library or programs directly operated by the

library. Data given earlier indicate that the majority of library-based literacy programs are outside voluntary and CBO groups which have been given a home and library administrative supports. But library-staffed and library-operated programs, while probably not in the majority, are nevertheless known to be quite substantial in number.

Furthermore, whether or not the library itself provides the direct instruction, programs of all types can have both external and internal staff—and volunteers are, of course, a feature of them all.

The response to LP 11 is similarly problematic. **Librarians and library staff themselves make up only about 14% of the instructional staff** in programs of direct instruction, with externally recruited adult education professionals and volunteers accounting for more than 80%. This gives a further sense of program texture and the nature of library involvement, but it doesn't reveal anything new about program type, extent of library

LP13. What are the 2-3 greatest barriers to effective service in your program and in the nature and extent of your outreach?

Q4 Local Programs (53 respondees of 63, 84%)

	<u># Times Cited</u>
Lack of stable/adequate funding/impending government decreases	42
Poor funding access	3
Funders favor project support over basic operating support	1
Turf battles/difficult to compete with more powerful ABE-GED interests	3
Too few staff/too few qualified staff	12
Too few resources for staff/teacher development and training	5
Pool of volunteer tutors is shrinking/more paid staff needed to tutor	3
Too much staff time needed for fundraising	3
Barriers to student participation (e.g. childcare, transportation)	7
Community education misconceptions/libraries not viewed as educational agents or partners	6
Too little media attention to keep national awareness/visibility up	2
Limited national commitment	2
Low state funding commitment	1
Little state library support	1
Tutor and student recruitment problems	11
Long tutor and student waiting lists	2
Retaining students/tutors	2
Lack of tutoring/program space	6
Poor coordination/collaboration among various groups	4
Limited hours of program operation	2
Limited understanding by librarians	2
Limited access to low-level, cutting-edge materials	1
Too little literacy staff involvement in library decision-making about their programs	1
The quick-fix mentality	1
Inability to diagnose learning disabilities	1
Barriers between children's and adult education programming	1
Interplay between employment status, skills required for jobs, and economic conditions	1

commitment, or issues of training. The whole area is one that should be examined more carefully in future research.

Considering that library literacy programs generally serve adults at the lowest level and thus follow nontraditional instructional approaches, it is not surprising that among most of those surveyed (80%) there is **heavy reliance on one-to-one tutoring** (LP 9). But it is significant, in terms of instructional and cost effectiveness, that there has been a substantial adoption of small group instruction over the past decade or so, with 64% of the surveyed programs having this feature—usually in addition to one-on-one, not as a complete substitute.

With respect to **technology**, there was speculation in Section 2 that local programs are already making heavy use of computers. The responses to LP 8 and LP 9 confirm this. The tables show that some 83% of the programs surveyed use computer technology for program management purposes, while 79% use computers for instructional purposes. Furthermore, some 71%

use television and video technology for instructional and training purposes (though the data don't show what form this use takes).

Other program features in evidence, as before, are the heavy attention to **servicing ESL adults** (79% of the programs provide ESL services) and the high involvement in **family literacy** (64%).

It is also interesting that about 25% of the programs work in some way in **workforce and workplace literacy**. This finding is consistent with other study data, and the state program data in Section 5 (LAPD 2-4) suggests that in at least some states the level of involvement is even higher.

Moreover, one of the early advisors to this project, the director of the long-established Brooklyn Public Library literacy program, believes that library literacy service to part- and full-time employed persons should make the programs more fundable rather than less, but she worries that the extensiveness of this service is not fully recognized. Here is yet another subject in need of future attention.

WHOLE LANGUAGE PREDOMINATES

Question LP 10 aimed to identify the theoretical underpinnings of the instructional programs surveyed.

Of the 53 programs (84%) responding to the question, 40% are based on whole language principles (the basic approach of Literacy Volunteers of America). Some 28% are based on phonics (the traditional Laubach Literacy method). And 32% use a combination of approaches, some including whole language and/or phonics. [Note: Many programs based on whole language also use phonics to help students with their pronunciation.]

Very little useful research has been done on whether whole language, phonics, or other methods work best as the foundation for adult reading programs. Moreover, the answer might well differ depending on the actual make-up of the student clientele from program to program, a relationship the survey did not address. In any case, the issue is of secondary importance in the present climate,

though it may be a good candidate for the future research agenda.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that as understanding has grown about the motivational needs of adult learners and the importance of functional context learning, the use of whole language also has grown. It takes into account the background knowledge that adults bring to the learning experience. It starts from the knowledge that most low-skilled adults already have encoding and decoding skills; they just cannot read at a high enough level to be able to extract meaning from the material. And it recognizes intrinsically that the purpose of lifting adult basic skills levels is not to give individuals an arbitrary grade-level equivalency but to enable them *to do something, to function* in necessary tasks of living and working.

It is also worthy of note that in a 1988 study of 23 LVA, Laubach, and eclectic programs in Illinois, the Illinois State University found that LVA students had significantly more grade-level gain than students in the

LC1. What opportunities and advantages (or freedoms and creativity) are possible in library literacy programs specifically because they operate within a library culture?
[Q2, Q3, Q4]

Q2 State Library Literacy Contacts (30 of 44, 68%)
Q3 SLRCs (32 of 40, 80%)
Q4 Local Programs (62 of 63, 98%)

	Q2	Q3	Q4
Materials: Libraries give access to new reader materials, books, audiocassettes, free collections, video materials/are excellent sources of instructional & tutor training materials/ provide access to wide array of materials	13	18	36
Less formal, non-school settings/fewer requisites for participation, non-threatening to adults, flexibility in learning and teaching/user friendly/nondiscriminatory/stigma-free/ respectful of individuality, individual need/neutral sites/ focus on personal development	15	9	19
Provide an atmosphere that respects confidentiality/ anonymity	3	2	3
Libraries are linked to so many other resources/organizations/ have the freedom to work with other agencies as community education partners/are a referral source to other education and social services	3	1	4
Libraries' hours are longer and year-round, allowing for 5 greater flexibility in scheduling literacy activities		5	2
Students become comfortable with library/learn library use/ can take part in library resources/programs before-while-after learning to read/exposure to speakers and activities not otherwise available/students can bring friends and family there	6	1	13
Libraries have trained, knowledgeable, dedicated staff/ administrative supports/programs already in place that literacy programs can draw on	2	2	11
Libraries have buildings with space for classes and meetings/quality space	3	2	13
Libraries have varied resources available	2	2	9
Libraries have technological resources for tutors & students/ including computers, faxes, photocopiers, etc./ Internet access	4	3	14
Libraries offer programs/access for the whole family/ are ideal setting for intergenerational activities	6	9	7
Libraries treat all patrons with respect as individuals, are nonjudgmental	5	1	4
Libraries have a public service culture and provide open access to everyone	2	3	1
Libraries are a recognized natural setting for reading and learning/they foster respect for and use of knowledge/ students are surrounded by peers who love to read/ shared love of learning to read	2	4	15
Location: proximity to home or work makes libraries very responsive to community need/very accessible/ central location	1	3	3

other two program types (as measured by the Slosson Oral Reading Test given at three-month intervals during a one-year period). Moreover, they did so even though they had much lower scores at the beginning than students in the other programs. In that same study, Laubach students using a traditional phonics-based program had the least gain, despite having tested highest at the outset.

**STATE LIBRARY
TECHNICAL SUPPORT
IS SUBSTANTIAL**

Question LP 12 provides another measure of the support services local library literacy programs have been getting from three primary sources, state library agencies, regional libraries within the state, and SLRCs. The data show that all three sources provide significant help in areas of essential need, and that substantial help comes to the local programs from other sources as well.

Several aspects of the response are worth highlighting:

First, despite the fact that earlier tables show

library literacy programs to be infrequently thought of by most SLRCs, the local programs indicate that the SLRCs provide them, on balance, with more extensive technical assistance help than state and regional libraries do.

Second, regional libraries have a larger overall technical assistance role than state libraries, and are the main source of public awareness help, policy development and planning, and fundraising assistance. They are also the largest provider of lending library resources.

Third, in the eyes of local programs, state libraries nevertheless provide some help in *all* substantive areas of need, and they have the dominant role in state advocacy and provision of grant funds. They also have a major role in state-wide conferencing activity.

Given the purpose of this study, the point that matters most here is that **although state library agencies are not the dominant source of most local program support, they are nevertheless a highly important source.**

Moreover, it is very significant that the local

Table LC1, cont'd

	Q2	Q3	Q4
Reference & research techniques are more easily taught in a library/training is available in the use of the library/opportunity to learn about role and importance of library	2	1	1
Libraries are subject to fewer regulations (e.g. class size, teacher credentialing)	3		2
Library patrons are a source of volunteer tutors	1		4
Libraries have a commitment to lifelong learning	1		3
Librarians/libraries are pro-active and offer a supportive environment	1		5
Libraries are avenues to information literacy/they instill sense of empowerment through reading and information services	2		2
Marketing and public relations efforts that are creative and ongoing	1		2
Literacy program is highly visible and has a built-in credibility because of location within the library/prestige of library enhances literacy program		1	12
Libraries are a source of staff training		1	2
Safety: Safe places for tutoring, especially in urban areas		1	1
Space and other services are free		1	3
Sources of literacy hotlines/helplines for all provider groups, adults of all ages	2		
Library-based programs are programs of choice	1		
Ability to sponsor tutor/student/business recognition events	1		
Flexibility—if something is not working, it can be changed immediately	1		
Quiet community-centered atmosphere		1	
More stable revenue stream if included as budget line item		3	
Statewide electronic network of information and materials		2	
Libraries sometimes provide the only literacy program in a community			1
Libraries provide access to federal and state grant money			2
Access to funding information/to funds			5
Literacy program is stronger because it can draw on other library programs/departments/services			5
Libraries give literacy programs direct contact with wide range of clients/with public			2
Library branches are a source of referral to main library literacy program/referral information is readily available/library staff is adept at spotting nonreaders and making referrals			3
Literacy program is part of library's WWW home page			1

Table LC1, cont'd

	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Volunteer tutors have an opportunity to recommend purchases for library's collection			1
Libraries are more trusted than other institutions			1
Students are exposed to diverse points of view			1
Library networks with large number of branches make extensive outreach possible			1
Inner-city locations expose students to cultural richness			1
Libraries help recruit volunteers, donors, and other program supporters			1
Libraries are a source of job referral to our literacy students			1

respondees report that their staff are paid less than their education counterparts in non-library programs, while an additional 9% are paid less than equivalent library personnel.

In other words, **salary inequities exist in three of every five programs.** That library literacy staff remain on the job as long as they do given this major disincentive is both amazing and admirable.

programs' think state libraries do less to help them than the state libraries themselves indicate they do.

For example, 50% of local programs say that state libraries regularly provide state advocacy services. But in LAPD 9, the corresponding state library response is 81%. For policy development and planning, the respective percentages are 8% and 53%! For professional staff development, they are 25% and 53%.

There are similar variations in the areas of national advocacy, state-wide conferencing, program and curriculum development, and evaluation and assessment.

In short, the state library role appears to be very much more extensive than Table LP 12 shows. The strong difference in the perception of the two groups is alarming, once again signalling poor communications and information flow between the two levels.

In any case, if local programs are to continue to offer anything resembling effective instruction and outreach, the state library agencies may well need to do more in the future, especially if the SLRC role is diminished.

PROBLEMS & DIFFICULTIES IN THE LIBRARY CULTURE

A final area of questioning in this sec-

tion looked at the advantages and difficulties that local library literacy programs experience specifically because they operate within a library culture.

Table LC 2 reveals some of the problems—from the perspective of the local programs alone.

Trouble competing for local education funds is the most-cited difficulty. Inadequate community understanding and lack of recognition and acceptance by traditional education sources are among the principal reasons for this handicap.

Compensation problems are a very close second. Some 47% of the

Low status in the eyes of non-literacy library staff also stands as a significant problem. About 31% of the programs report this as a constraint, which may explain in part the problem of lower pay.

ADVANTAGES & OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LIBRARY CULTURE

Table LC 1 explores the opportunities and advantages (or freedoms and creativity) that library literacy programs enjoy because they operate within a library culture— according to state library literacy professionals, SLRC heads, and the local programs themselves.

As the table shows, libraries are seen as inviting and supportive learning environments for a whole host of reasons.

Among the top advantages is that libraries provide an immense variety of free resources—books, video and audio materials, access to small and complex technology, quality space, trained and knowledgeable staff, and

other organizational supports. Individual programs of instruction located outside libraries could not afford such a rich accumulation of teaching and learning materials.

Equally important, libraries provide an inviting, non-threatening, stigma-free environment that is respectful of adult learners. They are

friendly settings, where students are constantly surrounded by peers and other library users who have a shared love of and respect for reading and learning, where knowledge is quietly celebrated, and where on a daily basis people gain and enhance control of their own lives through the ready acquisition of knowledge and information.

Befitting the nontraditional instructional approaches used and the clientele served by library literacy programs, libraries by their very nature provide needed flexibility. Library hours are longer and year-round, making it possible for literacy classes and activities to be scheduled more frequently and at convenient times. Because libraries are subject to fewer regulations than traditional education institutions, class size, teacher qualifications, and program content and methodology can be more freely customized to actual need. And programs can easily be redirected or adjusted if they are found wanting.

The quiet library environment is naturally conducive to learning. It is a trusted and safe haven, a very important issue in large urban areas. Its closeness to home and work makes it easy to get to, and its credibility and prestige in the community rubs off on the literacy program within.

Libraries are also seen by many of the respondents as comfortable environments for the whole family, an ideal setting for intergenerational activities. Indeed,

LC2. Please indicate which if any of the following problems your library literacy program has because it operates within a library culture. [Q4]

Q4 Local Programs (58 of 63, 92%)

Trouble competing for local education funds	48%
Lower pay than outside education counterparts	47
Low status in eyes of non-literacy library staff	31
Lack of top management support	19
Recruiting difficulties	17
Lower pay than other library personnel	9
No problems	14
Other (please specify):	29
Need more Board involvement.	
Concern about future funding.	
Lack of class space.	
Fundraising must be coordinated with other library fundraising priorities.	
Not associated with educational institution.	
Lack of full funding and staff.	
Limited in scope because of budget and space.	
Literacy regarded as a “sidebar” service in times of tight money.	
Purchase of materials must compete with other library needs.	
Public thinks we’re funded by the City.	
Short-term planning on part of library.	
Lack respect of trained educational providers: “You librarians don’t know pedagogy.”	
Overcrowding.	
Non-readers don’t want to enter the City reading institution, thus extensive public relations needed.	
Library “staff” sometimes worries more about library’s rules than customers’ needs.	

numerous indicators in this study show a strong and growing interest in family literacy programming among the public libraries involved.

Many other advantages and opportunities are cited in the table as well, some very thought-provoking indeed. For example, the inner-city location of many public libraries give adult literacy students exposure to a great variety of cultural resources...students learn tolerance and understanding through exposure to people of diverse background and viewpoint...libraries give literacy programs a direct line to a wide range of potential clients...and library patrons are a ready source of volunteers.

Obviously, the advantages an adult literacy program has because it operates within the library culture are substantial and varied. They far outweigh the problems summarized above, problems that stand as a challenge to caring libraries and political entities, not as an indictment of the programs.

Taken together with the purposes and goals expressed at the start of

this section, these benefits make it clear that library literacy programs are unlike any other, and that either on their own or in partnership with voluntary and CBO groups, public libraries are providing a vital and unduplicated service to hundreds of thousands of adults in literally thousands of communities across the country. In fact, in some communities, they appear to be the only source of adult basic skills help.

Library literacy programs provide better service because they can draw on the resources and attitudes of the library culture, but more than that, they *give back* immense benefits—to the libraries, to students and families, and to their communities, states, and the nation. Everyone benefits from their presence.