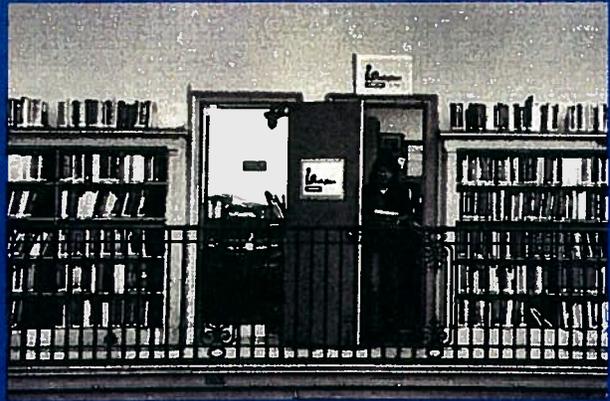
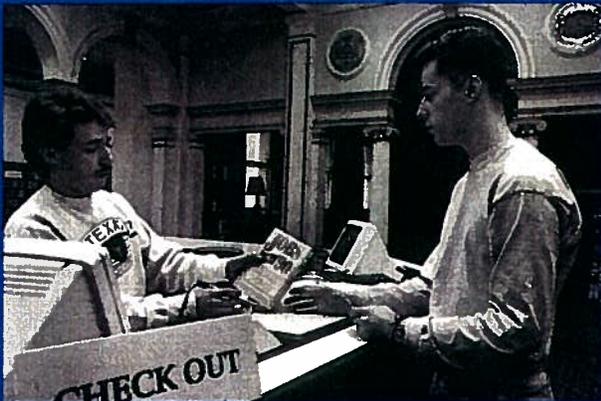


S E R V I N G

# JOB SEEKERS — AND — CAREER CHANGERS

A PLANNING MANUAL FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES



Part of the Public Library Development Program

Joan C. Durrance, Kathleen M. Savage,  
Mary Jo Ryan, and Stephen M. Mallinger

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Partnerships between public libraries and Education and Job Information Centers (EJICs) have a lengthy history. Originally defined in amendments to the Higher Education Act in 1976, EJICs first appeared in public libraries in New York in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation was a catalyst for stimulating the investment of both state and federal funds in launching these services. Soon after, the Kellogg Foundation's investment in public library EJIC projects followed in Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Washington. A related Kellogg Foundation project supported community learning and information centers in public libraries in four intermountain states: Colorado, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. Collectively, these projects as well as independent public library initiatives have created a rich heritage for the EJIC concept.

In the late 1980s, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the Public Library Association (PLA) formed a partnership to consolidate the lessons learned by EJIC pioneers to foster communication among EJIC libraries, to disseminate information about the projects, and to promote adoption of EJIC services among a broader range of public libraries. The first two phases of the PLA/Kellogg project funded a PLA/EJIC National Coordinating Office and advisory committee, a newsletter called the *PLA Linkletter*, and the production of a video, poster, and accompanying brochures built around the theme "Making a Living, Making a Life" to introduce EJIC services in a direct, accessible way to library managers, community leaders, and local officials.

In 1990, the Kellogg Foundation extended funding to a third phase—to produce this manual. It builds on the skills, techniques, service methods, and strategies learned in the Kellogg Foundation's state projects as well as Phases I and II of the PLA project. This manual is intended to inspire, motivate, and provide useful information to several audiences: librarians and other EJIC staff interested in improving their current services; library managers interested in beginning EJIC services and the staff they charge with designing the service; the public library community

at large—especially reference, adult services, and outreach librarians; library decision makers including state librarians; and library educators. The goal of the manual, then, is to address the following questions:

- How can library administrators know if a community needs EJIC services?
- How can library administrators and staff effectively plan these services?
- How can library staff develop partnerships with other local agencies in meeting these needs?
- What are the most effective strategies for responding to these needs?
- How can library staff best operate EJIC services?
- How can library administrators evaluate EJIC services?

In creating this manual, the lead author, Joan C. Durrance, and the Kellogg Phase III Advisory Council wished to place EJIC services in the context of other library services such as reference, information and referral, literacy, and outreach. An important part of this effort has been to relate EJIC services to the framework for public library roles defined by the PLA Public Library Development project manual, *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures (PRSPL)*.

Public libraries that have used the *PRSPL* manual may approach EJIC services from two perspectives: community needs assessment or role selection. Library assessment of community needs may reveal such factors as high unemployment rates, displaced workers, economic dislocation, literacy problems, or an influx of non-English-speaking residents. EJIC services are a logical response to such conditions. On the other hand, three of the roles defined in *PRSPL* (the Community Information Center, the Formal Education Support Center, and the Independent Learning Center) also provide a natural pathway into EJIC services. Even libraries not engaged in formal planning but with a strong historic commitment to information and referral services will find EJIC services to be a further extension of their program.

Whatever the library's path to EJIC services, it is clear that these programs develop and extend traditional library services in new and innovative ways. Needs based, client centered, and collaborative in nature, EJIC services provide a strong and flexible service response for a wide range of libraries wishing to make a difference in the lives of community residents and in the very fabric of community life. The members of the Kellogg Phase III Advisory Committee urge you to explore and take full advantage of these services.

Amy Owen, Chair, Kellogg Phase III Advisory Committee,  
Utah State Library Division  
Carolyn Anthony, Skokie (Illinois) Public Library  
Melissa Buckingham, Free Library of Philadelphia  
Gloria Coles, Flint (Michigan) Public Library  
Ronald Dubberly, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library  
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Vera A. Green, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh  
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Dorothy S. Puryear, Nassau (New York) Library System  
Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission  
Gary E. Strong, California State Library  
Eleanor J. Rodger, ex-officio, Public Library Association

Amy Owen



This manual is long overdue. Job and career questions are regularly among the most frequently asked in many reference departments—for good reasons. Each year millions of young people make decisions about what they will be doing with their lives. People periodically change jobs and even careers; this often requires additional education and training. In recent years the number of people who need education, job, and career information has greatly increased. Communities all over the country are experiencing the highest unemployment and underemployment in more than a decade. Many people who recently have found themselves out of the job market are unprepared for the changes they must make to find employment or embark on a new career.

Across America public libraries are among the most highly valued institutions in local communities. However, studies show that too many people fail to recognize that the library can provide assistance in solving a problem such as preparing for a job or changing careers. While librarians know how valuable getting and using information can be in solving problems, this is not so obvious to the general public. In the same vein and for the same reasons, the role that librarians play as providers of information is not clearly understood either by the public or by other agencies in the community.

A number of librarians have found out how to change those perceptions. For more than a decade public libraries in some communities have been recognized by job seekers and career changers as places they can go to get help and information as they prepare themselves for change. These librarians have developed services generically referred to as education, job, and career information centers (EJICs). Many EJICs were started by generous grants by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The experiences of pioneer EJICs funded by those grants greatly strengthens this manual.

In the course of developing my knowledge of EJICs in public libraries—and preparing to develop this manual—I made more than forty

visits to EJICs started by W. K. Kellogg funds. In addition, I asked for, and received, scores of brochures, posters, flyers, newsletters, and other promotional materials developed by other pioneering services in a number of states. This provided additional understanding of how these centers work, what they do to meet the needs in their communities, and how they get the word out about their services.

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has generously provided funds to the Public Library Association (PLA) to make this manual possible. I have been told by a number of EJIC staff members that they are very pleased that the manual has been developed. Over and over in the process of creating their own services, they had wished for more guidance as they ventured into this uncharted territory.

## **USING THIS MANUAL**

This manual is built solidly on need-based, community-centered practice developed by a large group of pioneers. They made mistakes at first as they experimented in developing a need-based approach. All learned the importance of working with other organizations in the community. By following the recommendations in the manual, you can learn from the successes of others and be able to avoid some of their missteps.

This manual will help you make the necessary community connections and to plan, develop, market, and evaluate services designed specifically to meet the needs of job seekers and career changers. By following the approaches presented here, you will be able to show the people in your community that, in addition to the things they know are possible at the library, there are, indeed, other ways they can get assistance.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of EJIC services and explains how these services meet needs. Share information from this chapter with library staff and decision makers as well as with community agencies and organizations to let them know the kinds of needs, approaches, and services that are possible.

Chapter 2, *A Need-Based Service*, identifies a set of specific needs commonly experienced by people who are looking for work, choosing or changing careers, attempting to start a business, or returning to school. People often come to EJICs with several different needs. By becoming familiar with the needs that actually are experienced by real people, you have taken the first step in preparing your library's response. Your clientele may need to identify and overcome problems that stand in the way of their making the best use of library and community resources, and your EJIC can help them do just that.

Chapter 3, *Strategies That Respond to Needs*, identifies a group of strategies that have been used effectively by libraries that have already experimented with delivery of these services. Several are familiar to librarians; others are new. These strategies include a variety of approaches designed to increase access to specialized EJIC resources such as the purchase of new materials, including self-assessment and career-advising

computer software, and the development of new ways to let people know about these resources.

Chapter 3 responds to research that shows that many people do not understand the services available at public libraries and that librarians often fail to respond to actual needs. It identifies effective approaches to the reference interview, presents ways to provide assistance by focusing on the client's need, and shows how EJIC staff can provide skill-building workshops and resource materials. The final strategies—forging connections with the community—focus on making links among service providers and raising awareness about these services.

The heart of the manual, Chapter 4, *Planning for a Successful Service*, shows how to prepare for and plan your EJIC. The planning process is need-based and community-centered. It builds on the approaches presented in PLA's *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries* process. This chapter takes a step-by-step approach that starts by preparing you to plan and concludes with helping you set priorities for service implementation. The planning process will help you assess your library's readiness for the service, determine the areas of greatest need, and set goals and objectives. Throughout this chapter you will find worksheets and checklists to help you collect the data needed to plan and shape your EJIC. For ease of photocopying, Appendix B, *EJIC Planning Process Checklists and Worksheets*, reproduces the worksheets. Use this chapter in conjunction with the information presented in the other chapters, especially Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 5, *Selecting and Evaluating EJIC Materials*, was developed by Kathleen Savage, a nationally recognized expert on job and career materials and a staff member at Cuyahoga County Public Library's InfoPLACE (Print Resources), by Stephen Mallinger, who guided the development of Workplace sites in Pennsylvania and currently serves as a Consultant in Library Development at the State Library of Pennsylvania (Software Resources), and by Catherine Allen, University of Michigan (Software Resources). It is an excellent guide to the literature—what is out there, who produces it, and what to look for when you select. At the same time it is a fine introduction to the rapidly growing world of career software products. This chapter provides detailed information about how to make collection development decisions, shows you where to look for valuable job information, explains what to look for in print and software, and much more. The chapter is arranged so that it can be used as an ongoing reference resource as you look for answers to career- and job-related questions.

An excellent supplement to Chapter 5 is *Serving Job Seekers and Career Changers: A Critical Bibliography for Public Libraries*, a detailed guide to specific titles, developed by Kathleen Savage. Its arrangement, by topics that roughly correspond to the types of needs EJICs attempt to meet, will help you identify resources that meet specific needs. For your convenience, the bibliography is three-hole punched so that you can add new titles to this important resource as you become aware of them.

Chapter 6, *Marketing EJIC Services*, was developed by Mary Jo Ryan, who led the development of these services in Nebraska libraries and who

serves as Public Information Officer for the Nebraska Library Commission, and by Cheryl Burley of the University of Michigan. The chapter will show you how to market and promote your library and change people's perceptions. Marketing, simply put, is a formal approach to identifying groups you are trying to reach; marketing helps you think about how best to reach the groups who most need your service. It reinforces the planning process and helps you to think about the specific services you are able to deliver. This chapter includes a number of examples of promotional materials that have been developed by various libraries with job and career centers to market these services. Captions for these brochures and those highlighted in Chapter 1 give valuable details including size, shape, color, and folding information. All materials were sent in by EJIC staff. Unfortunately, there was not enough room to include all the brochures we received. You may wish to contact some of the libraries listed in Appendix A, Selected Providers of EJIC/Economic Development Services, for additional ideas and publicity materials.

The last two chapters, 7 and 8, focus on various aspects of EJIC management. In Chapter 7 you will find suggestions about how to identify and prepare the facilities, how to select staff, what kind of training is most valuable and how to get it, as well as information about funding and grant writing. Chapter 8 presents valuable suggestions for evaluating this service. It includes sample survey and interview instruments to help you determine both how your EJIC is functioning and how well you are serving your clientele.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Increasingly there are a number of valuable resources to assist librarians who wish to develop job and career centers in public libraries. Many are referred to in various places in this manual.

### **EJIC Staff as Resources**

Appendix A, Selected Providers of EJIC/Economic Development Services, includes a number of established EJICs, a few libraries that have economic development services, and selected state library agencies and an association that have in the recent past provided assistance to job seekers and career changers. The list is arranged alphabetically by state. Consider these libraries as valuable resources for further information. This manual does not include names of coordinators because, in this field as in others, people change jobs and titles. The list may prove beneficial because people who are considering developing a new EJIC may decide to spend a day at an EJIC that is already in operation. EJIC staff are generous and always pleased to be of assistance.

### **PLA Members as Resources**

PLA's Adult Lifelong Learning Section (ALLS) is a focal point for librarians who are interested not only in job and career services but also

in literacy and other adult learning services. The ALLS Job and Career Information Services Committee is made up of an experienced staff of library job-and-career-services providers. This committee sponsors programs and discussions at national meetings. Programs have been held on developing EJICs and on various aspects of managing them. The committee has set up a one-on-one consultation program that can link those who need information about funding, marketing, planning, etc., with someone who has experience in this area. The linkages that PLA has across the nation are extremely valuable to those planning to start a job center. For the names of current committee members, check the *ALA Handbook of Organization* or call the PLA Office at ALA (1-800-535-2433).

### **Other Resources**

Chapter 7 provides information on other national associations that can provide help to developers of career centers. It also includes specific information about training resources.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This manual is the culmination of the efforts of a number of people and institutions. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation and its project officer during the years of Education Information Centers (EIC) funding, Dr. Arlon Elser, should receive special recognition for the encouragement and the wherewithal that made both the EJICs and this manual possible. Likewise, pioneers from New York State, too numerous to name, deserve thanks for their ideas and inspiration.

I would like to thank the many EJIC staff who welcomed me into their centers so that I could observe what they do and listen to their approaches to meeting client needs. I saw services I would not have imagined without my first-hand contact. These staff members were very generous with their time in answering my questions. These visits have been invaluable to this manual and to my other writings on these services.

In addition, scores of staff members from job and career information centers all over the country generously sent copies of brochures, posters, reports, and plans. All were appreciated and helpful. These materials have added considerably to my knowledge of what goes on in these centers and have helped me to understand the value of these services to their communities. Due to space considerations, only a few of the many materials that were sent are included here.

The manual has been enriched by the efforts of members of the Public Library Association's Adult Lifelong Learning Section and its Job and Career Services Committee. In 1985 the committee wrote the field's first guide to the development of services, *Job and Career Information Centers for Public Libraries*, published by ALA. These dedicated professionals have continued to inspire others to develop job and career services and have provided help for them along the way. It is important to acknowledge their efforts.

This manual has been shaped by a number of hands. Valuable suggestions were made by a number of practitioners, especially Jeanne Patterson, Stephen Mallinger, Mary Jo Ryan, Gloria Coles, Ruth Schwab, Steve Osserman, Vera Green, and Dorothy Puryear, among others, as they read and tested earlier versions of the manuscript. The manual was guided by members of a capable Advisory Committee whose expertise included both creators of these services and crafters of PLA's *Planning and Role Setting* process, whose names are found in the Foreword. The Advisory Committee was ably chaired by Amy Owen, a joint author of *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*. PLA's Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee provided guidance and recommendations as well.

Several individuals made special contributions to the manual. Jacquelyn Thresher deserves special recognition for her contributions to the ideas that are presented herein. Kathleen Savage, Mary Jo Ryan, Stephen Mallinger, Cheryl Burley, and Catherine Allen made special contributions to various parts of the manual. Cheryl Burley developed the manual's figures and worksheets; Amy Owen and Carolyn Anthony made valuable contributions to the final manuscript. Final shaping of the manual and paring it into the streamlined product you have before you was done by Rolly Kent, Bonnie Smothers, Joan Grygel, and others in ALA Publishing. The entire project was overseen by PLA's skilled director, Joey Rodger.

My work in the manual was enhanced immeasurably by the extraordinary support and assistance of my research assistants over the life of this project, Catherine Allen, Cheryl Burley, Heidi Weise, and Paula Gibbons. No faculty member has ever had more intelligent, capable, and dedicated staff.

Joan C. Durrance

# PUBLIC LIBRARIES

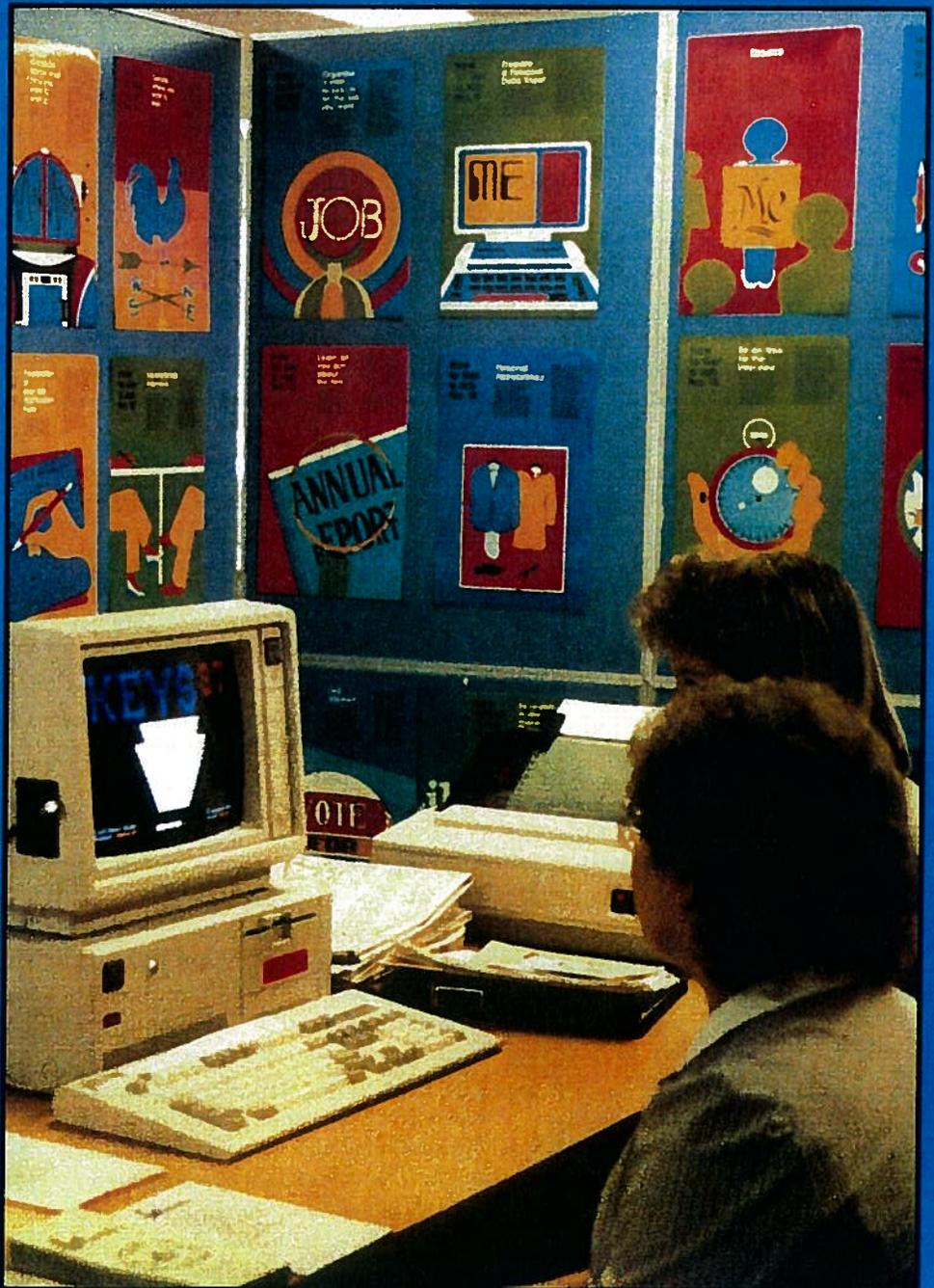
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## Public Library Services for Career Changers

AACR2 Revised: An Update for Public Services Librarians

A Second Look: Bibliographic Control of Videos



Joan C. Durando



Joan C.  
Durrance

Joan C. Durrance is an Associate Professor at the University of Michigan School of Information and Library Studies. Research for this article was funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

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## Public Libraries and Career Changers: Insights from Kellogg- Funded Sources

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*This article describes innovative services in public libraries in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nebraska, and Washington that have been designed to serve adults who are in a job, education, or career transition. These Kellogg-funded services are need-driven and client-centered. Library staff who deliver these services tend to spend a great deal of time working with an individual who is engaged in a process (e.g., looking for a new job, trying to re-enter the workforce, or exploring a career). Staff have found that it is important, therefore, to learn about these processes as well as the resources in order to provide services more effectively. This article also examines benefits of providing these services, knowledge needed to become a provider, strategies used to reach potential clientele, and evaluation of the impact of these services.*

---

A series of generous grants by the Kellogg Foundation, first to New York state in the 1970s and to Michigan, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Nebraska in the mid-1980s, to create Education Information Centers (EIC) has permitted pilot sites in these states to develop services around computer-based career assessment software (SIGI PLUS, Discover, Pennsylvania Careers, etc.) and develop a knowledge base built around the adult in transition, demographics of the workforce, and the changing world of work.<sup>1</sup> Each grant provided for multiple sites in each state with money for staff and equipment and for a state coordinator who took on the job of assisting in developing services in each site and providing the extensive training deemed necessary for these innovative services; 1990 marks the

final year of the three-year demonstration projects in the four states. These services build on knowledge gained during the late 1970s and early 1980s in New York, where Kellogg funds were used.

At a time when some reference departments put a five-minute limit on reference questions, a staff member in one of these projects may spend an hour with one person doing what some folks might call an in-take interview. Another hour might be spent either in bits and snatches (while doing other things), or exclusively, with someone using a computer software program designed to help the individual understand not only what is required (in terms of aptitude or education) for a particular job, but what kind of a personal mesh there is between a potential job and the individual's own values, preferences, and education. This same staff member may spend up to an hour with someone who has begun to narrow down his options and is trying to develop an

effective resume. There is no single pattern. There is great variety; however, staff in the Kellogg EIC centers spend much more time with the individuals they serve than most reference librarians do.

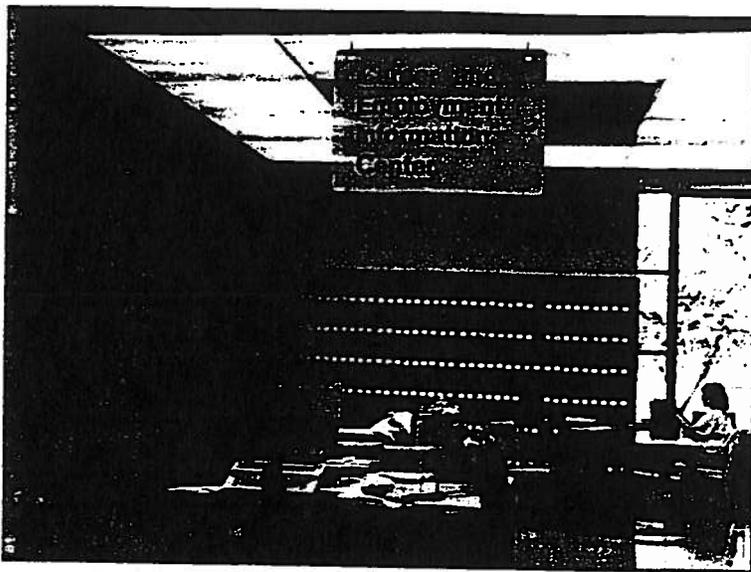
### Driving Forces for Creation of EICS

Since libraries are collections of books and materials, it is tempting to build services around materials. Innovative services like information and referral were built, not around materials, but around specific needs. Kellogg-sponsored EICs, likewise, were built around needs based on the economic downturns that were being experienced in both urban and rural communities during the early years of the 1980s.

One project coordinator has succinctly indicated the rationale for the development of these services in public libraries. There is, simply, a need and a demand for them:

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Manuscript submitted February 28, 1990; accepted April 9, 1990. See related information in ALLS Section News column, p. 118.



*Detroit Public Library Career and Employment Information Center (CEIC). Diane Cutler, CEIC Librarian.*

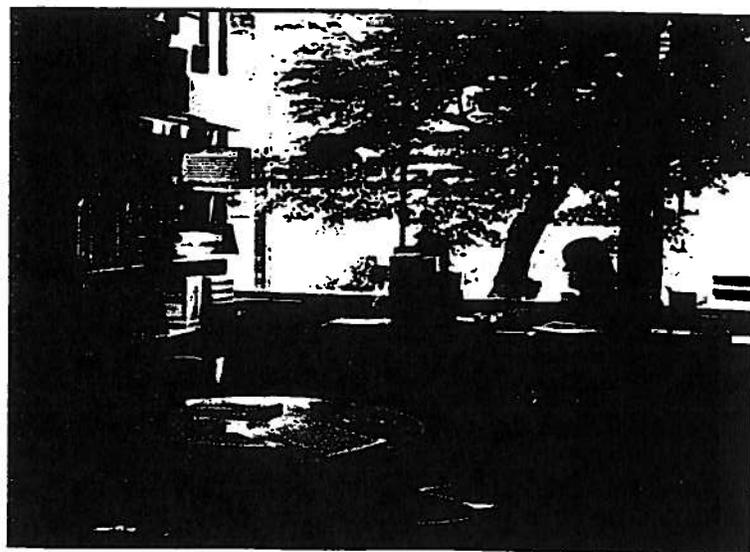
As long as the labor market in this country is characterized by rapid change which either requires workers to retrain or displaces workers with technological advances, there will be a demand for [these] services. . . For older workers [it] may be the only resource available to help them make sense out of an employment picture which is no longer recognizable. For other workers dealing with a job market dominated by low-paying service positions, new directions for training and education will be important. For all workers, the skills necessary to successfully change jobs on a cyclical basis, to plan for periods of unemployment between jobs, and to assess the changing role of work in their own lives will require the resources and counseling services of an Education/Job Information Center, services that are easily accessible and available with minimal bureaucratic interference.<sup>2</sup>

The Kellogg sites, funded initially in New York state, are now found in public libraries from Newport, Washington, a tiny town in the eastern part of the state with a population of 1,200 and no traffic lights, to the massive Free Library of Philadelphia, located in the city of our nation's birth, which has more traffic lights than Newport has people. In each of the Kellogg pilot states, there have been EICs in urban areas and in small, isolated communities.<sup>3</sup>

In Washington, staff at Raymond, just a few miles from the Pacific Ocean, and Newport, on the Idaho border, try to reach those individuals in isolated communities whose lives in the past have depended on timber. Sites in Everett, Longview, and Spokane sought to reach residents in those communities that have experienced economic ups and downs. The director at Newport writes "EIC stands for EMPOWERMENT INSPIRATION CENTERS in this very rural Northeast Washington State county. . . with perhaps the highest unemployment rate in the state for over the past decade."<sup>4</sup>

In Michigan, the communities chosen include Flint, whose unemployment figures for years have been higher than most any city in the nation; Detroit, a city suffering from a full range of social and economic ills; Lansing, the state's capital city that also suffers from economic problems; Battle Creek, a city in the western part of the state with a range of economic problems; and Marquette, Michigan's northernmost city and one that serves the entire Upper Peninsula that has long suffered economically. The locations were chosen to represent different parts of the state that exhibited economic development problems. The director of Flint's Career Opportunities and Planning for Employment (COPE) Center indicates that "The underlying goal of COPE is to prepare persons for the transition from a manufacturing society to a service society."<sup>5</sup>

Pennsylvania sites—Philadelphia, Monessen, Washington County, Chester County, Pittsburgh, and Scranton—represent all geographical parts of the state. Each of these sites has experienced economic problems; some are quite severe. The public library in Monessen, for example, serves a former steel town. The library, in fact, was built across the street from the now closed steel plant. Its rusting hulk reflects in the



*Everett (Washington) Public Library Education/Job Information Center (EJIC). Anita Johanson, career advisor.*

plate glass window of the public library. The state coordinator notes that "EICs have brought whole new user groups of adults seeking new life options into public libraries: blue collar unemployed, single mothers on welfare, the chronically unemployed, etc."<sup>6</sup>

Nearly all of Nebraska is rural. The nation's farms in the 1980s suffered more than at any time since the Great Depression. The largest EIC, at Columbus, is in a city of 30,000, a metropolis by Nebraska standards. There are EICs in public libraries in Crete, West Point, Holdrege, Alliance, and Broken Bow. In the western part of Nebraska, in the sand hills, communities are very isolated. Many are still out of range of a public radio station and are miles from the nearest college. The local public library in these communities takes on a very special and unique cultural and social role. Most libraries in these communities are run by community

librarians whose knowledge of librarianship is gained through the guidance of a state library staff member and on-the-job experience.

### Inventing a Service Approach

Vera Green has never had a more rewarding job. She now serves as the coordinator of The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Workplace, a Kellogg-sponsored service designed to reach adults in transition. She says of her job, "I get such satisfaction from my job. I leave work at the end of the day knowing that the work I have done has made a difference in somebody's life."<sup>7</sup>

Ms. Green and a host of other professionals who staff these Kellogg-sponsored centers (at some centers they are librarians and at others they may be counselors or adult educators) are inventing their jobs as they go along. They are not the first innovators in public libraries. These services owe much to other

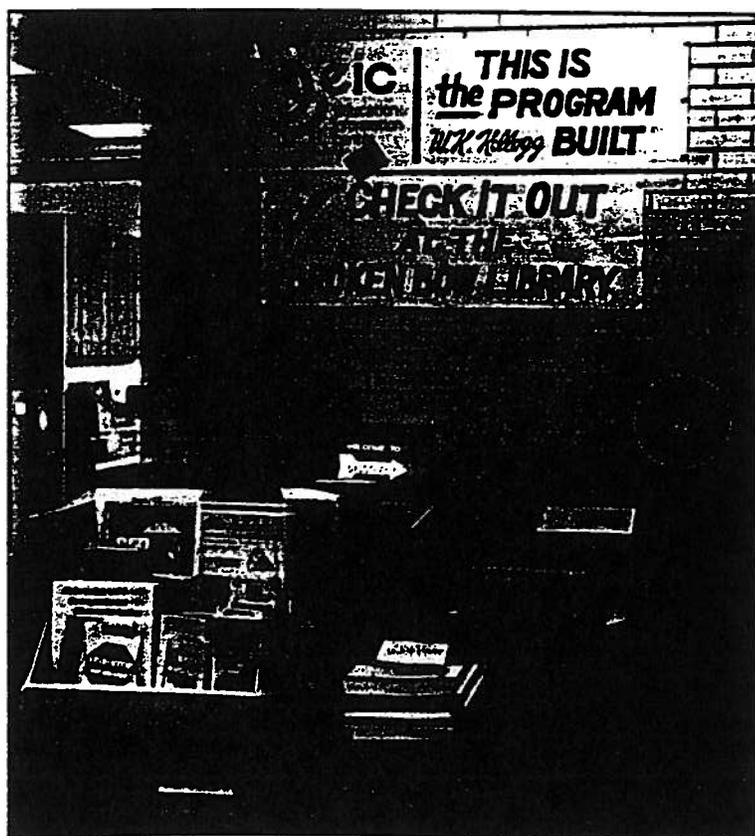
innovative services that have preceded them. Their work builds on reference service, public library job and career information centers, earlier Kellogg and LSCA-funded Education Information Centers, information and referral services (I&R), and on the tradition of public library work in adult education.<sup>8</sup>

The public library staff members who are working to create this user-based service share the excitement expressed by Vera Green. The voices of just a few give a hint of the experience:

In a nutshell, we have expanded our usefulness and our audiences. Our image is one of being aware and in tune to the needs of the times, rather than a repository for 'old' books or a place just to find recreational reading.<sup>9</sup>

The Kellogg Project literally has changed librarianship and library-client service models in our state.<sup>10</sup>

EICs help people discover themselves and light their own fires. The results are empowered learners and seekers and more satisfying lives.<sup>11</sup>



*Broken Bow (Nebraska) Public Library Education Information Center (EIC). The Broken Bow center is typical of other sites in Nebraska where emphasis is placed on material provision and sharing, as well as giving users access to the computer software DISCOVER.*

### What Does the Kellogg Model Look Like?

There is a great range of practice subsumed in the Kellogg-funded projects. The National Advisory Committee to this project decided in late 1989 that the term "EIC" does not transmit the full meaning of the service. Members felt that a more meaningful way of describing these services would be to characterize them as being built around the specific needs of adults who are in a job or career transition, thus they decided to refer to them as "services which meet the needs of adults in transition."

These client-centered services are not limited to strong materials collections and reference service in education, job, and career information, even though such collections provide an excellent resource for all of these centers. In most, but not all locations, practice involves extensive client-centered activities that may include advisement and coun-

seling and that focuses on the job seeking/career change process. In a few sites it also means provision of specific job notices and active participation in writing resumes. The range of practice is probably the result of practice being invented by incumbents with a variety of backgrounds; some are librarians, others have backgrounds that include social work, counseling, adult education, or, in a few cases, community experience.

Most Kellogg-sponsored sites, known by such names as Job and Career Information Center, the COPE Center, Work Place, Work World, and Education Information Center, have a common focus on the client and the process in which the client is engaged. This strongly influences the nature of the practice. It means, for example, when someone comes to a staff member and asks for a book on resumes, he is likely to be asked about the nature of the need rather than just being led to the resume books. Perhaps a referral to a social service agency, an appointment with an interactive computer career assessment program, or a workshop on resume writing is more appropriate for a specific need than a resume book. Very often, then, in EICs, a "needs assessment" interview that focuses on the individual's problem is conducted initially to find out how *best* that particular person might be served.

At most sites there is at least one computer and one interactive computer program that focuses on career decision making; often there is a career assessment program, such as Discover or SIGI PLUS, and an occupational information system (OIS) designed around a specific state's resources and needs. In addition, most EICs have word processing, resume writing, and other software and one or more computers. Sites that lack these sophisticated computer career assessment programs seem to focus more on another client intensive activity such as intensive resume writing assistance.

Computers at some busy sites are

in use most of the time. Therefore, at many centers, walk-in use of the computers is impossible. Discover, SIGI PLUS, and other career-assessment software require a minimum of an hour of uninterrupted time. The use of this computer software coupled with a service that focuses on needs have combined to produce a practice pattern that may mean that the patron (client)—rather than just dropping in, getting served, and leaving—will make an appointment for service. This appointment may be made to use the computer, get assistance with the software, go over a resume with an EIC staff member, or it can be used for a diagnostic (i.e., needs-assessment interview) or a career-advising appointment. In busy centers, appointments both for staff time and computer time are the norm.

#### **Selection of Strategies for Future Services**

There appears to be a wide range of intervention strategies (i.e., different ways that the EIC staff member chooses to work with individuals). These may include the diagnostic interview that focuses on the nature of need; information provision; a helping interview that focuses on facilitating various actions of the client; career advisement that includes discussion of the nature of the job process and selected careers, including interpreting computer printouts, training and instruction (about materials, computer programs, interviewing, job search process, etc.); and referral to other agencies.

This service may involve very personal, professional-client interactions. The professional may learn intimate details of a person's life (such as a marital break-up, job loss, or personal illiteracy). There are even occasional tears or expressions of anger. When the environment and the staff create a climate that facilitates it, there is a great deal of trust displayed by the client. Given these circumstances, some staff

have expressed concern with the open "fish bowl" environment of the library and have made alterations in the environment to provide, when necessary, a space more conducive to extended discussion.

An individual may have several visits over a period of weeks or months with staff. Those who have begun to take advantage of the services and have become clients are known by name to the staff and, likewise, know these staff members by name and expertise. To keep track of people who come back over a period of time, a few staff have developed confidential client records that they keep in desk drawers or filing cabinets. Several EIC staff members indicated that embarrassment over not being able to remember what someone had told them during a previous visit led them to develop these rudimentary files to jog their memories. However, since client files are considerably out of the norm for practice in librarianship, most staff have not created them. Because many adults in transition go through a similar process, some sites have developed sets of programs and workshops that are repeated at regular intervals; typically these programs, on resume writing, the job search process, interviewing, etc., are conducted by a variety of individuals from various community agencies.

The adults who seek help at these centers are *engaged in a process* (e.g., looking for a new job, trying to re-enter the workforce, exploring a career). Because these staff members realize that they cannot provide adequate information until they understand the individual's needs, strengths, and liabilities, they encourage their clients to discuss the process they are engaged in, often in conjunction with examining the results of computer-generated printout from Discover or SIGI PLUS. Therefore, the role of the librarian (or the counselor who has been given this assignment in the library) is to assist in a problem-solving process.

These staff see themselves as fa-

ilitating a process that may include several visits using the career assessment software, working with the EIC staff member on specific tasks, discussing a computer print-out, or obtaining a referral to another agency. They have learned that before people can use the library's information or the community's resources, they may need to find out more about themselves in a structured fashion and to examine their own resources. Individuals may need to gain additional knowledge or new skills before they can adequately use information that is readily available in the library.

Therefore, EIC staff indicate that it is not enough to direct a client to a source and just say, "You will find what you need over there." They have learned that while the information may be *available* in the library, it may not be *accessible* to the person who needs it if that person is inadequately prepared. These librarians who seek to reach adults in transition have learned that they need to understand how individual characteristics (like the lack of motivation or the inability to read) get in the way of the process. They need to know why someone has asked for a particular title or resource.

These librarians who seek to serve adults in transition are a group of dedicated inventors who

have been a part of an ongoing experiment in professional practice funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. They are trying out a range of strategies to work with people in their communities who need information and guidance on the most important activity in most people's lives—work. Each day these library staff stretch the limits of librarianship, trying out a variety of ways to reach and serve adults in transition. They will discard some, alter others. Some will become integrated into the regular bag of professional tricks. The staff at these Kellogg-funded centers have developed services designed to help adults who are struggling to find more meaningful jobs and get the education needed to give them a brighter future. Since most people spend over a third of their lives working and even more time than that preparing for work, this is a logical commitment for public librarians to make.

### Outreach Strategies

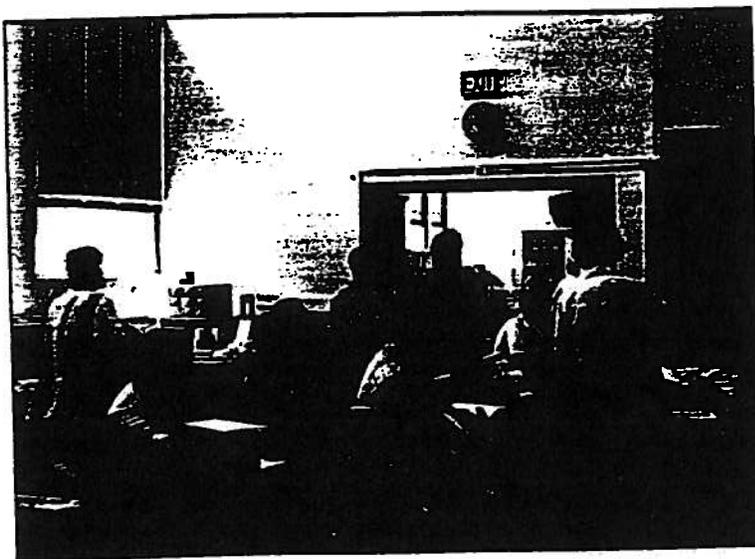
These librarians have learned to target their services so that they can use their resources where they are most needed. This means that they have needed to learn more about those who need these services most. *Linkletter* (a newsletter

funded by the Kellogg Foundation as part of a grant to PLA from fall 1987–February 1990) was filled with articles on how to reach high-risk populations and others who can best benefit from a service designed for adults who are seeking to better prepare themselves for the world of work.<sup>12</sup>

Librarians who seek to reach out to those who need these services most frequently work with other agencies to develop effective strategies. The services are built with the cooperation of agencies in the community. Over and over again, state coordinators stressed to their sites that when attempting to meet needs, they must supplement or enhance, but never duplicate. Providing relevant service involves cooperating with other services that are also attempting to assist those in need as well as the ability to inform these agencies adequately of the library's unique role. (These are the same principles used by those who attempt to work in literacy, adult learning, and information and referral).

An excellent example of how a rural librarian took a low-key approach to working with Extension (an essential agency in a rural community) occurred while I was visiting the western Nebraska community of Broken Bow. On the day of my arrival, Joan Birnie, the library director, also the EIC coordinator (small-town staff wear many hats), had, after some months been able to get on the agenda of the Cooperative Extension Board. She was given fifteen minutes. I observed her presentation on the nature of the materials and computer programs that had been purchased through the Kellogg grant. She brought several different types of books and discussed the new computer software. In addition, she left a stack of promotional materials. As she left she said, "Just bring those books back to the library any time. Take a look at them first."

The next morning, as I met with the library staff, the telephone rang. It was the extension agent



Carnegie Oakland Public Library Workplace, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A "drop-in" group from a local rehabilitation center.

who had been so intrigued by her presentation the night before that he and his assistant decided to come over right away to talk with her more about what the library could do for the community with these new resources. The presentation had been just long enough to show how valuable these new resources could be to the community. The county agents spent an hour developing a strategy to use Extension resources and influence to publicize these new services that would greatly benefit their community.

David Remington, director of a ru-

merce was mainly limited to the preparation of bibliographies. Now, however, those agencies are 'thinking library' and realizing that by providing resources, referral potential, and a non-threatening atmosphere, public libraries are ideal sites for local, cooperative initiatives.<sup>14</sup>

The best thing about EICs is the excitement this service has generated among community groups, agencies, and organizations outside the library profession. Their perception of the public library is changing dramatically as EIC libraries become an integral part of community-wide human services planning and program delivery mechanisms.<sup>15</sup>

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**In most, but not all, locations, practice involves extensive client-centered activities that may include advisement and counseling and that focuses on the job-seeking/career-change process.**

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ral center in eastern Washington, indicates:

The EIC program has brought this rural public library system into close, daily collaboration with the Spokane Community College District, the Washington State Job Services, Northeast Washington Rural Resources Development Association, the ProPend Orielle Economic Development Association, and other agencies which would benefit those seeking to empower themselves.<sup>13</sup>

The details in each community differ, but the pattern is the same. When librarians develop services that are designed to play a role in helping adults in transition, they work cooperatively with the other agencies that are engaged in the same process. Each agency has a unique role. Together they are far more effective than when they work in isolation.

Comments from two state coordinators show the benefits that return to libraries from this collaborative approach.

EICs have produced new alliances and networks for the state library. Prior to this project the state library's interaction with labor, welfare, or com-

#### **Knowledge Needed to Serve Adults in Transition**

Librarians who work with adults in transition have gained an excellent understanding of the job-transition process. They know the importance of the variation in the individual's skills, knowledge, and attitudes to the process; given this understanding, these staff put the focus on *the person with the question* rather than on *the question*.

The librarian who sets out to provide relevant services for adults in transition needs, first of all, to understand the process that adults go through when something thrusts them into seeking assistance in a job or career change. The staff at the Kellogg-funded sites gained this expertise in several ways: through extensive training in understanding adults in transition, counseling skills, job-seeking process, and economic development issues in their communities. In addition, they gained knowledge in networking and developing contacts with a variety of social service agencies, job service centers, nonprofit organiza-

tions, career counselors, and others who assist adults or students in the job market. In each state, the coordinator guided this knowledge development and, in addition, developed a strong network among the libraries that chose to undertake this labor-intensive service.

What these staff felt that they needed in the initial months of developing the service can be of real interest to library staff members who are considering developing such services:

- (1) role clarification, including local decisions as to which new roles, advising, counseling, teaching, and consulting, were appropriate;
- (2) computer-advising skills including learning how to use computer-advising software (e.g., Discover, SIGI PLUS);
- (3) change strategies—he need to be able show other people on the library staff the importance of these services;
- (4) management skills, including time management, goal setting, budgeting, etc., since there were many competing demands on their time;
- (5) referral and networking skills;
- (6) gaining the ability to continue the project past the funding period;
- (7) knowledge of the potential clientele and better skills in working with them;
- (8) marketing skills;
- (9) knowledge of the local, state, and national employment and educational picture; demographics, projections; federal and state agencies and programs; both basic and current information; and
- (10) how to design and conduct a workshop.<sup>16</sup>

Much of the initial training was designed by a faculty member in counseling who had had considerable experience working with the major career advising software packages: SIGI PLUS and Discover.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Evaluating the Service's Impact**

Staff at these centers look beyond the *Output Measure for Public Libraries* to find appropriate methods to evaluate these services.<sup>18</sup> These librarians seek to find out who their clientele are so they ask demographic questions. They need to know how these adults in transition

use the Center. They want to know how these individuals found out about these services. Some want to know how coming to the EIC helped and what impact it has had on the lives of those who came. Each center has had individuals regularly indicate the value of these services to their lives.

Here are two examples that appeared in the *Linkletter*. The first, after listing a full range of services that she had used, indicated that the Career Center had been, "most important of all":

a 'port in the storm', a place to go with solutions to my problems. . . . The fact that there exists a place to go that can provide a different outlook on what begins to seem to be insurmountable problems can provide a necessary boost in spirits.

I'm now enrolled in Eaton Business College as a computer/dental assistant student and have high hopes for the future. It all started with the Kellogg Foundation and the nice people at Everett Library. Please keep it up. I'm sure there are others like me that need the first stepping stone.<sup>19</sup>

### Beyond Kellogg: What Next?

Criticisms of outreach programs, particularly those funded by federal dollars during the "golden years" of federal grants have been that they seldom extend beyond the funding period.<sup>20</sup> However, some innovations funded during this era have become integrated into library practice. Although it is too early to say, it appears that many of these programs will far outlast their Foundation support.

Due to the success of the Kellogg project in Pennsylvania—and the leadership of the state coordinator—libraries in that state in 1989 became the first in the nation to receive Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds of \$600,000; the money has been designated to help dislocated workers. The office of the Democratic Floor Leader of Pennsylvania noted, "This is the first time JTPA funds have ever been directly designated for library pro-

grams. It presents an excellent opportunity for libraries to demonstrate their effectiveness in working with these target populations."<sup>21</sup>

On the local level, these Kellogg-funded projects are becoming integrated into the library at many sites because in their three years of operation, the library directors came to see that they were meeting a real need in their communities. Creative funding packages are being developed with other agencies to purchase updates of some of the career software (which is for some sites prohibitively expensive) or to provide outreach services. A number of staff, originally paid out of Kellogg funds, are now fully supported by local funds. Services that started in a central library have been expanded to branches.<sup>22</sup>

These services designed to meet specific needs are quite likely to survive and expand. The service at Cuyahoga County Public Library has been operating since it was initially funded by an LSCA grant in 1979.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, a number of services in New York, originally funded by Kellogg and LSCA funds, have continued on local funds.<sup>24</sup> This continuation is fostered because these libraries are: "attract[ing] persons who never use the library and turn them into enthusiastic users; . . . provid[ing] a service to the public that is highly visible and that the media will publicize; enhanc[ing] the library's image and develop[ing] community support at revenue raising times; build[ing] cooperation and networks with institutions, agencies, businesses and industries."<sup>25</sup>

### Epilogue: Developing a Guide, Videotape, and Brochure

Building on the knowledge gained by these and other services designed to meet the needs of adults in job and career transition, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in March 1990 generously provided a grant that will result in a guide to the development of these services, which

will be published by ALA at the Annual Conference in 1991. The manual will be built on the experiences of library staff from across the nation who have developed these services and on the experience gained from the Public Library Development Project. It will focus on planning, developing, and evaluating the services within the context of the needs of the specific community.

A videotape, poster, and a brochure, also funded by the Kellogg Foundation, has been prepared for release at the PLA National Conference in March 1991. The manual and the video will feature vignettes presenting the value and benefits of these services. All of these materials will help make a case for public library services for adults in job and career transition and for communities in economic transition. Together they will transmit—to the library community and to a variety of community groups—the role that can be undertaken by local public librarians as partners in community-wide efforts to ensure economic well-being and vitality.

### References and Notes

1. I am very grateful to the Kellogg Foundation for providing me with one of the most exciting opportunities of my professional career: the opportunity to observe an innovative, client-centered practice funded by the Kellogg Foundation. It has been my privilege to observe Kellogg project staff in nearly thirty sites in four states. I have seen a group of dedicated professionals inventing a new way of dealing with people who come to the library to get assistance. This article is based largely on my observations at these sites.
2. "Where Are We Now? The Best Thing About EICs from the Perspective of. . ." Judy Fuller, *Linkletter*, Feb. 1990, p.2.
3. Each issue of *Linkletter* (Fall 1987 through Fall 1989) contains details about local sites.
4. "Where" . . . David Remington, p.3.
5. "EIC Project Sites Report; Michigan: Roderick Macdonald," *Linkletter*, Winter 1988, p.3.
6. "Where" . . . Stephen Mallinger, p.3.

7. Report by Vera Green to the National Advisory Committee at the ALA Midwinter Meeting, Jan. 1990.
8. See Joan C. Durrance and James Nelson, "Educational Information Centers Invest in People," *Public Libraries* (Winter 1987), p.153-56; Thomas Childers, *Information and Referral: Public Libraries* (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1984); Marilyn Jacobson, *New York State Education Information Centers Program: Summative Evaluation Report* (Albany, N.Y.: N.Y. State Education Department, 1984); Lynn E. Birge, *Serving Adult Learners: A Public Library Tradition* (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1981); Gail A. Schlachter, ed., *The Service Imperative for Libraries: Essays in Honor of Margaret E. Monroe* (Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1982); Kathleen Heim and Danny P. Wallace, *Adult Services: An Enduring Focus for Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1990).
9. "Where" . . . Margaret Harding, p.2.
10. "Where" . . . Stephen Mallinger, p.3.
11. "Where" . . . David Remington, p.3.
12. Examples of these short, practice-based articles in *Linkletter* include:
  13. "Dealing with the Hispanic Client" (Spring 1988), p.3-4; "Ten Points on Working with Inmates and Ex-Inmates" (Fall 1987), p.3-4; Service to Labor" (Summer 1988), p.2-3; "EICs Linking Public Libraries to New Community Allies" (Summer 1988), p.3-4; "Rural Economic Development: Nebraska EICs" (Fall 1988), p.1-2; "Marketing: Getting Started" (Fall 1988), p.4-5; "The Joy of Resumes" (Spring 1989), p.7-8; "Going to the Library Could Land That Job" (Summer 1989), p.3; and "Special Issue: Focus on Women and Minorities" (Fall 1989).
  14. "Where" . . . David Remington, p.3.
  15. "Where" . . . Stephen Mallinger, p.3.
  16. "Where" . . . p.2.
  17. Results of training audit conducted by Joan C. Durrance in July and August 1988 at sites in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nebraska, and Washington.
  18. Cynthia Johnson, Dept. of Educational Psychology & Administration, Education Building II, Rm. 214, California State Univ., Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90840.
  19. Nancy A. Van House, and others, *Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures* 2d ed. (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1987). Note: Each of the Kellogg-sponsored states worked with Formative Evaluation Research Associates to develop an evaluation plan suitable for that state.
  20. "More about People Helping People," *Linkletter*, (Summer 1988), p.4.
  21. See Kathleen Weibel, "The Evolution of Library Outreach 1960-75 and Its Effect on Reader Services: Some Considerations." Campaign, Ill. Univ. of Illinois. Graduate School of Library Science, occasional paper number 16, Dec. 1982.
  22. "PA JTPA Funding a First-Workplace Gains National Attention," *Linkletter* (Fall 1989), p.1.
  23. See, for example, "What's Happening: Pennsylvania," *Linkletter* (Summer 1988), p.6.; and "Detroit Public Library Branches to Offer EIC Services," *Linkletter* (Winter 1989), p.1.
  24. "InfoPLACE: Career Counseling at Cuyahoga County," *Linkletter*, (Spring 1989), p.3-5.
  25. Interview with Jacquelyn Thresher, Feb. 18, 1990.
  26. "InfoPLACE," p.3-4.

## Libraries Have to Keep Up as Well

What's all this talk, a friend wanted to know, about Minneapolis' downtown library being obsolete and in need of replacement? Why, the library was built only twenty-nine years ago," he said, "at a cost of eight million hard-earned taxpayer dollars. The place ought to have a lot of good years left."

"Maybe so," we confessed. After all, if our friend can still get along with his 1961 model black-and-white TV set, then maybe Minneapolis could get along with a 1961 model central library. These were the opening two paragraphs of an editorial that appeared in the *Daily Times*, Ottawa, Illinois, on Friday, Oct. 5, 1990. It goes on to have the "friend" admitting that he got rid of his TV set in favor of a high resolution color set with cable-capability and a VCR beside it. The 45 RPM record player has been relegated to the dustbin, and the AM radio is of little interest because he now has an FM stereo with a compact disc player. The telephone is cellular and includes an answering machine. There is a computer in the den, and he plays audio tapes that read books to him on the way to work. But he can't understand the need for a new library facility. As he says . . . "the one we got is just fine. I can even remember when it was built—my grandpa took me downtown to see it."—G.R.S.

## **Kellogg Funded Education and Career Information Centers In Public Libraries**

**Joan C. Durrance**

*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*

A series of generous grants by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to public libraries in several states (first in New York, and later in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nebraska, and Washington) has in the last several years resulted in the creation of a number of education, job, and career information centers. These centers have enriched services in libraries by bringing librarians in direct contact with other professionals, most notably career counselors and adult educators, and by making available to library users interactive career counseling software and career guidance services.

There is a great range of professional practice subsumed in these Kellogg funded education information centers (EICs). These centers, usually start with a very strong materials collection, interactive software packages, and information services needed to support the needs of job seekers and career changers. Most EICs, known by such names as Job and Career Information Center, Work Place, Work World, and Education Information Center, provide extensive client centered activities which include advisement and counseling regarding the job seeking/career change process. At some sites there are career counselors working at the library; at others librarians refer clients to the services of career counselors.

These services have provided badly needed, free assistance to citizens in well over a hundred communities in the funded states. Their success has been due to several factors: their design—which focuses on the needs of the individuals, a well designed training package, a community based approach which involves working closely with ap-

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propriate agencies in the community, and a willingness on the part of public library directors to experiment with new modes of public library service.

### Design

EIC practice in many, but not all sites, includes as a major component at least one interactive computer program which focuses on career decision making; often there is a career assessment program such as DISCOVER or SIGI PLUS and an occupational information system (OIS) designed around a specific state's resources and needs. In addition, most EICs have wordprocessing, resume writing, and other software and one or more computers. Sites which lack these sophisticated computer career assessment programs focus more on such client centered activities as resume writing assistance.

Computers at the busy sites are in use most of the time. Therefore, in many centers walk-in use is impossible. DISCOVER, SIGI PLUS, and other career assessment software usually require a minimum of an hour of uninterrupted time. Thus, the computer software coupled with the nature of the need have combined to produce a practice pattern which may mean that the client—rather than just dropping in, getting served, and leaving—will make an appointment for the first convenient time that works for both the client and the EIC staff. This appointment may be: to use the software, to get assistance on how to use the software, to go over a resume with an EIC staff member, for a diagnostic or needs assessment interview, or for a career advising appointment. In busy centers, appointments for both staff time and for computer time are the norm.

Because of the similar nature of many questions, some EICs have developed programs and workshops which are repeated at regular intervals. Usually these programs, on resume writing, the job search process, interviewing, etc., are conducted by a variety of individuals from various community agencies.

There is a wide range of intervention strategies used. These may include the diagnostic interview which focuses on the nature of need; information provision; a helping interview which focuses on facilitating various actions of the client; career advisement which includes discussion of the nature of the process and the variety of careers, including interpreting computer printouts; training and instruction (about materials, computer programs, interviewing, job search process, etc.); and referral to other agencies. Due to the nature of these

services, some staff have made alterations in the library environment to provide, when appropriate, more privacy than is usually found in a public library reference area.

Three anecdotes can serve to illustrate how people have come to use these library based education, job and career information centers.

### *Mary*

Mary, a forty-year-old woman, first visited the EIC in her local library on a tour with the local Displaced Homemaker Program. She had not worked outside the home for several years. Most recently she had been a school bus-driver, a job she didn't really like and one that had no fringe benefits. Some years earlier she had worked as a clerk/receptionist. She was quite anxious to find a job. She later returned a number of times. While at the library she used SIGI PLUS, an interactive career guidance computer program, quite a few times, consulted other career counseling materials, discussed her options with library staff, and was referred to a career counselor. As a result of her sessions at the "EIC", she obtained a job as a clerk typist and developed plans to take a course in travel and tourism.

### *Raoul*

Raoul is a young Hispanic with a wife and child to support. Not too long before coming to this country from Mexico, Raoul graduated from college with an engineering degree. Unable to find a job that utilized his skills, Raoul had worked in a series of low-paying, menial jobs. His English-language skills were poor, and he had very little confidence, and limited knowledge about how to find a job. At his local library's EIC where a counselor was available to work with him, Raoul learned how to relate his background to finding a job. At the same time he worked with a librarian to identify appropriate information and materials designed to help him prepare his resume and to interview more effectively. The EIC staff at the library helped Raoul structure a job strategy and referred him to a local agency that helped minorities find employment. In just two weeks, Raoul found a job in an engineering company that had other Spanish-speaking employees. Shortly after that, he let the staff know that he was very pleased with his new job and that he had begun on his own to plan for continuing education.

### *Cindy*

When the local glass factory closed, Sally, the librarian at the Kellogg funded job center and career center in a western Pennsylvania public library went to the factory and gave a seminar on job seeking skills. She told those that she talked with that if they came to the library they could use the computer which was equipped with a career advising program, they could check out materials on careers, and they might, as well, talk with the library staff about the process of retraining to get a new job.

One person who took the librarian up on her offer was Cindy, a 32 year old single parent with a high school education, who lost her job when the factory closed. Cindy had been back a number of times over the intervening months. Over a period of six months Sally worked with her using DISCOVER and Pennsylvania Careers software, showed her how to get financial aid information, and provided her with encouragement. During that time Cindy decided that she wanted to go to college. After expressing her concern about the feasibility of enrolling as a freshman at her age, she enrolled in a small college in the next community. Throughout her transition from laid off worker to college student, the librarian gave her encouragement, guidance, and information.

### Training

These innovative public library services required an ambitious training program which was generously provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. These services in some libraries built on existing services designed to provide information to job seekers and career changers. Other libraries were simply responding to perceived needs in their communities. However, in all libraries, the staff were venturing into new territory, and training in career counseling techniques was an important element in the effective development of the services. An audit of training needs conducted by this author incorporated the concerns of librarians who were initiating these services into an extensive training program developed by Cynthia Johnson discussed in the next article by Sampson.

Staff needed to learn more about: conducting different types of interviews effectively; reference, assessment, and career counseling; the world of work: resources which can be used to help people; and what people go through as they are in the transition process. They needed to learn more about how to provide support and encouragement needed by job seekers and career changers. They felt it important to increase their skills in making appropriate referrals to resources outside the library.

Johnson's extensive experience in career counseling and training resulted in a training program designed to give librarians the knowledge needed to understand the decision needs of adults in transition and to work with them through the transition process, to understand the nature of career counseling, to gain the ability to work with career counseling software, and to learn when and how to refer their clients to career counselors. Given major differences in the programs

in participating states, Johnson tailored the training for each participating state. Her training has been supplemented by state based programs and continuing education programs at annual meetings of the American Library Association.

As a result of the training they have received and the "bootstrap" process of learning on the job, many of these staff have become knowledgeable about career decision-making and planning, the job search process, small business development, and the educational and work-related resources of the community.

### Interaction With Community Agencies

These are community centered services and require librarians to interact with a variety of educational, social service, and employment services. Other professionals in communities served by libraries which provide these services have come to realize that libraries can facilitate the role that their agency plays in the community by taking advantage of the ability of librarians to find, organize and disseminate information. Testimonials from agency heads illustrate this new understanding of what the library can do for them:

"My agency is always looking for new resources. I couldn't possibly research all that I need to. The library provides the information we don't have the time and expertise to obtain."

"The library made us more aware of what other agencies have to offer."

More and more community agencies are sending their clients to the local public library for information and assistance that just isn't available other places. Librarians regularly get notes from agency staff who in the past had completely underestimated or misunderstood the role that the library plays in the community.

"My eyes have been opened. The Library has become a focal point in this community."

"The community now thinks of the Library as more than just books . . . it is a place to get real and needed 'life' information."

"I was surprised that the library has so much to offer."

### Experimentation with Staff and Services

Public library directors have shown their willingness to experiment in a variety of ways with staffing and services. Some library directors such as those in three communities in Washington: Longview, Everett, and Spokane, and several New York sites hired career counselors (or individuals who were in the process of getting their counseling degrees) to run their services. Some sites in New York and Nebraska have made career counselors available at the libraries at certain times or on call. Libraries in most of the sites have used counselors in workshops they provided on specific career decision making topics.

Library managers, in several communities, including those in Flint and Lansing, Michigan hired other professionals, including adult educators and social workers, to develop the programs in their centers. Since these are experimental services, there is no one model. As these services come to the end of their Kellogg funding period, it is time to examine the longevity of professionals other than librarians in these positions. In New York, many counselors have remained well past the initial Kellogg funding period.

The future is optimistic for these experimental services in public libraries. The positive experience of pioneering staff bodes well for adoption of these services by other public libraries. The Kellogg Foundation saw public libraries as logical homes for EICs because libraries "are accessible to every element of the population and perceived as neutral, consumer-oriented, and non-threatening."

### The Future

Over a decade the Kellogg Foundation provided millions of dollars to start EICs in a number of states. The experiment has spread to a number of other communities in the states where Kellogg invested in EICs. In an effort to facilitate adoption by still other libraries, Kellogg has recently provided a generous grant to the American Library Association to create a guide to the development of these services.

This guide is being written by the author of this article, a faculty member at the University of Michigan who has observed service in over 40 EICs in four states.

The new guide, to be published in mid 1991, builds on a decade of public library experience in providing these services. It will be part of

**a series of guides to planning and developing public library services sponsored by the Public Library Association and published by the American Library Association. It will assist library decision-makers across the nation to develop new ways that their libraries can better serve job seekers, career changes, and other patrons in need of problem-solving assistance.**

# EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION CENTERS INVEST IN PEOPLE

JOAN C. DURRANCE and JAMES NELSON

*"I'll invest my money in People"—W. K. Kellogg*

*"...to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."—ALA mission*

## MEETING PEOPLE'S NEEDS

Darlene P. was an unemployed, thirty-two-year-old single parent with three children, living on public assistance. Her aim was to become a licensed practical nurse, but she failed the entrance exam required for admittance to the program. She visited an Educational Information Center (EIC) at her local public library, discussed various options with the staff, and enrolled in an EIC program that focused on test-taking skills and vocabulary building. After completing this "customized" EIC tutoring program, Darlene P. had gained enough skill and confidence to retake the entrance exam and ultimately to complete the nursing program. When Darlene graduated from the program, she invited her EIC instructors to attend the ceremony. The skills she gained while studying nursing helped her to pass the state licensing exam two years after she initially visited the EIC, and she was hired in a program that served physically and mentally retarded adults. Darlene is no longer on welfare and is making a vital contribution to society.

Mary R. is a forty-year-old woman who first visited the EIC on a tour with the local Displaced Homemaker Program. At that time she was quite anxious to find a job. She later returned to the EIC a number of times. While at the EIC she used SIGI-Plus, an interactive computer program, quite a few times, took advantage of career counseling materials, discussed her options with EIC staff, and was referred to a career counselor. She had not worked outside the home for several years. Most recently she had been a school-bus driver, a job she didn't really like and one that had no fringe benefits. Some years earlier she had worked as a clerk/receptionist. As a result of her sessions at the EIC, she obtained a job as a clerk typist and developed plans to take a course in travel and tourism.

Raoul G. was a young Hispanic with a wife and a child to support. Not too long before coming to New York from Mexico he had graduated from college with an engineering degree. Unable to find a job that utilized his skills, Raoul had worked in a series of low-paying, menial jobs. His English-language skills were poor, and he had very little confidence or knowledge about how to find a job. At the EIC, where a counselor was available to work with him, Raoul learned how to relate his background to finding a job. At the same time he worked with an EIC librarian

to identify appropriate information and materials designed to help him prepare his résumé and to interview more effectively. The EIC staff helped Raoul structure a job search strategy and referred him to a local agency that helped minorities find employment. In just two weeks, Raoul found a job in an engineering company that had other Spanish-speaking employees and shortly after that let the EIC staff know that he was very pleased with his new job and that he had begun to plan his own continuing education program.

Martha M. was a forty-two-year-old mother raising several children on income from her job as a home health aid. She told the EIC staff that she had no high school diploma and was convinced that she could not pass the GED exam. She was introduced to the New York State external degree program, was given a learning contract, and was introduced to an adviser. The EIC also provided her with advice, materials, and the information needed to work on her own toward obtaining the GED, which she did six months later.

When people approach an EIC for help, a librarian initially helps them identify and retrieve the information they need. As in the case studies above, if there are specific problems that require more than information to solve, the client may need one or more of the following: advice and guidance to clarify goals (such as Darlene's hope to become a practical nurse) and the chance to sort out opportunities or examine ways to overcome barriers that seem to make it difficult to reach a goal (such as Darlene's failing the entrance exam). Together, the client and EIC staff try to eliminate barriers; for example, to help Darlene prepare for the previously failed exam, the EIC staff used the online educational opportunities file "The Learning Connection" to identify a tutor. If the client needs educational or career counseling, it might be provided by a librarian with the necessary training or by an EIC counselor, if there is one on staff. Typically these interviews occur in a quiet place—a private office space or a secluded corner. If there is not a counselor on the library staff, the client may be referred to an education or career counselor in a network agency.

## HOW EICS WORK

When Raoul approached the EIC staff, he actually came in looking for a second job, since his first job was not adequate to support his family. It was through these discussions that the staff learned that Raoul had many skills he was not using. Raoul sat down with a career counselor on the library staff who worked with him to increase his confidence in job seeking. Li-

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brarians worked with him until he was able to use information that would put him in touch with an organization that eventually helped him improve his English skills and another that helped him find a job with the engineering firm.

Raoul's problems show the value of a counselor in the library setting. A counselor on the library staff is analogous to a counselor, nurse, or dietitian on the staff of a public school. These are professionals who perform special functions for an institution. Some libraries are not large enough to support a counselor in the library. If that is the case the library staff may refer clients who require a counselor to appropriate agencies.

When Mary first approached EIC staff members, she was very unfocused. She had no idea what she might be able to do. She only knew that she was unhappy in her job and that she needed a full-time job with fringe benefits. Her case shows the effectiveness of the use of an interactive computer program such as SIGI-Plus or Discover designed to help the client gain insight into personal preferences, skills, abilities, and values. The combination of receiving information about career options, using SIGI-Plus, and the counseling helped Mary make a decision and implement it. The EIC staff were able to see a transformation in Mary from an anxious, unfocused person to one who had more confidence in herself and, moreover, who had developed a plan for the future.

These cases show the effectiveness of networking between community organizations and the EIC. First of all, Darlene's tutor and additional assistance for Martha were identified from library-developed files; their cases show how library information and referral (I & R) files and contacts foster networking among agencies through library referral. What is important to note, however, is that Mary might not have found the EIC at all if she had not been introduced to the library through her participation in the Displaced Homemakers Program. Networking involves two-way communication and results in coalition building between the library and other agencies attempting to respond, in their own ways, to societal needs.

These case studies oversimplify the situation, for these transformations didn't happen overnight. EIC staff members didn't immediately know how to solve problems or identify agencies that might know how. It may take EIC staff members some time to clarify what an individual actually needs (just as a reference interview may be required to find out what information is actually needed when a question is asked). Sometimes those who come to an EIC can't even articulate what it is they want, because they aren't sure. They are more likely to know what they *don't* want: "I've been doing this job for fifteen years and it really isn't going anywhere." EIC librarians try to find out more about the need and then make the needed links—with materials or information, a counselor, or other needed expertise or resources.

The individuals in these case studies came from different life experiences, and they had unique needs that resulted from their own situations, but they all had one thing in common—a public library-based Education Information Center that changed their lives. The experience of an EIC helped them to develop self-confidence, a positive sense of what they could do, and the skills needed to achieve their occupational goals.

The case histories show why individuals come to an EIC; they also illustrate the major service components of library-based EIC: education and/or employment I & R service, including counseling and tutorial opportunities or links to those who can provide them. The EIC staff can work with individuals to assess their career goals and to identify educational and job opportuni-

ties. They can help identify factors in a person's background that might serve as a barrier to achieving their goals. EIC staff may help a person map out a plan of training or start a client on the road to a degree program.

## WHO USES THE EIC?

The New York EICs can provide the library field with valuable information about how they work and who uses them. Most who have gone to an EIC in New York are women, and most have at least some college education. The typical user may be underemployed; that is, she or he may be working, but not in a satisfying or rewarding job. About 20% are unemployed.

Users came to an EIC because they needed information about jobs (56%), had trouble deciding on a career goal (38%), were confused about their future (36%), or needed information about college (36%). Totals add to more than 100% because of multiple responses. Most came away with new information of value to them (81%) and/or became more aware of their own interests and abilities (51%). Some became clearer about their goals (46%), received support to do something about their situation (34%), or began to feel better about what they were doing for themselves (32%). Nearly all of them (97%) felt that the EIC had been either very or somewhat useful to them.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF EICS

The EIC concept was born in the 1970s and is a product of experiments in providing educational assistance to help adults become more self-reliant and productive members of society. The EIC was defined by the 1976 amendments to the Higher Education Act as "an institution or agency, or combination of institutions or agencies, organized to provide educational information, guidance, counseling and referral services."

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## EICs and other services such as bibliographic instruction in academic libraries and literacy and adult learner programs in public libraries are changing the way that librarians think about their roles.

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EICs, funded cooperatively in the state of New York by the Kellogg Foundation and the federal and state government blossomed during the late seventies and early eighties. In New York, Kellogg funded EICs in Brooklyn Public Library, Nassau Library System, Clinton-Essex-Franklin System, Nioga Library System, the Regional Learning Service in cooperation with Onondaga County Public Library, Westchester Library System, and the Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System. These libraries provide the model that will help the library field undertake this new role.

## HOW EICS CHANGE LIBRARIES

EICs are among the new services in libraries that can help librarians become more aware of the parameters of their profession and the methods of practice that are possible. EICs can help the profession establish what Donald Schon, author of *The Reflective Practitioner*, refers to as a "role frame."<sup>2</sup> EICs and other services such as bibliographic instruction in academic libraries and literacy and adult learner programs in public libraries are changing the way librarians think about their role

Librarians in the past saw their role as responding to a variety of questions asked by the public, which focused entirely on books—recommendations regarding specific titles or requests for information that could be found in books. Now, of course, these questions include a variety of community information requests.

The case histories above, drawn from New York Education Information Centers, illustrate ways that EICs change libraries. People who come to an EIC may return several or many times to the EIC for assistance. They become clients in the true sense of the word. At the EIC, library staff may spend extended periods of time with a single client. EIC users are likely to need more than just isolated bits of information—they also need assistance in problem solving. They may need to work with EIC staff to sort out ways to overcome barriers that stand between them and job or educational opportunities before they can use the information that the library has ready to provide them. Librarians and others on the library staff are called on to aid in this problem-solving and sense-making activity, which prepares the client to be able to use needed information.

### **PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THE ROLES THEY UNDERTAKE**

All professions undergo changes in their role frame. A hundred years ago, most librarians were reluctant to provide information directly to users. Instead they directed individuals to the books themselves. Over time, the roles acceptable for librarians changed. The adoption of community information services in the 1970s is an example of a change for public libraries. Institutions are, of necessity, conservative and slow to change. As a result, changes in roles must be articulated and discussed by practitioners before they can be accepted by other professionals and by library management. Only then will libraries be able to accept the role change.

Roles have been of real concern to public libraries in recent years because of the rapid changes that have occurred in public libraries. Indeed, one of the major accomplishments of the recently completed Public Library Development Project (PLDP) was the development of a manual entitled *Planning and Role Setting: A Manual of Options and Procedures*. PLA recognizes that public libraries are assuming a variety of roles in their communities, and this manual is designed to assist in that undertaking. The manual recognizes that there are many roles that public libraries may choose to adopt, but emphasizes that these roles be based on the needs of contemporary society.

The librarians who have developed EIC services are among an ever-growing group who have pioneered in a problem-solving role for librarians. They have decided that the business of libraries is to assist people who need not only information but also assistance in finding it, interpreting it, and overcoming barriers to the use of it. They have decided that librarians and the counselors who work in libraries need to help clients understand their own interests, abilities, and barriers to achieving educational goals so that they can take better advantage of opportunities. These librarians see themselves as education and information problem solvers. In the process of stretching the role they are engaged in what Donald Schon calls *problem setting*: "the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, and the means which may be chosen."<sup>5</sup>

### **ALA/PLA/KELLOGG COORDINATING PROJECT**

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has made a major commitment to support the development of library-based Educational

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**The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has made a major commitment to support the development of library-based Educational Information Centers, first in the state of New York and, more recently, through a grant of more than \$2.6 million to libraries in Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Washington.**

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Information Centers, first in the state of New York and, more recently, through a grant of more than \$2.6 million to libraries in Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Libraries in these states that are receiving Kellogg funding to develop EICs include: Lansing Public Library, Flint Public Library, Detroit Public Library, and the Peter White Public Library in Marquette in Michigan; John A. Stahl Public Library in West Point, Broken Bow Public Library, Columbus Public Library, Slagle Memorial Public Library, Crete Public Library, and Holdrege Public Library in Nebraska; Scranton Public Library, Monessen Public Library, Chester County Public Library, Washington County Library, the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh, and the Free Library of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Longview Public Library, Spokane Public Library, Everett Public Library, and Raymond Public Library in Washington.

In addition, Kellogg has recently come into partnership with ALA and the Public Library Association to coordinate this effort. Entitled "Increasing the Impact and Effectiveness of Education Information Centers," the PLA-EIC project consists of the PLA/EIC National Coordinating Office and a National EIC Advisory Committee. The EIC coordinating project is the result of two basic axioms. First, the guiding principle of the Kellogg Foundation has been its founder's statement, "I'll invest my money in People." Second, a basic tenet of the American Library Association has been "to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all." The challenge of this project is to increase the effectiveness of EICs in public libraries.

The EIC coordinating office is designed to foster networking among the Kellogg-funded sites. Networking will be facilitated by periodic meetings of EIC site staff and through a number of other methods including the project's newsletter, the *EIC Linkletter*, which will report on training and evaluation activities, program ideas and tips, news from various EICs, methods of improving EIC services, and a variety of other topics. Librarians interested in learning more about the project may obtain a single copy of the *Linkletter* at no cost by writing the PLA/Kellogg EIC coordinating office. Each volume of the *Linkletter* will be available on a cost recovery basis.

### **THE FUTURE OF EICS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

The future is optimistic for EICs in public libraries. The positive experience of the pioneering librarians and the new trend toward role setting in libraries bode well for public library adoption of EICs. The Kellogg Foundation sees public libraries as logical homes for EICs because libraries "are accessible to every element of the population and perceived as neutral, consumer-oriented, and non-threatening."

EIC libraries see this service as a logical extension of the helping role of librarians, an enlargement of the role through assumption of problem-solving elements. Librarians have

evolved into the EIC role, some argue, through the adoption of information and referral services and services to the adult learner in the 1970s.

Dorothy Puryear of the Nassau Library System in New York, former president of the Community Information Section of PLA, sees a bright future for EICs in public libraries. The hardest part of assuming the role, she finds, is selling librarians on the idea—a problem faced by all innovators. Once a librarian has decided to develop an EIC, there is no turning back. Puryear remarks, “Librarians who have accepted the idea of the EIC are amazed at the satisfaction that comes in helping EIC clients solve educational and job problems, plan for the future, and get their lives on track. It is very rewarding.” And, she adds, “an

EIC service may be the most critical and needed service a local public library can offer its community.”

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# A Call to Action:

## The Power of Personal Stories

by *Joan C. Durrance*

**B**etsy Gibson, director of the Butler (Pa.) Area Public Library can't say enough about the stories she is told by people who have been helped by the Library's WORKPLACE Center, coordinated by Judith Fleming. WORKPLACE is designed to help adults make informed decisions about jobs, careers, and education. Ms. Gibson is regularly approached by people in the community who tell her about the valuable assistance that they, someone in their family, or a friend have received. This praise often comes in the form of a story. This director says that these stories show how valuable the library is to the community. Since the development of WORKPLACE, she is convinced the library has become even more valuable, more central to what goes on in the Butler area. As a result, the Butler Area Public Library has benefited, not only from the good feeling that comes from being able to more effectively help the people in the community, but from the additional support that has come from new funding sources, which in the past had not considered helping the library.

Librarians like Betsy Gibson, who have developed services designed to increase access to information that people need to live, learn, work, and govern effectively, are both delighted and puzzled by the responses from people who find out about these services. Librarians across

the country who have created need based services are convinced by the comments they receive that a large number of people simply do not know that they can get information at their libraries to help them solve the problems of daily life. Research backs up these hunches.<sup>1</sup> While most people know that they can check out books at the library, large groups of people know only vaguely that they can get information at the library. Most people (this includes businessmen, elected officials, job seekers, citizens, and others) who need to solve problems are not aware that they can get assistance at the public library.

ALA President Patricia Glass Schuman challenges librarians to overcome these barriers and alert citizens of their right to know and the ability that librarians have to help them get the information they need.

Our impact can be massive if we speak out; if we inform people about the crucial role librarians have in making their right to know happen; if we articulate our message to the media in ways that will influence opinion leaders and decision makers; if we insist on being heard.<sup>2</sup>

When librarians work with citizens on community problems, the impact begins to be felt almost immediately. When the word gets out that there is help available that can be tailored for their own needs, people who haven't used libraries since their childhood come to the library. For

example, job and career center librarians say that most of their clientele are new to the library. They came to use these services because a friend or relative who had heard about them had passed the word on or they came because they had been referred to the service by an agency representative with whom they had been working. Many of the people who come to job and career centers and to other community centered services come with a story. You were able to help "my neighbor," "a colleague at work," "my brother," etc. These people then begin to tell the story of how valuable libraries and librarians are in their own words, based on their own experience.

### **The Power of a Story**

All over the country in small, rural communities and in the largest cities in the nation, in public, academic, school, and special libraries, librarians have begun to see library service through the eyes of people who have experienced it and through the stories that show how a librarian has made a difference to their lives. Stories can have an incredible power to distill human experience. Librarians most commonly present their work in the form of statistics that show variables such as the number of volumes in the library, circulation per capita, reference questions answered (completed), programs given. In an age when public funds are limited and governments increasingly find it necessary to lay off staff, statistics such as those most commonly used send a weak message about the centrality of library services to the viability of the community and no message at all about what librarians are able to do and how they can help assure a citizen's right to know.

In the past librarians have been reluctant or unable to share stories about how they help people or how they made a difference in people's lives. In her inaugural address, President Schuman challenged librarians to recognize that at a time when the national treasure we call the libraries of this nation are under siege, librarians can no longer passively assume that the American public knows the role that librarians play as organizers and disseminators of information.

If we truly believe that information can be used for powerful purposes, we must persuade people that librarians dispense tools for empowerment. We must convince them that the services librarians offer are an essential part of the solution to problems such as illiteracy, drugs, poverty, crime, pollution, illness, and unemployment.<sup>3</sup>

### **Stories Explain How Librarians Can Empower**

Some librarians have discovered that when people in their communities talk to their friends, family, and col-

leagues about the kind of help they received at the library, others come and ask for the same kind of assistance. This is not surprising. Researchers know that people tend to get their information from people they know.<sup>4</sup> These friends are influenced by a "word of mouth" introduction to library services, one that has been filtered through the experience of a "satisfied customer." For example, people frequently come to libraries that have job and career information centers and start their queries by saying something like this:

My friend came here and got help getting his resume in order. He ended up finding a better job than the one he left. I just got laid off and I wonder if you could help me, too.

Anecdotes have the power to show people in a community how librarians help. Not coincidentally they change the perceptions these people have of what kind of help to expect to get at the library.

Stories and testimonials serve other valuable functions. They show the trust that people in the community have in the library staff. Trust is a by-product of the development of a relationship. People who have stories to tell about how they have been helped usually know the name of the person who helped them. In this sense stories are a reflection of a warm professional relationship. In addition, anecdotal information helps librarians understand better what is valuable (and what they might do better). Finally, anecdotes and testimonials send powerful messages to library managers and funders that the library is providing a valuable service in the community.

During the past several years with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, I have watched libraries in a number of communities enhance their services to job seekers struggling to stay afloat in a very severe recession. During this time I have collected a number of stories about how librarians have helped people who have experienced lay-offs, job changes, or the effects of underemployment.<sup>5</sup> Stories about how library staff helped come in the form of thank-you letters, telephone calls, or follow-up visits. They show how librarians can play a part in the process a person goes through to break out of a dead end job or to rebuild a life that has been disrupted through job loss.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Right to Find Career Assistance**

A recent Gallup poll showed that "almost two-thirds of adult Americans would try to get more information about their career options if they could chart their careers again."<sup>7</sup> This study and many others like it show that people need help "to use the information to make decisions about their

participation in the labor force." The following story shows the kind of help that is likely to be available at a library job and career information center.

When the glass factory in Washington County, Pennsylvania closed, Sally McConnell, the librarian at the Workplace center at Citizens Library in Washington went to the factory and gave a seminar on job seeking skills. She told her audience that if they came to the library they could use the career advising software, check out materials on careers, or talk with her about choices and options. Laurie H., a thirty-two-year-old single parent with a high school education, was one who decided to investigate what the library had to offer.

Over time Laurie's librarian worked with her using career advising software, discussing options, and providing encouragement. During that time Laurie decided that she wanted to go to college. Although she was excited about her decision to go to college, she was also apprehensive about this major life decision. College had not entered her mind before working with the WORKPLACE librarian. She worried that she was too old.

Laurie received encouragement in her decision, guidance on how to approach the admissions interview, and valuable information about financial aid. To let Laurie know that she really cared about what happened to her, the librarian suggested that she come back and let her know how things were progressing. Laurie is now preparing for a new career as a technician and is proud of her decision to pursue a new career. She commented, "I feel like I am starting a new life and I'm very optimistic."

This story shows that librarian Sally McConnell not only provided the information Laurie needed, she also helped her see that she needed information. In all likelihood, if Ms. McConnell had not gone to the factory to do a workshop, Laurie would not have known that she could take advantage of the library's job and career information center. Laurie and many other blue collar workers are not regular library users and are not aware that they can get the information they need at the library. Laurie is typical of many former non library users. She has learned to take advantage of this knowledge treasure in her community. Working with a librarian has literally changed her life.

The outpouring of thanks and testimonials show that in many communities librarians are giving people the kind of

help that they need. These are just a few of the testimonials that librarians who help job seekers have received:

I came to the library with only vague ideas and the staff helped me percolate them down to something specific. I got help making connections with resources in the community and just generally got help seeing how to proceed. Thanks!

When I walked past the library, I used to just think books, books, books. I didn't know they could help me find schools. The counselor [at the library] showed me a lot of catalogs for adult education courses I needed to improve my skills.

You gave me excellent advice the best I received during my job search. Without it I would probably still be looking for a job.

Testimonials like these attest to the fact that librarians are seen by some as professionals who can help people lead more productive lives. Outreach librarians and librarians who provide literacy services, services to shut-ins, job and career services, economic development programs, and others often have notebooks and file folders of stories that show, not only how much their services have helped, but frequently how much the beneficiaries of these services have learned about their "right to know."

It should not go unnoticed that these stories bring benefits to the library as well. Directors have told me that the testimonials and stories they hear offer vital proof that in these tough economic times people in their community know that library staff are making a vital contribution to the health of the community. These testimonials may be essential to continued funding of these newest (and thus most vulnerable to cuts) services in the library.

I get more letters from satisfied users about this program than any other library service.

People have changed the way they think about the library here. They now see that we can help them with solutions to everyday problems.

### **THE RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT ONE'S HERITAGE**

Librarians in schools across the nation are facing cut-backs by administrators who see only a collection and assume that once it's there, the job is done. Because of football's high visibility, similar mistakes, such as assuming that the equipment for football games will substitute for the coach, are not made. School librarians, however, can use stories to show how what they do makes a differ-

ence in the lives of the children with whom they work. The story of how students at Carrillo Intermediate School in Tucson, Arizona learned about their heritage sends a powerful message about the role the school media specialist can play in helping students learn about their right to know about their heritage.

Stella Encinas, a fifth grader at Carrillo Intermediate School in Tucson, Arizona, learned more about her heritage through a program developed by librarian Carol CribbetBell. Stella and other students at this central city, magnet school wrote a book, *Celebrations in Our Pueblo*, to highlight the variety of ways Tucson's people have celebrated holidays through the years. Stella interviewed a barrio resident about *Quinceaneras*, the celebration girls enjoy on their fifteenth birthday, and learned how the celebration has changed over time. "Now I'm looking forward to my *Quinceanera* and maybe I'll do some of the same things they used to do, just for fun!" Stella added, "Most people have forgotten about traditions from the past. That's why this book is important - to help us remember." In developing oral histories students have learned about themselves and have managed to save a part of Tucson's culture. Librarian Carol CribbetBell, who developed this program, has seen it touch the lives of many young people. "I wanted to help bridge the gap between the eastside kids and the barrio children and give the minority youngsters a strong sense of their own culture, traditions, and language. At the same time, I hoped the Anglo children would learn to appreciate the culture of the community in which they are growing up."

### RELUCTANCE TO COLLECT STORIES

Stories like these show how librarians help ensure the right to know. Yet many librarians have not yet begun to find out how they, personally, have helped. There has been little response from librarians to the call by President Schuman and the ALA Public Information Office for stories. Many librarians simply don't know how they have helped their clientele. If we don't know how we help, how can we be assured that we are doing the right things? Researchers Dervin and Dewdney found that when librarians found out the nature of the problem that precipitated a reference question (in essence, why the information was needed), they were far more able to provide the kind of information that was really needed.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, traditionally, librarians have been reluctant to try to find out why people need information. The most com-

mon reason given for this hesitancy is that it would represent a breach of confidentiality. Isn't it strange that other professionals regularly obtain confidential information about their clientele? These professionals simply don't betray the trust and reveal the confidential information. Some librarians argue that it isn't any of our business to know why people need information. If it is our business to increase access to information and to assure the Right to Know for citizens, then we will probably be better able to proceed if we know more about the need. People will not disclose any more about the need than they think that the professional is worthy of knowing. Indeed people only bring to librarians those questions they think can be answered by librarians.

One librarian is quoted by Dervin and Dewdney as musing that the problem that comes with an increased ability to find out what people need is that "then you have to find an answer. It's much easier to tell them where the 600s are, or that the book they asked for isn't in." That librarian's tongue-in-cheek comment has strong implications about what *does* happen when librarians really provide the information people need. Once this happens, librarians become trusted helping professionals who can provide valuable assistance in problem solving. When a librarian becomes trusted, it is a natural step to begin telling stories to others about how this professional found information, made a link to an appropriate community service, conducted a workshop, informed, took the time to listen, etc.

Up to now most librarians have remained unwilling or unable to collect the stories that reflect their ability to meet needs. Those who do not may wish to examine their rationale. Stories are most often a by-product of a service that meets real needs; they reflect the fact that a certain degree of trust has been built up. Therefore, the failure to learn how working with someone helped (which is often reflected back in a story) might actually show that many librarians are not serving their clientele effectively. Recent research shows that when librarians find out how the information is to be used they are far more able to actually provide what is really needed.<sup>9</sup> Stories can be used to develop and revise services. Analysis of the stories told by users of job and career centers have contributed to the development of a manual designed to help librarians better respond to real needs.<sup>10</sup>

### THE NEED TO OVERCOME MISPERCEPTIONS

Periodic studies of library use and awareness by the general public reveal that most people think of libraries as primarily self-service institutions (with the main service,

which is carried out by staff, being checking out books). While most people know that they can check out books at the library, many do not know that librarians are there to answer reference questions.<sup>11</sup> Even people who know that it is OK to ask librarians questions frequently preface their questions with, "Where are your books on?..."

Large groups of people know only vaguely that they can get information at the library. Researchers regularly find that even those who know that they can ask questions at a library are convinced that they would not find problem-solving information in the library. Studies of businessmen, for example, show that while they might go to the library to get books for relaxation or for home building projects, when they need information for business they ask colleagues, suppliers, and others rather than the library. This misperception is quite common. Elfreda Chatman's study of blue-collar workers found that while they had information needs, they did not think of the library as a source of information.<sup>12</sup> Studies of the people who use job and career centers show that prior to their coming to the library this time to get help with a job or career change, most had not been in the library for several years, many since "grade school."<sup>13</sup>

All kinds of people suffer from faulty perceptions about libraries and librarians. This has contributed to the poor image of librarians as dour keepers of books who apparently, reluctantly at times, stamp them out. The result of the public's misperceptions of what librarians do is twofold. Lack of knowledge about what librarians do puts the profession in jeopardy of appearing to be trivial or superfluous in an era of tight budgets. Equally important, misperception and misunderstanding of what librarians do puts the public at risk. While librarians suffer by having their work trivialized when people assume that they are just bookkeepers, it is actually those who lack an understanding of what librarians can do who suffer most. People who are not aware that they can get help from a librarian, will not ask for it even if it is available unless something happens to change their perceptions. Those who are unaware that they are able to get the help they need lack, as well, an understanding that they have a "right to know."

While many savvy library users understand librarians' roles, more needs to be done to inform people about the skills and abilities of librarians. President Schuman's focus on the Right to Know looks outward toward those who can benefit from librarians' knowledge. This theme builds well on the renewed interest librarians have shown in how they help, through the recent library week campaigns that focus on librarians.<sup>14</sup> The "Decade of the Librarian" should continue to send out the word to people all over the country

that librarians are professionals with the skills to empower citizens with information.

However, in order for these thrusts to be effective, librarians, themselves, need to change the perceptions of people in their schools, universities, and communities. Services designed to meet needs are most often those that change perceptions. Services like literacy programs and job and career centers result in valuable stories from patrons who often express delight, surprise, and sincere gratitude for help with a real problem of concern to them. Frequently stories reflect a profound change in perception about what librarians do and what libraries are for.

### CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

When people know that they can ask questions at the library and, further, that they can get information from librarians to help them write a paper, make a consumer decision, find out more about a career or put together a resume, help make their neighborhood a better place to live, put together a business plan for their small business, or find out more about the toxic spill in their community, they have come to understand their right to know and how librarians can make that happen.

Perception changes often come quickly and enthusiastically and result in transmitting to others that change of opinion about the library. "I had no idea that I could get this kind of help in a library," is a commonly heard phrase in many libraries. Changing the perceptions of community leaders goes a long way toward assuring the public's right to know. This story of what I observed on a trip to western Nebraska shows how quickly and positively these changes can happen.

Joan Birnie, the director of the library in Broken Bow, Nebraska, periodically attends the meetings of the local Cooperative Extension Board as an observer because she wants to keep abreast of what this agency, which is so important to her rural community, does. When she requested time at an extension board meeting to describe the library's new grant funded education and career center, she was given fifteen minutes. At the meeting, she talked about the new resources including a new computer and interactive career advising software. In addition, she left some books and a stack of promotional materials. As she left she said, "Just bring those things by the library any time. Take a look at them first."

The next morning when the library opened, the extension agents called and asked if they could come right over to discuss the library's job and career

services. As soon as they arrived, they indicated that after Birnie had left the board, they talked quite a bit about what was possible with this resource in the community. They enthusiastically discussed ways to promote the library's new services. Several times one or the other repeated, "You have such valuable stuff here. You're just going to have to let people know what you've got. It can be so helpful to folks in the county."

With Ms. Birnie's short presentation, the county agents had gone from limited understanding of the possibilities of the library as a community resource to ebullience over what they had found. She was asked to make a return visit. In a very short span of time these community leaders became the strongest supporters that particular library might have. These men, in responsible positions in rural western Nebraska, had changed their perceptions and came to tell the story of what the library and its staff could do for their community.

### THE CHALLENGE—USING STORIES TO SEND THE MESSAGE

Anecdotes send a powerful message about the viability of libraries. Those who benefit from library service can speak far more effectively about its worth than can librarians. This was seen recently in the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. The most valuable statements were made not by librarians, but by people who have benefited from library service. The major flaw of the conference was the inward turning that framed issues from the context of libraries (too many resolutions were framed from such library centered perspectives as collections, technology, and networking). That approach resulted in nearly one hundred resolutions framed in library jargon rather than resolutions that linked the provision of information service to three major concerns in late twentieth century America the need to develop a more literate population, to foster productivity and economic development, and to turn apathy into participation in the world's premiere democracy. Stories collected by librarians can show the centrality of libraries; they can show that librarians support "Your Right to Know," how to participate in a democracy, how to get up-to-the minute information for decision making, where to get help, that your children are receiving the best education, your cultural heritage, your ability to read—to name a few.

A recent *Newsweek* article reported that a group of businessmen in Pittsburgh had recently begun work on a multimillion dollar project to revitalize one of the city's

neighborhoods.<sup>15</sup> This came as no surprise to Pat Callahan, director of the Carnegie Library's NeighborLINE service. Months before she had helped these men search a community development database that provided them a model, which they adapted to successfully obtain the needed funding. While the businessmen sing the praises of NeighborLINE and its director, the *Newsweek* reporter did not include the library connection in the report. This omission should be a reminder to librarians that people do not yet fully realize the value of information and how it might be obtained. The value of this story and the many that I have collected in Pittsburgh about the library's WORKPLACE service is that a number of people in Pittsburgh have learned the potential value of library services.

The stories that appear in this article show just a few of the ways that librarians make a difference in the communities. They strongly reflect services designed to meet real needs in the community. These stories are among the most powerful vehicles to change the perceptions people have about libraries and librarians. They can help change old, outmoded perceptions that people have about librarians. They can overcome the problem that many people have they simply have no image of librarians their experience is only with the building.

Anecdotes can:

- Help measure the impact of librarians (and the library) in the community.
- Show how librarians meet needs.
- Help librarians see the value in what they do.
- Actually change the way librarians practice their craft.
- Convince library directors and boards of the value of the service that led to the story.
- Help policy makers see the value of librarians and the institution they shepherd, the library.
- Bring new funding to libraries.

### COLLECTING AND USING STORIES

Stories can be a valuable addition to other methods of evaluation because so many of them focus on the impact of your library's services on the lives of people in your community. A systematic approach to collecting these stories will assure that you are obtaining them from a representative group. In addition to keeping those that are unsolicited letters of thanks, telephone calls that tell of a success or upcoming job interview or the like, make follow-up calls to selected users of your service. Follow-up calls are a vital part of evaluation because they permit librarians to find out how the service helped as well as what

worked and what didn't. These calls can be used both to collect stories and to make changes in the service. The forthcoming guide to developing job and career services *More Than Information: Public Library Services for Job Seekers and Career Changers* includes a chapter on methods to use.<sup>16</sup>

Follow-up is easy in services that focus on the individual (such as literacy, job and career centers, and economic development services) because these services often include appointments. Names are exchanged. People may come back several times to work on a problem. However, identifying patrons who ask questions at the reference desk is somewhat more difficult. In interviews and focus groups with reference librarians, I have found that the ability to follow-up is severely limited because librarians most often have little idea of the people with whom they are working or the nature of the problem. Without this knowledge, it is often quite difficult for librarians to make any determination of their impact. Reference librarians who show an interest in the question and who ask patrons to let them know if the information was useful are able to begin to overcome the invisible barrier that stands between librarians and their patrons.<sup>17</sup>

In collecting stories it cannot be overemphasized that great care must be exercised to avoid violating the confidence that has been given. While stories can be of great value in explaining what kinds of service are possible, when librarians tell them or include them in reports, etc., they must carefully mask personal identification unless they have been given permission. Many librarians have begun to make stories a part of their service's evaluation

program to supplement their regularly collected statistics. They can be used with several different target audiences including library management, the library board, community agency representatives with whom library staff cooperate, local media, and potential users of the service.

Gloria Coles, director of the Flint (Michigan) Public Library, has monitored the progress of the job and career center in her library. One of her considerations in continuing to fund this innovative service was based on the feedback from the community. She notes:

This service meets the needs both of our traditional clientele and the people who just haven't seen the need to use our library in the past. This service makes a difference in the lives of the people who use it. It is essential.

The experiment that we have undertaken in collecting stories shows their power. Stories from across the nation from children's librarians, adult service specialists, reference librarians, outreach staff, librarians who serve immigrant populations, the blind and physically handicapped, the homeless, budding Nobel prize winners, and those who serve present and elected officials, citizens of the premiere democracy in the world would swell our files with powerful testimony to how librarians help. Let us bring the stories together and create the copy that can be used in books and in articles for home town newspapers and national magazines that show librarians as defenders of the right to know and capable professionals who are providing people across the nation with the information they need, whatever their endeavor.

*Are new library roles hostile to programs serving development or democracy?*

# WHCLIS Goals vs. PLA Roles

By Joan C. Durrance  
& Catherine Allen

THE PLANNERS of the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services (WHCLIS) have chosen library and information services for literacy, productivity, and democracy as the themes of the event. The process leading to the conference has already raised public awareness of these new demands upon library and information services and their potential benefits. This article explores how the last decade of public library planning and role setting has or will relate to, and advance or impede, those WHCLIS aims for libraries.

## Library planning and roles

The federal government funded a comprehensive examination of literacy services in public libraries, but there is virtually no data on the extent to which public libraries provide services to support economic development or information in support of

democracy and self-government.<sup>1</sup>

In 1987 the Public Library Association issued *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries (PRSPL)*, a manual offering a method for developing services based on the needs of a community.<sup>2</sup> It recommends that libraries select the three or four roles that would be most responsive to the needs of the specific community they serve. *PRSPL* identifies eight roles from which public libraries might select:

1. Popular Materials Library;
2. Reference Library;
3. Preschooler's Door to Learning;
4. Community Activities Center;
5. Community Information Center;
6. Formal Education Support

- Center;
7. Independent Learning Center; and
8. Research Center.

There is little data on the effect that choosing roles has on the public library's ability to respond to community needs.

This article uses data collected by the Public Library Data Service<sup>3</sup> (PLDS) (see sidebar, p. 42) to examine current public library provision of services in literacy, economic development, and government information, the WHCLIS themes. We relate that baseline data to library choices of roles recommended in *PRSPL*, examining closely the time, expertise, and effort needed along with the influence of library role selection on the WHCLIS goals.

## Literacy services

Literacy has been a concern of libraries for many years. The ten questions PLA asked public libraries reflect this experience. Nearly nine out of ten libraries indicated that their libraries have literacy materials (see Chart 1). More than eight out of ten provide referral to literacy programs in the area and make space available for literacy activities. At a time when literacy has become a primary concern of the nation, it is not surprising to find that most public libraries pro-

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vide literacy materials, referral to other agencies, and make space available for literacy programs.

As activities become more labor-intensive and involve more of a librarian's time, fewer libraries participate. However, nearly seven in ten are engaged in a literacy coalition, which, in all likelihood, involves periodic meetings with other agency staff. Involvement in literacy coalitions is likely to increase. The U.S. Office of Library Programs reports that one of the primary goals of its Library Literacy Project is to "encourage cooperation among literacy providers in a community."<sup>4</sup>

Approximately 68 percent said that they provided tours or orientation to their literacy materials or services. A little more than six in ten publicize literacy programs. Recent innovative publicity campaigns include two from California. The Napa City-County Library used literacy students currently enrolled in its program in its radio public service announcements. The Menlo Park Public Library staff prepared publicity for its literacy program in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Thai, and Farsi.<sup>5</sup>

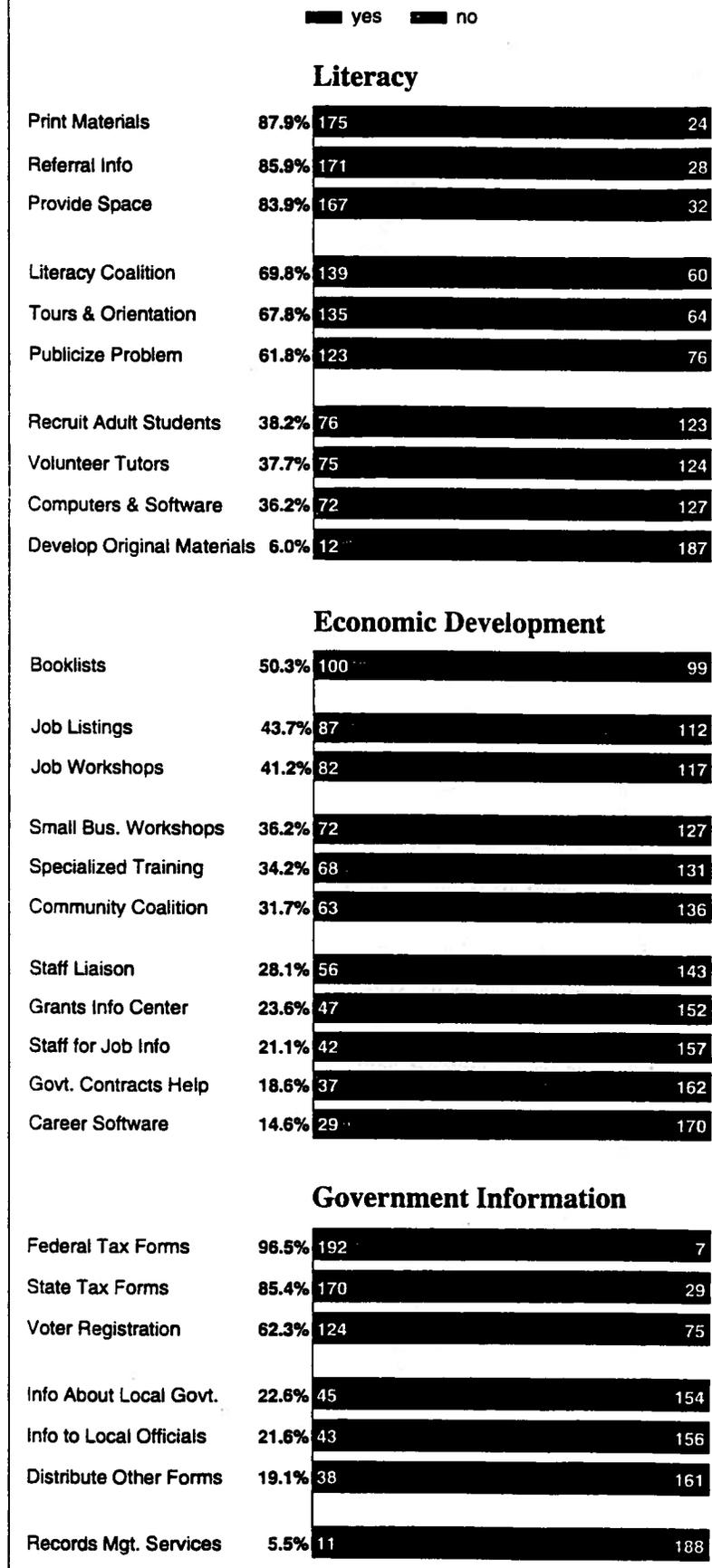
Only slightly over one third of the public libraries in our study either recruit adult students or tutors or provide computer software designed to teach basic literacy skills. However, libraries that effectively engage in these activities find that their programs grow rapidly. The Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, for example, found that its "Read for Literacy" program that involves adult students and volunteer tutors has grown from 100 to 432 as the result of recruitment activities.<sup>6</sup> The Missoula Public Library, Montana recruited parents into its adult literacy program by holding it at the same time as its children's story hour.<sup>7</sup>

Only six percent of these libraries indicate that they develop and produce original literacy materials. The Chicago Public Library Humboldt Branch has created a manual for recruiting and training a variety of native speakers to work with others who speak the same language to become literate in English.<sup>8</sup>

#### Literacy gets more effort

In order to measure literacy efforts, we combined the total number of responses to the literacy questions with the responses to the four ques-

Chart 1: Library Activities from the PLDS



tions that were judged to indicate higher effort: developing original materials, recruiting and training volunteer tutors, recruiting adult literacy students, and participating as an active member of a literacy coalition. Providing more of the high-effort activities was seen as a higher commitment to literacy.

We found that only five percent of the public libraries in this study engaged in all four of the high-effort activities and, therefore, showed the highest commitment to literacy. However, almost 55 percent showed moderate commitment to literacy by engaging in at least two of the high-effort activities or in six to ten activities overall. A low commitment to literacy was seen in libraries that have fewer than six low-effort activities and no high-effort ones. Fully one in four libraries showed a low commitment to literacy using this measure.

Libraries tend to engage in more activities to support literacy than to support either economic development or government information. Likewise, literacy services seem to include more staff-intensive activities. Perhaps this is because literacy has been a concern of libraries for so long.

### Services to economic development

Public library services that promote productivity have been interpreted by most professionals as those that foster economic development. This usually means helping business development, maintaining information on grants and government contracts, or providing job and career information services.

According to the survey results, fewer libraries have developed economic development services. While there are several literacy activities that are offered by more than 80 percent of all public libraries, only one economic development activity was provided by more than half (50.3 percent) of the libraries—developing booklists, pathfinders, or newsletters to support small business development. Although providing such lists is a traditional library activity, it does require staff time and effort.

The PLDS economic development data reflect recent growth in the development of job and career information services in public libraries.<sup>9</sup> About 44 percent of these public libraries provide job listings; 41 percent hold job and career workshops

(see Chart 1). Over one third provide workshops for small businesses.

Slightly more than one in five public libraries have specialized staff for helping job seekers and career changers. These staff are likely to work in services called, variously, Job and Career Information Centers, Workplace, the COPE Center (Career Opportunities and Planning for Employment). Fifteen percent of these public libraries provide career software that helps library users

to the area.<sup>10</sup> One library in four has created a grants information center. Closely allied to the grants center is the more intensive government contract procurement center (19 percent).

The Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, which has developed such a center, regularly announces to its community how many millions of dollars in government contracts have come to Toledo as a result of this library activity.<sup>11</sup>

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## Staff in the Parlin-Ingersoll Library have become active participants in economic development activities in their community by making the library a primary provider and producer of informational resources

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match their interests, skills, and abilities with the demands of the job world.

The PLDS data show that libraries are beginning to provide access to the training necessary to make these innovative services work. In 1990 about one third of these libraries provided their staff with training needed to carry out these services. Nearly a third indicated that someone on the staff participated in a community economic development coalition.

A few libraries provide other innovative, staff-intensive services that foster community economic development: 28 percent provide a designated staff liaison to local economic development personnel—in small and medium-sized libraries, this is often the director.

### Leaders in Canton & Toledo

The Parlin-Ingersoll Library in Canton, Illinois, for example, shows a high commitment to economic development. Staff in that library have become active participants in economic development activities in their community by making the library a primary provider and producer of informational resources.

Library staff there work closely with city officials, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Council and have created a promotional folder on the community to attract business and new jobs

Eight of the 11 economic development activities were judged to require a high commitment of staff and time. In measuring the economic development commitment, all activities received the same weight. Nearly one quarter of the public libraries (22.6 percent) provided six to 11 economic development activities and thus were judged as having a high commitment to economic development services. Most libraries (60 percent) engaged in from one to five economic development activities. Nearly one in five libraries indicated that they engaged in no economic development activities at all.

### Information for democracy

PLDS's questions reflect that in reality there is a lack of definition of the kinds of government information services that might be offered by public libraries. However, these questions do serve as indicators of the level of public library activity at this time. Like the economic development questions, these provide the first opportunity to look at the provision of government information by local public libraries nationwide.

By and large, public library services designed to foster participatory democracy are not well reflected in the current data. Perhaps the PLDS democracy questions are poorly posed. These questions have identified some activities that for the most

part have been initiated by government agencies and that require no expertise and little commitment on the part of librarians, e.g., distribution of tax forms and voter registration.

Interestingly, it is these passive activities that are present in most libraries. The analysis shows that nearly all (96.5 percent) distribute federal income tax forms, and most distribute state tax forms. Well over half register voters.

Chart 1 also clearly shows that

ties (mostly larger ones) since the turn of the century.<sup>12</sup> Some public libraries have increased their activities in this area during the 1980s.

### Pasadena, Detroit, & Pittsburgh

As the result of a strategic planning process in the early 1980s, Pasadena Public Library changed its name to the Pasadena Information Services Library. It selected as one of its priority activities serving as a focal point for the provision of information

their communities.<sup>14</sup>

Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library collaborated with other groups to develop NeighborLINE in the 1980s. NeighborLINE is designed to help Pittsburgh's citizens and neighborhood organizations become effective participants in community problem solving and decision making. It provides neighborhood and organizations with information about funding sources and strategies on housing occupancy, business patterns, and economic data and other statistics from local and national databases and other resources.<sup>15</sup>

Just five percent of the public libraries provide records management services to local government. The Urbana Public Library has engaged in extensive activities in this area for some years. Librarians work with city departments as documents are generated by the departments. Thus the public library creates graphic access to a document the time it is issued. The library has published a manual to guide librarians in setting up such processes.<sup>16</sup>

**W**hile providing tax forms/registering voters are valuable activities, they require no special professional expertise. There is clearly a gap in commitment to providing government information for government officials and the public

models of active library involvement in providing government information services at this time are isolated. Fewer than one quarter of these public libraries provide information services to local government officials or information to the public about their local government. However, models do exist.

Municipal Reference Libraries, products of the progressive movement, have served some communi-

ties about the community and, in addition, establishing the library as "the information and research arm of city staff and government."<sup>13</sup>

In the mid-1980s, building on its highly successful TIP Service, the Detroit Public Library, through a collaborative project with several other agencies, developed the Neighborhood Resource Center Project that aims to provide technical assistance to citizen groups seeking to improve

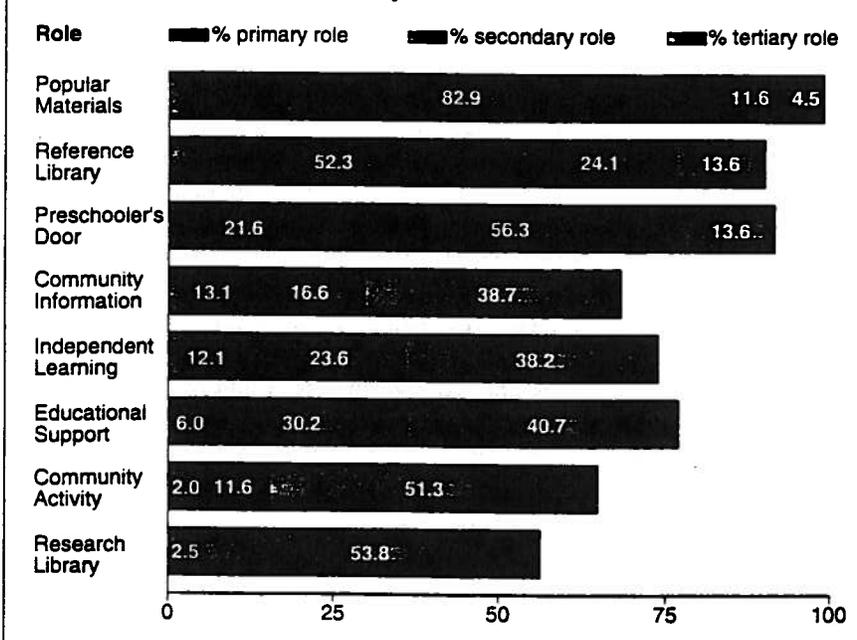
### For democracy, in principle

In the area of government information, we considered that seven questions, only three require extensive staff time and effort. Information services to local government officials, information about local government to the public, records management service, government information committee variable is based on providing these three services. Only four percent (two percent) provided all 17 percent showed moderate commitment by providing from four to six services and at least one of the effort activities.

Fully two-thirds of the libraries provided no more than the three government-initiated services of distributing tax forms and registering voters. While these are valuable activities, they require no special professional expertise. There is clearly a gap in commitment to providing government information for government officials and the public.

Democracy, librarians depend on the informed participation of citizens and officials; librarians should play a crucial role in providing the information needed by the American Library Association on Professional Ethics.

**Chart 2: Public Library Role Choices in Rank Order**



sions a lofty role for librarians in a democracy.

In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, librarians are members of a profession expressly committed to . . . the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.<sup>17</sup>

The data show that while librarians espouse this principle, they engage in few activities that increase access to local government information.

### Role selection and service

Role selection is a key part of PLA's current planning process. The *PLDS Statistical Report '90* shows that a mere three years after the publication of the manual, almost one third (199) of the 603 libraries that voluntarily sent in statistics to PLA have selected roles. This is an indicator of a fairly rapid adoption of this innovation.<sup>18</sup>

However, until now there has not been a great deal of discussion of the effect of role selection. The *PLDS* raw data provide the opportunity to examine the roles that public libraries selected and compare them with the types of literacy, economic development, and democracy activities in which these same libraries were engaged.

The 1990 *PLDS* questionnaire followed the recommendations of *PRSP* and asked library managers to designate primary and secondary roles. They were asked to:

Mark each of your primary roles (but no more than two) with a "1" and each of your secondary roles (but no more than two) with a "2". Mark all other roles with a "3."<sup>19</sup>

Chart 2 shows the role preferences of public libraries in 1990. It also shows that most libraries were unwilling to limit themselves to two to four roles as recommended. With the addition of the roles marked "3" (marked "tertiary roles" in Chart 2), more than half of the libraries picked all eight.

### The dominant roles

Three roles are dominant: popular materials library, preschooler's door to learning, and reference library. Nearly 83 percent of public libraries have chosen the popular ma-

terials library as a primary role; 95 percent have selected it either as a primary or secondary role. Slightly more than half (52.3 percent) selected reference library as a primary role; (76.4 percent either as primary or secondary). A little over one in five libraries chose the preschooler's door to learning as a primary role and half chose it as a secondary role. Overall, more than two-thirds of the libraries chose it as a priority role.

Public library planners were far

materials library role showed a high commitment to literacy, compared to only 40 percent of the libraries for which it was a primary role and a quarter of those that chose it as a secondary role.

### Development and role selection

There was little association in these libraries between role preference and greater commitment to economic development services. No role seems to predispose a library to

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## Revisions of the public library planning manual and process should address explicitly how to incorporate activities that foster democracy and economic development into the role-setting process

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less likely to choose the other five roles as primary role choices. Perhaps this is because the popular materials library, the reference library, and the preschooler's door to learning (viewed as the children's library?) are those that feel most comfortable. These three roles have been carried out by public libraries for the better part of the century.

This study shows that role choice influences the types of community-based activities in which public libraries engage. Moreover, it shows some roles are far less conducive to engaging in literacy, economic development, or democracy activities than others.

### Literacy services and role selection

Libraries that seek to serve independent learners and those that put a priority on reference service showed a higher level of commitment to literacy activities. Nearly six out of ten libraries that selected the independent learning center role and approximately half of those choosing the reference library role provided the types of literacy services that required more effort, time, and staff commitment.

The few libraries that did not select the popular materials library as a primary or secondary role showed a higher level of commitment to literacy than other libraries. Most of the libraries not choosing the popular

greater commitment to economic development, that is, providing six to ten economic development activities.

A higher number of economic development services was provided by those libraries that did not choose the popular materials role; however, only five percent of the libraries that chose roles failed to make this one a priority.

A number of libraries that chose the following roles had no economic development activity at all. The numbers in parentheses indicate the percentages of the libraries that chose these roles as priorities and at the same time checked no economic development activities.

Preschooler's Door to Learning (30 percent no ED activities); Independent Learning (25 percent); Popular Materials (19 percent); Educational Support (17 percent).

### No commitment to government

The *PLDS* survey clearly shows that most public libraries lack a commitment to providing access to government information. There seems to be little connection to the roles chosen except in a negative way.

Most libraries (66.8 percent) show a low commitment to government information service. They provide only tax forms and voter registration. Libraries choosing educational support, independent learning,

# The Public Library Data Service

**T**HE PUBLIC LIBRARY Association's Public Library Data Service (PLDS) annually collects information on role selection, output measures, and resource use. Data in this article were from its *Statistical Report '90* (Public Library Assn./American Library Assn., 1990).

PLDS provides much more data about public libraries than has ever been made available. However, its present checklist format (yes-no answers) with no data analysis limits its use to comparing one library with another. In spite of this limitation, the fact that data have been collected from over 600 libraries of all sizes across the nation makes this a rich and useful source.

In this feature nearly a third of the 603 public libraries included in the PLDS *Statistical Report '90* are analyzed. They are the 199 libraries that had selected roles from those recommended.

Each year the PLDS also includes questions on special topics. Prompted by the themes chosen for the 1991 White House Conference, in 1990 PLDS collected data on activities supporting literacy, productivity, and democracy, the three themes of the conference.

The analysis of the responses to the special PLDS White House Conference questions and the roles chosen by these libraries provide the basis for this discussion of public library services for literacy, economic development, and government information in this feature.

The PLDS White House Conference questions include some that require little effort or expertise on the part of the librarian (such as whether the library distributes tax forms) and others that reflect a library's commitment to an activity (such as whether the library recruits and trains literacy volunteers). The tables in this article show the responses to all the PLDS questions. To study the differing levels of effort implicit in these questions, we created a set of variables that combine the answers to the questions that require greater staff time and effort.

## PLDS literacy questions

In 1990 PLDS asked if libraries provided the following services in support of literacy:

- Provide literacy print materials for adult new readers, ESL learners, or tutors.
- Provide microcomputer(s) and microcomputer software to teach basic literacy skills.
- Develop/produce original literacy materials such as books, microcomputer software, or audiocassettes.
- Recruit and train literacy volunteer tutors for a library-based instructional program.
- Recruit adult students for a library-based literacy tutoring program.
- Have space that is regularly used for literacy tutoring, adult basic education classes, or tutor training programs.
- Maintain information about literacy providers in the area in order to refer requests for literacy services or information.
- Provide library tours or orientation for literacy students, tutors, or instructors.
- Participate as an active member in a literacy coalition.
- Publicize the problem of illiteracy through public hearings, informational programs, library displays, etc.

## PLDS development questions

In 1990 PLDS asked if libraries provided the following services related to economic development:

- Provide workshops in the library or at other sites that foster and support small business development/entrepreneurship.
- Create and distribute booklists, pathfinders, or newsletters that support small business development/entre-

preneurship.

- Provide staff with specialized training to support information services for small business development/entrepreneurship.
- Have a designated staff liaison to local economic development personnel.
- Operate a grants information center in the library.
- Provide information and/or assistance in procuring government contracts.
- Participate in community coalitions to further local economic development.
- Provide job and career information through workshops in the library or at other sites.
- Have staff with specialized training to provide job and career information.
- Provide interactive computerized career guidance software for public use.
- Provide job listings and/or job listing database.

## PLDS democracy questions

In 1990 PLDS asked if libraries offered the following services to provide access to government information:

- Have specialized staff to provide information services to local government officials.
- Have specialized staff to provide information about local government to the public.
- Distribute federal income tax forms.
- Distribute state income tax forms.
- Provide records management services to local government.
- Regularly distribute any specific information for local government such as school registration forms, dog license application forms, etc.
- Provide opportunities for citizens to register to vote.

and popular materials were least likely to show a high commitment to providing government information.

As has been seen with data on the other two areas (literacy and economic development), those libraries that do not choose the popular materials library or the preschooler's door to learning roles showed slightly more commitment to providing government information.

### Tradition and tokenism

PLA's new planning and role-setting process allows for the development of services that reflect the needs of a library's community. It has been fairly widely adopted. In less than four years, one-third of the libraries in the PLDS sample have chosen roles.

Developers of PLA's planning process saw the need to focus the efforts of public libraries and thus identified eight roles that are possible for a public library to play in its community. They cautioned public librarians that attempting all eight would spread public library services too thin. During this first round of planning, librarians chose the three most traditional roles for their greatest effort. Community-centered roles were chosen by only a few libraries as primary roles, by more as a secondary effort, but were most likely to be chosen in the category that the PLA planners warned against, the least effort (or spread thin) category.

We found by looking at the PLDS data that the public libraries that have undertaken the planning process do engage in a wide range of activities that promote literacy, economic development, and democracy in a com-

munity. However, those activities that public libraries are most likely to provide require less effort and staff expertise.

The PLDS data indicate that many libraries are making only token efforts in these areas. However, a few libraries are developing strong, high-commitment models of service in each of these areas.

Up to now there has been little study of the impact of role selection on service development. This exami-

nity-centered activities.

Revisions of the public library planning manual and process should address explicitly how to incorporate activities that foster democracy and economic development into the role-setting process.

The 1990 PLDS data reflect the first round of role selection. Current roles are those that predominated well before the development of the planning process. Roles, however, are not set in stone. It is not uncom-

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Several roles appear to be hostile to the development of services to support literacy, economic development, or democracy. The popular materials library is associated with low support of these community-centered activities

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nation of the PLDS data shows that role selection does, indeed, have an impact on public library activity. Two roles, the reference library and the independent learning center, are more likely to foster literacy activities. None of the eight roles are directly related to either economic development or democracy, although these concerns are implied in the community information center role.

Several roles appear to be hostile to the development of services to support literacy, economic development, or democracy. The popular materials library, in particular, is associated in many libraries with low support of all three of these commu-

mon for a new approach to initially reflect older patterns. The planning process is cyclical and, in all likelihood, many libraries that undertook the process in 1987 are beginning the process again in 1991.

Librarians should take this opportunity to look at how effectively they have used the planning and role-setting process in their own communities. Similarly, the opportunity that the White House Conference offers to public librarians to examine the extent to which their libraries provide community-centered services that foster literacy, economic development, and democracy should not be lost.

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