



Different Voices, Common Quest:

Adult Literacy & Outreach in Libraries!

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Rural Library Communities
facilitated by Yolanda Cuesta and Gail McGovern

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Identifying Community Issues Using Needs Assessments



**Asking people what the library can do for them
...is good public relations
...is NOT needs assessment**

- **Compile and analyze basic data about target group to build credibility.**

Demographic statistics

Agencies and services available

Community contacts or key leaders

- **Rely on the community itself for the critical information and perspective you need.**

Community gathering places

Information channels (formal and informal)

Community sources for help

- **Commit to early, active, and significant involvement by the community in the process.**

Emphasize interaction with the community

Rely on community networking

Let the community determine priorities and directions

Ideas for Identifying Community Leaders



In gathering community information, it is essential to identify those community connections **NOT** typically involved in library activities. The most valuable connections are individuals and members of groups who serve as pathways to the heart of a particular segment of the community.

Use the following list of categories of individuals and organizations to help identify those who can bring specific perspectives to the collaboration.

Note: This list is not all inclusive; selected examples are in ().

You **DO NOT** need to contact every category on the list.

You **DO** need to tailor your list to your specific effort.

You **DO** need to reach out to people not usually included.

Individuals

- home based business owners
- parents (working full time, parenting full time)
- retired people
- students (high school, community college, college, university)
- faculty members, deans of schools

Organizations

- Agricultural Organizations** (USDA cooperative extension services)
- Businesses/ Chambers of Commerce/Visitor's Bureaus** (major employers, minority business owners, small business owners; city, county and ethnic chambers, alumni associations)
- Community Services Organizations/Associations/Clubs** (AARP, AAUW, American Red Cross, B&PW, Kiwanis, Lions, Literacy Organizations, Rotary, Soroptimists, United Way, sororities, fraternities)
- Economic Development Organizations** (rural economic development councils, real estate broker associations)
- Educational Organizations** (community colleges, multilingual programs, PTA/PTO, school board, other libraries, private schools, home school organizations, higher education institutions/organizations, campus counseling centers)
- Ethnic Organizations** (Asian Resources Center, Hispanic centers, Inter-tribal Council, campus student associations [e.g. Black Student Union, Cambodian Student Association, Graduate student association], Urban League)

- Family Services Organizations** (Social Services Department, Family Service Agency, Jewish Family Service)
- Financial Representatives** (bankers, credit unions, financial planners, stockbrokers, campus financial aid office, scholarship information center)
- Government/Political Representatives** (mayor, city council, county supervisors, city/county fiscal office, law enforcement, job training programs, Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, student government officers)
- Health Organizations** (American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, hospitals, public health nurses, early intervention programs, public health clinics, rural health care systems, WIC, student health centers)
- Legal Organizations** (ACLU, bar association, legal aid, NAACP Legal Defense Fund)
- Media Representatives** (ethnic language newspaper, radio, tv, media, local magazines and newsletters, campus student newspaper)
- Miscellaneous Organizations** (arts and cultural groups, athletic groups, censorship groups, historic preservation groups, local neighborhood groups, men's groups, veterans' groups, women's groups, campus recreation and sports clubs)
- Organizations fighting discrimination** (Anti-Defamation League, human rights group, NAACP, campus cross cultural center)
- Organizations of/for People with Disabilities** (center on deafness, council of the blind, health and human services agencies, Easter Seals, Goodwill, independent living centers, United Cerebral Palsy)
- Organizations serving the homeless** (food closet, homeless assistance program, Salvation Army)
- Organizations serving ex-offenders** (Department of Corrections, Friends Outside)
- Refugee/Immigrant Centers/Services** (Catholic Social Services, refugee rights association)
- Religious Organizations** (church organizations, campus student religious groups [e.g. Asian Baptist Student Association, Muslim Students Association], ministerial association)
- Senior Centers/Service Organizations** (Area Agency on Aging, elder abuse/care agencies, RSVP)
- Technology Experts** (community information networks, computer clubs, consultants, community colleges, Internet providers, universities)
- Women's Centers/Service Organizations** (battered women's shelters, YWCA, NOW, campus women's resource center)
- Youth Service Organizations** (Big Brother/Sister, Boy Scouts, child abuse agencies, recreation programs, Girl Scouts, Jr. Achievement, Head Start, Even Start, child care associations, Association for the Education of Young Children, school age care and enrichment programs)

Strategies for Reaching Out to Rural Communities



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About the presenters.....

Gail McGovern specializes in training and consulting with libraries and other non profit organizations. Topics include assessing community needs, building partnerships and community coalitions, fundraising, grantsmanship, long range planning, program planning and evaluation, public relations, serving diverse populations, time management, training trainers, trustee roles and responsibilities, and workshop planning.

Before becoming an independent consultant, Gail was a library development consultant at the California State Library for over 20 years. Gail is a certified trainer for the Public Library Association Planning For Results process. She is a member of the American Library Association, California Library Association and the American Society for Training and Development. She is the editor of the **CLENExchange** (newsletter of the CLENE Roundtable of the American Library Association) and writes a monthly column on Internet searching for **Inter-face** (newsletter of MacNexus, the Sacramento Macintosh Users Group). Her publications include **Program Planning: Tips for Librarians** and **Working With Older Adults**. She is one of the trainers featured in the Library Video Network video, **From the Front of the Room: Trainers Discuss Diversity Training**.

Gail has a Bachelor of Arts degree in religion and Master of Library Science degree, both from Syracuse University. She also has earned certificates in a variety of specialized training areas including cultural diversity, facilitation, fundraising, grantsmanship, nonprofit management, program management, time management, and training techniques.

Yolanda J. Cuesta specializes in helping libraries and other non profit organizations serve ethnic and culturally diverse communities. Training and consulting emphasis include community based needs assessments, building partnerships and community coalitions, marketing and public relations, program planning and evaluation, and grant writing.

Prior to starting her own consulting business, Yolanda was Chief of Library Development Services and Ethnic Services Consultant for the California State Library. She is a member of the American Library Association; the California Library Association; the American Marketing Association; and REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish-Speaking.

Her publications include "From Survival to Sophistication: Hispanic Needs = Library Needs" and "Guidelines for Library Services to the Spanish-Speaking," both published in **Library Journal**.

Yolanda has a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a Master of Library Science degree from the University of Texas at Austin. She has pursued additional training in cultural diversity, grantsmanship, program planning and evaluation, and train-the-trainer techniques.

For more information about individual topics and/or presentations, see contact information below.

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Training Programs For Librarians Serving Culturally Diverse Communities

presented by Yolanda Cuesta and Gail McGovern

Libraries today are increasingly challenged by the complexity and diversity of the communities they serve.

To succeed in designing and delivering library services to culturally diverse communities, library staff must learn to thrive in an environment in which working with community members to plan, design and promote library services is encouraged. Yet library staff seldom have the time and opportunity to learn and practice the skills necessary to encourage and sustain community participation in the planning and delivery of library services.

An understanding of community based needs assessment techniques and the role they play in the design and delivery of effective library services is the foundation for the workshops. The needs assessment/building community relationships component is built into several of the workshops. This component may be modified or eliminated depending on library staff experience and background in this content area. The workshops are customized to meet the specific needs of each library.

1. Serving Diverse Communities—Opportunities and Challenges

To help library staff understand the benefits and opportunities in developing library services to meet the needs of diverse communities

2. Understanding Diversity

To help library staff understand and respect people of other cultures and to be understood and respected by them.

3. Celebrating Diversity

To help library staff assess their own cultural biases to improve communication with diverse communities and develop positive interactions among diverse staff members.

4. Gathering Input from Diverse Communities

To help library staff learn quick, easy ways to assess community needs.

5. Planning Library Services for Culturally Diverse Communities

To help library staff work with culturally diverse communities to design and deliver appropriate library services.

6. Hispanic/Latino Collection Development

To help library staff work with the Hispanic community to develop a collection that supports the needs and interests of the community

7. Delivering Effective Outreach Program and Services to Diverse Communities

To help library staff make the best use of limited resources to design outreach activities with significant impact on diverse communities.

8. Building Community Partnerships/Collaborations

To help library staff learn a process for establishing collaborative projects and activities.

9. Marketing Library Services to Culturally Diverse Communities

To help library staff communicate effectively with diverse communities in the design and delivery of library services.

Note: Knowledge and skill in community based needs assessment techniques or in gathering information from the community is a desirable pre-requisite for this workshop.

10. Managing Cultural Diversity

To help library managers understand the process of creating an organizational culture that values diversity

11. Developing Financial Support for Serving Diverse Communities

To help library staff identify appropriate funding sources and develop effective approaches for gaining financial support.