

**New York State Office for the Aging  
Senior Community Service Employment Program  
State Plan 2012-2016**

**Section 1: Purpose of the State Plan.**

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) is submitting for review, the Senior Community Service for the Elderly Program (SCSEP) Four Year State Plan. The SCSEP State Plan (henceforth referred to as the Plan) is a four year strategy for the provision of employment training and other authorized activities for eligible individuals; as well as a description of the planning and implementation process for SCSEP services. The Plan takes into account the distribution of eligible individuals and employment opportunities across the State.

The goal of the Plan is to foster both short and long-term coordination among the various national and state SCSEP grantees and sub grantees and to facilitate the efforts of key stakeholders. Organizations such as state and local boards under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) are encouraged to work collaboratively to accomplish the goals of SCSEP. There is an emphasis on the importance of strengthening partnerships between grantees and program providers and to be involved with community initiatives. The grantees are expected to work collaboratively to provide employment training for SCSEP participants at agency host or training sites. The anticipated outcome is to improve the self sufficiency among participants, and provide meaningful civic engagement opportunities that help strengthen communities.

Operating national SCSEP grantees in New York State include Easter Seals (ES), Senior Services America (SSA), AARP, Experience Works (EW), National Council on Aging (NCOA), National Urban League (NULI) and the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA). Each organization was invited to make a contribution to the development of this Plan.

**Section 2: Involvement of Organizations and Individuals.**

Input on the SCSEP Coordination Plan from required parties will be obtained as follows:

*State and Area Agencies on Aging:* A draft Plan prepared by New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) will be forwarded to the local Area agencies on aging (AAA) and to all 29 local SCSEP program directors via e-mail for comment. The draft Plan will also be posted on an intra-agency website accessible only to the AAA's and the NYSOFA main web site increasing availability for public comment.

*State and Local Boards under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA):* A draft Plan will be posted on the New York State Department for Labor (NYSDOL) web site. Additionally NYSDOL will issue an invitation to State and Local Board members to review and comment on the Plan. Interested members of the public, including businesses, labor organizations and the general population as well as all partner organizations will also be encouraged to read and comment on the Plan.

*Social service organizations providing services to older individuals:* Many of New York's social service organizations are actively involved with SCSEP as host agencies. In transmitting the draft Plan, local program operators will be directed to inform host agencies that it is available for review on the NYSOFA website.

*Affected communities:* Both the NYSDOL and NYSOFA web sites are designed to reach and inform the general public, in addition to the constituencies each serves. Each web site has general information about their relevant subject areas on employment and aging. This will ensure an extensive review of the Plan by the general public being served in the grantee service areas.

*Unemployed older individuals:* NYSOFA and national grantees network of SCSEP providers are encouraged to share the Plan with the organizations they subcontract with and to make the document accessible for trainees within their program. Additional solicitation for review and comment will be achieved through outreach efforts by NYSOFA to older adult stake holders and advocacy organizations that engage older workers.

*Community-based organizations serving older individuals:* All grantees are asked to share the draft Plan with community-based organizations that are or have been host SCSEP host agencies.

NYSOFA grantees are strongly encouraged to share the Plan with program participants and other community groups serving older adults and individuals.

**Section 3: Solicitation and Collection of Public Comments.**

All comments received will be placed in this section.

**Section 4: Basic Distribution of SCSEP Positions within the State.**

**4a. Location of Positions.**

Attachment B is the New York State PY 2012-13 Equitable Distribution (ED) Chart. The number of assigned SCSEP slots is based on USDOL’s distribution factor which serves as the foundation for equitable assignment of SCSEP positions. Since the last state coordination plan was submitted to USDOL in 2008, New York has made significant progress in ensuring equitable distribution of SCSEP positions, as illustrated below.

ED Comparison of PY 2007-08 to PY 2012-13\*

	PY2008-09	PY2011-12
Number of counties at equity	39	50
Number of counties at or within 1 to 3 slots of equity	11	6
Number of counties at or within 7 to 9 slots of equity	0	0
Number of counties at 10 or more slots of equity	2	0
Number slots under equity in New York City	33	21

There are 58 county planning and service areas in New York State, including New York City's five boroughs as a single planning and service area.

The State Office for the Aging convenes a January annual Equitable Distribution meeting attended by all National SCSEP grantees operating in New York State. This meeting provides an opportunity for any issues surrounding equitable distribution to be cooperatively resolved between both state and national grantees. Thanks to the efforts of all of the grantees who conducted a number of NYSOFA and USDOL approved out-of-state and in-state trades of slots, New York State was able to identify areas of concern with regard to equity and make necessary adjustments to ensure continued equal distribution of SCSEP slots.

*In regards to the future:*

With the completion of the USDOL rebidding process and the finalization of county slot allocations, NYSOFA plans to prepare a proposal ensuring New York State maintains equitable distribution of SCSEP slots. Through continued review of slot distribution NYSOFA will determine if moving slots between sponsors and/or counties will be necessary. The proposal will be presented to the national grantees at the annual Equitable Distribution meeting convening in January, 2013 for review and comment. The final draft will be submitted to USDOL for approval. If changes occur after the 2013 Equitable Distribution meeting NYSOFA will discuss the changes with national grantees and address any issues surrounding county equity.

#### **4b. Rural and Urban Populations.**

New York State is a combination of highly populated counties and sparsely populated counties. A number of counties have populations that live in small cities, villages and towns, and in rural areas. Program participants who live primarily in rural areas face special employment challenges, such as limited resources, isolation, increased poverty, decreased educational advantages and transportation challenges.

With the exception of New York City, the SCSEP program as a whole is either at or very near equity, this is true for counties in both rural and urban areas. In program year 2004-05 NYSOFA realized the need to make policy adjustments due to lack of adequate SCSEP resources. NYSOFA's policy of providing SCSEP funding to all area agencies on aging in the state resulted in NYSOFA's management of 57 programs, 37 of which were only awarded four slots. Since that time, NYSOFA has changed its policy and as of July 1, 2012 will be managing 29 programs. This change along with slot exchanges made by the national grantees has led to a more equitable distribution of slots and has enhanced the ability to operate more efficiently in rural areas.

#### **4c. Specific Population Groups.**

Older Americans Act (OAA) sec. 518(b) defines priority individuals as those who qualify based on one or more of the following criteria which is included in the chart as well as the number of older New Yorkers who fall into those categories.

<b>Population Group</b>	<b>New York Residents</b>
<b>Age 55 +</b>	<b>4,944,821</b>
<b>Have a disability (65+)</b>	<b>922,963</b>
<b>Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills (55+)</b>	<b>495,628</b>
<b>Reside in rural areas (55+) Number based on 2000 census. *</b>	<b>387,455</b>
<b>Are veterans or their spouses who meet the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act (65+)</b>	<b>577,702</b>
<b>Have low employment prospects (55+)</b>	<b>210,455</b>
<b>Have failed to find employment after utilizing services provided under Title 1 of WIA</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
<b>Are homeless or at risk for homelessness</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

\*US Bureau of Census has not yet released the 2010 rural population figures-Oct. 2012 is the scheduled release of the urban/rural update.

Ethnic/racial minorities and other vulnerable populations (e.g., limited English-speaking) continue to grow at a faster rate among older persons, as well as in the general population. NYSOFA will be working with SCSEP sponsors to increase outreach to older minority populations.

Outreach to underrepresented populations in both rural and urban settings is achieved by a variety of different methods, some of which are:

1. Mailings to community organizations
2. Public presentations
3. Attending various events within the community
4. Brochures in libraries, churches, super markets, on community bulletin boards
5. Web site postings

6. Newspaper/newsletter articles
7. Posting in veterans clubs and organization
8. Posting in One-Stop agencies
9. Workforce career days
10. Job Fairs
11. Employer recruitment at Careers Centers
12. Monthly partner meetings
13. Fliers
14. Classes on resume writing, interview skills, job search
15. Conduct workshops related to employment issues
16. Informational workshops
17. Educational counseling
18. Job search training

Grantees have recruited veterans in collaboration with the Black Veterans for Social Justice and Veterans Rehabilitation and Employment (VRE) representatives at one stop Centers. Recruitment material and presentations are made available throughout local well-established community service networks, including: Area Agencies on Aging and other service delivery systems for those 60 and older. Other outreach efforts have been made toward assisting underrepresented populations such as English as a second language training programs and minority service agencies; Vocational Rehabilitation and other disability-focused agencies; homeless shelters and welfare and employment security offices, targeting low income priority older adults. Grantees work with many

disability network agencies and public assistance offices to assist individuals over 55 who do not receive social security; have low literacy skills; cognitive disabilities; substance abuse and criminal histories.

Good examples of ongoing targeted outreach strategies to priority individuals by grantees include:

- Training sub grantees to identify and better serve those with disabilities; limited-English proficiency or low literacy skills; those who reside in rural areas; veterans; those with low employment prospects; those who have failed to find employment through the One-Stop Career Center and those who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.
- Utilizing information available on census software and web sites, which will assist sub grantees on identifying specific neighborhoods populated by individuals who are 55 and low income.

Sub grantees have also connected to intermediary networks that are most likely to have significant contact with priority individuals, such as: health clinics and other health-care providers, transportation and other service providers to older adults, homeless shelters, veterans' organizations and VA offices, food banks, and ex-offender programs. Sub grantees have consulted with their local aging and adult protective services providers to identify those at risk for homelessness.

Outreach materials that describe program services and eligibility criteria are provided at the One-Stop Career Center. Sub grantees are also encouraged to supplement their own outreach and recruitment efforts with various tools such as videos, brochures, and flyers. NYSOFA continues to work with sub grantees to enhance outreach tools and ensure that SCSEP-eligible jobseekers, especially those who have multiple barriers to employment, are encouraged to participate.

All individuals selected for enrollment will meet federal eligibility requirements: 55 years of age or older, low income, unemployed (as defined by TEG 12-06) and a resident of the jurisdiction being served. Each applicant's eligibility is determined and documented by sub grantee staff; every applicant must provide information for, and sign, a Participant Form that is retained as part of the program's official record. The information will also be entered into the SCSEP Performance and Reporting (SPARQ) database, a reporting system operated by USDOL used for monitoring program operations.

Priority low-income older workers may not hear about the SCSEP through traditional methods; therefore, proactive outreach measures are used; such as, recruitment through disability or veteran organizations. For applicants who may have difficulty gaining access to a SCSEP office, staff will conduct home visits, or engage older adults in other public meeting places, such as the local one stop, neighborhood churches, senior centers, local restaurants, public libraries or schools. This approach is especially helpful in rural areas, where applicants have access to services in locations familiar to them. Outreach

materials used to promote SCESP feature older individuals, engaging in jobs potential participants can identify with and the language is kept simple and encouraging.

Local grantee field staff play a significant role in reaching and recruiting SCSEP eligible participants most in need. The local perspective of field staff gives them a unique understanding of the people and agencies within those communities that they serve. Those linkages to the target populations and the community can make SCSEP an attractive option for low-income older individuals in need of job training and job-readiness skills. The local connection and community knowledge produces positive recruitment outcomes for priority groups.

During recruitment and selection of SCSEP applicants, priority is given to individuals who meet the OAA sec. 518(b) criteria. SCSEP management staff conduct regular reviews to ensure priority groups are being adequately served. NYSOFA will encourage and share best practice strategies in recruiting eligible participants to the program.

### **Section 5: Supporting Employment Opportunities for Participants.**

Analysis for New York State and each of its 10 labor market regions can be found in Attachment C. The New York State Department of Labor's (NYSDOL) market analysts list the significant industries and where they recommend the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) concentrate their resources. NYSDOL's 2011 Significant Industries

Report to the Workforce Development System identified significant industries on the basis of job counts, wage levels, job growth (both net and percent) over the 2006-2009 period and expected job growth based on industry employment projections through 2016. NYSDOL also considers whether or not an industry may be designated as a local priority by economic development officials.

High ranking industries are placed on a regional list of significant industries, which mean that some industries will appear on multiple regional lists. No one industry appears on all 10 regional lists -- a testament to the diversity of local industry across the state. However, some industries are cited as significant in a number of regions. For example, the most frequently cited industry is ambulatory health care services which were mentioned by nine regional analysts. The next most frequently cited were professional, scientific, and technical services management of companies and enterprises; educational services; nursing and residential care facilities; hospitals and specialty trade contractors.

#### **Section 6: Increasing Participant Placement in Unsubsidized Employment and Employer Outreach.**

It is the goal of each grantee to place as many participants into unsubsidized employment as possible in a timely manner. In order to meet this goal, grantees will be encourage to continue building relationships with local and national employers who are eager to hire mature job seekers. Many grantees recruit local employers and provide training for their managers and staff on the value of hiring older workers, dispelling common myths and

assist them in helping to find employment opportunities for SCSEP participants.

NYSOFA will share reference material with program sponsors that address these issues.

The following are examples of how programs prepare trainees for unsubsidized employment:

- The New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) SCSEP program brings in potential employers by sponsoring open houses. City agencies are invited to tour the program and become partner Host Agencies.
- The Age Works Computer Training Center provides basic and intermediate instruction in Micro Soft Office Suite (Word, Excel and PowerPoint). This training is ideal for beginners and a refresher for those with some knowledge of these software programs. The training is aimed toward workers with office skills who need to learn computers for the first time and for those who have fallen behind and need to upgrade their skills for today's technological workforce. The length of the courses is 8-10 weeks and prepares trainees:
  - For employment in data entry, word processing and general automated office work.
  - Fundamentals of the Internet.
  - For employer-employee relations, customer service skills, job search techniques and resume writing.

These programs are designed to assist participants in preparing for entry into unsubsidized employment. NYSOFA will share these best practices with program

sponsors highlighting best practices for providing training to assist older adult job seekers.

### **Host Agencies Work Site Training**

The New York City SCSEP program for mature adults offers temporary part-time training opportunities in settings such as non-profit businesses or government agencies. They currently have more than 600 trainees in 325 worksites throughout the city. While receiving onsite training, each participant receives a full range of job search techniques, employment contact and placement assistance with finding permanent employment.

### **Job Preparation Workshops**

Job Preparation Workshops assist applicants to become competitive in today's labor market by developing the necessary skills for effective resume writing and interviewing. These workshops are designed for the mature adult with proven work experience and the motivation to secure permanent employment as quickly as possible.

Grantees and sub grantees provide retention activities to ensure participants maintain their employment status as well as offer the opportunities to gain new skills on the job. One of the outcome goals is to prepare the participant for advancement opportunities within their employment sector. Follow up phone calls to the participants, and to the employers (with participant permission) are provided on a regular basis. Additional “post-employment” supportive services such as mediation/intervention and counseling are also available upon request or identification of need.

Sub grantee staff continually seeks out employment opportunities with businesses and industries located in their territories. They are able to track business trends and employment

opportunities through participation/membership in their local and state LWIBs, workforce committees, and chambers of commerce. Also, as part of their job development responsibilities, sub grantees routinely meet with local and regional employers to discuss the SCSEP; listen to the employer's needs, and offer to assist in filling jobs. These one-on-one contacts are the basis for developing training strategies with the employer, developing on-the-job experience contracts, or directly filling jobs, while establishing or maintaining partnerships.

Sub grantees utilize online programs to access information about jobs in specific areas or counties, along with required skill levels. Once identified, staff can contact those employers whose businesses fall into the high demand or high growth areas. Frequent contact with local employers allows sub grantee staff to provide participants with information on local job availability and the skills needed to obtain those jobs. Staff are also involved in business outreach activities such as visiting with employer representatives at job fairs, involvement of employers in Job Search/Job Club training, and any other networking activities that result in employer relationship building. Sub grantee staff welcomes the opportunity to provide information on hiring, training, and retaining older workers through meetings, seminars, workshops, presentations, and any other venues where potential employers may be present. Though not all attendees will be direct employer contacts, these activities help spread the word about the value and availability of older workers, dispel myths and introduce employers to the ageless workforce concept.

Sub grantees provide ancillary services to assist Host Agencies in providing training opportunities for eligible participants. Training opportunities fall under the following general categories: business/financial clerk, computer operator, kitchen aide/food preparation, clerical, receptionist, maintenance/custodian, and classroom aide. General training assignments provide staffing to agencies under tight budget constraints.

Utilization of SCEP participants provide employment agencies with qualified staff which may lead to a seamless service delivery system. Many times host agencies benefit from the placement of bilingual participants, something that host agencies have come to appreciate.

Sub grantee staff focus on companies that are high growth industries and offer jobs that are appropriate for SCSEP participants. One stops and economic development agencies provide a wealth of data on jobs in demand at local and regional levels. Online tools, such as NY Makes Work Pay and Local Employment Dynamics (LED) provide statistics on number of jobs, number of job availability, and which industries are currently hiring; this information can be sorted by county or zip code. Once key industries and potential jobs are identified, staff develop training and Individual Employment Plans (IEP) which assist participants in developing marketable job skills and facilitates placement in host agency assignments.

As part of the LWIB network, staff has access to employers in high growth industries interested in working with the Local Work Investment Act (LWIA) system. These employers are instrumental in identifying potential jobs within their businesses. Local

staff meet with human resource managers to discuss the company's employment needs, potential opportunities for SCSEP participants, and advancement opportunities beyond entry level. LWIA co-enrollment may be sought to gain training in high growth jobs. Other opportunities for job preparation include; on-the-job experience contracts with businesses, customized or specialized training, participation in Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiatives, trainings leading to industry-recognized certification, and partnerships with community and technical schools.

The most effective job retention strategies include; personal attention in making the initial placement; ensuring there is a good match between employer expectations and participant skill level, interest, and work ethics. Other factors for success include: follow up shortly after placement and periodically thereafter to ensure the participant is satisfied with the placement; counseling when issues or problems arise on the job; providing supportive services as needed; and providing good customer service for the employer and participant. It is also important that job development efforts focus on quality jobs, as these are the jobs participants are more likely to keep.

NYSOFA staff will use SPARQ data and regular contact with each sub grantee to monitor performance, when there are indications of underperformance technical assistance is provided.

## **Section 7: Community Service Needs.**

Services needs not only vary between communities but may also change from year to year depending on the local economy and available funding from other sources. In order to provide the broadest range of training opportunities possible, NYSOFA encourages all local projects to actively and continuously recruit host agencies focusing on those with the greatest placement potential. Priority in the recruiting process will be given to those sites whose services match community needs, offer training in areas where skills can be easily transferred to available jobs, and have the potential to hire the participant.

Emphasis will be placed on utilizing participants within the SCSEP program as computer trainers, resource room staff, recruiters and job developers. Placement will be tailored so that the participant can gain both skills and experience in a specific type of work. Jobs that offer interaction with the general public provide customer service training as an extra skill and help increase the participant's marketability. Traditionally, emphasis on community service in New York State has focused on aging services due in part to familiarity with the aging network and an acute awareness of the unmet needs of the older adults.

With an increased focus on training and placement, rarely do host agencies have the luxury of retaining the same participant for extended periods of time. Re-educating host agencies as to the purpose and goals of SCSEP is an ongoing activity statewide for all grantees. In addition to carrying the same message, all grantees must begin to share

information about the use of host agencies and types of training available. This will allow grantees to avoid having participants from more than one managing provider at the site, as well as provide replacement participants in a timely manner.

Community service assignments are as diverse as the people and locations served.

Development of community service assignments is an ongoing process. It requires staff to be aware of local community needs and the reality of the local job market.

Agencies/organizations have to be located that can act as Host Agencies, and the quality of services that can be provided by the host agency to the participant. Although host agency development is ongoing, selection of assignments are based primarily on participant need as determined by the assessment and documented on the IEP. There are instances where consideration is given to community service projects that may not directly prepare a participant for a job but are of exceptional value to the community. One example is participants who have been assigned to assist with disaster relief.

### **Section 8: Coordination with Other Programs, Initiatives and Entities.**

This section highlights efforts underway to enhance the coordination of SCSEP with other programs initiatives and entities.

#### **Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG):**

New York State Department of Labor in conjunction with the New York State Department of Mental Health are re-designing employment services making available job opportunities and services and supports in an organized system responsive to the needs of individual

businesses and job seekers. This re-designed system will replace the silos of employment-related information and fragmented approaches to assist Medicaid-eligible individuals with disabilities find employment. The system will offer a comprehensive database benefitting job seekers, employers, service providers, state agencies, advocates, tax payers and researchers. In conjunction with our partner state agency, NYSOFA will provide technical assistance so that Title V sub grantees will have access to this system.

The re-designed system will benefit:

**Job Seekers:**

- Create a single point of access for all individuals with disabilities that provide assistance in finding employment opportunities and provide a mechanism to access and coordinate support necessary for success;
- Screen for eligibility for financial support (i.e. Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities) and other (i.e. educational, vocational, rehabilitation) supports; assist with documentation requirements;
- Assess the skills of individual job seekers and develop a functional resume;
- Immediately link individual job seekers' skills and desires to available jobs; and,
- Automatically notify job seekers of matching employment opportunities as they become available.

**Employers:**

- Create a central source for accessing qualified applicants for jobs across NYS;

- Eliminate duplicative inquiries from job developers seeking employment opportunities for people with disabilities that have already been filled;
- Utilize an existing mechanism at NYS DOL employers are familiar with and are currently using to list job opportunities;
- Pre-screen job applicants with disabilities for the skills employers seek for individual job functions;
- Link employees with disabilities eligible for the Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities, eliminate the need for employers to provide health insurance for these individuals, as well as minimize the effects on employers' risk pools;
- Automatically generate tax credit claiming documentation for employers that hire an individual with a disability through the redesigned system; and
- Ability to perform outreach and education activities to address issues of diversity in the workplace.

**Service Providers:**

- Provide linkage and referral to systems of care across all state agencies;
- Centralize the repository of all service information for each individual, allowing for rational coordination of supports;
- Access to entitlements screening and eligibility criteria, including documentation requirements;

- Create job matches for individual job seekers, allowing job developers to focus on assisting job seekers with interview preparation and coordinating supports the individual needs to perform the job;
- Eliminate certain reporting requirements through a single system that meets reporting requirements for multiple state agencies;
- Automatically generate Employment Network claiming documentation to support Ticket To Work claims;
- Eliminate need for manual data entry through new ability to upload/download information from existing provider data systems; and,
- Automatically notify providers of job openings suitable matched to individuals they are serving.

**State Agencies:**

- Maximize provider resources and enable provider networks to coordinate care and services;
- Obtain precise baseline employment data across all disabilities; and,
- Track individual, provider and agency outcomes and progress using reliable sources, including wage record information.

**New York City:**

The NYC SCSEP program represents 56 percent of the total number of slots that are allocated to New York State. The program continues to initiate new and innovated ways to attract, train and move participants into unsubsidized employment. One example is the

New York City SCSEP Program Operators quarterly SCSEP Providers Meeting. The group that meets quarterly currently consists of: AARP Foundation, Easter Seals, National Urban League, Partnership for the Homeless, Jamaica Service Program, Korean Community Services, Chinatown Planning Council, NYC Department for the Aging and NYSOFA. The group became a voice and a bridge for Mature Workers returning to the workforce, promoting short term training participation and opportunities that has lead to better jobs, new career opportunities and professional upgrades for many older individuals. It is in the unique interest of New York City SCSEP grantees to work together, to share reports, information and best practices. NYSOFA will encourage SCSEP sponsors to convene quarterly meetings to facilitate greater coordination of employment training services to older adults.

**Partnerships:**

The New York City Department for the Aging's SCSEP program has a working relationship with the City's Department of Small Business Services and other New York City-SCSEP providers. The Workforce Investment Board of New York City serves to strengthen the cities SCSEP program. Collectively as a group, SCSEP Directors were able to establish collaboration with LWIA. Their goal is to assist the mature workers, to gain participation in employer recruitment forums, to have a presence at the centers, to position Title V participants for training at the centers, and to access the array of services available at the WIA Centers for our SCSEP population.

**New York State Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP):**

This organization provides training, technical assistance and networking opportunities to the Workforce Investment Areas, their partners and other interested parties. NYATEP holds two statewide conferences each year, which are attended by every WIA as well as many partner organizations. NYATEP has been very supportive in providing a venue for SCSEP grantees to work with all WIAs. NYSOFA will continue to encourage participation in this conference.

**Area Agencies on Aging:**

NYSOFA operates, through area agencies on aging (AAA), 29 SCSEP programs around the state. Many national grantees also contract with these AAA's to operate their program. For example, Senior Services America, Inc. (SSAI) contracts with the Erie, Rockland, and Chautauqua County Offices for the Aging. In addition, the Westchester County AAA and SSAI subcontracts with the NULI. The collaboration between the state and national grantees has worked extremely well. NYSOFA will continue to encourage the collaboration between the AAA's and national grantees in serving the employment needs of older workers.

**One-Stops:**

National grantees in New York State have close working relationships with the One-Stops. Many of these grantees sponsor employment and training assistants or

employment and training coordinators which are located at one-stop centers and serve as the primary point of contact for older job seekers. SCSEP participants are also assigned to the local One-Stops to assist with administrative duties, providing valuable assistance to the LWIB while enhancing their training for unsubsidized employment. Staff assists the one-stops by providing presentations to clients on various employment topics to enhance their chances of obtaining and retaining employment, Staff also assists with outreach to rural areas of the state. NYSOFA will encourage the continuation of these collaborate efforts which will include using One-Stops for job orders, labor market information, and coordination on intensive services/training needed by specific participants, and other resources of value to the SCSEP. In addition, NYSOFA will continue to encourage national grantees and one-stops to collaborate on joint training activities and job fairs, share job leads, and work together to engage the business community in One-Stop and SCSEP initiatives that support local business interests.

**Other Community Partners:**

Collaborative arrangements have been formed or strengthened with vocational rehabilitation providers to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome. A cooperative relationship with vocational rehabilitation providers enables sub grantees and national grantees to access assistance for participants with disabilities. This partnership also provides vocational rehabilitation a training/job development alternative for older clients. Agencies are recruited to meet a specific need, such as when a participant with a drug abuse problem is placed with a faith-based host agency that can provide drug counseling on-site. NYSOFA will seek to

enhance collaboration with community colleges/tech schools and adult education providers who offer provider training and remedial education for participants.

Staffing from community and employment training agencies have strong ties to area agency on aging and (AAA) funded programs, resulting in cross referrals of customers and designation of AAA sites as host agencies. Some of the sub grantees more innovative host agency assignments have occurred in collaboration with the aging network or resulted in permanent employment for participants. NYSOFA will work with national grantees and AAA's to encourage these types of innovations.

#### **Section 9: Avoidance of Disruptions in Service.**

Given the slot movement that has occurred in New York State over the last several years, all SCSEP grantees have made agreements to work with each other to avoid disruptions to trainees. As a grantee moved slots out of a county the incoming or remaining grantee agreed to enroll in its program participants that had been enrolled by the sponsor vacating the county. One example of this is the movement of slots that occurred in Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties. Experience Works and NYSOFA agreed that Experience Works would move out of those counties. This meant Experience Works would be have to move their slots out of the three counties which required that NYSOFA move slots into those counties in order to bring the counties to equity. The three programs which are now being operated by the AAA's, used their new slots and other vacant slots to enroll trainees from the Experience Works program who were not placed in unsubsidized

programs or otherwise left the program. This example repeated itself in other counties where slot movement occurred. This procedure that will be used in the future in counties where slot movement occurs either due to new Census data or as a result of sponsor trades.

Slots in over served areas were moved to underserved areas only when they become vacant to prevent any disruption in service. No enrollee will be terminated simply to improve equitable distribution. NYSOFA will continue to follow the principle that is included in USDOL guidelines on efforts to improve equitable distribution. It is also referenced in Section 503(a)(6) of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 which states that “disruptions in the provision of community service employment opportunities for current enrollees shall be avoided to the greatest possible extent.”

#### **Section 10: Improvement of SCSEP Services.**

How best to tap the growing “pool” of older workers, an economic resource for businesses, was a subject addressed by the 2005 White House Council on Aging. Top recommendations forwarded to the White House included two related to older workers: Res. 11: To remove barriers to the retention and hiring of older workers, including age discrimination, and Res. 12: To promote incentives for older workers to continue working and improve employment training and retraining programs to better serve older workers. SCSEP continues to be the foremost federal program to accomplish these goals. Providing low-income older workers with the tools, training and services needed to move from unemployed, to SCSEP

community service, to an unsubsidized job, is a role the NYSOFA and national grantees are uniquely qualified to fill, especially for those older workers most in need.

This Plan provides a framework for the provision of services to individuals eligible for SCSEP. The services provided by this program in New York will be important as the next generation of older workers will be very different. Racial and ethnic subgroups will represent 34 per cent of the older population by 2050, compared to just 15 per cent in 1995. This has significant implications for how SCSEP targets individuals for services, outreach, programs, advocacy, education, etc., as well as for the emphasis SCSEP must place on providing such services in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner.

Over the next four years, NYSOFA and its sub grantees look forward to working with the national grantees to consider best approaches to address challenges in SCSEP. NYSOFA will continue to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote useful opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are age 55 or older, particularly persons who have poor employment prospects, and to increasing the number of persons who may enjoy the benefits of unsubsidized employment.