

PY 2004 Nationwide Customer Satisfaction Survey of Participants
Final Report
September 13, 2005

I. Executive Summary

The first nationwide survey of participant satisfaction was conducted between April and June, 2005. Nearly 23,000 surveys were mailed to participants who had been active in SCSEP at any time between July 1, 2004, and February 2005, when the samples were drawn. 370 participants were selected from each grantee and, for national grantees, 70 were selected from each state in which each national grantee operated. Participants who did not respond to the first mailing received a second mailing and, if necessary, a third mailing in an effort to achieve a 70% response rate. The final response rate was 69.2%

The survey instrument consisted of the three questions that constitute the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and a series of questions that asked about all aspects of participants' experience with SCSEP, including how participants were treated by the sub-grantee; participants' evaluation of their community service experience; how well SCSEP prepared them for unsubsidized employment and helped them find such employment; and the impact of SCSEP on their physical health, outlook on life, financial circumstances.

The nationwide ACSI score of 82.8 is substantially higher than the last reported nationwide WIA participant score of 76.2. Participants gave the highest scores to their treatment by the sub-grantees, followed by their experience with their community service assignment. Participants gave their lowest scores to questions about how helpful the program was with unsubsidized employment and the provision of supportive services. 90% of respondents reported that, compared to the time before they entered SCSEP, their physical health is the same or better, and 69% reported that their outlook on life is a little more positive or much more positive. Participants agreed moderately with the statement that their community service wages have made a substantial improvement in their quality of life.

Various statistical analyses were performed to see which questions, and which clusters of questions, had the strongest effect on overall satisfaction. A regression analysis identified four questions in two clusters that are strong independent drivers of satisfaction. The three questions on the sub-grantee's treatment of the participant (questions 4, 5, and 11) are extremely highly correlated with the ACSI. Question 5, regarding whether the program understood the participant's employment needs and interests, has an extraordinary high correlation, meaning that any change in this score will have a very direct and powerful change in overall satisfaction. Fortunately, these three questions are areas of great strength for the program: the scores here were uniformly high. Continued attention to how participants are treated will help ensure high levels of satisfaction.

The fourth question with a strong independent relationship to the ACSI is question 8, whether the program provided the participant the right community service assignment. The strong correlation of this question with the ACSI, coupled with the high score this question received, indicates that this is an area where grantees should continue to show strength.

These results were confirmed by a structural equation model, which examined two clusters of questions – how participants were treated (Process) and their experience of their community service assignment (CSA Assignment) – in relation to the ACSI. This analysis, which accounts for 77% of the variation in ACSI scores among grantees, establishes that both process and the CSA experience determine overall satisfaction, but that process is twice as important. This analysis also established that for exiters completing the survey, whether or not participants were placed had a negligible effect on their satisfaction with the program.

II. Background

In 1965 the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) began as a demonstration project under the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA). The program gained separate legislative authorization in 1973 under the Older Americans Act (OAA). SCSEP was designed to foster and promote useful part-time opportunities in community service for persons with low income who are 55 years of age or older and to assist older workers in transitioning to unsubsidized employment. The OAA Amendments of 2000 expanded the program's purpose to increasing participants' economic self-sufficiency and providing a greater emphasis on placement into unsubsidized employment.

The Division of Older Worker Programs (DOWP) of the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor administers SCSEP through grant agreements with governmental entities and nonprofit organizations. There are 56 state and territorial grantees and 13 national grantees. These grantees deliver program services locally through approximately 900 sub-grantees and local projects.

The 2000 amendments require that customer satisfaction data be collected for each of the three customer groups: employers, host agencies, and enrollees. In April 2004, DOWP adopted final rules implementing the 2000 amendments to the OAA. The performance measurement section of the regulations includes customer satisfaction among the performance measures that will be included in the calculation of aggregate performance for incentives and sanctions. The section also specifies that for national grantees, performance measures are to be computed at both the national and the state level. DOWP determined that only the three questions that comprise the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI; for a discussion of the ACSI, see Section IV C below) would be used to determine grantee performance but that additional questions would be included in the surveys to provide customer evaluations of the services received that could be used for program improvement. In June 2004, the federal Office of Management and Budget approved the survey instruments and methodology, and in September 2004, DOWP issued Older Worker Bulletin 04-06, which sets forth administrative guidance on the performance measurement system, including the customer satisfaction surveys.

Planning for this effort has taken place over the last four years, starting with the development of recommendations by the Customer Satisfaction Subcommittee of the Title V Performance Accountability Workgroup, which completed its work in 2001. In 2003, DOWP conducted a pilot project with three state grantees, Florida, Iowa, and New York. The pilot project established that a mail survey could achieve acceptable response rates, determined the most

effective methods of survey administration, and tested several versions of the survey instruments.

Based on the results of the pilot project, DOWP decided to administer written participant and host agency surveys centrally once each program year. For PY 2004, DOWP contracted with a mail house to produce and mail the participant and host agency surveys on behalf of all grantees. DOWP also decided that a written employer survey would be administered locally by the sub-grantees and local projects on a continuous basis throughout the program year.

III. Survey Methodology

The sample for the participant survey was drawn in February and March, 2005, from Quarter 1 PY 2004 performance data that grantees submitted to DOWP. All participants active at any time on or after July 1, 2004 were eligible for selection. For both state and national grantees, at least 370 participants were selected for surveying. If a grantee had fewer than 370 eligible participants, all eligible participants were included. If a grantee had more than 370, a random sample of 370 was drawn.

Special procedures were developed for national grantees. A minimum of 70 potential respondents was required in each state in which a national grantee operated. If a national grantee had fewer than 70 customers in a state, all were selected; if it had more than 70, a random sample of 70 was selected. Since national grantees needed a minimum sample of 370, states were over-sampled if the 70 selected in each state where the national grantee operated did not produce the 370 total for that national grantee. Because many national grantees operate in six or more states with more than 70 customers in each of those states, many national grantees had samples far in excess of 370.

The survey methodology was designed to maximize the response rate. Participants received pre-survey letters from the sub-grantee, which were followed by the survey packet consisting of a scannable four-page survey instrument; a postage-paid, addressed reply envelope; and a cover letter on the grantee's letterhead addressed to the participant and signed by the grantee's director. After the first mailing, two additional mailings were conducted for those who had not completed a survey from the previous mailing(s). The first mailing was completed on April 4, 2005 and the last was sent to respondents on June 22, 2005.¹

Complete details of the survey methodology can be found in the Appendix.

IV. Survey Results

The results presented below are based on all three mailings of the participant survey and include all completed surveys received through August 1, 2005. This final report is enhanced with demographic and service information about the participant respondents based on Q3 PY 2004 data submitted to DOWP by the grantees.

¹ Because of the difficulties of administering the survey overseas, and because all of the participants in Puerto Rico were reported as having limited English proficiency, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico were not included in the participant survey this year. Seven state grantees that were subject to the survey did not submit usable participant data to SPARQ in time to be included in the sample. In addition, several states submitted incomplete data and thus had a smaller sample than required by the methodology.

A. Demographics and Service History

The pre-printed number on each survey allowed the participants' survey responses to be matched with their demographic data, service history, and outcomes. The information below is derived from data submitted to DOWP by the grantees for Q3 PY 2004. Section IV K below presents the extent to which any of these characteristics affect overall satisfaction.

The demographics of the respondents mirror those of all participants. As is evident from Table 1, participant respondents are predominantly white (65.3%), female (75.5%), non-Hispanic (93.1%), and with a high school diploma (46.5%). There are two important differences between national grantee respondents and state grantee respondents. State grantee respondents are much more likely to be female (80.3% v. 71.4%) and to have some college or post-secondary education (30.9% v. 25.3%).

Table 1

| | | | Count | Percent |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| National Grantees | Race | American Indian | 232 | 3.1% |
| | | Asian | 105 | 1.4% |
| | | Black | 1934 | 25.8% |
| | | Pacific Islander | 27 | .4% |
| | | White | 4839 | 64.5% |
| | Gender | Did not volunteer | 368 | 4.9% |
| | | Male | 2146 | 28.6% |
| | | Female | 5359 | 71.4% |
| | Ethnicity | Not Hispanic | 6558 | 92.7% |
| | | Hispanic | 514 | 7.3% |
| | Education | 8th grade or less | 743 | 10.3% |
| | | 9-12th grade no diploma | 1119 | 15.4% |
| | | HS diploma or equivalent | 3538 | 48.8% |
| | | 1-3 years of college | 1233 | 17.0% |
| | | Associates degree | 68 | .9% |
| | | Bachelors degree | 332 | 4.6% |
| | | Some graduate school | 76 | 1.0% |
| | | Masters degree | 54 | .7% |
| | | Doctoral degree | 10 | .1% |
| Post-secondary certificate | | 75 | 1.0% | |
| State Grantees | | Race | American Indian | 137 |
| | Asian | | 189 | 2.9% |
| | Black | | 1584 | 24.5% |
| | Pacific Islander | | 18 | .3% |
| | White | | 4294 | 66.3% |
| | Gender | Did not volunteer | 256 | 4.0% |
| | | Male | 1274 | 19.7% |
| | | Female | 5203 | 80.3% |
| | Ethnicity | Not Hispanic | 5915 | 93.5% |
| | | Hispanic | 408 | 6.5% |

| | | | Count | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| Nationwide | Education | 8th grade or less | 484 | 7.5% |
| | | 9-12th grade no diploma | 1145 | 17.7% |
| | | HS diploma or equivalent | 2848 | 43.9% |
| | | 1-3 years of college | 1283 | 19.8% |
| | | Associates degree | 75 | 1.2% |
| | | Bachelors degree | 368 | 5.7% |
| | | Some graduate school | 80 | 1.2% |
| | | Masters degree | 97 | 1.5% |
| | | Doctoral degree | 21 | .3% |
| | | Post-secondary certificate | 80 | 1.2% |
| | Race | American Indian | 369 | 2.6% |
| | | Asian | 294 | 2.1% |
| | | Black | 3518 | 25.2% |
| | | Pacific Islander | 45 | .3% |
| | | White | 9133 | 65.3% |
| | | Did not volunteer | 624 | 4.5% |
| | Gender | Male | 3420 | 24.5% |
| | | Female | 10562 | 75.5% |
| | Ethnicity | Not Hispanic | 12473 | 93.1% |
| | | Hispanic | 922 | 6.9% |
| | Education | 8th grade or less | 1227 | 8.9% |
| | | 9-12th grade no diploma | 2264 | 16.5% |
| | | HS diploma or equivalent | 6386 | 46.5% |
| | | 1-3 years of college | 2516 | 18.3% |
| | | Associates degree | 143 | 1.0% |
| | | Bachelors degree | 700 | 5.1% |
| | | Some graduate school | 156 | 1.1% |
| Masters degree | | 151 | 1.1% | |
| Doctoral degree | | 31 | .2% | |
| Post-secondary certificate | | 155 | 1.1% | |

The average age of all participant respondents is 65.3. This is the same as the average age for all active participants. There is no difference between state and national grantees on this characteristic. Table 2 presents the percentage of those under 60 and those 60 and over. Again, there is no statistical difference between state and national grantees.

Table 2

| | | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|-------------|-------|---------|
| National Grantees | Under 60 | 2961 | 27.1 |
| | 60 and over | 7977 | 72.9 |
| State Grantees | Under 60 | 2508 | 27.9 |
| | 60 and over | 6496 | 72.1 |
| Nationwide | Under 60 | 5469 | 27.4 |
| | 60 and over | 14473 | 72.6 |
| Total | | 19942 | 100.0 |

Table 3 presents other characteristics that identify most-in-need participants and thus could potentially impact survey responses. There are major differences between state and national grantees on two characteristics. State grantee respondents are more likely to have poor employment prospects (53.6% v. 39.1%) but are less likely to be socially isolated (14% v. 24.9%). However, there is strong evidence that grantees have not been consistent or accurate in coding most-in-need characteristics, and the data should be viewed with caution.

Table 3

| | | | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----|-------|---------|
| National Grantees | Homeless | No | 6583 | 99.4% |
| | | Yes | 38 | .6% |
| | Literacy Skills Deficient | No | 7162 | 95.4% |
| | | Yes | 349 | 4.6% |
| | Family Below Poverty Level | No | 1206 | 16.1% |
| | | Yes | 6301 | 83.9% |
| | Limited English Proficiency | No | 7185 | 95.7% |
| | | Yes | 325 | 4.3% |
| | Poor Employment History | No | 4574 | 60.9% |
| | | Yes | 2937 | 39.1% |
| | Other Social Barrier | No | 6906 | 91.9% |
| | | Yes | 605 | 8.1% |
| | Displaced Homemaker | No | 7052 | 93.9% |
| | | Yes | 458 | 6.1% |
| | Culturally Isolated | No | 5639 | 75.1% |
| | | Yes | 1872 | 24.9% |
| State Grantees | Homeless | No | 1343 | 99.5% |
| | | Yes | 7 | .5% |
| | Literacy Skills Deficient | No | 6058 | 93.5% |
| | | Yes | 419 | 6.5% |
| | Family Below Poverty Level | No | 1258 | 19.4% |
| | | Yes | 5218 | 80.6% |
| | Limited English Proficiency | No | 6242 | 96.2% |
| | | Yes | 245 | 3.8% |
| | Poor Employment History | No | 3004 | 46.4% |
| | | Yes | 3470 | 53.6% |
| | Other Social Barrier | No | 5708 | 88.2% |
| | | Yes | 765 | 11.8% |
| | Displaced Homemaker | No | 5948 | 91.8% |
| | | Yes | 529 | 8.2% |
| | Culturally Isolated | No | 5569 | 86.0% |
| | | Yes | 910 | 14.0% |

| | | | Count | Percent |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----|-------|---------|
| Nationwide | Homeless | No | 7926 | 99.4% |
| | | Yes | 45 | .6% |
| | Literacy Skills Deficient | No | 13220 | 94.5% |
| | | Yes | 768 | 5.5% |
| | Family Below Poverty Level | No | 2464 | 17.6% |
| | | Yes | 11519 | 82.4% |
| | Limited English Proficiency | No | 13427 | 95.9% |
| | | Yes | 570 | 4.1% |
| | Poor Employment History | No | 7578 | 54.2% |
| | | Yes | 6407 | 45.8% |
| | Other Social Barrier | No | 12614 | 90.2% |
| | | Yes | 1370 | 9.8% |
| | Displaced Homemaker | No | 13000 | 92.9% |
| | | Yes | 987 | 7.1% |
| | Culturally Isolated | No | 11208 | 80.1% |
| | | Yes | 2782 | 19.9% |

Nationwide, participant respondents have had an average of 1.1 host agency assignments and have been in the program for a little over a year and a half (581 days). As is evident from Table 4, participants enrolled with state grantees have been in the program 100 days longer (631 days versus 533 days) than those enrolled with national grantees.

Table 4

| | | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | Days in Program | 3436 | 532.9 | 1.0 | 7,863.0 |
| | Number of Assignments | 2682 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 4.0 |
| State Grantees | Days in Program | 3292 | 631.4 | 1.0 | 7,828.0 |
| | Number of Assignments | 2788 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 4.0 |
| Nationwide | Days in Program | 6728 | 581.0 | 1.0 | 7,863.0 |
| | Number of Assignments | 5470 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 4.0 |

There is also a significant difference between state and national grantees with regard to the participants' exit reason. Consistent with the difference in placement rate for the two groups of grantees, national grantees have a higher percentage of participants exiting for unsubsidized employment. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

| | | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| National Grantees | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 1546 | 45.2% |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 1871 | 54.8% |
| State Grantees | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 1367 | 41.6% |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 1921 | 58.4% |
| Nationwide | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 2913 | 43.4% |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 3792 | 56.6% |

B. Response Rate

The response rate was calculated by matching completed surveys against the sample list used to mail the surveys. Only surveys that contained answers to all three ACSI questions were counted as completed in the calculation. The response rate in Table 6 is based on surveys received through August 1, 2005. The nationwide response rate of 69.2% is just short of the target of 70%. Since this was the first year of the survey and grantees were unfamiliar with the process, the methodology appears to have worked well. With a more accurate database and more consistent preparation of participants in advance of the survey, there is every reason to expect a 70% response rate or higher in PY 2005.

Table 6

| Grantee | Response Rate |
|-------------------|---------------|
| AARP | 57.7% |
| ABLE | 73.0% |
| ANPPM | 66.4% |
| Easter Seals | 67.3% |
| Experience Works | 71.0% |
| Forest Service | 70.1% |
| Mature Services | 70.7% |
| NAPCA | 58.5% |
| NCBA | 71.8% |
| NCOA | 65.6% |
| NICOA | 77.4% |
| SER | 67.9% |
| SSA | 64.1% |
| National Grantees | 67.0% |
| Alabama | 84.2% |
| Alaska | 61.8% |
| Arizona | .0% |

| Grantee | Response Rate |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Arkansas | 75.1% |
| California | 63.8% |
| Colorado | 69.1% |
| Connecticut | 64.9% |
| Delaware | 68.4% |
| District of Columbia | 81.2% |
| Florida | 65.7% |
| Georgia | 72.6% |
| Hawaii | 70.0% |
| Idaho | 76.1% |
| Illinois | 62.2% |
| Indiana | 73.7% |
| Iowa | 75.8% |
| Kansas | 81.5% |
| Kentucky | 78.4% |
| Louisiana | 78.0% |
| Maine | 80.6% |
| Maryland | 73.9% |
| Massachusetts | 66.2% |
| Michigan | 74.5% |
| Minnesota | 73.9% |
| Mississippi | n/a |
| Missouri | n/a |
| Montana | 73.8% |
| Nebraska | 95.5% |
| Nevada | 68.0% |
| New Hampshire | n/a |
| New Jersey | 69.0% |
| New Mexico | 72.7% |
| New York | 71.0% |
| North Carolina | 69.6% |
| North Dakota | 77.5% |
| Ohio | 68.5% |
| Oklahoma | 77.5% |
| Oregon | 74.6% |
| Pennsylvania | 76.3% |
| Puerto Rico | n/a |
| Rhode Island | n/a |
| South Carolina | n/a |
| South Dakota | 78.5% |
| Tennessee | 78.0% |
| Texas | 71.9% |
| Utah | 56.1% |
| Vermont | 71.7% |
| Virginia | 76.2% |
| Washington | 74.8% |

| Grantee | Response Rate |
|-----------------|---------------|
| West Virginia | 81.8% |
| Wisconsin | 67.3% |
| Wyoming | 78.9% |
| American Samoa | n/a |
| Guam | n/a |
| Mariana Islands | n/a |
| Virgin Islands | n/a |
| State Grantees | 72.2% |
| Nationwide | 69.2% |

As is evident from Table 6, state grantees have a significantly higher response rate (72.2%) than do national grantees (67%). This difference may be the result of participants' having a stronger identification with state grantees than with national grantees, or it may be due to state grantees' having done a better job of alerting participants to the survey through discussions and pre-survey letters. It is also possible that the higher response rate for state grantees is related to the higher satisfaction rate achieved by state grantees compared to national grantees. See Table 7. The response rate has a small to moderate association with the degree of satisfaction expressed through the ACSI score; however, it is not clear whether those who are most dissatisfied are more motivated to respond so they can express their dissatisfaction or whether those who are most inclined to respond happen to be most dissatisfied.

There is a wide distribution of response rates among both state and national grantees. State grantee response rates range from a low of 56.1% to a high of 95.5%, and national grantee response rates range from a low of 58.5% to a high of 77.4%. These wide distributions are likely caused by a number of factors, including the degree to which grantees prepared participants for the survey.

C. ACSI

Developed and licensed by the University of Michigan Business School, the ACSI uses a set of three required questions. The responses to these questions are then used to form a customer satisfaction index. The questions are:

- (1) Using a scale of 1 to 10 where "1" means "Very Dissatisfied" and "10" means "Very Satisfied" what is your overall satisfaction with the services provided by _____?
- (2) Considering all of the expectations you may have had about the services, to what extent have the services met your expectations? "1" now means "Falls Short of Your Expectations" and "10" means "Exceeds Your Expectations"
- (3) Now think of the ideal program for people in your circumstances. How well do you think the services you received compare with the ideal set of services? "1" now means "Not Very Close to the Ideal" and "10" means "Very Close to the Ideal."

Weights are applied to each individual question's score based on factors developed by the University of Michigan Business School, and the ACSI score is obtained by combining the weighted scores from these three specific questions that address different dimensions of customers' experiences. The minimum ACSI score is 0 and the maximum is 100.

The ASCI is widely used in both the public and private sectors and provides the only widely recognized benchmark for customer satisfaction. The average ACSI score for all public and private sector organizations for the third quarter of 2004 was 74.3. In 2002 and 2003, Amazon.com achieved a score of 88, one of the highest scores for a private sector firm using the index. In most other private sector surveys, the highest scores have been around 80. WIA has been using the ACSI to measure customer satisfaction since 2000. The average employer score for WIA in PY 2003 was 71.6; the average participant score 76.2.

Table 7 presents the ACSI score for state grantees, for national grantees, and nationwide. Only those respondents who answered all three of the ACSI questions are included in the index and reported in Table 2. The nationwide score of 82.8 equals or exceeds the score achieved by most private sector organizations and far exceeds the typical employer or participant score for an employment and training program. As with the response rate, there is a fairly wide distribution of ACSI scores among the grantees, ranging from 71.9 to 92.9. There is also a slight but significant difference between the ACSI scores of state and national grantees, with participants being more satisfied with state grantees by more than one point.

Table 7

| Grantees | ACSI | | | | Response Rate |
|----------------------|-------|------|---------|---------|---------------|
| | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | |
| AARP | 1156 | 80.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 57.7% |
| ABLE | 269 | 81.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 73.0% |
| ANPPM | 208 | 81.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 66.4% |
| Easter Seals | 418 | 83.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 67.3% |
| Experience Works | 1829 | 83.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 71.0% |
| Forest Service | 1282 | 81.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 70.1% |
| Mature Services | 262 | 74.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 70.7% |
| NAPCA | 224 | 81.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 58.5% |
| NCBA | 547 | 87.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 71.8% |
| NCOA | 545 | 83.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 65.6% |
| NICOA | 289 | 90.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 77.4% |
| SER | 698 | 79.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 67.9% |
| SSA | 1027 | 82.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 64.1% |
| National Grantees | 8754 | 82.3 | .0 | 100.0 | 67.0% |
| Alabama | 238 | 88.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 84.2% |
| Alaska | 151 | 73.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 61.8% |
| Arizona | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Arkansas | 170 | 82.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 75.1% |
| California | 232 | 79.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 63.8% |
| Colorado | 67 | 74.6 | .0 | 99.9 | 69.1% |
| Connecticut | 59 | 83.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 64.9% |
| Delaware | 205 | 85.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 68.4% |
| District of Columbia | 67 | 91.7 | 22.2 | 100.0 | 81.2% |
| Florida | 242 | 83.8 | .0 | 100.0 | 65.7% |
| Georgia | 264 | 86.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 72.6% |

| Grantees | ACSI | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|------|---------|---------|---------------|
| | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | Response Rate |
| Hawaii | 156 | 88.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 70.0% |
| Idaho | 54 | 81.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 76.1% |
| Illinois | 227 | 84.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 62.2% |
| Indiana | 260 | 82.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 73.7% |
| Iowa | 138 | 81.8 | 6.8 | 100.0 | 75.8% |
| Kansas | 116 | 85.2 | 17.8 | 100.0 | 81.5% |
| Kentucky | 172 | 85.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 78.4% |
| Louisiana | 202 | 89.3 | .0 | 100.0 | 78.0% |
| Maine | 25 | 78.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 80.6% |
| Maryland | 135 | 87.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 73.9% |
| Massachusetts | 86 | 81.3 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 66.2% |
| Michigan | 270 | 81.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 74.5% |
| Minnesota | 222 | 85.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 73.9% |
| Mississippi | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Missouri | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Montana | 62 | 74.4 | .0 | 100.0 | 73.8% |
| Nebraska | 20 | 83.1 | 48.8 | 100.0 | 95.5% |
| Nevada | 86 | 78.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 68.0% |
| New Hampshire | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| New Jersey | 252 | 85.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 69.0% |
| New Mexico | 48 | 85.1 | .0 | 100.0 | 72.7% |
| New York | 143 | 84.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 71.0% |
| North Carolina | 234 | 83.0 | .0 | 100.0 | 69.6% |
| North Dakota | 53 | 92.9 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 77.5% |
| Ohio | 252 | 77.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 68.5% |
| Oklahoma | 182 | 90.9 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 77.5% |
| Oregon | 135 | 76.3 | .0 | 100.0 | 74.6% |
| Pennsylvania | 281 | 86.6 | .0 | 99.8 | 76.3% |
| Puerto Rico | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Rhode Island | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| South Carolina | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| South Dakota | 72 | 78.8 | .0 | 100.0 | 78.5% |
| Tennessee | 212 | 87.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 78.0% |
| Texas | 263 | 87.6 | .0 | 100.0 | 71.9% |
| Utah | 55 | 79.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 56.1% |
| Vermont | 32 | 82.6 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 71.7% |
| Virginia | 236 | 84.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 76.2% |
| Washington | 108 | 75.2 | .0 | 100.0 | 74.8% |
| West Virginia | 108 | 87.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 81.8% |
| Wisconsin | 242 | 71.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 67.3% |
| Wyoming | 74 | 85.9 | .0 | 100.0 | 78.9% |
| American Samoa | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Guam | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mariana Islands | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |

| Grantees | ACSI | | | | Response Rate |
|----------------|-------|------|---------|---------|---------------|
| | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | |
| Virgin Islands | 0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| State Grantees | 6908 | 83.5 | .0 | 100.0 | 72.2% |
| Nationwide | 15662 | 82.8 | .0 | 100.0 | 69.2% |

D. Treatment by Sub-grantee

The survey asked three questions about how program staff treated participants: whether staff gave them sufficient information about the program; whether staff understood their employment interests and needs; and whether participants had someone in the project they could talk to. The scores on all three questions in Table 8 are uniformly high.

Table 8

| | | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|--|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked. | 9163 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q5. The Older Worker program staff understood my employment interests and needs. | 9082 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to. | 8895 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | Q4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked. | 6723 | 8.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q5. The Older Worker program staff understood my employment interests and needs. | 6669 | 8.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to. | 6511 | 8.8 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | Q4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked. | 15886 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q5. The Older Worker program staff understood my employment interests and needs. | 15751 | 8.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to. | 15406 | 8.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

E. Supportive Services and Training

Three questions were asked about supportive services and training: did the program provide needed supportive services; did the program provide training before the community service assignment; and did the host agency provide the training the participant needed to succeed in the assignment. The results are presented in Table 9. The score for training provided by the

host agency is moderately high, but the sub-grantees received quite low scores for supportive services and training. Although participants rated neither national nor state grantees very highly on the provision of supportive services, state grantees are rated significantly higher than national grantees.

Table 9

| | | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|--|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services that I needed to meet my employment goals. | 5996 | 6.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q7. Before your community service assignment with your host agency, how much of the training you needed to meet your employment goals did the Older Worker Program give you? | 7172 | 6.5 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. | 7858 | 8.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | Q6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services that I needed to meet my employment goals. | 4380 | 7.0 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q7. Before your community service assignment with your host agency, how much of the training you needed to meet your employment goals did the Older Worker Program give you? | 5202 | 6.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. | 5756 | 8.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | Q6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services that I needed to meet my employment goals. | 10376 | 6.8 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q7. Before your community service assignment with your host agency, how much of the training you needed to meet your employment goals did the Older Worker Program give you? | 12374 | 6.5 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. | 13614 | 8.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

F. Host Agency Assignment

Five questions examined the quality of the host agency assignment: whether the assignment was right for the participant; whether the participant felt that he or she could ask for a different assignment; whether the participant felt comfortable at the assignment; whether the assignment was geographically convenient; and whether the program attempted to remove the

participant from the assignment before the participant felt ready. The results are presented in Tables 10 and 11. The scores on these questions are all fairly high. The score for the question about feeling comfortable at the assignment was among the highest received for any question in the survey. The question regarding moving participants from their assignment before they are ready shows a statistically significant difference between national and state grantees. Participants enrolled with national grantees were slightly more likely to say they were asked to leave their assignment before they were ready than were participants enrolled with state grantees.

Table 10

| | | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|--|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q8. The Older Worker program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me. | 8838 | 8.5 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q9. I understand that I have the right to ask for a different community service assignment if I don't like the one the Older Worker Program gave me. | 8269 | 8.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment. | 8996 | 9.0 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | Q8. The Older Worker program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me. | 6532 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q9. I understand that I have the right to ask for a different community service assignment if I don't like the one the Older Worker Program gave me. | 5943 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment. | 6618 | 9.0 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | Q8. The Older Worker program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me. | 15370 | 8.5 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q9. I understand that I have the right to ask for a different community service assignment if I don't like the one the Older Worker Program gave me. | 14212 | 8.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment. | 15614 | 9.0 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

Table 11

| | | | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|---|------------|-------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live? | Yes | 7883 | 86.8% |
| | | No | 837 | 9.2% |
| | | Don't know | 357 | 3.9% |
| | Q17. During my community service assignment, the Older Worker Program pressured me, before I was ready, to leave my community service assignment for unsubsidized employment. | Yes | 1306 | 14.5% |
| | | No | 6669 | 74.0% |
| | | Don't know | 1034 | 11.5% |
| State Grantees | Q10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live? | Yes | 5890 | 88.5% |
| | | No | 511 | 7.7% |
| | | Don't know | 258 | 3.9% |
| | Q17. During my community service assignment, the Older Worker Program pressured me, before I was ready, to leave my community service assignment for unsubsidized employment. | Yes | 815 | 12.3% |
| | | No | 5040 | 76.0% |
| | | Don't know | 775 | 11.7% |
| Nationwide | Q10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live? | Yes | 13773 | 87.5% |
| | | No | 1348 | 8.6% |
| | | Don't know | 615 | 3.9% |
| | Q17. During my community service assignment, the Older Worker Program pressured me, before I was ready, to leave my community service assignment for unsubsidized employment. | Yes | 2121 | 13.6% |
| | | No | 11709 | 74.9% |
| | | Don't know | 1809 | 11.6% |

G. Impact of SCSEP

Three questions presented in Tables 12 and 13 asked participants about the effect SCSEP has had on their lives: whether their physical health is better; whether their outlook on life is better; and whether their community service wages have made a substantial difference in the quality of their life. 90% of respondents report that their physical health is the same or better, and 69% report that their outlook on life is a little more positive or much more positive. Participants agreed moderately with the statement that their wages have made a substantial improvement in their quality of life.

Table 12

| | | | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|---|------------------------|-------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q14. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, would you say your physical health is better, worse, or about the same? | Better | 2396 | 25.9% |
| | | Worse | 760 | 8.2% |
| | | About the same | 5916 | 63.9% |
| | | Don't know | 189 | 2.0% |
| | Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life? | Much more negative | 249 | 2.7% |
| | | A little more negative | 406 | 4.4% |
| | | About the same | 2095 | 22.6% |
| | | A little more positive | 2393 | 25.8% |
| | | Much more positive | 4002 | 43.1% |

| | | | Count | Percent |
|----------------|---|--|--------------------|---------|
| State Grantees | Q14. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, would you say your physical health is better, worse, or about the same? | Better | 1783 | 26.3% |
| | | Worse | 570 | 8.4% |
| | | About the same | 4305 | 63.4% |
| | | Don't know | 128 | 1.9% |
| | | Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life? | Much more negative | 197 |
| | | A little more negative | 305 | 4.5% |
| | | About the same | 1458 | 21.4% |
| | | A little more positive | 1688 | 24.8% |
| | | Much more positive | 3046 | 44.8% |
| | | Don't know | 108 | 1.6% |
| Nationwide | Q14. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, would you say your physical health is better, worse, or about the same? | Better | 4179 | 26.0% |
| | | Worse | 1330 | 8.3% |
| | | About the same | 10221 | 63.7% |
| | | Don't know | 317 | 2.0% |
| | | Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life? | Much more negative | 446 |
| | | A little more negative | 711 | 4.4% |
| | | About the same | 3553 | 22.1% |
| | | A little more positive | 4081 | 25.4% |
| | | Much more positive | 7048 | 43.8% |
| | | Don't know | 253 | 1.6% |

Table 13

Q16. The pay I receive from the Older Worker Program has made a substantial difference in the quality of my life.

| | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | 9099 | 7.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | 6665 | 7.6 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | 15764 | 7.7 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

H. Unsubsidized Employment

Those participants who were employed in unsubsidized employment were asked three additional questions: how helpful the program staff had been to them in finding a job; how much of the skills and training required by their job they had obtained from their community service assignment; and overall, how much their community service assignment had prepared them for their current job. The results, which are presented in Table 14, are quite low. The extent to which the community service assignment provided the needed skills and training

received the lowest score in the survey. Given the role of community service in helping participants become self-sufficient, this is clearly an area that requires serious attention.

Table 14

| | | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|---|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | Q18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job? | 3744 | 6.9 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q19. How much of the skills and training you need to your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? | 3720 | 6.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? | 3568 | 7.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | Q18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job? | 2715 | 7.0 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q19. How much of the skills and training you need to your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? | 2699 | 6.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? | 2572 | 7.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | Q18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job? | 6459 | 6.9 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q19. How much of the skills and training you need to your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? | 6419 | 6.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| | Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? | 6140 | 7.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

I. Would Recommend

Respondents were asked whether they would be likely to recommend the program. The score for this question is quite high and is consistent with the ACSI score, with which this question is closely correlated.

Table 15

Q21. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other older workers?

| | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | 8727 | 9.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| State Grantees | 6442 | 9.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Nationwide | 15169 | 9.2 | 1.0 | 10.0 |

J. Open-Ended Questions

The last two questions asked respondents to write what they felt was most valuable about the program and what they thought was most in need of improvement. 15,664 of the participant 17,292 respondents (90.65 percent) commented on at least one of the two open-ended questions. Each grantee will receive copies of the comments that were included in the surveys completed by its host agencies.

K. Key Drivers and Questions Most Closely Associated with ACSI Scores

1. Driver Analysis

A driver analysis was conducted to determine which aspects of service were most important to overall satisfaction. Table 16 presents those results. First, each of the questions regarding customer service was correlated independently to the ACSI. The results in the last column indicate the strength of the relationship (the correlation) between each question’s responses and the ACSI (the closer to 1.0, the stronger the relationship), the statistical significance of the relationship (the closer to zero, the more likely the relationship would not have appeared by chance), and the number of observations in the analysis. (Only those respondents who answered the particular question under consideration and all three ACSI questions are included in the analysis.) Then the questions were analyzed together in a regression analysis in relation to the ACSI to see which questions made a significant, unique contribution to understanding what drives overall satisfaction over and above the contribution of any other questions.² This analysis narrowed the number of questions with a unique relationship to the ACSI to four, which are shaded in the table. Questions with only small or no unique relationships are unshaded. The analysis presented in Table 16 is based on the nationwide response to each question. There was no significant difference between the responses for state grantees and national grantees.

The four shaded questions are strong or very strong independent drivers of overall satisfaction. They fall into two groupings. The three questions on the sub-grantee’s treatment of the participant (questions 4, 5, and 11) are extremely highly correlated with the ACSI. Question 5, regarding whether the program understood the participant’s employment needs and interests, has an extraordinary high correlation, meaning that any change in this score will have a very direct and powerful change in overall satisfaction. Fortunately, these three questions are areas of great strength for the program: the scores here were uniformly high. Continued attention to how participants are treated will help ensure high levels of satisfaction.

² In the regression equation, the strongest driver for the ACSI, as determined by the correlations, is entered into the equation first. Other drivers are entered into the equation after the strongest, but they are only kept in the equation if they make a significant contribution over and above the previous driver.

The fourth question with a strong independent relationship to the ACSI is question 8, whether the program provided the participant the right community service assignment. The strong correlation coupled with the high score indicates that this is an area where grantees should continue to show strength.

The unshaded questions (6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, and 20) have smaller or little unique relationship to the ACSI, but they are still important. They are all moderately to strongly correlated with overall satisfaction. Many of them relate to and are subsumed by the shaded questions regarding how the staff treated the participant and the quality of the assignment. Put another way, sub-grantees that provide the right host agency assignment tend to give the participant the opportunity to request a different assignment and the participant tends to feel comfortable at the assignment. Other questions remain important because they have very strong correlations and quite low scores. Questions 19 (6.2), 18 (6.9), and 20 (7.2), which relate to unsubsidized employment; question 7 (6.5), which relates to training provided prior to assignment; and question 6 (6.9), which relates to supportive services, are all areas that cannot be neglected.

Table 16

| | | Relationship to ACSI |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|
| Q4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked. | Pearson | .698(**) |
| | Correlation | .000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| Q5. The Older Worker program staff understood my employment interests and needs. | N | 15393 |
| | Pearson | .732(**) |
| | Correlation | .000 |
| Q6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services that I needed to meet my employment goals. | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 10026 |
| | Pearson | .594(**) |
| Q7. Before your community service assignment with your host agency, how much of the training you needed to meet your employment goals did the Older Worker Program give you? | Correlation | .000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 11965 |
| Q8. The Older Worker program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me. | Pearson | .657(**) |
| | Correlation | .000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| Q9. I understand that I have the right to ask for a different community service assignment if I don't like the one the Older Worker Program gave me. | N | 14869 |
| | Pearson | .533(**) |
| | Correlation | .000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 13776 |

| | | Relationship to ACSI |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|
| Q11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to. | Pearson Correlation | .627(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 14894 |
| Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. | Pearson Correlation | .578(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 13175 |
| Q13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment. | Pearson Correlation | .577(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 15080 |
| Q16. The pay I receive from the Older Worker Program has made a substantial difference in the quality of my life. | Pearson Correlation | .502(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 15218 |
| Q18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job? | Pearson Correlation | .550(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 6160 |
| Q19. How much of the skills and training you need to your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? | Pearson Correlation | .453(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 6135 |
| Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? | Pearson Correlation | .589(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 5858 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2. Other Questions Related to Satisfaction

The driver analysis presented above is based on the mean score of questions for which the possible answers are a set of continuous numbers ranging from 1 to 10. There are other questions in the survey that are answered using discrete values (1 equals Yes and 2 equals No, or 1 equals None, 2 equals Some, etc.). Responses to these questions may also be significantly related to satisfaction.

There are four such questions in this survey where individual responses are associated with significant and, in some cases, dramatically different ACSI scores: geographic convenience of assignment (question 10); physical health (question 14); outlook on life (question 15); and being forced to leave community service prematurely (question 17). The results are presented in Tables 17-20. While most participants indicate that their community service assignments are convenient to where they live, the 1250 respondents who indicated the assignment was not convenient were 17 points lower in their satisfaction. The ACSI scores for the three

responses -- better, worse, about the same -- to the question on physical health are also significantly different from each other. The same is true for the ACSI scores associated with the discrete responses to the other two questions. For each question, the different responses are associated with very different levels of satisfaction.

Table 17

Q10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live?

| | Count | Average ACSI |
|------------|-------|--------------|
| Yes | 13344 | 84.3 |
| No | 1250 | 67.2 |
| Don't know | 571 | 77.5 |
| Total | 15165 | 82.6 |

Table 18

Q14. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, would you say your physical health is better, worse, or about the same?

| | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation |
|----------------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| Better | 4004 | 89.5 | 17.36 |
| Worse | 1270 | 68.8 | 30.91 |
| About the same | 9891 | 82.1 | 23.13 |
| Don't know | 298 | 76.6 | 29.35 |
| Total | 15463 | 82.8 | 23.33 |

Table 19

Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?

| | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| Much more negative | 422 | 63.2 | 39.59 |
| A little more negative | 688 | 68.1 | 33.04 |
| About the same | 3403 | 73.2 | 27.26 |
| A little more positive | 3953 | 82.7 | 19.75 |
| Much more positive | 6810 | 90.8 | 15.50 |
| Don't know | 224 | 72.4 | 30.67 |
| Total | 15500 | 82.8 | 23.29 |

Table 20

Q17. During my community service assignment, the Older Worker program pressured me, before I was ready, to leave my community service assignment for unsubsidized employment.

| | Count | Average ACSI |
|------------|-------|--------------|
| Yes | 2005 | 67.6 |
| No | 11357 | 86.0 |
| Don't know | 1717 | 78.5 |
| Total | 15079 | 82.7 |

3. Participant Characteristics

An examination of participant characteristics and the ACSI is also instructive. Table 21 shows that there is a slight but statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of men and women for state grantees and nationwide. The difference is not significant for national grantees. Table 22 reveals that participants with less than a high school diploma are significantly more satisfied than those with a high school diploma or more. This difference is statistically significant for all three groups of grantees.

Table 21

| Grantee | Gender | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------|--------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| National Grantees | Male | 2113 | 82.0 | 23.806 |
| | Female | 5307 | 82.6 | 24.069 |
| State Grantees | Male | 1257 | 81.1 | 24.467 |
| | Female | 5132 | 83.9 | 22.378 |
| Nationwide | Male | 3370 | 81.7 | 24.056 |
| | Female | 10439 | 83.2 | 23.261 |

Table 22

| Grantees | Education Level | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|---------|---------|
| National Grantees | 8th grade or less | 733 | 88.7 | 18.966 | 0 | 100 |
| | 9-12th grade no diploma | 1113 | 87.6 | 20.728 | 0 | 100 |
| | HS diploma or equivalent | 3502 | 82.0 | 23.818 | 0 | 100 |
| | 1-3 years of college | 1214 | 79.0 | 25.542 | 0 | 100 |
| | Associates degree | 68 | 72.1 | 30.686 | 0 | 100 |
| | Bachelors degree | 328 | 76.8 | 26.839 | 0 | 100 |
| | Some graduate school | 73 | 69.8 | 31.057 | 0 | 100 |
| | Masters degree | 54 | 77.6 | 28.079 | 0 | 100 |
| | Doctoral degree | 10 | 92.1 | 11.492 | 67 | 100 |
| | Post-secondary certificate | 74 | 79.6 | 26.313 | 0 | 100 |
| | Total | | 7169 | 82.6 | 23.873 | 0 |

| Grantees | Education Level | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|---------|---------|
| State Grantees | 8th grade or less | 477 | 87.8 | 19.450 | 0 | 100 |
| | 9-12th grade no diploma | 1124 | 87.3 | 19.776 | 0 | 100 |
| | HS diploma or equivalent | 2811 | 83.9 | 22.748 | 0 | 100 |
| | 1-3 years of college | 1271 | 79.9 | 24.528 | 0 | 100 |
| | Associates degree | 73 | 77.9 | 23.864 | 0 | 100 |
| | Bachelors degree | 363 | 77.5 | 24.873 | 0 | 100 |
| | Some graduate school | 80 | 73.9 | 27.236 | 0 | 100 |
| | Masters degree | 94 | 77.3 | 25.989 | 0 | 100 |
| | Doctoral degree | 21 | 83.6 | 22.796 | 4 | 100 |
| | Post-secondary certificate | 79 | 81.2 | 21.216 | 0 | 100 |
| | Total | 6393 | 83.3 | 22.852 | 0 | 100 |
| Nationwide | 8th grade or less | 1210 | 88.3 | 19.154 | 0 | 100 |
| | 9-12th grade no diploma | 2237 | 87.5 | 20.252 | 0 | 100 |
| | HS diploma or equivalent | 6313 | 82.9 | 23.364 | 0 | 100 |
| | 1-3 years of college | 2485 | 79.5 | 25.027 | 0 | 100 |
| | Associates degree | 141 | 75.1 | 27.419 | 0 | 100 |
| | Bachelors degree | 691 | 77.1 | 25.808 | 0 | 100 |
| | Some graduate school | 153 | 71.9 | 29.099 | 0 | 100 |
| | Masters degree | 148 | 77.4 | 26.675 | 0 | 100 |
| | Doctoral degree | 31 | 86.4 | 20.062 | 4 | 100 |
| | Post-secondary certificate | 153 | 80.4 | 23.752 | 0 | 100 |
| | Total | 13562 | 82.9 | 23.400 | 0 | 100 |

Finally, while starting wage in employment, the receipt of fringe benefits on the job, or having received additional paid training in the host agency assignment do not affect satisfaction, having left the program for a job rather than for some other reason appears to matter. As evident in Table 23, those who exited for unsubsidized employment had an ACSI score that was 7.7 points higher than those who exited for other reasons. However, as explained in the structural equation model in Section V below, exit reason does not have a separate and unique impact on satisfaction when considered in conjunction with participants' evaluations of how they were treated by sub-grantees and their community service experience.

Table 23

| Grantee | Reason for Exit | Count | Average ACSI | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| National Grantees | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 921 | 80.2 | 25.698 |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 948 | 72.0 | 32.183 |
| State Grantees | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 926 | 82.1 | 23.539 |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 1070 | 74.7 | 29.912 |
| Nationwide | Exited for Unsubsidized Employment | 1847 | 81.1 | 24.651 |
| | Exited for Other Reason | 2018 | 73.4 | 31.020 |

V. Participant Survey Structural Equation Model³

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical method that allows for the analysis of unmeasured latent variables (that is, constructs that are indirectly measured through the use of other indicators, such as clusters of questions on a survey). For example, customer satisfaction is a latent variable, with each of the three ACSI questions indirectly measuring the underlying concept. SEM differs from other methods in that it can test the relationship between the indicators and the latent variable (e.g., the three ACSI questions and the underlying customer satisfaction concept), as well as the relationships among different latent variables together in one integrated model.⁴ This allows the analyst to examine the effects of one latent variable on another while controlling for the effects of other variables.⁵

The statistical model below indicates that the process of providing services to older workers not only matters strongly to customers' satisfaction, but it matters more than any other factor affecting participant satisfaction. The model is constructed to show the relationship between two unmeasured latent variables -- the participants' experience with their community service assignments (CSA Experience) and the treatment participants received from older worker program staff (Process) -- and their overall satisfaction with the older worker program as reflected in the ACSI score.

Survey Questions Utilized in the Participant Survey Structural Equation Models:

CSA Experience

Q8. The Older Worker program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me.

Q9. I understand that I have the right to ask for a different community service assignment if I don't like the one the Older Worker Program gave me.

Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.

Q13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment.

Process

Q4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked.

Q5. The Older Worker program staff understood my employment interests and needs.

Q6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services that I needed to meet my employment goals.

Q11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to.

³ For more information about structural equation modeling, see Kenny, 1979, Loehlin, 1992, and Maruyama, 1998.

⁴ In this way, SEM can be thought of as an integration of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis.

⁵ SEM also allows the researcher to account for the possibility of correlated measurement error, which can be a problematic issue, particularly in the analysis of survey data.

ACSI

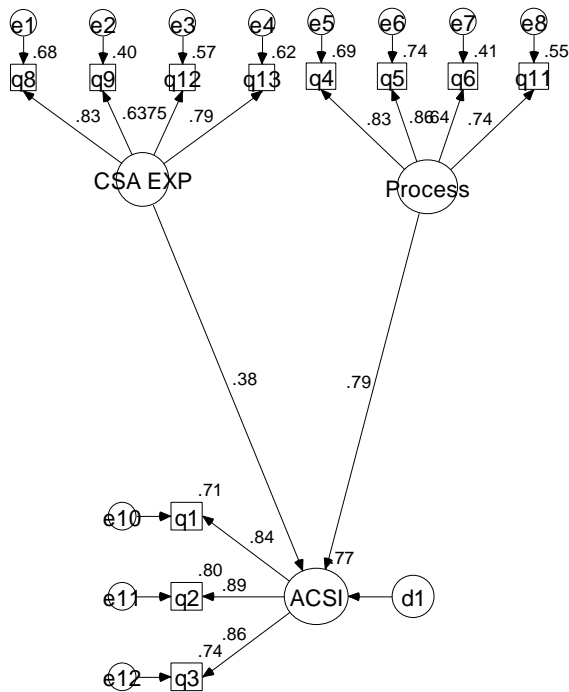
Q1. What is your overall satisfaction with the services provided by the Older Worker Program?

Q2. To what extent have the services met your expectations?

Q3. How well do you think the services you received compare with the ideal services?

77% of the variation in the ACSI scores received by the grantees is accounted for by this model, and the model fits the data very well.⁶ The model shows that the latent variable Process is strongly associated with the ACSI, while the latent variable CSA Experience is moderately associated with the ACSI. Interestingly, these estimates differ from those for the host agency survey model, where the quality of the assignment is more strongly associated with the ACSI than is the process. The direct paths between Process and ACSI (.79) and between CSA Experience and ACSI (.38) show the relative strength of the relationships among these variables.

Participant Survey Model



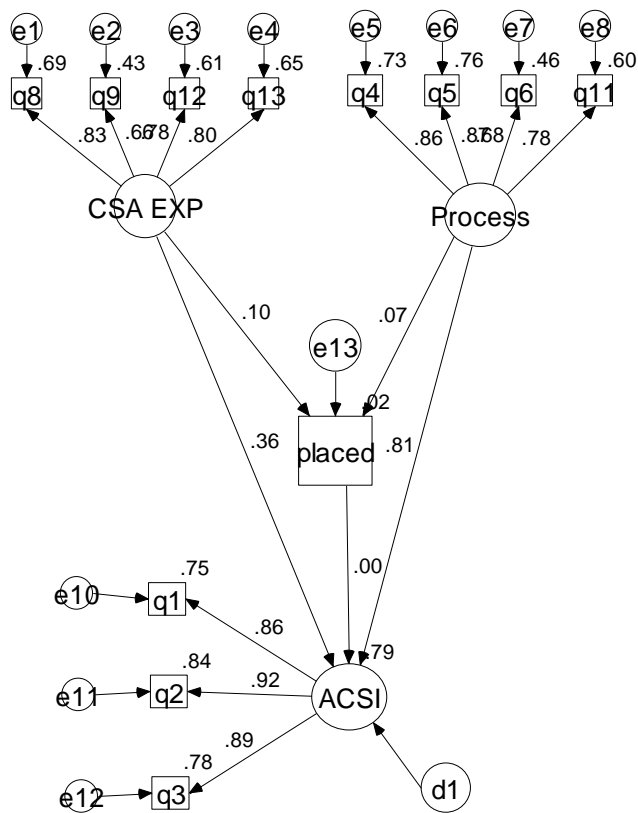
N=22918, df=42, chi-square=14330, TLI=.959

⁶ The remaining 23% is accounted for by measurement error and other unknown factors that have not been included in the model.

Several other variables, including the number of barriers the participant presented, the participant's health and outlook on life, and whether or not the participant exited, were included in the model. None of these additional variables yielded results that were practically or significantly different from the above model.

An often-raised issue in the interpretation of customer satisfaction results is the potential impact of negative outcomes on customer satisfaction (e.g., "if customers don't get placed, of course they won't be happy"). Another model was specified to test whether placement (i.e., whether the participant exited for unsubsidized employment) had a significant impact on customer satisfaction when controlling for the latent variables Process and CSA Experience. This model also explained a considerable amount of variation in the ACSI, but revealed that the impact of placement on the ACSI is negligible. Process remains the factor most highly associated with the ACSI.

Model for Exiters



N=6746, df=50, chi-square=3789.3, TLI=.957

VI. Recommendations

The driver analysis and the structural equation modeling yield similar results: the process – how sub-grantees treat participants – is the strongest determinant of overall participant satisfaction. The quality of the community service assignment also matters to participants, but much less so than how they are treated. Since SCSEP grantees receive particularly high scores in these areas, the key to continued success is to continue to give participants sufficient information about the program, to understand their interests and needs, to provide them someone to talk to when needed, and to make appropriate assignments. Note that the process and community service assignment questions are clustered; grantees that tend to do well on the key drivers also tend to do well on related issues.

There are several areas that warrant attention, especially as SCSEP grantees continue to focus on placement in unsubsidized employment. The questions regarding the extent to which the program assisted participant in finding unsubsidized employment and provided the skills and training needed to be successful on the job are among the lowest in the survey. The low score for provision of supportive services (which is echoed by host agencies and employers in their survey responses) may also prove important as SCSEP reaches out to more hard-to-serve participants.

A related area, not directly tested by the participant survey, is the provision of computer training to participants. Participants feel strongly that they did not receive sufficient training before being assigned to community service assignments. We know from the other surveys that both host agencies and the employers believe that participants come to them without the needed computer skills. So far, the lack of computer training is not hurting overall satisfaction for any of the three customer groups; however, providing basic computer training for participants who lack these skills may improve the quality of assignments and placements, leading to better outcomes and higher levels of satisfaction.

Finally, there are special populations or special circumstances that make providing satisfying service difficult. For example, participants whose host agency assignments were not geographically convenient, who felt pressured to leave the program before they were ready, or whose physical health or outlook on life was worse after starting the program all have very low satisfaction. Some of these circumstances are within the control of the grantee; others are not. However, in all cases, grantees need to be aware of the effects that these circumstances are likely to have on participants so they can make efforts to mitigate those effects.

APPENDIX

Survey Methodology

The pilot project established that participants identify with SCSEP most strongly at the local project level. Since advance notice increases the likelihood a respondent will fill out the survey, the methodology for the nationwide survey in PY 2004 required sub-grantees to notify host agencies and participants several months in advance of the survey that they might be selected to receive the survey and that it was very important to the sub-grantee that they complete the survey. In addition, participants, unlike host agencies, received pre-survey letters from the sub-grantee explaining that the survey would be sent from the grantee and that it was very important to the sub-grantee that the surveys be filled out.

The survey packets provided to respondents by the mail house consisted of a scannable four-page survey instrument in booklet form with a bar code and unique survey number; a postage-paid Business Reply Envelope (BRE) addressed to the Charter Oak Group; and a cover letter on the grantee's letterhead addressed to the participant and signed by the grantee's director. (All letterhead and signatures were electronically reproduced from samples provided by each grantee.) The mailing envelope bore the return address and logo of the grantee and a live postage stamp. Since the envelopes were presorted, the post office did not affix a cancellation to the stamp.

The samples for the participant and host agency surveys were drawn in February and March, 2005, from Quarter 1 PY 2004 performance data that grantees submitted to DOWP. All participants active at any time between July 1, 2004, and the drawing of the sample were selected for the survey. The methodology called for a participant to receive only one survey in a program year regardless of how many enrollments the participant might have in that year. Duplicate participants were eliminated from the sample as it was being drawn and another participant substituted if appropriate.

For state grantees, the methodology required a sample of 370 participants and 370 host agencies. If a grantee had fewer than 370, all customers in that group were included in the sample. If a grantee had more than 370, a random sample of 370 was drawn. For national grantees, a minimum of 70 potential respondents was required in each state in which a national grantee operated. If a national grantee had fewer than 70 customers in a state, all were selected; if it had more than 70, a random sample of 70 was selected. In addition, the methodology required a minimum sample of 370 at the grantee level for national grantees. If the 70 selected in each state did not produce a total of 370 respondents at the national grantee level, states were over-sampled to yield a total of 370. Because most national grantees operate in multiple states and have more than 70 customers in each, many national grantees had samples at the grantee level that far exceeded 370.

The first mailing of the survey was completed on April 4, 2005. The methodology (as approved by OMB) required DOWP to do up to three mailings to each customer group if required to achieve a 70% response rate. The mail house entered the unique survey number next to the name of each respondent on the survey sample lists. (These unique survey numbers also permitted survey responses to be matched with the complete administrative

records of the respondents.) 22,896 surveys were mailed to participants in the first round. When completed surveys were returned in the BRE's, a vendor scanned the bar code and generated a list of all completed surveys. This list of completed surveys was matched against the original sample lists to determine which respondents had not completed the first survey. A second mailing of 12,166 surveys that was identical to the first mailing except for the text of the cover letter was done on May 3, 2005. A third and final mailing of 9,276 surveys was done on June 22, 2005.

No allowance was made for Limited English Proficient (LEP) participants in the main survey. Instead, a pilot project was conducted with Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking participants in three national grantees that serve primarily these populations. Participants selected for the pilot project received the survey in either their native language alone or in both their native language and English. The pilot project mailing was conducted after the mailing of the main survey, and the results of the pilot project will be used to determine the most effective way to ensure full participation by LEP participants in future nationwide surveys. LEP respondents in the main participant survey in PY 2004 will serve as a control group to establish the response rate for non-English speaking participants who receive only an English version of the survey.

Because of the difficulties of administering the survey in overseas territories and because all of the participants in Puerto Rico were reported as having limited English proficiency, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico were not included in the participant survey this year. Seven state grantees that were subject to the survey did not submit any usable data to SPARQ in time to be included in the sample. In addition, several states submitted incomplete data and thus had a smaller sample than required by the methodology.