

**PY 2009 Customer Satisfaction Survey of Participants
Nationwide Report
July 16, 2010**

I. Executive Summary

The fifth nationwide survey of participant satisfaction was conducted between October 9, 2009, and February 8, 2010. Approximately 24,000 surveys were mailed to participants who had been active in SCSEP at any time in the 12 months before September 2009, 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 63.8%, about 8 percentage points higher than it was for the last survey.

The survey instrument consisted of the three questions that constitute the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and a series of questions that asked about various 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, and financial circumstances.

The nationwide ACSI score of 82.7 is about the same as last year's score. For the questions other than the ACSI, participants gave the highest scores to their experience with their community service assignment and their treatment by the sub-grantees. Participants also gave very positive responses to several other questions. Nearly 92% of respondents reported that, compared to the time before they entered SCSEP, their physical health is the same or better, and 73% reported that their outlook on life is a little more positive or much more positive. Participants were in moderate to strong agreement (7.9 on a scale of 1 to 10) with the statement that their community service wages have made a substantial improvement in their quality of life. As in all prior surveys, participants gave their lowest scores to questions about whether the host agency assignment gave them the skills and training they needed for their unsubsidized employment (6.6), whether they received needed training before their host agency assignment (6.6), and whether they received supportive services (6.8). These scores are similar to those reported in previous survey reports.

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 five questions (Questions 4, 5, 8, 11, and 20,) that are strong independent drivers of satisfaction. Question 4, regarding whether staff told the participant everything he or she needed to know, and question 5, regarding whether the program understood the participant's employment needs and interests, have very high correlations with the ACSI, meaning that any change in these scores will have a direct and independent change on overall satisfaction. Fortunately, these two 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 third independent driver, question 8, whether the program helped the participant obtain a community service assignment that was just right, has a moderately strong independent relationship to the ACSI. This question is especially important because host agency satisfaction is also driven by the quality of the match.

The fourth question with a moderately strong independent relationship to the ACSI is question 11, whether there is someone in the Older Worker Program the participant can talk to when he or she needs to. The participants' response to this question was very positive, leaving little room for improvement. Because this speaks to the relationship participants feel to the program, it is important that staff in the local offices continue to promote these strong, personal connections.

The fifth independent driver is Question 20, whether the host agency assignment prepared participants for success in unsubsidized employment. This question also has a strong independent effect on satisfaction. In addition, this has one of the lower ratings (7.5) among questions in the survey. As a result, this driver presents a major opportunity for grantees to increase satisfaction by making improvements in this area.

These analyses show that the data follow a pattern very similar to that established when the last survey was conducted in PY 2008. One major shift that appeared last year continues this year: participants are more concerned about preparation for unsubsidized employment than they were in PY 2006 and earlier years. The strength of Question 20 as a strong independent driver of overall satisfaction suggests that, especially in these difficult economic times, participants are concerned about whether their host agency experience is preparing them to become self-sufficient.

Another notable finding of this year's and last year's reports is that participants with multiple barriers to employment are more satisfied with the services they receive from SCSEP than those without barriers and, in some case, substantially more satisfied. Although there are several possible reasons for this result, further investigation is required to understand why this is so.

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 promote useful part-time opportunities in community service for persons with low income who are 55 years of age or older and to assist these older workers in transitioning to unsubsidized employment. The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 expanded the program's purpose to include increasing participants' economic self-sufficiency and a greater emphasis on placement into unsubsidized employment. In the 2006 amendments to the OAA, Congress reconfirmed the dual goals of the program and recognized that community service employment provides benefits to participants, non-profit organizations, and communities.

The Division of Adult Services/Older Worker and Disability Team of the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor administers SCSEP through grant

agreements with governmental entities and nonprofit organizations. In PY 2009, there were 56 state and territorial grantees and 18 national grantees. These grantees delivered program services locally through approximately 990 sub-grantees and local projects.

The 2000 amendments to the OAA required that customer satisfaction data be collected for each of the three customer groups: employers, host agencies, and enrollees. In April 2004, DOL adopted final rules implementing the 2000 amendments to the OAA. The performance measurement section of the regulations included customer satisfaction among the performance measures that were to be included in the calculation of aggregate performance for incentives and sanctions. (The 2006 amendments to the OAA retain customer satisfaction as a SCSEP measure; however, effective with PY 2007, customer satisfaction is designated an additional measure and is no longer included in the annual evaluation of grantees' aggregate performance.) DOL 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 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, DOL issued OWB 04-06, which sets forth administrative guidance on the performance measurement system, including the customer satisfaction surveys.

Planning for this effort began nine years ago, 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, DOL conducted a pilot project with three state grantees, Florida, Iowa, and New York. The pilot 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, DOL decided to administer written participant and host agency surveys centrally once each program year. Beginning in PY 2004, DOL contracted with a mail house to produce and mail the nationwide participant and host agency surveys on behalf of all grantees. DOL 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. The identical process was employed for the participant, host agency and employer surveys in PY 2004, PY 2005, PY 2006, PY 2008, and PY 2009. No surveys were conducted in PY 2007 due to budget constraints.

III. Survey Methodology

The sample for the participant survey was drawn in September, 2009, from Quarter 4 PY 2008 performance data submitted by the grantees. Participants active at any time in the prior 12 months 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 participant 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 more than six states with more than 70 customers in each of those states, many national grantees had samples far in excess of 370. The final sample size was 24,384 participants.

The survey methodology was designed to maximize the response rate. Participants were verbally alerted to the surveys by the sub-grantee in the two months prior to the mailing of the surveys. Participants received pre-survey letters from the sub-grantee, which were followed a week later 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 participants who had not completed a survey from the previous mailing(s). The first mailing was delivered to the post office on October 8, 2009, and the last was sent to respondents on December 8, 2009.¹

IV. Survey Results

The results presented below are based on all three mailings of the participant survey and include all completed surveys received through February 8, 2010. The responses from the three mailings were combined with demographic and service information about the participant respondents based on the Quarter 4 PY 2008 data submitted to DOL by the grantees.

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 DOL by the grantees for Quarter 4 PY 2008. Section IV. K 3 below presents the extent to which any of the participants' characteristics affects overall satisfaction.

The demographics of the respondents generally mirror those of all participants as represented in the Quarter 4 nationwide QPR for PY 2008.² As shown in Table 1, participant respondents are predominantly white (56.7%), female (69.1%), and non-Hispanic (87.5%), and have a high school diploma (39.4%). There are significant differences between national grantee and state grantee respondents. State grantee respondents are more likely to be female (71.7% v. 66.2%) and white (59.7% v. 53.2%) than national grantee respondents. National grantees respondents are more likely to be Hispanic (10% v. 8.4%) and less well educated (23.7% v. 21.9% without a high school diploma) than state grantee respondents.

¹ Because of the difficulties of administering the survey overseas, American Samoa, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands have never been included in any of the surveys. The US Virgin Islands were not surveyed in PY 2009.

² There were some differences between the respondents and the universe of SCSEP participants, but none were substantial.

Table 1

			Count	Percent
National Grantees	Race	White	6024	53.2%
		Black	3800	33.6%
		Asian	573	5.1%
		Pacific Islander	22	.2%
		American Indian	436	3.9%
		Did not volunteer	463	4.1%
	Gender	Female	7523	66.2%
		Male	3834	33.7%
		Did not volunteer	10	.1%
	Ethnicity	Not Hispanic	9865	87.1%
		Hispanic	1128	10.0%
		Did not volunteer	328	2.9%
	Education	Less than HS diploma	2693	23.7%
		HS diploma or equivalent	4436	39.0%
		Some college	2425	21.3%
		Vocational/technical degree	215	1.9%
		Associates degree	272	2.4%
BA/BS		904	8.0%	
Bachelor's plus		424	3.7%	
State Grantees	Race	White	7750	59.7%
		Black	3855	29.7%
		Asian	443	3.4%
		Pacific Islander	94	.7%
		American Indian	433	3.3%
		Did not volunteer	397	3.1%
	Gender	Female	9315	71.7%
		Male	3652	28.1%
		Did not volunteer	16	.1%
	Ethnicity	Not Hispanic	11399	87.8%
		Hispanic	1086	8.4%
		Did not volunteer	492	3.8%
	Education	Less than HS diploma	2843	21.9%
		HS diploma or equivalent	5160	39.8%
		Some college	2906	22.4%
		Vocational/technical degree	289	2.2%
		Associates degree	325	2.5%

		Count	Percent	
Nationwide		BA/BS	955	7.4%
		Bachelor's plus	495	3.8%
	Race	White	13774	56.7%
		Black	7655	31.5%
		Asian	1016	4.2%
		Pacific Islander	116	.5%
		American Indian	869	3.6%
		Did not volunteer	860	3.5%
	Gender	Female	16838	69.1%
		Male	7486	30.7%
		Did not volunteer	26	.1%
	Ethnicity	Not Hispanic	21264	87.5%
		Hispanic	2214	9.1%
		Did not volunteer	820	3.4%
	Education	Less than HS diploma	5536	22.7%
		HS diploma or equivalent	9596	39.4%
		Some college	5331	21.9%
Vocational/technical degree		504	2.1%	
Associates degree		597	2.5%	
BA/BS		1859	7.6%	
Bachelor's plus		919	3.8%	

The average age of all participant respondents is 63.9, about the same average age as the respondents from the last two surveys. Table 2 presents the percentage of those under 65 and those 65 and over. National grantees have a higher percentage of participants younger than 65 than do state grantees.

Table 2

		Count	Percent
National Grantees	Less than 65	7242	63.7%
	65 or older	4130	36.3%
State Grantees	Less than 65	7901	60.8%
	65 or older	5085	39.2%
Nationwide	Less than 65	15143	62.2%
	65 or older	9215	37.8%

Table 3 presents characteristics that identify most-in-need participants and thus could potentially impact survey responses. Thirteen different most-in-need characteristics are tracked in SPARQ based on the 2006 Amendments to the Older Americans Act. There are some differences between state and national grantees on the percentage of participants with

each of these characteristics. State grantees have a higher percentage of participants with seven of the 13 barriers than do national grantees; national grantees:.

- Rural
- Disabled
- Failed to find employment after WIA services
- Low employment prospects
- Frail
- Old enough for but not receiving Social Security
- Severely limited employment prospects

National grantees have a higher percentage of participants with four of the barriers than do state grantees

- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Limited English proficient
- Low literacy skills
- Veterans

Although the nationwide percent identified as low literacy skills is higher than in previous years, there continues to be a discrepancy between the percentage of individuals reported as low literacy skills (16.2%) and the percentage of individuals without a high school diploma (22.7%). The percentages are much closer than in previous years, however. The continued discrepancy most likely reflects the difficulty in identifying literacy-deficient individuals.

Table 3

			Count	Percent
National Grantees	Seventy-five or Older	No	10500	92.3%
		Yes	877	7.7%
	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	9350	82.2%
		Yes	2027	17.8%
	Low Employment Prospects	No	1765	15.5%
		Yes	9603	84.5%
	Failed to Find Employment After WIA Services	No	6957	61.1%
		Yes	4420	38.9%
	Severely Limited Employment Prospects	No	6821	60.0%
		Yes	4556	40.0%
	Old Enough for but not Receiving Social Security	No	8663	76.1%
		Yes	2714	23.9%
	Veteran	Not a veteran	9493	83.4%
		Veteran	1884	16.6%
	Disability	No	8543	77.9%
		Yes	2425	22.1%
Severe Disability	No	8624	75.8%	

			Count	Percent
	Frail	Yes	2753	24.2%
		No	8771	97.9%
	LEP	Yes	192	2.1%
		No	10035	88.3%
	Low Literacy Skills	Yes	1334	11.7%
		No	9244	81.4%
	Urban/Rural	Yes	2115	18.6%
		No	9244	81.4%
Urban/Rural	Urban	7611	67.1%	
	Rural	3737	32.9%	
State Grantees	Seventy-five or Older	No	12007	92.5%
		Yes	979	7.5%
	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	11173	86.0%
		Yes	1813	14.0%
	Low Employment Prospects	No	3196	24.6%
		Yes	9775	75.4%
	Failed to Find Employment After WIA Services	No	7345	56.6%
		Yes	5641	43.4%
	Severely Limited Employment Prospects	No	8134	62.6%
		Yes	4852	37.4%
	Old Enough for but not Receiving Social Security	No	10101	77.8%
		Yes	2885	22.2%
	Veteran	Not a veteran	11195	86.2%
		Veteran	1791	13.8%
	Disability	No	10157	78.3%
		Yes	2821	21.7%
	Severe Disability	No	10111	77.9%
		Yes	2875	22.1%
	Frail	No	10291	97.0%
		Yes	315	3.0%
	LEP	No	12030	92.8%
		Yes	937	7.2%
	Low Literacy Skills	No	11144	85.9%
		Yes	1835	14.1%
Urban/Rural	Urban	7968	61.4%	
	Rural	5009	38.6%	

		Count	Percent	
Nationwide	Seventy-five or Older	No	22507	92.4%
		Yes	1856	7.6%
	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	20523	84.2%
		Yes	3840	15.8%
	Low Employment Prospects	No	4961	20.4%
		Yes	19378	79.6%
	Failed to Find Employment After WIA Services	No	14302	58.7%
		Yes	10061	41.3%
	Severely Limited Employment Prospects	No	14955	61.4%
		Yes	9408	38.6%
	Old Enough for but not Receiving Social Security	No	18764	77.0%
		Yes	5599	23.0%
	Veteran	Not a veteran	20688	84.9%
		Veteran	3675	15.1%
	Disability	No	18700	78.1%
		Yes	5246	21.9%
	Severe Disability	No	18735	76.9%
		Yes	5628	23.1%
	Frail	No	19062	97.4%
		Yes	507	2.6%
	LEP	No	22065	90.7%
		Yes	2271	9.3%
	Low Literacy Skills	No	20388	83.8%
		Yes	3950	16.2%
Urban/Rural	Urban	15579	64.0%	
	Rural	8746	36.0%	

The above barriers were summed for each individual to determine the average number of barriers recorded for each participant. The table below shows the average number of barriers by grantee type. Although, as explained above, the state grantees work with individuals with higher percentages of different barriers, the national grantees have participants whose average number of barriers overall is slightly higher than the average for state grantee participants. Overall, this number is significantly higher than the average number of barriers reported in the PY 2008 survey report.³

³ Because of differences in how the 13 barriers to employment were counted, the numbers presented in this report and the PY 08 report cannot be compared to those in the QPR for either year.

Table 4

	Barriers			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	11377	3.4	0	9
State Grantees	12986	3.2	0	10
Nationwide	24363	3.3	0	10

Nationwide, participant respondents have had an average of 1.3 host agency assignments. Respondents who exited had been in the program 509 days, compared to 492 days last year. As is evident from Table 5, participants enrolled with state grantees were in the program significantly longer than those enrolled with national grantees. In contrast, national grantees were somewhat more likely to have the participant in more than one assignment than were state grantees.

Table 5

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Duration to Exit	3662	453.0	0	9,256
	Number of Assignments	11377	1.4	1	9
State Grantees	Duration to Exit	4031	560.0	0	9,877
	Number of Assignments	12986	1.3	1	13
Nationwide	Duration to Exit	7693	509.1	0	9,877
	Number of Assignments	24363	1.3	1	13

There is virtually no difference in the reasons for exit between state and national grantees. The results are presented in Table 6. As in all prior surveys, the number of individuals exiting for self-employment is very small, only 146 exiters (.6%).

Table 6

		Count	Percent
National Grantees	Regular employment	1147	10.1%
	Self employment	67	.6%
	Other reason	2448	21.5%
	Did not exit	7715	67.8%
State Grantees	Regular employment	1324	10.2%
	Self employment	79	.6%
	Other reason	2628	20.2%
	Did not exit	8955	69.0%

		Count	Percent
Nationwide	Regular employment	2471	10.1% ⁴
	Self employment	146	.6%
	Other reason	5076	20.8%
	Did not exit	16670	68.4%

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 7 is based on surveys received through February 8, 2010. The nationwide response rate of 63.8% is significantly higher than the rate of 61.7% achieved in PY 2006 and 8 points higher than last year's rate of 55.6%. The response rate is close to the Bureau of Labor Standards standard of 70%. Given the increasing difficulties in achieving that standard, however, this year's response rate is remarkable. Although of little practical significance, the state grant response rate of 64.4% is statistically higher than the response rate for national grantees of 63%.

Table 7

	Response Rate			
	Did not respond		Responded	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
AARP	759	47.1%	851	52.9%
ANPPM	137	37.0%	233	63.0%
Easter Seals	187	38.2%	303	61.8%
Experience Works	682	31.4%	1488	68.6%
Goodwill	170	40.5%	250	59.5%
IID	85	35.0%	158	65.0%
Mature Services	100	27.1%	269	72.9%
ABLE	138	37.3%	232	62.7%
NAPCA	152	31.0%	338	69.0%
NCBA	242	38.4%	388	61.6%
NCOA	283	36.8%	487	63.2%
NICOA	150	37.7%	248	62.3%
Urban League	198	47.1%	222	52.9%
QCS	53	20.9%	201	79.1%
SER	197	35.2%	363	64.8%
SSAI	416	37.1%	704	62.9%
VATD	111	31.2%	245	68.8%

⁴ The QPR for PY 2008 shows 16.9% exiting for unsubsidized employment. A possible reason that the survey data may under-represent those exiting for employment is that those who are employed may have less free time and may therefore be less likely to respond to the survey.

	Response Rate			
	Did not respond		Responded	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
TWI	147	43.6%	190	56.4%
National Grantees	4207	37.0%	7170	63.0%
Alabama	99	28.5%	248	71.5%
Alaska	196	53.0%	174	47.0%
Arizona	98	43.8%	126	56.3%
Arkansas	117	35.7%	211	64.3%
California	130	35.1%	240	64.9%
Colorado	83	46.9%	94	53.1%
Connecticut	75	42.6%	101	57.4%
Delaware	133	39.6%	203	60.4%
District of Columbia	47	36.4%	82	63.6%
Florida	139	37.6%	231	62.4%
Georgia	122	33.0%	248	67.0%
Hawaii	107	31.2%	236	68.8%
Idaho	33	33.7%	65	66.3%
Illinois	107	28.9%	263	71.1%
Indiana	110	29.7%	260	70.3%
Iowa	48	24.5%	148	75.5%
Kansas	79	42.2%	108	57.8%
Kentucky	109	31.6%	236	68.4%
Louisiana	102	35.9%	182	64.1%
Maine	33	31.1%	73	68.9%
Maryland	73	34.0%	142	66.0%
Massachusetts	134	40.2%	199	59.8%
Michigan	105	28.4%	265	71.6%
Minnesota	94	25.4%	276	74.6%
Mississippi	60	31.9%	128	68.1%
Missouri	100	27.0%	270	73.0%
Montana	35	28.2%	89	71.8%
Nebraska	58	47.5%	64	52.5%
Nevada	53	43.1%	70	56.9%
New Hampshire	35	35.7%	63	64.3%
New Jersey	125	33.8%	245	66.2%
New Mexico	19	29.7%	45	70.3%
New York	171	46.2%	199	53.8%
North Carolina	117	31.6%	253	68.4%

	Response Rate			
	Did not respond		Responded	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
North Dakota	41	32.8%	84	67.2%
Ohio	128	34.6%	242	65.4%
Oklahoma	106	36.3%	186	63.7%
Oregon	95	39.1%	148	60.9%
Pennsylvania	113	30.5%	257	69.5%
Puerto Rico	126	58.3%	90	41.7%
Rhode Island	28	35.0%	52	65.0%
South Carolina	88	38.6%	140	61.4%
South Dakota	45	33.8%	88	66.2%
Tennessee	87	35.4%	159	64.6%
Texas	137	37.0%	233	63.0%
Utah	62	44.9%	76	55.1%
Vermont	24	30.8%	54	69.2%
Virginia	101	29.2%	245	70.8%
Washington	76	38.2%	123	61.8%
West Virginia	65	40.6%	95	59.4%
Wisconsin	136	36.8%	234	63.2%
Wyoming	17	43.6%	22	56.4%
State Grantees	4621	35.6%	8365	64.4%
Nationwide	8828	36.2%	15535	63.8%

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 ASCI score for all public and private sector organizations as of May 2010 was 75.9. The ASCI score for federal government agencies was 68.5. High scoring private sector companies such as Amazon.com may score as high as 88 or 89 in a given year. In the majority of industry sectors, the best average score is in the mid to high 70s. Comparable data from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for PY 2008 showed an ASCI score of 73.9 for WIA participants and 72.1 for employers.⁵

Table 8 presents the ASCI score for state grantees, for national grantees, and nationwide. Only those respondents who answered all three of the ASCI questions are included in the index and reported in Table 8. The nationwide score of 82.7 is higher than the typical private sector score. As with the response rate, there is a fairly wide distribution of ASCI scores among the grantees, ranging from 75.1 (Wyoming) to 92.7 (IID). There is also a small but significant difference between the ASCI scores of state grantees (83.7) and national grantees (81.6).

Table 8

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
AARP	851	79.0	0	100
ANPPM	233	85.8	0	100
Easter Seals	303	82.0	0	100
Experience Works	1488	80.8	0	100
Goodwill	250	79.0	0	100
IID	158	92.7	21	100
Mature Services	269	83.1	0	100
ABLE	232	77.3	0	100
NAPCA	338	82.8	0	100
NCBA	388	86.3	0	100
NCOA	487	81.6	0	100
NICOA	248	82.8	0	100
Urban League	222	79.2	0	100
QCS	201	85.8	0	100
SER	363	82.5	0	100
SSAI	704	82.5	0	100
VATD	245	76.8	0	100
TWI	190	78.9	0	100
National Grantees	7170	81.6	0	100

⁵ Only 24 of the 50 states reported on the WIA customer satisfaction measure in PY 2008.

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Alabama	248	86.3	0	100
Alaska	174	78.3	0	100
Arizona	126	80.6	0	100
Arkansas	211	84.8	0	100
California	240	81.3	0	100
Colorado	94	83.7	0	100
Connecticut	101	80.6	0	100
Delaware	203	87.7	0	100
District of Columbia	82	85.1	0	100
Florida	231	85.9	0	100
Georgia	248	85.6	0	100
Hawaii	236	86.1	0	100
Idaho	65	87.0	22	100
Illinois	263	80.0	0	100
Indiana	260	85.0	0	100
Iowa	148	79.1	8	100
Kansas	108	86.6	6	100
Kentucky	236	83.0	0	100
Louisiana	182	89.9	0	100
Maine	73	82.2	12	100
Maryland	142	87.1	0	100
Massachusetts	199	80.0	0	100
Michigan	265	83.8	0	100
Minnesota	276	84.6	0	100
Mississippi	128	90.0	30	100
Missouri	270	83.5	0	100
Montana	89	76.3	0	100
Nebraska	64	85.3	22	100
Nevada	70	84.6	0	100
New Hampshire	63	80.5	0	100
New Jersey	245	86.6	0	100
New Mexico	45	80.3	0	100
New York	199	78.4	0	100
North Carolina	253	84.6	0	100
North Dakota	84	78.8	0	100
Ohio	242	82.0	0	100
Oklahoma	186	88.2	0	100

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Oregon	148	77.2	0	100
Pennsylvania	257	84.2	0	100
Puerto Rico	90	86.2	0	100
Rhode Island	52	80.7	0	100
South Carolina	140	86.3	0	100
South Dakota	88	83.3	0	100
Tennessee	159	87.0	0	100
Texas	233	79.5	0	100
Utah	76	81.6	0	100
Vermont	54	78.6	0	100
Virginia	245	89.8	18	100
Washington	123	79.0	15	100
West Virginia	95	86.3	36	100
Wisconsin	234	80.0	0	100
Wyoming	22	75.1	0	100
State Grantees	8365	83.7	0	100
Nationwide	15535	82.7	0	100

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 9 are generally high and are identical to last year's scores at the nationwide level.

Table 9

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked.	7345	8.7	1	10
	5. The Older Worker Program staff understood my employment interests and needs.	7282	8.5	1	10
	11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to.	7159	8.5	1	10
State Grantees	4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked.	8579	8.8	1	10

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
	5. The Older Worker Program staff understood my employment interests and needs.	8509	8.7	1	10
	11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to.	8368	8.7	1	10
Nationwide	4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked.	15924	8.7	1	10
	5. The Older Worker Program staff understood my employment interests and needs.	15791	8.6	1	10
	11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to.	15527	8.6	1	10

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 10. The score for supportive services and pre-assignment training are both very low. State grantees score significantly higher than national grantees on the question regarding supportive services.

Table 10

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services, such as assistance with transportation, housing, or medical care that I needed to meet my employment goals.	5790	6.5	1	10
	7. 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?	6171	6.6	1	10
	12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.	6633	8.1	1	10
State Grantees	6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services, such as assistance with transportation, housing, or medical care that I needed to meet my employment goals.	6807	7.0	1	10

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
	7. 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?	7041	6.7	1	10
	12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.	7590	8.1	1	10
Nationwide	6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services, such as assistance with transportation, housing, or medical care that I needed to meet my employment goals.	12597	6.8	1	10
	7. 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?	13212	6.6	1	10
	12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.	14223	8.1	1	10

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 able to 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. All of these questions were identified by SCSEP participants as being important to their satisfaction during focus groups. The results are presented in Tables 11 and 12. The scores on these questions are all relatively high. The score for the question about feeling comfortable at the assignment was among the highest received in the survey.

Question 17 (Table 12) shows the same small percentage of participants as in previous years reporting that they were pressured to leave their assignment before they were ready. Unlike last year, significantly more national grantee participants reported pressure than did state grantee participants. In addition, the score for the geographic convenience of the host agency assignment decreased from 91.1% to 88.3%, near its level in PY 2006.

Table 11

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	8. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me.	7163	8.4	1	10
	9. 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.	6810	8.6	1	10
	13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment.	7152	8.8	1	10
State Grantees	8. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me.	8341	8.5	1	10
	9. 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.	7852	8.7	1	10
	13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment.	8361	8.9	1	10
Nationwide	8. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me.	15504	8.5	1	10
	9. 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.	14662	8.6	1	10
	13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment.	15513	8.9	1	10

Table 12

			Count	Percent
National Grantees	10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live?	Yes	6382	88.0%
		No	625	8.6%
		Don't know	247	3.4%
	17. 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	927	12.8%
		No	5399	74.6%
		Don't know	911	12.6%

State Grantees	10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live?	Yes	7478	88.5%
		No	636	7.5%
		Don't know	337	4.0%
	17. 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	810	9.6%
		No	6563	78.0%
		Don't know	1046	12.4%
Nationwide	10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live?	Yes	13860	88.3%
		No	1261	8.0%
		Don't know	584	3.7%
	17. 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	1737	11.1%
		No	11962	76.4%
		Don't know	1957	12.5%

G. Impact of SCSEP on Participant Wellbeing

Three questions presented in Tables 13 and 14 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. Ninety-two percent of respondents report that their physical health is the same or better, and 73% report that their outlook on life is a little more positive or much more positive. These scores are very similar to those in the past two years. Participants indicated moderate to strong agreement (7.9 out of 10) with the statement that their wages have made a substantial improvement in their quality of life. This is a significant difference from scores in prior surveys, which have been around 7.5 out of 10 and may reflect the heightened importance participants place on income in an uncertain economy.

Table 13

		Count	Percent
National Grantees	14. 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	2261 31.5%
		Worse	589 8.2%
		About the same	4318 60.2%
	15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	215 3.0%
		A little more negative	339 4.7%
		About the same	1358 18.8%
		A little more positive	1933 26.8%
		Much more positive	3379 46.8%

State Grantees	14. 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	2556	30.6%	
		Worse	664	7.9%	
		About the same	5138	61.5%	
	15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	278	3.3%	
		A little more negative	389	4.6%	
		About the same	1631	19.3%	
		A little more positive	2211	26.1%	
		Much more positive	3958	46.7%	
	Nationwide	14. 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	4817	31.0%
			Worse	1253	8.1%
About the same			9456	60.9%	
15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?		Much more negative	493	3.1%	
		A little more negative	728	4.6%	
		About the same	2989	19.0%	
		A little more positive	4144	26.4%	
		Much more positive	7337	46.8%	

Table 14

	16. 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	7235	7.9	1	10
State Grantees	8466	7.9	1	10
Nationwide	15701	7.9	1	10

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 unsubsidized job they had obtained from their community service assignment; and overall, how much their community service assignment had prepared them for their current job. As was true in prior years, the scores, presented in Table 15, are quite low relative to the scores for other questions in the survey. The extent to which the community service assignment provided the needed skills and training (Question 19) and Question 7 (training provided before assignment to be successful in community service) have the lowest scores (6.6 and 6.5 respectively) in the survey. Given the paramount role of community service in helping participants become self-sufficient, this is clearly an

area that continues to require serious attention. Moreover, with a score of 6.5 on this question, the state grantees are especially low, significantly lower than the national grantees.

Table 15

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job?	2963	7.2	1	10
	19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?	2916	6.7	1	10
	20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?	2783	7.5	1	10
State Grantees	18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job?	3347	7.3	1	10
	19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?	3316	6.5	1	10
	20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?	3163	7.5	1	10
Nationwide	18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job?	6310	7.3	1	10
	19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?	6232	6.6	1	10
	20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?	5946	7.5	1	10

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 16

	21. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other older workers?			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	6938	9.2	1	10
State Grantees	8103	9.3	1	10
Nationwide	15041	9.2	1	10

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. Each grantee has received a CD with the comments that were included in the surveys completed by its participants.

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 17 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.⁶ This analysis narrowed the number of questions with a unique relationship to the ACSI to five, which are shaded in the table below. Questions with small or moderate correlations that contribute little unique understanding to the ACSI are unshaded.⁷ The analysis presented in Table 17 is based on the nationwide response to each question.

Five questions are shaded as the most significant independent drivers of satisfaction (Questions 5, 4, 8, 11, and 20). Questions 4 and 5, dealing with participants' treatment by the sub-grantee, are extremely highly correlated with the ACSI, and each has a strong, unique influence on the ACSI. The extremely large size of these correlations means that any change

⁶ 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.

⁷ Correlations from .1-.3 are usually considered small, .3-.5 moderate, and above .5 large or strong (D. Kenny, 1987. *Statistics for the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Little, Brown, and Company, Boston).

in these scores is likely to have a direct and independent change on overall satisfaction. These two questions are areas of great strength for the program: the scores for both are high. Continued attention to how participants are treated will help ensure high levels of satisfaction.

Question 8, the third shaded driver, asks about the quality of the community service assignment. Although participants rate the program moderately high on the assignment’s quality (8.5), there is room for some improvement.

Question 11, whether there is someone in the program to talk to, is less strongly correlated but is still an independent factor related to the ACSI. It is also highly rated by participants, meaning this quality of the program should be maintained but may not be the best focus for improvement.

The fifth shaded driver, question 20, is also very important. It asks about the impact of the program on preparing participants for unsubsidized employment. Although this question does not have as strong a correlation as the first four, it does make a unique contribution to the ACSI that is larger than of the contribution of Question 11 despite having a slightly smaller correlation. More important, the respondents rated this question only 7.5. This means there is substantial room for improvement in an area that is a significant driver of satisfaction. Question 20 was also a driver last year, suggesting that in these difficult economic times, participants are particularly concerned about SCSEP’s ability to help them secure employment.

The remaining un-shaded questions (6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18 and 19) are all strongly or moderately correlated with overall satisfaction, but the correlations are somewhat smaller than those of the key drivers, and they have little unique relationship to the ACSI. Many of these questions relate to and are subsumed by the shaded questions regarding how the staff treated the participant and the quality of the assignment. For example, 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. In the case of question 12, the correlation is strong but the unique relationship is smaller than for the five questions that are shaded. This question may well be important as another indication of the extent to which participants desire and expect to be trained for both their host agency assignment and for unsubsidized employment. Other questions remain important because they have moderately strong correlations and quite low scores. Questions 18 (7.3) and 19 (6.6), which relate to unsubsidized employment; question 7 (6.6), regarding training provided prior to assignment; and question 6 (6.8), regarding supportive services, are all areas that should not be neglected even if they are not among the key drivers.

Table 17

		Relation to ACSI
5. The Older Worker Program staff understood my employment interests and needs.	Pearson Correlation	.777**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15276

		Relation to ACSI
4. The Older Worker Program staff told me everything I needed to know about how the program worked.	Pearson Correlation	.756**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15443
8. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain a community service assignment that was just right for me.	Pearson Correlation	.697**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15006
11. There is someone in the Older Worker Program I can talk to when I need to.	Pearson Correlation	.678**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15021
20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?	Pearson Correlation	.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	5689
12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.	Pearson Correlation	.632**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	13780
6. The Older Worker Program helped me obtain the supportive services, such as assistance with transportation, housing, or medical care, that I needed to meet my employment goals.	Pearson Correlation	.567**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	12212
7. 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?	Pearson Correlation	.551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	12798
9. 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.	Pearson Correlation	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	14222
13. I feel comfortable at my community service assignment.	Pearson Correlation	.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15005
16. The pay I receive from the Older Worker Program has made a substantial difference in the quality of my life.	Pearson Correlation	.535**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	15187
18. How much help did Older Worker Program staff give you in finding an unsubsidized job?	Pearson Correlation	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	6044
19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?	Pearson Correlation	.521**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	5959

** . 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 generally 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.

As in prior years, there are four such questions in this survey where individual responses are associated with significant and, in some cases, dramatically different ACSI scores: convenience of assignment to the participant’s residence (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 18-21. While most participants indicate that their community service assignments are convenient to where they live, the 1185 respondents who indicated the assignment was not convenient were 18.2 points lower in their satisfaction, a greater disparity than last year. The ACSI scores for the three responses – better, worse, about the same – for 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. For question 17, those participants who reported that they were forced to leave their host agency assignment prematurely had an ACSI score 19.5 points lower than those who reported they were not forced to leave prematurely, a result similar to last year’s disparity.

Table 18

	10. Given your transportation situation, was your community service assignment convenient to where you live?					
	Yes		No		Don't know	
	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	6168	83.2	592	66.6	225	77.0
State Grantees	7248	85.2	593	65.6	303	79.2
Nationwide	13416	84.3	1185	66.1	528	78.2

Table 19

Table 19						
	14. 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		Worse		About the same	
	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	2191	88.7	568	64.8	4159	80.5
State Grantees	2475	90.2	633	69.6	4957	82.7
Nationwide	4666	89.4	1201	67.3	9116	81.7

Table 20

			ACSI	
			Count	Mean
National Grantees	15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	207	60.4
		A little more negative	324	66.5
		About the same	1305	69.8
		A little more positive	1866	81.3
		Much more positive	3269	90.2
State Grantees	15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	269	61.7
		A little more negative	368	67.3
		About the same	1556	73.8
		A little more positive	2144	82.9
		Much more positive	3840	91.6
Nationwide	15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	476	61.1
		A little more negative	692	66.9
		About the same	2861	72.0
		A little more positive	4010	82.1
		Much more positive	7109	91.0

Table 21

	17. 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		No		Don't know	
	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score	Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	879	66.2	5247	85.2	854	75.8
State Grantees	765	66.5	6372	86.5	984	78.8
Nationwide	1644	66.4	11619	85.9	1838	77.4

3. Participant Characteristics

An examination of participant characteristics and the ACSI reveals some important differences in overall satisfaction. Table 22 shows that there is a slight but statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of men and women nationwide, as was also true for last year's survey. The difference between men's and women's satisfaction is also significant for state and national grantees. Table 23 reveals that participants with less education are significantly more satisfied than those with a high school diploma or more. This difference is statistically significant nationwide, as well as for state and national grantees and is similar to results from prior years' surveys.

Table 22

		ACSI	
		Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	Female	4917	82.0
	Male	2241	80.9
	Did not volunteer	4	56.5
State Grantees	Female	6214	84.1
	Male	2137	82.5
	Did not volunteer	11	83.4
Nationwide	Female	11131	83.2
	Male	4378	81.7
	Did not volunteer	15	76.2

Table 23

		ACSI	
		Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	Less than HS diploma	1639	87.4
	HS diploma or equivalent	2805	83.0
	Some college	1533	77.8
	Vocational/technical degree	147	77.9
	Associates degree	185	74.0
	BA/BS	573	75.9
	Bachelor's plus	283	74.7
State Grantees	Less than HS diploma	1746	88.4
	HS diploma or equivalent	3394	85.3
	Some college	1869	80.8
	Vocational/technical degree	196	81.3
	Associates degree	233	79.0
	BA/BS	608	78.5
	Bachelor's plus	311	72.8
Nationwide	Less than HS diploma	3385	87.9
	HS diploma or equivalent	6199	84.2
	Some college	3402	79.4
	Vocational/technical degree	343	79.9
	Associates degree	418	76.8
	BA/BS	1181	77.2
	Bachelor's plus	594	73.7

SCSEP grantees are required to serve participants who have multiple barriers to employment and are considered most in need. Table 24 shows the satisfaction levels of those with different numbers of barriers to employment. The analysis shows that those with more barriers are actually more satisfied with the program than those with fewer barriers. Those with 4 or more barriers were significantly more satisfied than those who have only 1 or no barriers. It should also be noted that the percentage of individuals with four or more barriers is more than double the percentage reported last year. This finding corresponds with the increase in the average number of barriers reported earlier. (See Table 4.) It is not possible to say whether this substantial increase in participants with barriers is due to increased grantee effort to report all barriers or due to grantees serving a population that has more barriers.

Table 24

			ACSI	
			Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	Barriers	1 or fewer	1054	79.1
		2	1543	80.7
		3	1559	81.3
		4 or more	3014	83.2
State Grantees	Barriers	1 or fewer	1422	81.5
		2	1841	82.9
		3	1836	83.8
		4 or more	3266	85.0
Nationwide	Barriers	1 or fewer	2476	80.5
		2	3384	81.9
		3	3395	82.6
		4 or more	6280	84.2

Just as more barriers are associated with greater satisfaction, having certain individual barriers means that a participant is likely to be more satisfied overall. In Table 24a below, those barriers are listed where participants having the barrier are substantially more satisfied⁸ than those without the barrier and where the difference in satisfaction scores is statistically significant.

Table 24a

			ACSI	
			ACSI Score	Count
National Grantees	Seventy-five or Older	No	81.1	6550
		Yes	87.6	620

⁸ A substantial difference is determined by an Eta of .06 or higher.

			ACSI	
			ACSI Score	Count
	LEP	No	81.1	6314
		Yes	85.6	850
	Low Literacy Skills	No	80.5	5867
		Yes	86.8	1289
State Grantees	Seventy-five or Older	No	83.2	7670
		Yes	89.0	695
	Urban/Rural	Urban	82.6	4975
		Rural	85.3	3385
Nationwide	Seventy-five or Older	No	82.2	14220
		Yes	88.3	1315
	Frail	No	82.3	12116
		Yes	86.4	314
	Low Literacy Skills	No	82.1	13137
		Yes	86.6	2380

These analyses show that individuals with certain barriers are actually more satisfied overall than those without those barriers:

- Nationwide: Seventy-five or older, frail, and low literacy skills
- National grantees: Seventy-five or older, LEP and low literacy skills
- State grantees: Seventy-five or older, residing in a rural area

Participants with these particular barriers to employment may be more appreciative of the services they received or they may feel particularly well served in overcoming their barriers.

In addition to those barriers whose presence is associated with higher satisfaction, there is one barrier whose presence is associated with lower satisfaction. Table 24b reveals that nationwide, as well as for both national and state grantees, participants who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are 4-5 points less satisfied than those not homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Table 24b

National Grantees	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	82.36	6062
		Yes	77.72	1108
State Grantees	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	84.31	7344
		Yes	79.24	1021
Nationwide	Homeless or At Risk of Homelessness	No	83.43	13406
		Yes	78.45	2129

The data in Table 24b suggest that local programs should look carefully at the needs of those individuals who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to determine how to better address their needs.

While starting wage in employment, the receipt of fringe benefits in unsubsidized employment, or having received additional paid training in the host agency assignment do not affect satisfaction, exit status, including having left the program for a job rather than for some other reason, appears to matter. As is evident in Table 25, nationwide, satisfaction differs on two dimensions. First, those who had a job after exit were more satisfied (8.1 points higher) than those who exited for other reasons. Second, those who remained in the program were more satisfied (3.6 points) than those who left, even if they had a job. These findings may be explored in a supplemental analysis.

Table 25

		ACSI	
		Count	ACSI Score
National Grantees	Regular employment	617	80.4
	Self employment	31	71.1
	Other reason	1104	72.6
	Did not exit	5418	83.7
State Grantees	Regular employment	742	81.8
	Self employment	42	73.7
	Other reason	1144	73.5
	Did not exit	6437	85.8
Nationwide	Regular employment	1359	81.2
	Self employment	73	72.6
	Other reason	2248	73.1
	Did not exit	11855	84.8

V. Conclusion

There are several notable findings from the survey this year. The response rate improved substantially this year. Since the procedures for administering the surveys were the same as for all prior years, the improvement may have been due to the timing of the survey or to better preparation of the participants by the sub-grantees. Most of the surveying was accomplished before the holiday season this year. Only the third mailing overlapped with the holidays at the end of the year.

There are also two important findings that repeat results from the previous year's survey. First, unsubsidized employment is still a significant factor in participant satisfaction. Among the top five drivers of satisfaction for the second year is the helpfulness of the community service assignment in preparing participants for success in unsubsidized employment. This year also repeats the finding that there is significant room for improvement in this area; the score on this question has not changed.

The other finding is associated with the renewed emphasis on serving the most-in-need population reinforced by the 2006 Amendments to the Older Americans Act. The most-in-need measure is composed of 13 individual characteristics. On average, participants in the survey had 3.2 barriers, and the number of participants with four or more barriers more than doubled over last year.

The survey repeated the finding from last year that participants with the highest number of barriers (4 or more) were significantly more satisfied with the program than those with few or no barriers. There are several possible reasons for this result: The program may be successfully making the adjustments to provide comparable levels of service for all participants, including those with multiple barriers; or individuals with multiple barriers may not have expectations as high as those held by participants with fewer barriers and may be more appreciative of the help they receive in the program. It is also evident that the sheer numbers of barriers is sometimes less important than the types of barriers encountered, especially when the barrier is being 75 or over or having low literacy skills.

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