

**PY 2005 Customer Satisfaction Survey of Host Agencies
Nationwide Report
January 14, 2007**

I. Executive Summary

The first nationwide survey of host agency satisfaction was conducted between July and November, 2006. Over 15,500 surveys were mailed to host agencies that had been active in SCSEP at any time in the twelve months before March 2006, 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. Host agencies that 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 67.9%, slightly lower than last year's rate.

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 host agencies' experience with SCSEP, including how host agencies were treated by the sub-grantee; host agencies' evaluation of the assignment process; the extent to which SCSEP provided participants with training and supportive services when needed; the quality of the assignment; and the impact of SCSEP on host agencies' ability to provide services to the community.

The nationwide host agency ACSI score of 79.8 is significantly higher than the most recently reported nationwide WIA scores but somewhat lower than the 82.5 for host agencies in PY 2004. Host agencies gave the highest scores to their treatment by the sub-grantees, followed by their experience with the community service assignment process and the quality of the participants assigned. Host agencies gave their lowest scores to questions about the provision of training and supportive services by the sub-grantee and to the computer skills of the participants assigned. 69 percent indicated that participation in the program increased their ability to provide services to the community either "somewhat" or "significantly."

The survey was administered in the summer and early fall of 2006, when the national grantees were implementing a major transition due to a nationwide competition that had just been concluded. All of the incumbent national grantees experienced major changes in the geographical areas in which they operate, and nearly half of the participants enrolled with national grantees were transferred from their existing grantee to a different grantee. Because national grantees account for over 70 percent of the participants in SCSEP, there was concern that the disruption caused by the transition would have a significant negative effect on customer satisfaction scores. The fact that the host agency score is only slightly lower than last year's score suggests that host agency customers have a close relationship with and high degree of trust in the sub-grantees and local projects with which they work.

Various statistical analyses were performed to see which questions, and which clusters of questions, had the strongest effect (correlation) on overall satisfaction. A regression analysis was also used to finally identify four questions in two clusters that have a strong effect and are independent drivers of satisfaction. The question with the strongest unique relationship to the

ACSI (question 10) concerns the quality of the match, how well the participant met the host agency's business needs. This is followed by a set of closely related questions (question 4, 5, and 6). Question 4 is about staff giving the information needed to understand the program; question 5 is about making the process easy; and question 6 is about staff having a good understanding of the agency's business. The scores on providing information (8.6), making the process easy (8.6), and understanding the business need (8.4) are fairly high, but the score on the quality of the match (8.0), the strongest driver, shows some room for improvement. A fifth question (question 11), about staff being helpful in resolving problems, had a strong relationship to satisfaction but little unique influence on the ACSI. Its score (8.2) also represents an opportunity for improvement.

These analyses show that the data follow a pattern very similar to that established last year. Subsequent analyses of these data will focus on the relationship between satisfaction and outcomes, as well as questions grantees and federal staff raise about this report.

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 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.

The Division of Adult Services/Older Worker 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 2005, there were 56 state and territorial grantees and 13 national grantees. These grantees delivered 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, DOL 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 specifies that for national grantees, performance measures are to be computed at the national and the state level. 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 took 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, 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. For 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 same process was employed for the participant, host agency and employer surveys in PY 2005.

III. Survey Methodology

The sample for the host agency survey was drawn in March, 2006, from Quarter 2 PY 2005 performance data submitted by the grantees. Host agencies active at any time in the past 12 months were eligible for selection. For both state and national grantees, at least 370 host agencies were selected for surveying. If a grantee had fewer than 370 eligible host agencies, all eligible host agencies 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 host agency 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 survey methodology was designed to maximize the response rate. Host agencies were verbally alerted to the surveys by the sub-grantee in the two months prior to the mailing of the surveys. Host agencies then received 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 host agency contact person and signed by the grantee's director. After the first mailing, two additional mailings were conducted for those host agencies that had not completed a survey from the previous mailing(s). The first mailing was delivered to the post office on June 30, 2006, and the last was sent to respondents on September 15, 2006.¹

¹ Because of the difficulties of administering the survey overseas, American Samoa, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands were not included in the surveys this year or last year. Virgin Islands did not submit any data and also did not participate in the survey.

IV. Survey Results

The results presented below are based on all three mailings of the participant survey and include all completed surveys received through December 1, 2006. This report is enhanced with information about the host agency respondents and the participants assigned to those host agencies from final PY 2005 data submitted to DOL by the grantees.

A. Host Agency Characteristics

Because the surveys are linked to the host agency and participant records in the SCSEP database for this analysis, the survey only asked one question about the characteristics of the host agencies: how long the respondent had served as a host agency. This question was necessary because the database does not contain complete and accurate information about host agency history prior to July 1, 2004, when the SCSEP data collection system was implemented. As is evident in Table 1, respondents reported that they have participated in SCSEP for an average of a little more than 6 years. Host agencies had a slightly longer participation history with state grantees than with national grantees.

Table 1

Q20. For how many years have you been a host agency?

	Count	Average # of Years	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	5995	6.0	0	41
State Grantees	3545	6.4	1	33
Nationwide	9540	6.1	0	41

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 considered completed for the response rate calculation. The response rate in Table 2 is based on surveys received through December 1, 2006. The nationwide response rate of 67.9% is somewhat short of the target of 70% and slightly lower than last year's rate.

Table 2

	Count	Percent
AARP	1179	70.4%
ABLE	197	65.0%
ANPPM	106	51.5%
Easter Seals	305	67.6%
Experience Works	1620	68.2%
Forest Service	95	73.1%
Mature Services	207	67.6%
NAPCA	187	60.7%
NCBA	407	59.2%
NCOA	540	69.6%
NICOA	219	70.6%
SER	563	60.0%
SSA	854	59.9%
National Grantees	6479	65.5%

	Count	Percent
Alabama	94	83.9%
Alaska	52	78.8%
Arizona	15	60.0%
Arkansas	57	73.1%
California	194	60.1%
Colorado	52	67.5%
Connecticut	46	73.0%
Delaware	50	76.9%
District of Columbia	8	61.5%
Florida	165	67.1%
Georgia	85	73.3%
Hawaii	69	92.0%
Idaho	24	60.0%
Illinois	115	77.7%
Indiana	155	73.5%
Iowa	80	76.9%
Kansas	34	66.7%
Kentucky	65	82.3%
Louisiana	64	73.6%
Maine	27	75.0%
Maryland	47	69.1%
Massachusetts	92	78.6%
Michigan	113	69.3%
Minnesota	121	70.3%
Mississippi	33	71.7%
Missouri	97	78.9%
Montana	21	56.8%
Nebraska	29	67.4%
Nevada	23	69.7%
New Hampshire	23	65.7%
New Jersey	99	63.1%
New Mexico	23	79.3%
New York	174	69.9%
North Carolina	112	78.9%
North Dakota	41	87.2%
Ohio	112	72.7%
Oklahoma	79	73.8%
Oregon	59	67.0%
Pennsylvania	237	72.9%
Puerto Rico	10	41.7%
Rhode Island	17	73.9%
South Carolina	42	61.8%
South Dakota	49	80.3%
Tennessee	133	76.4%
Texas	255	74.6%

	Count	Percent
Utah	21	65.6%
Vermont	34	79.1%
Virginia	85	75.9%
Washington	53	75.7%
West Virginia	40	81.6%
Wisconsin	72	68.6%
Wyoming	38	74.5%
American Samoa	0	N/A
Guam	0	N/A
Mariana Islands	0	N/A
Virgin Islands	0	N/A
State Grantees	3835	72.3%
Nationwide	10314	67.9%

As is evident from Table 2, state grantees have a significantly higher response rate (72.3%) than do national grantees (65.5%). This difference may be the result of host agencies 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 host agencies to the survey through discussions before the surveys were mailed. A similar difference between state and national grantees was seen in last year's survey.

There is a wide distribution of response rates among both state and national grantees. State grantee response rates range from a low of 41.7% to a high of 92%, and national grantee response rates range from a low of 51.5% to a high of 73%. These wide distributions may be related to the degree of preparation given to host agencies in advance of the survey or to the level of those agencies' satisfaction with the local SCSEP program provider. A higher ACSI score is related to a higher response rate.

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 2006 was 74.3. The ASCI score for federal government agencies in 2006 was 72.3. 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. Nationally, the average employer score for WIA in PY 2004 was 72.5; the average participant score 76.8.

Table 3 presents the ACSI score for state grantees, national grantees, and nationwide. Only those respondents who answered all three of the ACSI questions are included in the index and reported in Table 3. The nationwide score of 79.8 equals or exceeds the score achieved by most private sector organizations and exceeds the typical employer or participant score for an employment and training program. This score is somewhat lower than the score of 82.3 achieved for PY 2004. As with the response rate, there is a fairly wide distribution of ACSI scores among the grantees, ranging from a low of 63 to a high of 97.7.

Table 3

	Count	Average ACSI	Minimum	Maximum
AARP	1179	79.2	0	100
ABLE	197	76.7	0	100
ANPPM	106	84.5	19	100
Easter Seals	305	79.5	0	100
Experience Works	1620	78.7	0	100
Forest Service	95	80.5	7	100
Mature Services	207	75.9	0	100
NAPCA	187	82.5	30	100
NCBA	407	82.1	0	100
NCOA	540	83.2	19	100
NICOA	219	84.3	11	100
SER	563	78.5	0	100
SSA	854	80.9	0	100
National Grantees	6479	79.9	0	100
Alabama	94	82.4	0	100
Alaska	52	77.4	15	100
Arizona	15	69.9	19	100
Arkansas	57	81.7	0	100
California	194	76.7	4	100
Colorado	52	78.4	30	100
Connecticut	46	80.5	30	100
Delaware	50	76.9	22	100
District of Columbia	8	97.7	93	100
Florida	165	79.0	7	100
Georgia	85	88.5	56	100
Hawaii	69	79.4	22	100
Idaho	24	84.0	11	100

	Count	Average ACSI	Minimum	Maximum
Illinois	115	77.7	22	100
Indiana	155	78.1	11	100
Iowa	80	80.3	22	100
Kansas	34	72.5	0	100
Kentucky	65	87.0	37	100
Louisiana	64	87.7	52	100
Maine	27	78.2	30	100
Maryland	47	78.8	0	100
Massachusetts	92	76.7	11	100
Michigan	113	76.3	4	100
Minnesota	121	79.3	7	100
Mississippi	33	80.6	22	100
Missouri	97	75.1	7	100
Montana	21	63.0	0	100
Nebraska	29	75.2	0	100
Nevada	23	80.4	0	100
New Hampshire	23	75.2	44	100
New Jersey	99	81.9	15	100
New Mexico	23	77.3	37	100
New York	174	80.3	11	100
North Carolina	112	81.5	15	100
North Dakota	41	78.1	7	100
Ohio	112	76.6	7	100
Oklahoma	79	84.9	22	100
Oregon	59	70.5	11	100
Pennsylvania	237	80.0	0	100
Puerto Rico	10	84.4	52	100
Rhode Island	17	75.2	26	100
South Carolina	42	72.7	0	100
South Dakota	49	79.2	0	100
Tennessee	133	86.0	11	100
Texas	255	82.5	0	100
Utah	21	72.3	0	100
Vermont	34	72.5	0	100
Virginia	85	81.5	0	100
Washington	53	74.0	4	100
West Virginia	40	78.4	4	100
Wisconsin	72	79.6	19	100
Wyoming	38	75.3	26	100
American Samoa	0	N/A.	.	.
Guam	0	N/A.	.	.
Mariana Islands	0	N/A.	.	.
Virgin Islands	0	N/A.	.	.
State Grantees	3835	79.5	0	100
Nationwide	10314	79.8	0	100

D. Treatment by Sub-grantee

The survey asked three questions that explore how sub-grantee staff treated host agencies: whether they provided all the information needed to understand the program; whether the assignment process was easy to navigate; and whether staff was helpful in resolving any problems that arose. The results are presented in Table 4. Although the scores are fairly high, respondents gave lower scores to the question on helpfulness in resolving problems than to the other two questions. This is similar to the pattern of scores from last year's survey.

Table 4

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	6521	8.6	1	10
	Q5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	6403	8.5	1	10
	Q11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	5933	8.2	1	10
State Grantees	Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	3827	8.6	1	10
	Q5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	3742	8.6	1	10
	Q11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	3432	8.2	1	10
Nationwide	Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	10348	8.6	1	10
	Q5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	10145	8.6	1	10
	Q11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	9365	8.2	1	10

E. Assignment Process

Five questions examined the assignment process: whether staff had a good understanding of the host agency's business needs; whether the host agency received sufficient information about the participant assigned; whether the host agency felt it had a choice about the participant assigned; whether staff stayed in touch after the assignment to ensure that everything went well; and whether the program attempted to remove participants before the host agency felt they were ready.

The results are presented in Tables 5 and 6. The highest score was for understanding the host agency's business needs. The lowest scores were for providing the host agency enough information about the participant assigned and giving the host agency a choice in the assignment. While relatively few host agencies reported that the program attempted to

remove participants before they were ready (see Table 6), this is an important factor that significantly reduces satisfaction for host agencies that experience it. This is also an area where there is a significant difference in scores for state grantees and national grantees. See Section IV K 2, below.

Table 5

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Q6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	6471	8.4	1	10
	Q7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	6346	7.8	1	10
	Q8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	6251	7.7	1	10
	Q16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	6417	8.0	1	10
State Grantees	Q6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	3795	8.4	1	10
	Q7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	3756	7.8	1	10
	Q8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	3682	7.7	1	10
	Q16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	3778	8.0	1	10
Nationwide	Q6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	10266	8.4	1	10
	Q7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	10102	7.8	1	10
	Q8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	9933	7.7	1	10
	Q16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	10195	8.0	1	10

Table 6

Q17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?

	Never		Occasionally		Frequently		Nearly always	
National Grantees	4406	75.6%	1041	17.9%	215	3.7%	164	2.8%
State Grantees	2827	81.2%	495	14.2%	79	2.3%	80	2.3%
Nationwide	7233	77.7%	1536	16.5%	294	3.2%	244	2.6%

F. Supportive Services and Training

Four questions presented in Tables 7-10 asked whether participants ever needed supportive services and additional training, and, if so, the extent to which the sub-grantee provided them. There was only a small difference between state grantees and national grantees in the extent to which participants needed supportive services. However, state grantees were more likely than national grantees to provide those services when needed. Participants with national grantees needed training less often than participants with state grantees, but again, when they needed training, participants with national grantees were less likely to receive training than were state grantee participants.

Table 7

Q12. Did any of the older workers assigned to your agency require supportive services?

	No		Yes		Don't Know	
National Grantees	4734	72.7%	858	13.2%	917	14.1%
State Grantees	2743	71.3%	632	16.4%	470	12.2%
Nationwide	7477	72.2%	1490	14.4%	1387	13.4%

Table 8

Q13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?

	None		Few		Some		Nearly all	
National Grantees	257	31.9%	118	14.7%	208	25.8%	222	27.6%
State Grantees	148	24.6%	81	13.5%	170	28.2%	203	33.7%
Nationwide	405	28.8%	199	14.1%	378	26.9%	425	30.2%

Table 9

Q14. Do participants assigned to your agency ever need any kind of additional training?

	Yes		No		Don't know	
National Grantees	1755	27.0%	4299	66.1%	449	6.9%
State Grantees	1161	30.2%	2429	63.2%	251	6.5%
Nationwide	2916	28.2%	6728	65.0%	700	6.8%

Table 10

Q15. Does the Older Worker Program provide the needed training?

	Never provides training		Sometimes provides training		Often provides training		Always provides training	
National Grantees	300	22.0%	466	34.2%	363	26.7%	233	17.1%
State Grantees	179	19.2%	303	32.6%	258	27.7%	190	20.4%
Nationwide	479	20.9%	769	33.6%	621	27.1%	423	18.5%

G. Quality of Participants

Two questions asked whether participants were right for the job and had the necessary computer skills. The question on computer skills received the lowest score of any question in all three customer satisfaction surveys. The results are presented in Table 11. Although this question is moderately correlated with overall satisfaction, it is not a strong independent driver of satisfaction for this sample of host agencies. See Section IV K below.

Table 11

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Q9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	5044	5.4	1	10
	Q10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	6529	8.0	1	10
State Grantees	Q9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	3056	5.4	1	10
	Q10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	3834	7.9	1	10
Nationwide	Q9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	8100	5.4	1	10
	Q10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	10363	8.0	1	10

H. The Impact of SCSEP

One question asked whether the program made a difference in the respondent’s ability to provide services to the community. Over two-thirds of Host Agencies reported that SCSEP participants positively affected their ability to provide services to the community. The distinction between host agencies whose ability was increased by SCSEP and those whose ability was not increased is an important factor in satisfaction. See Section IV K below.

Question 18 was changed this year. Last year the question was posed as a simple yes/no response. This year the question was modified slightly, and the respondents were given five choices from “significantly decreased” to “significantly increased.” Forty percent of host agencies nationwide indicated that participation in the program significantly increased their ability to provide services, and over 28 percent indicated that participation somewhat increased their ability.

Table 12

Q18. How has your agency’s ability to provide services to the community been affected by its participation in the Older Worker Program?

	Significantly decreased		Somewhat decreased		Neither decreased nor increased		Somewhat increased		Significantly increased		Don't know	
National Grantees	41	.6%	84	1.3%	1395	21.4%	1848	28.4%	2584	39.7%	556	8.5%
State Grantees	18	.5%	41	1.1%	853	22.0%	1092	28.2%	1585	41.0%	280	7.2%
Nationwide	59	.6%	125	1.2%	2248	21.7%	2940	28.3%	4169	40.2%	836	8.1%

I. Would Recommend

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

Table 13

Q19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Q19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	6453	9.1	1	10
State Grantees	Q19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	3820	9.1	1	10
Nationwide	Q19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	10273	9.1	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 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

An analysis was conducted to determine which aspects of service were most important to overall satisfaction. Table 14 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 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 an independent relationship to the ACSI to just four, which are shaded in the table. Questions with only a small correlation or no independent relationship are unshaded.

The question with the strongest independent relationship to the ACSI (question 10) concerns the quality of the match, how well the participant met the host agency's business needs. This driver is very highly correlated with the ACSI, indicating that host agencies, even more than employers, value the quality of the assignment. This is followed by three closely related questions (questions 4, 5, and 6). Question 4 is about staff giving the information needed to understand the program; question 5 is about making the process easy; and question 6 is about staff having a good understanding of the agency's business. Each of these is strongly correlated and makes a unique contribution to the ACSI.

Question 7, regarding the receipt of sufficient information about the participant, question 11 about staff helpfulness in resolving problems, and question 16 about staff staying in touch are also strongly correlated to the ACSI. However, they do not make the same level of unique contribution to the ACSI. So, while they are important factors as noted last year, this year's analysis suggests that the emphasis should be on the initial exchange with the host agency and the match that is made through that exchange. This is particularly true for question 10 (quality of the match), whose score (8.0) leaves room for improvement.

The unshaded questions 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, and 17, have little or no independent relationship to the ACSI or smaller correlations, but they may still be important operationally. Questions 7, 8, and 16 are all strongly correlated with overall satisfaction. They relate to the shaded questions regarding providing information, being helpful in resolving problems, and the quality of the match, and they are subsumed by them. Put another way, sub-grantees that do a good job of keeping the process easy to use and of understanding the host agency's business needs also provide the host agency with the information it needs, give the host agency sufficient background on the participant assigned, allow the host agency some choice in the assignment, and stay in touch after the assignment. Due to the strength of the correlations and

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 relatively low scores received on questions 7 (7.9), 8 (7.8), and 16 (8.1), these are not areas that can be neglected.

Question 15 regarding needed training is moderately correlated with satisfaction, question 13 regarding supportive services is weakly correlated with satisfaction, and question 17 regarding attempts to remove participants prematurely is not correlated at all. However, as explained below, host agencies' ACSI scores varied significantly depending on how they answered these questions.

In addition, question 9 regarding computer skills warrants attention. The very low score on this question coupled with its moderate correlation to the ACSI suggests that the host agencies that responded to this question subsumed computer skills into the quality of the match. That is, if a host agency considered computer skills important to the participant's assignment, its rating on the quality of the match included an assessment of the participant's computer skills. For host agencies that care about computer skills, the lack of such skills may be lowering the score on the quality of the match. As computers become ever more critical to the operation of all agencies and organizations, grantees should consider a comprehensive approach to ensuring that participants have at least the minimal computer skills needed to be successful in both community service assignments and unsubsidized placements.

Table 14

		Relation to ACSI
Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.594(**) .000 10200
Q5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.657(**) .000 9996
Q6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.675(**) .000 10108
Q7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.621(**) .000 9948
Q8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.593(**) .000 9788
Q9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.424(**) .000 7982

Table 14, continued

		Relation to ACSI
Q10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	Pearson Correlation	.733(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	10211
Q11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	Pearson Correlation	.671(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	9227
Q13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	Pearson Correlation	.265(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1385
Q15. Does the Older Worker Program provide the needed training?	Pearson Correlation	.362(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	2253
Q16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	Pearson Correlation	.622(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	10047
Q17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Pearson Correlation	-.136(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	9166

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

2. Other Questions Related to Satisfaction

The driver analysis presented above is based primarily 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: provision of supportive services (question 13); provision of training (question 15); removing participants before they were ready (question 17); and whether participation in SCSEP affected the host agency's ability to provide community service (question 18). The results for the first three questions are presented in Tables 15-17. Those who felt that the sub-grantee provided none of the supportive services or training needed were 14-22.6 points lower in their satisfaction than those who felt the sub-grantee always provided the needed supportive service or training. Those who answered somewhere between the two extreme answers had ACSI scores that fell between the highest and the lowest scores. Similarly, there is a significant difference in satisfaction based on all four values of the question regarding whether the program attempted to remove participants from their assignments prematurely. Therefore, even though the correlations of these three questions with the ACSI is small to moderate, grantees that receive

more negative scores on these questions have significantly less satisfied host agency customers.

Table 15

Q13.To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?

	Count	Average ACSI	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
None	399	71.5	24.94	.0	100.0
Few	197	70.9	24.90	.0	100.0
Some	371	79.1	18.39	.0	100.0
Nearly all	418	85.5	16.93	7.4	100.0
Total	1385	77.7	21.92	.0	100.0

Table 16

Q15. Does the Older Worker Program provide the needed training?

	Count	Average ACSI	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Never provides training	475	66.0	26.01	0	100
Sometimes provides training	751	73.5	20.26	4	100
Often provides training	617	81.6	16.96	.0	100
Always provides training	410	88.6	14.84	7	100
Total	2253	76.9	21.39	0	100

Table 17

Q17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?

	Count	Average ACSI	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Never	7138	81.2	19.71	0	100
Occasionally	1509	78.3	19.18	0	100
Frequently	282	71.5	22.37	0	100
Nearly always	237	67.3	27.84	0	100
Total	9166	80.1	20.15	0	100

A similar phenomenon occurred with question 18, which asked whether participation in SCSEP affected the ability of the host agency to provide service to the community. As is evident in Table 18, those agencies that saw the SCSEP program increasing their capacity are much more positive about the program than those that saw the program having no impact or decreasing their capacity. These latter host agencies, which account for 23% of the total, may warrant special attention since they see their participation as having no benefit or being a net cost. Further analysis may reveal whether participants assigned to these host agencies have different outcomes from those assigned to SCSEP-affected host agencies.

Table 18

Q18. Would your agency be able to provide the same level of services that it does now if it did not participate in the Older Worker Program?

	Count	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Significantly decreased	57	55.5	39.16	0	100
Somewhat decreased	122	52.4	28.40	0	100
Neither decreased nor increased	2206	69.0	23.90	0	100
Somewhat increased	2910	78.0	17.66	0	100
Significantly increased	4112	88.3	13.34	0	100
Don't know	773	78.0	23.05	0	100
Total	10180	79.8	20.28	0	100

3. Participant Characteristics

The host agency sample list contained the name of the last participant assigned to each host agency selected for the survey, and host agencies were instructed to answer questions with reference to the participant most recently assigned to their agency. To determine whether host agency satisfaction is affected by the characteristics of the participants assigned, the following participant characteristics were examined for correlation with host agency ACSI scores: age, gender, ethnicity, race, LEP, literacy skills deficiency, other social barriers, total barriers, number of participant assignments, days in program, amount of participant's training, and participant's pre-employment status. As with the PY 2004 survey, none of these characteristics had a significant influence on ACSI scores.

Although the participants' characteristics do not correlate with host agency satisfaction, what does correlate, as is evident from Table 3, is the identity of the grantee. The correlation of the grantee and the lack of correlation of the participants' characteristics with the ACSI mean that what influences satisfaction is how the sub-grantee conducts its program, not the nature of the SCSEP participants who were assigned to the host agencies. Therefore, the analyses in Sections IV G 1 and 2 above provide the best guidance on what sub-grantees can do to increase customer satisfaction for host agencies.