

**PY 2009 Customer Satisfaction Survey of Host Agencies
Nationwide Report
August 3, 2010**

I. Executive Summary

This nationwide survey of host agency satisfaction was conducted between October 9, 2009 and February 8, 2010. Over 17,500 surveys were mailed to host agencies that had been active in SCSEP at any time in the twelve 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. 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 64.6%, somewhat higher than last year's rate and slightly higher than the participant survey response rate for this PY 2009.

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 81.3 is nearly identical to last year's score. For the remaining questions, 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. In regard to enhancing the host agencies' ability to serve the community, 75 percent indicated that participation in the program increased their ability to provide services to the community either "somewhat" or "significantly." This was nearly identical to the score for the previous years.

Various statistical analyses were performed to see which questions, and which clusters of questions, had the strongest effect (correlation) on overall satisfaction. Using a regression analysis four questions were identified as drivers, that is, having strong correlations and making a significant independent contribution to the ACSI. The four questions were 5, 6, 10, and 11. The questions with the strongest unique relationship to the ACSI (questions 10 and 5) concern the quality of the match and how well the participant met the host agency's business needs, followed by two closely related questions (questions 6, staff having a good understanding of the host agency's business and question 11, staff being helpful in resolving problems). Question 5 is about making the assignment process easy, and question 10 is about how well the assignment matches the agencies needs. Question 10 is most notable because it has a strong relationship to satisfaction and a substantial unique influence on the ACSI. Its score (8.1) also represents an opportunity for improvement.

These data follow a pattern very similar to that established in prior years. 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 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 host agency survey was drawn in September 2009, from Quarter 4 PY 2008 performance data submitted by the grantees. Host agencies active at any time in the prior 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 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. This report is enhanced with information about the host agency respondents and the participants assigned to those host agencies from the Quarter 4 PY2009 data submitted to DOL by the grantees.

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.

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 5.5 years, slightly less than in PY 08. Host agencies had a somewhat longer participation history with state grantees than with national grantees. Since state grantees have had a constant role in SCSEP while the participation of national grantees changes based on a competitive process, the longer average participation history is expected. Some national grantees have only recently become SCSEP grantees.

Table 1

	20. For how long have you been a host agency?			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	5976	5.2	0	45
State Grantees	4591	5.5	0	50
Nationwide	10567	5.3	0	50

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 February 8, 2010. The nationwide response rate of 64.6% is short of the target of 70% but higher than the PY 2008 rate of 62.3%.

As is evident from Table 2, state grantees have a significantly higher response rate (68.2%) than do national grantees (62.0%). 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 before the surveys were mailed. A similar difference between state and national grantees was seen in previous surveys.

There is a wide distribution of response rates among both state and national grantees. State grantee response rates range from a low of 41.4% to a high of 78.8%, and national grantee response rates range from a low of 49.4% to a high of 69.9%. 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.

Table 2

	Response			
	Did not respond		Responded	
AARP	581	36.4%	1015	63.6%
ANPPM	165	44.6%	205	55.4%
Easter Seals	183	38.3%	295	61.7%
Experience Works	776	35.9%	1387	64.1%
Goodwill	161	38.3%	259	61.7%
IID	35	31.8%	75	68.2%
Mature Services	86	26.5%	239	73.5%
ABLE	124	33.7%	244	66.3%
NAPCA	169	50.6%	165	49.4%
NCBA	255	43.1%	336	56.9%
NCOA	278	36.1%	492	63.9%
NICOA	126	38.4%	202	61.6%
Urban League	172	46.5%	198	53.5%
QCS	34	30.1%	79	69.9%
SER	225	40.7%	328	59.3%
SSAI	447	40.0%	671	60.0%
VATD	55	30.2%	127	69.8%
TWI	54	38.6%	86	61.4%
National Grantees	3926	38.0%	6403	62.0%
Alabama	55	27.8%	143	72.2%
Alaska	31	26.7%	85	73.3%
Arizona	17	22.4%	59	77.6%
Arkansas	61	34.7%	115	65.3%
California	171	46.2%	199	53.8%
Colorado	22	28.6%	55	71.4%
Connecticut	27	34.2%	52	65.8%
Delaware	25	26.6%	69	73.4%
District of Columbia	17	58.6%	12	41.4%
Florida	141	38.1%	229	61.9%
Georgia	56	27.3%	149	72.7%
Hawaii	38	32.8%	78	67.2%
Idaho	18	35.3%	33	64.7%
Illinois	56	29.2%	136	70.8%
Indiana	103	32.1%	218	67.9%
Iowa	24	26.4%	67	73.6%

	Response			
	Did not respond		Responded	
Kansas	34	34.0%	66	66.0%
Kentucky	36	29.0%	88	71.0%
Louisiana	40	30.5%	91	69.5%
Maine	21	32.8%	43	67.2%
Maryland	28	25.9%	80	74.1%
Massachusetts	48	35.0%	89	65.0%
Michigan	81	34.6%	153	65.4%
Minnesota	72	27.2%	193	72.8%
Mississippi	28	31.8%	60	68.2%
Missouri	52	28.4%	131	71.6%
Montana	16	29.6%	38	70.4%
Nebraska	12	30.0%	28	70.0%
Nevada	16	36.4%	28	63.6%
New Hampshire	20	33.9%	39	66.1%
New Jersey	66	37.9%	108	62.1%
New Mexico	14	36.8%	24	63.2%
New York	82	32.0%	174	68.0%
North Carolina	45	22.6%	154	77.4%
North Dakota	26	33.8%	51	66.2%
Ohio	99	31.7%	213	68.3%
Oklahoma	37	22.7%	126	77.3%
Oregon	37	29.6%	88	70.4%
Pennsylvania	106	28.6%	264	71.4%
Puerto Rico	15	41.7%	21	58.3%
Rhode Island	7	21.2%	26	78.8%
South Carolina	41	43.2%	54	56.8%
South Dakota	24	30.0%	56	70.0%
Tennessee	34	26.2%	96	73.8%
Texas	127	34.4%	242	65.6%
Utah	18	34.0%	35	66.0%
Vermont	18	47.4%	20	52.6%
Virginia	35	25.5%	102	74.5%
Washington	29	29.3%	70	70.7%
West Virginia	11	25.0%	33	75.0%
Wisconsin	46	26.9%	125	73.1%
Wyoming	10	33.3%	20	66.7%

	Response			
	Did not respond		Responded	
State Grantees	2293	31.8%	4928	68.2%
Nationwide	6219	35.4%	11331	64.6%

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 ACSI 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 as of May 2010 was 75.9. The ACSI score for federal government agencies at the end of 2009 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 scores are in the mid to high 70s. Comparable data from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for PY 2008 showed an ACSI score of 73.9 for WIA participants and 72.1 for employers.

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 81.3 exceeds the score achieved by most private sector organizations and also exceeds the typical employer or participant score for an employment and training program. The score is identical to that reported for the PY2008 survey. As with the response rate, there is a fairly wide distribution of ACSI scores among the grantees, ranging from a low of 70.2 to a high of 91.7.

Table 3

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
AARP	1015	82.3	0	100
ANPPM	205	83.2	11	100
Easter Seals	295	81.6	0	100
Experience Works	1387	80.3	0	100
Goodwill	259	78.4	7	100
IID	75	91.7	22	100
Mature Services	239	83.0	20	100
ABLE	244	76.1	11	100
NAPCA	165	81.7	18	100
NCBA	336	82.8	0	100
NCOA	492	82.9	7	100
NICOA	202	80.5	0	100
Urban League	198	78.0	0	100
QCS	79	77.4	13	100
SER	328	80.5	0	100
SSAI	671	82.6	10	100
VATD	127	75.2	8	100
TWI	86	78.9	0	100
National Grantees	6403	81.2	0	100
Alabama	143	84.4	8	100
Alaska	85	79.2	11	100
Arizona	59	81.7	35	100
Arkansas	115	85.4	19	100
California	199	79.5	0	100
Colorado	55	80.7	11	100
Connecticut	52	84.5	27	100
Delaware	69	84.1	27	100
District of Columbia	12	84.4	56	100
Florida	229	79.5	3	100
Georgia	149	83.6	16	100
Hawaii	78	82.9	11	100
Idaho	33	80.4	12	100
Illinois	136	82.2	19	100
Indiana	218	79.2	0	100
Iowa	67	81.4	22	100

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Kansas	66	80.1	0	100
Kentucky	88	87.6	22	100
Louisiana	91	87.7	27	100
Maine	43	72.4	22	100
Maryland	80	81.6	22	100
Massachusetts	89	79.0	15	100
Michigan	153	81.7	8	100
Minnesota	193	80.0	0	100
Mississippi	60	83.3	19	100
Missouri	131	80.6	17	100
Montana	38	74.4	0	100
Nebraska	28	76.4	33	100
Nevada	28	81.1	24	100
New Hampshire	39	74.2	30	100
New Jersey	108	81.7	0	100
New Mexico	24	72.8	22	100
New York	174	80.7	0	100
North Carolina	154	85.5	18	100
North Dakota	51	78.4	8	100
Ohio	213	79.0	11	100
Oklahoma	126	89.2	22	100
Oregon	88	74.8	19	100
Pennsylvania	264	81.0	4	100
Puerto Rico	21	86.2	44	100
Rhode Island	26	80.2	22	100
South Carolina	54	86.3	22	100
South Dakota	56	80.4	22	100
Tennessee	96	86.3	38	100
Texas	242	82.6	3	100
Utah	35	72.5	33	100
Vermont	20	82.0	22	100
Virginia	102	87.2	23	100
Washington	70	82.6	24	100
West Virginia	33	80.9	16	100
Wisconsin	125	77.1	0	100
Wyoming	20	70.2	15	100

	ACSI			
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
State Grantees	4928	81.5	0	100
Nationwide	11331	81.3	0	100

D. Treatment by Sub-grantee

The survey asked three questions that explore how sub-grantee staff treat host agencies: whether they provide all the information needed to understand the program; whether the assignment process is easy to navigate; and whether staff is helpful in resolving any problems that arose. The results are presented in Table 4. The scores are fairly high on all three questions, but respondents gave significantly 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	4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	6436	8.6	1	10
	5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	6297	8.6	1	10
	11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	5767	8.2	1	10
State Grantees	4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	4941	8.7	1	10
	5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	4833	8.7	1	10
	11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	4372	8.3	1	10
Nationwide	4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	11377	8.6	1	10
	5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	11130	8.6	1	10
	11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	10139	8.3	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 continues to be for understanding the host agency’s business needs. The lowest scores continue to be for providing the host agency enough information about the participant assigned and giving the host agency a choice in the assignment. As in last year’s surveys, only 20 percent of host agencies reported that the program ever attempted to remove participants before they were ready. (See Table 6.) As in the past, national grantees are more likely than state grantees to prematurely remove participants. Despite the fact that it does not happen often, premature removal of participants is an important factor that significantly reduces satisfaction for host agencies that experience it. As in previous surveys, this is 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	6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	6392	8.4	1	10
	7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	6315	7.7	1	10
	8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	6213	7.8	1	10
	16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	6354	8.0	1	10
State Grantees	6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	4892	8.6	1	10
	7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	4828	8.0	1	10
	8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	4768	7.9	1	10

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
	16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	4890	8.1	1	10
Nationwide	6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	11284	8.5	1	10
	7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	11143	7.8	1	10
	8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	10981	7.8	1	10
	16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	11244	8.1	1	10

Table 6

			Count	Percent
National Grantees	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	4471	77.9%
		Occasionally	955	16.6%
		Frequently	177	3.1%
		Nearly always	138	2.4%
State Grantees	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	3673	83.1%
		Occasionally	576	13.0%
		Frequently	100	2.3%
		Nearly always	72	1.6%
Nationwide	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	8144	80.1%
		Occasionally	1531	15.1%
		Frequently	277	2.7%
		Nearly always	210	2.1%

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 a small but significant difference between state grantees and national grantees in the extent to which participants needed supportive services. Moreover, as was true last year, state grantees were reported to be more likely than national grantees to provide those services when needed. When asked about the frequency of needing additional training, host agencies serving state and national grantees reported a similar frequency of need. However, host agencies serving national grantees reported that the local programs of national grantees were

less likely than the programs of state grantees to provide the needed training. This is consistent with the results from prior years.

Table 7

	12. Did any of the older workers assigned to your agency require supportive services?					
	Yes		No		Don't Know	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
National Grantees	820	12.7%	4602	71.5%	1011	15.7%
State Grantees	709	14.3%	3491	70.4%	757	15.3%
Nationwide	1529	13.4%	8093	71.1%	1768	15.5%

Table 8

		Count	Percent
National Grantees	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	25.6%
		Few	14.0%
		Some	28.7%
		Nearly all	31.8%
State Grantees	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	22.2%
		Few	11.2%
		Some	32.9%
		Nearly all	33.8%
Nationwide	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	24.0%
		Few	12.7%
		Some	30.6%
		Nearly all	32.7%

Table 9

	14. Do participants assigned to your agency ever need any additional training?					
	Yes		No		Don't Know	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
National Grantees	1745	27.2%	4183	65.2%	486	7.6%
State Grantees	1386	28.0%	3191	64.5%	372	7.5%
Nationwide	3131	27.6%	7374	64.9%	858	7.6%

Table 10

15. Does the Older Worker Program provide the needed training?		Count	Percent
National Grantees	Never provides training	240	17.0%
	Sometimes provides training	510	36.1%
	Often provides training	422	29.8%
	Always provides training	242	17.1%
	Don't know	0	.0%
State Grantees	Never provides training	170	15.7%
	Sometimes provides training	352	32.5%
	Often provides training	309	28.5%
	Always provides training	253	23.3%
	Don't know	0	.0%
Nationwide	Never provides training	410	16.4%
	Sometimes provides training	862	34.5%
	Often provides training	731	29.3%
	Always provides training	495	19.8%
	Don't know	0	.0%

G. Quality of Participants

Host agencies were asked two questions about whether participants were right for the job and had the necessary computer skills. The question on computer skills continues to receive 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 among the strongest independent drivers of satisfaction for this sample of host agencies. See Section IV K 1, below.

Table 11

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	5061	5.9	1	10
	10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	6451	8.1	1	10
State Grantees	9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	3934	6.1	1	10
	10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	4958	8.1	1	10

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Nationwide	9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	8995	6.0	1	10
	10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	11409	8.1	1	10

H. The Impact of SCSEP

Given the importance of community service in SCSEP, a question was asked about whether the program made a difference in the host agency's ability to provide services to the community. Seventy-five percent of host agencies reported that SCSEP participants positively affected their ability to provide services to the community. This is nearly identical to the result for last year and confirms the value that SCSEP brings to communities. The host agencies that reported their ability was increased by SCSEP were significantly more satisfied than those agencies that saw their ability unchanged or decreased. See Section IV K 2, below.

Table 12

18. How has your agency's ability to provide services to the community been affected by its participation in the Older Worker Program?		Count	Percent
National Grantees	Significantly decreased	39	.7%
	Somewhat decreased	64	1.1%
	Neither decreased nor increased	1342	22.8%
	Somewhat increased	1834	31.2%
	Significantly increased	2601	44.2%
State Grantees	Significantly decreased	39	.8%
	Somewhat decreased	49	1.1%
	Neither decreased nor increased	1069	23.2%
	Somewhat increased	1424	30.9%
	Significantly increased	2027	44.0%
Nationwide	Significantly decreased	78	.7%
	Somewhat decreased	113	1.1%
	Neither decreased nor increased	2411	23.0%
	Somewhat increased	3258	31.1%
	Significantly increased	4628	44.1%

I. Would Recommend

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

Table 13

		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	6392	9.2	1	10
State Grantees	19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	4917	9.2	1	10
Nationwide	19. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other agencies?	11309	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 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 As was the case last year, this analysis narrowed the number of questions with a substantial, independent relationship to the ACSI to just four, which are shaded in the table. Questions with a smaller correlation or less substantial independent relationship are unshaded.

The four questions that are drivers, those with strong correlations and significant independent contribution to the ACSI, are questions 5, 6, 10, and 11. The questions with the strongest independent relationship to the ACSI are questions 10 and 5. Question 10 deals with the quality of the match and question 5 relates to the ease of the assignment process. The especially strong relationship of question 10 with satisfaction indicates that host agency satisfaction hinges on how well the participant matches the agency's needs. As was true last year, the score on question 10 (8.1) leaves considerable room for improvement. Host agencies give a high rating to the ease of the process (question 5), indicating that improvement may be difficult; however, keeping the assignment process easy should remain a priority.

The remaining drivers are two closely related questions: Question 11 is about staff resolving problems and question 6 is about staff having a good understanding of the agency's business needs. Each of these is strongly correlated and makes a unique contribution to the ACSI. Question 11 also provides some room for improvement, with the nationwide score being only 8.3, as compared to question 6, which has a nationwide score of 8.6.

The unshaded questions 4, 7, 8, 9, and 16 have little or no independent relationship to the ACSI or have somewhat smaller correlations than the key drivers, but they may still be important to the successful operation of the program. Questions 7 and 16 are about communication and are strongly correlated with the ACSI, although they do not make significant independent contributions as drivers. Questions 4 and 8 are moderately strong in their relationship to 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 tend to provide the

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.

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

Question 9 regarding computer skills should not be ignored, however. While there has been a slight improvement in the nationwide rating (from 5.8 to 6.0), the score is still very low. For host agencies that care about computer skills, the lack of such skills may be lowering the score on the quality of the match since there is a strong correlation between these questions. 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
10. The participant assigned to my agency was a good match with my agency.	Pearson Correlation	.754**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	11261
6. The Older Worker Program staff that made the assignment had a good understanding of my business needs.	Pearson Correlation	.682**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	11137
11. The Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had.	Pearson Correlation	.667**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	10012
5. The Older Worker Program staff made the community service assignment process easy for me to use.	Pearson Correlation	.650**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	10990
7. I received sufficient information about the work history and education of the participant assigned to my agency.	Pearson Correlation	.616**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	11002
16. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with my agency to make sure the assignment went well.	Pearson Correlation	.605**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	11097
8. I had sufficient choice about the participant assigned to my agency.	Pearson Correlation	.590**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	10840
4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.	Pearson Correlation	.574**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	11240

		Relation to ACSI
9. The participant assigned to my agency had the necessary computer skills.	Pearson Correlation	.451**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	8887

** 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 have also been found to be significantly related to satisfaction.

There are four such questions strongly related to satisfaction. The first two questions (questions 13 and 15) deal with actions that may or may not be taken by the local program to support participants during their assignment. The results for the first two questions are presented in Tables 15 and 16. Those host agencies that felt that the sub-grantee provided none or few of the supportive services or training needed were 8-23 points lower in their satisfaction than those that felt the sub-grantee provided some or nearly all of the needed supportive service or training.

Table 15

			ACSI			
			Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	193	77.0	0	100
		Few	108	72.2	11	100
		Some	219	80.4	8	100
		Nearly all	243	88.0	30	100
State Grantees	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	140	75.2	3	100
		Few	72	78.4	11	100
		Some	211	79.9	19	100
		Nearly all	214	87.7	33	100
Nationwide	13. To what extent did the Older Worker Program provide the participants the supportive services they needed?	None	333	76.3	0	100
		Few	180	74.7	11	100
		Some	430	80.2	8	100
		Nearly all	457	87.9	30	100

Table 16

15. Does the Older Worker Program provide the needed training?		ACSI			
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Never provides training	236	68.4	0	100
	Sometimes provides training	506	74.7	0	100
	Often provides training	416	83.4	0	100
	Always provides training	242	88.8	11	100
State Grantees	Never provides training	169	63.7	0	100
	Sometimes provides training	346	74.8	8	100
	Often provides training	306	82.5	11	100
	Always provides training	251	89.5	18	100
Nationwide	Never provides training	405	66.4	0	100
	Sometimes provides training	852	74.7	0	100
	Often provides training	722	83.0	0	100
	Always provides training	493	89.2	11	100

Question 17, dealing with premature removal of participants, shows a similar relationship to satisfaction. In this case, the more often premature removal of the participant from an assignment takes place, the less satisfying the host agency's experience.

Table 17

			ACSI			
			Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	4412	82.1	0	100
		Occasionally	943	80.9	0	100
		Frequently	172	71.9	4	100
		Nearly always	136	73.8	0	100
State Grantees	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	3633	82.3	0	100
		Occasionally	572	80.8	0	100
		Frequently	98	73.0	11	100
		Nearly always	72	77.6	17	100

Table 17

			ACSI			
			Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Nationwide	17. Did the Older Worker Program ever attempt to remove any participants from your agency before you thought they were ready to leave?	Never	8045	82.2	0	100
		Occasionally	1515	80.8	0	100
		Frequently	270	72.3	4	100
		Nearly always	208	75.2	0	100

Question 18 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 SCSEP increasing their capacity to provide service 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 25% of the total (the same as last year), may warrant special attention since they see their participation as having no benefit to them or being a net cost. Further analysis may reveal whether participants assigned to these host agencies have different outcomes from those assigned to host agencies where SCSEP has a positive effect.

Table 18

18. How has your agency's ability to provide services to the community been affected by its participation in the Older Worker Program?		ACSI			
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
National Grantees	Significantly decreased	35	73.3	0	100
	Somewhat decreased	64	54.4	0	100
	Neither decreased nor increased	1323	69.6	0	100
	Somewhat increased	1809	79.7	0	100
	Significantly increased	2576	89.0	3	100
State Grantees	Significantly decreased	37	63.3	0	100
	Somewhat decreased	49	49.1	0	100
	Neither decreased nor increased	1048	69.9	0	100
	Somewhat increased	1410	80.2	0	100
	Significantly increased	2010	90.0	11	100
Nationwide	Significantly decreased	72	68.2	0	100
	Somewhat decreased	113	52.1	0	100
	Neither decreased nor increased	2371	69.7	0	100
	Somewhat increased	3219	79.9	0	100
	Significantly increased	4586	89.5	3	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, analyses were conducted with the ACSI and various participant characteristics. As was true in PY 2006 and PY 2008, several of these characteristics have a significant effect on host agency satisfaction.

Host agency satisfaction is:

- Higher with Hispanic participants (83.1) than with non-Hispanic participants (81.2)
- Higher with Blacks (82.2) than with Whites (80.9)
- Higher with those who have limited English proficiency (83.9) than with those who do not (81.1)
- Higher with those who have low literacy skills (83.3) than with those who do not (81.0)
- Higher with those with the lowest educational levels, such as those with less than a high school diploma, (83.6) than with those with higher levels, such as those with a Bachelor's degree (78.8)
- Higher for those not receiving social security income but eligible (84.1) than for those who do not have this characteristic (81.2).
- Higher when individuals have severely limited employment prospects (82.9), than when they do not (80.6)

Host agency satisfaction is:

- Lower when participants are at risk of being homeless (79.8) than when participants are not at risk (81.7)
- Lower when participants are disabled (79.7) than when participants are not disabled (81.8)

Although these nine participant characteristics do relate to host agency satisfaction, the size of these relationships is relatively small. The largest difference is related to participant's education levels, where there is a 2.8 point difference in the ACSI. In comparison, the difference between the highest and lowest host agency ACSI scores by grantee is 21.5 points.

What influences satisfaction most is how the sub-grantees manage their programs, not the nature of the SCSEP participants who were assigned to the host agencies. For example, there is a greater than 20 point difference between those grantees that do the best in providing needed training and those that provided training least often. In addition, the more host agencies see SCSEP enhancing their ability to serve their communities, the more satisfied they are. This can be influenced by characteristics of the agency, but it could also relate to how well the local SCSEP program matches the needs of the host agency, thus helping it to enhance community service. Therefore, the analyses in Sections IV G and K continue to provide the best guidance on what sub-grantees can do to increase customer satisfaction for host agencies.