

# Employer Survey Results for PY 2013

June 11, 2014

## 1. Overall Results

This report of employer customer satisfaction survey is based on recorded survey numbers that grantees entered into SPARQ from January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2103. There are several steps in completing the employer survey process, with areas of responsibility for both the sub-grantees and the employer. The sub-grantee must identify qualifying employers, enter the survey number and date of delivery into SPARQ, and deliver the survey to the employer. The employer must complete and return the survey. The sub-grantee must also keep track of the survey numbers to determine if the employer has returned the survey. If the employer has not returned the survey, the sub-grantee is required to record another survey number and deliver that survey to the employer.

The uneven returns from grantees indicate that there are many points along the way where this process breaks down. Table 1 presents the count of employer surveys recorded in SPARQ prior to being delivered to an employer. AARP accounts for 45.1 percent of those recorded survey numbers.

Table 1

| Grantee      | Count | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| AARP         | 249   | 45.1    |
| ANPPM        | 1     | .2      |
| ATD          | 32    | 5.8     |
| Easter Seals | 1     | .2      |
| Goodwill     | 21    | 3.8     |
| NAPCA        | 6     | 1.1     |
| NCOA         | 13    | 2.4     |
| NUL          | 30    | 5.4     |
| SER          | 1     | .2      |
| SSAI         | 48    | 8.7     |
| Alabama      | 2     | .4      |
| Alaska       | 13    | 2.4     |
| California   | 3     | .5      |
| Connecticut  | 9     | 1.6     |
| Delaware     | 3     | .5      |
| Florida      | 8     | 1.4     |
| Illinois     | 4     | .7      |

| Grantee        | Count | Percent |
|----------------|-------|---------|
| Kentucky       | 1     | .2      |
| Louisiana      | 28    | 5.1     |
| Minnesota      | 2     | .4      |
| Mississippi    | 6     | 1.1     |
| Nevada         | 10    | 1.8     |
| New York       | 5     | .9      |
| North Carolina | 5     | .9      |
| Pennsylvania   | 9     | 1.6     |
| Tennessee      | 25    | 4.5     |
| Utah           | 5     | .9      |
| Vermont        | 11    | 2.0     |
| Washington     | 1     | .2      |
| Total          | 552   | 100     |

While Table 1 shows the number of records in SPARQ where the sub-grantee recorded an employer survey number, Table 2 presents only the SPARQ records that were matched to a returned survey. Two hundred and fifty-six (61.7%) of the 415 returned surveys did not have a match in the SPARQ records, indicating that the survey had been delivered to an employer but the survey number had not been recorded in SPARQ. Those records are not included in this report since they have no grantee to which they can be connected.

As Table 2 indicates, there are a total of 157 returned surveys that had a match with the SPARQ records. Of those returns, 90.4% (142) are from AARP. There are 8 other grantees with at least one matched record. Without additional information and analyses, it seems likely that the dominance of AARP in the recorded and matched surveys may be a combination of both consistent recording and frequent placement of Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) participants in the private sector as opposed to with host agencies, which are not eligible to receive the employer survey.

Table 2

| Grantee        | Count | Percent |
|----------------|-------|---------|
| AARP           | 142   | 90.4%   |
| NCOA           | 1     | 0.6%    |
| NUL            | 2     | 1.3%    |
| ATD            | 2     | 1.3%    |
| Minnesota      | 2     | 1.3%    |
| Mississippi    | 4     | 2.5%    |
| New York       | 1     | 0.6%    |
| North Carolina | 2     | 1.3%    |

| Grantee | Count | Percent |
|---------|-------|---------|
| Utah    | 1     | 0.6%    |
| Total   | 157   | 100%    |

Table 3 presents the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) scores from those survey returns that had at least all of the first three questions answered, those questions required to calculate the ACSI. Although there were 142 returns for AARP, 7 surveys did not have answers to all three ACSI questions answered; therefore, they do not have an ACSI score. As a result, there are only 135 officially complete surveys for AARP.

Table 3

| Grantee        | Count | ACSI Score |
|----------------|-------|------------|
| AARP           | 135   | 91.1       |
| NCOA           | 1     | 92.7       |
| NUL            | 2     | 94.4       |
| ATD            | 2     | 72.5       |
| Minnesota      | 2     | 85.8       |
| Mississippi    | 4     | 83.5       |
| New York       | 1     | 100.0      |
| North Carolina | 2     | 91.7       |
| Utah           | 1     | 51.2       |
| Total          | 150   | 90.4       |

Table 4 presents the overall ACSI score for all grantee returns, 90.4, for all AARP returns (91.1), and all of the remaining grantees (84.4). The AARP score is significantly higher than the combined ACSI score of the other grantees and significantly higher than the nationwide average score of 86.7 in the last employer survey report of August 4, 2008. Because of the significant differences in the scores between AARP and the other grantees and the fact that 90 percent of the returns are from AARP, the remaining analyses will only use the AARP data.

Table 4

| Grantee            | Count | ACSI |
|--------------------|-------|------|
| AARP               | 135   | 91.1 |
| All other Grantees | 15    | 84.4 |
| Total              | 150   | 90.4 |

## 2. Analyses of Employer Returns for AARP

### A. Staff Service to Employers

As noted above, the remainder of the report is based on the matched returns for AARP only. Although no response rate can be accurately calculated (see discussion in Section 1), AARP had 249 surveys recorded in SPARQ, of which 135 were matched and had answers for the first three questions that constitute the ACSI. The ACSI score was 90.4, ranking among the highest scores attained in the public or private sector for this index.

The first section of the AARP analysis looks at staff services to employers. The score for Question 4 (Table 5) is very high and suggests that the sub-grantee staff communicate effectively with employers so that employers are able to understand the Older Worker Program.

In the remaining analyses, the responses for several questions (Questions 5, 6, 8 and 10) are numerically transformed so that all the results of the employer responses can be compared to each other.<sup>1</sup> All of the survey questions are comparable on a 1-10 scale, except for the Yes/No questions.

Table 5

|   | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program. | 136   | 9.15 | 3       | 10      |

The transformed average score for Question 5, 8.77, while fairly high, is significantly lower than the mean for Question 4. Table 6 presents the responses to Question 5 on the original scale. As evident from the responses in Table 6, there is some room for improvement in understanding employers' needs.

Table 6

| Q5. Would you say that the Older Worker Program staff that made the job referral(s) had a good understanding of your business needs? | Count | Percent |
|--|-------|---------|
| Staff had little or no understanding   | 0     | 0       |
| Staff had some understanding   | 8     | 6.0     |
| Staff had good understanding   | 39    | 29.1    |
| Staff had great understanding  | 87    | 64.9    |
| Total  | 134   | 100.0   |

<sup>1</sup> These transformations do not distort the original values chosen by the employer.

Question 7, whether the staff stay in touch with the employer after the participant is hired, shows a high average score (9.01), similar to the score for Question 4.

Table 7

|   | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Q7. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with me after I hired the applicant to make sure that everything was going well. | 134   | 9.01 | 1       | 10      |

Question 11, being helpful in resolving problems, reaffirms the staff's success in providing customer service to the employers. This question has the highest single score and is strongly associated with overall satisfaction.

Table 8

|  | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|--|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Q11. When I hired older workers with the assistance of the Older Worker Program, the Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had. | 108   | 9.22 | 1       | 10      |

## B. Participants Skills

The transformed score for Question 6 (7.89 on a 1-10 scale) is substantially lower than the average scores for the questions regarding staff services to employers in Section 2 above.

Table 9

| Q6. Would you say that the job applicant(s) referred by the Older Worker Program had the necessary skills for the job? | Count | Percent |
|--|-------|---------|
| Applicant had few or none of the necessary skills  | 0     | 0       |
| Applicant had some of the necessary skills   | 19    | 13.8    |
| Applicant had many of the necessary skills   | 59    | 42.8    |
| Applicant had virtually all of the necessary skills  | 60    | 43.5    |
| Total  | 138   | 100.0   |

The transformed score of Question 8 regarding computer skills, 6.92, is one of the lowest in the whole survey. It identifies an area where older workers and programs like SCSEP are significantly challenged. It should be noted that the employer only rated the computer skills if the employer considered some level of computer skills as necessary. As evident in Table 10, 42 of the employers did not consider those skills necessary. These employers were not included in

the transformed rating. As has been true in other years, computer skills training is one of the great challenges that sub-grantees often do not met successfully.

Table 10

| Q8. How many of the older workers hired with the assistance of the Older Worker Program came with the basic computer skills they need? | Count | Valid Percent |
|--|-------|---------------|
| None of the workers  | 11    | 9.7           |
| Few of the workers   | 11    | 9.7           |
| Some of the workers  | 18    | 15.9          |
| Nearly all of the workers  | 31    | 27.4          |
| Didn't need any computer skills  | 42    | 37.2          |
| Total  | 113   | 100.0         |

### C. Supportive Services

As has been true in previous years, very few employers indicate that older workers need supportive services. Only 6 of 140 employers indicated that they had an older worker with supportive service needs.

Table 11

| Q9. Did any of the older workers you hired with the assistance of the Older Worker program require supportive services, such as assistance with housing, transportation, or medical needs? | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Yes  | 6         | 4.3     |
| No   | 84        | 60.0    |
| Don't know   | 50        | 35.7    |
| Total  | 140       | 100.0   |

The results in Table 12 are difficult to interpret. One problem is the small number of responses. Another problem is an inconsistency in the number of responses to Question 10 compared with the number of responses to Question 9. Only the six employers who answered Question 9 in the affirmative should have answered Question 10; however, 12 employers responded to Question 10. In any event, the number of responses is so low that the results must be viewed with extreme caution.

Table 12

| Q10. Would you say that the Older Worker Program provided the supportive services that the older workers needed? | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| None   | 2         | 16.7    |
| Some   | 4         | 33.3    |
| Nearly all   | 6         | 50.0    |
| Total  | 12        | 100.0   |

Question 12 is a standard question that is widely used in satisfaction surveys, and the score is very high, as it has been for all SCSEP surveys over the years. The score on this question reaffirms the strong overall satisfaction score for the ACSI.

Table 13

|   | Count | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Q12. Would you recommend the services of the Older Worker Program to other employers? | 137   | 9.55 | 1       | 10      |

#### D. The Use of Wage Subsidies to Encourage Employer Participation

The response to Question 13 has been fairly consistent since the survey was first used. Seventy percent or more of employers over the years have agreed that they would be more inclined to use the program if older workers wages were subsidized at the beginning of employment. This does not necessarily mean that these employers would hire more participants or that employers who did not hire program participant would do so if there were a stipend. We would have to ask those questions directly to know what the impact would be on employer behavior. However, since only about 3% of SCSEP placements nationwide are due to OJEs, this question does suggest that grantees might be able to increase placement rates by greater use of OJE.

Table 14

| Q13. Would you be more inclined to use the Older Worker Program if the program paid the wages of the older workers for a number of weeks while they were gaining work experience? | Count | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| Yes   | 96    | 70.1    |
| No  | 11    | 8.0     |
| Don't know  | 30    | 21.9    |
| Total   | 137   | 100.0   |

## E. Employer Types

AARP’s relationships with a number of national employers such as CVS is reflected in Table 11, showing a high percentage of private sector employers (76.8%). Nationwide, the percentage of private sector employers is below 50 percent. According to the guidelines for the administration of surveys to employers, government and not-for-profit organizations are supposed to be surveyed only if they are not also a host agency in the last 12 months. That rule was largely followed by AARP, but there were two government and six not-for-profits designated as host agencies in the SPARQ records that were matched with surveys. If the designation in the SPARQ records is accurate, these employers should not have been surveyed.<sup>2</sup>

Table 15

|                | Count | Percent |
|----------------|-------|---------|
| For-profit     | 109   | 76.8    |
| Government     | 12    | 8.5     |
| Not-for-profit | 21    | 14.8    |
| Total          | 142   | 100.0   |

As evident in Table 16, there is no difference in ACSI scores among these categories of employers. None of the slight differences in ACSI scores are significant. AARP serves all three employer groups equally well, suggesting that AARP sub-grantees have learned to meet the needs all three employer groups. This was not the case in 2006, when the last employer survey report was issued.

Table 16

|               |                | ACSI  |      |
|---------------|----------------|-------|------|
|               |                | Count | Mean |
| Employer Type | For-profit     | 104   | 91.1 |
|               | Government     | 12    | 91.4 |
|               | Not-for-profit | 19    | 90.8 |

## F. Groups of Questions Associated with ACSI Scores

An analysis of the data was conducted to determine if there were questions that form a pattern or cluster that relates to the ACSI. A factor analysis was used to identify questions in the survey that form groups. These clusters of questions can be used to determine if a particular aspect of the sub-grantees’ interactions with employers is more important than others and can provide greater improvements in overall satisfaction. The factor analysis presented in Table 17 found

<sup>2</sup> There were also four for-profit agencies that were marked as host agencies, probably a mistake in recording since for-profit companies cannot be host agencies.

that the majority of the questions divided into two major components. Questions 4, 5, 7, and 11 were all associated with the actions of staff in informing and assisting employers. The second component, Questions 6, 8 and 10, is associated with the services provided to the older workers who have been hired, particularly the program’s delivery of skills training and supportive services. To better understand the most efficient way to improve employer satisfaction, it is important to determine whether one of these clusters of questions is more closely associated than the other with overall satisfaction as represented by the ACSI score. This would help grantees seeking to improve their program to focus on the most important program elements. The strength of this associations is indicated by the correlations in Table 17. The closer to 1, the stronger the association of the question with overall satisfaction.

Table 17: Clustering<sup>3</sup> of Individual Questions

|  | Clusters* |      |
|--|-----------|------|
|  | 1         | 2    |
| Q4. The Older Worker Program staff gave me all the information I needed to understand the Older Worker Program.  | .830      |      |
| Q5. Would you say that the Older Worker Program staff that made the job referral(s) had a good understanding of your business needs?                         | .698      |      |
| Q7. The Older Worker Program staff stayed in touch with me after I hired the applicant to make sure that everything was going well.                          | .879      |      |
| Q11. When I hired older workers with the assistance of the Older Worker Program, the Older Worker Program staff was helpful in resolving any problems I had. | .886      |      |
| Q6. Would you say that the job applicant(s) referred by the Older Worker Program had the necessary skills for the job?                                       |           | .639 |
| Q8. How many of the older workers hired with the assistance of the Older Worker Program came with the basic computer skills they need?                       |           | .775 |
| Q10. Would you say that the Older Worker Program provided the supportive services that the older workers needed?   |           | .807 |

\*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation.<sup>4</sup>

Table 18 shows that the relationship (correlation) between the staff service cluster and the ACSI is much stronger than the participant skills cluster and the ACSI. The difference between the two is practically and statistically significant. Staff service explains about 26 percent of the variation in ACSI scores, while participant skills explain about 16 percent. The message for AARP is that it will maintain its high employer satisfaction levels by continuing to focus on the

<sup>3</sup> The clustering process identifies those questions that are most closely associated with each other, indicating that the respondents were to some extent responding to the clustered questions as a group. This analysis produced only two components or clusters.

<sup>4</sup> Because of the small number of respondents, the cluster analysis is being used here to explore relationships between the ACSI and other questions in place of the usual driver analyses used in our participant and host agency survey reports.

way it interacts with the employer and will get less bang for the buck by seeking to improve its scores for participant skills. However, since the scores for participant skills are substantially lower than the scores for staff services, there is an opportunity for improvement here as well.

Table 18

|      |                     | Staff Service | Participant Skills/Qualities |
|------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| ACSI | Pearson Correlation | .510**        | .397**                       |
|      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000          | .000                         |
|      | N                   | 134           | 135                          |

### G. Demographic Characteristics of Participants and Employer Satisfaction

For the most part, the demographic characteristics of the participants do not influence employer satisfaction. Age, gender, race, ethnicity, and number of barriers play no role in the satisfaction level of employers with the individuals they hire.

In other surveys, education has been a factor, but there is no evidence that education alone is a substantial factor in employer satisfaction in this survey. As evident in Table 19, employer satisfaction was in the high 80s to low 90s for participants at nearly all education levels. However, employers hiring women without a high school diploma have an average ACSI of only 80, a substantially lower score than all other categories of education for women or men. Since there are only 11 women without a high school diploma, these results must be viewed with extreme caution. Nonetheless, the grantee might want to look more closely at the issues faced by women without a high school diploma in seeking employment.

Table 19

| Education Male       | Count | ACSI Score |
|----------------------|-------|------------|
| Less than HS Diploma | 14    | 88.86      |
| HS Diploma or Higher | 52    | 92.80      |
| Total                | 66    | 91.96      |

| Education Female     | Count | ACSI Score |
|----------------------|-------|------------|
| Less than HS Diploma | 11    | 80.12      |
| HS Diploma or Higher | 73    | 90.64      |
| Total                | 84    | 89.26      |

### H. Summary

AARP is the only grantee with sufficient data for survey analyses. The key message from the analyses is that AARP provides a high level of service to employers both before the participant is hired and during the period immediately after the participant has been hired. Moreover, AARP

is able to achieve that level of service with private sector, not-for-profit, and government employers.

However, similar to other program operators in SCSEP and other employment and training programs, the skills training of participants remains the most significant challenge. Employers are least satisfied with participant training, especially computer training.

Despite this programmatic shortfall, employers would recommend the program to their peers, and their overall satisfaction is extremely high. From a national SCSEP perspective, the employer survey continues to provide insight for grantees about an important aspect of their services. As the AARP results indicate, other grantees could learn much from the surveys if they were administered and used more consistently.