

CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

October 15, 2009

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT HEALTH LITERACY THROUGH
HEALTH PROMOTION CONTRACT**

WHEREAS, The Cleveland Public Library is committed to promoting lifelong learning for seniors; and

WHEREAS, The Cleveland Public Library wishes to participate in a contract to receive \$4,300 to buy books and play-a-ways for the Senior Health Clubs at J. Glen, McCafferty and Broadway Miles health clinics with the materials becoming a part of the Cleveland Public Library collection; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Trustees of the Cleveland Public Library accepts the Health Literacy through Health Promotion Contract from the Cleveland Dept. of Public Health in the amount of \$4,300 as detailed in the scope of work proposal to be deposited using 101048-48900 General Fund Miscellaneous Revenue and expenditures from 11310054-54110 General Fund Deputy/Literacy Books.

Health Literacy through Health Promotion

Scope of Work

9/1/09 – 4/14/10

Description: Cleveland Public Library will provide administrative and programmatic support for the health literacy program's Senior Health book clubs at J Glenn, McCafferty and Broadway Miles health clinics.

Contractor: Cleveland Public Library
325 Superior Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44114

Contact: Merce Robinson
Literacy Coordinator, Ohio Center for the Book
Cleveland Public Library
216-623-2831
Merce.robinson@cpl.org
www.cpl.org

Method of Selection: Cleveland Public Library was selected to fulfill these contract needs based on their ability or experience in meeting the following:

- a. Choosing and purchasing high quality books and play-a-way devices for the Senior Health Book Clubs.
- b. Their expertise when it comes to literacy
- c. Strength of partnership between CPL and Cleveland Department of Public Health

Length of Contract: The contract with Cleveland Public Library and Cleveland Department of Public Health will be for 12 months, with an opportunity to renew on a yearly basis based upon availability of grant funds.

Monitoring: Cleveland Public Library will be required to provide program and expense reports on a monthly basis. The performance, progress and appropriate spending of funds will be reviewed throughout the year by the contract manager; recommendations for continuation, suspension or revision of the contract will be made throughout the contract year.

Budget : \$4,300
Supplies = \$4,300

Program Tasks:

1. Help to select books for the Senior Health Book clubs.
2. Purchase books and play-a-ways as needed for the senior health book clubs at J. Glen, McCafferty and Broadway Miles health clinics; books will become a part of the Cleveland Library collection.
3. Distribute promotional material provided by the Cleveland Department of Public Health to increase book club participation.
4. Participate in process evaluation as needed to include enhanced reporting.
5. Attend all meetings as required.
6. Obtain prior approval for all budget revisions.
7. Participate in annual site visit.
8. Submit all progress reports and financial claims (with supporting documentation) as required.

Special Conditions:

1. The City (CDPH) has the authority to change the scope of work as deemed appropriate by the City in order to best meet the requirements of the cooperative agreement.
2. This contract is renewed annually, based upon performance and the availability of federal funds.

Lifelong learning gives seniors a boost

At the J. Glen Smith Health Center on Cleveland's East side, a group of senior women are seated in a circle chatting casually as they wait.

Soon the room is full: It is not a doctor's appointment or a test result that bring these women to the health center on this day, but the meeting of their monthly book club.

With books in hand, a lively discussion, complete with rolling laughter and personal stories, begins under the guidance of Merce Robinson, Cleveland Public Library's literacy coordinator.

The book club seeks to improve the health and wellness of participants through discussion of the book's characters and themes, the support and camaraderie of the group, and from an increased presence in the public health center. The program is co-sponsored by the Cleveland Department of Public Health (CDPH), MetroHealth Hospital, the Cleveland Public Library, and the Sisters of Charity Foundation.

Kathy Rothenberg-James, director of the J. Glen Smith Health Center, initiated the collaboration and participates in the club each month. She often observes how the books spark personal sharing and new insights.

When the book club read "The Soloist," about a mentally ill and musically gifted homeless man, Rothenberg-James witnessed thoughtful discussion and sincere support as some revealed how their families had been touched by mental illness. Later she saw a "breakthrough" when she invited a health care professional to present on schizophrenia.

"At the end of each book, I'm hoping the reader will have something to add to their life that they didn't know before," she said. "My big hope for the future is that lives will be changed."

Book club members recognize the benefits of being part of the group too and the group has grown from six to 20 members. Members cite an increased interest in reading and hearing different viewpoints, gaining new friendships, and the usefulness of being exposed to new information. This concurs with an AARP Survey on Lifelong Learning, published in July 2000 which found that older adults highly value engagement and enrichment.

With increased life expectancies and extended time in the workforce, seniors are most interested in subjects that will improve their quality of life, build on current skills, and help them safeguard their health. AARP also discovered that older learners favor methods that are easy to access, require a small investment of time and money, and let learning begin immediately.

Literacy Chronicle/Fall 2009



Discussion of the book, *Bring on the Blessings* has Minnie Farmer, Luberta Gilmore, and Sherby Searles (Left to right) sharing a laugh.

The Cleveland Public Library and the CDPH recognized that being a lifelong learner is a key element to successful aging for seniors. Together they have created a program that furthers their individual purposes and goals, but also increases their particular reach and influence, and maximizes their ability to meet a need in the community.

In addition to being the literacy coordinator for the Cleveland Public Library, Robinson also facilitates books clubs for the homeless and veterans. Robinson sees partnerships as opportunities to enhance the mission of the library and serve the community.

"Outreach is one of the duties of the public library," she said. "We must reach people where they are and have something for them. All partnerships increase our network and enhance this mission."

At the end of the meeting, the women pack their bags, tuck away their next book along with a flyer on free immunizations for their grandchildren, and leave in high spirits.

Today's discussion of "Bring on the Blessings" had the seniors reflecting on the benefits of investing in your community, the frailties and possibilities of the human condition, and the importance of sharing your personal history and knowledge with others. One book club member, Barbara Ward, summed up the discussion: "We need to leave a legacy. Knowledge isn't worth anything if you don't pass it along."

For more information:

AARP Survey on Lifelong Learning:
<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/lifelong.pdf>

Cleveland Public Library Literacy Services:
<http://www.cpl.org/?q=node/9172>