

***LSTA Grant Project Evaluation  
“Teen Library Creation Stations”  
Grant 11-10-1p***

**Summary of Evaluation:**

The exciting and ambitious objectives of Salem Public Library’s *Teen Library Creation Stations* have had their share of hurdles. From changing Teen Librarians to unveiling their new Teen Scene to equipment issues and altered expectations, the timeline has fluidly shifted to accommodate it all in true public library fashion. The over-arching goal of providing SPL teens with professional quality equipment, software, and training is well underway. What will follow are all the skills their teens will have to offer their community and the partnerships and opportunities which SPL will be able to help those teens foster within that community.

**Project Objectives:**

1. To equip each Creation Station with a hard drive, dual monitors and advanced software necessary to support activities including video editing, music editing, web applications, photo enhancement, graphic design, and more. Creation Stations will also be loaded with a comparable selection of open-source software to give students a range of experience and basis for comparison. The project will also provide simple digital video and still cameras, and sound recording equipment. Activities will include the purchase, installation, and testing of necessary equipment.

These Creation Stations are enviably impressive. The LSTA grant funds were used to purchase the photo and video equipment as well as the software for these stations including but not limited to the following:

- 2 MinoHD flip video cameras and 2 Canon battery packs
- 2 Canon Powershot SX30 camera kits
- 1 Canon 10 MP Powershot G12 camera
- Apple iWorks 2009 document/presentation software
- 2 Adobe CS5 Master Collection Software –1 Mac/1 PC (Dreamweaver –web creation, Encore –movie creation, InDesign –desktop publishing, Illustrator – digital drawing & creation, Photoshop –photo editing, etc.)

In conjunction with the grant, Salem Public Library purchased the computer hardware for these internet-connected stations. Instead of dual monitors, SPL chose to purchase wide, flat-screen monitors that are well-suited with enough desktop space for dual-program tasks. Wireless keyboards and mice are kept behind the Teen Reference Desk and have provided the checkout controls for the Stations’ sessions.

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2. To provide necessary training to staff and select volunteers who will then offer small-group classes and one-on-one support so that teen users are able to maximize the use of the Creation Stations. Activities will include:
  - Connecting Salem Public Library’s Teen Librarian with training opportunities related to the various equipment and software;
  - Training and testing a select cadre of teen volunteers;
  - Offering quarterly training combined with one-on-one support to teens interested in using the Creation Stations.

Due to transitions explained in **Project Results**, the timeline for implementing all aspects of this objective have been adjusted to a more spread-out timeframe. SPL currently has 9 staff and 4 volunteers trained to use and assist in the use of the Creation Stations. They are working on coordinating volunteer schedules with Teen Scene hours for more ready assistance as needed.

3. Engaging teens in the use of the Creation Stations, targeting 60-70 sessions per month. Activities will include:
  - Marketing the availability of the Creation Stations through library and community media;
  - Working with local schools and community partners to expand awareness of the Creation Stations.

Announcements of programs can be found in-house and on SPL’s website, press releases went to local newspapers regarding the Creation Stations, and an article went out to the community in the September 2011 issue of the SPL’s newsletter. Yet, having found that knowledge and understanding of the Creation Stations’ potential needed to be fostered in the library teens before the anticipated heavy use and partnerships might benefit the most, SPL’s Teen Librarian has re-evaluated this objective. Both marketing and programming have shifted to offering teens’ the skills they might then be engaged to apply toward the original grant objectives. (*See **Project Results and Project Impact** for more details.*)

4. Creating community benefit from the Creation Stations. Activities will include:

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- Creation of initial partnerships facilitated by the Teen Librarian with 5-10 local businesses and organizations to identify projects from which teens can gain real-world experience with the various programs while delivering to the local non-profits and businesses such useful products as web design, short promotional videos, music videos, brochures, and more;
- Provide in-lab demonstrations and bring sample products to the Salem Public Library Advisory Board, Salem Public Library Foundation Board, and the Friends of the Salem Public Library to keep them informed of the impact of the project;
- Invite other libraries in the region to experience hands-on demonstrations and presentations that highlight the technical aspects of the Creation Stations, how the project is managed, and what has been produced by teen users on the equipment;
- Share the project and lessons learned by submitting an article to OLA newsletter or conducting a session at a future OLA conference.

The potential for this objective has yet to be tapped but remains as the fruits of this grant take seed and grow. (See ***Project Results*** and ***Project Impact*** for more details.)

**Project Results:**

Due to transitions of changing Teen Librarians and completing their new Teen Scene, SPL found itself both ahead of their timeline and behind. Their implementing teen librarian was already familiar with the Adobe products and, therefore, able to do programs as well as staff and teen training herself. Since the grant funds did not arrive until the throws of launching Salem’s new Teen Scene followed all too quickly by Summer Reading planning and preparation, much of the grant process was delayed a bit. The equipment was ordered with a few functionality set-backs. Training and programming didn’t begin until late June 2011 rather than the spring. At this point, there are 9 staff and 4 volunteers trained on the Creation Stations. The teen volunteers have yet to be trained as the library teens learn what they can do with these Stations.

During the marketing and initial programming process, the Teen Librarian recognized the need to adjust her expectation of the teens’ excitement and interest in these Stations due to a lack of knowledge regarding the output of such high-end, professional software and equipment. Without the teens’ understanding of what could be done, SPL has taken a ground-level approach to what these stations might be used to produce. Therefore, programming has shifted from community

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connections and high-lighting the skills of local teens to offering opportunities for the teens to learn what they could be offering to the community.

In building opportunities that will lead their teens into fully experiencing, and contributing with, the potential of the Creation Stations, SPL’s Teen Librarian has offered to following programs:

- Photography workshops including taking photos at an event, editing them, and creating a video loop for the Teen Scene large-screen TV.
- Skyping with an author
- Video highlights reel of their *You Are Here: On stage talent showcase*
- Zombie mini-movies (filming, editing, etc.)
- Family Building Blocks (audio books read by individuals of all ages throughout the library and provided to community agencies)
- School Poster presentations via Creation Stations (planned)

**Project Impact:**

The greatest impact of the Creation Stations has been the recognition of the technological skill-set and knowledge of those teens who utilize the library. By adjusting their expectations to match the level of understanding from their teens, SPL has begun the process of expanding the technological literacy for their youth. When more fully realized, these skills and knowledge will definitely be an asset for the Salem community as well as for the future of those youth engaged in the process.

Once the teens’ grasp the potential of the Creation Stations as they see applicable, I have no doubt that the final impact of this LSTA funded grant will meet all the outlined objectives and more. SPL is setting the foundation to have an impressive impact on its teens and those teens’ ability and skills to impact and influence their community.

**Suggestions for Improvement:**

With all the transitions underway as this grant was intended to roll out, I wonder if the collaborations were lost in the process. It was unclear with whom the collaborations were intended and what their goals may have been. Perhaps more involvement with those partners

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might entice more teens to the library who have the technological skill-set originally anticipated by the grant for using these Creation Stations and helping their peers understand the potential of the Stations?

I would suggest that teen-centered endeavors like these Creation Stations have teens involved from the conception phases through the program planning and implementation. Different teens will choose to take on different leadership roles throughout any given process, but every level of their involvement engages collateral awareness of library opportunities for teens as well as teen dedication to the end goal. Teens involved in this process could have provided the insight early on that they were unaware of the appeal and potential of such professional level resources. That knowledge may have provided a different set of objectives and/or changed the timelines.

Respectfully submitted,

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