# Talking Points: Library/Workforce Partnerships Spur Economic Development

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## By the Numbers

- Number of Americans used a library computer to help address career and employment needs in 2009, including submitting online applications, searching for job opportunities, and working on their resumes: **30 million***
- Number who reported finding work: **3.7 million***
- LSTA Grants to States program: 17 states used nearly $3,000,000 to support **55 workforce development projects**.

*Source: IMLS analysis of U.S. Impact Study survey data.

Opportunity Job Fair at the Stark County Library in Canton, Ohio.

## Benefits of Library Partnerships with the Workforce System

- The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and IMLS are working together to highlight effective practices and encourage additional collaboration between the workforce investment system and public libraries.
- Working together, libraries and the public workforce system can make it easier for job seekers to get employment and training services that can lead to better jobs, improved career pathways, and sustainable wages.
- Libraries are ideal partners for community colleges and the workforce system to make it easier for people to find the job and career information they need.
- ETA has one-stop centers to help people find jobs, but public libraries outnumber them by more than five to one. As trusted community anchors, libraries are ideally positioned to work collaboratively with ETA for the benefit of American workers.

## What Libraries Do to Help the American Workforce

- Libraries offer Internet access; welcoming spaces; convenient hours and locations; and, most importantly, librarians to serve as information navigators.
- Libraries offer informal training in digital literacy, helping people learn how to use computers, navigate the web and find the best and most useful information. Many offer formal classes as well.
- Libraries provide training and assistance in the art of job seeking.
- Libraries support the nurturing of local entrepreneurs.
- Libraries help users to achieve and maintain financial literacy.

## Examples of Model Projects

### Webjunction – Project Compass

- A partnership with the State Library of North Carolina funded by the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program
- An innovative project linking libraries nationwide to share strategies for helping unemployed patrons find work
- Features four regional summits where state library officers are sharing best practices on meeting the workforce needs of their communities

### West Palm Beach Public Library – Career Catalyst

- A partnership with the state-chartered Workforce Alliance funded by the LSTA Grants to States program
- Provides increased access to online job search and career development resources for users of the library
- Offers online job preparation tutorials, practice exams for specific occupations, and other online tutorials and educational courses
- Establishes a core reference collection of Career Help and Technology Skills materials
- Offers monthly interactive workshops

### Library of Michigan– e-Library, "MeL"

- Supported by the LSTA Grants to States program
- Provides users with a personalized job search experience and helps librarians and workforce development professionals simplify the job search process
- Provides a wide array of valuable information including predicted job growth by field, a review of today's hottest careers, model resumes based on job titles and experience levels, interactive computer training courses, and eBooks for further skill-building and study

## About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Through grant making, policy development, and research, we help communities and individuals thrive through broad public access to knowledge, cultural heritage, and lifelong learning. To learn more about IMLS, please visit www.imls.gov.

### Did you know?

There are more than four times as many libraries as career one stops in high unemployment counties. An analysis of the numbers of public libraries and career one stops in high unemployment counties makes the case for strong partnerships to service citizens better. To see the numbers for your state, see http://go.usa.gov/rvAQ