

# **The Benefits of Community Service Employment (PY2006)**

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## The Benefits of Community Service

The customer satisfaction data for SCSEP participants provide important insights into the participants, their experiences, and the benefits accrued both during and immediately after participation. The current analyses involve a nationwide survey of individuals active from March 2006-February 2007. The data from the surveys were combined with individual records from SPARQ, the administrative database that captures participant activity while individuals are in SCSEP as well as their employment outcomes. Together, these data provide a wealth of information from which to try to answer some fundamental questions about the SCSEP program and its benefits for participants.

In the first part of this paper, we explore those characteristics of the participants that are associated with their perceptions of the benefits associated with SCSEP program. In the second part of the paper, we explore the circumstances at exit and how they are associated with the perception of benefit.

### Who are the SCSEP participants?

Before looking at the relationships between participant characteristics and perceptions of benefit, the first tables review the basic characteristics of the participants in the sample used for the analyses, a random sample drawn for the PY 2006 survey. (See Table 1) Previous analyses have shown that the demographics presented here are comparable to the whole of the SCSEP population served in that program year.

To summarize, the majority of SCSEP participants are under 65, white and female. Seventy percent have a high school diploma or more, and over 30 percent have some education and training beyond a high school diploma. There is a high degree of racial and ethnic diversity among participants: nearly 30 percent are black and over 9 percent are Hispanic.

<b>Table 1: Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Education</b>			
		Count	Percent
Age Less Than or Greater Than 65	Younger than 65	4743	56.8%
	65 or older	3609	43.2%
Race	White	4545	56.4%
	Black	3044	37.8%
	Asian	306	3.8%
	American Indian	120	1.5%
	Pacific Islander	37	.5%
Ethnicity	Hispanic	321	3.9%
	Not Hispanic	7802	93.7%
	Did not volunteer	207	2.5%

Gender	Male	2378	28.5%
	Female	5946	71.2%
	Did not volunteer	28	.3%
Education	9th grade or less	1000	12.0%
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	1544	18.6%
	HS diploma/GED	3181	38.3%
	Some college	1276	15.4%
	Associates degree	310	3.7%
	Vocational/technical degree	172	2.1%
	BA/ BS	562	6.8%
	BA+	257	3.1%

Beyond the basic demographics, participants have other characteristics, many of which are seen as barriers to employment (Table 2). The most common barrier for participants, aside from being in a family that is below poverty (80 percent), is poor employment history, which accounts for 97 percent of all participants.

		Count	Percent
Homeless	No	8084	96.8%
	Yes	267	3.2%
Literacy Skills Deficient	No	7474	89.5%
	Yes	878	10.5%
Limited English Proficiency	No	7790	93.3%
	Yes	562	6.7%
Poor Employment Prospects	No	224	2.7%
	Yes	8128	97.3%
Poverty Level	No	1669	20.0%
	Yes	6683	80.0%
Social Isolation	No	6518	78.0%
	Yes	1834	22.0%
Displaced Homemaker	No	7488	89.7%
	Yes	864	10.3%
Other Social Barriers	No	7784	93.2%
	Yes	567	6.8%

While many people in the past have stayed in the program for 5, 10 or even 20 years, the average duration in the program when participants have exited is now somewhat less than one year. The average length of participation for those still in the program is higher but still less than two years.

	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Duration in Days for Exiters	3829	308	1	6122
Length of Time in Program for Current Participants	3829	488	1	6459

### Perceived Benefits

There are two areas of perceived benefit identified for assessment. The first is the psychological/emotional benefit expressed in two ways:

- Question 15 asks participants to compare their current outlook on life to their outlook before they entered the program
- The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) asks participants about their overall satisfaction with the SCSEP program experience

		Count	Percent
Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?	Much more negative	121	2.9%
	A little more negative	166	4.0%
	About the same	916	21.9%
	A little more positive	1107	26.5%
	Much more positive	1873	44.8%

	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
ACSI	4141	81.3	0	100

As evident from Table 4, over 70 percent of participants indicated an improvement in their outlook on life compared to their outlook before they enrolled in the program.

Overall satisfaction, which is represented by the ACSI (Table 5), can be seen as the participants' general sense how much overall benefit they receive from the program. The score of 81 on the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is high compared to the scores normally given to various government programs, indicating a high perceived level of benefit. As noted later, the ACSI is higher when people are in the program than when they leave, even when leaving means obtaining a job.

The second area of benefit is specific to the participants' perception of the degree to which they feel trained and prepared for success in their host agency assignments and in subsequent employment:

- The receipt of training during their assignment that prepares participants for success in their assignment (Question 12)
- For those who are employed after exit, the training within the host agency that prepared them for their job (Question 19)
- Again for those who are employed after exit, the value of community service generally in preparing participants for unsubsidized employment (Question 20)

Table 4 presents the scores associated with those benefits. As is evident from the data, participants give relatively high rating to the training for their community service assignment. In contrast the ratings for unsubsidized employment preparation are much lower.

<b>Table 6: Provision of Training</b>				
	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment.	3787	8.2	1	10
Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?	1564	6.3	1	10
Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?	1488	7.3	1	10

### **Participant Characteristics and Perceived Benefits**

As with any social program, key questions include who benefits and under what circumstances they obtain those benefits. Of all the participant characteristics, participant's education is the one characteristic that most consistently relates to all benefit areas. As evident in Tables 8 through 11, lower education levels are associated with higher positive ratings.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of their education or other characteristics, the majority of participants experience improvements in their outlook on life by participating in the program.

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<sup>1</sup> All of the relationships between benefits and education were tested for statistical significance and had *p* values  $\leq .01$ , except for Question 15, outlook on life, where there were no differences for any of the participant characteristics. (Tests of significance are included in the appendix.)

<b>Table 7: Education and Question 15</b>					
	Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?				
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Education	9th grade or less	436	4.1	1	5
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	709	4.1	1	5
	HS diploma/GED	1671	4.1	1	5
	Some college	641	4.0	1	5
	Associates degree	153	4.1	2	5
	Vocational/technical degree	90	4.1	1	5
	BA/ BS	281	4.0	1	5
	BA+	128	4.0	1	5

In Table 7 there are no significant differences by education.

<b>Table 8: Education and ACSI</b>			
		ACSI (Scale 0-100)	
		Count	Mean
Education	9th grade or less	436	85.6
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	705	85.2
	HS diploma/GED	1643	82.0
	Some college	642	77.6
	Associates degree	149	78.3
	Vocational/technical degree	90	76.3
	BA/ BS	278	75.7
	BA+	127	73.7

In Table 8, there is a 12 percent spread between the lowest and highest score. Those with a high school diploma or less are significantly more satisfied than those with any post-secondary education.

<b>Table 9: Education and Question 12</b>					
	Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. (Scale 1-10)				
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Education	9th grade or less	399	8.6	1	10
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	657	8.6	1	10
	HS diploma/GED	1497	8.2	1	10
	Some college	584	7.8	1	10
	Associates degree	137	7.6	1	10
	Vocational/technical degree	81	7.1	1	10
	BA/ BS	255	7.6	1	10
	BA+	114	7.5	1	10

In Table 9, there is a 15 point spread between the lowest and highest score. Those with some post secondary education or vocational technical training give a lower rating to their training for their assignment than do those without a high school diploma.

<b>Table 10: Education and Question 19</b>					
	Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? (Scale 1-10)				
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Education	9th grade or less	206	7.6	1	10
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	298	6.7	1	10
	HS diploma/GED	602	6.1	1	10
	Some college	219	5.6	1	10
	Associates degree	43	4.8	1	10
	Vocational/technical degree	32	6.0	1	10
	BA/ BS	84	6.3	1	10
	BA+	47	4.7	1	10

In Table 10, there is a 29 percent spread between the lowest and highest score. Those with more than a bachelor's degree or an associate degrees give much lower ratings to the training from community service assignment than do those without a high school diploma.

<b>Table 11: Education and Question 20</b>					
	Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? (Scale 1-10)				
		Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Education	9th grade or less	207	8.2	1	10
	10th-12th grade but no HS diploma	279	7.6	1	10
	HS diploma/GED	577	7.2	1	10
	Some college	196	6.6	1	10
	Associates degree	42	6.1	1	10
	Vocational/technical degree	27	6.9	1	10
	BA/ BS	84	6.9	1	10
	BA+	45	6.7	1	10

In Table 11, there is a 21 percent spread between the lowest and highest score. As in Question 19, those with college tend to give lower ratings to the preparation for unsubsidized employment than do those without a high school diploma.

As seen from Tables 8-11, education is significantly associated with nearly all of benefit measurements. The strength of those associations is demonstrated, in part, by the spread between the highs and lows for each benefit measure, where the spread is from from 12 to 29 percent. Better educated participants seem to differ from their less educated peers in their perception of the value of the experience in helping them gain new skills and find a job. Better educated participants, perhaps because they have more education and skills than their less educated peers, demand more of the host agency experience. Programmatically, this suggests more care in placing higher educated participants so that they can have the challenges they are expecting.

Next to education, age is the most important characteristic, but it is only significant for some outcomes, where older participants rate the outcomes higher than younger participants. Age is not related to the rating of Question 20 (overall preparation for employment) or Question 15 (outlook on life).

<b>Table 12: Age and ACSI</b>			
		ACSI (Scale 0-100)	
		Count	Mean
Age Less Than or Greater Than 65	Younger than 65	2156	79.2
	65 or older	1938	83.7

In Table 12, the spread is only 5.5 percent. The data for Question 15, outlook on life, showed no differences by age.



<b>Table 13: Age and Question 12</b>			
Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. (Scale 1-10)			
		Count	Mean
Age Less Than or Greater Than 65	Younger than 65	1994	8.0
	65 or older	1752	8.4

In Table 13, the low score differs from the high by over 4 percent.

<b>Table 14: Age and Question 19</b>			
Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? (Scale 1-10)			
		Count	Mean
Age Less Than or Greater Than 65	Younger than 65	847	6.0
	65 or older	695	6.6

In Table 14, the low score differs from the high by over 6 percent. No difference by age was found for Question 20 (overall preparation for employment).

As evident from the percentage differences, age has less of an association with the rating of benefits than does education. However, taken together, these data suggest that younger and better educated participants may expect more from the program. Being younger and better educated than their peers implies they begin the program with more capabilities. Therefore, satisfying them will mean more has to be done to give them an experience that enhances what they already have.

Along with education and age, gender is sometimes a factor that relates to perceived benefits. The data need to be seen in the context of the program's demographics given that nearly two-thirds of the participants are female. There is considerable variation in the relation of gender with the different outcomes of interest. Gender has a small but significant relationship with Question 12.

<b>Table 15: Gender and 12</b>			
Q12. During my community service assignment, my host agency gave me the training I needed to be successful in my assignment. (Scale 1-10)			
		Count	Mean
Gender	Male	886	7.9
	Female	2852	8.3
	Did not volunteer	8	6.8

Males differ from females on their assessment of the host agency preparation by about 5 percent.

Gender has no relationship with Question 15 (outlook on life), Question 19 (skills and training needed for current unsubsidized job) and Question 20 (value of host agency as preparation for unsubsidized employment), but does have a small relationship with the ACSI, overall satisfaction.

<b>Table 16: Gender and Outlook on Life</b>			
Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life? (Scale 1-10)			
		Count	Mean
Gender	Male	990	4.0
	Female	3135	4.1
	Did not volunteer	8	4.0

<b>Table 17: Gender and ACSI (Scale 0-100)</b>				
Gender	N	ACSI	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	985	80.0	24.96223	.79536
Female	3099	81.8	23.79919	.42752

### **Participant Characteristics Summary**

- Those with more education generally perceive less benefit from SCSEP.
  - Older and less educated participants are generally more positive about their experience than their younger, better educated counterparts.
  - There is a small difference on two benefit questions between men and women although no gender difference exists in regard to outlook on life and two other benefit questions. This suggests that women and men obtain similar benefits from SCSEP.
- Grantees may perceive younger and better educated participants as particularly attractive as participants because they may seem easier to prepare for unsubsidized employment. However, these participants may expect and need a higher level of training and a higher quality host agency experience to feel they have been well served.

### **Participation Status and Perceived Benefits**

We are not only concerned about who benefits from specific social service programs. We also want to know under what circumstances participants benefit. The analyses of participant characteristics provide some insights into which participants benefit from SCSEP. Those who are older and less well educated see themselves benefiting more than those who are younger (under 65) and better educated.

In this section, we look at circumstances that are associated with the perception of benefit. The outcomes considered previously are considered for two sets of participants under different circumstances: those individuals participating in SCSEP at the time of the survey and those SCSEP participants who exited before receiving the survey.

As evident in Table 18 whether someone is a participant or has exited from the program matters. Those who have not exited have the most positive outlook on life. As might be expected, those who left the program but did not get a job have the least positive attitudes.

<b>Table 18: Exit Status and Outlook on Life</b>				
Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life?(Scale 1-10)				
Exit Reason	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Did not exit	2768	4.14	1	5
Unsubsidized employment	624	4.06	1	5
Self-employment	33	4.09	2	5
Other reason	708	3.75	1	5

This corresponds with a central premise of SCSEP: When an older person is engaged in active community service work, is learning, and receives a stipend for that work he or she experiences significant benefit.

A second SCSEP premise is that individuals benefit from obtaining unsubsidized employment after their employment preparation activities within the host agency. That is also evident when we compare the outlook of those in unsubsidized employment to those who exited for other reasons. Table 18 confirms both premises.

Grantees believe they have been successful, that is, they have benefited the participant, when the participant obtains unsubsidized employment. Given that definition of benefit or success, we might expect those who leave the program without a job (those who exited for other reasons) to be less positive than those who exit for a job. In fact, that is true. However, those who exit the program for unsubsidized employment are less positive than those who are still in the program. (See Table 19) The ACSI scores in Table 19 further confirms that participants' perception of benefit is substantially different depending on whether they are current participants or have exited.

<b>Table 19: Exit Status and ACSI</b>				
Exit Reason	Count	ACSI	Minimum	Maximum
Did not exit	2714	84.3	0	100
Unsubsidized employment	627	79.8	0	100
Self-employment	32	82.0	49	100
Other reason	721	71.7	0	100

The next set of tables test whether assessment of benefit from training differs between those who exit for a job and those who exit for other reasons. The results in Tables 20 and 21 are mixed.

<b>Table 20: Exit Status and Question 19</b>				
Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? (Scale 1-10)				
Exit Reason	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Unsubsidized employment	467	5.5	1	10
Self-employment	18	4.7	1	10
Other reason	228	5.4	1	10

As might be expected, participants who are in self-employment gain the least from the host agency experience. There is no significant difference in the rating of training for those who obtained employment and those who exited for other reasons. This indicates that although they did not rate the skills and training they gained very highly, there was no difference based on whether these exiters went on to unsubsidized employment or not.

<b>Table 21: Exit Status and Question 20</b>				
Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? (Scale 1-10)				
Exit Reason	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Unsubsidized employment	464	6.9	1	10
Self-employment	19	5.6	1	10
Other reason	224	6.0	1	10

In Table 21, those who obtain unsubsidized employment do give a higher rating to their overall preparation than those who exited for other reasons. This seems contradictory to the responses on Question 19. However, Question 20 asked about the overall helpfulness of community service as opposed to just the skills and training aspect, and this difference in emphasis from Question 19 may have made the difference.

One of the most difficult findings to understand is that successful exiters, those exiting for unsubsidized employment, are less positive about the benefit of the SCSEP program than those who remain in the program. It is important to know whether this is true for all of those in unsubsidized employment or only those in certain types of jobs. Tables 22-25 compare perceived benefit for those in unsubsidized employment who had jobs with for-profit employers to those in the non-profit sector (government and not-for-profit). All of the tables show that a major reason for lower benefit ratings among those who exited for employment is related to the very low ratings given by those working in the for-profit sector.

<b>Table 22: Employer Type and Outlook</b>				
Q15. Compared to the time before you started working with the Older Worker Program, how would you rate your outlook on life? (Scale 1-10)				
Employer Type	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
For-profit	260	3.9	1	5
Government	115	4.2	1	5
Not-for-profit	250	4.1	1	5
Self-employment	30	4.1	2	5

<b>Table 23: Employer Type and ACSI</b>				
ACSI				
Employer Type	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
For-profit	264	75.2	0	100
Government	116	83.3	0	100
Not-for-profit	249	82.6	0	100
Self-employment	29	83.8	49	100

<b>Table 24: Employer Type and Question 19</b>				
Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment? (Scale 1-10)				
Employer Type	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
For-profit	189	4.3	1	10
Government	89	5.8	1	10
Not-for-profit	189	6.5	1	10
Self-employment	16	4.2	1	10

<b>Table 25: Employer Type and Question 20</b>				
Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job? (Scale 1-10)				
Employer Type	Count	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
For-profit	186	5.8	1	10
Government	86	7.5	1	10
Not-for-profit	193	7.7	1	10
Self-employment	16	5.6	1	10

While the above analysis tells us that former SCSEP participants are more satisfied with their preparation and perceive greater benefits when they exit for employment in the non-profit sector, the analyses don't tell us why. Secondary analyses were conducted to determine if these differences might be related to the amount of earnings (either the average starting wage or the percent of people working full-time). There is no significant difference in the average starting wage among the employer types.

Table 26 shows that there are nearly twice as many working full-time in the for-profit sector than are working full time in government and not-for-profits.

		<b>Table 26: Employer Type by Full- and Part-Time</b>				
		For-profit	Government	Not-for-profit	Self-employment	Total
Full-time	Count	289	57	110	28	484
	Percent	44.1%	23.9%	20.5%	30.8%	31.8%
Part-time	Count	367	181	427	63	1038
	Percent	55.9%	76.1%	79.5%	69.2%	68.2%

Table 27 shows the differences in satisfaction for those in full- versus part-time employment in each employment sector. The data below indicate that full or part-time employment by itself is not related to satisfaction. It depends on whether we are talking about full or part-time employment in the non-profit or for-profit sector. Those with part-time work are more satisfied than those with full-time work in the for-profit sector. In contrast, those with full-time work are more satisfied than those with part-time work in the government and not-for-profit sectors. There are several possible reasons why this is occurring.

**Table 27: ACSI Scores for Full- and Part-Time Jobs by Employer Type**

	Employer Type	Count	Mean	Std. Deviation
Full-time	For-profit	112	72.4	27.49836
	Government	25	90.7	16.11400
	Not-for-profit	46	88.4	15.37678
	Self-employment	5	88.3	15.21659
	Total	188	79.1	24.75038
Part-time	For-profit	158	77.9	27.42153
	Government	91	81.3	25.01151
	Not-for-profit	208	81.3	24.47810
	Self-employment	24	82.9	18.06988
	Total	481	80.3	25.30161
Total	For-profit	270	75.6	27.53767
	Government	116	83.3	23.64393
	Not-for-profit	254	82.6	23.23038
	Self-employment	29	83.8	17.47882
	Total	669	79.9	25.13454

Work with for-profit employers may be more satisfying, despite the reduced income, as part- rather than full-time employment because of the reduced pressure and flexibility associated with part-time work. Meanwhile, full-time work for government and not-for-

profit employers, where the environment has fewer pressures, may be more satisfying when it is full-time because of the increased income that full-time employment provides. It should be noted, however, that both full- and part-time government and not-for-profit work are associated with greater satisfaction than any for-profit work, full or part-time.

What also may make a difference in satisfaction between for-profit and not-for-profit employment is the transition from the not-for-profit or government host agency environment to their new employer. The transition from the host agency to for-profit employer may be quite jarring, making for a significant period of adjustment. The transition from a host agency to a not-for-profit or government workplace may be easier, especially in those instances where the participant is staying within the same host agency and merely shifting status from trainee to employee. This would mean that the lower satisfaction may result, in part, from the transition and not some other aspects of employment in these different employer types. To test this possibility, we looked at each of the benefit questions to determine whether employment in an organization that was not a host agency produced different ratings than employment in an organization that was a host agency (probably the host agency in which the participant has done some of their training).

**Table 28: Employer Host Agency Status and Employer Type by ACSI**

Employer Type		Count	ACSI	Std. Deviation
Government	Employer is host agency	85	83.3	24.15048
	Employer is not a host agency	31	83.3	22.58051
	Total	116	83.3	23.64393
Not-for-profit	Employer is host agency	195	82.3	24.65759
	Employer is not a host agency	60	82.0	20.73683
	Total	255	82.3	23.75458
Self-employment	Employer is not a host agency	29	83.8	17.47882
	Total	29	83.8	17.47882

**Table 29: Employer Host Agency Status and Employer Type by Question 19**

Q19. How much of the skills and training you need for your current job did you gain from your community service assignment?

		Count	Mean	Std. Deviation
Government	Employer is host agency	67	6.34	3.557
	Employer is not a host agency	22	4.05	3.184
	Total	89	5.78	3.592
Not-for-profit	Employer is host agency	146	6.86	3.373
	Employer is not a host agency	46	5.11	3.628
	Total	192	6.44	3.507
Self-employment	Employer is not a host agency	16	4.25	3.907
	Total	16	4.25	3.907

<b>Table 30: Employer Host Agency Status and Employer Type by Question 20</b>				
Q20. Overall, how helpful was your community service assignment(s) in preparing you for success in your current unsubsidized job?				
Employer Type		Count	Mean	Std. Deviation
Government	Employer is host agency	64	7.92	3.199
	Employer is not a host agency	22	6.14	3.758
	Total	86	7.47	3.419
Not-for-profit	Employer is host agency	150	8.11	2.799
	Employer is not a host agency	46	6.26	3.441
	Total	196	7.68	3.056
Self-employment	Employer is not a host agency	16	5.56	3.847
	Total	16	5.56	3.847

The data from Table 28-30 show two things. First, overall satisfaction (the ACSI) is not associated with whether or not the employer is a host agency. Second, the benefits of training and preparation are evaluated differently when individuals must face disruption as they shift from being a trainee in a host agency to being an employee. More importantly, the disruption appears to have a similar impact on their evaluation of training benefit in not-for-profits and government agencies. Since for profit companies can not be host agencies, we can not make the same comparison. However, the low ratings of host agency experience for those employed in for-profits, may in part be due to the transition and consequent adjustments that must be made.

### **Program Implications and Discussion**

As evident from the data in the tables above, when participants look back on their host agency experience from the vantage point of their unsubsidized employment, their employment situation has a substantial impact on their assessment. Specifically, those working in for-profit businesses view their SCSEP experience as considerably less satisfactory than those working in government or the non-profit sector. Evidently going to a job in a for-profit environment diminishes satisfaction for many. It is also evident that transitions, even from one not-for-profit to another can also be a source of discomfort and dissatisfaction albeit less so than the transition from host agency to for-profit employment.

The data suggest that the community service experience is ineffective in preparing participants for unsubsidized employment in some circumstances but not others. The program seems to work for participants who obtain employment in the government or not-for-profit sector. It does not seem to do well for those in the for-profit sector.



The type of employer clearly matters in terms of outlook on life and overall satisfaction with the program. Participants in government and not-for-profit organizations have a more positive outlook (post-program participation) and higher satisfaction with the program. The assessment of preparation for employment in Questions 19 and 20 (Table 23) lends some additional support to this idea. Preparation scores are substantially lower for those in for-profit employment, especially the preparation that should have made them ready for unsubsidized employment (Question 20).

One possible reason for the lowered satisfaction among those in jobs with for-profit employers is that the for-profit environment is uncomfortable and unfamiliar for various reasons compared to the non-profit/government host agency environment. Another possible reason for the lower satisfaction is that the host agency environment may not provide the skills and knowledge those going into a for-profit job need. A third possible reason is that those going into non-profits or government jobs may not be making any change but are merely changing their status in the host agency from trainee to employee.

There are a number of findings relevant to developing best practices in SCSEP programs:

- According to the participants, the SCSEP preparation and training of participants is most effective when they obtain employment in a setting that is the same or similar to their host agency
- According to the participants, the SCSEP preparation and training is least effective when the employment setting is different (for-profit business) than the setting in the host agency
- As a result, those employed in the private, for-profit sector look back at their SCSEP experience with less satisfaction and perceived benefit than do those who are employed in the non-profit sector
- The transition from trainee to employee status is critical and potentially difficult
- The difficulties are most avoidable when the participant’s transition is from host agency assignment to employee within their host agency
- The table below lays out the employment situations from most to least satisfactory from the participant’s perspective

<b>Most Difficult</b>					<b>Least Difficult</b>
Private Sector for profit full-time	Private Sector for profit part-time	Not-for-profit or government part-time, different agency	Not-for-profit or government full-time, different agency	Not-for-profit or government, part-time, same agency	Not for profit or government, full-time, same agency

Programs may need to make greater efforts to help former participants transition into the world of unsubsidized employment. For the for-profit sector, programs should begin using OJE’s to help with the transition. During the OJE, adjustment issues can be more easily identified and dealt with. In the non-profit sector, transitions still can be disruptive, and helping participants through the transition from their trainee to employee status certainly could make a difference in perceived benefits. Successfully managing the transition from host agency to employment might also mean the difference between staying with the job longer term and dropping out.