
**The Need for Adult Literacy Programs:
Pilot Program for the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center**

**by
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**“Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
M.S. in Community Economic Development”**

Date: _____

Approved by: _____
Professor Chuck Hotchiss



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ABSTRACT

The Need for Adult Literacy Programs:
Pilot Program for the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center

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The research in this thesis provides a look at the findings and effects of the problem of literacy in the city of Camden, New Jersey. It currently provides one of the most detailed pictures that have ever been available on the condition of literacy in this city -- and on the unrealized potential of its residents and particularly the youth. The media has portrayed the city as hopeless casting a spirit of depression and hopelessness on the residents. Also damaging, is the fact that they fail to acknowledge both the complexity of the literacy problem and the range of solutions needed to address it.

Way of the Spirit Ministries, International Inc. (W.O.T.S.) has developed an Adult Literacy pilot-program for 8 residents in Camden, New Jersey between the ages of 16 and 35 or older (adult population). The participants who qualify for this pilot program will receive literacy and language development, computer skills training, along with basic math. The program will help participants increase their ability to use English as it should be understood, read, and written. We will help participants learn how to better connect math with everyday living.

The program is designed to-

- ❖ Test participants for basic education competency
- ❖ Teach participants for two 14 week cycles to see if their reading, writing, and math levels rise according to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Context Standards and Cumulative Progress Indicators
- ❖ Assess residents at the end of each cycle
- ❖ Help prepare participants obtain their GED
- ❖ Prepare participants with Job Readiness Training (JRT)
- ❖ Help employ participants through job search at the State's One-Stop Career Center or Job Fairs
- ❖ Assist participants with entrepreneurial training

Our goal is to help raise the literacy levels of these low-level readers to the 9th grade level or better to further their education and obtain employment; because according to the States Work Force Development Data individuals with low literacy levels remain unemployable.

Dedicated to

*To my family Desmond, Julius, Janene, Janelle, Joelle,
and Julicea who have supported me these last two years.*

*To my Way of the Spirit family who prayed for me and
supported the vision God gave me.*

*And last but not least my coach Martha Chavis who opened
her hands and her heart to help me.*

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Executive Summary

Since its inception in 2002 Way of the Spirit Ministries, International Inc. (W.O.T.S.) has been consistently pursuing its role in the community as an educational organization. Through research it was found that Camden City was 49% basic illiterate. This percentage included those who are low-level readers, functional non-literate, and those who can not read English at all. The need to address this problem was closely linked to the social and economic problems that plagued the City.

The organizations mission became clear: to help alleviate and break the cycle of illiteracy in the residents of Camden City and neighboring communities. The board members felt compelled to take action to alleviate this crippling situation and embarked on the mission to develop the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center.

Faith in our community and its members is our business. W.O.T.S. will facilitate life skills program presentations called “Show Me The Way,” which will be presented by educators, businessmen, professional and resident mentors who will instruct our participants how to live, work, and give back to their own community while seeking a better life. We will also access the local banks to host financial literacy classes for our participants to learn how to use the banking system, manage their money, purchase a home, and acquire real legitimate wealth.

While family is identified as very crucial to the health of any society, W.O.T.S. will design seminars to help families actively address and cope with lost and bereavement, health, marriage, and any other family matters requested by our participants. Workshops for parents and children are designed to teach both the importance of education and everyday life skill needs to become productive community residents.

Study Goal

Part of the design of this pilot-program will include a survey that addresses literacy and its impact on the community, social hindrances, teenage pregnancy, and the impact of incarceration. Also as a result of these findings, the outcomes of the survey will help us explore and identify the need for biblical literacy as a conduit for learning life skills. It is not intended to proselytize nor coerce the community into Christianity but to examine the correlation between illiteracy and spirituality and how each can affect the other.

Study Objectives

The aim of this pilot-program is to find the root of illiteracy and examine counter measures that have disappointed minority urban residents in our educational systems. Results from these findings will allow W.O.T.S. to implement and integrate a unified system of service delivery, which focuses on meeting the participants needs while providing high quality services. The plan results in instruction that is learner-centered and focused on real world outcomes, so the participants can meet their goals as responsible workers, parents, and community members.

I. COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

U1. Community Profile.

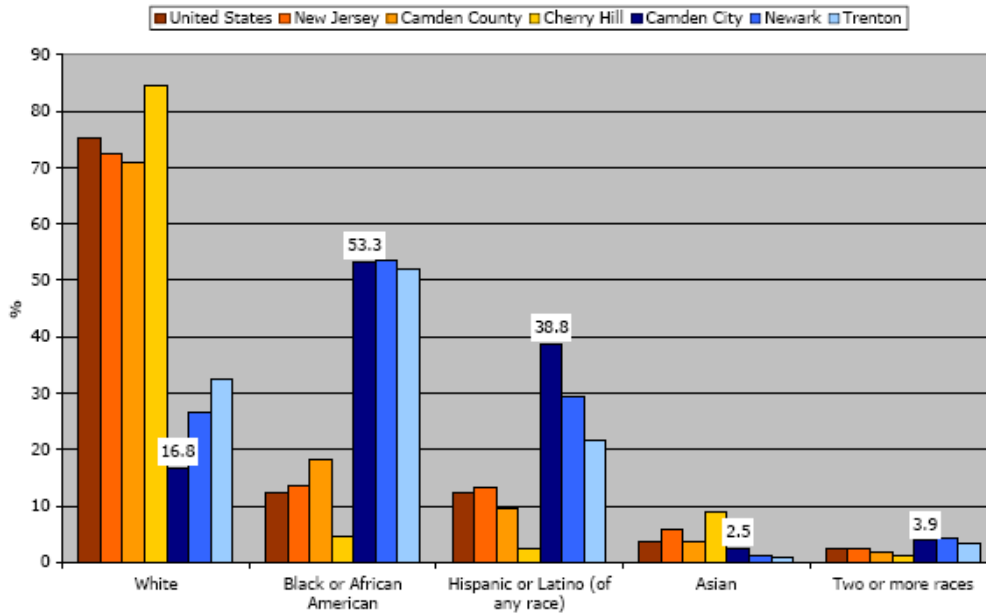
Camden was once known as one of the major manufacturing cities on the eastern seaboard. It is still home of the renowned Campbell Soup Company. Like other cities across America Camden experienced a social acceptance of segregation. In 1949 the Supreme Court outlawed the use of racially motivated restrictive covenants. This ruling seemed only to worsen the fears of whites about the process and effects of neighborhood change. Working-class whites especially saw not only their life savings (invested in their homes) but the communities they had worked hard to build - social clubs, job networks, churches, and schools - at risk of being unraveled by integration (Halpern, 1995:62). The result was white flight. With the institution of the Federal Assistance Program in effect from August 14, 1935 to June 30, 1997, which was administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Camden's new generation of welfare recipients arose due primarily to unemployment and family breakdown. As the years progressed and the industries that provided work for the city's inhabitants declined so did the quantity of permanent jobs. Without decent paying jobs the housing stock declined, residents became transit, frustrated, hopeless, and uncaring. Such is the condition of Camden.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) instituted Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) which became effective July 1, 1997 and replaced what was then commonly known as welfare, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) programs (Midgley, 2000). For the last forty years there has been an increased population of welfare recipients brought on by teenage pregnancy, and the housing of these recipients in the city. Viewed at any angle of the city the community breakdown is prevalent. Open air drug marketing is viewed on almost every street corner of the city. The city is under constant state policing. Disparaging elements has brought Camden to its present position.

Since Camden city is the county seat of Camden County, the city host two correctional facilities, the Riverfront Prison and the Camden County Correctional Facility know as the city jail. The municipality seems to be in constant financial ruin. Camden is presently going through complete redevelopment planning. The mayor and the municipality administrators lack vision and the technical assistance and professional development needed to move things forward in the "FUTURECamden Plans" has displayed levels of incompetence on all fronts. This has continued to cause disbelief and uncertainty among the residents. The Cramer Hill section of the city is to undergo the first major redevelopment phases of the city's planning.

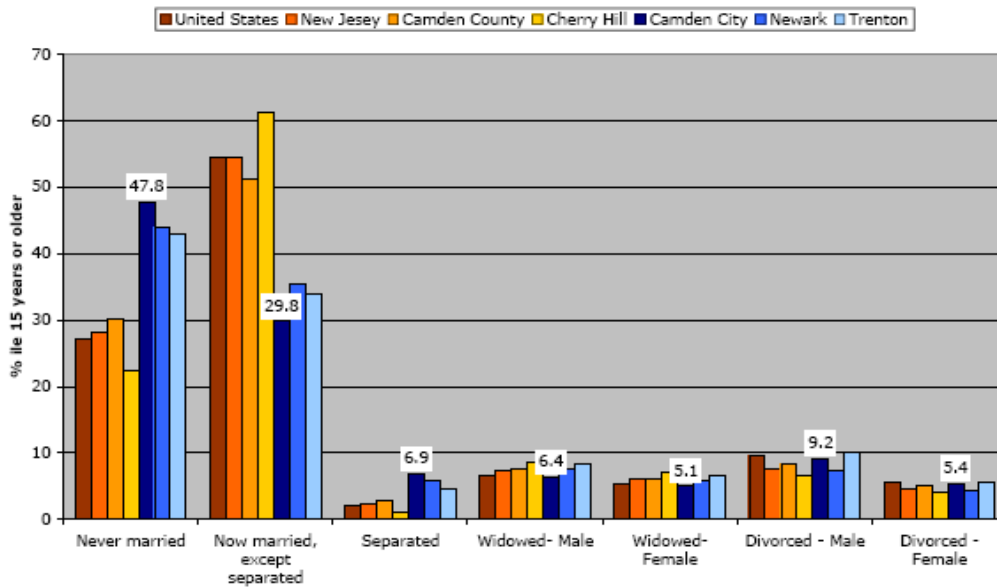
Cramer Hill CDC tracks the resident's community needs through surveys and town forums to offer information to the residents of the Cramer Hill section whose homes are cited to be removed through eminent domain. The low turnout rate at the meetings is related to their inability to read and write English proficiently, although the information is also written in Spanish. This information reveals the overall impact illiteracy has on the residents of Camden City.

Race and Ethnicity Breakdown 2000

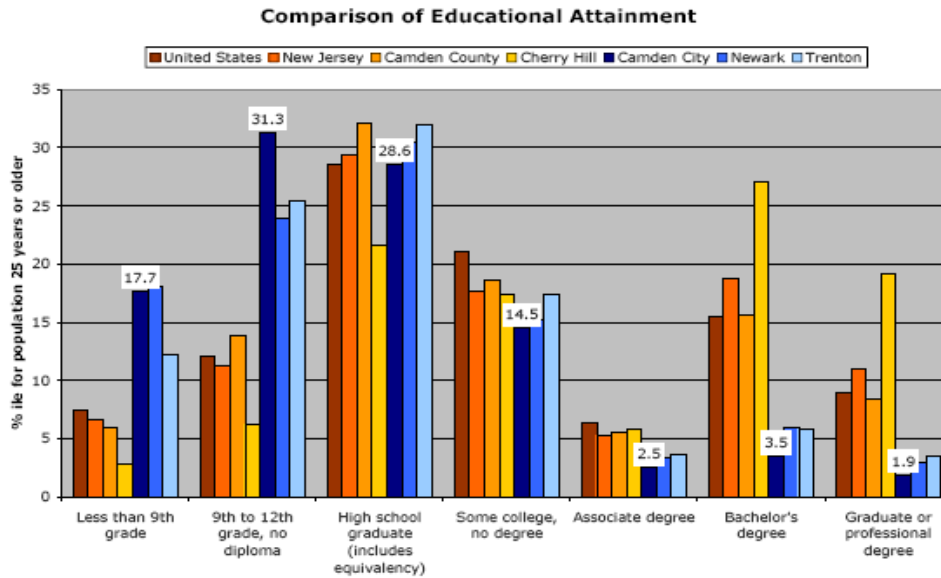


Over 85% of Camden City's 80,000 residents are African-American or Hispanic.

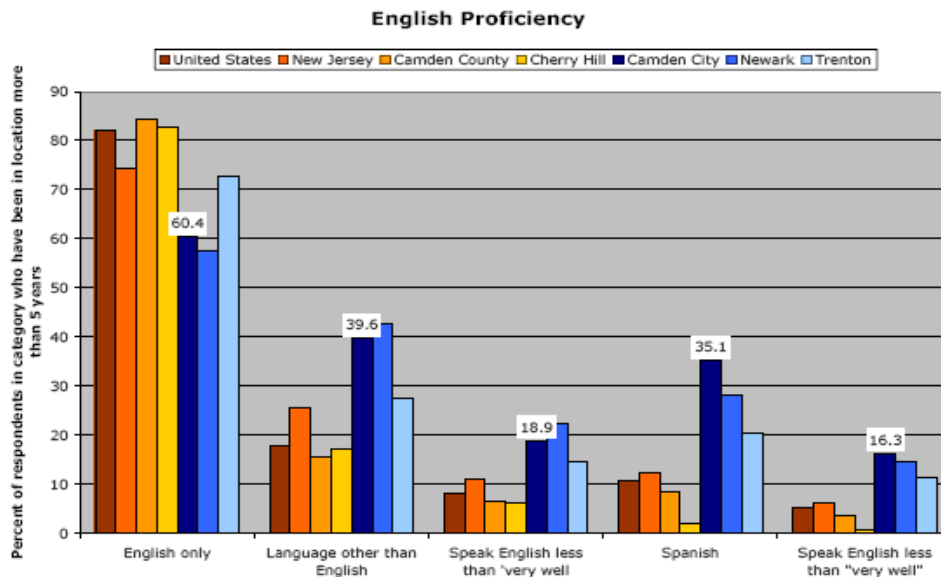
Comparison Marital Status



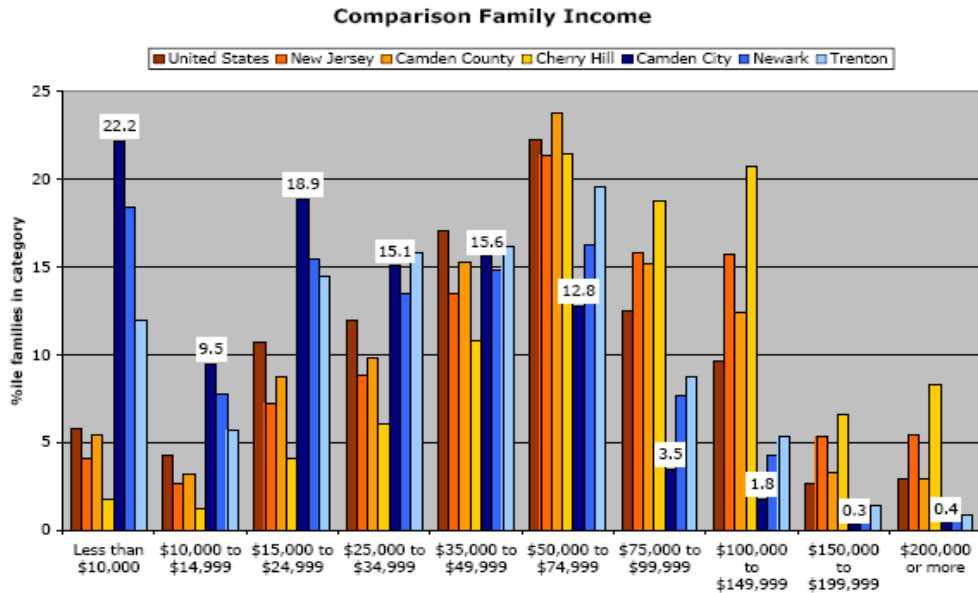
47.8% of Camden City residents have never married. 29.8% of Camden City residents are currently married.



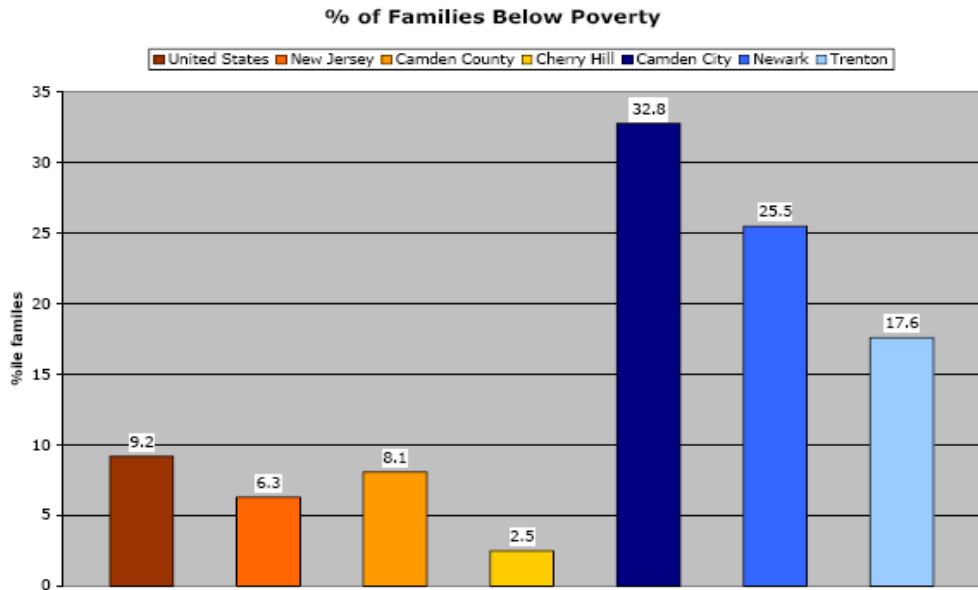
5.5% of Camden adults have a bachelor's or professional degree. Only about half of Camden's adult residents have completed high school. By comparison, over 45% of Cherry Hill adults have a bachelor's degree or a graduate degree. Fewer than 10% of Cherry Hill adults have not completed high school.



Almost 40% of Camden residents speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the language of the overwhelming majority of non-English speakers. Nearly 1 in 5 Camden residents speaks English less than "very well."



The median family income in Camden City is \$24,612, compared with \$65,370 in New Jersey. 22% of Camden families earn less than \$10,000 per year.

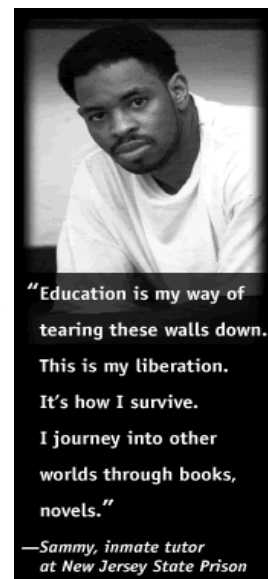


Nearly a third of Camden families have an income below the Federal poverty line.

2. Community Needs Assessment.

The United Way organization (2005) states core community needs are emergency services, food, clothing, shelter, childcare, healthcare, mental health services, substance abuse services, hospice services, disabled services, scouting, mentoring, disaster relief, crisis hotline and information and referral. Although community needs are assessed for the viability each program can provide, literacy remains the core component that will enable residents to maximize the benefits of these programs offered to the community. However, many low-level readers cannot fill out the necessary forms to acquire these services.

According to the *Executive Summary of Literacy Behind Prison Walls* (2005) the literacy skills of most inmates perform in Levels 1 and 2 on the prose, documents, and quantitative scales. *Prose literacy* was defined as the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts that include editorials, news stories, poems, and fiction; for example, finding a piece of information in a newspaper article, interpreting instructions from a warranty, inferring a theme from a poem, or contrasting views expressed in an editorial. *Document literacy* was defined as the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in materials that include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and graphs; for example, locating a particular intersection on a street map, using a schedule to choose the appropriate bus, or entering information on an application form. *Quantitative literacy* was defined as the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in printed materials; for example, balancing a checkbook, figuring out a tip, completing an order form, or determining the amount of interest from a loan advertisement. As Camden is home to a state and county prison the problem of illiteracy in connection with prison recidivism has been documented and is profound. Illiteracy within the state and federal prison systems has been described as “staggering.” America's prisons are full of poorly educated men and women who come from deteriorating urban neighborhoods with failing public school systems. Almost three-fourths of those incarcerated have not graduated from high school and a staggering 70 percent are functionally illiterate and read below a fourth grade level. At New Jersey State Prison the illiteracy rate is even higher.



This data recognizes that poor reading skills have an immense impact upon the lives of prisoners and ex-offends and is the major reason for reentry into the prison system. Within the Camden County Correctional Facility the populations of inmates greatly consist of African Americans and Latinos. Many criminologists and correctional administrators have found that low educational levels correlate highly with criminality, as well as with aggressive and violent behavior. Moreover, of all the variables linked to criminal behavior, failure in school is the most significant.

See APENDIX A –

*“Communities That Care” Community Needs Assessment Chart: Risk Factors for Non-literate Adults in Camden County, New Jersey.

II. THE PROBLEM

1. Problem Statement.

Camden, New Jersey sits in the middle of the triangle trade route of economic prosperity. It is centrally located between New York City, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City. Yet Camden residents will never participate in the economic wealth surrounding them for lack of one great need – the ability to read well, comprehend what they read, and compete for equal employment. Our challenge in creating the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center is to develop effective, comprehensive programs that will provide literacy instruction to adult learners at the lowest level of literacy to help them brake the cycle of illiteracy and thus the cycle of poverty.

W.O.T.S. Literacy Center will also address a major problem plaguing the City and that is the drug epidemic. Substance abuse will and has produced stillborn results while Camden is travailing over its “Rebirth.” Our Center will also address other literacy issues related to crime, family dysfunction, unemployment, HIV, AIDS, child care, and healthcare. Low literacy skills are robbing Camden residents and their children of their future. According to the New Jersey Department of Education (2004) Camden County has lost in numbers, 56.8% of males and 43.2% of females predominately Latino and African Americans. This information states drop-outs in Camden County trail only third to Passaic County, and the highest Essex County. The population of city residents, even county residents is transit, moving from one house to another never claiming a stake in real-estate– only adding to the overall problem of illiteracy in Camden County youth. This problem is relegated by unemployment and job security.

The future of Camden is at stake. The money spent for some charities may be needless, as many are in existence due to the population’s inability to read and to be employed, paying their fair share of taxes. A report from *Focus on Literacy* (2005) announced that 70% of the unemployed have reading problems and 85% of incarcerated have turned to crime as a means of survival due to the inability to read and thereby were not in a position to hold suitable and meaningful employment.

2. Target Community.

The target community consists of Camden County and especially Camden City residents. In Camden City the population is quite young with 34.6% under the age of 18, 12.0% from 18 to 24, 29.5% from 25-44, 16.3% from 45 to 64, and 7.6% who are 65 years of age or older. Camden borders Collingswood, Gloucester City, Haddon Township, Pennsauken, and Woodlyn. According to the US Census Bureau (2000), there are 79,904 people, 24,177 households, and 17,431 families residing in the city. The racial makeup of Camden is 16.84% White, 53.35% Black or African American, 0.54% Native Americans, 2.45% Asian, 0.07% Pacific Islander, 22.83% from other races, and 3.92% from two or other races, 38.82% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race, 8.9% are foreign-born. The median age of the residents is 27 years old.

Presently the participants are about 45% African American, 40% Hispanic, 10% White, and 5% other. Many are referred from participants attending Camden Community Connections STRIVE, or their adjudicated youth programs, and from family and friends who know about the program and send them as referrals. Since the project is only in its pilot stage the outcomes for how the program will empower the community is yet to be seen. The average participant comes from a neighborhood of like presence.



Bergen Square section of Camden City

*See APENDIX B – *‘‘Waiting on the World to Change’’*

3. Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Stakeholders Interest	Obtaining Support or Reducing Obstacles
Participants/Family	Access quality literacy support, jobs, income, and supportive services.	Obtaining continued support while providing effective adult education practices. Improvement in the general quality of their lives.
Camden Community Connections	Partnership and continued collaboration.	Obtaining continued support with the Executive Director. To maximize their continued support and help while being coached to run a non-profit organization.
Board of Social Services/TANF	Hope to gain a partner in bringing low-income, low-level and unemployed participants.	To maximize the role of TANF in this project, it will be necessary to establish a working agreement and on-going dialogue with the directors of Social Services.
Office of the Prosecutor of Camden County	Hope to gain a partner in bringing ex-offenders seeking the GED and employment	To maximize the role of the Prosecutor's Office in this project, it will be necessary to establish a working agreement and on-going dialogue with the directors of Social Services.
State Board of Parole	Hope to gain a partner in bringing parolees seeking the GED and employment.	Create on-going dialogue with the Warden for recognition and support.
Cramer Hill CDC	Hope to continue a partnership and become involved as a member agency.	Obtaining continued support in CHCDC while continuing to be involved in the Redevelopment Plan Process for the Cramer Hill section of Camden.
Camden County Correctional Facility	Hope to gain a partner in bringing ex-offenders seeking their GED and employment.	Create on-going dialogue with the Warden for recognition and support.
Camden Board of Education	Hope to gain a partnership and become a participating agency in the Consortium.	Work on reducing the obstacle of being unrecognized, become a partner in the Education Community.
Camden County One Stop Workforce Investment Board	Sustainable business and workforce assistance. Providing technical support.	Work on reducing the obstacle of receiving a vendor's permit to receive participants into the program. To maximize the role of the WIB in this project, it will be necessary to establish a working agreement and on-going dialogue with the directors.
Community	Become aware and involved in W.O.T.S. as a community agency.	Eliminate the obstacle of being unrecognized to the general community because they are critical to the success of the project.
City of Camden	Hope to gain a partner and receive support and funding.	Work on reducing the obstacle of being unrecognized. Become a partner in the social and economic components of the City's framework. Continue involvement in community organization and advocacy activities.

4. Project Goal(s) in CED Terms.

Achieving social policy goals have been among the chief purpose for adult education in the Unites States for many years. Researchers review the social purposes for which literacy education has been used: to integrate new immigrants, to teach moral lessons, as a tool in the War on Poverty, and today, to combat crime and strengthen the economy. However, while there have been many social policy goals for adult literacy education in the past, programs were not evaluated on whether or not they met these goals.

Today's labor market demands basic reading, writing and math knowledge for even unskilled jobs. Minority males and females especially those in urban settings are disproportionately educationally disadvantaged. This target population's inability to adequately read or write to complete job applications serves as one of the major barriers to their seeking employment.

The following charts identify jobs available for participants who meet the criteria and finish the literacy program.

PARTICIPANT HIGH GROWTH/HIGH DEMAND (HG/HD) EMPLOYMENT FLOW CHART

Participant Activities: Weeks 14:

Job Readiness Training/Personal Management/Community Service/First Job

Demonstration of Job Readiness Skills Completed	Employment Consistency
Application of Basic Skills - Literacy Attainment	Job Interest
Employment Evaluation	Business Mentor Relationship
Personal Management	Financial Management
Personal Status	Basic HG/HD Certificates

Basic HG/HD Job Certification:

<u>Finance</u>	<u>Hospitality</u>	<u>Healthcare</u>
Commerce Bank	Hotel Customer Relations	Hospital Volunteers
Financial Literacy	Retail Sales Introduction	CPR/First Aid
Customer Service	Customer Service	Crisis Management

Entry-Level Jobs in HG/HD Industries without H.S. Diploma or GED (Preferred Reading/Math, 8th Grade plus)

<u>Finance</u>	<u>Hospitality</u>	<u>Healthcare</u>
Security Attendant	Food Service Aide or Fast Food	Patient transport Aide
Telemarketing Representative	Sales Clerk	Security Attendant
Inventory Supply Clerk	Inventory Supply Clerk	Community Health Worker
Inter-Office Messenger	Grocery Bagger	Outreach Worker
Car Sales	Ticket Teller	Patient Attendant
Catalog Order Associate	Parking Attendant	Janitorial/Maintenance
		Usher
		Landscaping Attendant
		Janitorial/Maintenance Aide

Outline of Goals:

- ❖ Recruit participants - Paid staff is responsible for the recruitment of participants. Some participants come through other agencies or family.
- ❖ Proceed with in-take – Interested participants fill out an in-take packet with the in-take coordinator.
- ❖ Diagnostic testing – Participants are give the TABE and DESTINATION test certified by the N.J. Department of Education.
- ❖ Provide placement – Upon findings with the diagnostic testing the participants are then assigned to the classes they need.
- ❖ Adult Literacy classes – These classes are provided for adults who are no longer enrolled in the school system (16 and over) who are not educationally ready to take the GED classes.
- ❖ GED classes – These classes are for participants who test at a 9th grade level or better and desire to obtain their GED.
- ❖ (JRT) Job Readiness Training – Job readiness training is for the participants who are ready to obtain employment after writing their resume and learning job etiquette.
- ❖ Community Service – Participants are encouraged to offer willing several hours of community service. This allows them to give back into their community.
- ❖ Job Fair – Job fairs are set-up at the Center and participants are given an opportunity to interview with perspective employers.
- ❖ Job Recruitment – Through the good name of the Executive Director many companies contact the Center for possible perspective employees.

5. Project Objectives.

According to the findings there is an urgent need to create a comprehensive adult literacy program for adults 16 years of age and older. A coordinated literacy program will ensure that all adults with limited literacy skills have the opportunity to pursue:

- ❖ appropriate educational training
- ❖ life skills training
- ❖ counseling
- ❖ community service
- ❖ job readiness training
- ❖ job recruitment

III. PROJECT DESIGN

1. Review of the Literature.

This review is not exhaustive; rather, the intention is to review a selection of research that has been found to be either closely related to the present study or insightful for future purposes. The emphasis is primarily on those studies concerned with investigating the impact and benefits of adult literacy instruction - namely in the areas of literacy skills, employment, impact on self, family, further learning and the effect it plays on the community. However, these benefits and effects cannot be looked at without also taking into account the wider contexts of literacy learning. The following review therefore, also draws on some studies that investigate the ways in which these wider social factors themselves impact on literacy programs and literacy learning.

The United States is not a literacy superpower. This was made clear by a survey released in December 2005 by the U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics. There is no doubt that literacy needs are great! Most children who struggle with reading, spelling, and writing do not get the right type of help in school. So they grow into adults who don't read well. In the United States, this is considered functional illiterate. At the third-grade level, they don't read well enough to fill out a job application, read a memo from their boss, pass the drivers test, write a note to their child's teacher, or read their child a bedtime story. Their job options – and earning power – are limited, their success in college is rare, and they drop out of high school at a much higher rate than the national average.

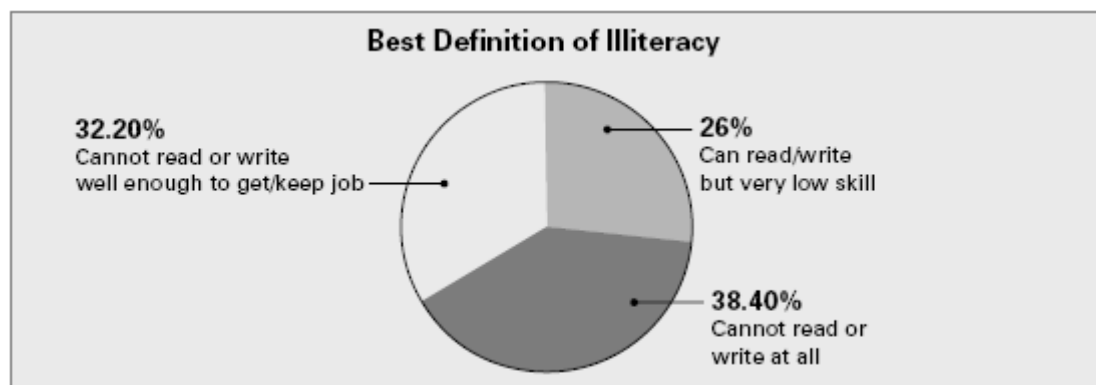
To address the problem of illiteracy in the city of Camden, New Jersey W.O.T.S. Literacy Center will follow the tradition of ProLiteracy Worldwide in creating the project for the Adult Literacy Program. The goals of the ProLiteracy Worldwide Organization (2006) are to (1) create a comprehensive and fully coordinated adult literacy and basic education system, (2) to ensure that all adults with limited literacy skills have the opportunity to pursue appropriate educational or job credentialing opportunities, (3) to assist adults to fulfill their human potential and to participate fully in society.

Education remains an important tool for social change and social transformation. The problems facing mankind are now so complex that new roles and forms of education are required. Faure et al (1972) stresses the urgency of this human situation. If school learning is insufficient, post-school supplements must be devised. Faure et al. expressed the new vision of society in the notion of "The Learning Society." A learning society implies that every citizen should have the means of learning, training and cultivating himself, truly available to him, under all circumstances..... . A learning society is a comprehensive concept which includes formal, non-formal, and informal learning extended throughout the life span of an individual for the purpose of creating an all-round development of the individual in the context of full societal development. *Learning society is a product and the process is continuing education.*

Ever since 1991 the National Literacy Act (NLA) has defined literacy as an individual's ability to read, write, and speak English, and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society. The act also includes the individuals' purposes to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential (NLA of 1991, sec.3).

Larry Roberts' in his article, *Illiteracy On The Rise In America*, (2005) states over 90 million US adults, nearly one out of two, are functionally illiterate or near illiterate, without the minimum skills required in a modern society. According to education experts one needs to be in ninth grade competence level to understand the instructions for an antidote on a bottle of corrosive kitchen lye, a tenth grade competence level to understand the instructions on a federal income tax return, and a twelfth grade competence level to read a life insurance policy. Because literacy is so important to the quality of our lives it must be viewed as necessary as food and water.

Research shows racism plays an important factor in education. Moreover, in many of the urban African American and Latino communities there appears to be a total disregard for the attainment of education because hopelessness has deemed education ineffective. This brings up a very important point. A significant correlation between race and poverty exists. Blacks and Hispanic Americans are three times more likely to be impoverished than White Americans (Proctor and Dalaker 2002). The cycle of poverty and low-literacy functioning is well documented, as is the achievement gap between white students and students of color. Race is a persistent factor in employment statistics, educational attainment, and the acquisition of literacy skills, with significantly higher unemployment rates and lower educational attainment rates among Black and Hispanic Americans.



The survey's margin of error is +/- 2.9 percentage points, ProLiteracy Worldwide.

Job loss and low wages are unequally distributed across races/ethnicities, with Blacks and Hispanics more likely to lose employment than Whites, and more likely to be hired for service work than for better-paying jobs (AP for Bureau of Labor Statistics 2004).

One of the major contributing forces of criminal recidivism is illiteracy. In the *Philadelphia Inquirer* 9/14/06 editor Yvonne Haskins reports, the correlation between crime and illiteracy is well documented. "Most studies cite that at least 70 percent of all inmates in American prisons suffer from extremely low reading proficiency.

Minority inmates from urban areas are likely to show higher illiteracy rates, maybe as high as 80 to 90 percent. Arguably, paroled inmates are doomed to re-offend in a country where 75 percent of all jobs require basic reading skills. All can agree that illiteracy undermines one's view of self-worth, leading to deviant, undesirable behavior in our society. So, how does this issue affect the high rate of homicides and what can we do, right now, to reduce that rate? While criminals are serving time in prison, no one - absolutely no one - should be released on parole unless he shows serious, measurable progress toward learning to read. It's a simple notion, a powerful one, to teach prisoners to read, but it has never been linked to gaining freedom."

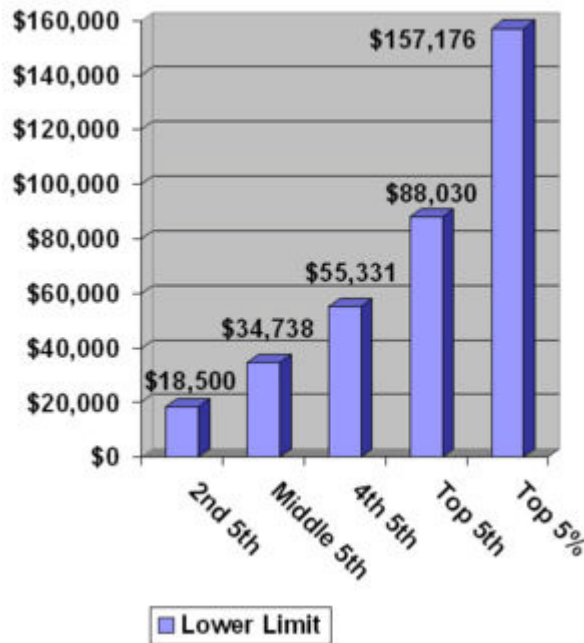
Kurt Landgraft in his article "*Literacy is the Key to Unlocking Potential*," states "The country will know how many cells they will need by how many students who can not read by the third grade." What can the nation do? The problem cannot be solved over night. The recidivism rate of returning parolees into the corrections system is amazing.

Another added burden to society is the immigration problem. Today, immigration has become the determining factor in U.S. population growth. The 31.1 million immigrants identified in the (2000 Census) are unparalleled in American history. It has more than tripled the 9.6 million in 1970 and more than double the 14.1 million in 1980. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, the percentage of adults who spoke English before starting school decreased while the percentage who spoke Spanish or another non-English language before starting school increased. Fewer adults who spoke English only or English and a non-Spanish language before starting school had *Below Basic* prose document and quantitative literacy in 2003 than 1992. These findings demonstrate the problem for increased dropout rates in urban cities where most Hispanic immigrants habitat.

Findings according to the Poverty Fact Sheet Series by examiner Juanita E. Miller, Ph.D., State Extension Specialist, Ohio State University shows high poverty rates have been linked to low levels of educational attainment. Low levels of formal education have been linked to employment in low wage earning jobs. Low wages have been linked to subsistence living. As can be seen, the links create a cycle from poverty to poverty. Not having a high school diploma or some post high school education has been associated with the poverty status of people.

When poverty rates are related to levels of educational attainment, one is made aware of some interesting information. Most obvious is the fact that the poverty rates of high school dropouts are three times higher than the poverty rate among high school graduates. Less obvious is the fact that the poverty rates for men and women at different levels of educational attainment show a gap that narrows as people go up the educational ladder. Individuals, families and communities have differing values placed on formal education and different attitudes about attending school. Although they may know that one needs a good education to get a good job, there is a tendency of poor people to decline educational opportunities (Epstein, 1996) and individuals who excel in school work may be scorned (Shaw, 1996). Many young people lack the confidence that they can achieve in school and so they under-invest themselves in educational endeavors.

Based on 2002 data from the United States Census Bureau, 44% of the Camden city's residents live in poverty, the highest rate in the nation. The city had a median household income of \$18,007, the lowest of all U.S. communities with populations of more than 65,000 residents, making it America's poorest city. In 2006 the median household income was \$24,612. Camden is also the poorest city in New Jersey. These results prove illiteracy and poverty are identifying markers.



This graph shows Camden City residents living at the lower limits for four income quintiles (the bottom quintile was omitted as its lower limit is \$0) and the top 5%.

Community development and literacy education programs both have long histories and share many underlying values and goals. However, several factors have limited the extent to which adult literacy and community development issues have been addressed together in systematic and coherent ways. Adult literacy programs have frequently been disconnected from the social, cultural, economic, and political milieus within which they emerged. Weinstein-Shr (1993) in *“First chance for a real Education”* suggests that adult literacy professionals must change their programs in ways that: (1) shift the focus from individuals and institutions, to families and communities, (2) recognize the role of extant knowledge in building and understanding new knowledge, and (3) promote multi-level collaboration between community agencies. Community development programs, on the other hand, have often ignored the fact that mobilization and social change require a modicum of knowledge, skills, and self-confidence in order to engage people in meaningful ways. The lack of interdisciplinary communication regarding the link between learning and social change is also present in community development theory and practice.

Research has been conducted over the past 20 years on demonstration programs designed to improve the basic skills and employability of disadvantaged adults. The positive effect an adult literacy program brings to a community has been proven across the country. For example, findings in the state of Iowa demonstrate adults who attend adult literacy programs:

- ❖ have higher rates of employment than the Iowa average (from 54% to 71% over the 10 years); the increase was greatest for the younger graduates under 40 years and for women
- ❖ the number of hours worked per week increased from 19.8 to 27.1
- ❖ increases in job skill levels (2.8 to 3.5 on a 5 point scale) and job satisfaction (2.0 to 2.4 on a 5 point scale)
- ❖ personal incomes increased by 43%
- ❖ dependence on welfare decreased dramatically by 70% employment benefits (e.g. health insurance) increased substantially
- ❖ personal savings and home ownership (54% to 70%) increased 12% had gone on to higher education
- ❖ the GED graduates' children had graduated from high school at the average State rate
- ❖ a higher percentage of the GED graduates' children had enrolled in higher education than the graduates
- ❖ most attributed obtaining employment and economic benefits to passing the GED

The study identified a number of non-economic 'quality of life' benefits:

- ❖ being better able to assist their children with school work
- ❖ feeling that they were better parents generally
- ❖ increased contributions to their community or church
- ❖ increased self-esteem
- ❖ improvement in the general quality of their lives.

From 1994 until 2007 program predictors remain invariable and national studies provide evidence about effective adult education practices. These findings report:

- ❖ Adults are more likely to be motivated and to achieve more when the curriculum content is well suited to their interests and needs.
- ❖ Adults in ABE programs with highly individualized curricula do better than those enrolled in programs that are less individualized and more structured.
- ❖ Important predictors of program persistence are the presence and use of client support services (e.g., transportation), placement in day rather than evening classes, programs with high levels of service integration, and membership in teacher-based classrooms rather than largely independent study, and class size of 10 or greater (Young, et al., 1994).

According to the findings in this review there is an urgent need to create a comprehensive adult literacy program for adults 16 years of age and older that will create the human potential needed to succeed in life and to fully participate in society.

2. Program.

The Adult Literacy Pilot-Program for 8 residents in Camden, New Jersey permits W.O.T.S. to test these participants between the ages of 18 and 35 or older (adult population).

The program is designed to:

- ❖ Test residents for basic education competency
- ❖ Teach residents for two 14 weeks/2 cycles to see if their reading, writing, and math levels rise according to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Context Standards and Cumulative Progress Indicators
- ❖ Assess residents at the end of each cycle.
- ❖ Help prepare residents to obtain their GED
- ❖ Prepare residents with Job Readiness Training (JRT)
- ❖ Employ residents through job search at the One-Stop Career Center and from job fairs

Our participants will continue their education to obtain a high school diploma, GED, or work skills for employment. Our goals are to help raise the literacy levels of these low-level readers above the 9th grade level thus making them candidates for their GED, or for successful employment, and to re-instill the personal self-esteem and pride needed to develop new lives, new homes and new communities.

We will counsel our participants to break the barriers of low self-esteem. According to M.J. Sorensen PhD, “Low self-esteem is actually a thinking disorder in which an individual views himself as inadequate, unworthy, unlovable, and/or incompetent. Once formed, this negative view of self permeates every thought, producing faulty assumptions and ongoing self-defeating behavior.” Through our program participants will find they have no real reason to fear reading, while understanding they are not too old or too slow to learn. They will find qualified and patient teachers and tutors that will encourage them and give them the tools to pursue their life’s goals. We will teach them that their lives have value while creating ways to break down the effects of low self-esteem. They will learn that they have a choice in remaining in poverty or to pursue a better life for themselves and their families. We will teach them to learn and identify social *entrapments* considering the policies and regulations that have created fourth-generation illiterate citizens of this United States.

Mission

Way of the Spirit Ministries, International Inc. (W.O.T.S.) is devoted to providing Adult and Family Literacy Programs for residents in Camden County by imparting knowledge, understanding, and encouragement through training activities, workshops on adult literacy, parenting skills and parent/child interaction that will increase literacy and language development. Together we will improve communication skills and English language proficiency that will increase the self-esteem needed to break the cycle of poverty.

3. Participants.

The participants attending the W.O.T.S. Literacy Pilot - Program are from Camden City. Presently they are African Americans and Latinos and they were recruited by W.O.T.S. and Camden Community Connections through their STRIVE Program.

4. Community Role.

The community plays a very important part in the vitality of the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center. If Camden will ever recover from the economic, social, and environmental entrapment it is presently in, it will take the entire community to achieve this. To have a strong economy, we need a skilled and educated workforce, and the more people are able to participate in the economy, the stronger that economy is. The stakeholders in the community are Camden Community Connections who will provide the corporate design for W.O.T.S. Literacy Center. Other community players include the Workforce Investment Board, where the project will receive some funding and technical assistance, New Jersey State Parole will refer participants, Board of Social Services/TANF will refer participants, Camden County Correctional Facility will receive literature to give ex-convicts about the literacy program, and the Camden Board of Education will provide the parents of the school children with information about attending the literacy program. Reaching out to other civic and local organizations is a work in progress. The participants will access quality literacy training, job assistance, and supportive services. Finally, the community will give testimonials concerning the positive effect the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center is having in the community.

5. Host Organization.

The W.O.T.S. literacy pilot -program will be hosted by Camden Community Connections at their campus, located in Virtua Health – 5th Floor, 1000 Atlantic Avenue, Camden, New Jersey that will serve as the facility site. Camden Community Connections (CCC) is the major collaborator for the program. CCC is a youth services program that the Camden County Workforce Investment Board (CCWIB) helped launch in partnership with the Camden County Office of the Prosecutor through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Youth Services. They provide support services and support to at risk youth and youth offenders between the ages of 14-21 as an alternative to traditional juvenile justice, and corrections program experiences.

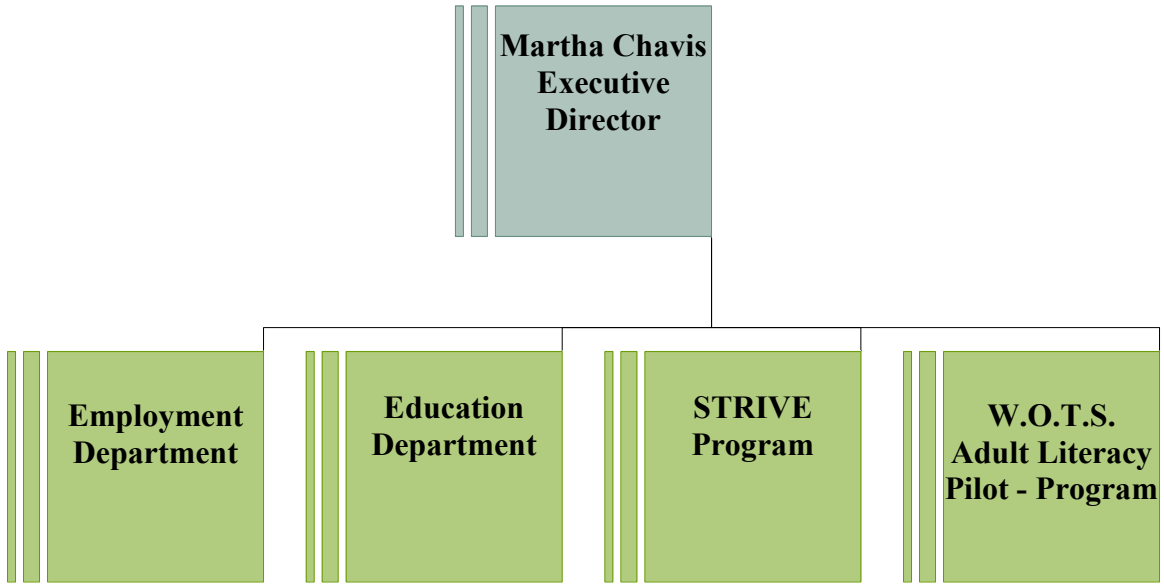
CCC utilizes a holistic curriculum approach linking employment, education and life skills. It includes assessments, one-on-one and small group classes and hands-on experiences. To reduce the likelihood of youth returning to the juvenile justice system, CCC identifies barriers to success and addresses related behaviors, thereby increasing the youth's chances for employment, success in alternative education programs, school retention and access to post-secondary education and technical training opportunities. CCC's community service activities, required that all of the youth participate, serves as the internship experience for participants to demonstrate their job readiness and basic skills knowledge. C.C.C. offers similar programs that are designed to prepare youth offenders with job readiness training, career direction, academic support, and job opportunities for today's labor market. Their programs provide individual and family counseling, and mentoring.

Twenty three organizations signed MOU's in support of this project. Named the Camden Community Connections, this project brings together the Juvenile Justice Agencies, the Faith Community, and the Workforce System. Partners include: Camden County Prosecutor's Office, Camden County, One-Stop System, Camden County Improvement Authority, Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse, Camden City Chamber of Commerce, Juvenile Drug Court, Camden County Workforce Investment Board, Camden City Police Department, Superior Court of New Jersey Probation Division, Camden County Resource Center, and Camden House. As seen, C.C.C. represents a network of organizations which aid in service delivery.

W.O.T.S's role is adult literacy intern for the literacy pilot - program, and to vie for funding from organizations to financially organize this project. Through the help of C.C.C. one initial RFP was awarded from Our Lady of Lourdes Health Foundation to fund the pilot – program.

6. Organizational Chart.

Camden Community Connections Host Organization



7. Method.

W.O.T.S. Adult Literacy pilot-program will be working under the tutelage of Martha Chavis the Executive Director of Camden Community Connections. Utilizing a cluster methodology, this project will explore the systematic approach of ascertaining funding for the literacy program, technical support, literacy classes, workplace stimulation, and employment status of participants.

8. Products and Outputs.

Goals	Outcomes
1. To provide 8 adults ages 18-35 with adult education instruction for two cycles / 14 weeks to determine progress in the W.O.T.S. Literacy Pilot-Program	Intake process assesses 8 adult participants. Testing determines placement. With literacy instruction participants read better.
2. Participants receive computer training by using Microsoft Word (i.e. writing letters, essays, and resumes).	Participants demonstrate basic computer skills.
3. Participants will engage in several classes of Life Skills Training using (biblical literacy) as the tool for broadening exposure to life circumstances and the world.	Participants engage in biblical literacy as a conduit for Life Skills Training (e.g., education, financial literacy, self-discipline, family relationships).
4. Retest to identify the participants ready for GED Preparation.	Participants who test (reading and math at a 9 th grade level) will begin to prepare for GED classes.
5. Participants engage in Community Service to broaden their exposure to their community.	Participants engage in Job Readiness Training for future job placement.
6. Participants prepare for Job Interviews (e.g., dress to impress, resumes prepared, holistic body care, and etc.).	8 adult participants acquire permanent good paying jobs

Quality of Literacy

The W.O.T.S. Literacy Program is a service program offering its participants hope for a better future. In fact we are “promoting hope.” Many residents do not even know they can have more. Many participants have not had exposure to many things others take for granted (e.g. the museum, a ballet, a ride in an airplane). Poverty is not only crippling but blinding. The outcomes of resident participation hope to reveal self awareness, promote a healthier life style, and appreciate the power of education.

IV. Implementation

PROJECT PLANNING

1. Implementation Plan.

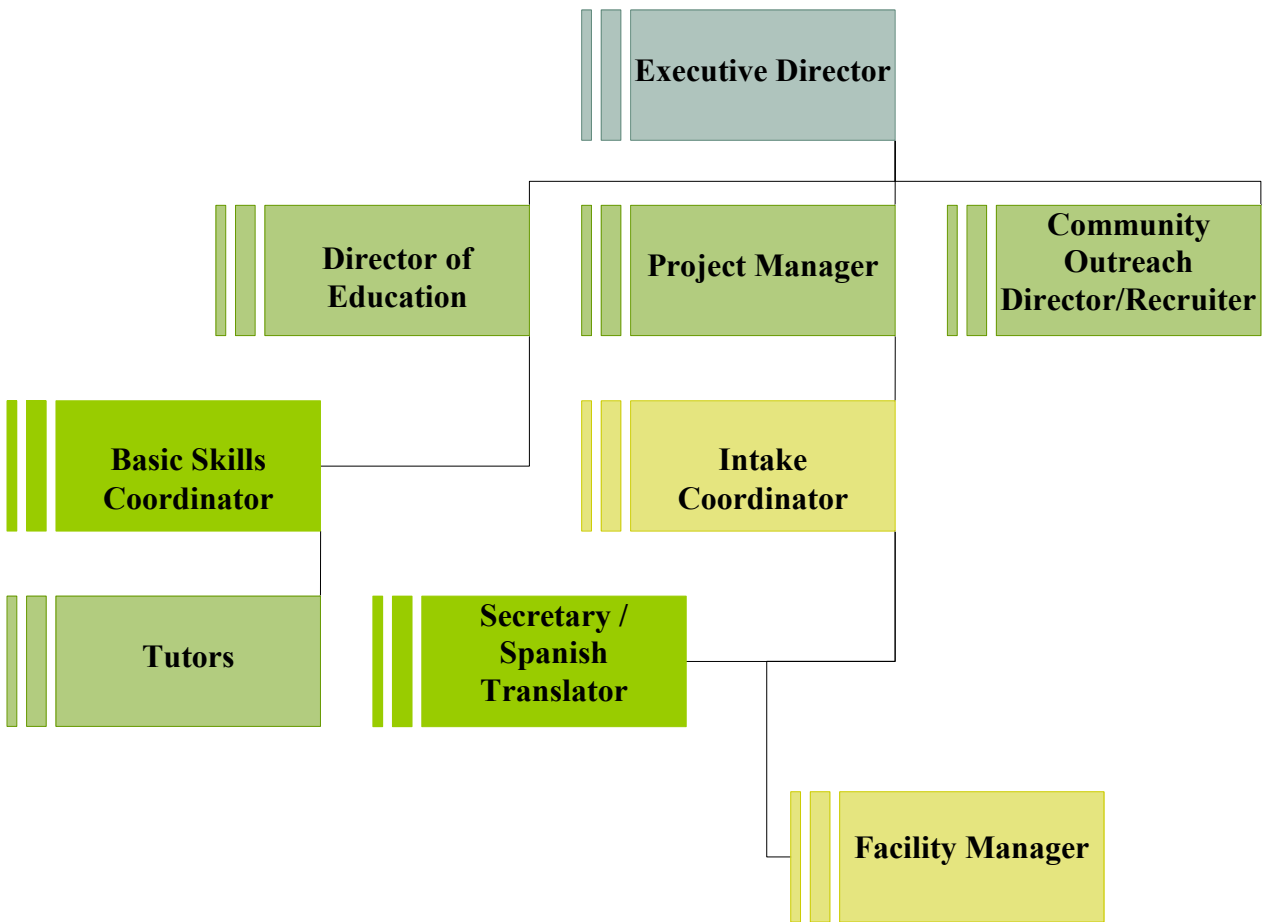
Objectives	Person Responsible & Resources Needed	Activities	Indicators	Results
1. Find funding Sources	Executive Director of CCC, business specialist, and grant writers	Executive Director of CCC provided a RFP Funding being sought from other foundations and public donors	Solicit funds from individual donors and funders	Increased number of private donors and funders giving to promote the literacy program
2. Find present / permanent building for program	W.O.T.S. Board, NJ Department of Ed., a realtor	Seek a realtor, community and municipal help to find a suitable building Begin looking to acquiring office and classroom equipment	Board taken to scout the building for the program Meeting with all finance people to establish purchasing limits	Organization obtains a permanent building for the program Building receives all permits and licenses for public occupation
3. Hire employees for job titles	W.O.T.S. Board, NJ Department of Ed., a realtor	Interview job candidates	Choose the most qualified candidate who lines up with the organizations vision	Person hired
4. Access Contracting Opportunities	President, Board, and Education Director	Meet with specialist for bid-matching	Participate in bid and solicitation opportunities Expand state involvement in Education Department	Increase market and financial base
5. Marketing	Program Director, Liaison of Community Affairs/Recruiter	Develop awareness of the W.O.T.S. Literacy program Purchase, print and circulate brochures and market materials about the program	Community receives information about the program Program publicized on the radio	Participates call inquiring about the program
6. DOL Workforce Assistance	Program Director, and Department of Social Services Referral of participants for the program	Meet with department specialist to obtain license	Vendor agreement signed and instituted	Increased ability for competitiveness
7. Program Execution	Program Director and Staff	Morning debriefing and departmental meetings set up with directors	All staff report for meetings, discussing the vision of the organization	Corporate enthusiasm

2. Inputs.

- ❖ Eligibility process
- ❖ Program Orientation
- ❖ Individual Assessment
- ❖ 2-4 hour sessions toward literacy training weekly
- ❖ 1 hours of math classes weekly
- ❖ 1 hour of life skills training classes weekly
- ❖ 1 hour of computer literacy classes weekly
- ❖ 14 weeks of training per cycle
- ❖ Counseling (if needed)
- ❖ Dollars per student

3. Staffing Pattern.

Way of the Spirit Ministries, International (W.O.T.S.) decided at the start that managerial positions be created to ensure a leadership structure to oversee the daily operation of the W.O.T.S. Literacy Program. Interested persons were required to submit a letter, listing their qualifications and explaining why they wanted to become a part of the managerial team. The Board reviewed each request and a decision on each position was reached by consensus. W.O.T.S. management structure will consists of the following positions.



*See APPENDIX C – *Staff Job Descriptions*

4. BUDGET.

W.O.T.S. LITERACY PILOT - PROGRAM	
<i>SOURCE OF FUNDING</i>	
FORD FOUNDATION	\$250,000.00
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY	\$40,000.00
OUR LADY OF LOURDES HEALTH FOUNDATION	\$1,500.00
PRIVATE DONORS	\$160,000.00
IN-KIND DONATIONS	\$125,000.00
TOTAL	\$576,500.00
<i>EXPENSES</i>	
STAFF	\$320,000.00
FOOD	\$5,000.00
TRANSPORTATION	\$40,000.00
TRAINING MATERIALS	\$10,000.00
EQUIPMENT	\$25,000.00
LICENSE & PERMITS	\$1,000.00
INSURANCE	\$3,500.000
RENT	\$12,000.00
TELEPHONE & COMMUNICATIONS	\$3,600.00
UTILITIES	\$6,000.000
OTHER	\$2,000.00
TOTAL	\$422,500.00
<i>NET PROFIT</i>	\$ 154,000.00

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

5. Project Implementation Report.

This report will address three elements of reporting for the implementation of this pilot – program: task, implementation and resources and responsibilities. The TASK will address the service delivery of the program, the IMPLEMENTATION will address the time frame of the program, any funders and the completion of the program, the RESOURCES/RESPONSIBILITY will address the host site, information gathered to access the program, and future activities for the President and Board of W.O.T.S.

TASK: The program provided literacy skills for adult participants for 2 cycles per 14 weeks. We computed weekly reports for participants to assess their growth and to determine if the program was beneficial. A record and time table was used to complete the evaluation of the program. Since Martha Chavis is coaching the program's intern the program will also be evaluated by the Executive Director of Camden Community Connections. Due to the fact that the program is a pilot it will be needful to research funders and technical assistance for help to set up the on going program and to seek help with fundraising to acquire monies for the organization.

IMPLEMENTATION: W.O.T.S. literacy pilot-program provided the classes beginning September 6, 2006 and ending April 10, 2007. From a collection of diagnostic test, computer lab reports and written practice papers the benchmarks can be carry out. A complete evaluation of the program will be evaluated by the Executive Director of Camden Community Connections. This will serve to address any funders questions concerning C.C.C. hosting the pilot – program, and to satisfy our Advanced Ruling with the IRS. Continue to apply for monies through RFP's, public, and private donors.

RESOURCES/RESPONSIBILITY: Program site provided by Camden Community Connections. Pilot – program required one teacher experienced in English (lifelong learning), and one tutor experienced in teaching math, both were provided for the program. The intern's responsibility will be to gather all the instrument's used and compare them against the New Jersey Core Curriculum Context Standards and Cumulative Progress Indicators. For adult literacy programs New Jersey uses (TABE Test, a NJ certified tool) to identify the participants literacy growth. The intern from W.O.T.S. will finalize the written evaluation and then the Executive Director of Camden Community Connections will examine the findings and make a written report if needed to Southern New Hampshire University, School of Community Economic Development. Intern will submit a written proposal to the W.O.T.S. Board to establish a plan for fundraising. Finally it will be the President and the Board's responsibility to acquire a place for the program to officially open and operate.

6. Project Implementation Gantt Chart.

Gantt chart provided to outline time and operational direction:

<i>TIMEFRAME</i>	Sept '06	Oct '06	Nov '06	Dec '06	Jan '07	Feb '07	Mar '07	Apr '07	May '07
TASK									
<i>service delivery of program</i>									
<i>acquire benchmarks</i>									
<i>evaluation of the program</i>									
IMPLEMENTATION									
<i>time frame of the program includes months program was active</i>									
<i>funders include any RFP awarded</i>									
<i>completion of the program</i>									
RESOURCES/RESPONSIBILITY									
<i>host site at CCC</i>									
<i>information gathered to access the program</i>									
<i>future activities for the President and Board of W.O.T.S.</i>									
<i>acquire space or a building</i>									

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

MONITORING

1. Management Information System

Assessment of the literacy pilot – program will allow the intern to track the reading progress of the participants, compare the effectiveness of different teaching methods, and to examine the value of various materials used. The ends results of monitoring these activities will allow the intern to judge the value of the program, to evaluate its effectiveness, and to make necessary improvements. It also enables the intern (teacher) to address adult students’ learning problems and find ways to effectively deal with those problems. The forecasting needed to catalog the MIS for the adult literacy pilot - program involves addressing three questions: How did we gather the monitoring information? How did we create a management information system? What did we include in it?

How did we gather the monitoring information needed to keep the project on schedule, anticipate problems, measure progress and set the stage to evaluate program success? For this intern evaluation was an afterthought. It was not stressed the importance of setting up a plan that would need to be evaluated at the end of this pilot – program. Initially if I was instructed to look at several evaluation questions before the process of teaching I would have structured my program differently. Questions like; why are we evaluating? What are we evaluating? How are we evaluating? And, how well have we evaluated?

Shrouded in misunderstanding the program continued with a structured curriculum that was implemented. We used “We All Can Read” a step-by-step intensive phonics program for teaching anyone to read and spell by James E. Williams (2003), along with other instructional teaching products. These products were incorporated with homework lab, computer self-pace learning and traditional teacher-student classroom activities. The participants upon arrival were to sign in the attendance sheet that reported their name and sign in time. This allowed us to keep track of their attendance and whether or not they were late. Adult learners have so many other problems affecting their lives mainly in part to low literacy levels, which cause many to be consistently late or absent. This is the number one problem causing a major gap in the performance of the program. Solutions for this problem haven’t as yet been found.

Progress of the program was measured (1) by asking how effective the instruction was for the day, and (2) by retesting to see if they have advanced at least one grade higher at the end of the teaching cycle. Adults see learning somewhat different than children. Learning for them takes on a varied system of engagement.

How did we create a management information system to collect and report project data that enabled us to monitor project performance? We created a MIS of (enrolled and active) by (1) mapping their educational level and employability skills. This produced identification of their education and employment skill needs through on-the-spot observation, assessments and one-on-one interactions (2) pairing participants with one-on-one tutors who will aid them in their learning instruction, (3) utilize various education and employment enhancement tools on an as needed basis, and (4) participants take the W.O.T.S. literacy survey.

What did we include in it? Monitoring is a continuous process. To effectively monitor an adult literacy program the instructors must keep a watchful eye on student's body language. This alerts the instructor to emotional problems that may be going on in the participant's life. Stress will produce an inactive learning environment and create an atmosphere of unproductive learning. Apart from this the instructor can generally gage a participant's achievement and successes in reading and writing activities for the day.

The literacy-focused assessment data included for this project is the standardized test (TABE Test, a NJ certified tool), and alternative assessments (such as samples of student's work and observations of participant's reading and writing performance). Monitoring the project will also include analyzing this information to determine if the program is meeting the needs of our participants. In *Monitoring the School Literacy Program*, Effective monitoring practices are necessary for maintaining a quality literacy environment. "All teachers need ways to determine what students are learning and the progress they are making. This information provides the basis for making decisions, planning instructional activities and experiences, and distinguishing effective from ineffective procedures," Cooper (1997, p.513).

2. Summary Monitoring Table

The monitoring plan ensures that the literacy pilot-program implements the mission of the W.O.T.S. Organization.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<p>Literacy Center is officially open to the residents of Camden County</p> <p>Participants hear about the literacy program and enroll in the program</p> <p>Estimate the number of participants expected to enroll in each program cycle</p>	<p>Participants will demonstrate a real interest in obtaining literacy education</p> <p>Secondary schools become active stakeholders for W.O.T.S.</p>	<p>Enrollment records (enrollments, and dropouts)</p> <p>Average daily attendance records (for students and teachers)</p> <p>Transcripts (from last attended school or last attended public problem)</p> <p>Participants records (participants demographics)</p>
<p>Participants receive the best literacy help structured for each individual</p>	<p>Participants are tested to determine their entrance level and the best program to assist them</p>	<p>Standardized achievement test (TABE)</p> <p>Computer testing system (DESTINATION)</p>
<p>Literacy curriculum produces a fully coordinated literacy program</p>	<p>Provide the necessary curriculum components, including topics, of each course/program</p>	<p>Program modules</p>

Summary Monitoring Table (cont'd)

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
Participants receive counseling to help deal with problem solving and decision making	Participants receiving counseling expand their availability for an organized referral network	Counselors' records (development of improving low self-esteem)
Participants are rewarded for observing and adhering to the programs rules and code of conduct	Participants are scored on their behavior, dress policy, and late or absenteeism	Disciplinary action records (referrals, infractions, and suspensions)
Participants obtain high school diploma/GED Participants take the W.O.T.S. Literacy Benefits Survey to access community needs, and other surveys to judge the programs value and approach by the participants	Academic progress by a minimum of one grade level per 14 week cycle X 2 cycles	Participants achieve their academic goals (scores and the proportion of students taking the test) Participants follow-up surveys (overall value of program, employment and wage rates and further education)
Monitoring the literacy program produces best practices	Participants receive follow-up visits from program recruiters and identify the success or failure of the participant	Follow-up/tracking participants
To work with instructors to identify factors in the program that affect the participants achievement in learning to read	Display beliefs, behaviors and practices that are supportive of adult learners	Foster learner-centered instruction while demonstrating empathy, patience, and support
Funding is provided through public, private, and federal dollars	Funding is acquired for the establishing of the program	Funds and expenditures (per pupil expenditure trends)
Participants are engaged in the learning process and hope is restored in their lives	Participants understand the judicial system and stay out of trouble	Low recidivism rate

EVALUATION

3. Performance Indicators

The performance indicator system is designed to support continuous program improvement. To assure the W.O.T.S. Literacy Program will work; this system used will help to identify strengths and weaknesses and generates discussion about causes and appropriate improvement strategies. Listed below are the performance indicator systems that will produce evidence demonstrating whether our strategies are working or need restructuring.

- enrollment records (enrollments, and dropouts)
- average daily attendance records (for students, teachers, and administrators)
- transcripts (from last attended school)
- participants records (participants demographics, and any extracurricular activities)
- standardized achievement test scores (TABE NJ instrument tool used for adults)
- (DESTINATION) computer testing system
- program modules
- counselors records (development of improving low self-esteem)
- disciplinary action records (referrals, infractions, and suspensions)
- participants follow-up surveys (overall value of program, employment and wage rates and further education)
- county college entrance exams (scores and the proportion of students taking the test)
- funds and expenditures (per pupil expenditure trends)
- community surveys or needs assessment
- follow-up/tracking participants
- low recidivism rate

These performance indicators were adopted by the W.O.T.S. pilot-program and are the standards used by Camden Community Connections, Camden, New Jersey for their adjudicated youth program. These indicators are classified according to the rate their funding sources pay for each participant being served. The funding source performance benchmarks are for:

- ❖ Enrollment - # of participants recruited
- ❖ Participation - # of participants in program daily
- ❖ Retention - # of participants in literacy classes or training
- ❖ Placement - # of participants high school diploma or job
- ❖ Follow-up - # of participants in contact over 2 yrs.

4. Summary Evaluation Table

The W.O.T.S. literacy pilot-program will employ appropriate evaluation and reporting processes. The evaluation will be culturally sensitive, appropriate to the task at hand, and require participants to perform, create, and produce on the level appropriate to each learner. An effective evaluation for our project will include:

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	ACTUAL OUTCOMES
Enrollment - # of participants recruited	8 adults enroll for the literacy program	75% = 6 adults	Expect 6 adults to start
Participation - # of participants in program daily	8 adults participate in the program daily	↓	Expect 6 adults to participate in program daily
Retention - # of participants in literacy classes or training	8 adults remain in the literacy class and training class	↓	Expect 6 adults to remain active and participate in literacy classes or training
Placement - # of participants high school diploma or job	8 adults are placed for the GED or job placement	24% = 3 adults	Expect 3 adults to prepare for placement for the GED or job placement
Follow-up - # of participants in contact over 2 yrs.	8 adults are followed up and contacted over 2 yrs.	90% = 7 adults	Expect to contact 7 adults over 2 yrs.

Successful implementation of new project activities like the literacy pilot-program can often become problematic due to program uncertainties. Use of a formative evaluation allows any reader to track not only the progress of the program but view the evidence. This evaluation report will identify the results of this on-going program and report the evidence of its findings. The evaluation is divided into two segments, formative evaluation and reporting and participatory evaluation.

FORMATIVE EVALUATION and REPORTING will:

- reflect the learning objectives
- focus on what participants have learned and can do
- be congruent with instruction and be based on meaningful tasks
- be based on appropriate criteria that participants know and understand
- reflect a range of tools and methods of assessment and evaluation
- provide multiple opportunities and ways for participants to demonstrate their learning
- be ongoing and continuous
- inform practice and instructional decisions
- inform others in a clear, accurate, and practical structure
- include the community survey
- personal interview with two participants

PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION:

COMMUNITY-LITERACY BENEFITS SURVEY

Riverfront State Prison held their fourth annual job fair “New Beginning” on Thursday, December 7, 2007. The location of the Job Fair was at Riverfront State Prison, Delaware and Elm Street, Camden, New Jersey. W.O.T.S. was asked to participate through their Education Department in which, our organization was permitted to perform our Community-Literacy Benefits Survey. This survey can be found in the APPENDICES. We chose a random sampling of prisoners to take the survey. Of the thirty questions asked these identified below are the ones that will be reported to show the correlation between illiteracy and incarceration.

#10- How far did you go in school? 89% went above the 8th grade, 5% went to 8-10th grade, 5%, went only to the 4th grade

#13- What is your household income? 91% reported below \$20,000 annually before incarceration

#16- What quality of life do you have? Only 44% reported good

#17- Has involvement with drugs or alcohol affected your life? 85% reported it was the reason for their incarceration

#20- Do you believe education will get you a better job? 100% said yes

#28- What is your age? 84% were between 25-40 years old

#29- Have you been praying about a change in your life? 100% said yes

#30- What are the most important things to you? 90% reported reuniting with their family and getting more education for a better job

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH THREE PARTICIPANTS

Three participants agreed to be interviewed by the W.O.T.S. intern. Before beginning this task each participant was briefed on what the questions would entail. For the purpose of confidentiality the surname of each participant was withheld.

Question #1 – *Solivette what has the program done for you?*

“I’m reading more, spelling and writing more frequently. My self-esteem was very low; you helped me build my confidence. Now I’m able to do more community work. I can be more out spoken. Not being able to read holds me back. I had a day care center in my home. I did it for five years but the state program required us to fill out so many forms. At first, I got help from people to do the forms but then the state kept sending more and paperwork. Then the classes they wanted us to take required more and more reading, and I knew I could not read in front of those people. I was afraid they would catch me doing something wrong. I couldn’t read what was on the paper. It was just too much for me so I had to let the day care go. But I still love kids.”

Question #2 – *Solivette what have I done for you?*

“You are very patient and clear about whatever the topic is. You make sure we understand what you are teaching. That’s important to me because it’s no good if I read it but don’t understand it. It’s important that I understand. My children are teenagers but they tell me how proud they are of me. I tell them Ms. Ry has done this. She works with me and gives me the confidence to not be afraid.”

Question #1 – *Barbara what has the program done for you?*

“The program helped me because I had no one to help bring it out of me. I thought I couldn’t learn now I’m learning. I try to take my time and I stopped fearing, I’m not scared to do anything. My confidence level is up because I can do it! I’m very thankful for the program, to help people like us.”

Question #2 – *Barbara what have I done for you?*

“You are patient and you show concern for us. You call us and make sure we are coming to the classes. You listen to what we have to say. I learned how to read my Bible a little better. Before I didn’t know what the Bible said even though I go to church. Now I can find my own scriptures in my own Bible. I filled out a job application and got hired at a restaurant.”

Question #1 – *Cindy what has the program done for you?*

“I think the program is good, you really try to help me a lot. You help me learn words I didn’t know. What you teach us stays in my head, like when you made us look up words; I was surprised at what they mean. I would tell people where to come if they have problems reading like me. Some people will be shy so if they come here it wouldn’t be uncomfortable.”

Question #2 – *Cindy what have I done for you?*

“You help me pronounce words so I can read the word. Basically, I see words and I try to read it. I think you are a great teacher, you tell us what is true or what’s not true.”

The positive remarks from the participant’s are evidence that the literacy pilot-program was a definite success. Human service programs are often difficult to evaluate however, the participant’s reports from surveys or personal written letters and interviews are testimonies to the programs effect on the participants who live in their community.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENTS

We will continue to seek the input and involvement from W.O.T.S. members, leaders and stakeholders, as the organization grows and realizes our mission, vision, and goals.

The state of affairs involved for creating sustainability for the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center will be:

- ❖ financial – businesses planned within the Center that will generate revenue
- ❖ political – support from other state, county, and city agencies
- ❖ social – programs provided for every age, and segment of the community

2. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The sustainability plan for the W.O.T.S. Literacy Center has been carefully thought out from the initial incorporating of the organization. With the initiation of the literacy pilot-program the dream of creating a quality literacy agency has now been realized. The Centre for Development and Population Activities/Project Design Training Manual (1994) gives strategies for organizations seeking sustainability. Below is a list of the strategies for sustainability that will be in use at our Center.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:

- ❖ Set up several programs that will be fee for services.
- ❖ Approach other donors – national and international.
- ❖ Initiate income-gathering projects.
- ❖ Get in-kind services from other organizations and form networks to conduct collaborative intervention.
- ❖ Have cross-subsidiaries between projects.
- ❖ Initiate self-sustaining activities to raise funds for your own organization.
- ❖ Provide technical assistance to other organizations.
- ❖ Solicit in-kind support from the corporate sector.
- ❖ Obtain project support from the corporate sector.

POLITICAL SUSTAINABILITY:

- ❖ Gain government support for the project and the organization
- ❖ Gain community support for the project and the organization.
- ❖ Complement and supplement long-term policies.
- ❖ Network and collaborate with other organizations.
- ❖ Form pressure groups in collaboration with other organizations.
- ❖ Lobby for the cause.
- ❖ Hold advocacy meetings for the issue and contact the media to publicize project activities.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:

- ❖ Provided programs for every age, and segment of the community.
- ❖ Build a strong volunteer base from retired persons, high school, college, and university students.
- ❖ Create partnerships/collaboration with public, private and non-profit agencies.

3. INSTITUTIONAL PLAN

Camden Community Connections (CCC) will not be able to sustain the literacy program for W.O.T.S. Since W.O.T.S. is an educational organization this would create competition and hinder the funding for the CCC organization due to their mission. CCC is a workforce organization through the U.S. Department of Labor and the mission of W.O.T.S. would create a conflict of interest. For that reason these terms listed are intended to function and be used by staff and volunteers to help design and implement work plans that will be revisited by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. To initiate and sustain the programs at W.O.T.S. Literacy Center we will:

- ❖ Develop an institutional vision, mission, and values.
- ❖ Develop technical competency among staff.
- ❖ Develop institutional evaluation systems.
- ❖ Conduct performance reviews.
- ❖ Be flexible and adapt to the changing internal and external environments.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS TIMELINE (As of MAY 1, 2007)

MAY through DECEMBER, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant Criteria ▪ Goals setting & strategic planning with BOARD ▪ Review market demand ▪ TANF regulations ▪ MIS setup & Evaluation Reporting
MAY, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Become more visible to community ▪ Meet with community organizers ▪ Set up program for literacy classes ▪ Seek funding for literacy programs
JUNE, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit for literacy participants
JULY, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit volunteers for up-coming Literacy Festival ▪ Interview teachers & participants
AUGUST, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop evaluation systems
SEPTEMBER, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Host annual Literacy Festival ▪ Host literacy classes
OCTOBER, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan for Board Retreat
NOVEMBER, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess strategic plan
DECEMBER, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disseminate institutional strategic plan

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RESULTS

Since the intern is the president of W.O.T.S. it was advantages to be instructed in the proper way of operating a non-profit organization. Therefore, the initial goal for performing the internship at Camden Community Connections was to be coached by the Executive Director Martha Chavis and this did not change the life of the project. However, many new objectives were recognized during that time. The four questions below give a brief summation of objectives that were fully or partially achieved.

1. What knowledge was learned by the intern?

Developing all the elements needed for running a literacy program was provided through the internship at Camden Community Connections. Working with the Education Department exposed the intern to program operations (e.g. recruiting, in-take procedures, diagnostic testing, class placement, GED instruction, and small group instruction, one-to-tutorial instruction, stipend payments, program cycling, reaching benchmarks, and case management). Through the Employment Department participants received Job Readiness Training; interviewing techniques, resume writing and job etiquette. Participants were introduced to community non-profit organizations that supplied their clothing needs for job interviews. Job recruitment is encouraged for all participants in the programs. Job fairs are hosted regularly sometimes at the campus or surrounding cities. Recruiting people for the program was the difficult part, and keeping the participants was even more difficult. Observation revealed that organizations are built upon the direct result of the manager's ability to recognize talent, motivate and supervise the staff. The success of an organization is the result of good leadership. The organization must also have good legal representation, because anything is liable to happen when dealing with the public. This objective was fully achieved.

2. What skills were developed by the intern?

Organizational skills were the greatest benefit obtained for being in this pilot-program. Specifically, observing the executive director in a constantly changing environment. Genuine collaboration among organizations was demonstrated at the W.O.T.S. 3rd Annual Literacy Festival. This demonstrated broad support is a benefit when hosting a community event. Finally, a grant was awarded to fund the pilot-program. This objective was fully achieved.

3. What attitudes were formed by the intern?

Running a non-profit organization can be very rewarding but not necessarily easy. If you don't have passion for what you are doing the weight of providing service and dealing

with staff and participants attitudes can become a stumbling block. This objective came over time through the project and originally no task was initiated.

4. What were the intern's reactions to the whole experience?

Upon entering the program with no experience and with no foundation to build upon, it was necessary to be open to the learning experience. The experience was very, very rewarding and the passion to perform is still vibrant. This objective became a part of the project as the project became a reality. It wasn't originally an objective but the experience was worth noting.

Presently, to assess the success of the program nothing could have been done any differently given the amount of time the pilot-program was initiated. Actually all elements of the program were completed. What needs to happen now is to secure funding, find space for the program, and recruit participants for our first class. The outcomes for the pilot-program were successfully completed. This objective was fully achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To start up a business requires some management skills. It has been said if God gives you the vision He will give you the provision. There is value to having an adult literacy program for the residents in Camden, NJ and the participants proved it. However, it is advisable to have experience in administrative management, policy and procedures of a non-profit organization before attempting such a feat.

The participants came daily with problems and issues they had to face; realizing when they came they would be greeted by the friendly face of the intern. Non-literate adults amass many problems due to illiteracy. The pilot-program demonstrated the participants desire to effect change in their lives. The adults stated, "that if they had more education they could accomplish more." You must be committed to be a servant to the people in your community.

If anyone desires to start a literacy program, research the community to determine the need and then enroll in Southern New Hampshire University.