

# **The Economic Impact of Public Libraries on South Carolina**



A study prepared by:

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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Study Background and Acknowledgements</b>	
• <b>Rationale for the Study</b>	<b>6</b>
• <b>The Research Literature on the     Economic Impact of Public Libraries</b>	<b>7</b> <b>8</b>
• <b>Research Team and Acknowledgements</b>	
<b>Study Methods and Procedures</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Summary of Findings from Surveys of Public Library Users</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Summary of Findings from Analysis of Public Library Statistics</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix A: Detailed Findings from Surveys</b>	
• <b>General Adult Users</b>	<b>16</b>
• <b>Business Users</b>	<b>20</b>
• <b>Personal Investors</b>	<b>23</b>
• <b>Job Seekers</b>	<b>26</b>
• <b>Selected Qualitative Responses</b>	<b>28</b>
• <b>Selected Homeschooling Responses</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendix B: Detailed Findings from Analysis of Public Library Statistics</b>	
• <b>Direct Economic Impact</b>	<b>57</b>
• <b>Indirect Economic Impact</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Appendix C: Selected Research Literature</b>	<b>62</b>

## **Executive Summary and Key Findings**

Taxpayers rightfully want to understand what benefits they receive from the tax dollars that they entrust to South Carolina governments. Public libraries are one of the institutions supported by these tax dollars. The purpose of the study reported here was to determine economic benefit of public libraries for South Carolinians and to what extent they feel the public library contributes to their overall economic wellbeing.

A variety of approaches have been used in the United States and internationally to study the benefits that public libraries bring to those who fund or support them. These efforts also have a variety of names: economic impacts, economic benefits, return on investment (ROI), taxpayer benefit, and so forth. The study techniques have generally involved analysis of surveys of users/non-users of public libraries, analysis of use statistics collected by the libraries, and a combination of the two techniques. This study used a combined approach.

The study consisted of two phases. The first phase was to gather and analyze data directly from users to determine their perceived value of South Carolina public libraries in four areas: General Use, Use for Business, Use for Personal Investment, and Use for Job Seeking. This was a general population, self-selected sample of individuals who came into public libraries or visited the public library web sites during March 2004. The argument for using this sample is that the perceptions of those who make use of a service provide a good measure of its value. The actual value or impact of such services would be difficult if not impossible to identify or measure with available methodologies. March was selected because it usually is considered to be an “average use” month with fewer holidays, school opening or closing, and other special events that could affect the use of public libraries during other months.

Among the findings are indications that the public library:

- Improves overall quality of life: 92% said yes
- Increases local property values: 47% said yes
- Attracts new businesses to the community: 38% said yes
- Attracts patronage to local businesses: 44% said yes
- Enhanced personal fulfillment: 73% said yes
- Nurtures a love of reading: 73% said yes
- Is a source of personal enjoyment: 64% said yes
- Helps manage personal finances or saved money: 32% said yes

- Helped to obtain a new job: 11% said yes
- Helped improved or start business: 15% said yes
- Helped with a business opportunity: 25% said yes
- Assisted workers to be more productive their job: 37% said yes
- Introduced users to new technologies: 28% said yes
- Helped users with primary education work: 18% said yes
- Helped users with life-long learning: 47% said yes
- Contributed to their home schooling efforts: 12% said yes
- 49% of business users indicated that they obtained most of the business/research information from their public library
- 78% of business users indicated that information obtained from the public library contributed to the success of their business
- Without access to the information in their public library, 23% of the business users indicated that they estimated their cost would increase between \$500 and \$5,000 and 7% estimated costs would increase by \$5,000
- 41% of business users said that if they did not have access to the public library it would have some negative impact and 33% said it would have a major negative impact on their business
- 59% of personal investors said they obtained the information needed for making investment decisions from their public library
- 48% said “definitely” the investment information at the public library had contributed to their financial well-being and 34% said “somewhat”
- 32% of the respondents said the dollar value of the information obtained from the public library was between \$10,000 and \$1 million and 2% said over \$1 million

In the second phase of the project, the Study Team used existing data from the South Carolina State Library to demonstrate a monetary equivalent of the services provided by South Carolina libraries. Among those findings are the following:

- (1) The direct economic impact of all SC public library expenditures is \$80 million
- (2) The existence of SC public libraries brings to the state (from federal and private sources) almost \$5 million each year that it would not otherwise have.
- (3) The value of the loans and use of books, videos, cassettes, CDs, newspapers, magazines, etc. to users each year is approximately \$102 million.
- (4) The value of reference services to users in SC each year is approximately \$26 million.
- (5) The total direct economic impact of SC public libraries is estimated at \$222 million, while the actual cost of these services to the state and local

governments is only \$77.5 million. This means that for every \$1 spent by state and local governments on SC public libraries the return on investment is \$2.86.

- (6) The indirect economic impact of SC public library expenditures (wages, supplies, books and related materials, construction, etc.) on the state's economy is almost \$126 million. This means that for every \$1 expended by SC public libraries, the state receives \$1.62 of indirect economic impact.
- (7) The total direct and indirect return on investment for every \$1 expended on the state's public libraries by SC state and local governments is \$4.48—almost 350%!

## **Background and Rationale for the Study**

As a public service to the library and information profession and the people of South Carolina, faculty from the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS), University of South Carolina (USC) offered their research expertise to the South Carolina Association of Public Library Administrators (APLA) gratis to conduct a study of the economic impact of public libraries in South Carolina. The project came as a response to a suggestion from the most recent reaffirmation of accreditation review of SLIS by the American Library Association (ALA), Committee on Accreditation (COA). The Committee indicated that members of the public library community had expressed the concern that SLIS was not working as closely with that part of the profession as they were with others (i.e., providing research assistance, consultation, and professional development). The study was undertaken in part to demonstrate the School's continued interest and commitment to the public library community, and also because the topic is of national interest, offers faculty members the opportunity to engage in meaningful scholarship that is of personal interest, and provides a public service to the State. APLA agreed to participate fully in the study and cover the relatively moderate costs of making the findings and report available to the public.

In 2002, the Moore School of Business produced a report, *The Economic Impact of the Cultural Industry on the State of South Carolina* (<http://research.moore.sc.edu/Research/studies/CulturalInd/cult2002.pdf>). While libraries were mentioned as having a positive role to play, their inclusion in the report was minimal, and it offered limited evidence to describe the specific economic benefits or impact that public libraries offer the people of South Carolina.

Jim Brazell of the Moore School of Business, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) says that about 28,000 small businesses start up each year in SC, but only about 3-4,000 actually use the services of the SBDC. They push the use of libraries, but do not have any data to demonstrate actual or perceived value of the public libraries for small businesses. One of the purposes of this study was to gather information that later

can be used in as advocacy for these small businesses to make better use of these potentially beneficial resources.

## **The Research Literature on the Economic Impact of Public Libraries**

A variety of approaches have been used in the United States and internationally to study the benefits that public libraries bring to those who fund or support them. These efforts also have a variety of names: economic impacts, economic benefits, return on investment (ROI), taxpayer benefit, and so forth. The study techniques have generally involved analysis of surveys of users/non-users of public libraries, analysis of use statistics collected by the libraries, and a combination of the two techniques. This study used a combined approach.

A review of the research literature on the impacts/benefits of public libraries shows that no one approach has become dominant. When an economic modeling approach has been used, two techniques have been emphasized: “consumer surplus” and “contingent valuation.” Consumer surplus measures the value a consumer (or public library user) places on a good or service in excess of what they must pay to get it. It is particularly appropriate for measuring the value of a specific library service, such as video/DVD loans, a service available from commercial outlets as well as most public libraries. The willingness of a library user to purchase this substitute good when the library service is not available is measured (through the use of survey instruments) and summed, and repeated for other services. The contingent valuation approach consists of two measures: willingness to accept (WTA) and willingness to pay (WTP). In WTA, library users are asked how much money—usually in lower taxes—they would accept to give up library services. In WTP, users are asked how much they would pay to have a service (or a library) they do not have. Again, both techniques often use questionnaires or interviews. Researchers studying public libraries have found that the WTA approach is less reliable than WTP since users often are unable to respond. In general, this study has not taken an economic modeling approach, though selected questions used in it have been taken from these studies.

Surveys of users and non-users of public libraries have also been used by researchers in several different studies. This approach usually involves the selection of a random sample of users/non-users and asking them various demographic and use/non-use of their local public library. Questions may be asked of specific types of users (general public, business information users, children, parents, teachers, etc.) to determine how use/non-use varies. Questions may also include probing about the impacts that their library has had on life-style, economic advantages gained by use, value of the library to the community, and so forth. The survey approaches used by these researchers have also been employed as one of the two major techniques used in this study.

Because libraries are systematic collectors of statistical information about the uses of their facilities and services, researchers have made considerable use of these data in various studies of the impact or benefit of the library to the community. These studies range from simple calculations to determine per user cost of services to sophisticated analysis of value based on such things as user time, effort, replacement value, new funding in the community because of the existence of the library, economic impacts of construction, and purchase of services by the library. This study uses this approach as the second of the two major techniques used to calculate the value of public libraries to South Carolina taxpayers. (For citations to the research literature used in this study see Appendix C.)

## **Research Team and Acknowledgements**

Dr. Robert Williams and Dr. Dan Barron, were the primary investigators during the study and were joined by other SLIS faculty members, Dr. Stephen Bajjaly and Dr. Jennifer Arns along with their Graduate Research Assistants. A research team was assembled composed of these faculty along with representatives from the public library community, Dr. Curtis Rogers, Director of Library Development, State Library of South Carolina and Valerie Rowe-Jackson, Associate Director for Strategic Planning, Richland County Public Library. The primary representatives of APLA representatives were Beverly James, Director, Greenville County Library; Dwight McInvaill, Director,

Georgetown County Library; Prudence Taylor, Director, Greenwood County Library; and Norris Wootton, Director, Williamsburg County Library.

Todd Stephens, Director, Spartanburg Public Library and President of APLA assisted the Research Team to remain in close contact with APLA, whose participation provided input and feedback to procedures, data gathering instruments, and field-testing from the initial discussion to reporting stages.

Padgett Lewis, graphic artist from Richland County Public Library provided the logo. Libby Law of the State Library of South Carolina provided access to the data that are gathered regularly from all South Carolina Public Libraries for annual statistical and logistical reports. This includes reporting to the Federal/State Cooperative Survey (FSCS) (<http://www.nclis.gov/statsurv/surveys/fscs/aboutFSCS/aboutFSCS.html> ).

Steven Wilson, Research Assistant, SLIS created the data gathering instruments in Flashlight and provided the initial analysis of the data gathered.

Dr. Charles McClure, Francis Eppes Professor and Director, Information Use Management and Policy Institute of the School of Information Studies, Florida State University was generous in allowing the Study Team to adapt procedures and instruments he developed for a similar study of public libraries in Florida, as reported in Charles R. McClure, Jane B. Robbins, and Bruce T. Fraser, *Economic Benefits And Impacts From Public Libraries In The State Of Florida*, (<http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/finalreport/> ).

The Division of Library Development, New York State Library reports a somewhat similar study in a brochure that was used by the Project Team for graphic ideas and initial phases of the study. A copy of their brochure may be found at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/stackup.htm> .

At the national level, the Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC) released *Libraries: How They Stack Up* in 2003. This “provides a snapshot of the economic impact of libraries worldwide. The report contains interesting comparisons of library economics and activities to other sectors, professions and destinations in the global

economy.” The brochure may be found at <http://www.oclc.org/reports/2003libsstackup.htm>.

## **Study Methods and Procedures**

The study consisted of two phases. The first phase was to gather and analyze data directly from users to determine their perceived value of South Carolina public libraries in four areas: General Use, Use for Business, Use for Personal Investment, and Use for Job Seeking. This was a general population, self-selected sample of individuals who came into public libraries or visited the public library web sites during the March 2004. The argument for using this sample is that the perceptions of those who make use of a service provide a good measure of its value. The actual value or impact of such services would be difficult if not impossible to identify or measure with available methodologies. March was selected because it usually is considered to be an “average use” month with fewer holidays, school opening or closing, and other special events that could affect the use of public libraries during other months.

- During the month of February 2004, the web-based survey instruments’ URLs were distributed to all public library directors via email with the assistance of South Carolina State Library staff and tested. Four separate data gathering instruments were employed: Adult General User, Business User, Personal Investment User, and Job Seeker.
- Each county was provided unique URLs by the Study Team which identified that county’s patron responses for each of the four surveys. These URLs, in many instances were linked from the individual library web pages.
- For those public libraries that were unable to or preferred not to post the URLs for each survey to their web site, it was recommended that they print out enough surveys for patrons, and then the local staff entered the patron responses on the their unique URLs. The Study Team worked individually with those that elected this option. Hard copies of all the surveys were provided to each library.

- The surveys were made available to all libraries and branches.
- At the end of March 2004 SLIS staff compiled and analyzed the data. Counties were provided with their unique set of responses in May

In the second phase of the project, the Study Team used existing data from the South Carolina State Library to demonstrate a monetary equivalent of the services provided by South Carolina libraries.

## **Summary of Findings from the South Carolina Public Library Users Surveys**

The first phase of the study was conducted to determine the perceived economic value of South Carolina public libraries. The following is a summary of the participants' responses. Four separate surveys were administered to selected public library users in all participating public libraries (including branch libraries) in South Carolina, Adult General Users, Business Persons, Personal Investors, and Job Seekers. The report of the entire results of the survey with tables is found in Appendix A.

### **Survey of Adult Public Library Users**

The survey results are based on a study of adult user perceptions conducted during spring, 2004 by faculty of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina of 3,689 public library users throughout the state.

- When asked “do you think that the presence of this library in your community...”
  - Improves overall quality of life? 92% said yes
  - Increases local property values? 47% said yes
  - Attracts new businesses to the community? 38% said yes
  - Attracts patronage to local businesses? 44% said yes
  
- When asked about the kind of assistance they received in their most recent visits to their public library...
  - Did it enhance your personal fulfillment? 73% said yes
  - Did it nurture your love of reading? 73% said yes
  - Was it a source of personal enjoyment? 64% said yes
  - Did it help you in managing your finances or save you money? 32% said yes
  - Did it help you obtain a new job?: 11% said yes
  - Help improve or start your business?: 15% said yes
  - Did it help you with a job search or business opportunity?: 25% said yes
  - Did it make you more productive on your job?: 37% said yes
  
- Since the public library is often viewed as an important component of the educational system, the survey asked several questions about the educational benefits of their library:
  - 28% said it had introduced them to new technologies
  - 18% said it had helped them with primary education work
  - 47% said it had helped them with life-long learning

- 12% said it had contributed to their home schooling efforts

### **Survey of the Business Community**

A separate survey was administered to members of the business community throughout the state (161 responding) about their use of their public library. They responded as follows to these questions:

- Where do you obtain most of the business/research information you need to successfully run this business or fulfill your personal role in the business?
  - 49% said from their public library
- Do you feel that the information obtained from this library has contributed to the success of your business?
  - 53% said “yes”
  - 25% said “somewhat”
  - only 4% said no
- If you had to pay for it, estimate how much your business would have to pay for the information you receive from the library.
  - 23% estimated their cost would increase between \$500 and \$5,000
  - 7% estimated costs would increase by \$5,000
- When asked if their business would be impacted if the library stopped offering business information services:
  - 41% said it would have some impact
  - 33% said it would have major negative impact

### **Survey of Job Seekers**

Persons seeking job information at their public libraries completed a separate survey. (298 respondents):

- When asked about sources they use for a job search:
  - 76% said they used their public library
- When asked if the library had saved them money in their job search:
  - 100% said yes; and 31% said it had saved them \$100 or more

### **Personal Investors Survey**

A separate survey was conducted of persons who used their public library for investment decisions (172 respondents):

- When asked where they obtained the information needed for making investment decisions:
  - 59% said their public library
- When asked whether their use of the investment information at the public library had contributed to their financial well-being:
  - 48% said “definitely”
  - 34% said “somewhat”
- Respondents were asked: “If you did not have this library available to provide investment information, how much money would you likely spend each year to obtain this information?”
  - 20% said \$500 or more
  - 6% said over \$1,000
- Respondents were asked: “What dollar value would you assign to this library’s investment information resources?”
  - 32% said between \$10,000 and \$1 million
  - 2% said over \$1 million

## **Summary of Findings from the Analysis of South Carolina Public Library Statistics**

The second phase of the study was conducted to determine the economic value or benefits of South Carolina public libraries as indicated by statistical data collected annually by the South Carolina State Library. The data were those that the SC State Library staff use in their annual reports to the Federal/State Cooperative Survey (FSCS). The most recent data were those for calendar year 2002. The Study Team analyzed the data using the formulas explained in Appendix B.

- (8) The direct economic impact of all SC public library expenditures is \$80 million
- (9) The existence of SC public libraries brings to the state (from federal and private sources) almost \$5 million each year that it would not otherwise have. (This figure excludes funds received directly by the SC State Library)
- (10) The value of the loans and use of books, videos, cassettes, CDs, newspapers, magazines, etc. to users each year is approximately \$102 million.
- (11) The value of reference services to users in SC each year is approximately \$26 million.
- (12) The total direct economic impact of SC public libraries is estimated at \$222 million, while the actual cost of these services to the state and local governments is only \$77.5 million. This means that for every \$1 spent by state and local governments on SC public libraries the return on investment is \$2.86.
- (13) The indirect economic impact of SC public library expenditures (wages, supplies, books and related materials, construction, etc.) on the state's economy is almost \$126 million. This means that for every \$1 expended by SC public libraries, the state receives \$1.62 of indirect economic impact.
- (14) Thus, total direct and indirect return on investment for every \$1 expended on the state's public libraries by SC state and local governments is \$4.48, or almost 350%!

## Appendix A: Detailed Findings from the Surveys of South Carolina Public Library Users

### A.1: Responses for the Survey of Economic Benefits and Impacts for South Carolina Public Library Users

*The percentages below are based on 3,689 respondents from all of the South Carolina library systems. (All percentages are rounded to the nearest hundredth and presented in red font.)*

1. Your Age:

- Adult 18-35 (28.08%)
- Adult 36-55 (41.01%)
- Adult 56 and older (28.87%)

2. What is your gender?

- Male (26.54%)
- Female (71.02%)

3. What is your highest level of education completed: (Select only one answer)

- High School or less (15.64%)
- Some College (26.76%)
- College Graduate or more (34.72%)
- Advanced Degree (20.41%)

4. How often do you use this library? (Select only one answer)

- 1--2 times a week (48.58%)
- 2--3 times a month (34.51%)
- 3--5 times in six months (11.01%)
- Once a year or less (3.36%)

For questions 5, 6, 7, & 8 please select the response that best describes your thoughts about each statement according to the following scale:						
		Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
5.	Libraries have contributed to the prosperity of our community.	1.06%	.49%	3.80%	13.28%	78.58%
6.	Libraries have contributed to the prosperity of South Carolina	1.03%	.65%	5.45%	14.31%	75.25%
7.	Libraries have been economically beneficial to local businesses.	1.17%	.87%	13.64%	18.41%	61.86%
8.	Libraries have contributed to my personal financial well-being.	4.36%	2.39%	16.10%	17.67%	55.49%

9. Do you think that the presence of this library in your community: (Select all that apply)

- Improves overall quality of life (91.57%)
- Increases local property values (46.52%)
- Attracts new businesses to the community (38.17%)
- Attracts patronage to local businesses (44.16%)

10. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply):

- Enhanced your personal fulfillment (73.43%)
- Nurtured your love of reading (72.57%)
- Provided “peace of mind” or a source of personal enjoyment/fulfillment (64.41%)
- Helped you to manage finances/save money (32.37%)

11. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)
- Helped you obtain a new job (10.49%)
  - Helped you with a job search/business opportunities (25.37%)
  - Made you more productive on your job (36.62%)
12. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)
- Helped you with civic duties or politics (29.52%)
  - Supported community agencies (28.90%)
  - Helped with issues concerning community development (32.20%)
13. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)
- Helped you improve or start your business (15.07%)
  - Promoted your use of a local business (25.62%)
14. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)
- Helped you gain/improve computer skills (e.g., training) (39.50%)
  - Improved literacy (e.g. the Internet) (36.35%)
  - Encouraged you to get your own Internet account from an Internet service provider (e.g. Freenet, AOL) (18.32%)
15. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)
- Helped with English as a Second Language (3.82%)
  - Introduced you to new technologies (27.67%)
  - Helped with primary/secondary education (18.87%)
  - Helped you plan for college (10.11%)
  - Supported your education in a formal post-secondary school, college, or university class (18.24%)
  - Facilitated life long learning or contributed to learning and education but not via a formal classroom setting (47.25%)

- Contributed to your Home Schooling (11.39%)

16. In your recent visits to the library, has the library assisted you by providing information or services that: (Select all that apply)

- Helped you accomplish a task or reach a goal (61.51%)
- Helped you obtain general non-critical information (e.g. hobbies) (65.90%)
- Provided you with critical information (e.g., legal, health) (45.54%)
- Helped you obtain information that you could not have obtained elsewhere (51.37%)

## A.2: Responses from the Business Community

*The following percentages, which are emphasized in red font, are based on 161 respondents from all of the South Carolina counties' library systems. (All percentages are rounded to the nearest hundredth and presented in red font.)*

1. In which area of business do you work? (Select only one answer)

- Manufacturer (6.21%)
- Retailer (11.18%)
- Professional (27.95%)
- Service (19.25%)
- Wholesale/distributor (8.07%)
- Bank (.62%)
- Other (19.88%)

2. Open-ended Question...

3. How many employees are in this business? (Select only one answer)

- 1 to 5 employees (42.86%)
- 6 to 25 employees (14.29%)
- 26 to 100 employees (16.77%)
- 101 to 500 employees (5.59%)
- Over 500 employees (9.32%)

4. How many years has this business existed in this community? (Select only one answer)

- Just starting up (14.29%)
- Less than 1 year (6.83%)
- 1 to 5 years (15.53%)
- 5 to 10 years (8.70%)
- Over 10 years (42.86%)

5. Where do you obtain most of the business/research information you need to successfully run this business or fulfill your personal role in the business? (Select all that apply)

- Co-Workers (20.50%)
- From the Internet (56.52%)
- From your company library (12.42%)
- From personal or company purchased publications (26.71%)
- This public library (49.07%)
- Small business centers (14.91%)
- Lawyers, accountants, consultants (13.66%)
- Other (7.45%)

6. Open-ended Question...

7. What type of reference materials do you use at this library for this business? (Select all that apply)

- Economic data and statistics (31.68%)
- Technical information (40.37%)
- Company directories (21.12%)
- Information on starting a small business (19.88%)
- Legal information (27.33%)
- Government regulations (26.09%)
- Sales, marketing and management information (33.54%)
- Other (13.66%)

8. Open-ended Question...

9. How often do you come to this library to use its business sources? (Select only one answer)

- More than once a week (23.60%)
- 1 time per week (13.04%)
- Several times per month (22.36%)
- 1 time per month (8.07%)
- Occasionally (18.63%)

10. How often do you use online library business sources remotely from home? (Select only one answer)

- More than once a week (16.15%)
- 1 time per week (6.83%)
- Several times per week (8.07%)
- 1 time per month (8.70%)
- Occasionally (39.75%)

11. How often do you use online library business sources remotely from work? (Select only one answer)

- More than once a week (19.25%)
- 1 time per week (5.59%)
- Several times per month (11.80%)
- 1 time per month (3.11%)
- Occasionally (37.27%)

12. How many hours per week would you estimate you spend using this library in-house for business purposes? (Select only one answer)

- None (18.01%)
- 0 to 1 hour (26.71%)
- 1 to 5 hours (32.30%)
- Over 5 hours (10.56%)

13. How many hours per week would you say you spend using this library on-line for business purposes? (Select only one answer)

- None (19.25%)
- 0 to 1 hour (29.19%)
- 1 to 5 hours (24.84%)
- Over 5 hours (11.80%)

14. How often do you consult the library staff for help in finding the business-related information you seek? (Select only one answer)

- Never (14.91%)
- Occasionally (50.93%)
- Most of the time (13.66%)
- All of the time (4.97%)

15. How successful do you consider your business to be? (Select only one answer) Not successful enough (13.04%)

- Average (20.50%)
- Successful (27.95%)
- Very successful (19.88%)

16. Do you feel that the information obtained from this library has contributed to the success of your business? (Select only one answer)

- Yes (52.80%)
- Somewhat (24.84%)
- No (3.73%)

17. If you had to pay for it, estimate how much your business would have to pay for the information you receive from the library. (Select only one answer)

- Nothing (8.70%)
- \$1 to \$100 (21.74%)
- \$101 to \$500 (21.12%)
- \$501 to \$1,000 (9.94%)
- \$1,001 to \$5,000 (13.66%)
- Over \$5,000 (6.83%)

18. What would be the impact on your business if this library stopped offering business information services? (Select only one answer)

- No impact (11.80%)
- Some impact (40.99%)
- Major negative impact (32.92%)

### **A.3: Responses from the Personal Investment Community**

*The following percentages, which are emphasized in red font, are based on 172 respondents from all of the South Carolina counties' library systems.*

1. Where do you obtain most of the information you need to make your investment decisions? (Select all that apply)
  - Friends and relatives (24.42%)
  - Stockbroker (27.91%)
  - Internet (55.23%)
  - Reference material obtained from this library (58.72%)
  - TV and/or radio (25.00%)
  - Personal magazines and newspapers received from subscriptions (43.02%)
  
2. How often do you use the library to obtain investment information? (Select only one answer)
  - More than once a week (23.84%)
  - Once a week (24.42%)
  - Once a month (18.60%)
  - Occasionally (16.28%)
  - Never (8.72%)
  
3. What type(s) of investment information do you use at this library. (Select all that apply)
  - Financial newsletters (23.84%)
  - Financial newspapers (40.70%)
  - Online databases (34.88%)
  - Investment advisories (ex: Value Line, Morningstar) (43.02%)
  - Magazines (35.47%)
  - Company Information (23.84%)
  - Other (16.28%)
  
4. Open-ended Question...

5. Do you usually consult library staff for help in finding the investment material? (Select only one answer)
- Yes (12.21%)
  - Occasionally (36.63%)
  - No (41.86%)
6. Do you use any of the library's online subscription databases from home to obtain investment information? (Select only one answer)
- Yes (14.53%)
  - Occasionally (11.63%)
  - No (63.37%)
7. Do you feel that the information you obtain at the library helps you to make good investment choices? (Select only one answer)
- Yes (69.19%)
  - Occasionally (12.79%)
  - No (7.56%)
8. Do you feel that your use of the investment materials at this library has contributed to your financial well-being? (Select only one answer)
- Definitely (47.67%)
  - Somewhat (33.72%)
  - Not at all (9.30%)
9. If you did not have a library available to provide investment information, how much money would you likely spend each year to obtain this information? (Select only one answer)
- \$1 to \$50 (22.67%)
  - \$51 to \$100 (13.95%)
  - \$101 to \$200 (18.60%)
  - \$201 to \$400 (12.21%)
  - \$401 to \$500 (6.40%)
  - \$501 to \$999 (7.56%)
  - Over \$1000 (5.81%)

10. What dollar value would you assign to this library's investment information resources? (Select only one answer)

- \$1,000 to \$10,000 (47.09%)
- \$10,001 to \$50,000 (18.02%)
- \$50,001 to \$100,000 (8.14%)
- \$100,001 to \$999,999 (3.49%)
- Over \$1,000,000 (2.33%)

#### **A.4: Summary of the Economic Impact of Libraries Study--Questions for Job Seekers**

*The following percentages, which are emphasized in red font, are based on 298 respondents from all of the South Carolina counties' library systems.*

1. When beginning a job search, where do you go to find potential leads? (Select all that apply)
  - Family and Friends (51.68%)
  - Newspaper (76.85%)
  - Material at the Library (34.90%)
  - State Job Service Online (43.29%)
  - Internet (69.46%)
  - Personnel agency (16.11%)
  - TV or radio (10.07%)
  
2. What type of materials or services do you use at the library as you are looking for employment? (Select all that apply)
  - Internet sites (81.21%)
  - Books (for resumes and interviewing) (32.21%)
  - Online databases to search for job openings and lists of companies (50.34%)
  - Print newspapers and magazines (43.96%)
  - Print company directories (12.08%)
  - Computer for typing resumes and letters (48.32%)
  
3. Do you ask the library staff to help you find the information? (Select only one answer)
  - Yes (31.88%)
  - Sometimes (44.97%)
  - No (18.46%)
  
4. Have you used the library before in your search for a job? (Select only one answer)
  - Yes (64.09%)
  - Sometimes (11.41%)
  - No (20.47%)

5. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, did the information services you found at the library help you obtain a job? (Select only one answer)

- Yes (34.90%)
- Somewhat helpful (26.85%)
- No (13.42%)

6. Please estimate how much money the materials and services available at this library saved you in your job hunt. (Select only one answer)

- \$20 (34.45%)
- \$50 (15.44%)
- \$75 (7.72%)
- \$100 (8.72%)
- Over \$100 (21.81%)

7. What is your personal estimate of the value, in dollars, of the job-searching materials and services at this library? (Select only one answer)

- Under \$100 (21.81%)
- \$100 (17.45%)
- \$1000 (21.81%)
- \$1001 to \$50,000 (18.79%)
- \$50,001 to \$100,000 (4.70%)
- \$100,001 to \$999,999 (.67%)
- Over \$1,000,000 (3.02%)

## **A.5: Selected Qualitative responses from the South Carolina Economic Impact Study of Public Libraries.**

The following are selected responses to the two open-ended questions of the general survey:

- What is one of the most important economic benefits that you have received from this library? (Please be as specific as possible.)
- What is another of the most important economic benefits that you have received from this library? (Please be as specific as possible.)

Most of the responses deal with the library saving the patron on having to buy the books they check out, or previewing books before they are purchased by the patron, however, some of these responses are quite unique and provide excellent insight into individuals' needs and uses of the libraries in their communities. Many homeschoolers rely on libraries, as do retirees, however, for continuing education and business use, these comments can be quite powerful. Some of the responses express that it is too difficult to place a monetary value on life-long learning, and what the arts, and culture do to promote healthy and vibrant communities.

These responses are selected from each county's set of compiled responses and are organized by county name. Minor grammatical and spelling errors have been corrected using MS Word's spell and grammar check features. Note: ABBE and AHJ regional library systems consist of Aiken-Bamberg-Barnwell-Edgefield and Allendale-Hampton-Jasper respectively. --Compiled by Dr. Curtis R. Rogers, SC State Library.

### **AIKEN**

- I am currently a graduate school student, and I am able to view my satellite courses in the library. This has saved me money personally for several reasons. First, having the ability to view my class within the library saves me time and money from traveling 60 miles to my class, it allows me to arrive home sooner, reducing my dependence on childcare, as well as my eliminating my need to pay for satellite TV.
- Free children's books and movies for my children. I don't have to buy books or rent movies for them. I use the library.
- Internet access- I can't afford a computer much less Internet access. I'm glad they have computers in that in my time in the past when I was job hunting it was helpful so that I could e-mail resumes or job hunt.
- I am a homeschooler with a daughter who is an avid reader. Without the regular use of the library our daughter would be severely limited in the books she would be able to "devour." We are financially unable to purchase all the books it takes to keep her reading appetite satiated.

- All libraries provide essential access to information that ensures ALL persons, regardless of their social station, have a chance to obtain the information necessary to become successful in our society.
- Computer and Internet services for myself and my children. Instilling the love to read. This has saved money that I would have spent elsewhere or more realistically, would not have been able to attain without the library due to lack of funds personally.
- Provided the opportunity to indulge my love of reading and to pass this on to my family (children). This library provided free books. I wouldn't be able to buy the variety and number of books by children and I read from the library.
- Due to low income brought on by job unavailability, there are no funds for recreational activities. The library has furnished movies, education and recreational as well as entertaining books and educational books and programs for my children and myself.
- The Library has helped a number of children and families who cannot afford to buy informative books and tapes to improve their education and enjoyment. A lot of people cannot afford computers or the use of the Internet if it were not for the Library.
- My family members and I have access to the latest books, latest movies, latest magazines and great oldies too (at no cost). We benefit in many ways outside of economically - it's a better education and it makes for a better world!
- Being able to obtain references on science, health, economy, nature, etc. This regional library has obtained references from many other libraries, not only within the system but also outside. The most important benefit is the reading enjoyment and obtaining references to keep expanding my curious and scientific mind.

ANDERSON:

- Access to a large variety of books that I would otherwise not be able to read. As a homeschooling mother we need a large variety of study materials (books, video) that we could not afford to purchase.
- The library has provided profitable personal investing information, helped me plan vacations and provided valuable resources I've needed for my civic and volunteer activities in this community. The library is an incredible asset to this community -- in terms of both economic impact and personal enrichment.
- Library materials have provided indispensable support for my volunteer activities, which in turn benefit the community. It also has provided hours of personal enjoyment and enrichment. The library is one of the finest things about this community.
- On a personal level I enjoy exploring a number of interests but cannot afford to invest in a large number of books. I often check a book out of the library in order to determine if the book will be useful to me before purchasing a copy of my own.

## BAMBERG

- A great place for my 4 kids to borrow books (save me money), and a great place for them to feel safe while I run errands.

## BARNWELL

- Helped save money by offering books to read on loan for free. Long-term goals-eventual economic benefit! My goal is to enrich my mind and to teach our children a love of reading. Once you teach your children to read, and LOVE to read, you empower them with curiosity. Curiosity creates a desire for knowledge. Once you want to know everything, you can achieve anything in your life. The library is such a powerful tool to better yourself through books, computers, research, etc. Every town on the face of this planet should have a free public library. It is for the betterment of all mankind.
- Another benefit to the library has been the computers. The computers have attracted many people to come and use the library, who otherwise would never go to a library. Free Internet usage is a tremendous boost to library usage by the general public.

## BEAUFORT

- Several years ago I consulted with Dennis Adams for information on the first African American Podiatrist for Black History Month during my work in Sales at a local radio station in Beaufort. After obtaining this information I was successful at selling a Podiatrist in the Walterboro area a co-sponsorship for Black History Month.
- It saved me 10's of thousands of dollars when I was able to get information to keep an insurance company from totaling my car. Instead they fixed what was just cosmetic and I was able to keep my own vehicle!
- It assists me with obtaining resources critical to my studies as a graduate student. It also provides information services that I use on my job as a educator of students K-12 thus increasing my economic potential and helping offer job security by helping me become a more "valuable/professional" educator to my employer.
- The library has always provided my family and myself with the information and information tools to become more literate in all areas of our lives; financial, educational and spiritual. The library is a place that assists us in providing financial resources, planning educational endeavors and provides us with life-long information literacy skills development resources.
- I must be honest by saying that I have not used your library as I just moved here from San Diego. I am going today so that I can start my account. That said, I based all of my questions on my use in San Diego. I am a big supporter of libraries as they are a great wealth of information. It is sad to think that many folks miss out on what they can learn. Granted the Internet has opened many doors for folks but you can't always get the information you need unless your crack open a book. When people open their minds and learn, they become more open to new ideas. I have learned to visit museums and art galleries that I never even knew of as well as the works inside. As a result, I

am out and about learning more. We make it a tradition to go out for lunch when we make these trips. You won't see a shop owner complain about that. We then pass on our findings to our friends and they of course make the trips as well.

- High-speed computer access has helped in my business and personal dealings. Quick downloads now make it possible to do a great deal of research in a modest amount of time. This has enabled me to be much more productive.
- With the rising costs of everything, I can maintain my love of reading, because the books are there for me to borrow and I don't have to buy every one I would like to read. It also increases my abilities to converse with others because we can share our reading experiences with the same book and not spend a fortune.
- We have recently moved from the North. Having a good library in our vicinity is most important to us and is an issue we kept in mind when choosing an area in which to live.
- I base 95% of my son's elementary homeschool curriculum on library books from the Hilton Head Library, with additional books borrowed from Bluffton and Beaufort. I could never afford to purchase the hundreds of books I have borrowed over the past seven years. My son has attended weekly story/language arts sessions at the library since he was two years old. I'm convinced these sessions have enhanced his reading ability and his love of reading.
- Recently, the library has been instrumental in helping me thru my graduate studies. But, I have lived in Beaufort for 23 years and the library has always provided the information I needed to pursue life long learning.
- Weekly trips to the Library with my three-year-old grandson have enhanced his love of books and reading new books without the expense of always purchasing new books and videos.
- Use of the library and consultation with the staff has assisted us in providing an education for ourselves and our children. This not only enhances our opportunities economically but assures that our children will become productive citizens in the future.
- I learned to make slipcovers and saved the price of buying new furniture. I am now investigating faux finishes to update the look of old furniture and boring white rooms. I am saving the price of a decorator.
- The library frees me to spend my economic resources in ways that are more income producing by allowing me to borrow instead of buy to provide for some of my entertainment and informational needs. In other words, I make better use, to my family, of the funds I have because of the library's existence.
- Because of the help and information I received at the library I was able to improve my present working conditions and, in addition, start my own business.
- Our family has borrowed countless videos and books on tape for educational and entertainment purposes. We do not have a computer in the home, but my son and I have both learned how to do research on the Internet using library computers. My son has also spent many hours playing the educational games

on the children's computers. These opportunities have been financially very helpful.

- Having a virtually unlimited supply of reading materials at my fingertips without having to go to the expense of purchasing each book I read. Also, although I haven't used them, having computers available for students and others who cannot afford their own is a very important economic benefit.
- Introducing my daughter to the community story time in the children's library, which teaches her social skills and enjoyment of stories without having to pay for such entertainment and education. It also teaches her caring for another's property when we check out books to take home to read and enjoy.

#### BERKELEY:

- Being able to bring my children here for research papers and to allow myself to use other reference types in my own, everyday life it is very important to me that the library is available to me and my family. Knowing that we aren't able at this time to purchase a computer of our own.
- Libraries encourage people to be educated and to be productive! People of any economic class can come to a library, learn, and improve their own situation in life! When people choose this type of proactive learning instead of staying home and watching cable, they are choosing a productive lifestyle. A productive, motivated workforce is what drives our economy!
- I save money on the books I read as I am on fixed income and really don't have places to store them. I can't tell you how much this means to me and many other citizens of the community.
- I also can't afford Internet service in my home right now. The library has computer games my children love to play which also familiarizes them with the computer. We are all learning more about computers through using the ones at the library.
- I have a number of health problems. Through use of the library, I have better learned to take care of myself thereby saving on the number one killer of us old people," the high price of health care".
- I am interested in all subjects pertaining to business; I have gleaned many new ideas and information from the materials at the library, enabling me to be a more productive employee, thus improving my personal financial status.
- My spouse and I have improved our financial situation by studying and applying the information from library books. We learned how to make a budget AND stay on it! We have read about investing for our retirement and which college saving plans would be best for our family.

#### CHAPIN MEMORIAL (MYRTLE BEACH):

- I am able to read a lot of new fiction that I wouldn't read if I had to buy all of the books myself. I am able to do research that helps me in my job, and also in my hobbies (writing, painting, crafts, baking, and creating my own website).
- I am able to borrow videos for free rather than having to rent them. I can borrow books on tape to enjoy in my car, which are too expensive to purchase otherwise.

## CHARLESTON

- Ability to find a wide range of materials in various formats without having to purchase items at my own expenses. For example, I am taking a beginning Spanish language class through my local community education program and I have been able to borrow videos, audiotapes, instructional books on CD, and books on learning Spanish from my local public library. I have been able to try out these materials and increased my knowledge without additional expense. I have also been able to choose one audiotape set that works best for me to purchase. This would not be possible to do through a commercial vendor.
- I am a homeschool parent and on a very limited budget. We would be lost without the library. My child and I visit at least two days a week and she is an avid reader. I could never afford to buy this many books and instructional material on our own. The library staff is wonderful and much appreciated.
- I lead a book club where I work. The library provides all of the books and the librarian assists with the selection of books and requests them for me. I am more valuable to my employer because of this.
- I was able to educate myself about mutual funds and investing, with the materials available (like Morningstar) to make my own investment choices and get out of the financial hole I was in.
- The library enabled me to write a business plan for loan applications by providing the economic data and "how to" books to guide me in writing the plan.
- The library enhances the education services in our community. Our state does not have a good reputation nationally for our education system. Employees refuse transfers to our state because of this. Companies looking to relocate have to factor this into their decision.
- Web authoring skills that I self-taught using library resources have helped me take on new responsibilities in my current job. This has resulted in a larger raise this year than I'd have gotten otherwise.
- As a teacher of elementary school children, I have the ability to use resources to enhance the curriculum that I would not have without the public library. The children in my classes benefit greatly.
- Libraries are the absolute best benefit of paying taxes. They allow me to pursue interests that I never would if I had to purchase every book I need for casual reference.
- The library is a very beneficial resource to homeschoolers. I can quickly have any information I need to teach my children at my fingertips without having to make pricey purchases.
- Previewing references / books prior to purchase or instead of purchase; haven't rented a movie on VHS or DVD in ages since the library has such a nice selection; tax forms / information to ensure that my taxes are done correctly and completely; saved money on products and services based on research done using library materials; my ravenously-reading 3-year-old

nephew gets to be surrounded by zillions of books without making the entire family broke.

- We use the library weekly since we started home schooling. We always find something for everyone in our family. We are watching less TV and are reading more. We have learned about many subjects by doing this and we have also developed a love for reading. Our minds have been opened to many things that we never even considered. My children have traveled the world through many time periods and have seen many things thanks to our library. We love our library and look forward to each visit there.
- It is wonderful to be able to get such a vast amount of videos/ DVDs and novels. I love romance and historical novels, but I read them so fast that it would be very expensive for me, if I had to buy each single book I read. The same applies to the videos we get from the library for entertainment. We used to spend very much money by renting movies. We have a low income, but the \$30 I spend per year as an out-of-county customer are WELL worth it. Thanks to the library the amount of entertainment my husband and I can enjoy every week has greatly increased. We couldn't afford all this entertainment without the public library.
- Libraries are the best "bang for the buck". Libraries provide and facilitate learning opportunities for all. Everything you do is FREE as long as items are not lost or late!! Where else can you go to a movie, listen to music, decorate your space with new art and read to yourself and your loved ones and provide activities for all members of your family????
- I have saved hundreds of dollars on books for homeschooling. Every lesson I teach relies, to a certain extent, on specific texts. Having access to these books via the library means that I needn't purchase a book just for a single lesson.
- I obtained books from the library that helped me to write a curriculum I use to teach drama/public speaking to local students. I believe the drama and public speaking skills will help my students be more productive. I am able to teach this class for a minimum fee because I was able to write my own curriculum.
- Personally, our family uses the library on a weekly basis to read books and watch videos. There is no cost to do this and we are on a budget and would not be able to purchase books or videos. I also use the library as a source for work information (Human Resources) to keep on top of the latest laws and HR info.
- As a teacher, I check out children's fiction and nonfiction books for my first grade class to read. This eventually (hopefully) will lead to important economic benefits in Charleston County because I am educating our county's future taxpayers.
- Reading leads to knowledge, which leads to the quest for more knowledge, which in turn builds the skills one can use to develop a value within society. When more individuals contribute to society and less take from society everyone benefits.
- I have been able to direct my customers (students) to books that the library has so that they may learn more about the topics I teach. In this way, the library has acted as an information source that I can include in my business (free of

charge). I have been able to make some library purchase requests related to this and they have been filled. Our local library has willingly let me set up short-term exhibits to demonstrate what it is I do. This also promotes use of the books that the library contains on my topic (robotics). Thus the library has been a direct and key element in my business plans. I WOULD BE WILLING TO INCREASE MY TAX BURDEN TO FURTHER SUPPORT LIBRARY SERVICES IN MY AREA.

- Economically, I have the whole world at my fingertips for free!! I can fulfill my need for fantasy with books, books on tape, videos, CD's. I can travel to far off places as well as enjoy my hometown using resources in the library. I have 2 teenage children who excel in public school, in large part because they love to read and visit the public library regularly. In 2 short years, we will be using the library to research colleges and scholarships. My children, I believe, will have a significant impact on the economy because of what they learned from reading and resources in the library and what they decide to do with their lives. My 14 y.o. daughter (who is ranked #1 in her class of 276 students) said last night she wants to be an author, "and Mom did you know J.K. Rowling is a millionaire?" and "by the way Mom, will you pick up the sequel to the book I just finished. I know they have it at the main library." You can't put a dollar figure on this kind of stuff. I'll see you this afternoon!
- This Library has a social function, which is gathering people from all walks of life in a pleasant environment. This Library provides me books, videos, and diversified information on economic activities as well, like buying a house, having a better score in the SAT, GRE, GMAT tests, and video and books enhancing community activities. ITS THE BEST (and perhaps) THE ONLY LINK between my wants and needs and what the world has to offer.
- The presence of an OPEN public library with ready public access and outreach makes any community far more attractive to me and to any thoughtful American. It's not just that I use it; it's that a public library is a statement of the strength of democracy in a community.
- Helping me with my children's education. I have been a renewed library patron since my first child was born and it has allowed me to instill the love of books and reading in both of my children. The amount of books we have gone through in the last 6 years is unbelievable and all we have to do is go to the library. They think it is like going to Books a Million and Blockbuster. I am so happy that the library is part of their life, like my local library was a part of mine growing up. The staff at the James Island Branch is also exceptional. They know me and my children in the branch and wherever we run into them. They make the library a great community.
- I know you need to identify economic benefits, but I feel most of the library's benefits to me are other than economic. Having the availability of books at my disposal, help to find information when I need it, a place to read quietly, etc., bring a lot of joy into my life. I don't know how to put an economic twist on it, but I am most grateful to have the library. I would not live in a community without one. Thanks for all you do.

## CHEROKEE

- Without our library I would have to travel 50 miles round trip to the closest bookstore. Small communities greatly benefit from libraries.

## CHESTER

- I'm not from Chester. I came here to do family history research in their wonderful local history room. While I was here I ate lunch downtown and browsed the stores. Things I would never do in Chester if I wasn't here at the library for research.
- I teach school and many of our children do not have books at home. I can check out books or encourage my students to come and get a library card and check out books. By doing this, I show them the importance of life long learning and in supporting services that are in the community where they live and grow.
- In the past, when I was searching for employment, it provided a place where I could learn about careers, how to write a resume, and other such resources.

## CHESTERFIELD

- I have received more knowledge in many different venues in the library experience by the source of technology, textbooks, newspapers, and the librarians sharing conversations to open our minds to a global conscious community.
- The library contributes to my career as a teacher at our After School Enrichment Program by using the library as a base of where I receive a lot of their work. We use the library to educate our students by making the library as the source of connecting to our world.

## CLARENDON

- It has helped me economically by providing me a place to use the Internet. Otherwise, I wouldn't have a place to look up information on available jobs in S.C.
- My children read avidly. If my husband and I had to buy all the books that my children read, we would either have to give up some serious things in our family budget or my children would just not be able to read as much or as often as they currently do by utilizing library books.
- I would never have moved to a community that did not have a local library. I checked out the library before we bought a lot in this area.
- My husband drives over an hour to work. He uses the time to listen to books on tape from the library. This makes his driving time more useful and relaxing. It gets his workday off to a better start and ends the day with a bit of "decompression" before he gets home.

## COLLETON

- As a homeschooling mother, the use of a library is of great benefit to our family. The use of the resources limit our on personal spending on textbooks and give our children a way to self teach.

- I have been able to update my resume using their resources, which resulted in a more rewarding job. As a recently separated mother of a two-year-old son, it is important to me to be able to support myself rather than rely on welfare.
- The library has provided me with a place to share a variety of information with my 6-year-old child. He has a thirst for knowledge, and I can go into the library and find answers to ALMOST all of his questions. Most recently his questions have involved our solar system. We were able to find a variety of information to explore his questions. Who knows what career path he might choose to follow. The information he gained in THIS library might just be the determining factor for the field he chooses to enter.
- I have received free access to books, journals, and the Internet. This has allowed me to further my knowledge in work related fields without having to pay for classes. This has allowed me to improve my position at work and make myself more valuable to my employer.
- There is a wealth of information available to help answer questions I've had about repairing my home computer. I use it for our church and home schooling our 3 sons. I would never have been able to afford to take it for repair nor buy a new one. With the info I found I was able to repair it myself.
- By being able to use the library Internet services, I have been able to locate services and products in the local (tri-counties) area. As a newcomer to this area, I have saved considerable time and money in so doing in terms of lower travel costs as well as being able to "shop" long distance.

#### DILLON

- Using Internet enabled me to get info to help make decisions concerning health insurance and also to invest saving wisely.
- The library carries such a wide selection of materials that I can borrow books for each member of my family rather than paying the high prices at the big bookstores. Our family is on a tight budget, and this is a major benefit to us.
- The most important economic benefit that I have received from this library is that it has helped my financial situations personally to find another job.

- The library recently had a Friends of the Library book sale. I was able to buy three bag loads of books for \$20. I feel good because I got a great bargain, books that I wanted to read, and I helped my local library purchase new things that they need.

## DORCHESTER

- I homeschool my children, but cannot purchase all of the resources we need to use. The Library makes it possible to homeschool more cost effectively.
- Use of Internet, courses I've taken here. New job strategies, job hunting. My family checks out many books, CD's and movies, which I would have to buy or rent otherwise.
- I consider reading an important part of my overall health needs. The reading helps me "recharge" my "batteries" so I can be more productive at work.
- The education of my children. Even though I don't homeschool, it's vital to have a library conveniently located nearby where I live so that we can conveniently located resources. The Internet alone will not cultivate a love of books or a love of learning. There are few public services that are more important to an informed democracy. The libraries in SC are under funded!
- I cannot afford a computer so I am able to use one at the Library. Also I enjoy reading. I would not be able to read or watch educational videos with my son if it weren't for the Library.
- As a retired teacher I see the library as a vital support of the schools. An improved, literate citizenry enhances our economy throughout the area.
- I make and sell handmade needlecrafts to help supplement my family's income. I use the library to find new patterns, learn new needlecrafts and solve problems I may have. It has also helped me to price my items and advertise/present them more efficiently.
- To expand my child's education. For example, this week my son's kindergarten class is studying space. My son, Jacob, has benefited tremendously because of the literature I've showed him from this library. He now knows about stars, the sun, moon, earth, mars and our solar system and he's only in Kindergarten! This library is a NECESSITY for this community. Thanks for your time and for respecting our - the public's - opinion.
- I introduced my daughter to the library at the age of 4. She was reading by age 5. We came to the library every Saturday. She would check out 10 books. She received a full scholarship to USC. We could not have provided her the reading materials, which sparked her interests on our limited budget. She will graduate in August with a master's degree in library science.
- My children have done research on jobs and have spent many hours working on school-related projects. This has provided a better education and therefore better jobs.
- Taxes fund the libraries. This is part of my taxes at work. Most of the information that is available here would cost elsewhere. Legal information is one such area. This state needs more libraries and more computers. To begin to close them would be an example of poor leadership and an inability to see ramifications in the future.

## EDGEFIELD

- My family uses "DISCUS" databases for research, which is accessed from our home computers. DISCUS provided information, which is NOT available on Internet.

## FAIRFIELD

- Instead of buying books to help my child improve her reading skills, I am able to check out books. The videos the library has allow my children to see new movies without having to purchase them. The same applies to my husband and myself. We are able to check out tapes, books, and videos without having to purchase them.

## GREENVILLE

- I used the library to help facilitate a job search. In addition to reviewing the weekly help wanted ads from newspapers throughout the Southeast, I was able to research the companies running those ads in order to focus my cover letter and resume on the company's specific application.
- The greatest economic benefit that I have received from the Greenville Library System has been free access to an outstanding selection of books, music, movies, and other resources that I otherwise may not have been able to afford. It has assisted me in both civic and personal growth while providing a service that makes me proud of Greenville.
- Using Reference USA in the resources section has helped me obtain contact, economic as well as other information about local businesses. I used this information in preparing proper proposals to the targeted businesses and as a result have done some sound business in the community, thus improving my own financial situation
- I check on many of my accounts via the internet at the library, I have made friends in New Zealand, South Africa, Rome Italy, England, and right here at home via the internet at the library as well as friends in person at the library. I have been disabled over 10 years and this is of great economic benefit to me living on an income of under \$600 a month.
- Ability to search costly databases, which are available only through library subscriptions, allows me to do more work for my organization and also obtain evaluative information, which would otherwise be unavailable to me. While some databases may be available through individual subscription, the prices would be higher than I could afford to pay, even though I am certainly not poor. Being able to search these databases from home also allows me to conduct research more efficiently by doing it at any time of day or night, without worrying about whether a computer will be available after I drive to a library location, and without worrying about privacy while viewing the results on the screen. I use the Library's website, its databases (including the library catalog), or its web links to free sites (especially the health-related ones) almost daily.
- The library has provided valuable materials -- books and CDs -- that have supported my volunteer activities with a local nonprofit performing arts

group, the Greenville Symphony. The materials have been enormously helpful and have bolstered local financial support for the Greenville Symphony, a prominent community institution and a cornerstone of Greenville's appealing quality of life.

- I have learned so much through the library in Greenville, since I was about three years old I have been coming to the library. There are many things to do here, such as research as I am doing today, we have the South Carolina room to look up genealogy and I enjoy that very much. I am in the process of looking for my Mom's Fathers roots so that she may find him, and I want to help her through all of this. I love to bring my children in to check out books, and movies. We especially love it in the summertime, as to there's time to relax more and do lots of reading. I love the library....
- It's inexpensive entertainment. I can't afford to buy all of the BBC, travel or history videos that I would like. And these aren't the kinds of selections Blockbuster keeps in stock. But actually, tapes and DVDs aren't biggest draw. I love being able to read new bestsellers without having to individually purchase a collection of books I may never read again.
- The availability of the Internet has allowed me to communicate with my college instructors, send in assignments via the Internet without having to drive 60 miles to the university I was attending.
- Borrowing library materials allows me to examine and evaluate them before spending my own, or my organization's money for purchasing titles for which a one-time loan may be all that is needed. It also provides opportunities for reading, viewing, and listening to many materials to which I would never be exposed if I had to purchase them. Examples: (1) Through Interlibrary Loan, I recently borrowed a VHS copy of an important Senegalese film, which still costs \$295.00 to purchase (and around \$75 to borrow, as I recall.) It was loaned by an out-of-state academic library. I could not afford to pay that price to see it otherwise, and rental companies don't generally make specialized foreign films of this type available for loan. Being able to see such a film certainly expanded my understanding of political and cultural issues in another part of the world in a way that non-visual storytelling could not convey as effectively. (2) A number of children's books, which I had not seen, were recommended last week on a reputable website's bibliography. While I was able to read about many of them on Amazon.com's website and make some evaluations from their descriptions and reviews, I needed to actually read and look at the illustrations for number of the titles before making decisions on whether to use a nonprofit organization's limited funds to purchase copies. I placed requests for library copies of 5 titles, which were located in various branches throughout the county; and all were delivered to my local branch for pickup within just a few days. I made a single 1-mile drive to obtain all of them instead of having to drive to multiple branch locations. Most of the titles are unlikely to be stocked by local bookstores. Without being able to borrow them from the library, I would have been forced to purchase first, and then dispose of those items, which proved not suitable for the special project on which I was working. By examining the books first,

I feel more confident that I am making responsible purchase decisions with the organization's money. (3) When traveling, or when my eyes are troubling me, I am able to continue reading by borrowing audio books. Most of the books, which I borrow, would be beyond my budget to purchase.

- The library has provided books, newspapers and magazines that have been enormously helpful to my career as a journalist. Books and magazines on personal finance also have been useful and have contributed materially to my personal financial well-being. In addition, I've enjoyed using travel books and magazines to enhance my enjoyment of vacations. Fiction and other general interest newspapers, magazines and books have given me many hours of personal fulfillment. The library, in short, is an invaluable community resource: a vital component of the community's educational infrastructure, a strong supporter of the local economy and an important part of this community's overall quality of life. I hope South Carolina's local and state leaders place a priority not on limiting but rather on expanding library services in our communities.

#### GREENWOOD

- The Library's information on developing financial plans is invaluable. The books, magazines, and Internet information helped me create a workable practical budget, and it was all free. I could never afford to buy the books or subscribe to the magazines I used at the library. I have the Internet at home, and I used the DISCUS thing to help narrow my search when I was looking for legitimate information. I've learned you can't believe everything you read on the Internet.
- I cannot afford a computer or the Internet. This library is very beneficial to people like me, who are on low incomes when they need these types of benefits available.
- Access to medical reports, current reading material such as magazines that I cannot afford to purchase. Computers are available for my younger family members to learn hand/eye coordination skills. They can also play games, use Internet to research school projects if they need to.

#### HORRY

- The most specific economic advantage that I have received through the Public Library System is the ability to read books and view movies at no cost. However I feel that this advantage goes well beyond economics. It has helped to provide family reading and increased family time together.
- The library allows me to save money. It provides me with entertainment through books, I have learned about buying a home and car, and I have been able to learn about health issues without having to visit a doctor.
- I used the library when receiving my Master's Degree. I just feel that the number of libraries per capita in a given area is one of the key indicators of that area's economic and general well-being.
- I like to read and before moving to South Carolina bought novels of my favorite authors. We are now retired and I cannot really afford to buy as many

books but your library system has all the authors I enjoy and I no longer have to spend the money to buy books.

- Access to information is difficult to quantify, however I believe it is the single most important feature of a good library. We live in what is sometimes referred to as "The Information Age" and a library has a critical role to play in today's world.

#### KERSHAW

- The library helped me to understand the rates of land and home taxes. It also gave me the knowledge of knowing what my property value is and what it could be. I also got the information that I needed so I wouldn't get taken advantage of. Having that kind of knowledge helped me to be able to save money and have a savings account.
- As an older retired library user I come to the library primarily for my reading pleasure. Certainly, finding good books to borrow means I don't have to spend money to purchase books. But I know others have benefited in many ways, from learning about their taxes, their legal rights, job opportunities, and educational and college opportunities. And the use of the Internet is overwhelming!
- The library has saved us hundreds of dollars by making it possible for us to borrow books that we would have otherwise had to buy to support our homeschool, as well as my husband's self-owned business.
- The libraries computers with internet service has been there for us to use when our home computer wasn't working, making it possible for us to handle business, both personal and professional, without having to buy, or rent, a second computer
- The opportunity to actually "see" where my tax dollar is going. Our library is always full of students and adults, reading. What our state needs to improve the quality of life are more educated people. The library provides a source for all of us, and those who would otherwise not be able to afford books.
- Living in Elgin, the new library, has increased the value of our home. Also, we can research living environment of our community as I did when going for research during Kershaw County Leadership projects.
- The medial books and encyclopedias are useful to me in finding out about my son's illness, different medications and their side effects and other information to help me understand words that would frustrate me without an explanation.

#### LANCASTER

- Having a strong local library enhances the whole life of the community. Computer use for those who cannot purchase one is so important. In the hunt for new industry it is vital to have a well-established library system.
- Part of my job as a middle school media specialist for LCSD requires me to become familiar with, read, evaluate, and purchase books appropriate for young adults and teens. The public library provides me with access to many new books so that I can evaluate possible selections/additions before I consider purchasing those items for my library. I can be sure that the items I

purchase are appropriate for my students and that the items will be useful for them.

- My husband was diagnosed with a liver disease we had never heard of and I was able to check out books on this subject and learn valuable information. I have also had some health problems and was able to learn about them from the library. Any time I need to know about a medical condition, the library is the first place I go.
- Being able to borrow materials and not have to purchase them is a huge help. Having access to DISCUS has opened a world of information too.
- Until I got my own computer, I used the library's resources. I still check out books on computers and various other subjects. Books are very expensive and I cannot afford to buy them. There is no doubt in my mind but that the library is and always has been a very important part of our community. Even the Internet cannot change that. For example, many of the genealogical websites have to be paid for. The Internet may be more convenient at times, but the library is free.
- Although I don't currently travel long distances to get to work, I have used the library's audio book collection to fill my travel time. Books on Tape would have been very expensive if I would have had to purchase them myself and then listened to them once; however, the beauty of the library is that the county purchases those items once and all library card patrons benefit.

#### LAURENS

- I take tests for my college courses online here, and I also check and read my emails. Which sooner or later will help me get my degree, and make better\$. This also helps me right now because I can't afford Internet @ home!
- Having access to the Internet. Having the Internet at the library has helped people who cannot afford to buy a computer. This is only public access that I know of that people can access the Internet for people who cannot afford computers at home.
- Learning and education always contributes to economic improvement. I have been able to obtain information on Colleges and have found reference aids to help in my personal education (Spanish). I also find many aids for the homeschooling education of my two children, which has been invaluable and ultimately will add to the economic development of them.
- Having access to a wide range of books and videos. Books can be very expensive. Buying a wide range of books for their children or for themselves is way too expensive for most middle-income people. Even being a member of a book club can be very expensive. Most books cost at least \$15.00 when bought from a book club even at 50% off because of the shipping and handling charges. I think most people would agree that children need to be exposed to a wide range of books to increase their general knowledge of the world as well as increase their reading ability.

## LEE

- The most important benefit is that citizens want to improve their computer skills for the job market because computers are the future.

## LEXINGTON

- Providing resources (books) that I don't have to buy. I'm a graduate student and I save a lot of time and money by utilizing the resources at the library. Additionally, I have a free e-mail account that saves me money on a monthly basis.
- The Lexington library has helped me in homeschooling my children. In particular we love the website because it enables me to search for books/videos/DVDs that my children may need for a particular subject and do so in the comfort of my own home at a convenient time for me.
- I can't afford the investment of Internet access and buy a computer as well, but I am required to have both to attend college. My local library is getting me through college.
- The library provides computer access. The access allowed me to complete an on-line application for my profession. The application provided my employer with the information about me and helped the employer to decide to hire me. Without the application, I could not have been hired. The computer access is the most important economic benefit.
- I have been able to increase my income. This is due to my ability to better research products and services, which enable me to expand, facilitate and increase interest in the services that I offer. Better ideas - better business.
- As a result of frequent visits to the library, I was able to land my last two jobs. Without the materials (PCs with word processor, books on the latest technology, Internet access, etc.) available there, I can honestly say I wouldn't currently be employed in the field of technical support. If allowed to continue, these services will benefit others in the future as well they have helped me in the past.
- The simple fact that I can borrow books instead of having to purchase them for my book-loving family is a tremendous economic benefit! It is very important for all citizens to have access to reading materials to foster literacy skills as well as new knowledge to start small businesses, further hobbies, etc. If we had to buy books for all these things, we'd never have enough money.
- This library's presence enabled to complete weekly research projects and graduate with a 3.0 GPA as a single parent and go on to be a productive member of this community.
- I am able to use a variety of great books and countless topics for my children's homeschool curriculum that is on their learning level. I don't need, therefore, to spend hundreds of dollars buying them or limit their education because we cannot afford to buy them.
- I am a classroom teacher. Each week I expose the children I teach to either library books/educational videos I check out here. The school simply does not have the wealth of resources offered here.

- The ability to obtain information on different subjects to broaden myself as an individual and make myself more attractive in the job market. They are staffed with very helpful, friendly people who want to help you get ahead and enjoy yourself. Without libraries and a way for all people to have books available we would be in dire straights in this country. Literacy is a problem now; think how bad it would be without our libraries to help make it better.
- Computer software for my children to learn on is extremely valuable. Our system doesn't like all software, so visiting the library to use the computers is something my children look forward to. We don't have to upgrade our system or purchase new software. We love the library!
- Before any important purchase for our household, I make a trip to the library to research the best products and best sources for them. This information has saved our family a lot over the years.
- I am on a VERY tight budget & I have been able to read books (sometimes multiple times) that I would not have been able to buy ordinarily. I know that I will definitely buy some of the books I have read many times when I have the disposable income. Without this library I would not have been exposed to this information. Also, I appreciate that I can do research online at night and on weekends. I make my requests to pick up during business hours. This is very helpful as I rarely have time to "browse" when the library - and most stores - are open. I am endlessly thankful for this library system, and appreciate all the efforts of the SC library system.
- I read non-fictional educational type books. This library helped me come to an equitable financial settlement in my divorce due to reading and self-educating.

#### MARION

- The Marion County library has contributed to my economic benefits in more ways than one. It has helped be to be more productive in preparing my self economically, and educationally. The library also provides me with the information that I'm looking for at the time, if my local library does not have the reference material I need the librarians are always willing and supportive in securing it from another library. I very proud of our local library facility.
- The local library provides so many opportunities to those who do not have access to the Internet, let alone computers at home, especially some of the students in the area. The Marion area suffers due to the like of jobs. So the library provides services to those who are looking for gainful employment. It also provides a safe-haven for those youngsters who do not have a parent to go home to after school because parents are at work. In doing so these students are able to come and read, study, and complete homework assignments. I personally have benefited so much from the Marion County Library and wished that More funding would become available to help secure more technology for our local library. The support staff are really great, they go out of their way to help you in any way possible. They go above and beyond the call of duty.
- Free books & magazines for all and free Internet use. This is a great resource for knowledge. Knowledge is power. Power is money.

## MARLBORO

- The access of the library gave me access to a computer along with providing me with research material that helped me write my book.

## MCCORMICK

- I rely on the Library collection of Consumer Report Magazines for all purchases related to equipment for my rural business. I also use this information for purchases for personal uses.
- The library provides me with information that is used to document information used in grant applications for projects that improve quality of life in the rural setting as well as promote tourism that brings customers to my small town Main Street store.

## OCONEE

- The availability and the personal one-on-one specific help from job sources locally, cell phone plans consumer reports. Most places you have to pay someone for that knowledge and experience like a community college, which most of us can't afford.
- I have used the library as a reference resource for my LLC business, my homeschooling, and reading material for my kids. Two of these children have started college and they use the county libraries for all their research.
- I can no longer afford to attend Clemson University because tuition prices have increased. The library allows me to continue learning and has encouraged me to pursue other options.
- As homeschoolers, we already spend at least \$400 per year on books, textbooks, videos & other resources. The library provides us with many books we would either have to purchase or do without! We count on the library for classics & Newberry winners.
- Having a library where it is to call upon for specific information, very well staffed, excellent helpers, very knowledgeable. You don't ask about how many of us read for pleasure. It is still an important part of our lives - our staff at the Seneca Library is so well informed, have great suggestions, wonderful atmosphere with weekly art exhibits, so helpful with computer workers and young people reading corner for children is most attractive, enjoy recycling of magazines table, manner in which each request is so easily and properly taken care of. A great town (Seneca) and Walhalla Library. Please keep as is and try to have more money to keep our libraries. We need them! Many people still like a library rather than Internet.
- While economic benefits are a vital part of the services offered by the Library, some other qualities are equally important. While we all know that the more we read about current trends, new Tec development, etc the Library does a real service by promoting literacy. The ability to read, understand what we read, and apply it to our daily lives is a basic as it gets. The Library provides a vital service to all Oconee Residents who are interested in improving their

personal and professional growth and well being. The personnel at the Westminster Branch of the Oconee Library are Tops.

#### ORANGEBURG

- One of the most important economic benefits I believe that the library has provided is as much open access to information or services to everyone who resides in the community because obtaining a library card is free and is not contingent upon someone's ability to pay in order to receive one. Obtaining a library card is mainly a mere matter of meeting the minimum requirements of county residency to become entitled to making use of the library's information and services offered.
- Research by use of computer access, which would have otherwise not been available, allowed me to win a lawsuit and keep my home. I had been a victim of fraud. I was able to locate and bring vindication and financial resources to the situation. It also allowed me to reinstate credit losses and secure a more stable future. The computers and books helped me develop some ideas, which I will be using in an ongoing business development.
- I was able to use the computer and Internet Services in the computer Lab, when my home computer crashed. I was also able to go to class online, do assignments, and meet due dates for assignments. (2) Check on the progress of my Small Business account. (3) Get information on fundraising. (4) Order health supplies online.
- As a senior citizen with limited funds, I could not get a computer of my own. The library made it possible to take advantage of business and learning opportunities to enhance my limited funds and live a better lifestyle.
- By providing foreign language study books, the library has helped me improve my marketability and gives me the ability to seek higher paying job.
- Since I am retired, the main economic benefit I receive from the library is really indirect. The general well-being and future of this community depends on education of our young people. Libraries appeal to young people by making education a fun, hands-on experience.
- Medically my health was getting worse and the cost was rising. Advice that I've read and applied has made a dramatic improvement in my health care.

#### PICKENS

- My 6-year-old son and I come to this library three times a week. We work on his homework and read several books per visit. I think that it is vitally important that children gain a full understanding of how regular visits to the library can benefit them. It is too easy to place a child in front of a television, or a video game, as an electronic babysitter. I feel that parents that do that lose valuable opportunities to connect with their children on several levels. And their children don't gain a full understanding of the importance of reading and miss the chance to realize the importance that the library can have in their lives.
- Helping me find markets for horses I raise - also care & training issues. I am still actively raising horses. Locating rare books and markets for some I have.

Helping me use inter-library loan to obtain books otherwise not readily available.

- With free use of the Internet it has made me a more active user of both the computer labs and the library in general. I really enjoy the audio media that is provided (books on tape and CD) and the visual media (DVDs and VHS movies) that is available. I would like to see the books on compact disc selection increased. Thanks.
- Provides a quiet place to study for the PE exam (mechanical engineering). Passing the PE exam will result in a promotion at work.
- The use of the library facilities has helped me to obtain my Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. It has also kept me up to date on other personal issues that have interested me. Such as my personal finances, etc.
- Well, This Library has helped very much because I don't have my own computer at home, at this time I cannot afford one. This Library has helped me with school. I have done a lot of my essays on the computer's they have here. I was having a hard time at first to learn the different things that I could do and the Library Personnel helped me in these areas. They are very helpful when my children or I need them.
- I have attended several of the free computer classes and some of them more than once. I bring my children here to use the computers to help them with their homework because we do not own a computer.
- The access to reference materials such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and various handbooks has been the most important economic benefit, which I have received. The cost of these materials makes them almost impossible for an individual to purchase
- Email service helps me in my starting a business and communication between my supervisors/boss/directors. Communication with friends through email is very valuable and good for my well being.
- I use the computers at this library to do a job search, email family and friends and to search the web for subjects that interest me. Although I have a job, it doesn't hurt to know what else is out there. I also stay in touch with family and friends that live far away. This method is less expensive than long-distance. Everyone at this library has been helpful, courteous and acted in a professional manner. The staff here is a credit to the local community.
- Helping me become computer literate - or starting me on this new adventure in learning. I am just now 80 and computer has opened so many doors. Also there are foreign contacts - many viewed through entering BBC pages and from then on to other foreign vistas. Also it is helpful in seeing how our country is seen by people of other nations.

#### RICHLAND

- As a homeschooling mom, I depend on the library for a wealth of educational materials and experiences that I would not be able to find or afford elsewhere. At least 75 percent of our reading and research materials come from the library. The library has provided books, magazines, and DVDs that have been crucial to our homeschooling lessons.

- The library (along with my parents) has nurtured a love of reading for my entire life, and my love of reading has carried me through grade school, college, and now graduate school. Love of reading has affected my success in school, which directly affects my financial success in life.
- With school budgets the way they are, I would have to purchase many of the books my children are required to read. I have been able to obtain every book my children were asked to read from my local branch library
- Using the library saves me TIME, a valuable resource that cannot be replaced. I can use the Internet to search the catalog, place holds and be alerted to their availability at my closest branch through e-mail. I then only need to make one trip to the library to pick up and check out my reserved materials. Then, should I need to hold the materials longer than the 3 weeks usually provided, I can go online to renew (if no other requests are waiting). This flexibility along with the wide variety of materials makes the library a vital resource not just for saving money but also for saving time.

#### SALUDA

- The most important benefit I have received is help with getting money for college and that will last a lifetime.
- Internet access has allowed me to contact potential future employers directly in other states and has allowed me to research information about communities in these states.

#### SPARTANBURG

- I'm a single mom of 2 small children. I'm able to help them increase their love for learning and reading. As well as the enjoyment I receive from reading. I can't afford to buy us many books. The library provides new books to our family each week. I am also able to use the computer services and Internet.
- I'm retired. The library has been a major recreational source contributing to both my emotional and intellectual well-being.
- I check out movies weekly. Either for my family's enjoyment or for instruction a specific topic. I would not be able to afford to buy or rent this quantity of movies or videos otherwise.
- We often use the library's computer, as we can't afford one of our own at this time. The library is integral to our lives as we know them here in Inman.

#### SUMTER

- Being able to borrow books for personal reading allows me to save since I don't have to purchase books for reading hobby. Since we are on retirement income this is a big help.

#### YORK

- I use the library primarily to borrow audio books for my long commute to and from work. Without the library I would have to buy or rent audio books, which is extremely expensive. I listen to 4-5 unabridged books per month, saving me at least \$50 per month in rentals.

- Having local resources available is a fundamental benefit to all involved. Continuing education, a passion for literacy and a sense of community is all brought together by this one facility. The economic and social benefits of a library cannot be described in dollars and cents.
- The library provided me access to books that I needed to help tutor students. Without these books I would have used other resources, as I was not interested in making a purchase of books for a limited need usage.
- Provides a wealth of material for my classroom I cannot afford to purchase and the school district has no money to provide.
- The library provides job skill information and computer experience for a lot of people who couldn't otherwise afford the materials.
- My family reads extensively, both professionally and personally. We read both fiction and nonfiction; our ages range from 7 years-49 years. We cannot afford to subscribe to or buy all the resources we use for school and personal use. Our public library makes it possible for us to have access to a wide variety of resources, some of which we did not know about until we discovered them at the library.
- Access to quality resources is a huge economic benefit for me and my family. We could not afford to buy the amount of information we digest. The collection development of York library adds wonderful and diverse resources.
- The library if Fort Mill obviously provides a learning environment & institution for all citizens, thereby improving the personal and economic well-being & potential of the entire community. Because of my use of the Internet I've been able to access accounts & do business that saves me time & money. Additionally has allowed me the access information from various organizations, government agencies and individuals in a very timely manner.
- The library is very important to me in many ways, and has helped me no matter what stage of life I am going through. It was very important when my children were little and I was able to bring them to the story hour and let them be exposed to wonderful stories and other children their age. I met one of my best friends during these times. The library is always where I go if I don't have the information at home or on the Internet. It is also a lifesaver when my computer is out of operation. My son just told me yesterday that at least he had something to look forward to - he is waiting on a sequel in a series of books he is reading to be transferred to the Clover branch. The librarians are wonderful people also- they are knowledge sources and a very personal face in this impersonal world. I wouldn't know how to begin to put a price tag on all of this.
- I spend most of my disposable income on books. Since I don't have much disposable income, if it were not for the library, I'd have to rob banks to support my reading habit. This would have a serious negative impact on my family's economic health.
- I have been looking to use the library for child enrichment. Specifically I wanted to bring my two toddler children for story time, however each time I have learned of an interesting program, the enrollment spaces have been filled. I think that with such a great demand for additional pre-school/toddler

time activities that additional programs would be added. In light of the Presidents call for "no child left behind" I would think that programs to reach young children would be important to this library system. After all, a love of reading is nurtured from the very start.

- The library has maintained a local community health and human services resource database which I use regularly in my work and which I would otherwise not be able to afford / maintain myself.
- As a teacher of the academically gifted, I use the library often to check out books on topics my classes are studying. I cannot personally afford (nor can my district afford) to provide all the resources my students need and deserve; by checking out a "mini-library" for each unit we study, I can give my students the high-level information they need to do appropriate research and become independent learners.
- The DISCUS program is also an extremely valuable resource. Being able to access DISCUS from home has made such a difference using the library for education and business.

## **A.6: Selected Comments by Homeschoolers in the South Carolina Economic Impact Study of Public Libraries**

**The following are selected responses to the two open-ended questions of the general survey:**

- What is one of the most important economic benefits that you have received from this library? (Please be as specific as possible.)
- What is another of the most important economic benefits that you have received from this library? (Please be as specific as possible.)

These responses are selected from each county's set of compiled responses and are organized by county name. Minor grammatical and spelling errors have been corrected using MS Word's spell and grammar check features. --Compiled by Dr. Curtis R. Rogers, SC State Library.

### **AIKEN**

- I am a homeschooler with a daughter who is an avid reader. Without the regular use of the library our daughter would be severely limited in the books she would be able to "devour." We are financially unable to purchase all the books it takes to keep her reading appetite satiated.

### **ANDERSON**

- Getting books on loan versus \$\$\$ for the books. As a homeschooler I'm trying to read as much as I can on the subject.
- Access to a large variety of books that I would otherwise not be able to read. As a homeschooling mother we need a large variety of study materials (books, video) that we could not afford to purchase.

### **BEAUFORT**

- I base 95% of my son's elementary homeschool curriculum on library books from the Hilton Head Library, with additional books borrowed from Bluffton and Beaufort. I could never afford to purchase the hundreds of books I have borrowed over the past seven years. My son has attended weekly story/language arts sessions at the library since he was two years old. I'm convinced these sessions have enhanced his reading ability and his love of reading.

## CHARLESTON

- I am a homeschool parent and on a very limited budget. We would be lost without the library. My child and I visit at least two days a week and she is an avid reader. I could never afford to buy this many books and instructional material on our own. The library staff is wonderful and much appreciated.
- Opportunity to check out books that I need for homeschooling and for my personal reading so that I do not have to purchase the books.
- The library has economically benefited our homeschool. We could not otherwise have afforded one-tenth of the material we borrow from the library.
- This library has provided many, many books to use in our homeschooling adventure.
- The library has been a tremendous blessing to us. As homeschoolers we use almost every aspect it has to offer. It has allowed me to be a better teacher.
- Able to borrow dozens of books to use while homeschooling, thereby saving us money in that we do not have to purchase them.
- I homeschool my children and without the books from the library I would probably not be able to do that.
- The library is a very beneficial resource to homeschoolers. I can quickly have any information I need to teach my children at my fingertips without having to make pricey purchases.
- Access to materials that I could not afford to buy for our homeschool.
- As a homeschooler, I save hundreds of dollars borrowing books, which I would otherwise have to buy.
- We are a homeschooling family. The library allows us to use books for the required reading curriculum without having to make expensive purchases to fulfill those requirements.
- Educational tools! We as homeschoolers NEED the libraries! We love our library!  
Thanks
- I am able to give my son knowledge. We homeschool and without the library, I would have to seek his curriculum from another source.
- I have saved hundreds of dollars on books for homeschooling. Every lesson I teach relies, to a certain extent, on specific texts. Having access to these books via the library means that I needn't purchase a book just for a single lesson.
- I am also furthering my own education in addition to homeschooling my child. I find as many wonderful sources of information for myself and my husband (who is a professional) as I do for myself.

## CHESTER

- We Homeschool and never could afford all of the books that you provide.

## CLARENDON

- Educational resource for homeschooling, i.e., books, nutrition kit that comes in 1g. plastic box (would like to see more of those kits for other subject areas!)

## COLLETON

- As a homeschooling mother, the use of a library is of great benefit to our family. The use of the resources limit our on personal spending on textbooks and give our children a way to self teach.
- I have been able to find material to enhance my son's homeschool education. Again, there is no way we could afford to purchase all the material that we have used.

## DILLON

- Magazines with current financial info. Books for homeschool so I don't have to purchase them.

## DORCHESTER

- I homeschool my children, but cannot purchase all of the resources we need to use. The Library makes it possible to homeschool more cost effectively.
- The education of my children. Even though I don't homeschool, it's vital to have a library conveniently located nearby where I live so that we can conveniently located resources. The Internet alone will not cultivate a love of books or a love of learning. There are few public services that are more important to an informed democracy. The libraries in SC are under funded!

## GREENVILLE

- Over the past 5 years of homeschooling, being able to borrow books from the library rather than having to buy them has probably saved our family thousands of dollars.
- Honestly, your wide selection of children's materials makes it easier on our pocketbook to homeschool. Additionally, if I'm considering a purchase for our use, if it's available, I can "test-drive" it at the library to see if it's worthwhile
- We homeschool and the library is a valuable resource.

## GREENWOOD

- The ability to read books without having to purchase them. This is especially important for my children. We homeschool and by using the library it significantly cuts my cost for schooling by providing books for general reading, enjoyment, historical studies and science

## KERSHAW

- The library has saved us hundreds of dollars by making it possible for us to borrow books that we would have otherwise had to buy to support our homeschool, as well as my husband's self-owned business.

## LAURENS

- Learning and education always contributes to economic improvement. I have been able to obtain information on Colleges and have found reference aids to help in my personal education (Spanish).I also find many aids for the homeschooling education of my two children which has been invaluable and ultimately will add to the economic development of them.

## LEXINGTON

- Homeschool resources The Lexington library has helped me in homeschooling my children. In particular we love the website because it enables me to search for books/videos/DVDs that my children may need for a particular subject and do so in the comfort of my own home at a convenient time for me.
- To find a multitude of books without having to purchase them myself. I rely on library books for homeschooling my children. We are a one-income family, so using library resources helps me to provide a better education for my general.
- I save hundreds of dollars every year by using library books in homeschooling my children. There is no way I could buy all the books I need.
- Providing me with books for homeschooling my children that I would otherwise have to buy
- We homeschool. That means one income for our family. By being able to access the books we need without having to purchase them, this eases the monetary strain we might otherwise have to deal with.
- I am able to use a variety of great books and countless topics for my children's homeschool curriculum that is on their learning level. I don't need, therefore, to
- spend hundreds of dollars buying them or limit their education because we cannot afford to buy them.
- Free information and supplements to our homeschool, such as creative dramatics program, educational books and videos, story times, craft times, the butterfly garden.

## OCONEE

- I homeschooled my children and used the library for many resources. I could not have afforded to buy all the materials. The librarians were always very helpful and eager to help.
- I have used the library as a reference resource for my LLC business, my homeschooling, and reading material for my kids. Two of these children have started college and they use the county libraries for all their research.
- This library has helped me tremendously with my homeschooling curriculum! More than you know!
- As homeschoolers, we already spend at least \$400 per year on books, textbooks, videos & other resources. The library provides us with many books we would either have to purchase or do without! We count on the library for classics & Newberry winners.
- Providing information and support with homesteading and homeschooling.
- Use it to assist HomeSchooling greatly!!
- Books for homeschool.

## PICKENS

- Helped in the education of our children in homeschooling and the training for their life

- The most important economic benefit is the opportunity to use a large number of resources. We homeschool and it is important to the balancing of our budget to use these resources.
- I DON'T HAVE TO BUY BOOKS TO HELP WITH MY CHILD'S HOMESCHOOLING OR OUR HOME IMPROVING EFFORTS. P.S. IF THIS IS WHAT THE SURVEY IS FOR, THESE ECONOMIC BENEFITS EXPERIENCED WILL BE NEGATED IF PROPERTY TAXES ARE INCREASED.

#### RICHLAND

- As a homeschooling mom, I depend on the library for a wealth of educational materials and experiences that I would not be able to find or afford elsewhere. At
- least 75 percent of our reading and research materials come from the library. The library has provided books, magazines, and DVDs that have been crucial to our homeschooling lessons.

#### YORK

- The library always has the research materials I need for whatever I'm studying at the time -- from history to gardening, soap making, homeschooling.
- As a homeschool mother the library has been a tremendous source of learning tools and information.
- I homeschool my children. Without the library, I wouldn't be able to afford all the books and materials I need.

## **Appendix B: Detailed Findings from the Analysis of South Carolina Public Library Statistics**

Note: All of the data used in these calculations of the various types of economic impacts of public libraries are based on the 2002 annual statistical compilation by the SC State Library.

### **Part I: Direct Economic State-wide Impacts of all South Carolina Public Libraries**

**Measure 1:** Total impact of all public library expenditures on the state's economy

Purpose: To determine the total monetary impact on the economy of the state of SC of all expenditures (capital and operating) for one year for all public libraries in the state.

Method: Sum of all expenditures by all public libraries. (However, because some portion of operating expenditures consist of collection development costs, most of which are spent out of state, 75% of collection expenditure costs have been deducted.)

Calculating formula: sum of: (total operating expenditures + total capital expenditures) - .75 of total collections expenditures

- **Sum Total for the state: \$79,914,285**
- **Library System Minimum: \$109,795**
- **Library System Maximum: \$11,646,359**
- **Library System Average for the state: \$1,949,129**

**Measure 2:** Total Non-Tax Funds Received by all SC Public Libraries

Purpose: To determine the total non-SC state and local tax funds that are received by all public libraries in SC because of the existence of these libraries.

Method: Sum of funds (operating and capital) received by all public libraries from non-state and local taxing sources (federal government, gifts, endowments, etc.).

Calculating formula: sum of: operating revenue (total federal funds) + operating revenue (other funds) + capital revenue (federal funds) + capital revenue (other funds)

- **Sum total for all libraries: \$4,730,215**
- **Library System Minimum: \$0**
- **Library System Maximum: \$725,381**
- **Library System Average: 118,255**

**Measure 3:** Value of the loans of books, videos, and other materials to library users

Purpose: To estimate, using the best methods developed by researchers, the value of the library materials used by users of SC public libraries.

Method: Researchers (see Sumison, et.al. (2002) and Morris, et.al. (2001a)) have shown that users of public libraries are willing to pay approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the price of a book or similar items (videos, magazines, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

Calculating Formulas:

(1) Books: using 50% of the 2001 average price of hardbacks and trade paper books of \$10.00 (at \$5.00 per item) results in: (total circulation of juvenile books + total circulation of adult books) \* \$5.00

- **Sum total for all public libraries: \$64,415,630**
- **Library System Minimum: \$65,635**
- **Library System Maximum: \$12,000,000**
- **Library System Average: \$1,657,683**

(2) Non-print materials (video, etc.): using the average 2001 price for tape cassettes, compact disc and VHS cassette of \$35.00,  $\frac{1}{4}$  = \$8.76, results in: (total circulation of juvenile non-print materials + total circulation of adult nonprint) \* \$8.76

- **Sum Total for all libraries: \$24,071,990**
- **Library System Minimum: \$0 (reflects no report for this library)**
- **Library System Maximum: \$7,829,075**
- **Library System Average: \$617,231**

(3) Magazines and newspapers: take the 2002 average subscription cost of magazines and newspapers (\$200.00) and multiply times the number of

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<sup>1</sup> Note: a recent study by the NY State Library Regional Library system (nicely displayed in effective flyers and a Web page at: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/stackup.htm> ) used cost figures as follows: Books: \$25.00; Magazines (one issue): \$10.00; AV materials: \$25.00; other materials: \$25.00; Reference questions (adult and juvenile): \$40.00; ILL: \$25.00. This study was done using data from the regional library systems (about 15) in New York state. These regional libraries exist to serve individual, independent libraries in their region. The brochure/Web page they have developed from this study reflects the economic impact (which they term ROI—return on investment) of these regional libraries in New York state. Thus, while they are not exactly parallel with this study of individual, independent public libraries, the concepts they use do appear to be useful.

subscriptions held results in: (sum of all newspaper and magazine subscriptions) \* \$200.00

- **Sum total for all libraries: \$4,142,000**
- **Library System Minimum: \$11,200**
- **Library System Maximum: \$596,400**
- **Library System Average: \$101,024**

#### **Measure 4:** Value of reference questions answered

Purpose: To estimate the economic value of information provided through the reference services (in-person, telephone, and e-mail) provided by all public libraries in the state.

Method: While the research literature in this area is limited, a few studies have been conducted. Morris, et. al. (2002) based their estimates on the average time a user spent in a reference transaction (about 30 minutes) and multiplied it times an average community hourly salary.

Calculating formula: Using this approach, with a South Carolina 2002 median hourly wage of \$12.00, a value of \$6.00 per reference transaction was used for calculations. This resulted in the formula: sum of reference transaction \* \$6.00.<sup>2</sup>

- **Sum total for all libraries: \$26,269,818**
- **Library System Minimum: \$7,200**
- **Library System Maximum: \$7,516,836**
- **Library System Average: \$640,728**

#### **Measure 5:** Measuring the value of in-library use of materials.

Purpose: To estimate the economic value of information provided to users who visit and use materials inside the state's public libraries. Morris, et. al. (2001a) base their estimate for this value on the average time spent in the library by users (about 30 minutes) and multiply it times a community average salary cost.

Calculating formula: The Study Team used an even more conservative time and value estimate figure of \$2.43 for each visitor. This resulted in the formula: the sum of in-library use of materials in all public libraries \* \$2.43.

- **Sum total for all libraries: \$10,351,105**
- **Library System Minimum: 0 (only 38 libraries reporting)**

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<sup>2</sup> The New York State Library study (2004) used a \$40.00 value for each reference question (adult and juvenile) for each reference question.

- **Library System Maximum: \$1,763,193**
- **Library System Average: \$272,398**

**Measure 6:** To measure the economic value of the use of facilities and equipment in all public libraries in South Carolina.

Purpose: To estimate the economic value of the use of facilities (for meetings, study, personal use, etc.) and equipment (computers, Internet access, copying equipment, etc.) by all users of all public libraries. Morris, et. al. (2001a) estimate that the value of these uses is 10% of the operating expenditures.

Calculating formula: sum of total operating expenditures \* .10

- **Sum total for all libraries: \$7,872,119**
- **Library System Minimum: \$10,846**
- **Library System Maximum: \$1,332,466**
- **Library System Average: \$192,003**

**Total Direct Economic Impact of South Carolina Public Libraries**

<b>Measure 1 total:</b>	<b>79,914,285</b>
<b>Measure 2 total:</b>	<b>4,730,215</b>
<b>Measure 3(1) total:</b>	<b>64,415,630</b>
<b>Measure 3(2) total:</b>	<b>24,071,990</b>
<b>Measure 3(3) total:</b>	<b>4,142,000</b>
<b>Measure 4 total:</b>	<b>26,269,818</b>
<b>Measure 5 total:</b>	<b>10,351,105</b>
<b>Measure 6 total:</b>	<b>7,872,119</b>
<b>Total all direct impacts:</b>	<b>\$221,767,162</b>
<b>Total all state and local income:</b>	<b>* \$77,541,128</b>

**Every \$1.00 expended by SC state and local government gives a direct return of \$2.86**

\*Note: total state and local government income (operating and capital) was calculated by summing: local tax income (operating) + state income total (operating) + local (capital expenditures) government income + state government income (capital expenditures).

## **Part II: Indirect Economic Impacts of all South Carolina Public Libraries**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this section is to estimate the indirect economic impacts of expenditures made by all South Carolina public libraries through payment of salaries, building costs, equipment costs, etc.

**Method:** There is some controversy about what kinds of multipliers to use when calculating indirect economic impacts. A great variety of different approaches have been used in studies of industries (such as individual companies), public utilities (such as airports), universities and individual schools in them, arts and culture in an individual state, and for libraries. Recent studies in Florida (McClure, et. al., 2001) and (Griffiths, et.al. 2004) have also used different approaches and methods. Other studies are cited in the references section of this report (see University of South Carolina, Moore School of Business, as one example). From these various studies, particularly those concerned with estimating local/regional effects, we have taken what we consider a conservative approach. A estimate that is frequently cited by economists is that about \$.36 is retained in the local/regional economy for every \$1.00 spent (for wages, capital expenditures, etc.) as a secondary impact. When third, fourth, etc. level impacts are considered the figure goes to about \$.637 for every \$1.00 spent. For total expenditures of South Carolina's public libraries we used the figures cited in Measure 1 (above), which excludes 75% of the collection development costs of materials, which are mostly expended out of state.

Calculating formula: total expenditures in Measure 1 / .637

- **Total Indirect Economic Impact of all SC Public Libraries: \$125,454,132**
- **Library System Minimum: \$172,362**
- **Library System Maximum: \$18,283,139**
- **Library System Average: \$192,003**

Thus, every \$1 of SC state and local government expenditures returns \$1.62 of indirect economic impact.

**Total direct and indirect return on investment by SC local and state governments is:  $\$2.86 + \$1.62 = \$4.48$ . Another way of saying this is that each \$1 of state and local funds invested has about a 350% return on investment.**

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