

# Financial Fitness Series—Altus Summary, August 2017.

The Financial Fitness Series was held at the Altus Public Library for six weeks in the summer. Each program began at 12 noon through 1:15 p.m. and included a free lunch and all materials for those attending.

The grant funds allowed the library system to purchase a significant collection of Resource Center materials covering all aspects of financial planning. Materials were purchased in the major areas of money management, kids and money, banking and savings, credit and debt, homeownership and mortgages, financial education, insurance types and coverage, investments, retirement, social security, frauds and security, and estate planning. We also obtained and copied the NEFE *Smart About Money* financial planning worksheets and made those available in the Resource Center as well as the classes. A bibliography of the FINRA recommended on-line resources available in the major areas of financial planning was prepared and distributed to the class participants as well as through the Resource Center and online through the web - [financial-fitness.oklibraries.org](http://financial-fitness.oklibraries.org).

The class participants represented the targeted audience groups identified in the grant with the majority being retired seniors varying levels of financial experience. However, there were two young couples attending who had never been introduced to any form of budgeting or saving and were working from pay check to pay check without any thought for the future. They both commented that this course was an eye-opener for them ...teaching them things they never knew and providing easy tools to begin very basic budgeting, saving and debt control. There were also three adult literacy and ESL learners who attended to improve their financial literacy knowledge. This was an exceptional experience because their tutors attended with them to help with the training and understanding. These adult learners actually did their homework because the financial materials became a part of their literacy lessons.

The participant evaluations were favorable with 100% agreeing to visit the library either in person or online to use the free resources available in the Resource Center; and 100% said that they would recommend this series to others.

Of special interest were the comments received on the individual evaluations for the specific sessions. The group appreciated the broad coverage and timeliness of financial topics, the “great hand-outs”, and the awareness of the critical need to plan for the “golden age” medical costs. They also commented

upon the diversity of the group and the interaction that developed as they became engaged in the different discussions...they learned from one another's experiences. One respondent said that she was now getting all of her financial records together and another said he was giving a crash course in financial planning to his children. Another commented that she now had the tools to get organized. Another comment was "I have set my goals and I have a plan...now I just need to work the plan." One senior commented on the materials and worksheets with this quote "New stuff makes 'Old' knowledge more valuable." Others commented that: this series should be a high school course, a college refresher and a community based continuing education opportunity.