

**The Economic Value of the Middle Country Public Library
In Suffolk County, New York**

**By Dr. Pearl M. Kamer, Chief Economist
Long Island Association, Inc.**

Executive Summary

At the request of the Middle Country Public Library, the Long Island Association performed the following special research report, which compares the value of the direct services provided by the Library with the tax dollars used to support it. It also estimates the economic impact of the operating and capital expenditures made by the Library. The data on which it is based pertain to the Library's fiscal 2004-05 year. Key findings of the study are as follows:

- The Middle Country Public Library uses the tax dollars it receives to good effect. The \$10,981,862 in tax dollars that it received in fiscal 2004-05 generated library services valued at an estimated \$50,447,193. This is equivalent to a ratio of 4.59 to 1. Thus, library users received \$4.59 in services for every dollar they invested in the library.
- The library's operating and capital expenditures resulted in increased output, earnings and employment throughout Long Island but particularly in the local community. As a result of this spending, the total Long Island output of goods and services expanded by more than \$22.6 million including the original expenditure. Long Island earnings increased by almost \$5.7 million and approximately 141 support jobs were created throughout the Long Island economy.

Middle Country Public Library is a medium sized public library located in the geographic center of Long Island, New York. The Library serves as the community center for 60,000 local residents. It offers comprehensive programs and services to meet their needs from infancy through the senior years. Since 1960, Middle Country has grown from its modest beginnings in two storefronts to become the largest and busiest public library on Long Island. It has been recognized at the local, regional and national levels for its leadership in developing innovative family support services, community coalitions, and collaborative partnerships with the health, human service and business communities. During the past decade, Middle Country Library has become the national model for Family Place Libraries. It has developed and managed the Community Resource Database of Long Island, initiated a regional business center and expanded its facilities by 40%. This enabled the Library to create a state-of-the-art space to support its increased programs and services.

The Library's service to the community, its creativity and innovation and its leadership in developing programs that are emulated by other libraries is demonstrated by the following activities:

Expansion of Facilities. In the past five years, the Middle Country Library has completed the expansion and renovation of its Selden facility. The 30,000 square foot expansion made it possible to include a drop-in Teen Resource Center, Computer Place training lab, Rauch Family Place area for families with young children, Senior Center, courtyard, meeting rooms, and an 11,000 square foot library/collections area. The Family Place Training Center has two classrooms, a kitchen and a bath, which is used for national and regional training and is available for community partners who use it for training and workshops. The Library also made a 77,000 square foot expansion and renovation of its Centereach facility to include the national Hagedorn Family Place Library model, a Regional Adult Literacy Center, the John D. Miller Business Resource Center, an 800 square foot interactive Museum Corner, special spaces for teens and seniors, meeting rooms, a reading garden, and a dynamic lobby space with a welcome desk, ATM and coffee bar.

Increased Use by the Community. The Middle Country Library has become the busiest public library on Long Island. It has an annual circulation of 1.5 million items. More than 60,000 persons attend the more than 2,400 programs it holds each year. Middle Country's two buildings offer twelve meeting rooms for library and public use. These meeting rooms serve the needs of groups ranging in size from three or four persons to over 200. They provide meeting space for hundreds of civic and business groups, youth and senior groups, sport associations, literacy, home schooling, support and cultural groups as well as groups that provide entrepreneurial training. Specific users include bereaved parents groups, multiple sclerosis, arthritis and mental health groups. In all, some 1,000 to 1,500 visitors use the Library each day.

The Family Place Libraries Initiative. Middle Country's model family-centered library programs have been replicated in more than 160 urban, rural and suburban libraries across 21 states. Middle Country is working in partnership with Libraries for the Future, a library advocacy organization based in New York City, to create a national network of family-centered libraries. Librarians from across the country visit Middle Country to attend an intensive 3-day Family Place Training Institute. As a follow-up, Middle Country Library staff members then visit them on site to assist them in developing their own Family Place Libraries. Middle Country staff members publish articles and books on the development of family centered services. They also represent the Library at national and statewide conferences to advance the concept of family centered library services.

Closer to home, Middle Country launched Family Place Long Island to incorporate 23 Nassau and Suffolk County libraries into the Family Place network. The principal focus of this effort was to reach diverse, underserved and nontraditional libraries in their communities. Middle Country is now in the process of launching Phase II of Family Place LI. As part of this process, it will bring 10 more Long Island libraries into the Family Place network and work with the National Association of Mothers Centers, the National Center for the Parent-Child Home Programs, and the local Child Care Councils to develop three new models of family support programming. These models will then be replicated in public library settings across Long Island. To date,

Middle Country Library has raised \$400,000 to support the development and expansion of Family Place Long Island.

The Community Resource Database of Long Island. The Community Resource Database of Long Island was developed by the Library with the involvement and support of the two county governments, the United Way of Long Island, multiple corporate and foundation funders, and the Library's Foundation. It is an online directory of more than 12,000 health, human service and education programs and services on Long Island. The Database serves as a unique and successful example of a library initiated public-private partnership serving a regional population of 2.6 million individuals.

The Miller Business Resource Center. The Library's Miller Business Resource Center meets the information needs of the local business community, thereby providing support for regional economic development. The Center provides area businesses and entrepreneurs with one-on-one business research and virtual access to an extensive collection of specialized databases. The Miller Center receives support from the local Industrial Development Agency as well as private, corporate and foundation sources. It has developed partnerships with the 800-member Hauppauge Industrial Association so that the Library's resources have become an integral part of the local business environment. The Miller Center serves as the umbrella for the Library Business Connection, which is the networking and education arm of the Center. The Business Connection sponsors seminars, breakfast meetings and training opportunities for the business community.

The Library assists the business community in other ways as well. The Women's Expo, an annual tradeshow produced in partnership with the Long Island Fund for Women & Girls, provides a venue for over 50 women entrepreneurs who have products to market. For one day each year, the Expo transforms the Library into a marketplace in celebration of women's entrepreneurial activities. Library staff members also provide career counseling. A team of career counselors on staff at the Library provides one-on-one career guidance and employment assistance to district residents.

Recent New Collaborative Projects. In collaboration with Literacy Suffolk, Inc., Middle Country now houses the Mid-Suffolk Regional Literacy Center as part of its overall Adult Learning offerings. These offerings include literacy tutoring, English as a Second Language, citizenship and GED classes and extensive computer training. In partnership with the Family Service League of Suffolk, Inc., a library-based Family Center was established. The Center built upon the family spaces and resources already in place at the Library but added parent education opportunities and family casework assistance provided by a Family Service League caseworker.

Attracting Private and Corporate Funding. The Middle Country Library recently undertook the following activities, designed to attract additional private and corporate funding.

- Formed the Middle Country Library Foundation whose primary task is to raise funds beyond the local tax base to support the library's regional and national work and the library's expansion project. The Foundation raises over \$250,000 annually, which it passes over to the Library, and helps to attract over \$200,000 that goes directly to the Library.
- Initiated fee structures that serve as revenue streams to support the Family Place and the Community Resource Database.
- Passed a \$12 million bond issue and conducted a \$1 million enhancement campaign to expand and renovate the library's two facilities.
- Established a Community Relations function to manage the Foundation, as well as grant writing and fundraising activities.
- Secured a \$1 million Hagedorn Endowment for Family Place Libraries to ensure continued support for this major Library initiative.
- Held three fundraisers to support the Library's special projects. These included:
 - The annual *Putting Families First* Golf Outing in partnership with the National Association of Mothers' Centers and the National Center for the Parent-Child Home Program.
 - The annual *Women's Expo*, a trade show for women entrepreneurs. It was held in partnership with the Long Island Fund for Women & Girls.
 - The *Distinguished Speakers Series*, a lecture series on child and family issues for children's librarians and health and human service providers.

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Introduction

Most public libraries do not receive extensive funding from outside their immediate region. Because they are local in nature they tend to recycle local tax dollars. Libraries confer both direct and indirect benefits to the communities in which they are located. For example, the use of libraries helps to create a literate population, which is a major indirect benefit, especially in an economy that requires an increasing degree of knowledge. Yet, it is difficult to measure indirect benefits. However, the direct benefits to library users are measurable and this study estimates those benefits based on the fiscal 2004-05 performance of the Middle Country Public Library. This fiscal year extends from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005.

This study analyzes the cost of operating the Middle Country Public Library and compares the value of the direct services provided with the tax dollars used to support the Library. The study also measures the secondary economic impact of library operating expenditures on the community. For example, the wages it pays, the goods and services it purchases and the buildings it constructs or remodels recycle local tax dollars and have a ripple effect on the economy.

Part I of this study compares the local tax dollars received by the Middle Country Public Library with the measurable direct benefits to Library users. Part II of this study examines additional economic benefits conferred upon the community by library operating and capital expenditures.

PART I: Direct Benefits to Library Users

Methodology

Several frequently used library services have been selected for analysis. They fall under these general categories: library collections, circulation and reference transactions, programming, and electronic resources. The frequency of use of these services in fiscal 2005 was quantified by using the New York State Annual Reports for Public and Association Libraries. Each of the services has been assigned a market value: that is, the dollar amount that users of the particular service would have paid had the resources of the library been unavailable. By multiplying the number of users by the market value of each service, it is possible to estimate the total value of library services to their users. This figure was then compared with the state and local tax dollars received by the Middle Country Public Library during fiscal 2004-05. The result is a cost-benefit analysis that demonstrates the economic value of the tax dollars used to operate the library. This

method was used by the St. Louis Public Library¹ in its seminal study of the value of its services to users.

The Value of Library Collections

It is important to recognize that Middle Country Public Library has a large and diverse collection of books, journals, recordings and software. The estimated value of the Library’s collection and the manner in which it was derived is shown below in Table 1. The results show that the collection is valued at almost \$16.9 million. The value of this collection can be measured in terms of its relationship to the tax dollars needed annually to operate the library. During fiscal 2004-05, the Library received tax dollars totaling \$10,981,862. In effect, the Middle Country Public Library collection is valued at more than 1.5 times the tax dollars needed to operate the Library.

Table 1: Value of the Middle Country Public Library Collection

Materials Owned	Number	Estimated Value Per Item	Total Estimated Value	Source of Value Estimate
Adult Fiction Books	72,272	\$27.56	\$1,991,816	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Adult Nonfiction Books	144,455	62.84	9,077,552	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Children’s Fiction Books	63,962	24.37	1,558,754	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Children’s Nonfiction Books	64,879	24.37	1,581,101	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Print Serials (volumes)	7,692	4.83	37,152	Library Journal
E-Journals	3	303.62	911	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Audio Recordings (Music)	13,078	17.00	222,326	School Library Journal
Audio Recordings (Books)	10,297	75.00	772,275	School Library Journal
Video Recordings (DVD’s)	76,560	20.00	1,531,200	School Library Journal
Other (CD-ROM, Software)	3,955	31.66	125,215	Average Price paid by Suffolk Libraries
Total	457,153		16,898,303	

Source: Middle Country Public Library

The Value of Library Services: Circulation and Reference Transactions

The two greatest values for users of library services are the circulation of the library’s collection of books, music, videos and other materials and the reference transactions performed by its librarians.

The number of transactions conducted in fiscal 2004-05 by the Middle Country Public Library is shown below in Table 2. Each of these transactions has been assigned an estimated market value. The findings indicate that the market value of transactions involving the circulation of library materials and reference help by library staff was almost \$49.0 million in fiscal 2004-05. This is based on total circulation of 1,834,544 items and 181,619 reference transactions.

¹Holt, Glen E. , Elliott, Donald, and Moore, Amonia. Placing a Value on Public Library Services. 1998.

Table 2: Estimated Value of Circulation & Reference Transactions, Middle Country Public Library, Fiscal 2004-05

Item Circulation	Circulation	Proxy Dollar Value Per User	Total Proxy Dollar Value	Source of Proxy Value Estimate
Adult Fiction	274,690	\$27.56	\$7,570,456	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Adult Nonfiction	304,057	62.84	19,106,942	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Children's Fiction	215,420	24.37	5,249,785	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Children's Nonfiction	90,560	24.37	2,206,947	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Other Adult Material	51,596	4.00	206,384	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Audio Recordings, Books	43,675	75.00	3,275,625	School Library Journal
Audio Recordings, Music	113,379	17.00	1,927,443	School Library Journal
Adult Video/DVD	563,316	4.00	2,253,264	Blockbuster Rental Price
Other (CD-ROM, Software)	5,886	7.00	41,202	Blockbuster Rental Price
Other Children's Material	2,329	4.00	9,316	Bowker Annual Library Almanac
Audio Recordings Books	7,888	75.00	591,600	Av. Price, Books on Tape
Audio Recordings Music	9,540	17.00	162,180	CD Purchase Price
Children's Video/DVD	139,070	4.00	556,280	Blockbuster Rental Price
Other (CD-ROM, software)	13,138	7.00	91,966	Blockbuster Rental Price
Total Circulation	1,834,544		43,249,391	
Reference Transactions	181,619	29.00	5,266,951	Average Price, Google Answers
ILL Materials Received*	4,231	27.00	114,237	Av. Cost of Interlibrary Loan— Assn. of Research Libraries
Grand Total	2,020,394		48,630,579	

*Materials received from other libraries. Source: Middle Country Public Library

The Value of Library Services: Programming Services

The Middle Country Public Library also provides extensive entertainment, educational and other programs for library users. These include special programs for adults, young adults and children. Almost 65,000 library users participated in these programs in fiscal 2004-05. These programs had an estimated value of \$676,998.

Table 3: Value of Library Programming, Middle Country Public Library, Fiscal 2004-05

Type Of Service	Participants	Proxy Dollar Value Per User	Total Proxy Dollar Value	Source of Proxy Value Estimate
Adult Programs	22,902	\$10.42	\$238,639	St. Louis Public Library
Young Adult Programs	1,696	10.42	17,672	St. Louis Public Library
Children's Programs	36,985	10.42	385,384	St. Louis Public Library
Other Programs	3,388	10.42	35,303	St. Louis Public Library
Total	64,971		676,998	

Source: Middle Country Public Library

The Value of Library Services: Electronic Resources

The Middle Country Public Library also provides valuable electronic resources to its users. One of these is SuffolkNet, a source of dial-up Internet access for library cardholders. For many library patrons it is their only source of Internet access. The Library provided an estimated \$1,139,616 worth of services to almost 4,000 SuffolkNet users in fiscal 2004-05.

Table 4: Value of Library Electronic Services, Fiscal 2004-05

Type of Service	Number of Users	Proxy Dollar Value Per User	Total Proxy Dollar Value	Source of Proxy Value Estimate
SuffolkNet Service	3,957	\$288.00	\$1,139,616	Annual Cost, AOL
Total	3,957		1,139,616	

Source: Middle Country Public Library

Cost-Benefit Analysis of Services

The foregoing analysis indicates that the Middle Country Public Library conducted 2,089,322 individual transactions in fiscal 2004-05 and provided services valued at more than \$50.4 million to their users as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5: Estimated Dollar Value of Services Provided by the Middle Country Public Library, fiscal 2004-05

Type of Service	Number of Uses	Total Proxy Dollar Value
Circulation & Reference Transactions	2,020,394	\$48,630,579
Programming	64,971	676,998
Electronic Services	<u>3,957</u>	<u>1,139,616</u>
Total	2,089,322	50,447,193

Source: Middle Country Public Library

Since the Middle Country Public Library is funded by primarily by local tax dollars, it is useful to compare the dollar value of services provided during fiscal 2004-05 with the tax dollars used to generate those services. This comparison is called a cost-benefit analysis. It measures the dollar value of library benefits provided per tax dollar. In fiscal 2004-05, the Middle Country Public Library received tax revenues totaling \$10,981,862. These tax dollars generated \$50,447,193 in library services. This is equivalent to a ratio of 4.59 to 1. *Thus, library users received about \$4.59 in services for every dollar they invested in the library during fiscal 2004-05.*

Table 6: Local Tax Revenues Going to The Middle Country Public Library, Fiscal 2004-05

Type of Tax Revenue	Dollar Amount
Local Property Taxes	\$10,965,575
Other	16,287
Total Tax Revenue	10,981,862

Source: Middle Country Public Library

PART II: Additional Economic Benefits Attributable to Middle Country Public Library

Introduction

The foregoing cost-benefit analysis expresses the economic benefits of the Middle Country Public Library in the terms of tax dollars invested in the Library. However, the Library is also a major employer in its area. Most library employees live within or close to their respective communities. As a result, they tend to spend their wages locally. These wages are injected into the Long Island economy and undergo several rounds of re-spending so that the ultimate economic impact of these wages is a multiple of the original expenditure. This is the so-called ripple or multiplier effect. For example, library employees spend their wages at local retailers, who in turn buy goods and services from other Long Island businesses so that the process continues. Operating and capital expenditures made by the Library are also injected into the economy and are subject to the multiplier process. There is some leakage out of the system, as when wages are spent off Long Island. However, as a general rule, most wages generated by the Library remain within the Long Island economy and are subject to the multiplier process.

Methodology

The use of an input-output model of the Long Island economy makes it possible to estimate the secondary economic impact of operating and capital expenditures made by the Middle Country Public Library. The Long Island Association commissioned such a model from the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Commerce Department. The model is called the Regional Input-Output Modeling System or RIMS II. It is specific to the Long Island economy and reflects inter-industry relationships on Long Island. That is, it shows the industries from which Long Island businesses purchase their inputs and the industries to which they sell their output.

The model contains multipliers for output, earnings and employment. The output multipliers show how much Long Island's total output of goods and services, its gross metropolitan product, increases in response to each dollar of spending by the Middle Country Public Library. The earnings multipliers show how much overall Long Island earnings increase in response to such spending. The employment multipliers show how many secondary jobs are created for every one million dollars of spending by the Library.

The Secondary Economic Impact of Library Operating Expenditures.

In fiscal 2004-05, operating expenditures by the Middle Country Public Library totaled \$11,598,887. The RIMS II multipliers are industry specific, which makes it possible to demonstrate the economic impact of public library spending on specific Long Island industries. As Table 7 indicates, fiscal 2004-05 operating expenditures of \$11,598,887 caused total Long Island output to expand by \$22,197,951, including the original expenditure. This is equivalent to a net output increase of about \$10.6 million. Long Island earnings increased by more than \$5.5 million and 137 additional jobs were

created throughout the Long Island economy. The greatest impact occurred in various service industries. However, virtually all Long Island industries benefited from this spending, including construction and real estate. Most of this impact is local and occurs in the local community.

Table 7: Output, Earnings and Employment Gains by Industry Resulting from Fiscal 2004-05 Operating Expenditures, Middle Country Public Library

Industry	Output Increase	Earnings Increase	Employment Increase
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$31,317	\$6,959	1
Mining	6,959	1,160	0
Utilities	539,348	100,910	1
Construction	647,218	229,658	5
Manufacturing	1,265,439	255,176	6
Wholesale Trade	657,657	190,222	3
Retail Trade	669,256	206,460	9
Transportation & Warehousing	373,484	128,748	4
Information	482,514	115,989	2
Finance & Insurance	1,004,464	231,978	4
Real Estate; Rental & Leasing	1,449,861	89,311	3
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1,035,781	423,359	8
Management of Companies & Enterprises	190,222	75,393	1
Administrative & Waste Management Services	545,148	189,062	7
Educational Services	100,910	40,596	2
Health Care & Social Assistance	751,608	328,249	8
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	89,311	33,637	1
Accommodation & Food Services	292,292	99,750	6
Other Services	12,065,162	2,794,171	65
Households	0	3,480	1
Total	22,197,951	5,544,268	137

Source: LIA computations based on RIMS II Input-Output Model of the Long Island Economy

The Secondary Economic Impact of Library Capital Expenditures.

The Middle Country Public Library made capital expenditures of \$204,651 during fiscal 2004-05. RIMS II multipliers for the construction industry were applied to this figure to determine the secondary economic impact of this capital spending. The findings show that this spending caused total Long Island output to expand by \$423,055, including the original expenditure. This is equivalent to a net output increase about \$218,000. Local earnings increased by \$131,754 as a result of this spending and four additional support jobs were created throughout the economy.

Table 8: Output, Earnings and Employment Gains by Industry Resulting from Fiscal 2004-05 Capital Expenditures, Middle Country Public Library

Industry	Output Increase	Earnings Increase	Employment Increase
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$696	\$143	0
Mining	348	102	0
Utilities	4,666	860	0
Construction	206,002	73,019	2
Manufacturing	34,156	6,631	0
Wholesale Trade	15,513	4,482	0
Retail Trade	26,113	8,043	1
Transportation & Warehousing	6,999	2,251	0
Information	9,926	2,333	0
Finance & Insurance	23,494	5,423	0
Real Estate; Rental & Leasing	27,096	1,576	0
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	17,886	7,470	0
Management of Companies & Enterprises	5,444	2,149	0
Administrative & Waste Management Services	7,552	2,824	0
Educational Services	2,292	941	0
Health Care & Social Assistance	17,948	7,838	1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,128	778	0
Accommodation & Food Services	6,692	2,292	0
Other Services	8,104	2,456	0
Households	0	143	0
Total	423,055	131,754	4

Source: LIA computations based on RIMS II Input-Output Model of the Long Island Economy

Aggregate Impact of Spending by Middle Country Public Library, Fiscal 2004-05

By aggregating the foregoing tables, it is possible to ascertain the secondary economic impact of operating and capital spending by the Middle Country Public Library during fiscal 2004-05. Those results are shown below in Table 9. They indicate that total operating and capital spending of \$11,803,538 caused the total Long Island output of goods and services to expand by \$22,621,004 including the original expenditure. This is equivalent to a net output increase of more than \$10.8 million. Long Island earnings increased by almost \$5.7 million and approximately 141 support jobs were created throughout the Long Island economy.

Table 9: Output, Earnings and Employment Gains by Industry Resulting from Total Expenditures, Fiscal 2004-05, Middle Country Public Library

Industry	Output Increase	Earnings Increase	Employment Increase
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$32,013	\$7,103	1
Mining	7,307	1,262	0
Utilities	544,014	101,770	1
Construction	853,220	302,677	7
Manufacturing	1,299,595	261,806	6
Wholesale Trade	673,169	194,704	3
Retail Trade	695,369	214,503	9
Transportation & Warehousing	380,483	130,999	4
Information	492,439	118,322	2
Finance & Insurance	1,027,958	237,401	4
Real Estate; Rental & Leasing	1,476,957	90,887	3
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1,053,667	430,829	8
Management of Companies & Enterprises	195,665	77,542	1
Administrative & Waste Management Services	552,699	191,886	7
Educational Services	103,202	41,537	2
Health Care & Social Assistance	769,556	336,087	8
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	91,440	34,414	2
Accommodation & Food Services	298,984	102,043	7
Other Services	12,073,267	2,796,627	65
Households	0	3,623	1
Total	22,621,004	5,676,022	141

Source: LIA computations based on RIMS II Input-Output Model of the Long Island Economy

Conclusions

The Middle Country Public Library uses the tax dollars it receives to good effect. The \$10,981,862 in tax dollars that it received in fiscal 2004-05 generated library services valued at an estimated \$50,447,193. This is equivalent to a ratio of 4.59 to 1. Thus, library users received \$4.59 in services for every dollar they invested in the library. The library's operating and capital expenditures resulted in increased output, earnings and employment throughout Long Island but particularly in the local community. As a result of this spending, the total Long Island output of goods and services expanded by more than \$22.6 million including the original expenditure. Long Island earnings increased by almost \$5.7 million and approximately 141 support jobs were created throughout the Long Island economy.

About the Long Island Association

The Long Island Association is Long Island's chamber of commerce and the largest business-to-business networking organization in the region. Its networking events include trade shows and seminars geared to the needs of small, medium and large businesses. Its issue-oriented committees deal with housing, taxation, transportation and environmental matters. They develop agendas for change that are communicated to the New York State legislature and the governor's office. Thus, the LIA is much more than a chamber of commerce. It lobbies for social and economic changes that benefit all Long Islanders. The LIA can be reached by telephone at 631-493-3006 or by email at www.longislandassociation.org.

Dr. Pearl M. Kamer, the LIA's Chief Economist, monitors national, regional and local economic trends and publishes regular reports concerning the area's changing business environment. She also prepares special studies for local businesses, governments and non-profit organizations at their request on a fee-for-service basis. This is one such study.

Dr. Kamer joined the LIA in 1995. She earned her M.B.A. and Ph.D. degrees at New York University and received her B.A. from Queens College, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Dr. Kamer has taught at various area colleges. Her fields of specialization include international business, regional economics, and public and corporate finance. She is the author of two books: *The U.S. Economy in Crisis: Adjusting to the New Realities* and *Crisis in Urban Public Finance: A Case Study of Thirty-Eight Cities*. She has also authored numerous business articles and is widely quoted in the media.

Dr. Kamer is past president of the New York Metropolitan Economic Association and the Regional Economist's Society. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Broadhollow Bioscience Park at Farmingdale State University and the Health and Welfare Council. She is Vice-Chair of the Route 110 Redevelopment Corporation and serves on the Technical Advisory Committee of the Long Island Index. Dr. Kamer was recently appointed as an economic advisor to the Ways and Means committee of the New York State Assembly.