

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

FY2012 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant Name: City Year, Inc.	Application ID: 12AC133392
Program Name: City Year Greater Philadelphia	

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. This feedback is provided on a restricted basis and cannot be shared or distributed outside of your organization. We hope you will find this information helpful in completing applications to our future grant competitions. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of your application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- The applicant provides well documented deficiencies in student achievement, attendance and behavior at both the district level (School district of Philadelphia) and the individual "Turn around" schools selected as AmeriCorps sites. The schools must show demonstrated needs by test scores, AYP (Adequate Yearly Performance) performance indicators, student demographics and principal interest.
- The AmeriCorps members bring added value by providing multi-faceted approach (academic, attendance, behavioral) to support struggling students in a full-time, long-term setting. This sort of support goes beyond what a typical volunteer program or classroom teacher can offer by providing supplementary services through the Whole School Whole Child curriculum on a consistent basis.
- The plan for evaluating AmeriCorps member effectiveness is thorough and well-documented. The proposal includes a calendar of program evaluation that includes formative and summative data collection, a variety of measurement tools and a third party evaluator.
- The applicant has ensured AmeriCorps members will have an enriching service experience by providing structured time for reflection, guided by the Idealists Journey curriculum, the "Leadership After City Year" program, and individual Member development plans.
- The applicant provides excellent specifics about why the population to be served was selected based on the criteria by which schools were chosen. Specifically, "Title 1 eligibility, Adequate Yearly Progress status, Early Warning Indicator (EWI) data, and feeder patterns into low performing high Schools" determined the target sights.
- The applicant provides strong reasoning for the use of AmeriCorps members in the schools to help keep students in school until graduation by explaining how the full-time Member model provides support throughout the day, every day to targeted students. As the applicant mentions, this is something volunteers who come in a few hours a week cannot do.
- The applicant uses volunteers, recruited and managed by the 10-Member Civic Engagement team, to provide much needed support to schools through service days as well as through a mentor program. In addition, the organization recruits corporate volunteers to assist the Members, providing them with career advice and

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

FY2012 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

mentoring which is a good use of these volunteers' skill sets.

- The applicant provides significant opportunities for reflection through its performance evaluations and the "Idealist's Journey." In addition, the entire AmeriCorps member's experience is based on the Army's model of "Be, Know, Do" which the applicant states will build Civic Identity, Civic Capacity, and Civic Action.
- The applicant provided compelling evidence of the need to improve dropout rates and to improve reading and writing proficiency.
- The applicant provided excellent details of its intervention strategy.
- The applicant provided evidence of good partnerships within the community. This enhances the probability of its success with the program.
- The applicant backed up plans with significant research.
- The community needs are well documented in low PSSA scores, and in high, free and reduced lunch statistics.
- The training provided to AmeriCorps members is thorough as demonstrated by a Basic Training Academy, a mid-year Academy and Friday training.
- The training topics offer a wide variety of topics such as leadership, community mapping, and classroom management.
- The applicant presented a training plan that did not adequately incorporate Member development nor learning from its service experiences.