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Executive Summary

RSVP of the Capital Region, Inc., is a self-incorporated, free standing agency. Capital Region is a 40 year CNCS grantee, covering five counties, Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, and Perry, in southcentral PA. This application adds the relinquished counties of Lancaster and Lebanon and the adjoining, currently unserved York County, which is encircled by the existing and relinquished counties. Mission: RSVP of the Capital Region provides meaningful volunteer opportunities for persons 55 years of age and older and provides measurable value to the community.

Proposed unduplicated volunteers: 681

Requested funding: \$238,350

Service Categories: RSVP of the Capital Region offers volunteer opportunities that fall under a broad base of service categories principally emphasizing children's education and their improvements in basic skills and school preparedness, Healthy Futures, disaster preparedness, and additional offerings allowing services for Veterans and families.

Community Needs: Matching the broad base of service categories are a myriad of community needs centering on keeping seniors independent in their homes, improving reading and math skill levels in children, preparing children for school, assisting with disaster preparedness, and providing services to Veterans within the VA Medical Center at Lebanon and local Veteran Service Organizations.

Methodologies: Service activities to address each PFI activity are outlined in the workplans. As examples: Independent living for seniors centers on providing nutritious meals, access to food, and socialization. Programs to increase academic skill sets focus on individualized and small group tutoring

Anticipated Outcomes: Outcomes related to each PFI activity are outlined in the workplans. As examples: Seniors will remain independent in their homes through access to food through Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, fresh produce co-ops, and Senior Share boxes and socialization through Telephone Reassurance Programs. Tutoring and out of school time programming provides for improved basic academic skills.

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Strengthening Communities

RSVP of the Capital Region, Inc., will add Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Counties, a 2,257 square mile area, to its existing area covering Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin and Perry Co. Approximately 296,699 seniors, 55 and over (27% of total population of 1,087,985), reside in this new East region.

Highlights to the area include: York Co., a mix of rural and urban neighborhoods, is a manufacturing hub, from Harley Davidson to Utz snack foods. It is a low cost alternative for Maryland retirees.

Lebanon Co., has moved from mid-80's closed steel plants to the 6th best performing small metro area in the nation and first in PA. Lebanon is also first in gross domestic product growth in PA,

outperforming state and national economies. Like senior Volunteers, Lebanon has reinvented itself.

Lancaster Co., known to most of the US for Amish/Mennonite populations, maintains 63% of all land in agriculture despite a population of over 500,000.

The RSVP Board sets diversity as an emphasis for the organization in geographic representation, educational background, ethnicity, race, religion, economic status, gender and employment history, including members from social services. They are representative of the communities served and a cornerstone in the design of this RSVP and will incorporate membership from Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Co.

Capital Region uses local focus plans for service guidance. All County Aging four year plans share a common mission to promote the continued independence of older adults and their health/wellness.

United Way of Lancaster cites "Strengthening early care, education," among their Building Blocks. UW of York Co. emphasizes "readiness to achieve in school," that "children enter school developmentally on track in the areas of literacy, socio-emotional and intellectual skills" and academic achievement, that "elementary...students are prepared to succeed in later grades" through Focus on Our Future.

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Partners may be funders, advisors on committees, providers of in-kind office/program spaces, joint program stations as in tutoring programs and/or traditional referral only stations.

In 2011, Capital Region adopted a Marketing Action Plan and christened a new website rsvpcapreg.org. In addition, the Plan includes Facebook updates; at least monthly print coverage; displays at senior expos, health fairs, and community events; presentations to civic groups, senior organizations and businesses; and a "You've been spotted" RSVP Volunteer pin promotion. Special community projects, such as Sock It To Us! (statewide sock collection) and the MLK Book Drive, put the media wheels in motion. These same tools will be expanded to incorporate the new Counties.

There has been steady growth in bringing people from minority populations into RSVP with 13.3% African American, 2.1% Hispanic and 1.6% Asian and Native American volunteers currently serving, which would continue in the three additional Counties. Diversity of volunteer opportunities is the key to diversity of all varieties in the Volunteer pool.

RSVP of the Capital Region seeks to reinstate, rejuvenate the relinquished Lebanon and Lancaster Counties to return RSVP services to the senior Volunteers and to the organizations they served, including essential senior services, such as the free noon meals offered by Lebanon County Christian Ministries and Meals on Wheels; to the disaster preparedness programs through the original sponsor, American Red Cross of the Susquehanna Valley, which was forced to relinquish; and to the students waiting for the return of their tutors, while simultaneously opening a wide new range of services to early childhood recipients and Veterans in the VA Medical Center and through Veterans service organizations. RSVP also seeks to include York Co. and has consulted with existing Senior Corps partners, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion Programs, in addition to Aging and UW, to ensure strong partnerships in organizations and schools most in need.

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Recruitment and Development

RSVP offers diverse experiences to accommodate senior Volunteers of all abilities/generations/skills/desires. Operating programs or being equal partners with stations facilitates our ability to provide quality volunteer experiences. Quality, "pulse of the community" opportunities are offered to new and existing Volunteers providing fresh experiences.

Volunteer tutoring leaders help with recruitment, training and gathering data. RSVP volunteers are After School Advisory and RSVP Board members, lead student clubs, and manage not for profits with no staff assistance, sometimes creating a not for profit as a social entrepreneur. Veteran services Volunteer leaders will support staff at each County RSVP office with Veteran recruitment and placements in service to Veterans and their families. Volunteers are featured as leaders in media opportunities and presentations to funders/organizations. RSVP feeds the need that many boomers have for highly skilled positions with leadership opportunities.

The results of the most recent volunteer survey showed that 96% of the respondents felt that volunteering made a positive difference in their lives and 84% were satisfied with their volunteer placement.

RSVP receives excellent press, but the greatest recruiting tool remains word of mouth. VolunteerMatch is quite effective in "bringing people to the door." A new website designed by a Harrisburg Area Community College student web design group adds another branded element to the package of Senior Corps of PA materials. The website allows us to drive the public to the website for comprehensive information and direct listings from VolunteerMatch. Staff of the new Counties will participate with the United Ways of Lancaster and York Volunteer Centers and their group Volunteer opportunities, such as Day of Caring that help introduce RSVP to the general population. RSVP staff and Volunteer leaders

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display at senior expos and fairs, community and health fairs, and UW events, and present to senior/church/civic/corporate groups. One day event Volunteers help recruit not only boomers but Volunteers wanting to try out the role, entering the world of volunteering more as a social activity as opposed to an ongoing commitment.

Volunteer retention has not been an issue. Volunteers link up and stay, some 25 to 30 years. Volunteers join us able to drive, totally ambulatory. As they age, RSVP adapts-new roles, new stations, even some home based. Adapting to change is what RSVP is about.

Capital Region is exploring new types of Volunteer Recognition activities vs a traditional once a year major event, including ongoing one county luncheons/breakfasts or group training meetings/luncheons. Internal awards are based principally on service hours by service categories. In 2012, Capital Region garnered a statewide Senior Corps of PA individual Volunteer award. Community wide award submissions are also made.

RSVP prides itself in ongoing educational opportunities available for all staff, through UW and other local resources or statewide or nationally through other grants.

Coordinators meet on an as needed basis with new stations/new station staff/MU renewal or at once a year meetings when gathering statistics.

Potential tutors participate in RSVP's two hour, group, in-house training on expectations and boundary setting with the elementary school providing a second two hour training to provide comfort with security and "how things work." Volunteers choosing to serve at the Lebanon VA will go through orientation, as will RSVP staff. Those Volunteers serving with the ESGR (Employer Support of the

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Guard and Reserve) may go to Washington, for group training. Many volunteer positions offer trainings, participation in in-services or a "buddy" approach to teach the skills needed for the volunteer roles.

Program Management

RSVP of the Capital Region leaves itself open to new opportunities, new stations, adaptable responses to community needs, and new programming. Most are within the realm of educational services for children and Healthy Futures, particularly food security/food access. RSVP always seeks stations which can partner to meet unmet community needs that have been identified by local United Ways' focus care councils, Agencies on Aging's long term plans, or other stations.

Coordinators meet with new stations, explain RSVP and its policies and station responsibilities, share volunteer hour and mileage forms, gather job descriptions, and discuss needs for data in the case of PFI based activities. A wide range of placements are needed to meet the range of abilities among the volunteers; therefore, "meaningful" to one may not be even possible for another. RSVP has been part of the push for stations to design volunteer positions for those who want to think, lead, manage, and plan, in order to satisfy many of the younger seniors' needs for engagement. As part of this application, ways to serve Veterans and better utilize Veterans as RSVP Volunteers have already been explored. In addition to the VA Medical Center at Lebanon, RSVP will add positions across the tri-county area, including Veteran mentors/civilian professionals to the Veterans' Courts; social and family support services through the J1 Office at Fort Indiantown Gap, such as the Yellow Ribbon events and the Joint Family Assistance Team; and opportunities with the ESGR (Employer Support of Guard and Reserves).

All outcomes and workplans are reviewed annually by the Board's Evaluation Committee. There are also tie-ins between the community impact programming and the agency's Strategic Plan as far as maintaining or expanding specific impact programs. The achievement of those levels is annually reviewed by the Board.

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RSVP utilizes Volunteer Reporter for the volunteer and station data collection. Data for outcomes is collected by each Coordinator from stations in their County. All Coordinators are assigned specific workplans/outcomes. Coordinators share data collected with the appropriate person handling that workplan and set of outcomes. The Program Director oversees all project performance and evaluation at multiple times during the year as various funding sources' reports are due, in addition to CNCS. There are additional outcomes and models for various funding streams.

The Executive Director is responsible for budget development, financial management, and cash flow. Monthly financial statements are provided to the Board. There is a strong internal control system and an independent annual audit.

Over the past decade, RSVP has built a diverse base of funding for its current service areas, including UW of the Capital Region, large PA Dept of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center grants, along with Summer Feeding Program grants, and a wide range of local foundations and other local funding sources. RSVP of the Capital Region has garnered sufficient additional resources to not only match CNCS grants, but also expand program and geographic areas. The diversification of the funding base for Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Counties will kick-off in year one with applications for capacity building and project grants targeted at services for Veterans and general Volunteer recruitment supports (clearances, transportation, staff time) from Lancaster and York County Community Foundations and the Foundation for Enhancing Communities. In November 2013, RSVP will be eligible to make its first United Way appeal for program funding to the UW of Lebanon County. In 2014, RSVP will be eligible to apply for a three year initial partnership grant from the UW of York County. RSVP would also consider returning to a lottery calendar fundraiser used by the former RSVP and its sponsor. Overall, diversity of funding, the continued securing of resources, is one of this RSVP's signature features.

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Organizational Capability

Created in 1972, incorporated in 1991, RSVP of the Capital Region has served Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Co. for 40 years, added Franklin Co. in 2003 and Adams Co. in 2008. The agency is oriented to geographic expansion and will take on the relinquished Lebanon/Lancaster area with previous staff and York with the assistance of existing CNCS programs and the cooperation of the Area Agency on Aging and United Way.

The two key staff positions are the Executive (ED) and Program (PD) Directors. The ED, Carol Oman, has been at RSVP for 13 years and has 34 years of not for profit administration experience, receiving a Non Profit Executive Leadership Institute certification from Bryn Mawr College in 2011. Positions have been offered to the relinquished RSVP's staff. The former Director, Michelle Strauser, with 14 years' experience, will return as PD. The PD is responsible for supervising 3 full-time County Development Coordinators. The former Lebanon County Coordinator, Cathy Gable, will also return. Both staff have been involved from the beginning in this grant writing process.

RSVP contracts bookkeeping services through Wilson Bookkeeping Services. The ED is responsible for financial management. QuickBooks Pro is utilized for accounting. RSVP has administered a CNCS grant since 1972. The agency has multiple federal pass through grants since 2003 from the PA Dept of Ed. RSVP is audited annually by Wildeman and Obrock, CPA's, of Harrisburg.

UW of the Capital Region recognizes RSVP as a leader in volunteer services through funding of two program grants annually for general volunteer recruitment and volunteer services in educational programs. UW of Adams County recognizes RSVP by inclusion on its Volunteer Center Advisory Board. The UW of Franklin County has been a strong partner in ChambersburgReads, a multi-provider project to encourage mentoring, tutoring, and other types of volunteering, which includes RSVP. Dauphin Co.

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Area Agency on Aging and Cumberland Co. Office of Aging serve with RSVP as partners in developing Coming of Age and Explore Your Future along with AARP, Pathways Institute, and UW of the Capital Region. Coming of Age/Explore Your Future is a national, boomer oriented Temple Univ. program. Education and services to keep seniors independent constitute most of the impact-based programming.

RSVP will have initial office space within the Arnold Center at 615 Cumberland Street, Lebanon, with staff establishing office spaces in Lancaster and York. RSVP maintains a main office and satellites in Perry and Adams Co.

A bidding policy is in place as part of the ED's responsibilities. The Board maintains a Personnel Comm., and the agency has Personnel Policies. All staff receive detailed job descriptions. Written travel policies are in place.

RSVP conducts an annual volunteer survey with sealed results going to the Board Evaluation Comm., which provides a report to the full Board. Volunteer comments are acted upon by the ED with a response to the Board. The Evaluation Comm. annually reviews the CNCS final report and United Way outcomes models. Any concerns from the Evaluation Comm. are brought to the attention of the Board and ED in a written report. The ED must in turn supply explanations back to the Board incorporating Coordinators' input. Coordinators meet with station supervisors at least once a year to review unmet needs, orient new staff, update MOU's, attend recognitions, and/or garner data. RSVP operates within a five year strategic plan.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A