

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The City of Burlington requests 20 FTE AmeriCorps members to incorporate cultural competence into organizational systems of City departments, schools and Vermont non-profits. Members will build organizational capacity to more effectively serve people of diverse backgrounds and eliminate disparities. The 20 AmeriCorps members will be recruited from diverse backgrounds and communities to represent the growing diversity of the City. This project will address the CNCS focus areas of Economic Opportunity, Education and Healthy Futures. The CNCS investment of \$251,809 will be matched with \$164,695. The project will run 09/01/2013 through 08/31/2016.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

### Compelling Community Need

In Burlington - the largest city in Vermont, with a population just over 40,000 - there are over 60 different languages spoken in the school district (Burlington School District 2012-2013 Annual Report). Burlington and the neighboring city of Winooski (with a population of 6,500) are in some ways as globally diverse as many larger major cities, with 5,000 refugees resettled over the last thirty years from Vietnam, Tibet, Bosnia, Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Bhutan, Burundi, Burma, Iraq and dozens of other countries of origin. Our changing community is not just from refugees; other immigrant and American-born groups are moving from throughout the US to Burlington, and the number of white Burlington residents has declined by 5% since 1980. This makes for a striking change; 25% of new residents and 37% of students in the schools identify as a person of color.

Burlington's growing diversity is a major asset in an increasingly competitive global economy. Our success needs to include-and not marginalize-the most vulnerable populations. Recent trends show people of color in our community are not succeeding at the same levels as their white counterparts.

Poverty: Burlington has high concentrations of poverty, especially in old working class neighborhoods. The overall poverty rate in Burlington has risen from 16.2% in 1980 to 25% in 2012. According to the ACS 06-08, poverty rate for people who identified themselves as white had a 23% poverty rate while people who identified themselves otherwise had a 42% poverty rate. Vermont is the 9th hungriest state in the nation.

Racial Inequities in Education: Burlington's school district is struggling with differences in academic

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achievement associated with race, ethnicity and income. On New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) tests, for example, disparities carry through all grades. In high school, 46% of white students are considered proficient in math, compared with 25% of Asians and 9 percent of black students. Other data show some students aren't reaching fluency even after seven years of English support services. About 52% of English Language Learner (ELL) students who entered the district in the 2004-05 school year were by 2011 reclassified as fluent English proficient based on state criteria to meet that goal. The most recent 'Equity and Inclusion Report' distributed in October 2012 tells an interesting story that while blacks and Asians have higher attendance levels and black students participate most in after-school programs, "suspensions of black students occur at more than triple the rate at which white students are suspended."

Economic: There are race-based disparities in income, access to resources and involvement with correctional actions. According to the 2000 Census, 43% of white households in Burlington owned their home, but only 15% of black households and only 22% of Asian households were homeowners. Statewide, black residents comprised less than 1% of Vermont's population in the 2009 ACS survey -- but, they comprised 10.3% of Vermont's incarcerated population in 2009 (VT Dept. of Corrections FY2009).

These data show race-based disparities across different measures of inclusion. They illustrate a widening gap between white and minority residents and that our existing systems aren't working for everyone. We All Belong is committed to equality and inclusion in our community. We will achieve equity by examining these achievement gaps and figuring out how to better serve our diverse community. Why is there an achievement gap? While many teachers, employers and service providers have long-term experience working with people in poverty, serving people from racial and ethnic minority groups is relatively new. Appropriate trainings and education have not been available to teachers, non-profit staff and managers. Lack of experience and awareness has proven to be a major challenge for nonprofits, municipalities and schools, reinforcing greater inequities in service and frustration for all involved.

What now? Though the data is bleak, there are several recent developments that show readiness for change. 1) Leaders in our community are starting to acknowledge the inequities in our systems. The Burlington School District continues to lead with ambitious diversity and equity goals which are

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supported by AmeriCorps members. They created an Equity task force, and the School Board accepted a strategic equity plan in January 2012. Superintendent Jeanne Collins stated in this report, "Our mission recognizes that if we don't actively promote inclusion and equity, we are passively accepting an environment where some students are excluded and others are not supported in the ways they need to succeed." The District's process is wrought with community criticism about leadership and the slow pace of change. This conflict peaked with a student protest in April about racial climate, programming and uneven outcomes for English language learners. The protest and news coverage raised the community's awareness of demographic changes and the discrimination experienced by students and teachers of color in the district (Burlington Free Press, 4/20/12).

2) Leaders are putting equity on their agenda. A new Mayor in the City of Burlington has elevated the issue, and the City Council passed a resolution in July 2012 to create a strategic plan for diversity and equity in the City. A committee was convened by the Mayor and supported by We All Belong staff. A plan will be presented to the City Council in May 2013. In addition, five City Departments-including the Mayor-are participating in the We All Belong Program this year. The United Way of Chittenden County also created and adopted an ambitious Diversity Strategic Plan in 2011. The plan addresses five areas: employment, volunteerism, community investments, resource development and communications. We All Belong AmeriCorps members helped create and implement the plan and are incorporating cultural competence into their \$4M investment process with member agencies.

3) Greater community awareness is helping to keep equity a priority. A recent meeting with parents and school administrators focused on student placement. Parents felt their students, who are not native English speakers, are being unfairly placed in lower level classes (Burlington Free Press, 11/13/12). More people are learning about race, culture and the societal implications. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center opened a special traveling exhibit RACE: Are We So Different on October 6th, 2012. AmeriCorps members have supported ECHO over the past year to prepare their staff and develop community collaborations. Schools and businesses are using this exhibit to educate students and employees about race and racism in our society. In the first two months, 1124 children and 345 adults attended RACE and the Burlington School District sent 1200 students, faculty and staff.

Description of Activities and Member Roles:

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### Evidence, Research and Definitions:

These most recent accomplishments demonstrate that key organizations and stakeholders have taken some steps towards cultural competence, laying an important foundation to not only move forward themselves but make change in other segments of our City. To reduce race-based disparities, We All Belong chose to address cultural competence because research shows that improving organizational cultural competence improves program impact and success by clients/students. For example, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) report states that a diverse and culturally competent staff is an important factor contributing to successful employment and integration outcomes. Further, when individuals are financially stable and contributing members of our community, the larger community benefits. A well-trained and diverse staff is one of the key principles and approaches from the refugee model.

The We All Belong Program builds the capacity of schools and organizations to be more culturally competent. This innovative model combines AmeriCorps resources with extensive organization-wide training based on research. A few best practices are shared here:

- 1) Mental health and medical care professionals have been at the forefront of promoting cultural competence due to the consequences of a poor diagnosis from lack of language and cultural understanding. This research and best-practice models are transferable to school settings and nonprofits, such as providing written material in multiple languages and engaging community leaders in program development and decision-making.
- 2) The We All Belong Program's philosophy on leadership development is consistent with recommendations of the 2010 Leadership Learning Community report, "Leadership and Race: How to Develop and support Leadership that Contributes to Racial Justice" that states, "To support leadership that contributes to racial justice, we need to focus on how individuals and groups are connecting, organizing, thinking systemically, bridging, and learning as part of a dynamic leadership process that mobilizes action on the scale needed to address racial injustice."
- 3) Leadership development programs must pay attention to structural racism that if left unchallenged undermines the effectiveness and sustainability of community-based organizations and racial justice work. This includes two significant challenges in Vermont: a) most executive directors and board

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members are white and not reflective of the general population; and b) nonprofit management has been professionalized. We no longer stress the connections between leaders and the communities they serve (St. Onge, et al., in "Embracing Cultural Competency: A Roadmap for Nonprofit Capacity Builders," 2009). This separation makes it very hard for nonprofit leaders to be in touch with those they are serving and to craft services that are culturally relevant.

Overview of the We All Belong Program: In 2008, a State formula grant launched the Program, and over the past five years the City of Burlington has enrolled over 100 diverse local leaders to serve as AmeriCorps members placed in each of Burlington's nine schools, twenty nonprofits and five city departments. Within the first three years, the Program achieved its goal to improve access to services for children and families by: a) increasing personnel diversity, b) helping outreach to under-served populations, and c) cultivating the next generation of leaders via their AmeriCorps service. In September 2012 we enrolled 14 members (12 FTE), of whom 80% identify as people of color and are multi-lingual and multi-cultural, truly representing the diverse community and further diversifying their service host sites. During the 2011-12 program, members made 26,000 contacts with underserved residents and held community events and workshops that were attended by 5,500 residents.

In 2010, we added another component to the program to help agencies make deeper systemic change. The program provides cultural competency training and coaching tools to support organizations to be more equitable and inclusive. This package is an excellent complement to the AmeriCorps resources invested by CNCS. Currently we are training 100 CEOs, staff, board members, and AmeriCorps members representing 15 schools, city departments and non-profits.

Agencies are selected through a competitive process to participate in the year-long program and host AmeriCorps member(s) to support their cultural competency work. What we provide is: 1) support to complete an organization assessment and conduct strategic planning; 2) skill building trainings on a variety of diversity and inclusion topics; 3) small group coaching sessions to help leaders apply their learning; and 4) facilitated sharing across agencies.

Participants received a total of 24 hours of cultural competency training each year, divided into large group trainings and small group coaching sessions. The curriculum is a cumulative experience and

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requires at least one year's commitment by 3-10 staff and board members. AmeriCorps members work internally to build capacity in the organization and serve as cultural liaisons connecting different cultural/ethnic groups with their host agency. The program's impact is noted by Martha Maksym, Director of the United Way of Chittenden County, "The WAB has certainly raised our awareness as an organization about the critical need to become more culturally competent in order to better serve our community. It requires leadership and requires systems being put in place so the change isn't dependent on one or two people within the organization but becomes embedded in the organization's standard operations. I was especially impressed with the participation from Board members and senior leadership at participating organizations-many that are our member agencies. It made a big difference in the discussions during the trainings and set the bar high for us at United Way of Chittenden County to have even a better showing ourselves this year!"

AmeriCorps member roles:

Building on our five years of diversity and equity work, the 2013-2016 program will place 20 FTE AmeriCorps in schools, nonprofits and city departments. Members are a critical link between the agency and the area's diversifying community. AmeriCorps enables us to hire parents, newly resettled refugees, college students, graduates and community leaders. Bringing such layered life experience is what makes AmeriCorps a critical tool for change. Members identify service gaps, design and implement more culturally relevant delivery methods. Here are the roles they will perform organized by sector.

Sector: Education

Agencies: Burlington School District, South Burlington School District, Visiting Nurse Association Family Room, Greater Burlington YMCA, Winooski School District

Number of Members: 8

Member role: volunteer recruitment, training and management; curriculum development; staff and teacher retention efforts; diversity and equity training for staff; parent engagement, English Language support for students and parents; early childhood education and school readiness, afterschool delivery and coordination.

Expected Outcome: staff and volunteers receive cultural competency trainings, school climate is more inclusive, outreach methods are more culturally appropriate, more parents are involved in schools, children 0-5 are participating in school readiness programs, families are accessing after-school care,

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volunteers are recruited.

Sector: Local and Regional Government

Agencies: City of Winooski; Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; City of Burlington: Human Resources, Mayor's Office, and Community and Economic Development Office

Number of Members: 5

Member role: research of best practices, integrating equity into regional and municipal plans; improve methods for diverse hiring efforts; stakeholder interviews to involve under-represented voices in decision-making.

Expected Outcomes: government structures are more inclusive, boards and commissions are more representative to general public, strategic planning processes in place, staff and volunteers receive cultural competency trainings, improved staff recruitment and retention methods, top-level officials are integrating equity into City priorities.

Sector: Social Services

Agencies: United Way, Howard Mental Health Services, Champlain Valley Agency for Aging, Local Motion, Visiting Nurse Association

Number of Members: 4

Member role: translation and outreach to limited English speakers about services available, program assessment and design, research best practices, childcare so parents can attend classes, parent education.

Expected Outcomes: staff receive cultural competency trainings, improved staff recruitment and retention methods, mental health services are delivered in more culturally competent ways, services for seniors are serving the aging refugee population, United Way allocation process is more culturally competent, volunteers are recruited and trained in working with diverse populations.

Sector: Arts, Parks and Culture

Agencies: ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center, Burlington City Arts, National Park Service in NH and VT, City of Burlington-Parks and Recreation Department

Number of Members: 3

Member role: run youth leadership development programs, coordinate adult English and Citizenship classes, outreach, interviews with stakeholders.

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Expected Outcome: more people accessing services, staff receive cultural competency trainings, agency structures are more inclusive, outreach materials are more culturally appropriate.

Participating Agencies for 2013-14 (anticipated)

Burlington City Arts

Burlington School District

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Champlain Valley Agency for Aging

City of Burlington, Community and Economic Development Office

City of Burlington, Human Resources Department

City of Burlington, Office of the Mayor

City of Winooski

ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center

Fletcher Free Library

Greater Burlington YMCA

Howard Center

Local Motion

National Park Service, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park and Saint-Guadens

National Historic Site

South Burlington School District

United Way of Chittenden County

Vermont Energy Investment Corporation

Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties

Winooski School District

Outputs and Outcomes

Measurable Outputs and Outcomes: We will use the following Capacity Building and Leverage Standard National Performance measures.

Title: Diverse and Inclusive Organizations

G3-3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by organizations or participants

G3-3.2: Number of community volunteers managed by organizations or participants

G3-3.4: Number of organizations that received capacity building services

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- G3-3.5: Number of staff and community volunteers that received training (of one or more types)
- G3-3.6: Number of organizations that completed a community assessment identifying goals
- G3-3.10: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building helped make them more effective
- G3-3.11: Number of new systems/business processes or enhancements put in place
- G3-3.12: Number of organizations that monitored their progress towards community assessment goals
- G3-3.9: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building helped them to be more efficient

Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement: We annually evaluate the program through frequent member and supervisor reflection (in person, written and by phone), annual written evaluations completed by participating agencies and Advisory Committee analysis. The cultural competency trainings provide opportunities to assess program impact throughout the year. This information is collected and analyzed by program staff, consultant team and the Advisory Committee to make micro changes during the year and macro changes from one program year to the next.

### Community Involvement:

The We All Belong Program was born out of a long community planning process that began in the summer of 2007 when CEDO convened a group exploring how to address racism and classism within the community. From 2008-10 the Program reduced barriers to the target population accessing services by placing AmeriCorps members (ACM) from these groups in agencies. This success positioned us to hold agencies accountable to make more systemic change as we added the leadership training and coaching component in 2010.

The Advisory Committee is inclusive of community partners, leaders from the target populations and represents the city's cultural/ethnic diversity. The committee meets quarterly and convenes with the purpose to provide program oversight, evaluation, and advocate for the Program on multi-systems level (city, state, national). Membership includes: Wanda Hines-Director of the City's Social Equity Investment Project; Ita Meno-CQ Strategies (Cultural Competency Trainer); Martha Maksym, Executive Director, United Way of Chittenden County; Dr. Dan Balon, Director of Diversity Education and Engagement, Burlington School District (BSD); Mercedes Mack- BSD graduate, ACM alumna; Jeetan Khadka-former ACM Team Leader; Francine Serwili-former ACM; Susan Leonard-Human Resources Director, City of Burlington; Sara Martinez de Osaba- ACM alumna, Director of the

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Vermont Multi-Cultural Alliance for Democracy; Beth Truzansky- Program Director, CEDO.

Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs: CEDO AmeriCorps programs have a long history working with other National Service programs including VISTA and Senior Corps. We are currently supporting other Vermont AmeriCorps programs and SerVermont regarding cultural competency training and engaging ethnically diverse populations. We have strong working relationships with other programs and the United Way Volunteer Center.

Potential for Replication:

Burlington frequently serves as a model to other cities on a broad range of initiatives due to our size, history of collaboration, and willingness to test new ideas. The We All Belong Program served as a model for SerVermont and Marlboro College's successful application for CNCS Nonprofit Capacity Building grant awarded in 2011. Our model is unique; supporting agencies make systemic change by combining concrete cultural competency awareness, skill building in large training sessions coupled with small group coaching sessions. This helps leaders integrate their learning and utilize a peer group for support and guidance. This model can be best practices for other communities facing the rapid diversification of their population as well. The City sponsored an A\*VISTA program from 1993-2010 which was recognized as a best practice by CNCS in 2002 and by the National League of Cities in 2003. Burlington participates in the Urban Sustainability Director's Network (a national group representing cities around North America) which also has a new Equity and Access working group to exchange best practices among cities.

### B. Member Outputs and Outcomes

Member Recruitment and Support: Our ideal AmeriCorps member is a local leader from one of the target populations; people of color, refugees, or from generational poverty. Our members would also have experience straddling two worlds: work with diverse community groups and organization staff that tends to be white, middle-class.

The recruitment strategy is to assemble a diverse recruitment team of current and former ACM and others leaders who are 'connectors' in their respective communities. They call and visit individuals they think would be a good fit, and we do presentations at English classes run by Vermont Adult Learning, and cultural associations such as the Somali Bantu Community Association of Vermont and

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Association of Africans Living in Vermont (which serves many refugees/immigrants and not just Africans). This method has been extremely successful producing highly qualified, diverse teams. Over the five years running, approximately 74% of the incoming team are returning members or recruited by alums. The recruitment team conducts a member pre-screening for cultural competence before sites do their own hiring process. The screening requires applicants to demonstrate competence in at least three of these four areas:

1. Direct hands on experience working in teams with people from diverse backgrounds
2. Active and ongoing participation in diversity or cultural competence training or classes
3. Commitment to addressing dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression on an individual level
4. Commitment to addressing dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression on an institutional level

Enrollment: The program is currently receiving Formula funds for operation. In the 2011-12 program year, we had 93% retention of FT members and 77% of HT members. The challenge is never finding an appropriate member; rather, it has been the sites' ability to support a member or come up with match. This is starting to change as supervisors are receiving the cultural competency trainings. In the 2011-12 year, 11 FTE were filled in the first program quarter. Low enrollment rates over the past few years are attributed to additional FTE's awarded after the initial State allocation. These slots were not filled due to our program structure (requiring a year-long training commitment by host agencies). It was not possible to add new sites once the program year had begun.

Retention: For the 2011-12 program year, of 12 members slots, we had a 90% retention rate with 9 exiting with their education award. One challenge we experience with retention is that by design we are hiring leaders who are valuable resources. Equally, when there is a crisis in their family or in their community, they are also the first person to respond. It is worth noting that in our program history, we had several members who needed to take leave for 'compelling personal circumstances' due to family illness or crisis that limited their ability to complete their service. This is not something we can avoid, though as a program we support members as much as possible. In most cases, members returned to service after the crisis and were able to resume their AmeriCorps responsibilities.

We support our members through several formal and informal efforts. Much of the Team Leader's role is to support members, provide opportunities to celebrate their work and draw connections among the members. Events include members' families and we distribute vouchers to local cultural events

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and festivals. The program celebrates members through a mid and end of year celebration and City Council public acknowledgements. We assess ACM satisfaction through two site visits, exit interview and program evaluations.

One member shared about his year in service, "This year has a huge impact on my professional as well as personal growth. As a recent high school graduate and young adult of the community, working in this kind of setting has made me feel more mature and responsible. Personally, I had to give up some of great time of being a youth and work as an adult member of community. I can see a lot of expectation from people of the [Nepali] community towards me and I had to be loyal towards their expectation. This expectation has a lot to do with my professional growth."

Member Development-The We All Belong Program invests in members as a rising workforce by providing training and coaching to achieve work and education goals. This has been successful; following the 2011-12 program, 90% of members are employed or pursuing degrees. Only 10% are unemployed compared to 50% prior to service. We invest heavily in Early Service Training. ACM get 40 hours of training in the first quarter of their service in addition to their on-site orientation. This covers:

- Member Orientation-establishing group norms; team building; AmeriCorps history, rules and regulations and benefits; intro to social equity factors with Burlington-specific creative solutions
- Designing Organizational Change (2 half days) with agency teams including CEO, board member and staff. Design diversity and inclusion goals for the year. Reading: "Switch" by Chip and Dan Heath
- Introduction to Cultural Competency with Tracey Tsugawa-covering diversity definitions (gender, race, disability, etc), types of power, personal background and impact on diversity work, organizational culture, etc. Readings: "When the Golden Rule Doesn't Work" by Gardenswartz and Rowe; "Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences" by LeBaron and Pillay.
- Creating Effective Supervisor/Supervisee Relationships-a 3-part series for members and supervisors about communication, work-planning and personal development lead by Dan Balon and Ali Dieng of the Burlington School District.

Members continue to receive training through the year from three sources: 1) host site, 2) State Commission, 3) We All Belong bi-monthly team meetings. The desired outcomes of team meetings are to: 1) Increase confidence and skills to serve and advocate for change on individual and

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institutional level, 2) Establish connection to the local and state-wide social justice network (AmeriCorps and We All Belong participating schools, organizations and city departments), 3) Personal development plan for in-service and post-service. Here is a sample of training over the year. Quarter 1: book discussion using "Courageous Conversations About Race" by Singleton and Linton, site presentations by all members, training on community outreach methods, using/being a translator.

Quarter 2: Team meetings continue with book discussions, planning MLK day, cross-cultural communication and conflict, writing/telling personal narrative, qualitative research methods and ethics, Meyers Briggs Type, and Facilitative Leadership (a two-day training on engaging others in decision making).

Quarter 3 and 4: Training is focused on the job search, job and school application process and discussions featuring people with interesting career paths. Training is also about organizational change process related to cultural competency.

Cultural competency trainings are provided by CQ Strategies, a consultant group led by Tracey Tsugawa, the state's leading cultural competency expert. Tsugawa is an investigator for the Vermont Human Rights Commission and teaches an Environmental Justice course at the University of Vermont. The team includes Sherwood Smith, Director of the Center for Cultural Pluralism at the University of Vermont; Dan Balon, Director of Diversity Education and Engagement for the Burlington School District; Brian Hsiang, teacher for Vermont Adult Learning; Ita Meno, community activist; and Kathy Johnson, Vermont Equity Training & Consulting. More information is on their website: <http://www.cqstrategies.org>.

Member Supervision: Members are primarily supported through on-site supervision as well as peer coaching from an AmeriCorps team leader and program director. The team leader, a role taken from the VISTA and NCCC model, is important in supporting and celebrating members. The Program Director communicates with members and supervisors on a regular basis and visits each site twice to ensure compliance, support and productivity. Supervisors receive a training before they enroll members and then receive a 3-part training with members in the first quarter. Members and supervisors submit reports bi-annually to track the program's impact and to evaluate challenges and opportunities.

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Ethic of Service and Civic Responsibility: Members reflect on their service during monthly team meetings. Members are trained to capture their story of service and given the opportunity to reflect in writing and when gathered as a group. Frequently, individuals are the first in their community to do National Service. Here is a reflection from a member serving her community at the Somali Bantu Community Association of Vermont, "I find that being an AmeriCorps member is a very profound way of finding the real me and leading others to find themselves...I feel that I have really made a difference and that's all that matters to me most." Post service, members remain connected and engaged in civic life. Many are model advocates for equity in our schools, organizations and government. Members are frequently highly sought after by agencies post-service, and we have alums coordinating the Burlington After-School Program, serving one-on-one with students, and working on school reform with High School students.

Members strongly identify with the AmeriCorps brand and publicly attribute their professional credentials with their AmeriCorps experience. Recently, alum Ali Dieng trained 25 members and supervisors about working together. He shared, "I served with WAB right after I got to Burlington from Africa and I didn't know anything about working in a school and my English was very poor. Through AmeriCorps I gained work experience, made incredible connections and have since been hired by the Burlington School District's After-school program. AmeriCorps was the key to my success." Members wear AmeriCorps gear during service, sites display an AmeriCorps sign in their office and attribute member's work publicly using the AC logo.

### C. Community Outputs and Outcomes

Performance Measures: We will use National Performance Measures addressed in Section A.

Sustainability: The Program is catalyzing a fundamental shift in the way that our schools, City, and other service agencies operate. By definition, cultural competence is a process of regular self-assessment and setting goals for improvement. It is a journey and not a destination. The Program catalyzes this process in schools and service agencies from the top by providing tools to their leaders. Concurrently, we cultivate community advocates through our diverse ACM Corps that infuses agencies with the diverse perspectives, languages and skills they need to change. The work of AmeriCorps members is an essential part of the whole system change.

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Financially, each participating organization contributes \$9,000 to the project. Over time, agencies are committing more funding for their equity work as part of their budget. Additional investment has been made from the City of Burlington, SerVermont, United Way, AD Henderson Foundation and local businesses and philanthropists.

**Volunteer Recruitment and Support:** The goal of the Program is to include the entire community from beginning to end, and a diverse volunteer base is essential for this effort. Many volunteers are parents and residents who otherwise would not have been engaged for a number of reasons: they weren't asked, hadn't felt comfortable in the school/agency, didn't know their skills could be useful, etc. ACM use their rich networks to recruit, train and support a diverse group of volunteers. Last year 1,200 volunteers were recruited, and next year we anticipate another 1,500 volunteers. Volunteers will be engaged in short-term service opportunities and long-term service in schools and organizations such as: parents helping to provide food, transportation and translation for school events; mentors and tutors for kids; and youth engaging in a year-long volunteer program at the ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center. Sites work with the Program Director to ensure volunteer projects are allowable activities under AmeriCorps rules. Volunteers are recognized at community events such as the Champions of Diversity and Equity organized by the Burlington School District.

**Capacity Building:** By creating more culturally competent schools and agencies we create more efficient and effective agencies. The depth of capacity building goes beyond immediate assistance; it is the foundation of how organizations do their work. As described earlier, we are in year three piloting tools to support Agency leaders, staff and Boards in the basics of creating organizational systems that are culturally competent. Each year we provide over 24 hours training teams of agency leaders. This year we are working with fifteen schools, nonprofits and government departments. Many of these agencies are in their third year with the program demonstrating significant commitment and growth. Agencies learn how to assess, plan and implement their organizational change process. Agencies are more sustainable because leaders have changed the way business is done. Agencies have made over 30 systems changes.

### **Organizational Capability**

The Community and Economic Development Office's (CEDO) mission is to foster economic vitality; preserve and enhance neighborhoods, quality of life and the environment; and promote equity and opportunity for all residents of Burlington. Established in 1983, we have a 30 year history of working

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with low-income residents as well as with community and faith-based organizations to fight poverty through community engagement, creation of new programs, effective allocation and leveraging of resources, and strengthening the local nonprofit infrastructure. We directly serve low-income residents through housing and business loan and grant programs, through neighborhood organizing, and through grants for neighborhood improvements.

CEDO has three divisions: Housing, Economic Development, and Community Development. In addition, CEDO runs the local Community Justice Center and has administrative and special projects staff. CEDO is funded through Federal and State grants, City general fund, development fees, and the local Housing Trust Fund. We have an extensive background and capacity to manage and monitor federal grants. The Community Development (CD) division of CEDO is responsible for the AmeriCorps program, the Community Development Block Grant program, and neighborhood services. These programs jointly strengthen anti-poverty efforts, the nonprofit infrastructure, civic engagement and volunteerism and develop nonprofit/government partnerships.

Multi-Site Project: The project is multi-site and does site selection annually starting with a distribution of Request for Proposal (RFP) and Information Meeting in April; applications due in June; and selection announcement in July. The We All Belong Advisory Committee participates in site recruitment and the selection process. Organization applications are evaluated with the following criteria:

- Establish a Committee on Cultural Competence composed of (at minimum) the CEO or Assistant, Member of the Board and AmeriCorps member
- Participation in the training and coaching program offered by the WAB program
- Commitment of cost-share match
- Provide members with work station, site-specific training, tools, and transportation needed to successfully perform their service assignments
- Be an organization whose mission is in keeping with the goal of the We All Belong Program
- Be willing to select an emerging leader that may represent diverse race or socio-economic backgrounds
- Be able to provide supervision and support to members, including weekly supervision meetings, mid-year and end-of-year performance reviews and reports, an availability to offer guidance, feedback, and support to members

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- Commit to sending members to all trainings, meetings, and events sponsored by CEDO, the SerVermont, and the Corporation for National and Community Service
- Make reasonable accommodations for members who have disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Further consideration in site selection includes: ability of site to address changing priorities, emphases, or objectives of the grant; ability to clearly demonstrate outcome-based measures and projects; sustainability plan for post AmeriCorps project and activities; past performance of host agency (if applicable).

Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff: The City of Burlington is managed by a Mayor and a fourteen member elected City Council. CEDO is a department of the City with the CEDO Director reporting to the Mayor. The We All Belong program is supported directly by a Program Director, Team Leader, Assistant Director for Community Development, Assistant Director for Finance and Finance Assistant. Program oversight is supported with an Advisory Committee (listed earlier in this application). Staff roles are divided between programmatic and financial. Finance staff prepares and submit FFR and AFR, invoicing, billing and monitoring. Darlene Kehoe is CEDO's Finance Director and is experienced at managing federal grants. She, with a Finance Assistant, has responsibility for over \$5 million in federal and state grants.

Beth Truzansky is Director of the We All Belong Program. She manages all site and member relationships; manages the education/training component with the consultant team; member training; and fundraising for the Program. Beth has experience working with nonprofits, city government, and community groups. Her skills are based in community organizing; particularly with low-income, youth, and underserved populations. Included in the Program work, she plays a key role in community problem solving on issues of race, class and civic engagement in the City of Burlington. Beth is a trainer for the Interaction Institute for Social Change, delivering trainings for 45 National Service Volunteers, nonprofit managers, city and community leaders annually.

Marcy Krumbine is the Assistant Director for Community Development and supervises the Program Director. She also manages the City's Community Development Block Grant which includes a unique citizen allocation process. She serves as the representative for the Lead Agency for the Continuum of

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Care and brings with her over 5 years of federal and state grant management experience, including from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Team Leader is either a second year member or someone with experience working with diverse populations, managing groups and training and group facilitation. The Team Leader supports the Program Director in site visits, maintaining communication with members, providing coaching, gathering member feedback and facilitating bi-monthly team meetings. The Team Leader this year is a leader in the Somali Bantu community arriving eight years ago as a refugee. She comes with experience engaging other young adults from different backgrounds, planning events, and is supporting CEDO to better serve the Somali Bantu community in Burlington.

Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement: CEDO seeks to be a more diverse and inclusive department and is a participating agency in the We All Belong program in 2013. A diverse committee of nine staff, including the director and two managers, conducted a self-assessment using the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmark tool and is pursuing cultural competency goals for the department. All staff participated in three half-day retreats on cultural competency between January-May 2012, and more are planned for Winter 2013. The benchmarks identified for this year's work includes: 1) creation of a compelling diversity and inclusion (D&I) vision, strategy and business case that is communicated to all employees; 2) Define D&I broadly, to have a compelling business case and articulated behaviors/expectations communicated to staff; 3) D&I training and education is required for all employees and leaders.

Plan for Effective Technical Assistance: In addition to the Cultural Competency technical assistance provided to organizations, CEDO provides training specific to hosting AmeriCorps members. Supervisors attend two trainings prior to AmeriCorps service, and then participate in training during orientation and mid-year. The training provides information on the expected lifecycle of AmeriCorps service experience, communication and conflict resolution, and rules and regulations including reporting, monitoring and match documentation. Further trainings are offered based on particular needs or feedback from sites to help with strategic planning, meeting facilitation, assessment, etc.

Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization: Success in Securing Community Support: CEDO has demonstrated over twenty years of innovative community problem-solving utilizing

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National Service members to leverage demonstrable results. CEDO has successfully managed a Formula AmeriCorps State grant since 2008 with a sound performance and compliance record. We are able to raise funds to support the growth of this program; over the past three years we won \$40,000 from Foundations and Grants as well as leverage \$4,000 each year in pro-bono consultant services. This success was built on our AmeriCorps\*VISTA program that ran from 1992-2010 and served as a model for National Service. This was the country's first cost-share VISTA program. During its tenure, VISTA members raised \$154 million and recruited over 18,476 volunteers to build organizational capacity and fight poverty in Vermont.

The We All Belong Program's sustainability is in the breadth, depth and diversity of the stakeholder commitment. Community members, leaders, and service providers have been involved from the outset in a deep process of understanding what is, imagining what will be, and committing to a shared action plan. Our partners contribute funds and bring a wealth of resources to the program. We are moving forward together leveraging the resources, expertise and leadership necessary to be successful beyond the grant period. Considerable capacity has been built making diversity and equity a core issue. We All Belong has: 1) created more equitable systems in host agencies and is more accessible to service users; 2) created and delivered cultural competency curriculum to over 100 CEO's, Board members and staff; and 3) agencies are now committing more resources to diversity and equity in their budgets to continue this work.

Compliance and Accountability: CEDO and our service sites maintain compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations and prohibited activities. For host sites, we provide training with explanation of AmeriCorps rules, regulations and prohibited activities. Sites receive access to current provisions, regulations and FAQ's. They signed an MOU outlining such rules, regulations and activities. The Program Director works closely with supervisors on the work plan to ensure ACM responsibilities are permissible and appropriate. Compliance checks occur frequently, with a focus on timesheets and member work plan, including a mid-year site visit. For members, they also receive training and extensive explanation of rules, regulations and prohibited activities and sign a member agreement.

During the last year, we identified two challenges: member time reporting and FBI fingerprint checks. Corrective action has been taken to ensure member time reporting is in compliance. The Program Director provided several trainings with member and supervisors, written guidelines, lots of

## **Narratives**

monitoring the OnCorps time reporting system, and working one-on-one with members and supervisors to ensure that hours are logged and reviewed promptly and that the content is accurate and with the detail desired by AmeriCorps. The other area of challenge has been with FBI fingerprint regulations. After many requests, CEDO was rejected by the Vermont Criminal Information Center. This ruling is very inconsistent across AmeriCorps programs, and we are the only AmeriCorps program in the State denied access. To comply with new AmeriCorps regulations on background checks, we have had to order fingerprints directly through the FBI which is costly and cumbersome. We are working with our Program Officer to seek Alternate Search Procedures.

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

Cost Effectiveness: The We All Belong Program leverages AmeriCorps investment for significant change in our community. As stated, nonprofits, schools and government agencies are struggling to create more access and inclusion. The AmeriCorps program is a way to utilize Federal resources matched with local investment, professional expertise and CEDO's sound ability to manage resources. AmeriCorps enables host agencies to put their cultural competency knowledge into immediate action. It also enables cultural and ethnically diverse communities to make deep and lasting change from within agencies. Further, the collaboration among agencies has great value.

In an effort to compare alternate methods, the Burlington School District employs bilingual and bicultural home school liaisons to promote connections and communication between the immigrant and refugee communities and the schools. Bilingual/bicultural home school liaisons work in the schools and in the community, visiting families, translating documents, interpreting at meetings, and generally supporting the learning of students by facilitating communication between home and school. Unlike with AmeriCorps, liaisons are not focused on changing systems such as curriculum or program delivery methods. This model grew out of AmeriCorps members service in the District. Each liaison serves for 9 months and costs approximately \$25,000. This is a great model for AmeriCorps sites to build capacity and afford, though it has taken many years for the Schools to provide such a service and use Title 1 funds. For this reason, many agencies are not able to afford such a position in their agency and rely on AmeriCorps to build such capacity.

Getting more specific about the We All Belong budget, we secure non-Corporation resources, and we will secure cash commitments from the host agencies. Each agency contributes \$9,000 towards each MSY. In addition, we have applied for foundation funding to support training costs. In 2012 we

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received a \$30,000 grant from the AD Henderson Foundation. Our budget is designed to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps and provide members and host agencies with the support they need to carry out the program. We do this through staff support (the Program Manager and Assistant Director for Community Development) and training.

### Section I. Program Operating Costs

A. Four staff support the program: Program Director (95%), Assistant Director for Finance (5%), Finance Assistant (8%), and the Assistant Director for Community Development (5%). The full cost of this personnel and fringe benefits will come from the grantee share and are calculated using the above FTE percentages.

B. All calculations of benefits are listed in the budget.

C. Staff travel is included for CNCS sponsored meetings. Member Travel is included at the federal rate. This rate is low because most members are serving in close proximity, and only significant travel is for state-commission events. Also, the City of Burlington offers bus passes for ACM which further reduces the mileage reimbursement expenditure.

D. No Equipment is being purchased.

E. Supplies- Office supplies are also based on previous modest purchasing. The City has just moved to a more efficient and cost effective centralized supply purchasing system. Sweatshirts will be purchased for members with the AmeriCorps logo. Estimate is \$30 per sweatshirt for 24 members.

F. Consultant and Contractual Services-to compensate community leaders serving on the recruitment team that conducts the cultural competency screenings as described in Section A of the grant narrative. We estimate 50 applicants being screened by two team members.

G. Training costs are for food (no alcohol) for member and supervisor trainings.

H. Evaluation is not included in the budget this year, though will be included in year 2 if awarded Competitive funds.

I. Other program costs include: postage, copying and communications. Communication costs support each of the four staff and one team leader stated in the grant narrative. Payroll is contracted to an outside vendor. Costs are based on prior year experience. OnCorps fees are based on 1% of CNCS Share paid to the State Commission.

### Section II Member Costs

A. Living allowances are based on the 20 FTE; full-time stipend at \$12,300 and half-time at \$6,519.

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B. Member support costs are included for FICA, and health care for full-time members. The City of Burlington provides Worker's Compensation coverage. We also conduct the criminal background, including FBI checks, for all members, supervisors and staff in accordance with CNCS policy.

Section III. The City uses real-cost for administrative expenses, not Federally Approved Indirect Cost rate.

The MSY is \$13,259. This is a slight increase from previous years due to the \$300 increase in member stipend costs.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

N/A

### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

In order to maximize AmeriCorps resources and expand AmeriCorps service opportunities during times of fiscal austerity, CNCS is seeking to increase the opportunities to serve by reducing the overall cost per MSY for AmeriCorps programs funded in FY2013. Programs are being directed to modify their budgets in order to reduce the cost per MSY and also to develop a plan for making further reductions in years 2 and 3 of the grant.

CEDOs We All Belong AmeriCorps State Program 13AC144996 is pleased to provide this grant clarification. The program will host 20 MSY at a MSY cost of \$12,590 and increase recruitment to the disability community as requested. We are not asking to increase our FTE request. In an effort to reduce MSY cost over time, we will pursue additional grants and increase contribution by host sites in year 2 and 3 if possible. It is important to note Vermont has very limited philanthropic resources. Securing additional funding has been a challenge for host sites and increasing costs can be a limiting factor to participation. Based on funding availability, the program intends to reduce MSY to \$12,200 in Year 2 and \$12,000 in Year 3.

Programmatic clarification:

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### 1. Grant Start Date and Member Enrollment Period:

In the Clarification narrative field, please confirm your desired grant award start date and member enrollment period start date.

Grant Dates: 9/1/2013

Enrollment Period Start Date: 9/1/2013

### 2. Please revise the Executive Summary in the application so that it contains the required elements specified in the 2013 AmeriCorps State and National application instructions.

The City of Burlington requests 20 FTE AmeriCorps members to incorporate cultural competence into organizational systems of City departments, schools and Vermont non-profits. Members will build organizational capacity to more effectively serve people of diverse backgrounds and eliminate disparities. The 20 AmeriCorps members will be recruited from diverse backgrounds and communities to represent the growing diversity of the City. This project will address the CNCS focus areas of Economic Opportunity, Education and Healthy Futures. The CNCS investment of \$251,809 will be matched with \$164,695. The project will run 09/01/2013 through 08/31/2016.

### 3. The program indicates that one barrier to member retention has been sites' ability to support a member or come up with match. Please provide a corrective action plan related to this issue.

The program has increased our training for AmeriCorps supervisors so they can better support members from diverse backgrounds (including culture, ethnicity, ability, gender and other identities). Cultural competency is the ability to work across difference and supervision skills is a significant piece to creating a more inclusive workplace. Our supervisors are developing their skills in supervising individuals from a different culture, a person with a disability or with limited professional experience. In addition to supervisor training before members are enrolled, this year we provided a three-part training for members and supervisors to improve communication, clarity of expectations, and promoted reflection and evaluation. Members and supervisors reported these sessions greatly improved their working relationships. This was the first step in improving member retention. In addition to the three part-training, we will meet with members and supervisors at their sites, support members through monthly team meetings, and match supervisors up for peer coaching relationships.

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These additional activities should assist in improving member retention.

The other challenge to member retention is the loyalty members have for their families. Members take their service seriously and at the same time, when there is a family crisis they are often required to attend to that first. This is taken into consideration when recruiting and weighed with the overwhelming benefit for members to serve at host agencies. To address this issue, we will make sure that all members are aware of the services that are available in the City and may assist them in times of family crisis. Specifically, we will introduce our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all members for their on-going benefit.

The existing corps is diverse and brings many strengths; it also has significant demands by program staff and supervisors. In order to recruit a more diversified member base, we utilized past members of diverse backgrounds and were quite successful. To ensure a successful inclusion, we will plan to recruit people with disabilities first to shadow with currently serving members. This will give applicants and sites a taste of service and supports necessary. We will work to use existing MSYs as well as Burlington's Committee on Accessibility to recruit people with disabilities to serve in a part-time basis. This will set us up for a more success with this new population and prevent early terminations by these members.

Site Match Corrective Action-Our current practice is to maintain communication with sites year-round to ensure their commitment, ability to host members and provide necessary match. All MSY's are allocated before the start of our training program.

The challenge with limited site match originated when our program received additional MSY slots when additional funds were secured. However we were not able to utilize these positions due to the timeline of our program and year-long training component. We had already selected agencies to participate in the program and adding new agencies was not feasible. Current sites were not able to utilize additional MSYs and so they went unused.

4. Please provide more detail related to the role of the team leader, including whether the team leader is involved in program administration and site monitoring or member supervision.

This role of the Team Leader is to serve as a peer support for members and promote equity work in the

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City. The member maintains a big-picture view to promote communication and collaboration across agencies to create a more equitable, inclusive community. This member does not do administration, monitoring or supervision.

The Team Leader member has three main focus areas. 1) Provide peer support to corps members. Team Leader meets with members regularly and volunteers in their programs such as family education at the VNA family room; English classes at the Fletcher Free Library; and parent engagement in the Burlington School District. This is to offer additional mentoring to members; it fosters problem solving and developing a strong community network. 2) Promote equity work across the City by serving as liaison to efforts such as the Partnership for Change and the City's Diversity and Equity Committee. These activities raise awareness of AmeriCorps in the community and advance the program goal to create a more welcoming and inclusive community. 3) Support cultural competency work internally by participating in CEDO's cultural competency team, planning staff training and making programming more accessible (such as small business development and lead remediation programs). These activities improve organization effectiveness.

CEDO is a municipal office and provides programs for income-eligible applicants. The Team Leader supports CEDO programs and direct benefit is to the program, not individuals.

5. Please clarify whether the cultural competency trainings and coaching tools the program provides to CEOs, board members, and AmeriCorps members is delivered by AmeriCorps members or program staff.

These We All Belong group training and coaching sessions are delivered by CQ Strategies consultant team. These sessions are different from the team meetings and individual coaching provided by the AmeriCorps Team Leader and program staff.

6. Please provide more detail related to how the program ensures compliance with AmeriCorps eligibility requirements considering that some members are recently settled refugees.

During enrollment, the program makes a copy of member's Birth Certificate, Passport or Permanent Resident card. Eligibility is confirmed through the CNCS online process. When enrolling an applicant

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in eGrants, citizenship verification information is required. If an applicant is not born in the US, further verification is requested by CNCS and a copy of their documentation is sent to the CNCS National Service Hotline. An email is sent back to the program confirming eligibility.

7. Please provide more detail related to the members' roles in Education, including the type of curriculum members are developing, member roles in early childhood education and school readiness as well as their training in these areas, and member roles in afterschool programs.

Curriculum- Members develop resources for teachers and administrators to serve all students and reduce the achievement gap tracked by the Burlington Equity Data Report. This includes curriculum development that promotes respect for difference, helping students discern and act on humane values. Links to performance measure G3-3.10 to improve organization effectiveness

Early childhood education-Members serve at a parent-child center run by the Visiting Nurse Association. Members support the pre-school, assist with nutrition, family play programs and childcare for parents to attend English, citizenship and GED classes. These members are frequently selected from parents utilizing these services. They receive training from the site and always are supported by credentialed staff members. The Center's pre-school has demonstrated success preparing 17 children each year for school. Links to performance measure G3-3.10 to improve organization effectiveness

Afterschool programs-Members support parent access to afterschool programs, serve as cultural and linguistic liaisons for staff and parents to communicate, help staff understand cultural norms of their students, and develop multicultural activities for afterschool program. Links to performance measure G3-3.10 to improve organization effectiveness

8. Please also provide some examples of staff and teacher retention efforts and parent engagement initiatives.

The Burlington School District is working to retain teachers and staff of color. Last year they held a mid-year event and end of year interviews to better understand teachers' experiences in the schools, experiences of discrimination and feelings of inclusion. This information was released in a retention

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report in May 2012. Current efforts include principals and teachers to try and change school climate to be more welcoming of teachers of color who are in the minority in the District.

Engaging parents in their children's education is dependent on building trusting relationships with teachers and staff. The member serving with the Family School Partnership program meets with parents on and off school property to build this relationship. They identify what has limited a parent's involvement in the past and work to reduce those barriers. Changes already made include: improved classroom signage, translating school correspondence, and explaining school expectations that may be unfamiliar to parents who did not attend school in the US.

9. Please provide more detail related to the childcare component of the Social Services Sector intervention, including member roles and responsibilities related to childcare and member training for these roles.

Members serve at the VNA Family room (as noted in #7) provide childcare while parents attend English, citizenship and GED classes. They facilitate constructive play activities, ensure safety standards and assist with parent communication. Members receive training from the site and always are supported by credentialed staff members.

10. Please provide more detail related to the Arts, Parks, and Culture sector intervention, including whether members are coordinating or directly instructing adult English and Citizenship classes.

Members at the Fletcher Free Library support their English and Citizenship classes. They recruit volunteers to teach the Citizenship classes. They both coordinate and teach the English classes in concert with volunteers.

11. Please clarify whether member roles, including those roles in early childhood education, childcare, youth leadership development classes, and adult classes, will displace or supplant staff or duplicate staff roles.

These positions do not displace, supplant or duplicate staff roles. These are programs that are either new or strictly volunteer run. Positions are distinct from staff roles because there are no staff

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performing these roles. Member build organization capacity so agencies serve more people and populations from not otherwise reached such as: English language learners, newly resettled refugee parents, and training people of color to serve on boards and commissions.

12. Please describe in more detail the program's plan to train members to accurately and appropriately document AmeriCorps hours and the program's process for addressing instances of noncompliance in member timekeeping.

The program has instituted several steps to ensure compliance in member timekeeping.

Supervisors-Supervisors receive training before member enrollment to develop appropriate position descriptions and learn how to use the OnCorps system. They receive written guidance on expectations for timesheet review regarding prompt review and appropriate language.

Members-Members receive training at orientation outlining expectations of timekeeping, the learn how to use the OnCorps system and eligible duties and language for reporting.

These efforts are supplemented with individual coaching and ongoing review at team meetings.

Members receive reminders to submit timesheets promptly and reviews of their timesheets by program staff. Additionally, CEDO has committed additional staff to monitor OnCorps regularly to improve our compliance. This has already made significant improvements in prompt submission and appropriate language.

13. Criminal history checks must be conducted on all members, employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, stipend or similar payment from the grant, regardless of whether these costs are coming from federal or non-federal share. A detailed description of the requirements can be found at: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/criminal-history>.

14. Please verify that criminal history checks will be conducted on all members, employees and other individuals as described above. Please explain why criminal history checks for staff are not budgeted.

Criminal History checks will be conducted on all members, employees, and other individuals as required by CNCS regulations.

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The budget has been adjusted to conduct checks for 4 staff paid through the grant in addition to all AmeriCorps members as described above.

Member Disability Clarification:

What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

We All Belong will designate 2 half time positions for people with disabilities. This is 8% of our 26 requested slots. We will not increase our total 20 FTEs, though we have adjusted our budget to change FT into HT positions. In addition to slot designation, we will develop internship opportunities for people from the disability community to learn more about AmeriCorps service. Given the program's focus on inclusion, we are already working with sites to create more inclusive climate with hopes of increasing our numbers of members with disabilities in year 2 and 3.

Outreach to members of the disability community will utilize our strong grass roots network of community leaders; reaching out through participating agencies; and agencies with targeted services for people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. We will reach out to agencies serving Veterans to identify applicants. Support for members is in line with our already diverse corps. We will create a training series covering different types of physical and hidden disabilities and offer to supervisors and members. The series will build on a training we offered this year through the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) which was very well received. Peer mentors will be identified to support the interns, members and supervisors through challenges.

We are unable to identify specific host sites for members at this time. We conduct a rigorous screening process of all applicants and then work with sites to identify appropriate placements for applicants. However based on experience, the following sites are likely to provide viable member placements: VNA Family Room, Local Motion, Fletcher Free Library, and the Burlington School District.

Budget Clarification Items:

1. Please reduce your budget to the funding and MSY for which you are under consideration, unless you are requesting disability MSY and/or no-cost MSYs. If your changes impact one or more

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category disproportionately, please explain your budget changes in the "clarification summary" field of the narrative.

Made changes in E-Grants. MSY cost is \$12,590 which is below the approved rate. No additional MSYs are being requested, though due to increase of HT positions, total slots increased from 24 to 26. Changes were made to the budget to reflect the increased number of slots and member costs. Other slight adjustments to personnel and member stipends were made to stay within the MSY cost.

2. Section I. Other Program Operating Costs: adjust budget for criminal history checks for all members, employees and other individuals as necessary.

Made changes in E-Grants. 26 members and 4 staff x \$40/each

Performance Measure Clarification Items:

Please make the following changes in the Performance Measures screens in eGrants:

Diverse and Inclusive Organizations Performance Measures

1. The text in the "Describe Interventions" field appears to cut off. Please ensure that the full intervention description appears in this field.

Made changes in E-Grants.

2. Please remove G3-3.1 (volunteers recruited) and G303.2 (volunteer retained). Volunteer generation outputs will be captured in semi-annual progress reporting.

Made changes in E-Grants.

3. For G3-3.4: The program's instrument description indicates that the program intends to use signed MOUs to document the number of programs receiving capacity building services. Please confirm that an MOU can accurately capture organizations that received capacity building services, considering that it is signed prior to any services being performed.

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Made changes in E-Grants.

4. For G3-3.5: Please confirm that the program's proposed target does not include national service participants. Please confirm that trainings provided will be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model. Please confirm that the program's instrument ensures an unduplicated count of staff and volunteers, even if they receive multiple types of training. Please indicate the minimum number of days, hours, or other units of service required for staff or volunteers to be considered as having received training. Please confirm that the program's target includes only those staff or volunteers who meet the minimum threshold of number of days, hours, or other units of service to be considered as having received training.

Made changes in E-Grants.

5. For G3-3.6: The assessment describes appears to be an organizational assessment. Please confirm that the program's proposed assessment meets the definition of Community Assessment included in the Performance Measure Instructions. Please indicate the minimum number of days, hours, or other level of assistance required in order to determine that the assistance provided by the CNCS-supported organization or assigned national service participant was substantive and instrumental in completing the activity and/or achieving results.

Made changes in E-Grants. G3-3.6 was removed. The type of assessment we conduct is an organizational assessment.

6. G3-3.11: Please clarify how improvement in organizational outreach strategy is determined and what level of improvement is sufficient to be counted.

Changes to how an organization conducts outreach to be more inclusive are identified as part of the organization assessment and evaluated at the end of the program year. Examples of changes include: translation of materials, more in-person outreach as compared to direct mail, community presentations, and development of social media. One change constitutes an improvement for inclusion in this measure.

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7. G3-3.9 and G3-3.10: Please select either G3-3.9 or G3-3.10 and delete the other. These measures were intended to capture improvements at nonduplicative organizations

Made changes in E-Grants. We conduct an organization assessment using the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmark tool: [http://qedconsulting.com/files/GDIB\\_2011.pdf](http://qedconsulting.com/files/GDIB_2011.pdf)  
Agencies conduct and pre and post assessment where they use the tool to set goals at the beginning of the program year and again mark progress at the end of the program year.

8. For the outcome the program elects to keep: Organizations must use a pre-post organizational assessment to measure sustained changes in efficiency within an organization (G3-3.9) and sustained changes in effectiveness within an organization (G3-3.10). The program's Instrument Description for these Outcomes do not clearly include a pre-post organizational assessment tool. Please revise these statements to more clearly include a pre-post organizational assessment tool and confirm that these tools ask questions that measure the areas of efficiency that the organization seeks to improve and that are intended to support or enhance the program delivery model (G3-3.9) and areas if effectiveness in which the organization seeks to improve and that are intended to support or enhance the program delivery model (G3-3.10). Please confirm that the pre-assessment is administered before capacity building services are provided and that the post-assessment will be done at the end of the term of service of the national service participant engaged in the capacity building activity.

Made changes in E-Grants.

9. G3-3.12 was removed.

10. Please review all your performance measures and determine if any changes are needed to reflect the funding and MSY amount specified above. If any changes are needed, please make the changes in the performance measures in eGrants.

Made changes in E-Grants.

### Continuation Changes

N/A

### Grant Characteristics