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Executive Summary

Reading Partners respectfully requests \$239,400 from CNCS and Serve DC, matched with \$604,917 from Reading Partners. This grant will support our proven literacy intervention program in 12 Title I elementary schools in DC. Support at this level will enable 18 full-time Reading Partners AmeriCorps members to recruit and manage 780 community volunteers to provide one-on-one literacy tutoring to at least 660 K-5 struggling readers twice a week during the 2013-14 program year. 65% of students who complete the program will advance their literacy skills by at least one full grade-level. This project will support the Education Focus Area for CNCS.

Rationale and Approach

a. NEED:

DC is home to the lowest elementary reading scores in the country. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that in 2011, only 19% of 4th graders in DC public schools read at or above grade-level standards. For African American students, proficiency dropped to 14%. These statistics rank DC last compared to other states. Moreover, roughly 70% of District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) students are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch, and yet only 11% of these students read at a proficient or advanced level according to the National Center for Education Statistics. The real-life implication of these statistics is that in 4th grade classrooms across DC, nine out of ten students feels left behind every time they open a book. The real grievance of our students' daily struggle is that the defeat they feel in 4th grade will follow them throughout their academic careers. In a 2011 report, the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that students reading below grade level in third grade were four times as likely as their peers to exit school before earning a high school diploma. Indeed, it is critical to support struggling readers during the elementary years when targeted, data-driven, and personalized intervention can put them on a path towards future academic and employment success.

Reading Partners (RP) targets economically disadvantaged children because we believe that every student, regardless of their socioeconomic or demographic background, deserves the opportunity to succeed in life thanks to strong literacy skills. For students who have fallen behind in reading, early intervention is critical not only to their short-term success in the classroom, but to their long-term academic and life success as well. Once students start to fall behind in reading, they tend to fall faster and further behind their peers with every year, a phenomenon researchers and educators call the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986). Strong reading skills in elementary school are especially important for children growing up in low-income communities, where there are so many barriers to academic

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and economic success. Children with low academic achievement are three times more likely to join gangs than their higher-achieving peers (Hill, et al. 2001). RP utilizes community service and volunteerism as a means to enact positive change in our schools and for our children. We are dedicated to mobilizing community volunteers to become advocates for educational opportunity in their local communities. Our program is designed so that no matter a volunteer's prior experience with education or children, he or she can learn to use our research-based curriculum and support a student's concrete skill mastery. In this way, RP empowers everyone and anyone to become a change agent for their local schools.

b. AMERICORPS MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS:

AmeriCorps Members (ACMs) will serve in one of three roles: Site Coordinator (SC), Regional Site Coordinator (RSC), or Outreach Coordinator (OC). These members will serve together to recruit, train, and manage community volunteers to provide personalized literacy tutoring to K-5 students who are reading below grade level at each of our school sites. Altogether, these members will recruit and manage 65 volunteers to serve 55 students at each of our 12 schools. Because they train and manage volunteers to provide direct service, ACMs allow RP to serve many more students than if members solely tutored.

Site Coordinators: SCs are school-based positions and are responsible for managing the delivery of our tutoring program for 45-65 students Monday - Thursday at that school. Fridays are used for professional development trainings, service days, or tutoring make-up sessions. Under the supervision of a RP Program Manager, SCs are responsible for three activities: cultivating and stewarding relationships with their school's teachers and administration, training and coaching volunteer tutors to ensure each session is productive, and collecting and recording data on students' literacy development. SCs are responsible for maintaining close and consistent communication with teachers and administration to share school events, schedules, student availability for tutoring, student data, and student progress. SCs are also responsible for teaching volunteers how to use our research-based curriculum, pairing them with a student, observing tutoring sessions and coaching tutors with new strategies or activities to facilitate learning, and monitoring tutors' completion of progress monitoring notes. SCs serve as tutors in the unusual case that a volunteer cannot attend his or her tutoring session. Collection and management is the third major component of this role and entails assessing each student upon entry into the program, at mid-year, and at end-of-year; developing an Individualized Reading Plan for each student and adapting it as needed (with input from the Program

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Manager); and collecting school-based assessment data and recording it in our database. SCs also coordinate Home Connection Events such as twice annual Reading Recitals, as well as monthly newsletters. A SC's schedule is 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. RP plans to place 12 SCs in 2013-14.

Regional Site Coordinators: RSCs are school-based positions and supervised by Program Managers, but unlike SCs, RSCs are not assigned to one particular school. Rather, RSCs rotate between our larger school sites with the most need to provide additional direct service support. Working closely with their Program Manager, RSCs determine which schools need their help in a given week and when they arrive on site, they are tasked with specific duties such as performing make-up sessions with students who were previously absent, offering more intensive coaching to novice tutors, and supporting the SC with data collection and management. RP plans to place 4 members as RSCs.

Outreach Coordinators: OCs are supervised by Outreach Managers, and are responsible for designing individual tutor recruitment plans for each school site and then executing those plans. OCs have desk space in the DC office, but they spend much of their time at community centers, schools, businesses, and civic organizations to recruit tutors. Once a volunteer has expressed interest in RP, the OC guides the volunteer through the orientation and application, ensures the volunteer completes a background check, and schedules the volunteer to attend an on-site training with an SC before becoming a tutor. OCs also focus on renewing the commitment of current tutors and partners for the next program year. Finally, OCs are tasked with developing volunteer appreciation events or strategies to ensure our volunteers feel connected to their service commitment. OCs call and email volunteers interested in tutoring and entering their volunteer status into RP's Salesforce database. These duties are directly related to the recruitment of volunteers and not general programming. These duties do not overlap with RP staff administrative functions. RP plans to place 2 OCs who will serve from 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

RP is requesting 18 full-time slots: 12 members will serve as SCs, 4 as regional SCs and 2 as OCs. Our service year runs from approximately August 1, 2013 to July 31, 2014.

c. EVIDENCE-BASED/EVIDENCE-INFORMED AND MEASUREABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT: The RP program is both evidence-based and evidence-informed. Our model is based on studies from educational research that supports community-driven one-to-one tutoring programs as a cost-effective and outcomes-focused way of improving student achievement (Slavin, R.E., Lake, C., Davis, S., & Madden, N. (2009, June) Effective programs for struggling readers: A best evidence synthesis. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education. Elbaum, B.,

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Vaughn, S., Huges, M.T., & Moody, S. W. (2000). How Effective Are One-to-One Tutoring Programs in Reading for Elementary Students at Risk for Reading Failure?: A Meta-Analysis of the Intervention Research. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92, 4, 605-619.)

The RP program intervention begins by Program Managers and SCs selecting participating students by meeting with principals, teachers and literacy specialists at each site to develop a tactical plan for identifying potential RP students. At enrollment, SCs assess each student to determine their independent reading level and place them at the appropriate lesson within our four levels of research-based curriculum, developed in partnership with the Stanford University School of Education. Our curriculum is divided in two major levels: Beginner Reader, which targets phonics skills, and Comprehension Reader, which focuses on critical thinking skills and text analysis. Within the Comprehension Reader curriculum, there are three levels that correspond to 2nd through 4th grade level content and difficulty. The curriculum design takes into account that tutors are volunteers who do not necessarily have any prior experience in education. Each lesson is designed to be user-friendly and comes complete with concept explanation instructions, games, worksheets, and appropriate reading materials. Through this curriculum, students are working at their appropriate reading level and experiences a boost of confidence and success when they exercise and master new skills.

As a prior AC and Social Innovation Fund grantee, RP is also obligated to conduct independent evaluation studies to verify the efficacy of our work and continuously improve. RP recently completed one such study with the Stanford University School of Education. This study included an experimental evaluation and reported that our program demonstrated statistically significant differences in reading skill gains for participants compared to control group students and had a moderate effect size (0.55), based on the Rigby PM Ultra assessments, RP's literacy assessment since 2007. To build on the findings of the Stanford study, RP is contracting with a nationally recognized social policy research firm, MDRC, to conduct a randomized control trial (RCT) at 19 RP school sites nationwide. The study, made possible by the SIF, will include over 1,200 students and will probe the efficacy of our program design, our fidelity the program model nationally, and suggest ways to improve our program. Results from the study will be ready in summer 2014.

In addition to being evidence-based, RP prides itself on being evidence-informed. To monitor and improve our program internally, RP has a Research and Evaluation department. This department focuses on assessment, curriculum and program updates to reflect changing policies such as the implementation of Common Core State Standards, and managing internal and external studies. The Research and Evaluation department also supervises our internal data collection cycle. This cycle

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includes a literacy assessment of each enrolled student to determine baseline literacy skills and growth; twice annual tutor, teacher, and principal surveys; collection of school-administered performance data; and qualitative notes from tutors on students' real-time breakthroughs and challenges. We record all data in our Salesforce.com online database so that our program staff and Research and Evaluation Department can analyze the data and progress-monitor. Each summer, we report students' gains to our funders, outreach partners, and tutors via emails and reports so that everyone involved in creating success for students knows how the school year progressed.

These reports allow us to measure and demonstrate the local impact ACMs have had on their school sites. For instance, 4 of the 5 DC Charter Schools that made the most gains on their DC CAS reading proficiency scores from 2010 to 2012, were schools with RP support. RP schools have increased their DC CAS proficiency rates by an average of 7% per year over the past two years. The following data demonstrates the impact each ACM had on the local school level in DC last year (percentages represent the percentage of students who accelerated their rate of learning): Brightwood Elementary (98%); CAPCS - Amos (100%); CAPCS - Butler (81%); Center City - Congress Heights (78%); DC Bilingual (66%); DC Prep (79%); Septima Clark (86%); Wheatley Elementary (80%); CAPCS - Rand (98%).

The investment by Serve DC will allow RP to have a direct academic impact on more than 2,000 children in DC over the next 3 years. Serve DC funding for 2013-14 would allow RP to serve 660 students in DC. 65 percent of students in DC who receive the full dosage of tutoring (16 hours) will increase at least one full grade level in literacy skills. This performance measure target has been selected based on internal trend analyses on assessment data collected over the last 5 years. RP has maintained consistently strong outcomes even while scaling to serve many more students. RP's education performance measure is based on the requirements for the Education National Performance Measure.

d. MEMBER RECRUITMENT:

RP has filled 100% of our AmeriCorps (AC) positions each year for the last 3 years, and has retained at least 94% of members. 45% of our first-year ACMs also elected to serve a second term with RP in 2012-13. We received 64 applications last year for our 12 available positions in DC. We are currently at 100% enrollment and retention for our DC cohort. Additional recruitment strategies include:

1.Partnerships. Close partnerships with community institutions like colleges and universities, community centers, volunteer centers, and other AC programs help us promote our program. 2.Web presence. Our website clearly explains our AC program. We post opportunities on bulletin boards like

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idealist.org, VolunteerMatch, and americorps.gov. Candidates submit applications online. 3. Tutor conversions. This year, 22% of our national AC cohorts were volunteer tutors from last year.

RPs Diversity in Recruitment Initiative ensures that each region attends Diversity Career Fairs and posts hard copies of the ACM position description in low-income communities as part of our recruitment strategy. We recruit in our service neighborhoods by making AC recruitment materials available at all of our sites, advertising open positions in those communities, and working with organizations like Teach for America to recruit individuals who are passionate about community service. 50% of our DC cohort is from the DC area.

e. MEMBER TRAINING:

Training for ACMs is designed to scaffold members into their service experience by teaching them about their service commitment and service environment, supporting their transition into the service environment, and providing ongoing and consistent coaching to ensure that members are thriving. Training begins with 3 weeks of pre-service orientation planned by RP program staff. This training consists of: 1. AC Training & RP Orientation: All members meet at 1 location for one full week of training in August. Staff provides training on AC-specific topics like the history of national service, prohibited activities and RP AmeriCorps policies and procedures. ACMs sign their contracts during this training. Additionally, PMs train members on RP-specific topics like literacy and pedagogy, student and tutor support, and reading assessments. 2. Center-based Training: After leaving Orientation, members spend two weeks in their regions prior to the start of tutoring. They conduct community mapping exercises to learn more about what it's like to live and serve in the community, receive 1:1 coaching and orientation at their site from their manager, and set up their Reading Center. They meet with school personnel to discuss the program structure and review the Rigby student assessment processes. Members then complete classroom observations, schedule volunteers for orientations, and conduct student assessments before scheduling tutoring sessions. Training throughout the year includes 1. Weekly on-site coaching with staff 2. Friday Team days to come gather as regional teams to discuss training topics. 3. Professional development days (every other Friday) coordinated with Days of National Service. Managers cover topics such as: goal setting; public speaking; and Life after AC. Each prohibited activity is outlined in our Member Contracts. Members must initial and sign the Prohibited Activities section, following a Prohibited Activities training. RP volunteer tutors must sign a Tutor Code of Conduct after receiving training on the RP program and our Prohibited Activities pertaining to both RP and AC.

f. MEMBER SUPERVISION

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RP offers multiple levels of support and a very high-touch supervision and professional development model, which we believe is critical to equipping our members with the skills they need to effectively engage the thousands of community volunteers that we do. We provide our members with an unusually high degree of support with a low program manager to member ratio (1:6 average). OCs are supervised by Outreach Managers (OMs) who have 3-6 years of volunteer management experience. SCs and RSCs are supervised by Program Managers (PMs), all of whom have classroom teaching experience with at-risk youth and/or a DC teaching credential. In addition to constant contact over email and phone, PMs visit each ACM at their school site at least once a week to provide in-person guidance. Members also receive support from their AmeriCorps Program Manager (ACPM). The ACPM provides prohibited activities supervision and surveys member satisfaction with the RP AmeriCorps program. The ACPM accomplishes this through training, surveys, and 1:1 check-in meetings with members. Managers are supervised by the DC Regional Executive Director (RED). Program and Outreach Managers are hired based on their experience with volunteer outreach, education, and/or direct service. All managers attend a comprehensive orientation and training in June/July, participate in weekly check-in meetings with their direct supervisors, and participate in bi-weekly team meetings. National staff such as the CEO, COO and AC Director also join PMs on school visits to ensure program quality and fidelity to the program model.

RP is compliant with the CNCS tutoring guidelines in the following ways: 1. RP requires that all members have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and successfully complete a 120-hour training program prior to the start of the program and regular in-service trainings during the program year. Community volunteers also undergo a training program that is focused on in-school instruction. 2. RP uses the Rigby PM assessment kit to track student progress and measure student outcomes. Students are assessed three times per year and tutors use the data to guide instruction. On a weekly basis, members review tutoring notes and conference with PMs to adapt student intervention plans. 3. Upon entry into RP, every student is assessed and placed into one of the three curricular programs depending on the student's academic needs and reading skill level. 4. RP's training program is designed by expert educators to prepare tutors and members for their work in reading centers. 5. Members are supervised by PMs who have at least 5 years of experience in education, a current DC teaching credential and/or a master's (or higher) degree in education.

g. MEMBER EXPERIENCE

RP connects our members on a national level throughout the year by receiving a monthly newsletter with current events in AC or CNCS as well as AC accomplishments at RP. Members connect on a

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regional level each week through trainings and team building. RP partners with other DC AC programs on National Days of Service to give our members a sense of connection and identity to the AC brand and mission. In 2012, RP proudly joined with Greater DC Cares on MLK Day to help put on a career fair for military veterans and their families. Members helped check in, guide, and assist over 400 attendees as they spoke to over 50 local and national companies in attendance. During AC Week, RP joined with DCPCA Community Health Corps, Groundwork Anacostia, and the National Park Service to help install exercise equipment at city parks in the Anacostia neighborhood.

OCs gain in-depth experience in community partnership development, and they see the impact community volunteers can have. SCs have meaningful service experiences as they assess and report on the measurable improvements their students make with the support of volunteers.

RP is clear on our commitment to continuous improvement and learning during Orientation. Each month, ACMs submit a reflection on an area for growth and a story of pride along with their timesheets. Friday trainings start and end with discussion questions designed for self-reflection. ACMs identify as such to community members and partners by wearing their AC gear that prominently displays the AC and RP logo at sites and events. ACMs are trained to abide by all regulations outlined in their member contracts and handbook. Pins, jackets, and polo shirts with RP and AC logos are distributed after the AC Pledge is complete. All members participate in a Life After AC training in June before they graduate.

RP documented the DC member experience in depth with both qualitative and quantitative data. For example, each month members are asked to document a 'Great Story', a paragraph depicting a moment they were proud of. This Great Story came from a first year ACM in DC last year. At the end of June 2012, he wrote, "I am a proud to report that the CAPCS-Butler program has been a resounding success. Many many teachers, students, volunteers, administrators, and parents attended the end of year celebration and complimented me and the program for its great impact on the school. Furthermore, my end of year data proved that a vast majority of my 63 students enrolled in the RP program accelerated their rates of learning and narrowed their achievement gaps. I am proud of myself for the success of the program, and so thankful to all those who supported me in the long and often difficult process. This includes most importantly my program manager, as well as all the teachers at Butler, and especially my principal. It has been a great year and I look forward to another great service year with RP starting this fall."

h. VOLUNTEER GENERATION

The RP model is a unique approach to helping struggling readers from low-income communities.

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There are many willing community volunteers in DC, and citizens are looking for the right opportunity. To maintain a stable pipeline of tutors, we seek out relationships with work-study programs, employee engagement programs, and civic volunteerism opportunities that we know will have long-term potential. Our volunteer recruitment partners include: Teach For America Alumni, Accenture, DC Reads and work study partnerships with Trinity, George Washington and Catholic Universities.

RP engages in stakeholder meetings with community volunteer members and organizations to discuss issues and solutions to challenges our communities face. For example, in early November, RP and Teach for America co-hosted an event to educate TFA alumni about opportunities to volunteer with RP. As a result of the event, TFA alumni have adopted 2 RP reading centers in DC, serving as tutors themselves and recruiting their networks to volunteer as well. We look forward to expanding this partnership and letting all TFA alumni know about RP by the end of their two years of teaching. We are confident that this type of event will be a huge success for the future of RP and are confident that this support and collaboration will contribute to long-term sustainability.

RP's past 2 years of programming in DC resulted in recruiting 207 volunteers in 2010-11 and 716 in 2011-12. Local community volunteers are empowered by our ACMs through training and personalized coaching to tutor their own students. This begins by OCs developing volunteer outreach strategies for each school. As of December 13, 2012, our DC OC has already recruited 446 volunteers in DC to tutor at our 10 schools, 125 of whom were also tutors with RP in 2011-12. We anticipate ending the 2012-13 program year with 600 active volunteers in DC. Because OCs dedicate so much time to fostering relationships with volunteers, we expect to retain a significant number of our volunteers next year based on past trends, further contributing to the 2013-14 goal to recruit 780 volunteer tutors. SCs focus on serving students through our volunteer tutors by creating Individualized Reading Plans (IRPs) for tutors to follow in order to best support their student. Our student-tutor pairs work together for 45 minutes twice a week, following an Individualized Reading Plan tailored to that student's particular needs and strengths. Tutors are expected to complete their commitment of at least 1 hour per week until the end of the semester in which they began tutoring. To execute the plan, tutors use our multi-level, research-based curriculum. RP's ACMs are directly responsible for volunteer recruitment and management throughout RP. Volunteers are trained on prohibited activities and asked to sign a Tutor Code of Conduct before tutoring. Tutors are held accountable to this under the supervision of ACMs and their supervisor.

i. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION

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Being an AC program is central to the RP brand, and we display the AC logo throughout each regional office and on our marketing collateral. The AC logo is clearly displayed on our website, recruitment table banners and pamphlets, and promotional videos. We also partner and connect with other AC organizations for National Days of service, training, and organizational strategy. Members receive gear such as polos, jackets, and pins and are educated on the history of AC during orientation and training during the year.

Organizational Capability

a. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING

RP's mission is to help children become lifelong readers by empowering community volunteers to provide individualized instruction that produce measurable results. RP was founded in 1999 by three retired California teachers. The teachers recruited a small group of volunteers to tutor the students at their local elementary school who they saw falling further behind each year. RP was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) under the name YES Reading in 2001. The organization changed its name to RP in 2008 and has grown exponentially since then, shifting from a local Bay Area organization to a national organization that is serving over 5,000 students from over 100 schools throughout DC, Maryland, California, Texas, New York and Colorado during the 2012-13 school year. RP received a \$3.5M Social Innovation Fund investment from CNCS via the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in April 2011. This investment, along with high interest from the philanthropic and education community in DC, has enabled us to serve the community and children of DC for the past 3 years.

Thanks to a partnership with the NewSchools Venture Fund, RP expanded to DC in 2010, its first region outside of California. Operations in DC have grown dramatically since the region launched: we grew from four partner schools in 2010-2011 to eight in 2011-2012. In 2012-2013, Reading Partners will serve at least 450 students in 10 schools across wards 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8. Students participating in Reading Partners in DC demonstrated incredible achievement in 2011-2012: 94% increased their rate of learning and for every month a student participated in the program, they gained 1.9 months of literacy skills - previously, the average student was gaining just half a month of skills per month in school (and thus falling behind grade level). RP will expand to a total of twelve school sites, which will also serve as service sites in 2013-2014: CAPCS-Butler Global Campus, Brightwood Education Campus, Center City Brightwood, Wheatley Education Campus, H.D. Cooke Elementary School, DC Prep Elementary Academy, DC Bilingual Public Charter School, CAPCS- Amos 1 Campus, CAPCS- Amos 3 Campus, Septima Clark Public Charter School, Moten Elementary School, and Simon Elementary School. We aim to serve 660 students at these twelve school sites, with this number

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growing in future years.

The administration of the AC program falls under the purview of our AC department. RP created this department when it received our first AC grant, allowing us to support members directly and to ensure compliance with all federal regulations. Our Director of AC Programs, Kristarae Flynn, oversees national grant management regulations and member support structures. She came to RP in 2010 after serving as the Director of Community Development at Public Allies, where she supervised ACMs and partnerships in San Francisco, CA. Our AC Program Managers (ACPMs), Jeremy Exell and Brittany Prince, manage partnerships with National Direct, CaliforniaVolunteers, and VISTA grants in 3 CNCS state offices. Jeremy served with AmeriCorps NCCC and as a VISTA. Most recently, he managed member outreach for AmeriCorps Alums in DC. Brittany was an ACM at RP as a Site Coordinator for 2 years before being promoted to this position. The ACPM provides another level of knowledge, accessibility, and support for members beyond their direct supervisor. Members are encouraged to reach out to their ACPM with any questions or concerns about AC or their service year. Jeremy, the ACPM based in DC, will manage this grant.

RP has an organizational structure that has proven to be effective over the past 5 years as an AC program in 6 states across the country. A full-time RP Program Manager is responsible for overseeing a portfolio of 5-6 school sites and their SCs. RP PMs are experienced educators who in addition to being experts in elementary education, must have professional experience coaching and supervising adults. PMs are also responsible for managing relationships with each school's principal and administration to ensure the achievement of strong outcomes in student learning. Since our model relies on volunteer tutors, RP has a robust Outreach team comprised of full-time Outreach Managers (OMs) who supervise 2-5 Outreach Coordinators (OCs). OCs are managed by Tabitha Blackwell, our OM based in DC. OCs recruit volunteers for 6-8 school sites in their portfolio. Managers conduct twice-monthly trainings for their members to enhance their knowledge of best practices in education, as well as volunteer recruitment and management techniques. DC managers report to DC Regional Executive Director (RED), Lisa Lazarus.

The Mid-Atlantic RED works closely with the DC regional board as well as with the national board of directors. Specifically, Lisa meets with the national office to set fund development goals in alignment with the DC launch plan and ensures that these goals are consistently met or exceeded. Lisa coordinates RP's relationship with DCPS and local Charter Management Organizations and spearheads the process of selecting and launching new reading centers. She also develops local fundraising initiatives to ensure regional sustainability. Prior to joining RP, Lisa was the Director of

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Effective Practice and Leadership Development for New Leaders, working with programs in DC and Baltimore. Lisa graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University, earned her Masters in Elementary Education from Lesley University and the Shady Hill School Teacher Training Course, and earned her Masters in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Our program in DC is currently fully staffed and does not have any vacancies for full-time staff members. The only positions that will need to be filled are new AC positions for next year. 4 out of our 10 DC AC members are planning to apply for another year of service with RP. The main qualifications for these positions are: excellent constituent relations skills (volunteers, teachers, parents), positive attitude; detail-oriented with strong organizational skills; ability to manage multiple projects at once; experience and interest in working with elementary school-age children; ability to express oneself clearly, in written and verbal forms; working knowledge of and ability to follow structured RP literacy curriculum. They must also meet all AmeriCorps eligibility requirements. RP provides both initial and ongoing support to full-time staff members in the realm of financial and programmatic orientation and technical assistance. Initial support constitutes a week long Program Orientation each July to train new and returning staff on RP culture, structure, and expectations. Trainings include an introduction to the RP program model, accounting policies, AC allowable expenses and timekeeping requirements, AC history and regulations, and best practices of managing ACMs. During the year, Program staff participate in bi-weekly conference calls to preview upcoming program events, review AC regulations and procedures, and share management techniques and problem-solving strategies.

Following Orientation, members are given the training schedule for the year. Trainings take place every other Friday and are facilitated by managers or an outside expert in the topic. Training topics are aligned to happenings in the program calendar in order to provide ACMs with the most helpful and relevant skill set for that time period. In addition to the topics listed in Member Training, other topics include: CPR/AED, Disaster Preparedness, The Five Domains of Literacy, Working with English Language Learners, Cultural Awareness, Learning Styles and Childhood Development, Stewarding Partnerships, and Professional Communication. Using online survey tools, RP has the capacity to survey and analyze member feedback for each of these trainings, enabling us to improve the training calendar and topics year over year.

Spearheading our various evaluation efforts is our Research and Evaluation Department, lead by Senior VP of Research and Evaluation Dean Elson and staffed by Director of Curriculum Lindsay Barrett and Data/Research Manager Rebecca Sutherland. The department has two major priorities:

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planning and supervising our annual cycle of internal program assessments and acting as liaison with external evaluators. As exemplified by the successful execution of the Stanford University School of Education study as well as the two external evaluations for two Social Innovation Fund grants currently underway (a nationwide randomized controlled study in partnership with MDRC and an implementation study taking place in Colorado), RP is equipped with in-house expertise to follow through on multiple evaluation projects at a time. Consequently, RP is well positioned to execute the evaluation requirements of AmeriCorps.

RP has five years of experience managing ACMs, as well as managing multiple federal grants in the same program year. In 2012-13, we are supervising 112 ACMs in the following combination of AC grants: 63 FT slots through CaliforniaVolunteers, 18 FT slots with National Direct, 10 slots with CA VISTA, 6 slots with NY VISTA, 5 slots with TX VISTA, and 10 FT Education Award Program slots. We currently also manage two CNCS Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grants this year - one through the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and one from the Mile High United Way. In 2011-12, RP managed a 40-MSY National Direct (ND) grant, a 33-MSY CaliforniaVolunteers grant and a 6-member VISTA grant in CA. In 2010-11, RP secured a 33-MSY CaliforniaVolunteers competitive grant and served as the single largest placement site for Public Allies DC, hosting 5 members. In 2009-10, we managed 18 members as a host site for three different agencies in CA. In 2008-09, we managed 8 members as a host site.

b. SUSTAINABILITY

Reading Partners traditional fundraising strength has been in foundation relations. In DC, that tradition is evident in the following foundations that have made a leading investment in our program: The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, CityBridge Foundation, Fordham Street Foundation and New Schools Venture Fund's DC Schools Fund. We work closely with our foundation partners to discuss our future plans and to outline sustainable growth. As we expand, we are also diligently working to expand non-philanthropic partnerships such as our current collaboration with the Washington Post Charities. In regards to in-kind resources, our school partners donate classroom space for us to use for our reading centers. These in-kind donations of space are elemental to our program design. In DC for FY13, we have nearly \$110,000 already committed and roughly \$145,000 pledged and pending and these amounts are tracking to certainly be able to meet the match we have proposed in this application for 2013-14.

RP recognizes that in order to sustain our impact in the community we need to cultivate a local, loyal, and long-term base of funders and champions. With the guidance of RP's development staff, our DC

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RED is currently engaged in building this network so that no single grant expiration threatens our operations. A major priority for our RED is to build her local board of directors, which we see as an integral piece to raising our regional profile, to connecting with potential corporate partners, and to executing future individual giving campaigns. Beyond our efforts to secure our impact from the funding perspective, we are also dedicated to fortifying the community's interest and involvement in public education. RP volunteers become advocates for increased citizen involvement in public education as they share their tutoring experiences with friends and families tutoring and realize that student achievement is a shared responsibility, not the sole duty of teachers or principals alone. RP surveys showed that 85% of volunteers are more interested in public education issues after their service, and 90% intended to continue volunteering in their community.

RPs' success depends on strong relationships with multiple stakeholders, including principals/superintendents/teachers, volunteer partnerships, and community families. Regular monthly meetings allow RP to maintain close communication with teachers and school district administration throughout the school year to ensure students receive maximum academic support. Through specialized training of our local community volunteer tutors, we align our instructional practices to mirror what the teachers are working on in the classroom and to reinforce what students are learning. Our stakeholders donate their time, funds, and/or in-kind resources and RP guarantees and delivers results within a year. Our DC Regional Board also places a crucial role in long-term sustainability. The DC Regional Board will provide strategic guidance to the RED in regards to program implementation. For example, the RED will receive input on school sites to partner with, therefore strengthening community relations. Financially, the DC Regional Board generates partnerships through fundraising that grow over the years.

c. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

RP holds itself accountable to compliance regulations by utilizing a Federal Grants Manual that outlines policies and procedures for all major federal grants regulations and deadlines, including CNCS and AC. RP holds itself accountable to instances of risk by conducting multiple internal audits each year in regards to member files, hours, health benefits, and payroll. For instance, the AC Program Director conducts a quarterly member file check for all AC grants to ensure that member files are complete and updated. The ACPM and AC Director meet on a quarterly basis to analyze and audit member hours and timesheets for accuracy and to determine if ACMs are on track to meeting their 1700 hour commitment. The accounting, development and AC department meet monthly to discuss each grant's fiscal progress, follow-up on upcoming grant program or fiscal deadlines, and announce

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updates of new CNCS regulations.

To hold members and service sites accountable to compliance regulations, RP trains members and staff on prohibited activities and acceptable conduct, followed by the signing of contracts. Principals sign MOUs that outline AC expectations. Staff, members, and partners receive training on the AC prohibited activities so they are able to recognize any violation of prohibited activities and report to RP immediately. Tutors must sign a code of conduct that outlines relevant AC regulations before they can begin tutoring.

Members are required to ask their manager or ACPM if an activity they are unsure about is within compliance of the grant. Weekly site visits and formal check-ins by PMs and the ACPM allow RP to continually monitor site and member compliance. ACMs and managers receive a 2 hour timesheet training during Orientation focused on allowable and unallowable activities. Members submit bi-monthly time sheets that are checked and approved by managers and audited on a quarterly basis by the ACPM and AC Director. If there is any uncertainty about RP's compliance, the AC Program Manager will immediately seek advice and guidance from our Serve DC Program Officer. RP has never been on corrective action status for any grant received and support a culture of establishing strong communication with each of our grant Program Officers early on in the grant year.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. COST EFFECTIVENESS

RP is a cost-effective approach for improving elementary literacy proficiency across DC because our model leverages community volunteerism to increase instructional capacity at Title I elementary schools. By recruiting, training, and continuously coaching private citizens as reading tutors, RP is able to help more children receive individualized attention than our school partners might otherwise be able to do on its own. Last year across the nation, 5,162 volunteers collectively donated over 120,000 hours of tutoring, which is valued at \$1.44M if we were to pay volunteers a \$12/hr tutor wage. With school, municipal, and state budgets forced to do more with less resources, RP is able to bring more personnel into schools without burdening schools' budgets. The RP model will cost Serve DC \$362 per child to increase her literacy skills, thereby altering his or her life trajectory. RP is also cost effective because we transform unused classroom space into reading centers at no additional cost to schools. Schools may donate the use of classroom space, which we project to be worth \$168,000. RP thus saves on cash expenses by not needing to rent space and schools incur no additional cost through the in-kind donation of space.

RP is requesting \$13,300 per MSY (18) and is not exceeding the maximum cost per MSY. We have

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requested the maximum cost per MSY because RP has a multi-touch supervision and professional development model. Members not only receive support from their direct supervisor around performance, but also from their AC Program Manager. They ensure members receive a meaningful service experience by providing reflection and team building opportunities focused on the AmeriCorps mission.

Organizational funding sources breakdown: 47% private foundations; 15% government (CNCS - AmeriCorps); 14% government (Social Innovation Fund - CNCS); 14% school fee-for-service; 5% corporate; 5% individuals. RP's growing operating budget is \$13,144,384 for FY13. The proposed RP DC project will cost approximately \$844,317 representing approximately 6.4% of RP's total operating budget. \$239,400 from Serve DC would represent 1.8% of the RP total operational budget.

RP receives 15% of its revenue from the CNCS and AmeriCorps; this includes our CaliforniaVolunteers, National Direct, and VISTA grants. We have a dedicated department for our relationship with AC and it is their charge to grow our collaborations with partner state commissions. RP received a \$3.5M Social Innovation Fund (SIF) investment from 2011-2014, administered by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (EMCF) for CNCS. SIF will allow RP to scale nationally more quickly than previously anticipated. The investment focuses exclusively on capacity building and infrastructure development in areas such as research and development, evaluations, policy advocacy, and accounting and fundraising.

Serve DC funding would account for 28.35% of revenue, and RP would raise the remaining \$604,917 (71.65% of total program cost) to support this project. These remaining funds will be a combination of private philanthropy (foundation support, corporate giving, and individual donations) and fee-for-service and in-kind support from our school partners. Because of our success to date and growing presence in DC, RP is confident in our current and future ability to meet our local fundraising goals. Private Foundations and Individuals: \$196,917. RP anticipates that our lead investors from FY13 will renew and/or increase their support in FY14. Our top FY13 foundation investors include: The Washington Post Charities (\$30,000), The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation (\$25,000), CityBridge Foundation (\$25,000), Freddie Mac Foundation (\$50,000) and Fordham Street Foundation (\$15,000). Thus far in FY13, our local supporters have donated over \$51,917 in cash or in-kind donations (e.g., books or office supplies), and we project that we will collect renewal funds from these sources in 2013-14. We have hired additional development staff to focus on individual giving and are innovating our annual solicitation events and strategies to more precisely target our various stakeholders with giving potential.

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To further build a network of individual contributors, the DC RED has prioritized the creation of a 10-person advisory board composed of local business, philanthropic, and civic leaders who are champions for education. In addition to helping to raise RP profile across DC, board members are donors and tutors themselves and ultimately facilitate a major gifts campaign.

School Fee for Service and In-Kind: \$408,000. To demonstrate their investment in our program, each RP school partner contributes fee-for-service, which is expected to be approximately \$240,000 (\$20,000 per school). This figure accounts for 28% of our overall Reading Partners DC budget in 2013-14. RP expects private philanthropy to be at least \$196,917, accounting for 23% of the Reading Partners DC project in 2013-14. In addition to our philanthropic and fee-for-service revenues, RP also has significant in-kind resources. To operate our program, we ask each school partner to donate classroom space that we can transform into our reading centers. With 12 schools in 2013-14, we expect the value of this donated space to be roughly \$168,000, 20% of the RP DC budget.

These conservative projected cash and in-kind donations are currently \$604,917 - far exceeding our required match goal to manage and operate the Reading Partners DC program.

Consider the total costs and benefits of the program and, to the extent possible, document the costs and benefits: A highly cost effective model for improving elementary literacy, RP's most significant cost is personnel. In 2013-14, 63% of our DC budget will go towards personnel. RP invests in personnel because our ability to help students make measurable and lasting gains in their reading achievement depends upon our tutors having the coaching, problem solving help, and instructional resources they need to be effective. Accordingly, our model requires ample staff to maintain low staff-to-member and member-to-tutor ratios and to provide an individualized level of support. Each school site has at least one dedicated full-time ACM to manage tutoring and we limit our PMs to a maximum of six schools to supervise. To attract and retain passionate and engaged staff, RP intentionally offers ACMs more than the minimum living allowance required by CNCS and invests heavily in coaching. While personnel may be our largest cost, the present and future benefit that we accord to minority and/or children from low-income communities merits the expense. According to RP data, 89% of students who participated in RP in 2011-12 accelerated their rate of learning. By gaining an average of 1.6 months of skills for every one month of tutoring (compared to only gaining .6 skill-months for every month spent in school prior to enrollment in RP). For DC schools specifically, this statistic is even higher. 94% of DC students who participated in RP in 2011-12 accelerated their rate of learning. DC students gained an average of 1.9 months for every one month of RP tutoring.

Compare the cost effectiveness of the program with the costs and benefits of alternative models or

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approaches (if available), and demonstrate how your program model is most cost effective: A growing number of nonprofit organizations are committed to improving youth literacy rates. Jumpstart for Young Children, Everybody Wins!, and Experience Corps are examples of organizations committed to improving youth literacy rates that deploy volunteers to help emerging readers solidify their skills. However, RP is the only scaled nonprofit in the US with its program model: the complete package of in-school, one-on-one literacy instruction by volunteers who are trained and supported by staff and ACMs, while working in close partnership with school staff and teachers. RP is unique compared to other literacy nonprofits because our program offers full-time integration into each school's space, schedule, and culture rather than being an after-school or part-time only support. Because we offer eight to nine hours of on-site programming Monday through Thursday, RP is able to serve 45-65 students per school with reliable, yearlong instruction. Moreover, RP directly increases the quantity of literacy resources in our partner schools, as well as the personnel required to guide students through those resources. We equip our school partners with a dedicated full-time member, a multi-leveled and research-based curriculum, a reading center with a library, and a data collection cycle that augments teachers' knowledge of their students' strengths and needs. Compared to other organizations working in this field, RP is the only one that offers such a comprehensive package of resources and support. Finally, because our one-on-one program model is more intensive than other organizations, our outcomes are stronger. No other program is delivering evidence-based results at such a low cost, while efficiently utilizing a low number of ACMs leveraged by as many volunteer hours. Our performance measure model makes it clear and simple to report our outcomes to our state commissions and CNCS. RP was invited by CNCS in December 2012 to present at the national conference in 2013. RP has been identified as a strong program model for reporting outcomes and we plan to share our process in creating strong performance measures and the tools we use to determine accurate results.

To execute our program, we rely on a budget model that maximizes the cost benefit to our school partners. By leveraging private philanthropy and AC dollars, RP will match the Serve DC grant at 71.65%. We ask our school partners to demonstrate their investment in our program by contributing fee-for-service, the average contribution being \$20,000. With this cost model, schools receive literacy intervention services for 45-65 students without having to overextend their already tight budgets. Schools are jumping at this opportunity, with a waitlist of over 15 schools in DC that have requested a RP program. Moreover, RP is free to students and constitutes no additional costs to families.

2. BUDGET ADEQUACY

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RP utilized Serve DC's Sample AC program budget template, as that mirrors our program operating costs to provide clear planning for all Reading Partners DC program expenses. The budget takes all AC and Serve DC requirements into account, while building in the programmatic needs of RP. To align with the narrative, we invested 63% of our DC budget into our personnel including staff and ACMs, allowing RP to be fully staffed and provide a high level of program oversight at each placement site. We offer our DC ACMs more than the minimum living allowance required by CNCS, as well as go beyond the minimum health benefit requirements to invest in the members to ensure that they are appreciated and valued. RP has created project budgets for new AC regions for three years, so we are familiar with requirements and true costs. RP has continuously met and exceeded our contracted match requirement with our state and national AC grants, proving the adequacy of our past AC budgets. This budget template is similar in expenses and has proven to support our record of meeting all of our Performance Measures on all AC grants.

For this particular budget, RP budgeted for the following major expenses: 1: Personnel Salary and Benefits (\$169,124); 2: Staff Travel to Serve DC and CNCS events and trainings (\$220); 3: Member Travel (\$495); 4: Member Gear (\$900); 5: Supplies and equipment such as books for centers (\$1200); 6: Member Training Costs for disaster preparedness training, RP recommended CPR Certification Training, and facilitators for Cultural Awareness and Resume/Interview Skill trainings (\$1,500 ; Staff Training is an additional \$90); 6: Mandatory fingerprinting Costs for all volunteers, RP staff and members under Serve DC grant must receive required 3-part Background Check; (\$12,015); 7: Rent (\$168,000); 8: Reasonable Accommodations for Disability Inclusion (\$100) 9: Member living allowance, FICA, Worker's Compensation, and Health, Vision and Dental coverage (\$361,273); 10: Federally Approved 18.1% Indirect Cost Rate (\$129,400). These expenses total \$844,317.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

N/A

Continuation Changes

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N/A