

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Jumpstart California requests 676 AmeriCorps members (144.65 MSY) to deliver its supplemental evidence-based early education program to 2022 children, of which 1819 are high-need children. AmeriCorps members (called "Corps members") will serve preschool-aged children from low income neighborhoods helping them to become kindergarten-ready by building the emergent language and literacy, skills children need to succeed in school. Starting in September 2013, 674 Corps members will serve a minimum of 300 hours, and two members will serve 1,700 hours each as Strengthening Community Coordinators. These coordinators will leverage 1,100 additional volunteers in service projects benefiting preschool children in these same communities. At the end of the academic year, 1,617 of all Jumpstart preschool-age children will complete the Jumpstart program, including 1454 high-need children. Of these high-need children, 885 will demonstrate significant fall--to-spring gains in literacy skills important to school readiness as measured by the DRDP. The project will focus on the California Volunteers focus area of Education. The California Volunteers investment of \$1,229,840 will be matched by \$1,554,654 in private dollars from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

## Rationale and Approach

a. NEED: Jumpstart addresses the early childhood education gap, which negatively impacts the future of California's high-need young learners between the ages of three and five. A lack of resources in low-income communities served by Jumpstart means children in these neighborhoods often enter school up to 60% behind their peers from more affluent communities (Lee, V.E., & Burkham, D.T., 2010). Specifically, children from low-income neighborhoods enter kindergarten with fewer vocabulary words, are less likely to know their letters and numbers, and score below their peers from higher-income neighborhoods in early learning and math (Heckman, 2008). These same young children continue to experience negative outcomes once they enter school; they are less likely to read on grade level by third grade, are more likely to drop out of high school, and experience significantly lower earning potential once they enter the workforce (Education Commission of the States, 2009; McKinsey & Company, 2009).

Jumpstart focuses on early learners because children who start school behind often remain behind, requiring more expensive and less effective remediation in later grades. On average, children from low-income communities engage in far fewer literacy experiences at home and are less likely to master emergent literacy skills (National Education Center Studies, 2000). Longitudinal studies indicate that investments in quality preschool programs can generate long-term positive effects in

## Narratives

education, economic performance, and crime prevention (Karoly, Kilburn & Cannon, 2005; Belfield, Nores, Barnett & Schweinhart, 2006). By bringing together colleges, universities, preschools, families and community members, and by providing meaningful adult-child relationships, Jumpstart helps young children overcome these disparities.

In California, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) for the 2012 school year demonstrates the sustained negative impact that low socio-economic status has on reading performance. Over 29% of economically-disadvantaged children in the eight counties in California where Jumpstart concentrates its program failed to meet 3rd grade reading proficiency standards. STAR data reveal that the percentage of underachievement in low-income students increases to 38% by the 11th grade. Jumpstart selects and works with sites that have requested the Jumpstart program and are geographically accessible to Jumpstart's members. These sites must enroll at least 70% low income children. Control groups in these same communities made school readiness improvements of less than one developmental level over the course of the year versus Jumpstart children who averaged gains of greater than one developmental level.

**b. AMERICORPS MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS:** Recruiting Corps members to solve the early education crisis gives Jumpstart access to a motivated and diverse group of individuals who champion the ideals of civic and personal responsibility. Corps members receive extensive training to serve young children and deliver Jumpstart's curriculum, understand the importance of the adult-child connection, and are willing to perform at the highest level to foster this critical relationship.

Jumpstart partners with AmeriCorps because it seeks to engage individuals who value the depth and commitment of national service. A year of AmeriCorps service presents a longer and more tangible responsibility than many college extracurricular or volunteer opportunities. Just as Jumpstart's curriculum provides a complete, sequential learning experience for young children, the structure of AmeriCorps allows Corps members to build upon their own experience over the course of their AmeriCorps year; members complete their term of service more civically engaged and with increased knowledge of early childhood best practices. In California, 93% of Corps members report satisfaction with Jumpstart's program, 86% said that Jumpstart helped them feel more connected to their college/university; and 96% felt it helped them develop leadership skills.

Jumpstart's partnership with AmeriCorps links it to a network of national service organizations, providing opportunities for Jumpstart and other organizations like City Year and Justice Corps to share knowledge and increase one another's capacity. Leveraging Corps members allows Jumpstart to

## Narratives

be part of a larger community addressing the needs of young children, teens, and young adults- a network serving the "whole child" from birth to adulthood.

During the academic year, Jumpstart Corps members are organized into teams of 5-6 members, assigned to a community-based preschool partner, matched with a classroom and each partnered with one to three children. Together, an entire team serves all of the children in the classroom. Corps members serve in preschools for approximately 10 hours/week and serve the same 3-4 children throughout the school year. This includes two, two-hour Jumpstart sessions, which occur over 20 weeks and are lead by the Corps members; three hours of additional child-centered service directly related to the week's activities and themes; and two to four hours of planning and preparation. Members also strengthen the community through organized service projects and ongoing family engagement.

Corps members provide the greatest impact to young children during each two-hour Jumpstart session; all planning and activities revolve around more effectively increasing children's language and literacy skills during that time. Corps members use research-based techniques to implement Jumpstart's unique program that achieves gains in children's language and literacy skills. Jumpstart's sequential, intentional curriculum helps children develop six core skills to better prepare them for school: (1) Alphabet Knowledge, (2) Meaning and Use of Print, (3) Phonemic Awareness, (4) Rhyme Awareness, (5) Vocabulary, and (6) Comprehension.

Each Jumpstart session includes the following six sequential elements:

**WELCOME:** Corps members welcome children to the Jumpstart session from their previous activity. Children build alphabet knowledge through exploration of name cards with other children and Corps members. Over time, children develop an understanding of meaning and use of print. Corps members review the elements of the Jumpstart session and what comes next. **READING:** Each week, the Jumpstart classroom breaks into groups so that members can read a pre-selected developmentally-appropriate "core storybook" to a small group of children. The content of each week's core storybook corresponds with themes presented throughout the year, ensuring continuity of curriculum. During the first session of the week, Corps members read to children and engage them in the story narrative, teach new vocabulary words, and provide an enjoyable book reading experience. In the second session of the week, they use strategies that allow the child to help reconstruct the story, build comprehension, develop oral language skills and strengthen selected vocabulary. **CIRCLE TIME:** The Team Leader engages the whole group in four activities that include songs, poems, and word play, with themes or vocabulary related to the week's core storybook. Corps members support the Team Leader by

## Narratives

encouraging children to participate and take turns. This large group learning time offers children a chance to learn in a social context. CENTER TIME: During this time, Corps members observe and join children at one of five activities that correspond to the week's core storybook, and engage children in language-rich conversations about their choices and ideas. Children choose from activities related to the book and theme; these include writing, books, puzzles and tangible learning objects, dramatic play, and either art or science, and are designed to provide child-guided opportunities to reinforce their understanding of concepts and vocabulary from the current storybook. Corps members also support children as they attempt to problem solve with materials or other children. "LET'S FIND OUT ABOUT IT": This activity, led by the Team Leader, builds children's conceptual knowledge and content vocabulary through discussions and exploration about a particular theme present in the week's core storybook, such as colors, things that grow, or musical instruments. Children explore new ideas, new information, objects and their use, and how things work. All children participate in this small group activity over the course of the week. "Lets Find Out About It" allows Corps members to devote greater attention to a particular group of children in session while deepening children's language and comprehension skills. SHARING & GOODBYE: During this large group time, Corps members engage children in a dialogue about their favorite session activities by using examples of children's work and rich vocabulary to guide the conversation. Corps members also tell children what they can look forward to in the next session and conclude the session with a song.

Corps members serve individually in the classroom for an additional two to four hours per week to work directly with their partner children to reinforce the concepts and skill building established during that week's session. This assistance time allows Corps members to strengthen academic skills specific to each child while providing a lower adult-child ratio.

Many Corps members choose to serve a second or subsequent term with Jumpstart and may do so as a Team Leader, which provides the dual benefits of deepening the member's service to Jumpstart and helping develop leadership skills. Team Leaders coordinate with the classroom teacher and the other members at the preschool site. Jumpstart Site Managers directly oversee all members and assign a Team Leader to each classroom where he or she leads the Jumpstart session, coaches the team of Corps members on developmentally-appropriate practices, facilitates pre- and post-session team planning and preparation, and communicates with families. Their role is essential to a high-quality program.

Jumpstart's Strengthening Communities Coordinators are based in Jumpstart's Northern and Southern California regional offices and are responsible for engaging on-going and one-time

## Narratives

volunteers in Jumpstart's programming. The Coordinators' primary responsibility is to recruit and train volunteers to participate in activities, projects and events that benefit the same low-income communities that Jumpstart serves. These two members engage volunteers in events such as Jumpstart's Read for the Record, a national campaign to break the world record for reading the same book to children on the same day in California and across the globe, and targeted local service projects. The Coordinators will recruit volunteers to meet local needs through participation in preschool enhancement projects, "material creation" service days, targeted learning activities at community events and national days of service.

Jumpstart California requests 674 minimum-time AmeriCorps members to deliver its evidence-based program to 2,022 children in California, of which 1819 are high-need. Members will serve a minimum of 172,113 service hours in the counties of Alameda, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Fresno, Orange, San Bernardino, Ventura, and Los Angeles. Site Managers will recruit AmeriCorps members from San Francisco State University, City College of San Francisco, University of California, Berkeley, Saint Mary's College, Stanford University, California State University, Fresno, California State University, Northridge, Pepperdine University, Pitzer College, University of Southern California, California State University, Dominguez Hills, California State University, Fullerton, and University of California, Irvine. Dedicating 300 hours to Jumpstart allows college students to serve the entire academic year and have sufficient time to concentrate on their studies and excel in school. Jumpstart also requests two full time members (1,700 hours) to serve as Strengthening Communities Coordinators.

c. EVIDENCE-BASED AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT: Jumpstart's supplemental curriculum maximizes the impact Corps members have in the classroom, expanding the boundaries of what a supplemental education program can achieve for children. Led by its national program team, Jumpstart employs the most current and evidence-based early childhood practices through its curriculum.

In 2006, Jumpstart began piloting a new curriculum adapted from the Opening the World of Learning (OWL) preschool curriculum. The OWL is a comprehensive research-based preschool curriculum that recognizes the critical need to provide preschool-age children with programs that are rich with support for multiple aspects of development (Pearson Education, 2009). The OWL targets the language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and social-emotional development of young children. In a two-year study of 100 teachers and 3,000 students using the original OWL curriculum, children showed gains on nearly all language and literacy constructs annually, and those gains increased from year to year (Pearson Education, 2009). Those data are among the many evidence

## Narratives

sources that influenced Jumpstart's decision to adapt OWL as the foundation for its program and curriculum, which was adopted in California in 2009. The new model also allowed members to serve several children in a group instead of one-to-one, greatly increasing the number of children served. During the pilot phase of adopting the OWL curriculum, Jumpstart's evaluation team and independent child assessors gathered data from multiple sources, including direct child assessments and feedback from Jumpstart site staff, Team Leaders, Corps members, and early childhood center staff. The pilot results concluded that children exposed to Jumpstart's new curriculum outperformed the children who were engaged in Jumpstart's previous curriculum.

To help measure success, Jumpstart has built high-quality systems to collect, manage, analyze, and report data to staff and stakeholders. At the beginning, middle, and end of the Jumpstart program year, classroom teachers are asked to rate all participating children's language and literacy skills on a scale from 1-5 (1=lowest; 5=highest) on the Jumpstart School Success Checklist (JSSC). The JSSC is based on the High Scope Educational Research Foundation's Preschool Child Observation Record. Jumpstart focuses on 15 items directly related to our organizational goal of promoting early language and literacy skills. Teachers receive a standardized orientation and training on how to complete the checklist appropriately. After the JSSC is completed for participating children, they are returned to Jumpstart for analysis by Jumpstart's Research and Evaluation team. Their data are then used to inform ongoing local and national decision-making, including program improvement, by creating or modifying program activities, trainings, and/or curriculum. Jumpstart also tracks key Corps member and site information in its proprietary system for data collection and management.

The evidence from high-need children served by Jumpstart's curriculum shows a strong impact on increasing one developmental level on the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) (used to assess school readiness) over the course of the program year. Children who score 4-5 (Integrating) on the DRDP are considered school ready. Jumpstart defines high-need as children who begin the year at DRDP's level 1 (exploring), 2 (developing), or 3 (building). While all Jumpstart children demonstrate need, approximately 80% of Jumpstart children fall into the high-need category. For the last 10 years in which demographically-similar comparison children were included in the evaluation, Jumpstart children consistently rated as gaining statistically significantly more language and literacy skills over the course of the program than the comparison group. Corps members, on average, demonstrate a more than 10% increase in knowledge of early childhood education best practices and key concepts after participation in Jumpstart.

Jumpstart California proposes Corps members will engage 2,022 children in preschool language and

## Narratives

literacy intervention experiences with 1,617 children completing the full Jumpstart program year (receiving a minimum of 100 hours of service through Jumpstart sessions and child assistance time). Of the 1,819 high-need children who start the Jumpstart program, 1,454 will complete the program and 885 will improve by at least one developmental level in school readiness, measured by the DRDP. The National Performance Measures Jumpstart uses were created in direct connection with AmeriCorps, in order to ensure high-quality measurable. In collaboration with AmeriCorps staff, and with an understanding of evaluation of early childhood programs, Jumpstart was able to assist in crafting essential indicators that are important, relevant, and developmentally-appropriate for early childhood education based-programs around the country and including Jumpstart.

The impact of the Strengthening Communities Coordinators is also carefully measured. Over the course of their year-long service, they will engage a total of 1,000 short-term volunteers who will dedicate at least three hours of service each and 100 long-term volunteers who will each dedicate at least 10 hours. Using Jumpstart's Volunteer Tracker Tool, the Coordinators track data on the volunteers they engage, including the volunteer's satisfaction level with their experience and if they feel that they have gained knowledge.

For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only:

d. MEMBER RECRUITMENT: Jumpstart has developed a sophisticated recruitment strategy which resulted in a 101% enrollment rate with 91% retention in 2011-12. Jumpstart Site Managers collaborate with college community service centers, cultural organizations, work-study offices, student organizations, employment centers and relevant academic departments to publicize the Jumpstart program and recruit Corps members. Site Managers work with faculty and staff at each higher education partner to conduct student orientations and recruitment activities, using professionally developed materials including posters, flyers, videos, social media and web pages. Jumpstart works with each university partner to leverage resources offered such as service learning course credit, internship credit, and utilizing work study awards to provide benefits to Corps members. Benefits may vary depending on the priorities and strategies that each university partner implements for its student body. Prior to service, students are made aware of their unique options which are dependent on their university.

Jumpstart conducts a rigorous interview process for potential Corps members. Selection criteria include evidence of: (1) commitment to early childhood education and children; (2) commitment to AmeriCorps and community service; (3) strong team-building, management, and communication skills; (4) maturity and good judgment in relating to peers, children, staff, and families; and (5) ability

## Narratives

to represent Jumpstart and AmeriCorps to diverse audiences.

Jumpstart values diversity and recruits Corps members that represent diverse racial and economic backgrounds and speak a variety of languages. Last year, 75% of Jumpstart California Corps members were persons of color, and 40% were bilingual. Jumpstart also increases gender diversity in early education with 15% male participation, compared to only a 2.3% average in the early childhood education field. (U.S. Bureau of Census Labor Statistics 2011)

e. MEMBER TRAINING: Jumpstart provides initial and ongoing training to orient Corps members to the community in which they serve, their preschool site, and to the service they will perform. Site Managers also provide support and supervision throughout the year through in-service trainings and regular visits to preschools.

Each year, Jumpstart California begins with a comprehensive training and orientation program for incoming Corps members. During their first interview, Corps members learn about AmeriCorps regulations and responsibilities which are later reiterated during pre-service and in-service trainings. Accepted Corps members attend the Introduction to AmeriCorps session to learn about the structure of AmeriCorps, Jumpstart's partnership with AmeriCorps, what it means to be a national service member and training on prohibited activities and unawarded activities. Members also take the AmeriCorps pledge.

Pre-service orientation instructs Corps members on the skills needed to serve in a preschool classroom. Prior to classroom service, Corps members complete up to 30 hours of pre-service training on a wide array of early childhood development concepts, family engagement best practices, and other specific techniques related to working with young children such as classroom management and dual language learners. Trainings are designed by the national Jumpstart program team and adapted by Site Managers based on Corps member needs.

Once they begin service, Corps members participate in ongoing trainings and team planning meetings, which focus on two key components: (1) delivering early childhood content; (2) and ensuring Corps members have the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the connections between what they are learning and their hands-on experiences in the classroom.

Each Strengthening Communities Coordinator is supervised by the local Regional Program Director. Their orientation and training is facilitated by the Regional Program Directors and consists of twelve trainings related to volunteer engagement best practices. Topics include volunteer recruitment, event planning, volunteer orientation, volunteer management, and public speaking. Program Directors provide ongoing training customized to the member's responsibilities and needs, as well.

## Narratives

f. **MEMBER SUPERVISION:** Jumpstart implements a sequential observation and feedback continuum for focused Jumpstart session visits. Each site visit for members concentrates on a set of quality standards and checklist items with an emphasis on quality session implementation. Site Managers observe a Jumpstart member session and afterward provide teams with feedback to acknowledge progress, highlight areas for growth, and provide a plan for improvement, if necessary. Observation and feedback occurs at least once a month in the preschool classroom and can be followed up by a coaching visit where the Site Manager provides Corps members with real-time feedback and modeling. Jumpstart's weekly team planning meetings are opportunities for individual teams to plan, train, and reflect in small groups, as well as a way for Corps members to integrate their hands-on experiences with future service plans. Meetings involve debriefing after a Jumpstart session and preparing for the next session. They provide Corps members with opportunities to raise concerns and collaborate in problem solving when needed. Additionally, Site Managers meet weekly with Team Leaders, providing coaching on how the Team Leader can improve session quality as necessary. These one-on-one reviews also contribute to the Team Leader's professional development.

In the first month of the Coordinators' term, the Regional Program Directors monitor training and orientation plans on a weekly basis and provide close guidance on all assigned projects. Following the completion of the member's first month, the Regional Program Directors schedule weekly check-ins to monitor progress on all projects and deliverables, problem solve challenges as needed and celebrate member achievement. Additionally, the Coordinators are part of the larger regional team and participate in weekly staff meetings in their respective offices.

g. **MEMBER EXPERIENCE:** Jumpstart leverages its partnership with AmeriCorps to provide Corps members with a tangible, impactful experience that can foster a lifetime of civic engagement. By partnering with colleges and universities, Jumpstart engages Corps members during a pivotal point in their lives. These emerging adults complete their term of service with advanced knowledge in early childhood best practices and the challenges surrounding education and resources in low-income neighborhoods. Jumpstart seeks to equip Corps members with the tools they need to continue serving as ambassadors to these communities long after they complete their AmeriCorps term.

Jumpstart California is committed to promoting a lifelong service ethic in its Corps members through structured opportunities to reflect on themes such as the meaning of AmeriCorps service, social justice, and civic engagement. Corps members wear Jumpstart t-shirts with the AmeriCorps logo to designate themselves as AmeriCorps members at their preschool site, within their universities, and in the community. The meaning of AmeriCorps service is communicated to Corps members beginning

## Narratives

with recruitment and reiterated throughout the year. Jumpstart offers five citizenship trainings that Site Managers can choose to present to Corps members based on the demographics of their community and the interest from Corps members. Workshops include: (1) "The Working Poor," (2) "Defining your AmeriCorps Service," (3) "Rights and Civic Education," (4) "Leadership and Civic Education," and (5) "Jumpstart as a Social Change Agent." Site Managers may also create their own trainings with help from additional resources provided by Jumpstart's National Program Team. Corps members reflect on their service through structured activities such as team planning meetings; these activities offer members the opportunity to consider the impact of their service, improve their efforts, and increase their sense of civic responsibility. Beyond training, Corps members build interpersonal skills through their day-to-day involvement with children, families, and community members from diverse backgrounds. Members also facilitate and participate in a variety of events supported by other AmeriCorps programs, universities, community-based organizations, as well as national service days. Events such as the Native American Story Telling program, the LA Times Festival of Books and evening and weekend family workshops are among a few examples of activities that members were involved with in 2012 to expand their reach, visibility and service to the community.

During the course of his/her term of service, the Strengthening Communities Coordinators develops an intimate connection with the low-income neighborhoods that Jumpstart serves. Charged with the task of organizing community events that raise early literacy awareness and model Jumpstart strategies, he/she directly engages preschoolers and their families. Over time, the member has the opportunity to start new and continue existing partnerships with city agencies, community based organizations, and impassioned citizens. He/she will develop public speaking and networking skills, as they represent Jumpstart in numerous venues to diverse volunteers, from college students to corporate employees. The Strengthening Communities position provides each member a supportive environment to build professionalism and an understanding of the non-profit field. The Coordinators will conclude their Jumpstart experience with a comprehensive understanding of volunteer management and recognition, service learning and leadership.

Corps members are recognized and celebrated at key times throughout the year by Site Managers. Beginning with the AmeriCorps pledge celebration at the beginning of the year and culminating with end of the year graduation events, Corps members are encouraged, supported, and acknowledged for their many contributions and successes.

h. VOLUNTEER GENERATION: Jumpstart engages community members as volunteers who

## Narratives

contribute their time and talents to deepen Jumpstart's impact. Volunteers engage in service activities that include participating in literacy fairs with children and families, classroom material creation and participating in special events such as Jumpstart's Read for the Record. During orientations volunteers are trained on prohibited and unawarded activities. Engaging volunteers also allows Jumpstart to develop better relationships within the communities it serves, and more effectively message the importance of early childhood education.

Jumpstart's two full-time Strengthening Communities Coordinators will oversee Jumpstart's volunteer engagement. For the past two years, the Strengthening Communities member in the Northern California regional office has proved to be so effective that Jumpstart plans to duplicate this position in its Los Angeles office. Jumpstart acknowledges the challenges inherent in single member placements, but it has built a robust support structure. The members will be oriented and trained as a team and will work collaboratively with each other throughout the year on various service projects and interact with part-time Corps members when planning volunteer events.

i. **ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION:** Jumpstart is a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network and is committed to increasing public awareness of AmeriCorps. All Corps members are given comprehensive trainings on AmeriCorps so that they become ambassadors and advocates both within their university and in the larger community. Jumpstart's goal is to ensure that AmeriCorps members understand the vastness of the network, the opportunities available to them through AmeriCorps, and the tremendous, multifaceted impact AmeriCorps has in communities across the state and country. The AmeriCorps logo is featured on all collateral, Corps member t-shirts, prominently displayed throughout Jumpstart's offices and on the website. Jumpstart also communicates to community partners, preschool teachers, and parents the importance of our AmeriCorps partnership.

### **Organizational Capability**

a. **ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING:** Jumpstart began in 1993 when 15 Yale University students recognized a need in their community for caring adults to devote extra attention to preschool children from low-income neighborhoods. These students began working with 15 young children at a New Haven, Connecticut Head Start center with the aim of bolstering the skills needed for success once children entered kindergarten.

Since its founding, the organization has recruited more than 25,000 Corps members and engaged more than 50,000 young children across the country. Jumpstart began its service in California in 1999 and has grown to reach high-need children in eight counties throughout California thanks in

## Narratives

part to the support of CaliforniaVolunteers over the past ten years. In 2011-12, Jumpstart California served 2,130 children and recruited 582 AmeriCorps members. Jumpstart was awarded additional slots during the 2012-13 program year, and it plans to engage 675 members. Jumpstart California has consistently reached its recruitment and retention goals and continually achieves high program quality.

Jumpstart California's programmatic growth is supported by a solid fundraising strategy. It has received funding from CaliforniaVolunteers and successfully managed its AmeriCorps program for the past ten years. Fiscal support from AmeriCorps is matched with a diverse financial portfolio of both cash and in-kind donations, including grants from government contracts, private foundations, corporations, and individuals. At a national level, Jumpstart's current AmeriCorps funding represents approximately 35% (\$6.1 million) of total funding.

Jumpstart's staff structure integrates and supports AmeriCorps compliance at the national, regional, and local level. In California, two Executive Directors manage staff members who oversee the state's AmeriCorps program. Site Managers (1-4 employees at a college/ university partner), oversee training, compliance, and program implementation by supervising Corps members during the year. Site Managers report to Regional Program Directors who also work closely with Regional Coordinators to ensure AmeriCorps compliance. Jumpstart has established an effective organizational structure demonstrated by its record of satisfactory performance, compliance and responsiveness. Jumpstart California is led by an experienced leadership team. Executive Director Gary Jimenez has two decades of experience working in the Los Angeles non-profit community and has overseen Jumpstart's rapid local growth since 2009. He works closely with the program team including Senior Program Director and Interim Northern California Executive Director Jennifer Curran, Senior Program Director Atalaya Sergi, Program Director Truyen Tran, and Associate Program Directors Amanda Coy and Deborah Lieberman. They oversee Operations Manager David Manspeaker, Regional Coordinator Nicole Rouse, and 18 Site Managers based at Jumpstart's university partners. Jennifer Curran, Amanda Coy, Nicole Rouse and multiple Site Managers all joined Jumpstart as Corps members lead with firsthand knowledge of the AmeriCorps experience.

Providing a robust support system for Corps members is essential to creating a quality experience for both Corps members and preschool children. Site Managers directly oversee recruitment, retention, training, and program implementation. They manage program compliance and relationships with preschool teachers and directors. Program Directors oversee the constancy and quality of programming across the region and act as a liaison between the national office and Site Managers. To

## Narratives

ensure consistency throughout the region, Program Directors have weekly calls with each Site Manager, conduct file checks and site monitoring visits at a minimum of one time per semester, and facilitate monthly Site Manager team calls and quarterly trainings to ensure adequate support is provided and best practices shared.

Chief Executive Officer Naila Bolus joined Jumpstart in October 2011, bringing with her exceptional experience in growing organizations and building relationships with diverse donors and constituents and works closely with the California Executive Directors. Gary Jimenez is the primary contact for this grant application and Atalaya Sergi is the secondary contact.

FOR CURRENT GRANTEES ONLY:

b. **SUSTAINABILITY:** Jumpstart's forward-thinking growth plan ensures program sustainability by targeting neighborhoods where Jumpstart can leverage university and community relationships to make the greatest impact possible. Jumpstart targets markets based on the following key criteria: (1) a large population of preschool-aged children living in poverty; (2) limited access to high-quality early education programs; (3) presence of local champions and private funders; (4) presence of supportive early learning school districts, nonprofit organizations, and community groups; (5) and existence of public funding and support for early childhood education.

Jumpstart California is committed to sustainability by forming strong community partnerships and diverse fiscal support. Jumpstart university partners provide access to a renewable and talented Corps member recruitment pool, provisions for a campus-based office, recruitment support, access to Federal Work Study Funds which students can leverage to gain work training through Jumpstart, and the option of earning course credit for member training. Site Managers and Program Directors have forged strong relationships with preschool agencies and Head Start, ensuring that Jumpstart has access as many classrooms as the program can support. Jumpstart also benefits from advisory boards in Southern and Northern California, which provide access to local networks, share knowledge and expertise, and support fundraising. Because of our diverse funding streams and multiple partners, our model has proven effective and sustainable and the Stanford Innovation Review has recognized Jumpstart as a non-profit organization that succeeded in lowering costs while experiencing rapid growth.

c. **COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY:** Jumpstart supports and monitors its sites in California through an infrastructure of university partners, regional, and national staff dedicated to ensuring program quality, compliance regarding prohibited activities and unawarded activities and fiscal compliance. All staff involved are trained on prohibited and unawarded activities. Jumpstart's

## Narratives

National Service Programs Department specifically focuses on AmeriCorps compliance and administering both the state and federal background check process. In each region, there is a direct line of supervision from the Executive Director to the Program Director, who supervises Site Managers overseeing the Corps members at each Jumpstart site. The Northern and Southern California regional offices ensure that sites maintain Jumpstart's overall mission and AmeriCorps standards of compliance. Executive Directors oversee fiscal management, including budgeting and contracting with university partners, while Program Directors monitor and support the program continually, culminating annually with a year-end review. At each of our university partners, a faculty or staff person serves as a campus champion and represents and advocates for Jumpstart in the university community.

Jumpstart selects placement sites in a strategic manner to ensure AmeriCorps compliance and maximize program effectiveness. Site Managers first meet with the preschool director to evaluate the programmatic capacity of the site. If the site is deemed capable of fulfilling all AmeriCorps and Jumpstart responsibilities, the Site Manager arranges an orientation with the classroom teachers where they discuss program expectations and the Jumpstart School Success Checklist. Site Managers meet formally with teachers for mid-year and end-of-year check-ins, where feedback and strategies for improvement are shared. Jumpstart sites are never for-profit organizations and sites do not contribute financially to the Jumpstart program.

Jumpstart continually improves systems ensuring compliance with AmeriCorps provisions. In cases of noncompliance, Jumpstart maintains a detailed corrective action plan under which all cases of noncompliance are addressed within 30 days of the occurrence.

### CURRENT GRANTEES AND FORMER GRANTEES ONLY

**DEMONSTRATED COMPLIANCE:** Jumpstart California demonstrates compliance best by consistently meeting or exceeding our primary performance measure: school success. In 2011-2012, Jumpstart set a national performance measure that 65% of high-need children who received 100 hours of service will achieve gains of one developmental level or more at the end of the program year. In California, 92% of Jumpstart children improved by one or more developmental levels. This percentage can be attributed to Corps member's effective implementation of the program, guided by Jumpstart's local, regional, and national Jumpstart staff. Jumpstart also consistently meets its Strengthening Communities performance measure. In 2011-12, Jumpstart exceeded its goal of volunteers recruited and hours served. Jumpstart's organizational structure ensures compliance through a multi-tiered review process in which Site Managers, who supervise Corps member

## Narratives

activities, report to regional Program Directors. Program Directors work with national program staff to review and improve compliance policies.

**ENROLLMENT:** Jumpstart achieved over 100% enrollment of allotted Corps member slots in 2011-2012 through the recruitment efforts of Site Managers and with the support of Program Directors. Site Managers recruit Corps members early in the academic year, with some conducting spring recruitment for the following school year when possible. Site Managers maintain waitlists to refill Corps member slots quickly in the event a member exits service before serving 30% of his or her term. Program Directors focus their support at the beginning of the school year on helping Site Managers reach recruitment goals. This accomplishment demonstrates that Jumpstart has become a visible presence on the campuses of its university partners, and the demand for Jumpstart continues to grow.

**RETENTION:** Jumpstart California had a retention rate of 91% during the 2011-12 program year. Jumpstart's program and implementation strategies contribute to high retention because: (1) the intentionality of the curriculum allows members to see their impact grow over the course of the year; (2) strong mentoring relationships with Site Managers ensures a support structure and professional development for members; (3) the collaborative session structure encourages accountability and teamwork; and (4) strong relationships with teachers provide meaningful classroom support.

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

**FOR COST-REIMBURSEMENT GRANTS:**

a. **COST EFFECTIVENESS:** Jumpstart California is a cost-effective program. The proposed cost per member service year is \$8,500, which is well below the AmeriCorps maximum. Jumpstart California will see a cost increase of \$193 per MSY due to an additional full-time AmeriCorps member at a cost of \$27,897. Additionally, three Site Managers were moved onto the direct portion of the grant. For 20 years, Jumpstart has worked to minimize costs and ensure that the vast majority of discretionary expenses are used in direct service to children from low-income neighborhoods.

Jumpstart obtains diverse resources for program implementation and sustainability from non-government sources: foundations, corporations, and individuals. Jumpstart will match CaliforniaVolunteers funds at a rate of 56%. Jumpstart California has cash commitments from 33 corporations, foundations in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and individual donors whose annual support is committed for the long-term. Jumpstart's university partners all contribute in-kind support in the form of staff time, office space, and office supplies. In all, \$1,564,138 in committed support will be matched against its request from the CNCS of \$1,229,840.

## Narratives

Jumpstart California has had great historical success in securing match funds (FY10 Budgeted Match: 44 %/Actual Match: 46%; FY11 Budgeted Match: 45%/Actual Match: 54%; FY12 Budgeted Match 55%/Actual Match: 60%) Other strategies that Jumpstart is pursuing include (1) the continued focus on sustainability by Northern and Southern California advisory boards, specifically on fundraising and recruitment of additional board members; (2) creating and sustaining meaningful links between Jumpstart's national, regional and local fundraising efforts in order to grow private giving; (3) and continued fiscal growth as a result of Jumpstart's Read for the Record. By implementing these strategies, Jumpstart will increase gifts and raise awareness of the Jumpstart program and the importance of high-quality early education.

Jumpstart receives substantial in-kind support from its national corporate sponsors, including: Pearson, Tommy Hilfiger, and Franklin Templeton, among others, which provide in-kind donations of office space and support, Corps member apparel, recruitment collateral, toolkits, and training guides. In 2011-2012, this in-kind support totaled more than \$1.3 million, in addition to the grant support received from corporate sponsors. Corporate funding equals approximately 26% of Jumpstart's revenue. Notable regional sponsors include Wells-Fargo, Bright Horizons, Starbucks, and Staples. Pearson, which has supported Jumpstart for the last decade, agreed this fall to a renewed commitment of \$750,000 in cash and in-kind services.

Jumpstart's plan to increase its share of costs and diversify its non-federal revenue sources has been successful. In the past, total government support equaled as much as 45% of its revenue. These funds proved highly effective in bringing Jumpstart to more children, creating a diversified funding base will create a more sustainable program. In 2012-2013, Jumpstart projects federal funds will comprise of 39% of its total revenue and plans to effectively grow its base of individual donors throughout the state.

Special Circumstances: NOT APPLICABLE TO JUMPSTART.

For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only:

b. BUDGET ADEQUACY: The enclosed budget provides an adequate description of the support required for Jumpstart's program. The budget includes the cost of Site Managers, who are responsible for Corps member recruitment and implementation of the program. In order to increase retention and ensure program continuity, Jumpstart's Site Managers are full-time employees who are eligible for benefits. The budget also includes the cost to train all Corps members, including trainings provided at institutes held throughout the program year, and costs for assessment and evaluation activities related to performance measure outcomes.

## Narratives

Jumpstart has successfully managed CaliforniaVolunteers funding for the past ten years. Currently, Jumpstart works with seven state commissions and also manages a National Direct grant, further demonstrating its capacity to manage large grants. Jumpstart has expertise in raising matching dollars, managing local government grants (such as Community Development Block Grants), and securing large, private restricted gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Jumpstart's National Finance Department supports and monitors AmeriCorps and fiscal compliance for all sites. Members of the finance team conduct regular trainings for regional and university staff and support compliance reviews. Fiscal staff at Jumpstart's university partners receive an orientation from a member of Jumpstart's finance department, a packet containing Jumpstart and AmeriCorps fiscal policies and best practices, and ongoing support from both the finance team and the local Regional Coordinator. Additionally, to ensure that each university has the financial controls in place to manage an AmeriCorps grant, Jumpstart requires university partners to submit their most recent A-133 audit to Jumpstart's finance department for thorough review. Each university provides the finance team with monthly documentation of all Jumpstart related expenses as part of Jumpstart's online periodic expense report. Jumpstart's finance department conducts an extensive review of this documentation, and if necessary, designs and implements a corrective action plan.

For EAPs and other Fixed Amount grants Only: NOT APPLICABLE TO JUMPSTART.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

1. Jumpstart has consistently demonstrated commitment to evidence-based decision-making as part of high-quality program evaluation and continuous program improvement. In addition to annual evaluation of child and Corps member impacts, At least once every three years, Jumpstart also engages independent consultants to design an external program evaluation, conduct data analysis, and produce the formal evaluation report for AmeriCorps. These results are used to enhance the curriculum and improve trainings for maximum impact on children and Corps members alike.
2. Jumpstart's evaluation of impact on the children it serves asks two primary questions: (1) What progress in key school readiness skills (fall-to-spring gains in language and literacy) do participating Jumpstart children achieve? (2) Do participating Jumpstart children show greater gains on measures of school readiness than demographically similar comparison children over the program year ?
3. The annual evaluation of children's language and literacy gains includes quantitative statistical analysis of pre- and post-program contrasts for participant children using a standardized teacher observational tool called the Jumpstart School Success Checklist (JSSC). The JSSC is derived from the High Scope Educational Research Foundation's Preschool Child Observation Record, an assessment

## Narratives

from a leading educational institution. External studies of the JSSC have established strong internal and external validity.

For the external evaluation, Jumpstart will work with its consultants to ensure a quasi-experimental or experimental design will be used to create a control group against which the gains of Jumpstart participants will be compared. The goal is to ensure that the evaluation findings can attribute year-end impacts to the Jumpstart program and not to other differences between the groups. Following the spring data collection, evaluation consultants will include all children that have been enrolled in the program for at least four months (long enough to have benefited) and those with pre- and post- data. In addition to measuring child outcomes, Jumpstart annually measures Jumpstart Corps member development through a pre-service, mid-year, and year-end survey regarding their beliefs about early childhood, civic engagement, leadership development, and career interests.

4. Year 1: Awarded AmeriCorps Program start date--September 2013

\* Fall 2013: the Fall Corps member survey will be completed prior to pre-service training; JSSC will be completed during the two weeks prior to session implementation.

\* Winter of 2014: the Mid-year Corps member survey will be completed after in-service training; JSSC will be completed again mid-program during February of 2014.

\* Spring of 2014: the End-of-Year Corps member surveys will be completed within 2 weeks of last Jumpstart session; the JSSC will be completed within 2 weeks of program completion.

\* Summer of 2014: data analysis and reporting of Corps member and child results by Jumpstart's Research and Evaluation team.

Year 2: September 2014- August 2015

\* Fall 2013: the Fall Corps member survey will be completed prior to pre-service training; JSSC will be completed during the two weeks prior to session implementation.

\* Winter of 2014: the Mid-year Corps member survey will be completed after in-service training; JSSC will be completed again mid-program during February of 2014.

\* Spring of 2014: the End-of-Year Corps member surveys will be completed within 2 weeks of last Jumpstart session; the JSSC will be completed within 2 weeks of program completion.

\* Summer of 2014: data analysis and reporting of Corps member and child results by Jumpstart's Research and Evaluation team; independent data analysis and report completion by external consultants.

Year 3: Final Evaluation Report due October, with the AmeriCorps recompetete application.

\* Fall 2013: the Fall Corps member survey will be completed prior to pre-service training; JSSC will

## Narratives

be completed during the two weeks prior to session implementation; external evaluation report results disseminated and submitted to AmeriCorps.

\* Winter of 2014: the Mid-year Corps member survey will be completed after in-service training; JSSC will be completed again mid-program during February of 2014.

\* Spring of 2014: the End-of-Year Corps member surveys will be completed within 2 weeks of last Jumpstart session; the JSSC will be completed within 2 weeks of program completion.

\* Summer of 2014: data analysis and reporting of Corps member and child results by Jumpstart's Research and Evaluation team.

5. Jumpstart has worked with Shelby Miller, independent consultant, and Peter Abrams Research Services & Consulting since 2002 to design and implement Jumpstart's program evaluations. Both individuals are based in New York City. Miller has been a consultant and researcher/evaluator in preschool and early education for more than the past decade with city and state governments, nonprofit organizations, and government entities. Miller developed the evaluation methodology for Jumpstart to measure the effect of the program's impact on participating children. Abrams's firm analyzed the data in consultation with Miller. Throughout the process of data collection, analysis and reporting, the evaluators have proven themselves to be completely objective and routinely provided unbiased, high-quality analyses and reports on the effect of the Jumpstart program.

6. In addition to funds provided by California Volunteers, Jumpstart's national and regional offices raise funds from foundations, corporations, and individuals for research and program evaluation.

### Amendment Justification

N/A

### Clarification Summary

N/A

### Continuation Changes

N/A