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Executive Summary

Sixty-five AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 16,000 volunteers to improve the impact, effectiveness, and sustainability of Rebuilding Together programs so they may rebuild additional homes for low-income homeowners in need. Rebuilding Together CapacityCorps members build capacity by recruiting and managing volunteers, performing direct home repairs, conducting client outreach, building community partnerships and creating new programs. Members serve at 39 Rebuilding Together affiliate operating sites in 20 states. At the end of the three year period, Rebuilding Together expects to see additional refinement and improvement in how CapacityCorps members are utilized with a continued trend towards helping more homeowners in need, especially in the Gulf Coast region and Sandy-affected zone. Rebuilding Together also anticipates the needs of veterans to increase with appropriate changes to programming to track that need. This project will focus on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity, Veterans, and Disaster Services. The CNCS investment of \$812,500 will be matched with \$753,750.

Rationale and Approach

Need

Rebuilding Together (RT for the remainder of this application) believes that everyone deserves to live in a safe and healthy home. RT provides critical repairs, accessibility modifications, and energy efficient upgrades to low-income homes and community centers at no cost to service recipients. RT's work mitigates critical risks for elderly, veteran and disabled homeowners and serves those with the fewest resources and least capacity for self-help. Although RT completes an average of 10,000 projects each year, 6,000 homeowners in-need are currently on the RT service waiting lists.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) found that "worst case housing needs" grew by nearly 1.2 million households, or more than 20 percent, from 2007 to 2009 and by 42 percent since 2001. "Worst case housing needs" are defined as low-income households who paid more than half their monthly income for rent, lived in severely substandard housing, or both. Inaccessible entrances, unsafe bathrooms, leaky pipes and roofs, and uneven floors create critical safety hazards. Over 2.6 million low-income homeowners live in homes deemed physically inadequate, characterized by missing siding, broken windows, holes in the foundation, a sagging roof, or holes in the floor.

Community Problem: Unsafe housing for the elderly and disabled

Unsafe conditions dramatically increase the likelihood of suffering an injury at home while performing the basic activities of daily living, and conditions such as lack of hot water or lack of

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heating exacerbate health problems. According to the CDC, "among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and are also the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma." In 2010, 2.3 million seniors sustained injuries from nonfatal senior falls, costing the U.S. \$30 billion, a number that will rise as the baby boomer population ages over the coming decades.

Currently, Americans spend over \$160 billion each year on home energy bills, about 5% of the median household's budget. Low-income households spend more than triple the average energy budget (16%), some as much as 35%. Older Americans are disproportionately affected by higher energy costs due to their fixed incomes. Since 2006, unprecedented jumps in the cost of heating oil, propane, natural gas, and electricity have created an energy-cost crisis in our nation's low-income households. The current economic crisis has exacerbated an already critical situation, as fixed incomes are stretched to meet rising costs for energy, healthcare, food and transportation.

Homeownership preservation through aging-in-place, energy efficiency and home modification services is an often under-utilized strategy of affordable housing for low-income elderly and disabled individuals. Preserving homeownership is cost effective and respects elderly homeowners' wishes to remain in their homes and communities rather than live in unaffordable and undesirable nursing home facilities.

The housing crisis numbers across the country are staggering, yet our most vulnerable citizens continue to be the most in need. By 2025, the elderly population in the United States is expected to double from 34 million to nearly 70 million. A 2005 HUD report on Elderly Housing Consumption notes that this growth in the aging population will pose significant challenges for the existing housing stock of this country and baby boomers who desire to age-in-place. The majority of seniors own their own homes (81%), and for low-income homeowners, their home is often their largest asset and protection from financial insecurity. Unfortunately, the rapidly aging US housing stock was not designed to meet the needs of the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Community Problem: Veterans in need of housing repair and modifications

Honoring our country's veterans as they return home is something all Americans can agree on. RT's Veteran Housing Program was created to meet the growing needs of those who have served. Over 50,000 wounded warriors have returned home from Iraq and Afghanistan. Of the 21 million Americans who have served, 5.6 million have disabilities and 1.5 million are at risk of homelessness.

Community Problem: Natural Disasters are exacerbating the existing housing crisis

In addition, the U.S. has seen unprecedented natural disasters over the past 10 years. RT is dedicated

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to the long term recovery of the communities devastated by Hurricane Sandy. As a member of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster response, RT's goal is to bring as many families back to safe and healthy homes as soon as possible. The low-income families RT serves are among the most vulnerable in times of disaster. In New York, over 300,000 homes were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. FEMA has approved 110,000 applications for individual assistance. In Nassau County, more than half the homes damaged don't have flood insurance. In New Jersey, a total of 350,000 homes were damaged, including 275,000 uninsured homes. FEMA has approved 57,000 individual assistance applications.

RT affiliates submitted AmeriCorps in fall 2012. The selected sites represent communities with great need but also represent great opportunities for service. For each, several themes of community need emerged: RT affiliates have long waiting lists to serve homeowners; local government agencies have requested assistance from RT affiliates to meet community needs; inner-city neighborhoods and central cities have rapidly aging populations and seriously deteriorating WWII-era or older housing stock; and are often both elderly and disabled, in need of critical energy efficiency and accessibility repairs to live safely.

According to the 2011 American Housing Survey, seven million homeowners live below the poverty line; over 1 million of them live in homes built before 1940. The number of low-income homeowners grew from 22.9 million in 2008 to 25.8 million in 2010 (2011 American Community Survey).

Individual Community Need Documented through US Census Data:

Montgomery, AL: 12% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10% live alone and 11% live in poverty. Additionally, 12.3% of population are veterans, 24.8% of families with children live in poverty, and 60% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Phoenix, AZ: 12.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8% live alone and 7.4% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.1% of population are veterans, 17% of families with children live in poverty, and 70% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Berkeley, CA: 11.7% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10.1% live alone and 9.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 4.2% of population are veterans, 10.7% of families with children live in poverty, and 73% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Oakland, CA: 11.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 9.3% live alone and 14% live in poverty. Additionally, 5.5% of population are veterans, 23.2% of families with children live in poverty, and 79% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//San Francisco, CA: 13.6% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10% live alone and 12.5% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.6% of families with children live in poverty and

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75% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Redwood City, CA: 13.4% of population are seniors over age of 65; 9% live alone and 6.5% live in poverty. Additionally, 6.3% of population are veterans, 6.8% of families with children live in poverty, and 76% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//San Jose, CA: 5.7% of population are seniors over age of 65; 6.1% live alone and 8.9% live in poverty. Additionally, 5.1% of population are veterans, 11% of families with children live in poverty, and 77% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Broward County, FL: 14.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 11.3% live alone and 12.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.3% of population are veterans, 13.7% of families with children live in poverty, and 80% of population spends more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Gainesville, FL: 5% of population are seniors over age of 65; 6.5% live alone and 10% live in poverty. Additionally, 6% of population are veterans, 23.4% of families with children live in poverty, and 68% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Miami, FL: 14.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 9% live alone and 21.5% live in poverty. Additionally, 3.3% of population are veterans, 19.8% of families with children live in poverty, and 80% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Des Moines, IA: 17.6% of population are seniors over age of 65; 13% live alone and 8.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 11.7% of population are veterans, 19% of families with children live in poverty, and 55% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Aurora, IL: 6.5% of population are seniors over age of 65; 5.5% live alone and 10.1% live in poverty. Additionally, 5.5% of population are veterans, 14.5% of families with children live in poverty, and 76% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Chicago, IL: 10.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.7% live alone and 16.6% live in poverty. Additionally, 4.8% of population are veterans, 25.9% of families with children live in poverty, and 74.6% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Lafayette, LA: 10.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 7.1% live alone and 12.8% live in poverty. Additionally, 9% of population are veterans, 17% of families with children live in poverty, and 50% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//New Orleans, LA: 11% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.4% live alone and 16% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.4% of population are veterans, 30.5% of families with children live in poverty, and 70% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Springfield, MA: 11% of population are seniors over age of 65; 11% live alone and 17.7% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.4% of population are veterans, 32.1% of families with children live in poverty, and 73.1% of population spend more than 20% of income on

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housing costs each month.//Baltimore, MD: 11.7% of population are seniors over age of 65; 11% live alone and 18.11% live in poverty. Additionally, 8% of population are veterans, 17.7% of families with children live in poverty, and 68.2% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Montgomery County, MD: 7.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.6% live alone and 6.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 7% of population are veterans, 6.5% of families with children live in poverty, and 65% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Minneapolis, MN: 8% of population are seniors over age of 65; 7.8% live alone and 15.7% live in poverty. Additionally, 6% of population are veterans, 25% of families with children live in poverty, and 69% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//St. Louis, MO: 15% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10.7% live alone and 6.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.1% of population are veterans, 12% of families with children live in poverty, and 59% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Pitt County, NC: 9.9% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.1% live alone and 13.3% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.8% of population are veterans, 23.3% of families with children live in poverty, and 60.2% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Durham, NC: 9.8% of population are seniors over age of 65; 7% live alone and 8.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.5% of population are veterans, 18.1% of families with children live in poverty, and 60.5% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Long Island, NY: 14.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 9.5% live alone and 5.3% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.3% of population are veterans, 5% of families with children live in poverty, and 78% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Bergen County, NJ: 15.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10.5% live alone and 7.2% live in poverty. Additionally, 6% of population are veterans, 6% of families with children live in poverty, and 75.3% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//New York City, NY: 12.2% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10.1% live alone and 18.4% live in poverty. Additionally, 3.5% of population are veterans, 23.4% of families with children live in poverty, and 72.1% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Columbus, OH: 9.9% of population are seniors over age of 65; 7.9% live alone and 9.4% live in poverty. Additionally, 8.2% of population are veterans, 18.1% of families with children live in poverty, and 63% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Dayton, OH: 11.8% of population are seniors over age of 65; 11.3% live alone and 15.6% live in poverty. Additionally, 9.8% of population are veterans, 41.9% of families with children live in poverty, and 65% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each

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month.//Oklahoma City, OK: 11.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.6% live alone and 7.7% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.9% of population are veterans, 21% of families with children live in poverty, and 58% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Philadelphia, PA: 12.1% of population are seniors over age of 65; 11.6% live alone and 17.8% live in poverty. Additionally, 7% of population are veterans, 30% of families with children live in poverty, and 67% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Pittsburgh, PA: 13.8% of population are seniors over age of 65; 12.6% live alone and 13.9% live in poverty. Additionally, 8.2% of population are veterans, 26.3% of families with children live in poverty, and 54.2% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Nashville, TN: 10.2% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.1% live alone and 10% live in poverty. Additionally, 8.2% of population are veterans, 23.4% of families with children live in poverty, and 66.2% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Arlington County, VA: 8.7% of population are seniors over age of 65; 6.8% live alone and 7.6% live in poverty. Additionally, 7.8% of population are veterans, 7.9% of families with children live in poverty, and 61% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Roanoke, VA: 14.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 12.7% live alone and 11.7% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.7% of population are veterans, 26.8% of families with children live in poverty, and 69% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Alexandria, VA: 5.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 7.2% live alone and 7.3% live in poverty. Additionally, 10.3% of population are veterans, 9.7% of families with children live in poverty, and 63% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Seattle, WA: 10.8% of population are seniors over age of 65; 8.7% live alone and 13.6% live in poverty. Additionally, 6.7% of population are veterans, 9.3% of families with children live in poverty, and 70.6% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.//Tacoma, WA: 11.3% of population are seniors over age of 65; 10% live alone and 10% live in poverty. Additionally, 13% of population are veterans, 19.2% of families with children live in poverty, and 76% of population spend more than 20% of income on housing costs each month.

AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems

Three areas of critical and growing need are of particular importance to engaging AmeriCorps members in preserving affordable homeownership 1) providing energy efficiency repairs/weatherization; 2) serving the elderly, disabled, and veterans; and 3) rebuilding the affected Hurricane Sandy zone, and continuing our work in the Gulf Coast.

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RT requests 65 full-time AmeriCorps members to leverage an additional 16,000 volunteers to improve the impact, effectiveness, and sustainability of Rebuilding Together programs so they may rebuild additional homes for low-income homeowners in need.

RT CapacityCorps will continue as an Individual Site/Scattered Site Program Model, in which 39 RT affiliates will serve as operating sites. The proposed program would place between one to three AmeriCorps members at each site for 11 months, with year one beginning August 2013 and concluding July 2014. The growing need for home modification services to underserved populations and disaster areas will require full-time member service positions.

Rebuilding Together is a community-based network comprised of 200 independent 501(c)(3) organizations that are focused on providing services that meet individual community need, rather than using a one-size fits all approach. CapacityCorps members will serve at select RT affiliates that have met established selection criteria, have documented need, and offer AmeriCorps positions that are value-added, sustainable and expand services to serve additional low-income homeowners in need. The smaller nature of RT affiliates favors individual to small team placements that will substantially increase RT's capacity to meet unmet community needs.

CapacityCorps members will engage mostly in duties that have never had a staff position or a volunteer in these roles in the past. More than 85% of the proposed operating sites have less than ten staff; more than 50% have less than five staff. While RT partners with over 200,000 volunteers a year, many volunteers are direct, hands-on, episodic rebuilding volunteers, rather than capacity building volunteers. RT affiliates, by focusing on owner-occupied rehab of low-income homes, do not duplicate the activities of state or local government entities. These government agencies typically do not engage in home repair or modifications in a substantial manner.

Evidence-based/Evidence informed and Measurable Community Impact

In the 2011-2012 program year, because of the interventions of 65 RT CapacityCorps members, 233 veterans in need were served in addition to 3,287 elderly and disabled individuals living in 1,810 homes. The AmeriCorps investment in CapacityCorps members also recruited and/or managed 15,497 community volunteers who contributed 110,406 volunteer hours to RT. CapacityCorps members also helped secure \$417,000 in in-kind and cash resources.

RT CapacityCorps partnered with a professional independent evaluator in the fall of 2011 to conduct a cost-effective and extensive Program Evaluation focused on the objectives listed in Regulation 2522.800-2522.810 that examined the CapacityCorps program. Some key findings of the RT external evaluation: 1) CapacityCorps members are serving a greater-than-expected number of homeowners

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with more significant repairs than in years past; 2) Bringing members together is a significant factor in a positive member experience and a unique feature to this AmeriCorps program; 3) CapacityCorps has an impact on the organization as a whole, with increased focus on measurement, energy efficiency, and the ability to enact large-impact rebuilding projects; and 4) Affiliates have a high level of satisfaction with the program.

The activities of the CapacityCorps will address three of the five strategic focus areas: Serving Veterans, Disaster Recovery, and Economic Opportunity. CapacityCorps will use the standardized national performance measures in these focus areas, and CapacityCorps has the data collection tools in place to successfully track outputs and outcomes. Members will focus on serving additional low-income homeowners that are elderly, disabled, energy efficiency upgrades, veterans, and rebuilding after the hurricanes. To track progress effectively on outputs and outcomes, members will complete monthly and quarterly reports on their activities, and will receive extensive training on data collection. Over the next three years, RT expects to see additional impact through refinement and improvement in how CapacityCorps members are utilized with a continued trend to helping more homeowners in need, especially in the Gulf Coast region and Sandy-affected zone. RT also anticipates that the needs of veterans will increase, with appropriate changes to programming to track that need. Finally, RT anticipates CapacityCorps alumni will continue to take leadership roles in the network which will help to contribute to the commitment to providing the best member experience possible. During this period, RT will develop a full evaluation plan to measure the first two years of the program with full evaluation implementation by the third year of the program.

RT believes that home repair and rehabilitation are inherently green and are a key strategy in reducing energy consumption. Through the repairs RT CapacityCorps members will make, homeowners will save money on utility bills, thrive in cleaner home environments and be better able to afford other essential needs such as food, health care, and energy costs.

Member Recruitment

Using the AmeriCorps recruitment portal as the means for receiving member applications, RT manages the messaging, materials, timelines, and distribution of candidates to the RT affiliate network. The 2011-2012 CapacityCorps program had a 7.5% increase in applications from the previous year, leading to 1,312 candidates recruited for the 65 member positions.

Increased interest in the program is due to the National Service Programs (NSP) team national recruitment strategies, including a recruitment information website on the RT main website, position description postings on national recruitment sites, and high quality materials, and videos. RT affiliate

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host sites are also encouraged to recruit locally to include as many people from the local community as possible. The NSP team provides a recruitment toolkit for best practices in recruiting locally and also holds several recruitment trainings each year to discuss best practices and make improvements to the recruitment strategy.

One of CapacityCorps strengths continues to be the diversity of underrepresented populations in its members. RT has continued to improve the recruitment process including improved and clearer position descriptions, improved online and local recruitment strategies, new outreach materials, and videos featuring the already diverse members of the programs. For the 2012-13 program year, 27% of currently serving members represent some type of diversity of underrepresented populations serving in AmeriCorps including minorities, baby boomers, persons with disabilities, and veterans. RT will continue to reach out to diverse candidates to help make service a possibility for all.

Member Training

After a careful selection process and detailed offer conversation, CapacityCorps members attend the RT AmeriCorps orientation during the first week of their service. The NSP team hosts orientations for the CapacityCorps members in Washington, D.C. Each CapacityCorps class attends a week-long intensive learning experience with other members from the class. Members are trained in all required AmeriCorps rules and policies, how to engage volunteers productively, how to assess community needs, and the history and meaning of national service. They engage in daily team building activities and also learn hands-on skills. Members meet in small groups based on their service location and position descriptions to better understand the service they will perform. Members in their second year of service assist the NSP team in facilitating the conversations. Each CapacityCorps member is trained as an EPA lead paint certified renovator and learns best practices for keeping homeowners safe, warm and dry. The orientation also includes a healthy homes focus that has deepened the impact of RT's work on both the health of the homeowner and the safety of the unit. The NSP team also holds a number of webinars and remote trainings during the year on topics such as outcome-based measurement, resume writing, professional development, Life after AmeriCorps, service projects, and active citizenship.

After the RT national orientation, members receive a local orientation from their host site supervisor. Each local supervisor is provided a template for a two week orientation schedule to help the CapacityCorps member understand local needs and the local practices that meet these needs. The supervisors are trained during the Site Supervisor Strategy Meeting and Orientation about the best practices for orientation as well as a thorough review of allowable and prohibited activities including

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real life examples and issue-based interactive scenarios. In addition to training, monitoring of operating sites will occur in the following manner to ensure the CapacityCorps is in compliance with 45 CFR 2540.100 and not engaging in prohibited activities: review of member and host site quarterly reports; tri-annual check-in calls with site supervisors and members; site monitoring compliance visits, and desk audits. Operating sites found out of compliance will be notified in writing, and asked for a corrective action plan

Member Supervision

The CapacityCorps program will have a centralized program management structure with the RT National Office acting as the parent organization, with no funds sub-granted to operating sites. Key affiliate staff such as Executive Directors and Program Managers will serve as high-quality local site supervisors providing day to day supervision. The NSP team also performs a walk-through of the supervisor handbook during the annual site supervisor orientation and a detailed discussion about roles and responsibilities.

The NSP team will have four dedicated staff to ensure its full program implementation; the program model requires considerable hands-on training, technical support and regular support to help perform to their full potential, both from a member and from a site perspective. Systems to ensure that members are not participating in prohibited service activities include: training both during member orientation and site supervisor orientation, review of member reports, discussions during regular check-in calls, and in the signing of member contracts and site contracts. "Policy update" trainings will be held periodically to ensure compliance.

Member experience

No event is more meaningful to the CapacityCorps member experience than the MLK Work Week project. During a full week of service, all CapacityCorps members come together to serve one community in need. During the evenings, members reflect on the legacy of MLK and what their service means to them individually in structured conversations.

Volunteer Generation

A major focus of CapacityCorps will be to continue to engage and sustain new community volunteers. CapacityCorps members will lead initiatives to recruit and retain new volunteers, including baby boomers, from faith-based, skilled trades, corporations and civic organizations. These partnerships will improve the quality and volume of homes RT rehabilitates and are essential to serving additional homeowners.

Mobilizing community volunteers to come together to rebuild homes inspires community spirit and

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renewal that has a domino effect in community revitalization. Volunteer generation is the engine that allows RT to complete over 10,000 projects a year. RT is a great volunteer model because CapacityCorps members help build relationships with skilled trade volunteers as well as provide opportunities for others to give back through painting projects or other lower skill activities. Members and supervisors are trained at orientation about the roles volunteers can have and how to not place volunteers in situations where they could engage in prohibited activities.

Organizational Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

During member orientation, each CapacityCorps member receives his/her AmeriCorps Greys featuring the AmeriCorps logo and other easily recognizable national service gear. RT's CapacityCorps recruitment posters feature the AmeriCorps logo. RT National trains members and site supervisors about how to discuss service, how to honor the "A," and ensure CNCS and AmeriCorps are properly recognized as partners with RT. A review of how each RT affiliate identifies with AmeriCorps is also part of the compliance site visits and desk audits.

In 2011-2012, CapacityCorps members partnered with other national service programs (such as NCCC, VISTA, etc.) for a total of 48 cross-stream collaboration project or events. CapacityCorps members attended State Commission kick off events and trainings, partnered with NCCC teams and State programs for rebuilding projects, and partnered for other days of service including MLK Day, AmeriCorps Week and Make a Difference Day.

Organizational Capability

Organizational Background and Staffing

A safe and healthy home for every person. RT strives for this vision by bringing volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of low-income homeowners in need.

For 25 years, RT has been dedicated to helping low-income homeowners with critical home repairs and modifications for accessibility and aging in place. RT is a national nonprofit organization that works in partnership with community volunteers to rehabilitate the homes of low-income, veteran, elderly and disabled homeowners, so they may live in warmth, safety and independence. RT was born out of community members coming together to help their low-income neighbors fix their homes in Texas, then in Washington, D.C., and beyond. In 1988, with 13 loosely organized programs, the National Office and Affiliate Network began. RT was started as "Christmas in April," and has since grown to an Affiliate Network of 200 affiliates that serve 1,800 communities across America. Since RT's founding, RT has mobilized more than 2.7 million volunteers to serve 27 million volunteer hours to rehabilitate over 100,000 homes for low-income homeowners, delivering over \$1.5 billion in

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market value. RT engages skilled trades' people and community volunteers to rebuild homes free-of-charge for the homeowners, and cost-effectively leverages donated materials, supplies and labor. RT has become a national leader in affordable housing preservation, with more than 2.8 million house of service completed annually by RT's volunteers and transforming every \$1 donated into \$4 in equivalent market value.

RT National, located in Washington D.C., is the national office governing the RT Affiliate Network. The RT National Board of Directors is a fifteen member body with the primary oversight of the National Office and the Affiliate Network. The National Board has active committees in the areas of planning, development, advocacy, and finance. The National Board sets the strategic vision, provides policy oversight, monitors the financial integrity, and is engaged with quarterly program updates and the A-133 audit. The RT AmeriCorps program is placed strategically under the Affiliate Relations department in order to have direct access to the Organizational Development Institute training program, regional staff support throughout the country, and the programmatic expertise of staff members at the National Office.

The NSP team manages the RT AmeriCorps program. Each staff members receives an RT and NSP specific orientation about the program and grant requirements. All current NSP team staff served in AmeriCorps.

Director, National Service Programs (FT 95%) Martin Costello. Martin is an AmeriCorps alumnus, serving in a National*Direct program called Pro Bono Legal Corps. He is a licensed attorney with five years AmeriCorps program management experience. Duties: financial monitoring, operating site oversight and development, marketing, AmeriCorps staff supervision and development, evaluation, federal programmatic and fiscal reporting, and overall compliance.

Program Manager (FT 95%) Jessie Permar. Jessie is an AmeriCorps alumna, serving three years including terms with NCCC and State program in Louisiana, focusing on disaster recovery. She has a Master's in Social Work with specialties in program development and evaluation. Duties: strategic program/partnership development, training curriculum development, conflict resolution, member recruitment, state commission liaison, and site compliance.

Compliance Manager (FT 95%) New Position. RT would seek an AmeriCorps grant specialist to assist affiliate with grant questions and continue to improve quality controls. Duties: Grant compliance, criminal history reports, quarterly/monthly report monitoring, site compliance, financial monitoring assistance.

Program Specialist (FT 95%) Megan Stransky. Megan is an AmeriCorps alumna, serving two years

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with Volunteer Maryland, including one year as a Team Leader. Duties: day-to-day program administration, member monitoring and compliance, operating site monitoring, data collection and stakeholder communication tools, management of program logistics, administrative support and data tracking.

Senior Director, Affiliate Relations (FT 30%) Jessica Oh. AC State, VISTA, National Direct experience. Supervise Director, NSP and assist in site monitoring and development.

Vice President of Affiliate Relations Amber Hamilton. Duties: executive oversight of CC and Dir. of National Service Programs, and assist in site monitoring and development.

RT has demonstrated experience administering and overseeing corporate, foundation and government grants ranging from \$250,000- \$3 million from federal agencies such as the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Administration on Aging (AoA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD). RT has a number of strategic national partnerships such as American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Lowe's, Sears, Crate and Barrel, Phillips 66 and Choice Hotels. RT has the administrative systems in place for effective grants management and oversight including processes for documentation, financial oversight, data collection, local staff time-keeping, programmatic and financial reporting systems, resource/technical assistance provision and the replication of best practices.

This past year, the Rebuilding Together CapacityCorps program saw a continuation from program development to program refinement. Each year, the program has improved including this past year surpassing all performance measures and addressing any CNCS issues in a timely manner such as state consolations or eGrants questions. RT also works closely with our Program Officers and CNCS Communications team to keep them well-informed about the program. This year was also the first year that the Director of AmeriCorps, Bill Basl, attended our member orientation and MLK Work Week project.

The RT National Staff has seven AmeriCorps alumni, including two RT CapacityCorps alumni, working in the National Office. The NSP team receives support internally for larger projects and events such as member recruitment, assisting with training, and helping during our MLK Work Week project.

RT AmeriCorps members receive some of the most comprehensive training in AmeriCorps. The National Service Programs (NSP) team hosts an orientation for the CapacityCorps members in Washington, D.C. Each CapacityCorps class attends a week-long intensive learning experience with other class members from around the country.

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The NSP team also hosts webinars and remote trainings during the year on topics such as outcome-based measurement, resume writing, student debt relief and Ed award best practices, service projects, and active citizenship.

In 2010-11, the NSP team conducted an in-depth external evaluation of the program. Our evaluator interviewed members and host sites about the program and created a detailed report about the program which will be submitted to CNCS with this grant application. In addition to reporting members provided services valued at \$2 million, a number of recommendations were made such as improving the member reporting process and connecting alumni back into the program -- issues we addressed in the 2011-2012 program year and detailed in the Grant Progress Report.

Sustainability

Since the inception of the RT CapacityCorps program in Sept. 2008, RT has received a diverse cross section of corporate philanthropic resources for cash match. During the program's first year, RT secured \$150,000 from Verizon and the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation (Lowe's). During the second year, RT raised \$180,000 from Lowe's and Louisiana Pacific (including Recovery Match). From that point forward, Lowe's has supported the program and will continue to donate over \$200,000 this year alone. Choice Hotels will also be contributing to match our AmeriCorps grant, providing even more support for the program from our great corporate partners.

RT affiliates utilize community partnerships to cost-effectively leverage local cash and in-kind contributions through our extensive local and national partnerships. Every dollar of cash contribution is leveraged into four dollars in value.

The RT Affiliate Network connects on the local level with stakeholders in all sectors. In particular, RT affiliates engage: the Aging network and local Area Agencies on Aging (AAA); the Alliance to Save Energy; local government's housing, community development, senior, disability, and low-income housing coalitions; neighborhood associations and community-based groups; churches and faith-based senior service providers; local chapters of skilled trade organizations and unions; veterans orgs; civic organizations and fraternal orders; many corporate partners; the disaster recovery community; professional associations such as the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Society of Civil Engineers and green building/universal design orgs. In addition, our partners have increasingly introduced us to new partners that have brought an increased awareness of our services, local community support, expertise, and enhanced visibility.

As a leader in homeownership preservation, RT responded to emerging needs through the Energy Efficiency & Green Home Rehab Initiative to make low-income homeowners' homes more energy

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efficient; the Rebuild 1000 Initiative to rebuild 1,000 homes in the devastated Gulf Coast, and the Heroes at Home program to serve veterans in need. RT is recognized as the nation's leader in volunteer home rehabilitation and occupies a unique niche in the affordable housing community -- specifically rebuilding existing, owner-occupied homes for elderly, veteran, and disabled homeowners. RT's partners help maximize efforts to provide services to homeowners. Some of RT's community stakeholders are the Falls Free Coalition, which is a program of the Center for Healthy Aging at the National Council on the Aging, the National Housing Conference, Campaign for Housing and Community Development and the Alliance to Save Energy. National staff members are on the Board for the National Home Builders Association for the Certified Aging in Place Specialist program. The American Society of Civil Engineers awarded RT the National and Multi-Region Public Service Award in 2006.

Compliance and Accountability

One of the primary roles of the RT National office is to monitor the health and compliance of the RT affiliate network. RT National utilizes multiple tools to monitor overall affiliate compliance and affiliate health including a contract governing the responsibilities of the affiliate to the National Office called the Affiliate Partnership Agreement, the Standards of Excellence tool that evaluates RT affiliates on eleven categories of affiliate compliance, health and welfare, and an Annual Performance Report and self-evaluation completed by affiliates.

Affiliates hosting RT AmeriCorps members have an additional layer of support and monitoring from the NSP team. The NSP team hosts the annual CapacityCorps Host Site Strategy Meeting and Orientation before members begin service. The training's primary purpose is to review with AmeriCorps site supervisors the rules, regulations, and best practices for hosting an AmeriCorps member. All supervisors receive an updated handbook, an overview of any new policies or procedures required by the grant, and a walk-through of all required grant and interactive prohibited activities discussions

Technical assistance and monitoring is a critical aspect of RT's overall program management. The NSP team uses member reports, check-in calls, evaluations, and in-person trainings to evaluate the needs of Rebuilding Together host sites. The NSP team also monitors other activities related to grant compliance such as timeliness of reports, quality of program, changes in supervision, or any other issue that could potentially affect a member's service experience or grant compliance.

Rebuilding Together continues to use a risk-based monitoring approach for its CapacityCorps sites to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations. Started in the 2010-2011 program year,

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this risk-based monitoring approach is a review of each site and classifies it as a low, moderate, or high risk. These risk assessments inform how the NSP will conduct a monitoring plan for the year, including site visits, desk audits, or simply more attention and technical assistance in a specific area. Each site visit will include a follow-up memo about any issues that need correction. Sites that fall outside of our standards of AmeriCorps compliance and program excellence will not host members through the CapacityCorps program. For each site visit, the National Service Programs team uses a monitoring tool to evaluate the host sites. This tool is shared with site supervisors during the Host Site Strategy Meeting and Orientation and allows participants to understand the types of issues that are important to RT and CNCS. At the conclusion of the visit, NSP will make recommendations to the site to improve its performance (if necessary) and provide technical assistance to achieve those goals. The visits also provide sites the opportunity to give feedback to the NSP team about how to improve the program at the parent level.

Demonstrated Compliance

Although changes in technology have allowed the NSP team to offer technical assistance through webinars and other real time multi-location methods, our primary tools for providing technical assistance continue to be our handbooks and in-person trainings. The site supervisor and member handbooks provide detailed information about each program area and responsibility. These handbooks form the base for the in-person trainings where we review topics such as timekeeping, reporting, prohibited activities, best practices, and life after AmeriCorps, just to name a few.

As a part of structure of oversight by the NSP team, members will have three scheduled calls with NSP team staff during the term of service -- immediately after member orientation, mid-year, and end of term. The conversations will cover a number of topics including overall service satisfaction, reporting, prohibited activities, and any support needed by the member or the site. Members are required to submit a monthly satisfaction survey to give them the opportunity to let the NSP team know about their service experience in real time and to request any extra support if necessary.

CapacityCorps members also complete monthly and quarterly reports on their activities to effectively track progress towards outputs, outcomes, and member satisfaction. Mid-Term service evaluations and end of term service evaluations will be performed for each member during the program year providing the member and the local site supervisor focused opportunities for monitoring, redirection, reflection, recognition and coaching.

CapacityCorps is integrated into RT's existing systems for insurance, HR policies/payroll, financial statements/reporting, cash/general ledger processes, budgeting, internal controls, cost allocation,

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purchasing, and chart of accounts - expanding and refining systems as necessary. Key fiscal policies will ensure that all CNCS FFR/PMS reports are completed according to GAAP and executive oversight. Staff will keep detailed timesheets that will record hours worked, and will be signed by their supervisor. Member timekeeping and payroll systems are in compliance with CNCS standards with training provided to members and supervisors about allowable hours and applicable rules. RT national and affiliates carry General Liability, Volunteer Accident, and D&O insurance. Worker's Compensation policies will be secured for all states as required by state law.

Retention and Enrollment

The percentage of members not completing service remains about the same from the 10-11 program year from to the 11-12 program year. Only two full time slots were not filled during the 11-12 program year, due to a member withdrawing from our program just before orientation started, and a position was not able to be filled in time for the class-based enrollment period. Six members were unable to complete their terms of service. In addition, six new host sites joined the CapacityCorps program in 11-12 and three sites cycled out of the program. The National Service Programs team has continued to develop methods to help sites fill each slot requested and ensure successful terms of service including a more flexible recruitment process tailored to each site's needs and one-on-one counseling about service options for anyone potentially leaving the program. In most cases, individuals who left the program did so because of personal reasons that did not rise to the level of compelling personal circumstances but impacted the member negatively.

Consultation with State Commissions

RT has always made an effort to coordinate our efforts with each state hosting CapacityCorps members and will continue to do so moving forward. After RT affiliates were selected through our internal application process for the program year (described below), RT began the consultation process with each state. The NSP state commission liaison contacted each state and completed the individual consultation process. As in previous years, RT will contact each commission with the members' contact information and service location. RT also partners with state commissions during our projects including MLK Work Week in Oklahoma and Building a Healthy Neighborhood in Columbus, OH.

Operating and Member Service Sites

RT CapacityCorps members will serve at RT affiliates. RT affiliates meeting established site selection criteria in compliance with 45 CFR 2522.475 were invited to apply to submit CapacityCorps Operating Site Applications through a comprehensive application process that included an Operating Site

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Application, AmeriCorps project description, with supporting documentation and AmeriCorps-readiness self-assessment tools. Only affiliates found to be in "good standing" with the RT National office (seven internal standards of compliance) were eligible to apply to host members. RT affiliates' relationship with the RT National office is, at the minimum, a contract governing the responsibilities of the affiliate to the National Office called the Affiliate Partnership Agreement. Specifically, the proposed operating sites were selected based on the criteria consistent with regulation 45 CFR 2522.450.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

Cost Effectiveness

RT's mission is built on the cost-effective leveraging of donated materials, supplies and labor, and CapacityCorps continues to benefit from many existing national partnerships. Extensive in-house training and technical assistance opportunities through the RT Organizational Development Institute and experts in the affiliate network continue to provide significant cost savings to the program. Essential costs for the CapacityCorps program to meet the proposed outputs and outcomes are qualified staff to implement the program according to federal regulations; member and supervisor orientations, service project and training costs; and travel funds to conduct programmatic site visits and regional meetings.

Furthermore, the proposed 13-14 CapacityCorps budget is directly aligned with the following priorities: 1) dedicated staff to offer high-quality, hands-on technical assistance to sites/members needing additional support in order to be successful; 2) comprehensive member development on safe and healthy housing and capacity building; 3) resources to implement high impact disaster relief and veteran support service projects.

This application request of \$812,500 will represent almost 6.5% of the RT National budget. Over the past five years, RT has received three years of a fixed amount grant funding with a total amount awarded of \$2,273,967. In 2008 and 2009, RT received \$1,140,200 in CNCS funding for a cost reimbursement program, for a total of \$3,414,167 of CNCS funding over the past five years. Due to the nature of the RT CapacityCorps program, being centralized at the RT National office, and the grassroots nature of our local affiliate, RT does not pursue State Commission funding requests at this time.

The cost per MSY of \$12,500 x 65 FT 1700 MSY = \$812,500 in CNCS funds requested for the Fixed Amount grant program. The increase in cost per MSY from \$11,842 to \$12,500 from the previous grant application represents the expanded costs in engaging licensed, professional facilitators in

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training all members in energy efficiency repairs, certification and training costs associated with EPA required Lead Safe Work practices, CNCS required FBI and multi-state background checks, as well as the increase in the living allowance for members since the last application was submitted. This increase in MSY would be the first for RT CapacityCorps.

Special Considerations - RT CapacityCorps plays an extremely important role with the RT affiliate network. CapacityCorps members will be serving at 37 host site affiliates, in 20 states. For our smaller and more rural affiliates, CNCS-funded CapacityCorps members may be the only resource the RT National office is able to offer in terms of grants because many of the corporate and philanthropic dollars are donor-designated with specific regions favored over others. With CapacityCorps, RT is able to offer a premier national service program, in conjunction with our national corporate partners like Lowe's, at relatively little cost for the affiliate. RT is also able to bring the total CapacityCorps program resources to selected affiliates, like RT Oklahoma City, for our signature service events like MLK Work Week. This diversity in site location and technical support does increase the amount of dollars RT has to spend on travel, training, and support. Despite the increased cost, it is import to RT and the entire affiliate network to have CapacityCorps members serving around the country, and most importantly, in some of the nation's neighborhoods that are most needy.

Budget Adequacy

The following sources of match are significant for full program operation for a Fixed Amount program: total cash match of \$753,750 for the CapacityCorps program will be met by corporate sponsorship support from Lowe's, Crate and Barrel, Choice Hotels and other corporate and foundation sponsors in the amount of \$250,000. RT host site affiliates' cost-sharing in the amount of \$7,750 per member, per term, totaling \$503,750. The total cash match will support costs such as benefits and insurance, training, travel and program operating costs including staff salaries, benefits, and supplies at the operating site level, cost sharing funds provided by the RT affiliates will be funded through a combination of unrestricted general operating funds, corporate grants, foundation grants and reserves.

Rebuilding Together will continue to be a strong and accountable partner with CNCS, championing the values and goals of AmeriCorps while building a successful and sustainable program that improves the homes and lives of low-income elderly and disabled homeowners.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

RT CapacityCorps partnered with a professional independent evaluator in the fall of 2011 to conduct a

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cost-effective and extensive Program Evaluation focused on the objectives listed in Regulation 2522.800-2522.810 that examined the CapacityCorps program. Using to the 2010-2011 program year as test data (year two of the three year grant cycle), a report was created from this evaluation and shared with all stakeholders including CNCS. RT resubmitted the full report to CNCS in January 2013 as required by CNCS grant requirements. Over the next three years RT will develop a full-evaluation plan to measure the first two years of the program with full evaluation implementation by the third year of the program.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

N/A

Continuation Changes

N/A