

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: National Council of La Raza

Application ID: 13ED147876

Program Name: NCLR Latino Empowerment through National Service

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- (+) The applicant demonstrates multi-state need using statistics from the 2010 census and the Department of Labor (DOL) showing population demographics. The 2010 Hispanic dropout rate was 15.1% compared to the national average of 7.4%, as cited from NCES data. The dropout rate correlates with challenges experienced by the Hispanic population when trying to transition into the workforce, clearly supporting the argument of the need for employment education support.

- (+) The applicant clearly describes the need in the community by providing school dropout rates, reading test scores, and math test scores of the targeted community.

- (+) The applicant provides persuasive evidence that the identified needs exist in the targeted community due the overwhelming increase in the student and adult Hispanic population, lack of quality education, poor facilities, teachers with inadequate education, and employability attainment.

- (+) The application provides clear documentation of the community problems to be served on, specifically literacy and employment services for Hispanics in Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego, California; Chicago, Illinois; Austin, Texas; and Riverdale, Maryland.

- (+) The applicant describes the community problems they will serve on with two target populations: K-12 economically disadvantaged Hispanics performing at educational standards below white counterparts, and teenage and adult economically disadvantaged Hispanics who suffer a higher unemployment rate than the national average.

- (+) The application provides clear documentation of the extent of the need due to the wide gaps in scores of Hispanic students compared to Caucasian students as well as the high dropout rate of 15.1%% compared to the national average of 7.4%. These have a direct impact on students' financial stability and employability.

- (+) The applicant thoroughly describes the Hispanic population as economically disadvantaged. According to the Department of Labor, the unemployment rate averaged 11.5% compared to the national average of 7.9%. The higher

unemployment results in an economically disadvantaged population.

(+) The applicant explains these populations were selected based on the need for programs to decrease educational challenges faced by the population served due to cultural differences and language barriers so students will be able to transition into the workforce.

(+) The applicant provides an excellent description of the AmeriCorps member's roles as financial literacy and employment coaches and tutors. Specific topics that the Members will cover were listed and the impact on the teens and adults was clearly identified.

(+) The application thoroughly documents the process of the AmeriCorps members' activities, roles and/or responsibilities in the development of educational programming and mentoring, especially in the same language to develop better understanding and trust by the participants.

(+) The applicant provides clear substantiation that the organization will be able to reach a greater number of individuals and provide a more concentrated effort as a result of the AmeriCorps investment.

(+) The applicant did a good job describing what the organization will accomplish with AmeriCorps members by clearly stating that the full-time Members are integral to the program and will allow consistent delivery of services that will then allow Members to develop meaningful relationships with program participants.

(+) The application provides a clear description of 96 full-time AmeriCorps members; 49% will serve in the area of financial literacy and 51% as employment coaches. This split aligns with the described needs, program design, and activities.

(+) The applicant did a good job describing how the AmeriCorps members are engaged in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions by discussing the use of the Cross Age Tutoring model. The applicant clearly describes the success of Cross Age Tutoring and the benefits of the model. Statistics were provided from their program evaluation showing 76% of students have shown gains in literacy levels.

(+) The evidence-informed interventions of AmeriCorps members and volunteers are based on past performance and clearly described with outcomes. For example, Members will tutor 1200 unduplicated students on an annual basis. 80% of tutored students will show an increase in one grade level of reading and math.

(+) The applicant expects to see 8,400 individuals receive literacy tutoring and employment services. The overall change will result in individuals being able to graduate high school and obtain gainful employment.

(+) The application thoroughly describes the overall change expected. This includes a positive impact on Hispanic youth through an increase in literacy and parent engagement. The Hispanic adults served will have 60% success in finding employment and 70% will complete training.

(+) The applicant provides an excellent description of the community impact by discussing the expected program change. For example, the applicant states that AmeriCorps members will serve 3600 tutees and 4800 individuals will receive financial literacy and employment services. The application further describes how the Members will recruit

additional community volunteers to expand the reach of the services.

(+) There will be several demonstrable impacts of the proposed programs. Usint the LENS program, 1,200 students will receive a minimum of 30 hours of tutoring on key literacy skills. This will result in an increase in reading levels for the program participants.

(+) The applicant thoroughly describes that the proposed interventions will have measurable community impacts such as providing individual and group tutoring that will increase students' future success and employability programs that allow adults to be more productive and remain employed.

(+) The applicant provides a thorough description of how their program interventions will have community impact. An example of this is how they will provide literacy and math tutoring services to increase academic achievement from one grade to the next. This is an excellent example of the AmeriCorps investment making a difference nationwide with this program.

(+) The applicant clearly describes how they will measure the impact of their program. Literacy achievement will be measured by having the program participants' complete pre- and post-tests. For the employment readiness initiative measure, the applicant will have client placement logs which track the clients after receiving services. They will track if the students are able to find employment after services.

(+) Impact measurement for employment support services are demonstrated by the number of people served and by the number of people placed in jobs. Members will provide employment services to 1600 unduplicated individuals with 70% completing training and 60% finding employment.

(+) The applicant effectively explains that performance targets were determined based on past experience with service delivery and demonstrated community need. Using census data and National Center for Education Statistics, the applicant has strongly demonstrated that the target population has increased over the past two decades, therefore the need for tutoring and employment support has increased.

(+) The applicant clearly describes how they will measure impact by discussing pre-/post-testing, tutor logs, and stakeholder interviews. Additionally, the applicant provided a good description of the program success from the previous year and used that to determine performance measure targets for the next cycle.