

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

71 AmeriCorps members (25.95 MSY) will engage 3,752 disadvantaged young adults (opportunity youth) in service-learning projects coordinated by Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) affiliate sites in eight states, including Texas (North Texas YVC in Dallas); South Carolina (Anderson County YVC in Anderson); Wisconsin (Racine County YVC in Racine); Missouri (St. Joseph YVC in St. Joseph); Georgia (Macon and Middle Georgia YVC); Virginia (Hampton Roads YVC in Newport News); Louisiana (Capital Area YVC in Baton Rouge); and Oregon (Corvallis YVC in Corvallis). This project focuses on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity and addresses the identified need that youth unemployment is at an all-time high, especially summer youth unemployment rates. At the end of the three-year grant period, each of the 3,752 opportunity youth who enters the YVC program and completes at least 30 hours of service will develop needed employment skills by completing team-based, service-learning projects. The CNCS investment of \$278,008 will be matched with \$280,113.

## Rationale and Approach

### a. Need

Workforce development and work experience provided by volunteer activity is a critical need for today's young people. Youth employment is at its lowest level since World War II; only about half of young people ages 16 to 24 held jobs in 2011 (Sum 2011). Overall, 6.5 million people ages 16 to 24 are both out of school and out of work (Sum 2012). These youth are also YVC's target population -- young people in need of service-learning projects at nonprofit agencies that will give them the technical skills and the essential "soft skills" to hold a job and launch a career. In most cases, YVC AmeriCorps members will come from the same neighborhoods as the younger YVC opportunity youth.

Today's "opportunity youth" are young people out of school and out of work ages 16 to 24. They are high school drop outs or recent college graduates. They are urban, suburban and rural. They live in foster care and in juvenile justice settings. They are U.S. citizens and recently arrived immigrants. They may or may not live with a single parent or attend a low performing school (Hair 2009). The situation is especially dire for youth living in families with incomes below \$20,000. These youth experience the most disconnection and unemployment--2.5 times that of youth in the highest-income families; 21% of youth from these low-income families are unemployed, compared to 8% of those

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from families earning over \$100,000 (Sum 2011).

In 2011, The U.S. youth employment rates for both 16- to 19-year-olds and 20- to 24-year-olds dropped to lows not seen in more than 50 years. State-by-state employment rates vary, ranging from 18 percent to 46 percent for teens and from 51 percent to 75 percent for young adults (Annie E. Casey Foundation 2012).

In the states where AmeriCorps (AC) members will be placed, unemployment and out of school rates average 30% for youth age 16-19; those age 20-24 average 55%. Numbers gleaned from the Population Reference Bureau, US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicate:

1. Georgia: 107,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (19%); those age 20-24 total 364,000 (55%)
2. Louisiana: 62,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (32%); those age 20-24 total 181,000 (56%)
3. Missouri: 96,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (32%); those age 20-24 total 267,000 (67%)
4. Oregon: 54,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (28%); those age 20-24 total 160,000 (63%)
5. South Carolina: 62,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (62%); those age 20-24 total 182,000 (55%)
6. Texas: 339,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (24%%); those age 20-24 total 1103,000 (63%)
7. Virginia: 132,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (30%); those age 20-24 total 368,000 (65%)

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8. Wisconsin: 122,000 youth age 16-19 are unemployed and out of school (42%); those age 20-24 total 285,000 (73%)

Other key demographic, economic and health indicators in the following list are specific to the county of each YVC site. This information provides further insight into the impact AC members will have on opportunity youth in America. (Data is from US Census 2010; Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings; and the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

1. Macon and Middle Georgia YVC in Macon County, Georgia is 60.6% Black and 3.5% Hispanic with a median household income of \$27,324 and 40% of children living in poverty; 76% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 37%.

2. Capital Area YVC in East Baton Rouge, Louisiana is 45.3% Black and 3.6% Hispanic with a median household income of \$44,911 and 26% of children living in poverty; 63% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 39.5%.

3. St. Joseph YVC in Buchanan County, Missouri is 5.2% Black and 5.2% Hispanic with a median household income of \$41,210 and 23% of children living in poverty; 89% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 44%.

4. Corvallis YVC in Benton County, Oregon is 1.1% Black and 6.3% Hispanic with a median household income at \$49,156 and 15% of children living in poverty; 78% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 45.5%.

5. Anderson County YVC in Anderson County, South Carolina is 16% Black and 2.9% Hispanic with a median household income of \$38,851 and 28% of children living in poverty; 75% complete high school and the youth unemployment rate is 41%.

6. North Texas YVC in Dallas County, Texas is 22.3% Black and 38.2% Hispanic with a median household income of \$46,909 and 29% of children in poverty; 79% complete high school and the youth (age 16-24) unemployment/out of school rate is 58.5%.

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7. Hampton Roads YVC in Newport News City County, Virginia is 40.6% Black and 7.5% Hispanic with a median household income of \$49,228 and 20% of children living in poverty; 81% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 47.5%.

8. Racine County YVC in Racine County, Wisconsin is 11.1% Black and 11.5% Hispanic with a median household income of \$51,712 and 21% of children living in poverty; 74% complete high school and the youth unemployment/out of school rate is 57.5%.

From the above data, we can see that while certain economic and demographic percentages vary widely, the youth unemployment/out of school rate remains high. These unemployed and out of school youth age 16-24 are YVC's target population for this AC grant, both in terms of AC members engaged and the Youth Volunteers that AC members will recruit and train.

If the unemployment problem presented by opportunity youth is not addressed, the cost to the community will be great. One study estimates that for each 16-year-old out of school and out of work, the future lifetime taxpayer burden is \$258,040 (Belfield 2012). The same study calculates that the total taxpayer burden for all out-of-school and out-of-work youth ages 16 to 24 is \$1.56 trillion.

Based on the needs facing America today, YVC is enhancing its programs to emphasize skills that prepare young people to be employable citizens. YVC is now intentional about developing workplace skills for youth while they serve. This matches CNCS's funding priority of employment preparedness for opportunity youth.

### Citations

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### b. AC Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems.

AC members at the eight (8) YVC affiliate sites will recruit opportunity youth to become YVC Youth Volunteers. In addition to recruitment, AC members will train opportunity youth to prepare them for service-learning projects at nonprofit and community agencies in each community--a key component of workforce training. Finally, AC members will manage participating opportunity youth as they complete their volunteer project(s).

AC members are uniquely qualified to be excellent role models for the opportunity youth who will become YVC Youth Volunteers. In most cases, our YVC AC members will come from the same neighborhoods as the younger YVC opportunity youth. By developing their own job skills in their AmeriCorps placement, they will model an impressive ethic of workforce development as well as service.

YVC programming has two components:

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1. In the summer, youth volunteer on teams supervised by trained Team Leaders (AC members) work on extended week-long projects that allow them to see larger outcomes accomplished; the intensive design of the summer component reinforces teamwork, appreciation for diversity, real-world job skills, and civic responsibility.

2. During the school year, YVC Team Leaders (AC members) work closely with teachers to design and implement age-appropriate service projects that tie school curriculum to community service; additionally, young people from throughout the community work together on service projects after school, on weekends and during school breaks.

YVC projects address community needs in each affiliate area, as identified by Program Directors working in tandem with community, faith-based and grassroots organizations. A few examples of recent YVC service-learning projects delivered by participating sites in 2012 include:

1. North Texas YVC: Youth Volunteers learned about environmentalism, specifically disaster preparedness by educating the community at a fire/safety fair in a low-income neighborhood. Youth Volunteers organized fire and tornado safety games for neighborhood elementary children, and guided children through a fire room and tornado drill obstacle course.

2. Anderson County YVC: Youth Volunteers learned about how to effectively help and serve the homeless by planning and implementing a holiday party for homeless people at a local shelter.

3. St. Joseph YVC: YVC of St. Joseph is working with both the City of St. Joseph and American Water to learn about their local water system, how it works, and how its design impacts water quality in and around the Missouri River, giving Youth Volunteers exposure to engineering. Program participants were given the opportunity to map city storm drains, identifying which drains emptied directly into local watersheds (creeks and the river) and which drains emptied into the City's sewer system.

4. Macon and Middle Georgia YVC: YVC of Macon and Middle Georgia hosted a reading event for at-risk children addressing the issue of bullying. The Youth Volunteers read to the children and taught them about the issue of bullying and how keep safe.

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5. Hampton Roads YVC: Youth Volunteers cleared trails, painted and helped with light construction at a 45 acre DisAbility Awareness Camp. After volunteering they were given the opportunity to experience the challenges that confront an individual living with disabilities on a daily basis through a DisAbility Awareness Course. This course included a dyslexia station, blind maze, wheelchair basketball and much more.

6. Capital Area YVC: Youth Volunteers were instructed about water safety and then planned and implemented a kayaking expedition to clean up trash from a local lake. They also cleaned up trash on land and were able to learn about the importance of keeping community areas clean.

7. Corvallis YVC: The YVC of Corvallis, Oregon planned and implemented the Nutritional Story-time program at the public library to address issues of childhood obesity and diabetes. Youth Volunteers read several nutrition-related stories and engaged children in activities that helped distinguish the difference between healthy foods and "sometimes" foods.

8. Racine County YVC: In Racine, Wisconsin the YVC youth support senior care centers in the community with monthly visits. As part of their training, youth learn about the health care issues for the elderly, including proper care for those suffering from Dementia and Alzheimer's diseases.

In the summer, AC members will implement the most intensive part of the YVC program model by coordinating six to eight weeks of day-long service-learning projects. Planning for the summer begins in late winter when AC members review needs and requests from nonprofit agencies desiring to host service-learning projects and also begin to recruit Youth Volunteers. The AC members in this grant will specifically target opportunity youth for recruitment.

AC members serving with YVC will gain service-learning experience and develop valuable skills necessary for developing projects with community leaders focused on improving employability for opportunity youth while increasing volunteerism in the nonprofit sector. The AC member will be the point person for opportunity youth recruitment and volunteer opportunities in each of the eight YVC geographic service areas represented in this grant. AC members will look for the needs of opportunity youth to develop strategies to insure successful recruitment and retention through the service-learning

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project commitment. In addition to building capacity for YVC affiliates and nonprofit sites by adding the recognized AC brand, AC members will expand their own leadership, administrative, interpersonal and training skills.

Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) is requesting support for 8 full-time, 16 half-time, 17 minimum-time and 30 Education Award Only AC (AC) members (25.95 MSY) at eight (8) affiliate sites. This request for AC members will enable participating YVC affiliates to increase opportunity youth recruitment and in most cases, double the number of Youth Volunteers participating in service-learning projects. Program directors from participating affiliates state:

1. (Georgia) Macon and Middle Georgia YVC: With additional AC members we project to reach at least 300 economically disadvantaged youth in our summer sessions each year. We will also increase our focus to include youth leadership development. Requesting 2 minimum-time and 4 EAO.
2. (Louisiana) Capital Area YVC: With additional AC members, YVC of the Capital Area will reach out to a greater number of public schools in the Baton Rouge community to reach opportunity youth. We also envision reaching out to the local technical colleges in order to recruit a more diverse group of team leaders. We project this would increase our engagement with economically disadvantaged youth by 100 per year. Requesting 5 half-time; 4 minimum-time; 2 EAO.
3. (Missouri) St. Joseph YVC: The number of Youth Volunteers would easily double with the addition of AC members, raising the number of economically disadvantaged youth to approximately 500. Requesting 3 full-time; 3 half-time; 2 EAO.
4. (Oregon) Corvallis YVC: Additional AC members will enable us to add approximately 100 more economically disadvantaged youth. Requesting 5 full-time and 2 EAO.
5. (South Carolina) Anderson County YVC: Anderson County YVC has not reached out to opportunity youth in the past, but is eager to involve this population. The addition of AC members would enable the site to engage a minimum of 75 additional economically disadvantaged youth. Requesting 6 EAO.
6. (Texas) North Texas YVC: Without the addition of AC members, our summer program serving

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opportunity youth is in jeopardy. Additional AC members ensure we will have a robust program involving economically disadvantaged youth in both Dallas and Fort Worth. We anticipate reaching an additional 200 youth with the addition of the AC members. Requesting 6 minimum-time and 10 EAO.

7. (Virginia) Hampton Roads YVC: We have been approached to expand our programs at a number of new schools with high risk and economically disadvantaged students. With the addition of AC members, we will have the additional manpower necessary to meet this demand and project an additional 100 AC members. Requesting 5 half-time and 2 EAO.

8. (Wisconsin) Racine County YVC: With the addition of AC members we would be able to schedule projects to take place in the evenings or weekends that are intermittent currently, and that would allow the program to triple, going from approximately 100 youth from the Summer Camps to 300 youth in the Summer and as many in service-learning projects during the school year. Also, the Program director would be able to concentrate on refining opportunity youth recruitment practices to be sure we are reaching as many disadvantaged youth as possible. Requesting 3 half-time; five minimum-time and 2 EAO.

Variations in slot types pertain to specific needs at each YVC site. Full-time slots are requested for sites that need substantial support to build capacity in recruitment, training and management of opportunity youth; part-time and minimum-time slots supplement the service of full-time members or part-time members in the summer. The summer is YVC's most active period and this is why part-time and minimum time slots are very important.

AC members will recruit and manage opportunity youth aged 11-18 to provide team-based community service-learning projects as YVC Youth Volunteers during the project period (September 1, 2013- August 31, 2016). It is also YVC's intention that the AC members themselves will be recruited from economically disadvantaged young adults/opportunity youth, defined as young people aged 16-24 who are receiving or are eligible to receive TANF, Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, SCHIP and/or Section 8 Housing. This AC program addresses the problem that youth unemployment is at an all-time high, especially summer youth unemployment. Anticipated outputs and outcomes include:

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1. 3,752 opportunity youth will receive job training or other skills development through YVC service (annual)

2. Each economically disadvantaged youth who enters the YVC program and completes at least 30 hours of service will develop needed employment skills through completing team-based, service projects that incorporate service-learning

AC members are ideal role models for opportunity youth who become Youth Volunteers: they represent a desirable career path for Youth Volunteers who find a great deal of satisfaction in volunteering and want to devote their lives to the nonprofit sector. AC members can give them the job training and skills they need to make it in the working world.

### c. Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact

Service-learning is an evidence-based teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (Learn and Serve America 2010).

It is also documented that service-learning contributes to workforce development and employability. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's recent Kids County Policy Report (Youth and Work: Restoring Teen and Young Adult Connections to Opportunity, 2012), the best way to build skills critical to finding a job is to engage young people in work-like activities, and that practical experience tells us that many young people show extraordinary motivation and responsibility when given the right opportunities. Studies show that youth who miss out on an early work experience are more likely to endure later unemployment and less likely to achieve higher levels of career attainment. Everyone needs opportunities in their teen years and young adulthood to experience work and attain the job-readiness skills needed for long-term success (US Department of Labor 2012).

It is exactly this type of opportunity that YVC provides to youth. Young people need multiple and flexible pathways to success that meet their varied needs--combining education, training and supportive services, plus strong relationships with adults (Harris 2012). Again, service-learning projects presented to youth in YVC volunteer projects provide all three components: service-learning

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(education); training and supportive services (nonprofit site-specific training pertinent to service delivery); relationships with adults (Team Leaders work closely with Youth Volunteers).

YVC's independent evaluation completed in 2009 also shows evidence that service as an AC member with YVC also promotes a lifetime ethic of service work, an ethic critical to successful career development (Helm, Scott T., Youth Volunteer Corps of America Summative Process and Outcome Evaluation, Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership, Bloch School of Business and Public Affairs, University of Missouri-Kansas City 2009). An investment in AC members at YVC, and the opportunity youth who will develop job skills, is an investment in our country's future.

This AC program addresses the problem that youth unemployment is at an all-time high, especially summer youth unemployment. The AC program intervention is job training. Anticipated outputs and outcomes include:

1. 3,752 opportunity youth will receive job training or other skills development through YVC service (annual)
2. Each economically disadvantaged youth who enters the YVC program and completes at least 30 hours of service will develop needed employment skills through completing team-based, service projects that incorporate service-learning

By the end of the three year grant cycle, 10,000 opportunity youth will have received job training or other skills development provided by AC members in YVC service, and these youth will have completed at least 300,000 hours of service leading to increased employability.

YVC HQ utilizes a database (Ydat) to track AC member activity, Youth Volunteer hours and project data at nonprofit service sites. We are adapting a pre- and post-project survey (developed in 2010 by Scott Helm, Ph.D., of the University of Missouri-Kansas City) to track indicators specific to opportunity youth engaged as Youth Volunteers during the AC grant years--including job training, employability and career plans. We are in the process of working with Dr. Helm and program directors at the participating YVC affiliate sites to determine performance measure targets and key indicators. The survey, currently, evaluates qualitative and quantitative data, including process points

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such as the relationship between the national office and affiliates; the recruitment of AC members and Youth Volunteers; and communication between AC members, affiliates and community organizations.

All Youth Volunteers are surveyed at the completion of service. Community partners are also surveyed to determine the impact of the service-learning project on their agency, their constituents and the community. Affiliate agencies with AC members will report program data to YVC HQ quarterly. YVC will comply with AC reporting guidelines (as designated in the GPR) during the grant period.

Stakeholder accounts (funders and partnering nonprofit agencies) indicate that YVC has successfully established reporting and evaluation processes that create uniformity throughout the national network, among AC members and affiliate directors, and facilitate the production of mission-related outcomes.

YVC's last full year of AC National Direct funding was 2009-2010. Since receiving AC members for the first time in 1994, YVC has met or exceeded more than 95% of its performance measures.

In 2009-2010, YVC met 100% of its objectives: 10,047 youth were recruited to perform service-learning projects in their community, Youth Volunteers completed 138,233 hours of service, and 95% of Youth Volunteers surveyed stated that they would commit to continuing to volunteer the following year (YVC AC National Progress Report 2010).

In 2009-2010 YVC had, for the first time, a drop in retention. This was due to three underperforming affiliate sites that are no longer part of the YVC network.

### d. Member Recruitment

Member recruitment is conducted by each of the YVC affiliate sites. YVC Headquarters provides guidance and approves the selected members. To assist in recruitment, YVC provides each site with online outreach material and a recruitment guide clearly outlining the nature of service required from AC members.

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One of YVC's overriding goals is to "promote among young people and residents a greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity of their community." YVC affiliates are instructed to recruit diverse members that reflect the demographic of each community's service area. Underrepresented populations have served as YVC AC members in the past; in this grant period recruitment will additionally and specifically target economically disadvantaged prospects (opportunity youth). These AC member candidates will be recruited from nonprofit organizations, community groups serving families in poverty, and faith based organizations.

YVC's screening and interview process is geared toward identifying those who have experience working with diverse groups and understand the importance of cultural and economic diversity.

Each participating YVC affiliate program is required to utilize the online AC recruitment system which allows them to reach member prospects throughout the country. Affiliate sites also recruit locally and through their nonprofit partner agencies. Many successful member candidates have been YVC Youth Volunteers previously; this is an ideal situation because the new AC member has a rich understanding of the community and how YVC might best engage local opportunity youth as Youth Volunteers.

### e. Member Training

After placement, new AC members receive the Team Leader Guidebook (YVC 2010) and program directors at each YVC affiliate site conduct training during the first week of a Member's service. Affiliate sites must provide YVC with their individualized training plan by August 1. Training topics designated by YVC include:

1. Site orientation: The basics such as office supplies, equipment use, and office conduct.
2. Overview of AC member guidelines: prohibited activities, performance measures, and how Members differ from employees.
3. Time-keeping and time-sheets: What can and cannot be counted as service hours.
4. Team Leader Guidebook review: This is a comprehensive review including the basics of YVC programs, Youth Volunteers, community partnerships and reporting.

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5. Resources: Tools for lesson planning, engaging youth, team-building, building partnerships and networking.
6. Life After AC: Training schedule for topics to be covered for the rest of the service year.
7. Technology: Loan forbearance and MyAC portal system.
8. Member goals: Set goals for number of projects, number of youth, and outcomes.
9. Project planning: Sample project outline.
10. Recruitment: How to use social media and website; agency protocol pertaining to each.

Members also take part in a national three-day training to be held in Kansas City from October 11-13 that supplements the training provided at the local affiliate site. The national training is comprised of a combination of presentations, specific service-learning project overviews, and hands-on interactive sessions :

1. YVC Overview: History, program structure, mission
2. Working with Youth: Team building, diversity, conflict resolution, disabilities
3. AC Requirements: Performance measures, prohibited activities, AC gear, citizenship, life after AC, timesheets
4. Service-learning: Steps of process, youth voice, curriculum, project examples
5. Building Partnerships: Partnering with schools, agencies, parents, civic groups
6. Best Practices: YVC programs

### f. Member Supervision

Each YVC affiliate site provides a supervisor who devotes approximately 50% of his/her time toward AC members. The YVC Affiliate Services Coordinator provides support to affiliate program directors, and program directors provide support to AC members or designate back-up support for when they are unavailable. The Affiliate Services Coordinator communicates weekly with program directors. Program directors are required to meet with their Members at least twice a month; one of these monthly meetings involves additional training.

YVC's independent evaluation completed in 2009 shows evidence that service as an AC Member with YVC also promotes a lifetime ethic of service--the ultimate YVC goal. An investment in AC members

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at YVC is an investment in our country's future. In order to assess progress AC members and Youth Volunteers were asked about their past experiences and future plans. Fifty-four percent (54%) of AC members had previously been YVC Youth Volunteers; 51% of AC members said they planned to work in social services; 94% of AC members said they intend to continue volunteer activities; and 93% of Youth Volunteers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "the project makes me want to do more community service" (Helm 2009).

AC members' roles are distinct from YVC staff, YVC affiliate staff and Youth Volunteer roles. YVC affiliate staff supervises members but does not actively participate in youth recruitment or management. YVC has a non-duplication, non-displacement and non-supplementation policy that has been reviewed and approved by CNCS (the policy is outlined in the AC Program Director Manual). YVC clearly outlines how affiliates must educate the staff and members about AC and the differences between AC members and staff.

During the first week of service, affiliate program directors provide a review of the differences between staff and AC members. Activities prohibited by AC is also part of AC member orientation and are also outlined in the Program Director Manual. To ensure comprehension and compliance, AC members are required to complete a survey at the end of the first week that includes questions about AC and YVC policies and protocol. Prohibited activities are also addressed at the YVC National Conference. During site visits, YVC staff review prohibited activities with members and provide clarification, if necessary.

### g. Member Experience

Many of YVC affiliates report that they would not be able to provide the volunteer services they do without AC members. AC members help YVC affiliates with projects that they have put on hold because of a lack of staff time and resources. YVC's independent evaluation in 2009 found that 94% of community organizations that were helped by YVC stated that outputs increased as a result of YVC, AC members and youth volunteer activities (Helm 2009).

AC members are particularly suited to provide this intervention because of the typical age of AC members and the intensity of their service. The increasing awareness of the AC brand has allowed

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YVC affiliates to recruit highly skilled young people. Being a Team Leader with YVC is challenging, and highly skilled AC members get the job done. Nonprofit sites engaged with service-learning projects facilitated by AC members trust the quality of service that will be provided to their clients.

YVC offers AC members an unparalleled experience. Indeed, in the pre and post surveys that Dr. Helm administered to AC members, he found 15 statistically significant results that showed AC members enhanced their knowledge of community, service, and ability to work with youth and diverse groups. That same independent evaluation showed 80% of YVC AmeriCorps members positively rated their overall AmeriCorps experience. Only two out of thirty-five members who responded to the question rated their experience as negative.

This AC grant will provide AC members a unique, high-quality experience affecting them positively into the future. The AC members, in turn, will positively impact opportunity youth ages 11-18 who will serve as Youth Volunteers; and the nonprofit agencies in the eight participating communities will expand their service delivery through the Youth Volunteers led by AC member team leaders.

AC members will complete monthly reports which ask them to reflect on their service. Members are also given formal quarterly, midterm and final reviews. Supervisors will provide Life After AC training to help each AC member determine the best way or ways to use their AC service experience in whatever next steps they are taking. Finally, programs will hold at least one off-site retreat which will serve as a time to formally reflect and have honest discussions about how the group can perform better.

Members will be required to wear AC identification while serving, and will be trained to identify themselves as AC members when explaining project activities, especially their roles as leaders, to media, community members, partners, and the general public.

YVC members are connected with other AC members and programs in a number of ways, from the annual YVC Summit, where they have a chance to interact with other YVC AC members with the same role in different communities, and locally, when members connect with each other at combined trainings and social events organized by YVC, AC grantee program staff, or AC alumni.

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State Commission Executive Directors in all eight (8) participating states have been contacted by the YVC President and they look forward to including our National Direct AC members in all state trainings and days of service. All consultation forms required by State Commissions were completed by YVC Headquarters and the appropriate YVC affiliate.

Members will be reminded frequently of their inclusion in this national movement of service and the important role they play as current members and future alumni. This AC grant will provide members a unique, high-quality experience, which we know from our research affects them positively now and into the future. They in turn impact the youth they lead who, again based on our independent evaluation, are positively affected by participating in the YVC program and are inclined to have positive attitudes towards the AC program.

### h. Volunteer Generation

The YVC program is a youth volunteer program. AC members will be recruiting opportunity youth to be Youth Volunteers for service-learning project implementation. It will be the role of the AC members to recruit, train and manage opportunity youth as Youth Volunteers for their service project. Of the thousands of Youth Volunteers recruited each year, many continue to serve as YVC Youth Volunteers throughout their high school years and some become team leaders and/or AC members after graduation.

AC members will recruit opportunity youth as Youth Volunteers from public schools, group homes, homeless shelters, church groups, the judicial system (those required to do community service) and other youth service groups. Opportunity youth are not typically asked to volunteer, but AC member outreach to this population will benefit engaged opportunity youth by providing job training relative to their service-learning project assignment.

AC members will provide Youth Volunteers and parents (if available) with an orientation to YVC, including an overview of the roles and expectations for Youth Volunteers. The YVC service-learning experience is a mix of episodic and sustained volunteering; however there is ample time for on the job training during a service-learning project. By partnering with schools and other youth serving organizations for recruitment, YVC has a core of those who serve on an ongoing basis. However

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youth serving episodically are typically youth recruited from shelters, group homes and the judicial system; opportunity youth and our target population for the AC member service project.

Opportunity youth serving as Youth Volunteers will be engaged in the planning process for service-learning projects as part of their job training and career exploration. YVC engages Youth Volunteers in this capacity via the Youth Advisory Board at each site. The Youth Advisory Board is comprised of 10-20 Youth Volunteers who meet with AC members at least monthly to plan and help recruit for service-learning projects for their peers. AC members will work in tandem with the Youth Advisory Board to review agency project request forms. Requests are collected in the summer (for school year projects) and spring (for summer projects). Youth Volunteers will be heavily involved in planning and implementation of service-learning projects. Opportunity youth will be encouraged to have a role in the projects in order to ensure they are fully engaged.

YVC affiliates and AC members will also recruit adult volunteers (parents, teachers, community leaders) who provide additional supervision, transportation and clerical support. Adult professionals also volunteer to share their expertise during service-learning projects for training and education. For example, an EPA employee may donate her time to discuss issues pertinent to an environmental project, and provide additional information for opportunity youth to explore career options.

### i. Organizational Commitment to AC Identification

YVC will ensure that the AC logo is displayed prominently on YVC's webpage ([www.yvc.org](http://www.yvc.org)) and require that all YVC Affiliates display the logo on their webpages. AC members will wear appropriate service gear including the AC logo when serving in the community, and we will include the AC logo in as many print and publication materials as possible--including YVC's annual report, biannual newsletter, email blasts and program brochures.

## Organizational Capability

### a. Organizational Background and Staffing

Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) was founded in 1987 by David Battey with a mission "to create and increase volunteer opportunities to enrich America's youth, address community needs and develop a lifetime commitment to service." Since then, YVC has become a national organization and has grown

## **Narratives**

to over 30 local YVC affiliates across the US engaging over 270,000 Youth Volunteers in nearly four million hours of service.

All YVC projects benefit local nonprofit organizations by expanding their capacity. Since the economic downturn began in 2007, nonprofit agencies rely on volunteers more than ever.

YVC operates under the direction of a national board of directors which includes two CPAs, a former state senator, city mayor, an attorney, a public relations expert and two YVC affiliate representatives.

YVC successfully managed an AC program as a multi-site grantee from 1994-2010 (16 years). YVC has also received three CNCS Learn and Serve America grants and a Summer of Service grant. YVC had a VISTA grant from fall of 1999 until summer of 2003 with five VISTA members annually.

The primary contact for this application is Tracy Hale, Chief Operating Officer (phone 816-472-9822 and email thale@yvc.org). Paul Marksbury, Affiliate Services Coordinator (phone 816-472-9822 and email pmarksbury@yvc.org) is the secondary contact. YVC's President/Founder and Administrative Assistant will also have roles in supporting the AC members.

Tracy Hale, Chief Operating Officer, will be responsible for all CNCS financial reports. Tracy joined the YVC national Office in October 2011 and works closely with the President, the Board of Directors and staff to support the mission and vision of YVC. She supervises all YVC national office staff. Before joining YVC, Tracy served seven years as Vice President for Miller Management, which provided a variety of accounting and administrative services to over 400 nonprofit organizations. For 11 years prior to that she held various management positions at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

Paul Marksbury, Affiliate Services Coordinator, will provide oversight of all AC members and will monitor performance outcomes. His position is responsible for communicating with the State Service Commissioner in each State, organizing annual regional meetings and completing site visit reports. Prior to his position as Affiliate Service Coordinator at the YVC national office, Paul served as an AC Member with YVC of Kansas City during the 2006-2007 program year. After completing his service year, Paul became the Assistant Program Director and then soon thereafter promoted to the Program Director of the Kansas City YVC. Paul has experience successfully running an AC program,

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conducting YVC Affiliate training, and directing all aspects of a large-market YVC program from budget management to human resources.

David Battey, YVC President and Founder, will provide oversight for grant management (monitoring and reporting) and raise matching funds during the grant term. David has been in the service field since writing his Williams College thesis on the subject in 1985. Battey has 17 years experience with administering CNCS grants, including AC VISTA, AC National Direct, AC State and Learn and Serve America grants. He has been a governor-appointed member of the Kansas Volunteer Commission since 2000.

YVC's Administrative Coordinator, Darcy Bloss, will be responsible for all administrative duties including filing documents and monitoring eGrants to ensure compliance with enrollment and exiting provisions.

Additional support is provided by Hoover and Hibdon, YVC HQ's accounting firm. Hoover and Hibdon has managed the fiscal aspect of YVC's public funding (including CNCS) since 2007 and works closely with YVC staff to monitor affiliate fiscal reporting. YVC currently and consistently has had a no-finding A-133 audit.

YVC's strategic plan, discussed at length and approved by the national Board, was updated in 2012 based on feedback from affiliate sites, funders and area stakeholders. YVC's orientation, training and technical assistance for YVC affiliate AC sites include:

1. Orientation: Each affiliate participates in a series of conference calls beginning at the start of the grant term, June 2013 to orient them to the AC program, including AC rules, regulations and program management.
2. Training: Each affiliate is provided an outline of required training for placement sites. These trainings must take place prior to an AC member commencing service. In October, AC members and Program Directors will attend the national YVC Conference to learn about AC requirements and best practices for program operation.

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3. Technical Assistance: The YVC website is also accessed by affiliates as a technical assistance tool. Web pages include tips for Program Directors, the Program Director Manual, and sample training plans.

4. Monitoring and compliance: YVC conducts an annual site visit to each YVC affiliate AC Member site to identify additional training needs and monitor program status. Site visit follow-up to address any remaining need for technical assistance and/or training is provided via Skype, webinar or phone conference.

While Paul Marksbury, YVC HQ Affiliate Services Coordinator, will provide oversight for the overall AC program grant, each AC member will be supervised by the Program Director at each affiliate site. These include:

1. Georgia, Macon and Middle Georgia YVC: Amy Davidson. Macon and Middle Georgia YVC had part-time AC members (part time) in the past and currently host AC members through their sponsor organization, Hands On Network.
2. Louisiana, Capital Area YVC: Anna Stogner. Twelve years experience with AC members.
3. Missouri, St. Joseph YVC: Anita Jolly. Consistently received one full-time member annually for 3 to 4 year terms 1994 ; 2009.
4. Oregon, Corvallis YVC: Deb Curtis. Prior AC members for 12 years until 2009.
5. South Carolina, Anderson County YVC: Carol Loyd. Extensive prior experience with AC members via YVC grant up until 2009.
6. Texas, North Texas YVC: Millicent Boykin. Management experience with one AC member 2009-2010.
7. Virginia, Hampton Roads YVC: Laurie Sepanski. No prior AC grant experience, but eager to participate in the program.

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8. Wisconsin, Racine County YVC: Michelle Ortwein. Experience managing one AC member in 2009.

YVC utilizes both outside evaluation and an inside review to determine program efficacy and ongoing improvement. In 2009, YVC HQ completed an 18-month independent evaluation, its fourth comprehensive independent evaluation since our founding in 1987 (Scott Helm, Ph.D., UMKC). All Youth Volunteers are surveyed at the completion of service. Community partners are also surveyed to determine the impact of the service-learning project on their agency, their constituents and the community. Affiliate agencies with AC members will report program data quarterly. Data collected will pertain to the proposed intervention of job training and service-learning education: At the end of the three-year grant period, each opportunity youth who enters the YVC program and completes at least 30 hours of service will develop needed employment skills by completing team-based, service-learning projects.

YVC does not currently collect income data on its board members. However, each site has a Youth Advisory Board that participates in identifying areas of need in their own community; this body is comprised of youth reflective of the community being served, including low-income youth. Youth Volunteer involvement in the planning process for service-learning projects is evidenced by the activity of the Youth Advisory Board at each site. YVC will collect income data on this body beginning in July 2013.

YVC collaborates with other national service programs in the following ways:

1. YVC programs in over 30 cities conduct in-school projects in middle and high schools that always incorporate service-learning, which is modeled from the Learn & Serve America program.
2. YVC projects are conducted with inter-generational programming that includes Senior Corps members through programs such as RSVP.
3. The 71 AC members from eight YVC sites will participate in each state's AC trainings. These include Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

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4. YVC HQ works closely with State Commissions and CNCS State offices. Many YVC affiliates have served on state commissions. YVC's president (David Battey) has served on the KS Volunteer Commission since 2000.

### b. Sustainability

YVC's sustainability is embedded in its track record of service to both participating Youth Volunteers and the nonprofit organizations they serve, as well as in its good standing with corporate and private foundation funders. YVC has been operating successfully for 26 years with over 270,000 Youth Volunteers engaged across the United States and Canada in service-learning projects provided by over 30 affiliate YVCs. YVC Headquarters is able to contribute financially to the costs related to engaging the 71 AC members we have requested.

YVC HQ has strong support from private foundations and individual donors. The YVC strategic plan calls for expansion of YVC affiliate sites and increased funding to make this happen. Major, multi-year funding from Bank of America in 2011 provided seed funding for this expansion initiative. YVC also received a capacity building grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation in 2011 which facilitated the hiring of the current COO, a new position at YVC HQ. YVC revenue in FY 2012 by category was 24% public funding, 3% United Way, 11% individual donations, 31% corporate gifts, and 32% private foundation grants.

YVC HQ launched a marketing campaign in 2012 to bring its brand into alignment with YVC affiliates nationally and raise awareness about the impact of YVC service-learning projects on local communities. Community, nonprofit and faith-based agencies that benefit from YVC service-learning projects have become strong advocates for YVC in each community where AC members serve.

Each participating YVC affiliate from the eight (8) states have also signed a Grantee Responsibilities Agreement that includes the following commitments:

1. Commit to running a YVC program beyond the life of this grant.
2. Pay the Match Fee with 50% due at the start of the grant period.

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3. Report in alignment with YVC AC Performance Measures: a) AC members will recruit economically disadvantaged Youth Volunteers to participate in YVC projects; b) AC members will mentor, train and supervise economically disadvantaged Youth Volunteers to serve in YVC projects

YVC has maintained its programs for 26 years, including the last 3 years without AmeriCorps funding. However, the ability to reach opportunity youth has suffered and it is crucial to receive AmeriCorps funding to continue to serve this population.

### c. Compliance and Accountability

Each YVC affiliate site provides a supervisor who devotes approximately 50% of his/her time toward AC members. The Affiliate Services Coordinator provides support to Program Directors, and Program Directors provide support to AC member or designate back-up support for when they are unavailable. The Affiliate Services Coordinator communicates weekly with Program Directors (telephone, email or in person). Program Directors are required to meet with their members at least twice a month; one of these monthly meetings involves additional training.

AC member roles are distinct from YVC HQ staff, YVC affiliate staff and Youth Volunteer roles. YVC affiliate staff supervise AC members but generally do not actively participate in youth recruitment or service-learning project implementation. YVC HQ has a non-duplication, non-displacement and non-supplementation policy that has been reviewed and approved by CNCS (the policy is outlined in the Program Director Manual). YVC HQ clearly outlines how affiliates must educate the staff and members about AC and the differences between AC members and staff.

Part of an AC member's orientation, during the first week of service and provided by the Program Director, includes a review of activities prohibited by AC. Prohibited activities are also outlined in the Program Director manual. To ensure comprehension and compliance, AC members are required to complete a survey at the end of the first week that includes questions about AC and YVC policies and protocol. Prohibited activities are also addressed at the YVC National Conference. During site visits, YVC HQ staff review prohibited activities with members and provide clarification, if necessary. YVC HQ staff is also readily available via phone or email to answer any question about whether an activity

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is prohibited. Members are also part of an e-mail group where they can communicate with each other and YVC HQ staff.

YVC affiliate sites with AC members report program data at the conclusion of the summer program; performance measures are reported three times a year (during site visits and annually in September). YVC HQ complies with AC reporting guidelines (as designated in the GPR) during the grant period.

### c1. For Multi-state Applicants Only:

YVC President David Battey has personally called all eight State Commission Executive Directors that are part of this grant. He has consulted with many of them on a variety of AC and non AC service topics in the past as a Kansas Volunteer Commission member and a regular attendee of America's Service Commissions annual gatherings. All eight Executive Directors look forward to having National Direct AC members in their state and have affirmed that they do not see a problem with duplication in their responses to YVC's RFP for this AC project.

Instructions on how to become a YVC affiliate are posted on the YVC HQ website ([www.yvc.org](http://www.yvc.org)). Currently, there are over 30 YVC affiliates in the United States. Each funding cycle, YVC HQ disseminates a Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the CNCS AC RFP that affiliates must complete to request AC member funding. Requests for inclusion in YVC HQ's request are reviewed and discussed by the President, COO and Affiliate Services Coordinator. In this competitive process, sites are reviewed for quality, innovation, sustainability, quality of leadership, past performance, and community involvement. The eight (8) sites included in this request are:

1. Georgia, Macon and Middle Georgia YVC: Amy Davidson, 195 Holt Avenue, Macon, GA, [adavidson@volunteermacon.org](mailto:adavidson@volunteermacon.org). The Macon and Middle Georgia YVC is an outgrowth of Volunteer Macon's Youth Volunteer Program established in 1999. Since then the affiliate has established ongoing summer and out of school time programs, theme-focused summer programs, partnership with the juvenile justice system and intensive youth development and service-learning programs. Volunteer Macon expanded its role in 2005 to become the host agency for CNCS's Senior Corps, including Foster Grandparents, RSVP and Senior Companions; and in 2006 expanded to include VISTA and AC member programs. In 2007, they led the initiative to establish Macon as one of the

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100 Best Communities for Children sponsored by America's Promise, established the Mentoring Roundtable, and secured Department of Education funding to expand recruitment and retention of mentors for at-risk youth.

2. Louisiana, Capital Area YVC: Anna Stogner, 700 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, annas@cauw.org. Since the Capital Area YVC began in 1990, over 7,000 youth volunteers age 12-18 have invested over 140,000 hours of volunteer work in over 1,300 projects impacting over 1,200,000 people in the community. This YVC affiliate is the signature program of the Volunteer Center at Capital Area United Way. Key partners include a wide array of nonprofit, middle and high schools, colleges, foundations and corporations.

3. Missouri, St. Joseph YVC: Anita Jolly, 5223 Mitchell Avenue, St. Joseph, MO 64507, anitaj@youth0alliance.org. St. Joseph YVC has been a YVC affiliate for 21 years and has been responsible for the successful implementation, coordination and completion of a variety of federal, state and privately funded programs. Sixteen staff are responsible for programming in five key areas: Crisis Prevention, Substance Abuse Prevention, Early Childhood, and Youth Asset Development. The Youth Employment program has 50 registered business partners working with staff and participants and the YAC Attack YVC program served 20 agencies through service projects in 2012.

4. Oregon, Corvallis YVC: Deb Curtis, 1310 SW Avery Park Drive, Corvallis, OR 97333, debra.curtis@corvallisoregon.gov. Corvallis YVC has been in existence for more than 13 years. It started as a summer only program and expanded to a year round program in year two. The current program director has been with the affiliate for 12 years and is supported by a Director and Assistant Director. The affiliate has current partnerships with 25 agencies providing service to the local community.

5. South Carolina, Anderson County YVC: Carol Loyd, 907 N. Main Street, Suite 202, Anderson, SC 29621, carol.loyd@uwandersoncty.com. Anderson County YVC has established a great working relationship with most non-profits in the community by offering youth trainings, meetings, and other opportunities for engagement in service-learning activities. The affiliate has 3 part-time and 11 full-time staff members.

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6. Texas, North Texas YVC: Millicent Boykin, 2800 Live Oak Street, Dallas, TX 75204, mboykin@vcnt.org. North Texas YVC youth initiatives build self-esteem, provide leadership development and civic education, and help instill the lifelong habit of giving back to the community. The Volunteer Center of North Texas (VCNT), the affiliate's sponsor organization, is considered one of the strongest Volunteer Centers in the country and has consistently served as a model for other centers for over 40 years.

7. Virginia, Hampton Roads YVC: Laurie Sepanski, 10 San Jose Drive #4D, Newport News, VA 23606, yvchr@cox.net. YVC of Hampton Roads affiliated with Youth Volunteer Corps in May 2009 under the umbrella of National Center for the Prevention of Community Violence. In January 2011 YVCHR became an independent 501c3, still affiliated with YVC. Currently YVCHR has only one paid staff member, which is the Executive Director. All other staffing comes from a partnership with Christopher Newport University's Bonner Fellowship Program and Presidential Leadership Program. The affiliate has 9 YVC Clubs in area schools and has partnered with over 50 organizations since its inception in 2009.

8. Wisconsin, Racine County YVC: Michelle Ortwein, 6216 Washington Avenue, Suite G, Racine, WI 53406, mortwein@gmail.com. Racine County YVC has been connecting volunteers with opportunities in Racine County for over 10 years, when the Volunteer Center of Racine affiliated with YVC. Paid part-time employees and part-time AC members run the Summer Camps and the service-learning programs. There is one full-time director and 4 part-time employees, one of which is the Youth Coordinator who facilitates the YVC programming. Additionally, up to 8 volunteers a week drop in to help with office duties or other work.

After funding has been granted, YVC HQ will conduct site visits at each CNCS-funded affiliate site, utilizing a CNCS-approved site visit tool. Site visits are supplemented with Skype visits by the YVC HQ Affiliate Services Coordinator and as needed by the affiliate. Each affiliate site is required to submit an annual report (detailing program information) to YVC HQ. YVC HQ does not pass through CNCS funds to sub-grantees. Each affiliate provides funds to cover the cost of the Program Director and other support staff; AC Members receive their living allowance directly from the YVC HQ office.

### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

a. Cost Effectiveness

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YVC is requesting 25.95 MSYs at \$10,713/MSY for a total CNCS request amount of \$278,008. YVC will provide \$280,113 in match dollars (50.2%) The total budget is \$558,121. This AmeriCorps grant will represent approximately 20% of the overall funding for YVC Headquarters and the eight YVC programs participating in this grant.

YVC HQ has diverse funding resources in place to cover the match, including a significant workforce development grant from Bank of America. Each YVC affiliate applying for CNCS funding for AC members committed a cash amount toward the match in its RFP totaling \$8,000 per Full-Time member, \$4,000 per Half-Time member, and \$2,000 per Minimum Time member. They will not contribute any match for Minimum Time EAO members. Affiliates have agreed to pay 50% before a Member can start their service, 25% 90 days after start date and 25% 180 days after start date.

Additionally, in-kind affiliate commitments include Program Director salary/benefits (\$168,000) and background checks (\$1,875). The match amount for Program Directors' salaries are documented by affiliate sites' submissions of monthly time sheets with the percentage of time spent supervising their AC Members.

YVC received the AmeriCorps National Direct grant at approximately \$700,000 per year in 2010, 2009 and 2008. We also received the Summer of Service grant through Learn and Serve America in 2010 and 2009 at approximately \$175,000 per year.

YVC has maintained its programs for 26 years, including the last 3 years without AmeriCorps funding. However, the ability to reach opportunity youth has suffered and it is crucial to receive AmeriCorps funding to continue to serve this population.

Given our experience in successfully working with AC members, our proven ability to effectively administer AC grants, and our detailed budget planning and monitoring, we are confident that YVC will run a successful program, reaching disadvantaged youth to develop needed employment skills, with the low cost of \$10,713 per MSY.

### b. Budget Adequacy

## **Narratives**

The budget includes a living allowance costs and support for AC members, covered 70% by CNCS and 30% by the Grantee share. The budget also includes a portion of personnel costs and benefits for administrative oversight. Oversight of affiliate YVC programs provided by YVC HQ staff is integral to effective service delivery and compliance with AC regulations.

The budget includes training costs for Program Directors and AC members to attend the national conference in Kansas City in October. Members and Program Directors receive training on YVC-specific program standards as well as AC member requirements. Program Directors also receive training that prepares them to train AC members at the affiliate sites that are part-time or minimum time members and are not engaged with YVC during the October timeframe. The cost for the YVC conference is split between the CNCS and Grantee share. Further, the budget includes costs for 2 staff to attend the annual grant meeting and 1 staff person to attend the Financial Management Institute. Both of these trainings will be covered by the Grantee Share.

AC member service gear expenses are included in the budget for each AC member. As written in our AC Program Directors Manual, each member will wear a shirt, pin, or other AC item at all times during their service.

Background checks for all members and staff working with members is included in the Grantee share of the budget and will be covered by each YVC affiliate site.

A project evaluation is included in the budget, with 34% covered by CNCS and 66% covered by the Grantee share.

Rent is not highlighted in the budget but will be covered by the grantee.

Other costs such as office supplies, internet and phone will be covered under the Corporation Fixed Percentage of 5.26%.

The proposed budget is based on multiple years of experience successfully administering AC National Direct grants, using AC members in a similar capacity. This budget will ensure that the critical components of running successful YVC programs at affiliate sites are supported and will ultimately

## Narratives

help YVC and CNCS achieve its mutual goal of addressing youth unemployment, particularly for disadvantaged youth.

b1. For EAPs and other Fixed Amount grants Only:

N/A

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

#### 1. Performance Measures

Objective: Employment

Title: Youth Unemployment

Problem Statement: Youth unemployment is at an all-time high, especially summer youth unemployment

Selected Interventions: Job Training: Adult Basic Education

Outputs: O2: Number of econ disadv individuals receiving job training or skill development services

Outcomes: Disadvantaged youth will develop greater job skills through YVC service

#### 2. Opportunity Youth Identification

YVC affiliates participating in the AmeriCorps grant program will identify "opportunity youth" on the consent form filled out before youth can volunteer. The consent form states:

For the purpose of our grant reporting, does your child meet any of the following criteria: (a) out-of-school youth, including out-of school youth who are unemployed; (b) in or aging out of foster care; (c) limited English proficiency; (d) homeless or who have run away from home; (e) at-risk to leave secondary school without a diploma; (f) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency; or (g) individuals with disabilities? [ ] No [ ] Yes

#### 3. Leadership Training

The following list identifies top leadership skills sought by employers in job candidates matched with skills that can be gained through volunteering with YVC. (Source:

[http://www.quintcareers.com/job\\_skills\\_values.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/job_skills_values.html)

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What Do Employers Really Want? Top Skills and Values Employers Seek from Job-Seekers, by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D., and Katharine Hansen, Ph.D.)

1. Flexibility/Adaptability - YVC programs offer a variety of projects and tasks. Youth Volunteers rarely know exactly what to expect when they arrive at an agency. They must be flexible and adapt to whatever situation is presented.
2. Interpersonal Skills - From working with fellow Youth Volunteers and Team Leaders to interacting with agency staff and clients, YVC youth typically meet dozens of new people on a given project and must work together to achieve project objectives. YVC icebreakers and team builders further develop this skill.
3. Communication - YVC youth are given a voice in project selection and implementation, and must communicate in a respectful and effective way when completing a YVC project. YVC team builders and reflection activities also give youth a chance to practice this skill.
4. Teamwork - YVC projects are completed by teams of youth. From their first encounter to their final reflection, YVC staff who lead the projects require, foster and develop teamwork among the youth.
5. Problem Solving - YVC projects offer youth volunteers the authority to decide as a team the best way to tackle certain tasks. Often, things do not go as planned and the youth must figure out how to work around various obstacles to get the project done.
6. Multicultural Sensitivity - YVC programs are designed to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of diversity. YVC youth are recruited from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, and they are brought into parts of the community with which they are not familiar, and they must work together for a common cause.
7. Work Ethic - Hard work is always expected on YVC projects. YVC Team Leaders encourage youth volunteers' work ethic by modeling it and by demonstrating the importance of their efforts with service-learning lessons and activities.

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8. Reliability/Dependability - YVC youth are frequently reminded of the weight of their volunteer commitment. YVC's ongoing projects offer youth an opportunity to appreciate the importance of dependability as they develop relationships with agency clients, fellow Youth Volunteers and their Team Leaders.

9. Self-Confidence - Youth are given the authority to set goals, make project decisions, and meet new people. They see the results of their efforts in the smile of a child they share a book with, the pile of donated clothing they sort for a women's shelter, and the shine of the disabled veteran's apartment they just cleaned. Many opportunity youth begin serving with YVC to "get their hours," but continue volunteering because they enjoy the way it makes them feel.

10. Professionalism - For many Youth Volunteers, a YVC project is their first opportunity to behave in a respectful, mature manner in a non-school group setting. Much like a first job, YVC projects require punctuality, following instructions, and reviewing performance. Youth Volunteers are required to execute tasks and communicate with individuals of all ages and backgrounds to accomplish goals.

11. Planning/Organizing - YVC is designed to encourage youth to take an active role in program development, from deciding how best to deliver a service-learning lesson to actually planning projects start to finish. YVC youth are viewed as resources and YVC staff who plan projects are trained to incorporate youth voice in every step of the planning process.

12. Leadership - YVC programs are required to provide leadership opportunities for Youth Volunteers, such as the opportunity to serve on a youth advisory board or act as an assistant Team Leader on projects. Programs often offer professional development opportunities for youth as well, sending them to national conferences and local workshops and nominating them for service-related awards.

The Measurement Tool utilized to track leadership training performance is YVC's Post-Survey, completed by youth after each week-long summer project or after each school semester.

### 4. Job Training

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YVC offers a wide range of projects for youth to choose from, which enables them to explore different careers and interests and refine their career goals. After serving at a low-income daycare center, one Youth Volunteer said, "I've always considered being a teacher, but now I know that I definitely want to teach and inspire kids." Other youth have chosen careers in nursing after serving at a retirement home or social work after serving at a homeless shelter.

The following list identifies fields of work available for youth career consideration matched with YVC service learning projects that provide them with training in the field.

1. Health Care - Socializing with residents at a retirement home; serving breakfast to cancer patients at a residential cancer center.
2. Engineering - Building homes from the ground up and learning about their infrastructures.
3. Parks and Recreation - Cleaning up trash at a local park; helping with a community event at a park.
4. Education - Providing childcare at a homeless shelter while the parents are searching for jobs; reading to children at a low-income daycare; planning a summer day-camp at a transitional housing unit.
5. Construction - Assisting with building a house and learning about all aspects of construction while enabling low-income members of the community to become home-owners.
6. Landscaping - Learning about organic farming at a local farm that provides fresh produce for the food bank; planting a rain garden at a local park.
7. History - Improving landscaping at a former Native American mission and learning about its history; helping with a community event at a local museum.
8. Art - Painting a mural in a public space; guiding homeless children in an art project; coaching children and youth with mental disabilities and helping them perform a drama piece.

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9. Foreign language - Helping refugee children with their homework; playing with children whose second language is English at a bilingual preschool.

10. Accounting Serving at a thrift shop and handling money and interactions to raise money for a cause.

11. Biology - Clearing a trail for a nature center and learning about local plant and animal life.

12. Psychology - Serving as mentors at a camp for children with neurological disorders and learning about how disorders such as Asperger's and Tourette's affect people.

13. Veterinary care - Socializing pets at an animal shelter and learning about the need to spay and neuter animals; cleaning out a vacant animal enclosure at a zoo.

14. Social work - Throwing a holiday party for a domestic violence shelter and learning about how to prevent domestic violence; sorting food at a food pantry and learning about how families budget to ensure food on the table; helping to clean apartments at facility for people with mental illnesses and learning about their challenges.

The Measurement tool utilized to track job training is Ydat, a database specifically designed for YVC, where details of youth service projects are logged by Affiliates.

### 5. Youth Survey Augmentation

YVC has identified the need for additional questions to be added to the youth survey administered at the end of service. These questions will be added to the survey at the beginning of the grant period. After volunteering with YVC . . .

1. I have learned to be more flexible/adaptable.
2. I have enhanced my interpersonal skills.
3. I have developed stronger communication skills.
4. I am able to more effectively work in a team environment.

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5. I have improved my problem solving skills.
6. I am more sensitive to other cultures and backgrounds.
7. I have developed a stronger work ethic.
8. I have become more reliable/dependable.
9. I have increased my self-confidence.
10. I have learned how to be professional while doing my work.

### 6. Assessment and Reporting Frequency

YVC Headquarters has access to reported information on a continual basis because of the use of YVC-specific reporting software called Ydat. Once a year, a more formal request goes out to Affiliates for final report information.

YVC Headquarters staff reviews data internally biannually, then shares it with the YVC Board and its Affiliates annually, asking for comments and discussing points of merit. YVC then makes service improvements to administration of the program as needed. Results of the assessment will be included when reporting to CNCS as required in the grant agreement.

#### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

#### **Clarification Summary**

N/A

#### **Continuation Changes**

N/A