

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest (JVCNW), with a 56-year old history serving the most vulnerable in remote, rural and urban settings across five states in the Pacific Northwest, has served as a model for the establishment of Peace Corps, VISTA, AmeriCorps, and many faith-based volunteer organizations. Due to our effective program structure and support for members, who live together in pre-arranged communities of 4-8, we have a 99% retention rate of members. 140 AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 4500 volunteers to engage in capacity building, education, and health activities throughout 5 states of the Pacific Northwest. 108 members' capacity building efforts will strengthen the service of 80 nonprofits; 25 members serving as classroom instructors and educational assistants will assist 250 students to improve academic engagement; and 7 members will engage in activities leading to health access for 1500 individuals. At the end of the Aug 1, 2013 to July 31, 2016 project, 100 organizations will have enhanced and/or expanded programming with the creation of 495 sustainable, new or enhanced systems and business processes. 900 students will have increased engagement in the classroom; and 9000 will have accessed health services. The CNCS investment of \$1,694,733 will be matched with \$1,268,900.

## Rationale and Approach

1. a. NEED: JVCNW is an intermediary program with 140 members serving in the areas of Capacity Building, Education and Healthy Futures in 21 local communities in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. 73 members serve in rural, remote and/or economically distressed areas; other members live and serve in urban areas like "The Hilltop" in Tacoma, WA, where there are high unemployment and poverty rates. We have deep roots in these local communities and strong historical relationships with social service agencies, non-profits and community and faith-based organizations throughout the region which help us understand the compelling self-identified needs within each community, and make informed choices about which organizations have the capacity and impact to make effective partners. JVCNW will place 65 of its members in communities with poverty rates above the nat'l average; 43 members in 7 different counties where staggering poverty and unemployment levels classify them as Economically Distressed Areas (2010 Bureau of Economic Analysis, BLS). Big Horn and Blaine Counties in MT and Bethel Census Area in AK, have experienced persistent poverty levels of at least 20% of the population over 4 decades (USDA ERS, 1970-2000 Census). Persistent poverty can have a crippling effect on a community's ability to address residents' basic needs and can be a contributing factor to high rates of homelessness, at-risk youth, domestic

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violence, and myriad health disparities, especially among minority populations. JVCNW will place 49 members in rural areas; 33 of which are in remote communities. Over 70% of Alaska is inaccessible by road and only accessible by air during large parts of the year resulting in higher costs of living and large distances to reach essential services. Rural communities are smaller, more isolated, and receive less funding per capita than urban areas. (Nonprofit Ecosystem Framework, An Assessment of Capacity Building in WA State). Rural areas can have difficulty attracting and retaining young, educated workers.

**CAPACITY BUILDING:** The recession has had lingering effects causing a growing number of people in need. This increased pressure for the services of nonprofits comes while shortfalls in funding are causing a scaling back of services. Rural and remote areas have historically had higher levels of economic distress and more difficulty in building infrastructural supports to improve service delivery. Per the 2012 Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) report, in the 5 states JVCNW serves, 87% of nonprofits report increased demand for services, 58% did not meet the demand for their services, and 23% reduced programs or services. Our capacity building efforts enhance the quality and scope of services for non-profit organizations struggling to address local priorities such as homelessness, domestic violence, and at-risk youth. **Homelessness:** 25 members in capacity building will serve with sites addressing persistent issues presented to families, veterans and other individuals without housing or who are insecurely housed. Most of these placements will be in WA and OR. Seattle rates 6 of 100 most populated metro areas for homeless population, and the Portland area ranks 16th (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2011). Numbers of those experiencing homelessness in our metro areas have continued to rise. From 2009-11, homelessness in Multnomah County (OR) increased by 9%; the number of unsheltered families increased by 35%. **At-Risk Children and Youth:** 70 of our members will serve where child poverty rates are above the nat'l average, of these, 20 will be at sites investing in the wellbeing of children and youth. Poverty places children and youth at risk of poor physical, mental and behavioral health, and academic failure. High youth poverty rates can have devastating community impact, such as in Yakima, WA, where members will join a community-wide effort to prevent gang violence. Relative to the rest of WA, Yakima's youth are twice as likely to live in poverty and nearly 3 times more likely to be arrested for drugs, alcohol, vandalism or gang activity (2012 YC-Life Indicator Report). **Domestic Violence:** 14 of our members will serve in sites addressing domestic violence; 7 in AK serving Alaskan Native women. AK has the highest rate of reported forcible rape, over twice the national average (2011 FBI Uniform Crime Reports). 59 of every 100 adult women in AK have experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence or both (Council on

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Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault). EDUCATION: 80% of our 25 members in Education serve predominately Native American and Alaska Native students in remote areas of MT, WA and AK. 100% of the students served qualify for free/reduced lunch in 5 of our 11 partner schools; an average of 80% in the remaining 6 schools. Factors affecting students completion rates include the need of students to participate in providing for family sustenance and the lack of parental motivation for consistent attendance in one educational institution. According to the 2010 Montana American Indian Student Achievement Data Report, Native American students drop out of 7th & 8th grade at a rate 12 times that of white students. They comprise 11.3% of enrollment in these grade levels but account for 53.5% of the dropouts; the high school dropout rate for Native American students in MT is 12.7%, 1.7 times the national average for all students. HEALTHY FUTURES: JVCNW will place 7 members at service sites directly supporting increased access to healthcare for underserved populations, including those who are homeless and migrant workers. At 30% uninsured, those of Hispanic origin have less coverage than any racial group and half that of those who are white (2010 Census). 3 members will help address these disparities for Hispanic populations in places such as Hood River County (OR), a Medically Underserved Area for seasonal and migrant workers.

1.b. EFFECTIVE MEANS: CAPACITY BUILDING: 108 members will build the capacity of 80 service sites by completing capacity building projects to help nonprofits enhance the quality of services, expand their programs, and help more individuals and families in need access essential services. Additional outcomes measuring members' impact on extending the scale and reach and efficiency or effectiveness of the nonprofits will be documented. Member activities at shelters, drop-in centers, and resident service programs will enable these organizations to be more effective in addressing homelessness and housing insecurity through enhancements to volunteer management, development of therapeutic groups, educational programming, and job training. Our members will support nonprofits investing in the wellbeing of at-risk children and youth by designing parent education curricula to prevent abuse and neglect, enhancing mentor programs to effectively match at-risk youth with positive role models, organizing curricula that volunteers can implement to build life skills for youth transitioning to adulthood. In an effort to address widespread domestic violence, our member in Bethel, AK, organizes Teens Acting Against Violence (TAAV), a tribal youth program. She has helped local youth create a training video of how to give healthy relationships presentations, empowering youth to take action towards creating a community without violence. EDUCATION: 25 members will help children and youth achieve success in 11 schools through teaching, tutoring, and providing additional academic supports as part of a community wide effort to combat entrenched recidivism. 19

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members serve in schools located on/near Native American Reservations; 6 members will serve in alternative schools in urban, rural and remote areas with disadvantaged children. Of our 25 members in education, 4 will be classroom teachers on the Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation, where the school has difficulty finding and retaining qualified teachers; 21 members will serve as academic support, para-educators, reading and math clinicians and educational coordinators. HEALTHY FUTURES: 7 members will focus their service on increasing access to health services for uninsured, economically disadvantaged, medically underserved or those living in rural areas. 4 members will coordinate care and outreach to those experiencing homelessness and 3 members will address the barriers of accessing care for migrant worker communities.

Nonprofits receiving CAPACITY BUILDING support from members will be able to take on projects they would not be able to accomplish without affordable, reliable and skilled support from our members. This is especially true in economically distressed areas experiencing the flight of young, educated residents. On average, only 2.8% of individuals in their early twenties in our rural service areas have completed a bachelors degree or higher, 3 times less than the nat'l average (2011 ACS). Because our EDUCATION members largely serve in rural and remote schools, our college-educated members provide an educational level not always present in small local communities. Schools have difficulty finding qualified personnel and volunteers to teach and provide support roles required to help children, with high academic and personal needs, be engaged and succeed academically. Without our members, HEALTH sites would be limited in their abilities to connect vulnerable populations with access to care. Our members bring language and/or nursing proficiency, as well as the ability to help patients navigate new health changes. JVCNW requests funding for 140 full-time AmeriCorps positions to provide members with an adequate number of hours and duration of service to carry out the above-mentioned responsibilities in capacity building, education and health.

1.c. EVIDENCE/IMPACT: JVCNW is committed to continuous improvement and utilization of research-informed practices that integrate the best available evidence, client and social contexts, and practice wisdom. We are dedicated to collecting meaningful performance data and evaluating progress on our theory of change. CAPACITY BUILDING: In 2013-14, we will initiate a Capacity Building organizational assessment process, utilizing a pre/post assessment tool that includes guidance from Venture Philanthropy Partner's 2001 Report "Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organization" based on indicators from the McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid. These indicators include components under strategy, organizational skills and human resources, e.g. new program development, performance measurement, performance analysis and program adjustments, and

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volunteers. The community impact will be measurable through the development of systems and processes based on the McKinsey grid that our partner sites have self identified as important to their service delivery and lead to improved services to clients. The AmeriCorps' investment will strengthen nonprofits' programs to serve increased numbers of individuals and families in need; provide new, higher quality and enhanced services; and fill gaps in access to care. Examples: Clients will have better access and be more aware of services because of the marketing materials developed by members. Parents will expand their understanding of healthy behaviors, such as nutrition, and better prepare meals for their children, based on new classes provided. Nonprofits will have more effective volunteer systems because of member projects that create or solidify best practices.

**EDUCATION:** 25 JVCNW members will serve in a variety of school settings providing instruction, tutoring, and other educational supports primarily for Indigenous youth experiencing poverty in rural and remote school settings. In order to be effective, school-based interventions need to account for the limited resources of students living in poverty. Assessing student resources, including the availability of resource people who are available in times of need and frequent contact with adults who are positive role models, is vital for improving academic outcomes (Payne 2008, Nine Effective Practices). Community impact will be measured by the increased engagement of students in their academic environment, with the goal of increased retention and achievement of students in their studies. Individualized attention will provide the added resourced needed to engage students in the educational process, keep them in school and allow them to be academically successful. The Principal at the Bethel Alternative Boarding School (BABS), reports: "Since BABS serves all at-risk youth, the lower student to adult ratio increases the chances for more of a successful learning environment." Our members develop relationships with students, act as role models and coaches, and engage students in activities to better the community.

**HEALTHY FUTURES:** 7 members serving in healthcare will help safety-net and community health clinics in outreach, outpatient care, cancer screenings, information referral, and assisting economically disadvantaged clients in navigating new healthcare services. The Economic and Social Research Institute (2006) reports that socio-cultural competence; coordination and integration of care; comfort and support; access and navigation skills; and community outreach are key components to patient centered care for underserved populations. The community impact is demonstrated by the number of clients our members reach using language of origin; meeting clients where they live, such as migrant camps; and being a supportive presence navigating the complex process of health care; as well as those accessing care.

**CAPACITY BUILDING:** In the next 3 years, 100 organizations will receive services from members to

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enhance and/or expand their programming abilities and outreach. Members will create 495 sustainable, new or enhanced systems and processes. Organizational assessments, based in part on the McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid, will be used to help determine sites' needs and track additional outcomes measuring members' impact on extending the scale and reach, and efficiency or effectiveness of the programs. Upon completion of the capacity building activity, members will record on a project completion form a description of the project resulting in new or enhanced systems or processes for that organization, and site supervisors will certify. The form will be collected in an electronic data collection system. EDUCATION: After 3 years working with students who are at risk for having very high drop out rates, 1500 students will enter an academic program with our members, 900 will complete the program, and 750 will increase their engagement in the classroom, with the end goal of improved academic achievement and school completion rates. Members will utilize logs to note students' participation, as determined by their particular program or activity. Engagement will be documented via a pre- post- survey. Members will work in partnership with teachers to rate students' school engagement. HEALTHY FUTURES: After 3 years, 4,500 medically underserved individuals will access health services. Members will record referrals and utilization for unduplicated clients with a utilization log instrument. We plan to develop outcome measurement over the next year.

JVCNW will report annually in our Grantee Progress Report on Capacity Building aligned measures 3.4, 3.11 - the number of organizations receiving capacity building services, and the number of new systems and processes in place and utilized after members' service year. For Education, we will report on aligned measures ED1, ED2, ED27 - the number of students who enrolled and completed our educational programs, and the number of students who demonstrate improved academic engagement. In Healthy Futures, we plan to track the H1 measure- the numbers of individuals who are uninsured, economically disadvantaged medically underserved, or living in rural areas utilizing preventive and primary health care services. We will work to develop an aligned outcome measure in the coming year. Targets are based on past performance measure data collection, service site application data, and site supervisor and member input.

PROGRESS ON MEASURES: During 2011-2012, our members served 77 sites and completed 145 capacity building projects, exceeding our target by 20; 92% were being utilized by nonprofits 4 months after the completion of member service. To improve this rate, we will use the data collected from our organizational assessments to best meet the capacity building needs of our sites. Our efforts have helped nonprofits maintain/enhance quality of services, meet increased demand in a time of limited

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funding, and create replicable models. For example, our member at Food Connection in Tacoma, WA created a client tracking system which enabled the organization to expand from serving 450 students/wk to serving 590 students/wk; in the summer program, meals increased by 87%. Our member serving in the Anchorage, AK American Red Cross has greatly expanded their preparedness efforts by developing an action-focused and more user-friendly curriculum for Red Cross volunteers. The Red Cross office in Fairbanks called JVCNW to request a member due to this innovation and their desire to emulate this new program. We have collected capacity building forms detailing the scores of projects members have completed. Our evaluation efforts in the coming years will be geared toward developing common measurable outcomes in scale and reach, and efficiency and effectiveness. 56 members mobilized 9000+ volunteers from 2010-12.

In 2011-12, our education members reported serving 419 students. Students received classroom, individualized, and small group assistance. The relationships our members build with students are a critical aspect of their service and we have observed that the academic support our members provide leads to students' increased engagement and achievement. For example, a member who is a 2nd grade teacher in Hays, MT reported that many of her 18 students were reading 3-8 words per minute at below 10% accuracy in August, after her dedicated efforts, every one of these students increased their words per minute by 5-6 times with 90% accuracy by April. In 2012-13 we instituted an academic engagement measure.

In 2011-12, our members in healthy futures referred 3002 underserved individuals to health care (79% of our goal); 1116 of these accessed care (41% of our target). We serve high transient populations of people experiencing homelessness and seasonal employment; their access to care and our tracking of their utilization of care is extremely challenging. For 2013-14 we will target 1500 individuals to access health services, adjusting our expectations of success rates, partnering with new sites, and refining our tracking tool.

1.d. MEMBER RECRUITMENT: JVCNW has a highly effective recruitment plan, promoting our residential AmeriCorps program to diverse audiences and local communities, specifically targeting people of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and for specific service duties, skills and abilities such as teaching, nursing and language. In 2013-14, 53 positions require/request language proficiency, primarily Spanish. We conduct in-person recruitment at over 55 community colleges, colleges, universities, and diversity and service clubs. Extensive effort is made to ensure an appropriate fit of applicant to position; our success in doing so is reflected in our 99% retention rate. We provide personalized attention to potential members by connecting them with current or former members.

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Email campaigns, phone calls, web site, Facebook, our AmeriCorps blog, and Twitter are all employed to share information about member opportunities and to attract a diverse contingent of members. Our partners in our service locations and local communities help promote the program and assist us in reaching out on a local level to potential members. We advertise on the CNCS website and in magazines to attract diverse members. We recruit at colleges whose students are primarily Hispanic or African American, and/or come from immigrant or low-income families. Our members' demographics have shifted since 2010 when 92% of our members identified as Caucasian to 2012 when 81% identify as Caucasian. JVCNW is sensitive to the needs of diverse applicants and members, discussing with applicants their needs to complete service and to flourish in our residential program, incorporating trainings and regular facilitated discussions in member communities to allow for members' sharing of diverse perspectives. We seek members with a multitude of abilities and support our members needing accommodation, i.e. this year JVCNW worked with the Alaska Commission to secure a JAWS (Job Access With Speech) computer screen reader for a member who is blind in Juneau.

1.e. MEMBER TRAINING: JVCNW has a 56 year history of providing meaningful personal and professional development to members. Members attend a 5 day orientation in August in a rustic forest camp where 25 staff and local experts conduct trainings on National Service and AmeriCorps membership including affiliation, goals, benefits, regulations including prohibited activities, performance measures, time tracking, telling the AmeriCorps story, and service days; cultural competency and race relations; social analysis; understanding privilege, power and oppression; tools for living in community and in solidarity with those they serve; communication skill development; and techniques for living simply and sustainably. Optional workshops include being an ally to GLBTO youth and adults, gender, ecology, moving through addiction, the ethics of eating, immigration, storytelling, composting, growing your own food and other suitability skills. To ensure a thorough orientation to the local community, JVCNW arranges a support team of committed volunteers in each locale to provide a 2-4 day introduction for members including opportunities to meet community leaders/members, especially Tribal Elders in our reservation communities, alumni, and other key local contacts. This support team also facilitates in-depth monthly meetings with member communities using JVCNW formation materials addressing issues such as motivation for service, building community, reflection on service, solidarity with those they serve, and conflict resolution skills. This comprehensive support provides an effective model of service provision, leading to an extremely low attrition rate.

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JVCNW requires sites to provide the necessary professional on-site training for their members to carry out their service in an effective, quality manner. Some of the in-depth training members receive includes basic first aid, crisis de-escalation, cycle of generational poverty, cultural competency, basic counseling skills, classroom management, tutoring/educational assistance training, effects of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, identifying and reporting child abuse/neglect, suicide intervention, and mental illness competency. Members serving in domestic violence receive 40 hours of training over the course of several weeks. JVCNW provides three intense 3-day weekend retreats/leadership trainings throughout the year. The 1st in Oct. focuses on the insertion of the members in the local community and their own member community, with high quality training and tools for communication and leadership. The 2nd Feb retreat focuses on training in analysis/reflection on the systemic concerns of the clients with whom they serve. A 3rd in June (optional) provides resources/tools for reflection and "life after AmeriCorps" (finding employment, applying to graduate school, and building a resume from service experience). Staff sends out 2 resource emails each month, with AmeriCorps specific information, and suggested print articles and links addressing service topics and the four values of JVCNW.

As a faith-based organization, JVCNW is stringent about adherence to the rules on prohibited service activities. Information on prohibited activities is emphasized with site supervisors in their handbook as well as in our initial orientation and training calls. Prohibited activities are reviewed thoroughly at our Orientation with members. Every member, their site supervisor and JVCNW signs a contract before service begins that includes a detailed list of service activities prohibited for members and generated volunteers under 45 CFR § 2520.45, and CFR § 2520.65. Review of timesheets and activities as well as follow-up with our site monitoring ensures adherence to rules regarding prohibited activities.

1.f MEMBER SUPERVISION: Due to our structure as a residential service program, our members receive multiple layers of supervision and support from JVCNW staff, sites, support teams, and their own member community. Each member has a qualified site supervisor who, as part of their contract with JVCNW, provides an intensive orientation to the site and, minimally, weekly supervision sessions. Many members participate in site staff meetings receiving group input and feedback as well. Site supervisors are selected by the individual service site and are trained by each site for quality and effective supervision. In addition to instructing site supervisors in their AmeriCorps duties, responsibilities and expectations, JVCNW staff provide training, oversight, and support to supervisors through a comprehensive handbook for site supervisors detailing benefits/responsibilities of being part of AmeriCorps and other specifics needed for a successful service year, and initial trainings covering

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topics such as the role of the site supervisor, prohibited activities, performance measures, site monitoring, the member and the site supervisor contracts. Strong staff support/supervision of members is provided primarily by 7 Area Directors (ADs) who mentor and guide members and their member community throughout the year and liaise with partner site supervisors. Each AD has responsibility for 20-26 members. Member support by the AD includes: relationship building at Orientation; fall and winter Area Visits for 1:1 member consultations to review the service experience, site visit and meeting with the site supervisor and member for performance review, and meetings with the member community to assess community dynamics and offer feedback and support; Dec and May telephone supportive check ins; facilitation at 3 retreats/leadership development weekends; and availability for consultation at the member's request. The local support teams, often made up of former JVs/ and members, receive a handbook from JVCNW staff outlining their roles. They are in contact at least once per month to provide meals, facilitate discussions and plan activities. Members support one another through living in intentional communities, sharing meals and attending at least two planned evenings together per week with opportunities to reflect on service experiences. To better support site supervisors, a self- and member-assessment is provided to the AD during the Area Visit and at the end of service. ADs conduct an audit of each site and supervisor while on the first site visit with the member and supervisor, covering concerns such as required policies in place, contractual obligations completed, prohibited activities awareness and compliance, supervision duties carried out, and clarity of member duties. Sometimes ADs volunteer at service sites to understand services more clearly. ADs facilitate a mandatory meeting of all local site supervisors on the first Area Visit to provide guidance on AmeriCorps policy and procedures, discuss best practices with members, network, coordinate joint trainings for members, and conduct an informal community needs assessment.

1.g. MEMBER EXPERIENCE: A powerful and positive member service experience is a high priority for JVCNW. We evaluate and act on feedback gained from our members from their orientation, retreats/leadership weekends, service evaluations, and AD check-ins. Our members benefit from the diversity of service placements through their reflections on the interconnectedness of issues their clients face such as institutionalized poverty, homelessness, lack of educational resources, domestic violence, and poor health. Because our members live together in communities, every day there are structured and unstructured discussions, reflections and innovative ideas surfacing. Members volunteer at each others' sites, network and share resources to provide greater care for their clients, and create new, inter-organizational service delivery models. Our members are immersed in sub-

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cultural and cultural experiences, one of the most powerful of which is with Indigenous Peoples, with whom 40% of our members serve. Members are often invited to participate in community gatherings, sweat lodges, powwows, fish camps, and dog sledding. Our program requires weekly reflection discussions and monthly support team meetings in member communities. In Nov 2012 we offered our first post-service weekend retreat for former volunteers/members of any program, to reflect on how they continue to live a value-filled life of service. The next retreat is scheduled for May 2013. The JVCNW experience has produced 6 decades of alumni committed to carrying their service forward by improving their country and the world through professional and personal endeavors, for example former JVs include an assistant to the President in the White House, successful non-profit, legal, and medical professionals, and the newly elected Attorney General in WA state.

We highlight our AmeriCorps identity with our members in our recruitment efforts, the application process, and at all points through the year. We present AmeriCorps t-shirts to our members as well as "media information sheets" to guide members' comments about their national service and AmeriCorps identity in the event of press interviews in their local communities. We encourage our members to attend AmeriCorps events, trainings and activities sponsored by our state commissions and to collaborate with other member programs. We encourage members to participate in our AmeriCorps blog as well as in the national photo/video contests, inviting thoughtful reflection on the impact of their service.

1.h. VOLUNTEER GENERATION: Community volunteers are critical to our capacity building focus as they will continue to be involved with the service sites past the member's service year and will be able to implement many of the projects developed by members. An example of the type of volunteer generation our members will perform is at Yakima Memorial Hospital Home Care Services, where the member will spend 15% time on volunteer management assistance, serving clients who have been diagnosed with a progressive, life-limiting illness through nurturing volunteer relationships, assisting with volunteer trainings and placement, and increasing awareness of the need for veteran volunteers and veteran clients. Our member communities host service learning trips for college students from around the country (5 trips in 2011-12). Volunteer mobilization will continue to be a role our members play in helping to expand the reach of their sites. Our service sites and members receive orientation and training and sign contracts that ensure that neither members, nor the volunteers they recruit and manage, will be engaged in prohibited activities.

JVCNW takes great pride in our partnership with AmeriCorps and the broader national service movement and prominently displays AmeriCorps signage on our storefront and inside our office and

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fully integrates the AmeriCorps name/logo on our website, through our social media, in all our print and web materials including application forms, recruitment materials, program materials, member curriculum, press releases and publications. Our AmeriCorps identity is included in our signatures on email, our business cards and stationery. As described above, our members and staff are provided with AmeriCorps gear and tell the AmeriCorps story. In addition to requiring our sites to display AmeriCorps signage, we will discuss with sites how they should incorporate the AmeriCorps logo and name in all possible and effective ways to ensure the AmeriCorps brand is identified with our sites and acknowledged as an important part of the service they provide.

### Organizational Capability

2.a. ORG BACKGROUND/STAFFING: The mission of JVCNW is to engage individuals in a transforming experience of full-time service responding to locally identified needs of the most vulnerable in remote, rural and urban settings of the Pacific Northwest. JVCNW started in 1956 with a handful of dedicated volunteers who built and taught at Copper Valley School for Alaska Native and non-Native children. Our first years in Alaska were devoted to helping provide quality education to Alaska Native children. JVCNW expanded out of Alaska in the 1960s, and Jesuit Volunteers (JVs) began living and working with Native American communities, as well as serving in rural and inner-city social service and health placements in Washington, Oregon, in other states, and internationally. From its roots in the Northwest, JVC organizations have spread throughout the United States and abroad. As a highly successful intermediary service model, JVCNW has been a catalyst and archetype for the establishment of Peace Corps, VISTA, AmeriCorps and many faith-based volunteer organizations over the past 50+ years. Most of our members are recent college graduates. They live in pre-arranged residential intentional communities of 4-8 members in neighborhoods among those they serve. Our organization, including members, staff and board, strive to live out the four values of our mission: community, simple living, social and ecological justice, and spirituality/reflection. An exciting new program of JVCNW is our JV EnCorps (encore) program for individuals aged 50+, an attempt to connect the skills and talents of retiring baby boomers with the growing needs in our local communities. In 2011, we received a 3 year grant from the M.J. Murdock Memorial Trust to implement this pilot program in Portland, OR and to expand it to additional cities in the Northwest. JV EnCorps participants live in their own homes, focus on our 4 values and meet monthly for reflection on their service and resource materials provided by the JV EnCorps Manager. With 56 years of experience successfully running a full-time, high-engagement service program and 2.5 years as a National Direct AmeriCorps program, we have the expertise, systems and demonstrated

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capacity to manage a model AmeriCorps program. We have been named one of the 100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon since the 2009 inaugural year; and one of the 100 Best Green Companies in Oregon since the 2010 inaugural year. Our fiscal management is strong, evidenced by no findings in our 2012 financial audit. We have a strong administrative and program structure to implement the program, provide the excellent support, technical assistance and monitoring needed for members and sites to excel. The leader of the organization is the ED, Jeanne Haster, BA, MA, MTh, former JV, in her 9th year in the role, with 30+ years nonprofit experience. Jeanne has responsibility for program oversight, evaluation, fund development, stakeholder support and management of program operations. She is responsible to the BOD.

AmeriCorps Program Manager (AC PM), Mary Hegel, is a MSW graduate from Washington University in St. Louis, where she trained in program evaluation and assessing evidence-based practices. With 7 years experience working with community-based nonprofits, including 2 years as a JV, Mary has extensive background in community engagement and volunteer management. She is responsible for the smooth operation and compliance of our AmeriCorps program, and supports members and site supervisors in technical assistance. She coordinates collaboration and interaction with our 5 state commissions. AmeriCorps Administrative Asst. (AC Admin), Hilary Titus, BA, former JV, performs tasks relevant to member administration and data collection.

Lead Area Director, Julia Peters, BA and former 2-year JV, 3 years on staff, is responsible for member program operations, Area Director (AD) supervision, evaluation, member support and training. She has responsibility for a 7 member community in Portland, OR. We have 6 ADs who are responsible for the direct support, oversight, guidance, and leadership development of the members as well as direct support and oversight of our service sites. The ADs are Danielle Bastien, Anthony DeLorenzo, Susan Foster, and Bonnie Lenneman (BA degrees, 3 years on staff, and former 2-year JV/members); Jessica Heringer (BA, M.Div.) and Megan Bell (BA, former 2-year JV), each with 2 years on staff.

Recruitment and Marketing Manager, Christie Costello, BA, 2-year JV AmeriCorps member, establishes and carries out our member recruitment plan, marketing efforts, bi-annual newsletter. She supervises an 8-month Recruiter, Ian Roeber, BA, former 2 year JV AmeriCorps member, who travels the country to recruit a diverse group of members to our program; and our Program Assistant, Rachel Mathiowetz, BA, who provides programmatic administrative help. Jack Kennedy, BA, M.Div., has assisted in a temporary capacity for 15 years in the logistics of our orientation program for new members. Applicant interviewers are hired on an as-needed, part time basis to assist during the member interviewing process.

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A full time Business Manager, Diane Blankenship, BBA, 7 years on staff, is responsible for fiscal management and reporting. The business manager receives technical assistance from the grants manager, our CPA, and the AmeriCorps Grants Management trainings. She trains other pertinent staff in the fiscal responsibilities of members and sites, and provides technical assistance to members and sites as well. All new staff receive a thorough orientation to our office and to specific position duties, and are provided opportunities for on-going education and training. The AC PM attends the Oregon AmeriCorps Program Manager meetings; key staff attend the joint WA/OR commissions' sponsored Northwest Network trainings, the national AmeriCorps meeting, and the Grants Management Training. The ED has attended the first of 3 years of WA commission sponsored masters-level coursework in program design for sustainable organizations; performance-based budgeting; and program assessment at the Univ of Washington leading to a Certificate in Nonprofit/National Service Management. Area Directors receive specialized training to assist them in being good mentors and guides for our members, including training in community development, communications, conflict resolution, personality styles in working relationships, social analysis, and cultural competencies.

Training and skills development for members is a strong priority for JVCNW and is a budget priority. Our trained staff and experts accessed through our broad community networks provide high quality member training, and site specific training is expected of our sites. JVCNW is prepared to support data collection and management as needed for the external evaluation, and will make available needed information as requested by the evaluator. JVCNW's ED and AC PM will serve as the main contacts and have been working with evaluation consultants in planning this application to ensure that they are establishing a feasible and appropriate plan. JVCNW will support member training on data collection as needed. Our evaluation plan has sufficient time built in for implementation, including solidifying measures and data collection tools, data collection, analysis of data, reporting, and making use of findings. JVCNW has letters of commitment with two evaluators, members of the American Evaluation Assoc, demonstrating that we are in agreement about how such evaluation will proceed and be supported.

JVCNW is in the third year of our first AmeriCorps grant. We have gained tremendous knowledge and have the financial expertise, capacity, staff, infrastructure and program design to administer a second grant. Our A 133 audit on our 2011-12 grant year found us in 100% compliance, with no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. We have 100% enrollment and 99% retention rate in our first 2 years. Impactful member service stories are found on our AmeriCorps blog. From 2010, we have

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opened 5 new member communities serving Grays Harbor and Wenatchee, WA, St. Xavier, MT, Hillsboro and Hood River/Odell, OR. In 2011, 22 members returned for a second year with our AmeriCorps program; in 2012, 25 members returned for a second year.

A highly experienced, professional and engaged Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for the management of the affairs of the organization setting policy and making major decisions, overseeing development of programs, and evaluating the performance of its officers and directors. Staff and BOD are committed to a strong, sustainable and healthy organization, with impetus for growth and effective response to critical needs in our communities. Over the past year, staff and board created a new 3-year strategic plan, and are now engaged in the work of the plan.

During the first year of the grant JVCNW learned numerous ways to knit AmeriCorps with our 50+ year old organization as we worked with our program officer to adapt our program design, especially our community living practices, to align with AmeriCorps. Our residential model is a major reason for our high retention rate and it was important for this key aspect of our program to be a good fit with AmeriCorps. JVCNW has fully assimilated to be a strong, highly performing AmeriCorps program, with a record of compliance and responsiveness as measured by our financial and grants progress reports, continuation clarifications, and feedback from our program officer. Our staff work closely together at each juncture of the program to assure AmeriCorps compliance. The AC PM provides trainings for ADs in AmeriCorps regulations, especially prohibited activities, and ADA requirements.

2.b SUSTAINABILITY: JVCNW will secure our match for AmeriCorps funding from the service site fees already committed to in site applications and contracts. In-kind gifts are provided by local communities through their hours of volunteer service to support our members, the furniture and household goods which help furnish accommodations for member communities, bikes and other equipment. One of our goals for our next 3 year grant is to obtain community stakeholder support in the form of letters of support from local mayors and other community leaders in each community. We will be working with our agencies to develop these relationships and to obtain tangible support. The BOD and ED provide leadership to maintain a robust, progressive and sustainable program. We have an extensive, committed network of alumni and JV families who donate. These constituents respond generously to our 5 annual appeals, 2 on-line and 3 mailed, which serve as educational as well as fund-raising efforts. We undertake major donor work and make applications to charitable and family foundations for support. Fundraising and community events introduce new people to our program and encourage sustained financial support for JVCNW. To encourage our alums to be

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connected and support our efforts, our Outreach and Events Coordinator leads our alumni development efforts, in the creation of a new interactive and dynamic website and on-line alumni directory; monthly community news emails; and alumni gatherings and retreats. Diversifying the JVCNW funding pool through community partnerships, alumni support, a donor base of individual gifts and foundation grants, and federal assistance keeps our financial outlook strong for long-term sustainability. JVCNW has established a solid reputation for providing quality members for partner organizations which helps us sustain our service site and member applicant pools; we are not able to meet all requests from service sites and member applicants. Sites involve the local community in finding funding to meet their financial commitments. Our site fees have increased each year to help develop a sustainable model; our sites understand that JVCNW provides members for service in the site, and they hold much of the financial and programmatic responsibility in the event AmeriCorps funding is no longer available. An example of how a community might maintain a project is at HomePlate, a small nonprofit serving at-risk youth in Hillsboro, OR, where a new staff position replaced a member position because of the outreach and capacity building of our member. JVCNW has worked in local communities for decades developing relationships. Many of our alumni have stayed in the communities where they served often in rural and remote areas, building greater capacity for these areas as well as creating stronger ties with JVCNW. Leaders in the region who are former JVs include lawyers, judges, business and non-profit executives, health professionals, church leaders, and political leaders. These community leaders know the value of the service of JVCNW and will work to sustain it.

JVCNW collaborates with a varied group of stakeholders including community and faith-based organizations, tribal members and Elders in Indigenous communities, our alumni, local support people, foundation grantors, and state AmeriCorps commissions. We are connected to a broad network including the Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Foundation for Theological Education, Catholic Volunteer Network, the NW Jesuit Province and its universities, high schools, and social ministries. Direct consultations with sites have helped determine local and regional needs; mutually beneficial ways of proceeding; best practice in measuring our impact; and effective support for members. Local community members and organizations, partner sites, alumni, and churches help us open member communities and identify local need and service sites. Strong community bonds with JVCNW contribute to a greater sense of connection to the member services and leads to stronger commitment to support the services. Alumni provide feedback regarding placements, financial sustainability, and program development. JVCNW is currently organizing a nat'l advisory group of

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alumni, who do not live in the Northwest, to solicit best practice for recruiting, fundraising and programmatic elements, leading to long term viability of our organization. In addition, foundations, associations and the Jesuit Provinces provide technical assistance in sustainability for JVCNW and our partners.

2.c. COMPLIANCE/ACCOUNTABILITY: Service sites' applications for members are reviewed by Area Directors (ADs) as well as the AmeriCorps Program Manager (AC PM) to determine capabilities of impact in the local community, compliance, and financial commitment. Phone and email conversations address any outstanding issues prior to acceptance, and written confirmations. In their on-site visit in the fall, ADs utilize a rigorous site monitoring tool to determine site level compliance. Any issues are addressed and followed up on immediately. If merited, a second site visit occurs in Jan/Feb. JVCNW stresses compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited activities in our site handbook which is provided to sites before they make application to us; in the formal contract that sites and members sign with us; in the trainings for site supervisors; and in the orientation trainings with members.

JVCNW addresses Special Circumstances criteria as a well-established faith based and community based organization with a highly effective framework for providing service that meets the growing and emerging needs in the Northwest. We want to continue to be of service in areas where others are not currently serving, particularly in areas of scarce resources such as rural, remote, economically depressed, and Native American and Native Alaskan communities, where JVCNW has built strong relationships. The National Direct grant is needed to continue to carry out our mission of serving people who are most marginalized.

In 2011-12, 21% of members were enrolled late primarily due to portal issues for members; our plan of corrective action is for staff to enroll all members in the portal within the 30 day time frame. 6% of our members were exited past the 30-day deadline in 2012, primarily due to members not filling out their part of the exit form. Our corrective action is to exit members within the 30 day time frame even if they have not completed their part of the exit form, retaining documentation of our notifications to the member. As an AmeriCorps grantee, JVCNW has maintained 100% enrollment and 99% retention in our first 2 years.

Leadership of Oregon Volunteers and Serve Washington suggested and encouraged us to apply for our original National Direct grant in 2010. We have recently contacted all the state commissions. They have assured us we are not duplicating service and are grateful for our work in their states. Each of our five state commissions is receiving a National Direct Consultation Form.

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As an intermediary organization, JVCNW is proposing to operate a multi-state, multi-site program with 140 members living in 24 member communities serving in individual and team service sites in 21 local communities in AK (Anchorage, Bethel, Juneau, Sitka), ID (Boise), MT (Ashland, Billings, Hays, Missoula, St. Xavier), OR (Gresham, Hillsboro, Hood River/Odell, Portland), and WA (Grays Harbor, Omak, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Wenatchee, Yakima). 114 positions will continue from the 2012-13 year, 26 positions will be new. 49 members will serve in sites in rural areas (35%), of which 33 are in remote sites (24%); 43 (31%) will be serving in severely economically depressed counties; 55 (39%) of our members will be serving Native American and Native Alaskan populations, 15 (11%) will be serving primarily with Spanish speaking peoples, mainly migrant worker families. 56 (40%) will be involved in volunteer recruitment and management, though we will be stressing this for all our sites. All are serving disadvantaged populations.

JVCNW engages in a careful screening process for our services sites, which includes a meeting with each site director prior to acceptance. Selection for our 2013-14 sites took place in Dec, 2012 - Jan, 2013. Sites are aware of the pending AmeriCorps funding. Sites are selected based on the strength of their application, including community need, population served, local issues addressed and impact, alignment with JVCNW and AmeriCorps strategic foci and ability to meet requirements, organizational capacity, uniqueness of member position, quality of supervision and mentoring, and financial commitment.

JVCNW is committed to serving community and faith-based organizations, in rural, remote and severely economically distressed areas, as well as with those who are marginalized and experience poverty, homelessness, and other entrenched social concerns in urban areas. Our selection criteria aligns with AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §2522.450, working with disadvantaged children and youth, schools, community health centers, environmental organizations, elders and people with disabilities, and volunteer recruitment/management. For the 2012-13 year, we currently have contractual relationships with 103 organizations, including a schedule for payment of site fees to JVCNW. All selected sites for 2013-14 have made a commitment with their application to abide by JVCNW and AmeriCorps policies and procedures as well as to honor their financial obligations.

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

3.a. COST EFFECTIVENESS: As a large intermediary program, we are requesting a low MSY of \$12,105, well below the maximum MSY and fixed amount grants. We first competed in 2010 when the living allowance was \$11,800 with an MSY of \$11,842, trying to be as competitive as possible while maintaining a reasonable cost for our partner site fees (our match). The living allowance has

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gone up to \$12,100, associated member support costs have risen accordingly, and the additional FBI background checks are more costly. We are incurring \$30,000/year for evaluation costs for two years, after receiving competitive bids. Our salaries have increased based on work by a human resources consultant. We are proposing an MSY cost to more fully align with these increased mandatory and personnel costs. We are asking our partner agencies to increase their costs substantially for 2013-14, raising this more would cause undue hardship and possibly result in attrition. JVCNW is increasing its match to 43%, from 41%.

JVCNW 's diversified funding sources include service site fees, general contributions, private/foundation grants, housing fund fees and rental income, and a small percentage of other (1%) income. The CNCS share represents 38% of this budget; the entire AmeriCorps project represents 70%. For program years 2010-2013, JVCNW received a national direct grant of \$1,569,013/year, for a total of \$4,707,039. JVCNW has no state commission funding requests. JVCNW has a strong fundraising arm as outlined in 2.b. We depend on non-CNCS sources for 43% of the JVCNW AmeriCorps program, which is secured through committed service site fees. We fundraise for additional projects and to support more of the infrastructure of the JVCNW office than is accounted for in the grant.

Our model places 140 college-educated members in locales in desperate need of assistance, especially in remote and rural areas where it is difficult to attract young, skilled and educated individuals, and where other AmeriCorps members are not present, or present in small numbers. JVCNW is able to retain a member impact in these communities largely due to our residential model; we represent a replicable service model in this aspect and provide a good reputation for AmeriCorps service.

We have 26 members in AK with a higher cost of living than in the lower 48, including transportation costs for members and staff (food prices for a family of 4, children 6-11 yrs: Portland \$116/wk; Anchorage \$142/wk; Bethel \$283/wk (AK Dept. of Labor, 2011); median share of income AK households spend for home energy use is 47% in rural, remote areas, UAA, Institute of Soc. Econ. Research 2008). We have a 100% enrollment rate and 99% retention rate in our first 2 years. During our 2010-13 grant we expanded to 5 new local communities in rural, remote and severely economically distressed areas with 23 members. JVCNW is increasing our share of costs to 43% from 41%; 17% more than the required match for 4th year programs.

3.b. BUDGET ADEQUACY: Our AmeriCorps program budget reflects the impact JVCNW will have over the next 3 years, as we increase our member numbers from 132.5 in 2010 to 140 in 2013. Our member-centered focus is reflected in the 72% of the budget allocated for member living allowances

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and member support (fica, health insurance, wkrs comp), and the 3% set aside for member training and travel (again travel in Alaska and to other remote areas in Montana is more expensive). As much of our work is focused on managing and supporting our members, personnel salaries/benefits are reasonable at 16%. Personnel are a pivotal resource in carrying out our program, which positively affects member development, compliance, and retention. The indirect costs of office support are less than 5%; the cost for evaluation is 1% of the total budget. We anticipate the evaluation to be an equal expense in our 2014 budget. Our site fees, used for match, have increased from \$7,900 (2010) in the lower 48 to \$8,850 (2013); and from \$8,724 (2010) in AK to \$10,000 (2013).

The cost of criminal background checks, including the FBI checks, is included in the budget.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

An independent, external evaluation will be conducted focusing on the process and outcomes of capacity building efforts undertaken by JVCNW AmeriCorps members during their 2013-2014 placements, including the use of evidence-based and evidence-informed practices in capacity building. This evaluation will employ a formative and mixed-methods design using both primary and secondary data that is both qualitative and quantitative. The evaluation will provide JVCNW with ongoing data to inform improvement of its processes and services, and will also increase JVCNW's capacity to participate in future evaluation of its activities.

### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

N/A

### **Continuation Changes**

N/A