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Executive Summary

While preparing individuals and families for disaster, the Points of Light (POL) Disaster AmeriCorps will also embed its effects in local communities by training volunteer leaders to quickly manage unaffiliated volunteers in times of disaster. The POL Disaster AmeriCorps complements existing disaster AmeriCorps programs by being among the first Corps dedicated to community level preparedness. The requested Corporation for National and Community Service investment in the POL Disaster AmeriCorps is \$332,231 and POL's match is \$226,335, or 41%. The program will begin in nine urban communities. Each year, the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will reach 82,000 individuals and family members with information and education about the importance of being prepared and how to more effectively deal with the personal impact of a disaster; equip a cadre of 270 disaster volunteer leaders who will be prepared to activate locally or deploy to other affected communities in times of disasters to manage unaffiliated volunteers; and train 200 local organizations including churches, schools, and nonprofits to effectively manage volunteers in times of disaster, creating local preparedness networks that increase individual and family preparedness.

Rationale and Approach

NEED - The 2009 United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction reported that weather-related disasters are increasing globally in terms of the frequency of occurrence, the number of fatalities and the breadth of the territory affected. As if to prove the point, in 2011 the United States faced a historic year in natural disasters. That year, 12 separate billion-dollar disasters including floods, blizzards, tornadoes and drought, swept across multiple state lines. According to the National Climatic Data Center report, 108 U.S. weather-related disasters produced more than \$750 billion in damages.

In fact, 91% of Americans live in places at a moderate-to-high risk of earthquakes, volcanoes, tornadoes, wildfires, hurricanes, flooding, high-wind damage or terrorism, according to an estimate calculated for TIME by the Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute at the University of South Carolina. (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1229102,00.html#ixzz1tkJhyp8G>, retrieved from: http://www.fema.gov/pdf/media/factsheets/2011/mit_role_post_disaster.pdf). Yet, the government can't assist alone in times of natural or man-made disasters. As Kentucky Emergency Management Director John W. Heltzel said, "Although Federal, Commonwealth and local governments are ready to assist the public during times of emergencies and disasters, you should be prepared to take care of yourself and members of your family for the first 72 hours . . . following a

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disaster such as a tornado or an ice storm," (Retrieved from: <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=62176>).

Unfortunately, Americans are not prepared. In fact, FEMA recently found that only 14% of Americans are confident in their ability to respond to disaster and 65% are either not prepared, not interested in being prepared or only have a basic knowledge about preparedness. The remaining 21% are concerned but not fully prepared for disasters and expect to rely on the government or nonprofits when disaster strikes. There is a need to increase a majority of Americans' awareness, skills, expectations and personal responsibility around disaster preparedness.

Points of Light (POL) preparedness approach aligns with the United Nations Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters when they state that "Effective disaster risk reduction requires community participation. The involvement of communities in the design and implementation of activities helps to ensure that they are well tailored to the actual vulnerabilities and to the needs of the affected people. This informed engagement helps to avoid problems and secondary effects when hazard events occur. Participatory approaches can more effectively capitalise on existing indigenous capacities." (UNOCHA retrieved from: [http://unocha.romenaca.org/Portals/0/Docs/Disaster-Preparedness-for-Effective-Response\[1\].pdf](http://unocha.romenaca.org/Portals/0/Docs/Disaster-Preparedness-for-Effective-Response[1].pdf)).

POL operates on the belief that community engagement equals a community's resilience to disaster and that preparedness is critical for successful response and recovery. This belief was substantiated by the recent volunteer response to Hurricane Sandy. Our HandsOn Network affiliates (New York Cares, Long Island Volunteer Center, Serve Rhode Island, Jersey Cares, Volunteer Center of Bergen County and Volunteer Center of Monmouth County) mounted a tremendous response, activating 20,000 volunteers within the first months post-Hurricane. In the immediate wake of Sandy, volunteers who wanted to help, yet weren't sure how, were managed through our existing agile volunteer networks. These volunteers sorted and distributed donations, canvased apartments to identify the medically fragile or identify other life threatening needs and also mucked out homes and buildings. This allowed emergency responders to handle the critical/professional needs and POL volunteers to handle boots on the ground needs and leverage the generosity of individuals by coordinating donated resources ranging from blankets to tools.

POL's Disaster AmeriCorps program will capitalize on experiences such as this to expand the reach of our signature preparedness program Good and Ready. Through Good and Ready, POL creates a competency among individuals, families, community-based agencies, and faith-based organizations that helps prepare communities for future disasters and keep local communities safe before first

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responders arrive. When a threat looms the public debates often weigh the value of high-cost complex engineering solutions that can improve the physical infrastructure of transit, electrical grid, water/flood barrier systems. As the threat grows into an inescapable occurrence, news outlets broadcast or publish tips to prepare. POL's twenty years of experience has taught us that disaster resilient communities aren't built in a few days; effort needs to be placed on preparedness well before imminent disaster.

Thus, the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will create prepared individuals and families, and resilient communities, through volunteer engagement. The POL Disaster AmeriCorps complements existing disaster AmeriCorps programs by being among the first Corps dedicated to community level preparedness. While other Disaster Corps perform important service such as providing surge volunteers or specific health and safety training, the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will provide direct service and train volunteer leaders to recruit and educate teams of volunteers to:

- 1) Improve preparedness of individuals and families through local collaborative volunteer projects, service events, and trainings resulting in personal preparedness plans.
- 2) Expand Local Preparedness Networks and community capacity to respond to disasters by strengthening partnership networks while building a corps of trained volunteer leaders with specific focus on managing unaffiliated volunteers in emergency situations.
- 3) Support long term recovery and sustainability by increasing the POL network's organizational capacity to help individuals and families prepare and, in the case of disaster, more easily respond and recover from current events.

Specifically, AmeriCorps members will: a) Organize preparedness service projects targeted at vulnerable populations with a particular focus on youth, seniors/elders and families and individuals with low English proficiency; b) Lead volunteer engagement efforts in local communities in connection with existing preparedness days of service; and c) Conduct and organize training for individuals and families in concert with local emergency managers to influence preparedness plans and cultivate volunteer leaders. More specific activities are described below.

While preparing individuals and families for disaster, the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will further build on our network's strengths and embed its effects in local communities by training volunteer leaders to quickly manage unaffiliated volunteers in times of disaster. These volunteers will work through POL/HandsOn Network affiliates and other local county or city government systems that run emergency management response (e.g. fire departments, police stations, emergency operations centers).

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Twenty-four POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will be placed with nine POL/HandsOn Network affiliates and partner agencies located in Good and Ready target cities (with one additional Corps member serving as Team Leader). Communities where disasters have recently struck will be made a priority based on proximity of time to the disaster event. We believe this increases the interest and willingness for individuals, families and communities to become better prepared. The target cities/regions are - Northeast: Boston, MA; New York City, NY (metro area); Monmouth County, Bergen County and Newark, NJ; Washington, DC (metro area); South: Orlando, FL; Houston, TX; Mobile, AL; New Orleans, LA; Midwest: Indianapolis, IN; Saint Louis, MO; Omaha, Lincoln and Columbus, NE; and West: Los Angeles, CA. Historically, each of these target areas has been struck by severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, hurricanes, severe snow, ice jams, wild fires and acts of terror.

While POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will serve the general population in these cities, the projects POL has designed focus on both those interested in becoming volunteer leaders in times of disaster and those who often miss out on important information and services in times of disaster (New Americans/low English proficiency individuals; low-income youth and families; and older individuals). With their focused attention, POL Disaster AmeriCorps members can reach these individuals and families to build trust, ensure clear communication and, ultimately, prepare them for the worst. By providing a foundation of preparedness, individuals and families have skills to survive in times of disaster and recover more quickly.

POL, with the support of its network, is a leader in organizing unaffiliated volunteers in times of disaster. As we witness the devastation and aftermath during these times, a growing interest in preparedness has grown across our network both nationally and locally. POL understands the power of AmeriCorps members to join our network at this time to help push forward and showcase our deep belief that preparedness is a force multiplier in helping people in times of disaster. In non-disaster times it is difficult to allocate resources towards preparedness; yet AmeriCorps members can economically and consistently lead the charge in a diverse array of affiliates and partner organizations and demonstrate success and value. Once this is accomplished, local communities will embrace preparedness and embed it into their cultures.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS SOLVING COMMUNITY PROBLEMS - POL Disaster AmeriCorps seeks to support the development of a national network of individuals and institutions who are prepared to respond locally, regionally, and nationally in the event of a natural or manmade disaster. The POL Disaster AmeriCorps will leverage the human capacity of 24 AmeriCorps members in nine communities that are in high risk of disasters or continue to suffer the impact of a recent disaster.

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Members will be placed in groups of two to four at affiliate and partner organizations to develop and build preparedness programming for individuals and families and to ensure that it becomes embedded in the culture of the local communities. POL will also engage one AmeriCorps member to serve as a Team Leader with the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. By launching a modest sized corps, POL will be able to intimately learn from and prove the effectiveness of the proposed model.

In the nine communities, each year we will reach 82,000 community residents (246,000/3 years) with information and education about the importance of being prepared and how to more effectively deal with the personal impact of a disaster; equip a cadre of 270 disaster volunteer leaders (810/3 years) who will be prepared to be activated locally or deployed to other affected communities with experienced leaders in the field in times of disasters to manage unaffiliated volunteers; and train 200 local organizations (600/3 years) including churches, schools, and nonprofits to effectively manage volunteers in times of disaster, creating local preparedness networks focused on increasing individual and family preparedness.

Our programming will leave communities with two assets: more individuals and families who are prepared and a community equipped with turn-key tools and resources to quickly respond to disasters by engaging the power of volunteers. A CNCS investment makes good sense because disaster preparation saves lives, protects property and speeds recovery. In fact, for each volunteer mobilized by the Corps, 15 more people will be prepared, resulting in over 82,000 people prepared.

MEMBER ACTIVITIES - POL Disaster AmeriCorps member activities focus on designing projects and trainings, engaging volunteers and community organizations/members and developing preparedness strategy. The volunteers they recruit and train will be capable of both implementing preparedness projects and deploying to support an active affiliate in the midst of a response. Some specific examples of the types of projects and activities that AmeriCorps members will lead are: Designing and developing volunteer projects such as neighborhood canvassing to provide literature to and promote general awareness of disasters, managing donation drives to collect and distribute items for personal or family preparedness kits for vulnerable populations, and developing individualized preparedness plans with individuals, families and youth; Organizing and managing large scale Days of Service such as National Preparedness Month Neighborhood Block Parties, September 11 Day of Service, Hurricane Blow Out Days, Kit Building Party Days, and Winter Weather Parties; and Conducting trainings such as the Citizen Corps, Community Emergency Response Team training (a critical program in the effort to engage everyone in America in making their communities safer, more prepared, and more resilient when incidents occur), POL's Disaster Resistant Communities Group training (Virtual

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exercises implemented locally in churches, homes, community centers and schools), POL's Spontaneous Volunteer Management in Times of Disaster training (volunteer leaders managing unaffiliated volunteers immediately after disasters), and Volunteer Arlington's Volunteer Emergency Support Team training (how volunteers can provide assistance and relief to emergency responders and community agencies in times of disasters).

One POL Disaster AmeriCorps Team Leader, housed within the national offices, will support members across all host sites. While they will not handle disciplinary issues, they will support members through routine calls to create community engagement plans and to design and develop preparedness service projects, organizing and managing large scale Days of Service and coordinating trainings. This structure allows POL to quickly build the skill of members by offering continuous technical assistance in preparedness and community engagements. Additionally, the Team Leader position will support the sharing of best practices and networking among members, building capacity across sites. The Team Leader will be an integral member of the support team.

EVIDENCE-BASED/EVIDENCE INFORMED IMPACT - The interventions in which members and volunteers will engage are evidence informed and will have a measurable community impact. They bring best practices in volunteer engagement and community building to bear in the context of the disaster services sector.

Currently, members of the disaster services sector have "limited understanding about the components that can be changed or the 'levers' for action that enable communities to recover more quickly. The literature to date has identified factors likely to be correlated with achieving resilience for communities, including reducing pre-disaster vulnerabilities and conducting pre-event prevention activities to minimize the negative consequences of disaster; however, these domains have been rather broad and lack the specificity required for implementation" (RAND Corporation (2011). Building Community Resilience to Disasters: A Way Forward to Enhance National Health Security. Retrieved from http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR915.html). It is our intent that evaluation data from the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will help inform sector discussions regarding the required saturation of individual preparedness that leads to disaster resilient communities.

RAND has defined "eight 'levers' that can be used by communities to strengthen community resilience" (RAND Corporation, 2011, p. xvi). The POL Disaster AmeriCorps will address three of the proposed levers:

- "Education - Ensure ongoing information to the public about preparedness, risks, and resources before, during, and after a disaster"

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- "Self-Sufficiency - Enable and support individuals and communities to assume responsibility for their preparedness' and
- "Partnership - Develop strong partnerships within and between government and nongovernmental organizations" (RAND Corporation, 2011, p. xvi).

In addition to building a knowledge and resource base among individuals and families through this initiative, the POL Disaster AmeriCorps program will build the organizational infrastructure that will help prepare the community as a whole to respond quickly in the case of future disaster. Results will be demonstrated by the number of individuals in these communities who receive disaster preparation training and resources, knowledge increases among the members of this community who are trained to be disaster preparation leaders, and the increased capacity of the sites and other community organizations to provide spontaneous volunteer management.

Each year, POL Disaster AmeriCorps Members will equip 82,000 individuals in the nine selected communities with knowledge, skills, and resources in disaster preparedness. Of the 270 individuals who participate in our leadership category training series annually, 90% will report increases in disaster preparedness knowledge and skills. Disaster AmeriCorps Members will also train 200 local organizations to serve as members of local preparedness networks. Lastly, all host sites will demonstrate an increased capacity to serve as spontaneous volunteer management organizations.

POL staff have conceptualized a comprehensive evaluation design that will include two major components: a process and outcome study. The process study will begin in the first quarter of program implementation and will continue for the duration of the POL Disaster AmeriCorps program, allowing for ongoing assessment of implementation.

Process study data will be largely qualitative in nature and will be obtained from a number of different sources and activities: reviewing project documentation such as partnership agreements, site staff and member training plans, and compliance paperwork; conducting interviews with members, site staff and partners, and other key stakeholders; and conducting site visits. Data gathered through process evaluation activities will be used to document initiative implementation; identify problems encountered, thereby identifying situations which need immediate attention; identify project successes and potential effective strategies for replication; and generate recommendations that may be useful in making necessary changes or adjustments in program implementation.

The outcome evaluation, which will begin in earnest in the second quarter of program implementation, will determine the extent to which the POL Disaster AmeriCorps is creating more disaster resilient communities as measured by providing individuals with increased knowledge and

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skills so they can serve as disaster preparedness leaders (corresponds to CNCS D1 priority measure of providing individuals with disaster preparedness services), equipping local organizations to effectively manage volunteers in times of disaster and increasing capacity of the sites to function as spontaneous volunteer management organizations. The outcome study will use multiple methods and measures.

To demonstrate participation in disaster preparation activities, POL will utilize a dynamic dashboard performance measurement tool. Additionally, we will use a post-training survey to measure knowledge changes of the participants in our leadership category training sessions. Finally, using best practice standards, we will assess the readiness of our sites to serve as spontaneous volunteer management sites and conveners in their communities.

POL will produce bi-annual progress reports that detail findings from our process and outcome study. Additionally, annually we will produce an internal evaluation report that provides a comprehensive view of the year of implementation. Like the progress reports, our annual report will include findings from our process and outcome study. This report will also include snapshot deep dives to explore shifts in quantitative outputs side by side with implementation data. This combination macro and micro view will better enable us to identify best practices and inform program improvements.

Performance measure targets were developed through a multi-step process involving POL program staff, evaluation staff and the leadership team. This team developed a matrix analyzing what can be accomplished by AmeriCorps members, and the volunteers they recruit and train, utilizing the types of projects and activities described above. The matrix is based on past experience with preparedness related projects and research of what is happening across the field. POL finalized its performance measure targets by determining realistic yet ambitious goals on a local level and extrapolating across the program.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT - Recruitment of POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will primarily focus on the local level with our affiliates and partnering organizations. POL and its affiliates have a history of recruiting underrepresented populations, such as people of color, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, veterans and youth. Our affiliates and local partners also have deep reach into the communities in which they work and will tap into these networks when recruiting members.

POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program staff will encourage sites to recruit diverse and traditionally underrepresented candidates from the local communities. To support recruitment, POL will provide a toolkit with interview questions and processes, as well as conduct training calls. POL will have the final decision regarding eligibility requirements. POL will not engage members in

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activities that displace or duplicate the efforts of existing staff and volunteers and will ensure this through the application, compliance and monitoring process described in this application.

POL will also supplement the local recruitment efforts with outreach to national partners in the disaster field, utilizing our network to target additional candidates. Additionally, we will reclaim any positions unfilled by sub-grantees and make these available to those sub-grantees that need and can fill additional positions. Our current best practices to ensure retention include: standardized screening processes for members ensuring better alignment with program mission; in-depth site supervisor training aimed at providing greater member support; and all-member orientation and training focused on building esprit de corps and strengthening member identification with the programmatic mission.

MEMBER AND SUPERVISOR TRAINING - POL has extended experience training AmeriCorps members and their supervisors. The training and supervision plans outlined below are informed by this experience and lessons learned. Our training is based on: principles of adult learning, practitioner-based best practices, interactive design, practical resources for innovation, action and impact, and needs of the target audience.

To kick-off their term of service, POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will come together for a multi-day Member Training Institute. Elements of the training will include: in-depth briefing on disaster issues/needs provided by external trainers, including Disaster 101, Community Emergency Response Team, Spontaneous Volunteer Management, Mass Care, First Aid/CPR, Incident Command Structure, Preparedness Education, and Volunteer Management. In addition, trainings will be provided on AmeriCorps member regulations/prohibited activities, reporting and communication requirements.

Members will then spend one to two weeks in On-Site Orientation. During this time, members will continue to hone skills described above, while they learn to work within the site level culture of engaging diverse communities and managing partnerships, as well as recruiting and training volunteers and volunteer leaders. Support will be provided to the site level supervisor during this orientation through supervisor training calls and review of proposed on-site orientation training plans. From the beginning of the term of service, and as they matriculate through their term, members will be required to attend monthly training calls with the POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team. These calls will be developed and facilitated by the AmeriCorps Team Leader through the support and collaboration of program staff, contracted facilitators and experts in the field. Topics will include: Diversity, Time Management, Conflict Management, Building Service Portfolios, Translating

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Your AmeriCorps Experience and Life After AmeriCorps. We anticipate that these traditional topics will be augmented by program-specific calls that focus on areas such as preparedness best practices, information on specific disaster threats and general reflection on overall service efforts. Members will also be assigned to a POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team member for one-on-one and team calls to provide additional support and more specific training.

MEMBER SUPERVISION - Members will be managed directly by site level supervisors with support from the POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team. Members and their site level supervisors will participate in scheduled calls with their assigned national program team member to ensure that members are serving within compliance regulations and that site level supervisors have the resources and support necessary to provide a meaningful experience for members. Supervisors will be selected based on the needs of their local sites. They will undergo a background check, and the POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team will assess and ensure that selected supervisors have the capacity to adequately supervise members in addition to their site level position responsibilities.

Selected supervisors will be required to attend a multi-day Supervisors Training Institute prior to on-boarding of member candidates. This will address best practices for managing program requirements and members and it will facilitate understanding the performance objectives and fiscal accountability. Topics covered will include: National Service Overview, AmeriCorps Guidance (Provisions, Regulations), Operational Policy and Procedure, Program Evaluation, Member Management and Support, and Financial Reporting and Management. Supervisors continue to receive training, oversight and support through monthly supervisor training calls, monthly member calls (on topics such as manual review and time tracking) and monthly one-on-one calls with their assigned POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team member.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE - To initiate group development and cohesiveness, all members will participate in our annual two-day Member Training Institute early in their term of service. Focusing on experiential learning, skill building and team building, the Institute will reinforce POL Disaster AmeriCorps identity and build morale. Members will receive project-specific training and they will progress through sessions that link the mission of AmeriCorps to active citizenship and civic engagement. We will offer special training focused on working with disasters and, specifically, disaster preparedness, by bringing in external trainers experienced in this field and by relying on our experienced staff and affiliate staff.

During the service term, POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will have opportunities to connect with other national service members through State Service Commissions to explore opportunities for

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program and resource collaborations. In addition, to continue training and enhance member experience, we will host monthly webinars and check-in calls to provide additional training and opportunities to reflect on and learn from the service experience. Best practices and reflections from members will be shared via social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, and highlighted on the POL blogs. Our social media channels enable us to share innovative solutions, to problem solve, to recognize the work of members and to surface support from community stakeholders.

Ensuring Members identify with AmeriCorps is important to POL. In-depth training and exploration of what it means to be an AmeriCorps member will be provided at all of the Training Institutes. We know and have demonstrated the importance of ensuring the AmeriCorps logo is present at appropriate and required locations, providing national service literature and social media connections around AmeriCorps and service, and forging connections with other AmeriCorps members serving through POL national direct programs as well as in local communities. All serve to build esprit de corps and an identity with AmeriCorps.

Finally, after their term of service, we will encourage members to join AmeriCorps Alums, which engages tens of thousands of active participants and reaches more than 100,000 alumni. Alums gather annually at the National Conference on Volunteering and Service, and are regularly called upon by POL because of their passion for service and their training as community leaders. We engage AmeriCorps Alums in community projects ranging from national days of service to assisting in disaster response and recovery efforts.

VOLUNTEER GENERATION - A core principal of POL is that volunteer leadership is a force multiplier and that volunteers can be leveraged to lead others in service. Throughout their term of service, each POL Disaster AmeriCorps member will recruit, train and support volunteer leaders to manage other volunteers in the preparedness projects and days of service described above. The volunteer leader model has been instrumental in the success of our network and is a proven way to leverage the power and commitment of volunteers to engage their peers in direct service.

As described above, volunteers and volunteer leaders will be recruited by AmeriCorps members and will play critical roles in implementing the key preparedness service projects ranging from canvassing neighborhoods, collecting items for preparedness kits, working with individuals on specific preparedness plans and much more. The structure and outcomes of all volunteer projects that the POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will implement are developed and approved by POL, with an eye towards the rules, regulations and prohibitions of AmeriCorps service. Compliance will be monitored as described in this application, including reporting, site visits and interviews with volunteers.

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AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION - As described above and below, POL has a strong commitment to AmeriCorps. With a solid history of running successful AmeriCorps programs and partnering with CNCS, POL supports the overall strategy of AmeriCorps and understands the importance of branding national service. Through signage, logo placement, social media promotion and storytelling, POL will shine a spotlight on the successes that AmeriCorps members are achieving and will strive to highlight the benefit of national service to all who interact with our programs.

Usage of the AmeriCorps logo on websites, service gear and public materials related to AmeriCorps programming is status-quo at POL. Our marketing and communications department, as well as our program staff, will be trained in proper and appropriate usage of the AmeriCorps name and logo during the Staff Training Institute and will incorporate it whenever required, appropriate or advantageous. Local operating sites will also be trained on this during the Supervisor Training Institute. POL staff will monitor appropriate usage and identification with AmeriCorps as part of site monitoring efforts, as described in the compliance section of this application.

Organizational Capability

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND - Points of Light (POL) is the world's leading volunteer organization. Our mission is to inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world. We connect people to their power to make a meaningful difference, by providing access to tools, resources and opportunities to help volunteers use their time, talent, voice and money to meet the critical needs of their communities. The HandsOn Network (HON) enterprise is one way that POL activates volunteers. HON helps people find and engage in volunteer opportunities in their local communities, partnering with more than 70,000 corporate, faith and nonprofit organizations and delivering approximately 30 million hours of volunteer service annually.

Over the years, POL's ongoing partnership with CNCS has significantly enhanced our citizen engagement efforts through a range of successful partnerships that have included the AmeriCorps Promise Fellow program; Citizen Action AmeriCorps program; HandsOn Tech 'VISTA Partners in Technology program'; Veteran Leaders AmeriCorps; MLK Day activities; Initiative to Engage Persons with Disabilities in Service; Challenge Grant Awards supporting Network Expansion and Hurricane Recovery efforts in the Gulf; Learn and Serve America grants; and Training and Technical Assistance cooperative agreements. Through these partnerships, we created sustainable social capital by training hundreds of volunteer leaders and brought together citizens to tackle problems and revitalize the civic life of their communities. All of these programs successfully demonstrate impact and represent our continued organizational capacity and experience to plan and implement the proposed program.

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POL has already had great success in disaster programming through Good and Ready, its on-line and on-the-ground emergency preparedness engagement initiative led by POL in partnership with Ready.gov, the American Red Cross and the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes. Good and Ready creates a competency among individuals, families, community-based agencies, and faith-based organizations that helps prepare communities for future disasters and keep local communities safe before first responders arrive. Good and Ready has already provided value to the sector by convening existing disaster-focused groups to increase collaboration and strengthen networks. As an example, POL and the Corporation for National and Community Service are partnering with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to host disaster preparedness training for State Service Commission Executive Directors and HandsOn Network Executive Directors during 2013. Both the training and the opportunities for collaboration have been well received. The Executive Director of HandsOn South Alabama (HOSA) confirmed this when she said, "HOSA was able to support outlying areas such as Huntsville that didn't have a Volunteer Action Center and . . . we were also able to engage/train local volunteers who wanted to go and serve in other communities throughout the state."

ORGANIZATIONAL STAFFING - Our national staff is defined by a strong and vibrant leadership team guided by co-founder and CEO Michelle Nunn, who has been a groundbreaking leader in the development of the service movement. The POL Disaster AmeriCorps will be led by our Vice President of Impact Programs and directly supported by her staff. There will also be cross-functional work to support the POL Disaster AmeriCorps from various departments within POL, such as the evaluation and HandsOn Network teams. POL has an active board with a committee structure that allows monthly and quarterly oversight of programs, financial operations and other areas of POL's work. Strategic monitoring of the POL Disaster AmeriCorps will be part of these committees' efforts.

Our finance team is led by CFO Kristina Tecce, who has 18 years of experience with nonprofits and government agencies. She has led seven unqualified A-133 audits without findings, and her background includes regulatory, GAAP and financial analysis. She has developed finance systems in several nonprofit organizations and conducted workshops on responsible and efficient fiscal management. Prior to joining POL, Kris led CNCS's Cooperative Agreement for Finance Training and Technical Assistance, where she provided training and technical assistance to CNCS grantees in federal grant compliance. Kris' team will provide financial training and technical assistance to the POL Disaster AmeriCorps program team from planning through implementation and evaluation. A new role in our financial and grants management team is the Director of Grants, Delaine Fox, who will dedicate 25% of her time to the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. Delaine oversees all execution on

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federal grants to ensure timely financial reporting, expense review on federal grants, maintenance of member records, invoice management on federal grants, budget development and management for overall grants execution, and is the convening lead for federal grants compliance for the organization. She will also train staff on AmeriCorps compliance. Delaine holds a B.B.A. in Management, and has over 15 years of accounting with private companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations, including the management of government grant funds and risk management associated with contributions.

Sheika Kendi, Evaluation Manager, will contribute 12% of her time to manage the development and implementation of the program evaluation plan and all related instruments to track and measure program implementation and impact. Sheika has worked as a social researcher for eight years and has extensive experience conducting assessments and mixed methods evaluation research of programs. Sheika received her Master of Science degree in Educational Research from Georgia State University.

The following staff persons have direct responsibilities for the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. Kellie Bentz, Director of Disaster Services, will devote 15% of her time to the program. Kellie leads disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts nationally and globally for POL and HandsOn Network affiliates. While in this role, Kellie has been awarded a FEMA community preparedness honorable mention and recently completed an executive leadership certificate program from Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative. Prior to her role with POL, Kellie served as the Director of Development for the Bayou District Foundation and was the Founding Executive Director of HandsOn New Orleans. On-site Supervisors will be selected as described in the Member Supervision section and will devote 10% of their time.

One new position supporting the POL Disaster AmeriCorps is a Program Coordinator dedicating 75% of their time to maintaining member records, contracts, and MOUs with host sites; providing member support and tracking progress towards objectives. Candidates for this position will ideally have experience with disaster services and national service. In addition, we are seeking a detail oriented, self-starter who is able to manage multiple activities at a time.

STAFF TRAINING - During our Staff Training Institute, all staff associated with the program will be provided a program orientation including: training on program performance objectives, AmeriCorps compliance and identification, program structure, staff roles and responsibilities, financial management and disaster services in general. As described above, our existing staff has a rich history with AmeriCorps and disaster services and will use their expertise to train new staff and provide technical assistance to all staff as the program moves forward. Additionally, we will continue to build

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strong relationships with CNCS program staff to ensure we are up-to-date on the latest information from the national office. Finally, as described throughout the application, we also will rely on external trainers to provide disaster specific training during Training Institutes and monthly calls.

EVALUATION EXPERTISE - POL Research, Evaluation and Measurement unit collaborates with corporations, foundations, government agencies, and community-based and national nonprofits to measure the impact of and identify effective practices in volunteerism and civic engagement activities, programs and initiatives around the country and abroad. The unit has three foci: 1) Program and Event Evaluation: demonstrates program effectiveness and impact as well as equips staff with information to assist in improving and scale the most effective programs and services; 2) Applied Social Research: examines civic health and volunteerism, with an emphasis on topics such as volunteer leadership and youth service; and 3) Performance Measurement: assesses the extent to which strategies and tactics designed to satisfy our annual and strategic goals are successful.

SUSTAINABILITY - We have built a sustainability strategy into our program model by relying on community members to serve as volunteer leaders within communities so that local people are recruiting and managing their peers in service. It is our intention that AmeriCorps program activities (creating the structure of the preparedness service projects, days of service and training opportunities; recruiting and training volunteer leaders; and building relationships across community organizations) will demonstrate success and instill confidence in the communities and at the service sites. This confidence and success will generate local support and sustain the work in years to come.

Community partnerships are also critical for sustainability. AmeriCorps members will create and facilitate local relationships with Boy and Girl Scouts, Red Cross, Ready.gov, FLASH, Citizen Corps and others specific to the service sites. If built successfully and collaboratively, per POL guidance and training, these relationships will continue well beyond the term of service and benefit the program as it evolves beyond AmeriCorps support thus, ultimately, benefiting more individuals and families.

Finally, all members will be encouraged to join AmeriCorps Alums upon completion of their term of service. The goals of this action network are to broaden and deepen the impact of AmeriCorps Alums in their post service careers and continue to engage them and show them how to continue utilizing the skills they learned during their AmeriCorps program in service to others. In times of disaster, POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will be invaluable to the communities in which they reside.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY - As a national organization that is committed to supporting our local network, POL uses a risk based strategy to efficiently ensure program sites are

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compliant. POL has established Government Grants Compliance Team which is coordinated by the Grants Manager and sits in the Finance Department. The team includes program managers from each federally funded program, the CFO, President of Programs, and the VP of Foundation and Government funding. To ensure management effectiveness, this team meets monthly to review program status, reporting requirements and grants progress. In addition the Grants Manager will use Salesforce to efficiently generate reports, inform stakeholders of grant status, and maintain a master project management calendar. Additional tools used to monitor program sites include periodic: review of monthly progress reports with site supervisors, monitoring visits to project sites, and desk audits to assess programmatic compliance through monitoring of submissions, member activities, reports and member time tracking.

POL has the ability and structure to ensure its own and its service site locations' compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations, including prohibited activities. Based on past experience we implemented a preventative and proactive approach to program oversight by ensuring programs are fully equipped to operate compliant, effective, and impactful programs. This training includes 1) training each supervisor and member on prohibited activities during in-person orientation; 2) distributing written guidelines on prohibited activities in supervisor and member handbooks; 3) conducting quarterly mid-service webinars covering prohibited activities for members and volunteers during those events; 4) reviewing prohibited activities during mandatory, mid-year, one-on-one reviews with members and supervisors; 5) conducting on-site monitoring visits for each project site annually, during which we meet individually with each member and supervisor to ensure members are engaged only in allowable activities; and 6) utilizing monthly web-based reporting tools to question members specifically about prohibited activities for themselves and their volunteers.

All national and site staff associated with the POL Disaster AmeriCorps receives information on AmeriCorps rules and regulations during the Staff and Supervisor Training Institutes. This information, including prohibited activities, is discussed one-on-one with supervisors (for national staff) and/or a member of POL's Disaster AmeriCorps national program staff (for site supervisors) to ensure understanding and compliance. The reporting mechanisms outlined above allow POL to prevent and detect compliance issues.

In the event non-compliance or risk is determined via one of the above processes, immediate action is taken including: a written notice provided to the site and a phone conversation with a POL Disaster AmeriCorps national program team member. The site will provide written documentation of addressing the issue and how it achieved compliance. Further training will be provided as necessary,

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and the compliance issue and resolution will be documented in the host site file. We will inform CNCS of any concerns immediately upon discovery.

CONSULTATION WITH STATE COMMISSIONS - As part of our strategy to keep open communication with State Commissions and other state and national programs, by the time of this application all State Commissions in our target recruitment areas will be notified of the potential placement of national service members in the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. Once our site selection RFP process is complete, those states where members are placed will be notified. Site supervisors will also be given contact information for their State Commissions and asked to investigate local collaborative opportunities.

SITE SELECTION - POL Disaster AmeriCorps members will be placed with nine approved host sites that will be identified via a targeted RFP process administered this spring and summer. These host sites will be nine POL/HandsOn Network affiliates or partner agencies located in Good and Ready target cities (see list below). Particular focus will be with aligning with those cities where successful Citizen Corps Councils (local government and community-based agencies matched with emergency response personnel) are poised to mobilize concerned citizens and local nonprofits to inform and implement community preparedness plans. Communities where disasters have recently struck will be made a priority based on proximity of time to the disaster event. We believe this scenario increases the interest and willingness for individuals, families and communities to become better prepared.

The target cities/regions are - Northeast: Boston, MA; New York City, NY (metro area); Monmouth County, Bergen County and Newark, NJ; Washington, DC (metro area); South: Orlando, FL; Houston, TX; Mobile, AL; New Orleans, LA; Midwest: Indianapolis, IN; Saint Louis, MO; Omaha, Lincoln and Columbus, NE; and West: Los Angeles, CA. Applications will be accepted from other cities that can demonstrate need and alignment with the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. Nine locations will be selected. Host sites may have previously hosted AmeriCorps members, or may be new to the program. They may also have received prior or current POL funding.

The timeline for selection is as follows: May 2013 - Build program awareness through developing local partnerships, holding webinars and both targeted and general outreach; June 1, 2013 - Release RFP to field, continue to build awareness; June 28, 2013 - Proposals collected, reviewed and evaluated according to criteria outlined in the RFP; and July 8, 2013 - Announce selection of final portfolio of nine sites, notify relevant State Commissions.

All potential host sites will submit an application, which will then be reviewed by national service and other POL staff. Each application will have at least three reviewers. Host site applications must

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define community need, discuss how the proposed positions align with their organization strategy, illustrate how a member will be able to fulfill their role without displacing staff or other volunteers, state past accomplishments (including AmeriCorps member engagement), and show alignment with the POL Disaster AmeriCorps program model. They must also describe plans for member recruitment, supervision and training, as well as outline their performance measure targets. Reviewers will understand the relevant pieces of AmeriCorps Regulations 45 and look for quality, innovation, sustainability, quality of leadership, past performance, and community involvement during their evaluation of site applications. Sites will be contingently identified in July 2013, with final approval upon CNCS funding. Each site that is selected will receive a Host Site Agreement that will clearly define the expectations of the site and the national office that will be executed prior to the member start date.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

COST EFFECTIVENESS - The overall budget for the POL Disaster AmeriCorps program is \$655,750. The \$13,300 cost per corps member is at the maximum allowable amount. We feel that this is a very cost effective program designed to create exponential savings and unquantifiable benefits as disaster preparation saves lives, protects property and speeds recovery. In fact, for every \$4 invested in the POL Disaster AmeriCorps an individual will be more prepared.

We are requesting \$332,230 from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The POL Disaster AmeriCorps program represents 1% of POL's overall budget. The remaining \$226,336 will come from private sources, representing a match of 41%. POL has managed almost \$29 million in federal grant funds since 2007 and received a clean audit following its latest site visit. In partnership with CNCS over time, we have created sustainable social capital by training thousands of volunteer leaders and by bringing together citizens to tackle problems and revitalize the civic life of their communities. We have an exceptional record of raising resources from diverse sources, growing that funding over time and raising matching funds for federal grants. Total funding from the corporate sector, private foundations, individuals and government has steadily risen over the past several years, despite the nation's economic challenges. Since the 2008 merger, POL raised more than \$74 million. We also hold more than \$5 million in endowment funds.

POL is confident that we will be able to secure the financial resources to support the required matching funds for the POL Disaster AmeriCorps. Organizationally, corporations have been eager to support our general disaster work. Target, Allstate Foundation, UPS Foundation, FedEx, and KPMG have contributed \$625,000 (not including specific Superstorm Sandy relief) to the overall POL

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Disaster efforts over the past year. While these dollars are not earmarked for AmeriCorps programming, this support is indicative of ample corporate interest in disaster preparation. Our dedicated corporate development staff intends to pursue additional funds to support the work of the POL Disaster AmeriCorps.

BUDGET ADEQUACY ¿ The POL Disaster AmeriCorps program¿s budget was developed directly from the program design. As a new, innovative and impact driven program, significant investment will be made to ensure that members are fully trained and supported. Investment will be made in member development, local member supervision support and evaluation. As a new, first year program, evaluation efforts will provide detailed information on the effectiveness and efficiency of each program element, with careful attention to refining and replicating the model. The budget reflects the support of a cross-functional team of organizational experts who will enable significant programmatic development efforts, impact-driven evaluation efforts, highly effective member and supervisor training, and grant compliance. These investments are important to the success of POL Disaster AmeriCorps and are adequately budgeted based on POL¿s past experience with AmeriCorps programming.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

n/a

Clarification Summary

n/a

Continuation Changes

n/a