

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Points of Light Foundation

**Application ID:** 13ND147677

**Program Name:** Disaster Services Project

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

#### **Reviewers' Summary Comments:**

(+) The applicant cited the 2009 United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction by stating there has been an increase in weather-related disasters and they will continue to increase. As the frequency of disasters increase, so does the drain on resources for mitigation.

(+) The applicant referenced nine of the communities that are located within their existing network. These cities are prone to weather-related disasters. This shows a need exists in the targeted communities.

(+) The applicant's plan focuses on training citizens to take care of themselves and their families during the first 72 hours of emergencies and disasters, which is anticipated to better prepare communities.

(+) The applicant stated the Members and volunteers will participate in a program that is evidence-informed. They will follow best practices in volunteer engagement and community building. The program is designed to bring volunteers to communities and to allow the volunteers and Members to become part of the community, thereby following a proven model.

(+) The applicant provides data that demonstrates the severity of the problem among the population in the nation. 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% expect to rely on the government or nonprofits when disaster strikes. This data identifies the specific needs for education, preparedness, and understanding of the individual and community roles in a disaster.

(+) The applicant has a well-thought-out evaluation plan that measures process and outcome, both in the short and long term. They will use bi-annual and annual reports, and qualitative and quantitative data. For example, they will produce bi-annual progress reports for process and identify what needs to be changed. Annual reports will include an internal evaluation that provides a comprehensive view of the year. This combination of reporting using multiple measures will better enable them to identify best practices and inform program improvements.

(+) The applicant describes the use of evidence-informed interventions by Members and volunteers by stating the Points of Light (POL) Disaster AmeriCorps will address three of the levers proposed by the RAND Corporation including Education, Self-Sufficiency, and Partnership.

(+) Activities of AmeriCorps members are provided with specific examples, such as improving preparedness of individuals and families through local volunteer projects, service events and trainings, expansion of local preparedness networks to respond to disasters by strengthening partnership networks, and training volunteer leaders with a focus on managing unaffiliated volunteers in emergency situations. All of these activities will better inform community members, help them to be prepared in the event of a disaster, and to learn to not only help themselves, but to help others as well.

(+) The Members will target cities where a disaster has recently occurred, which will increase interest and willingness by the residents in those areas to become better prepared.

(-) The applicant did not state the economic needs of the communities to be served; therefore, there is no way of knowing how much support is needed and if the community can afford to provide any part of these services on their own.

(-) It is hard to determine what the organization will accomplish that it would not otherwise accomplish through existing staff and/or volunteers. They did not provide past or present accomplishments in order to clearly understand what they will accomplish with this proposal.

(-) It is unclear exactly what the Good and Ready program is that they refer to and how it aligns with the United Nation Hyogo program. The applicant provided insufficient information and did not adequately explain or describe these two programs.

(-) The applicant does not describe in detail the organizations that it will partner with to help develop preparedness programs to reach the local communities. For example, they mention churches, schools, and nonprofits but do not discuss the specifics of how they are determined or selected for involvement.

(-) The applicant states that they will be able to learn from and prove the effectiveness of the proposed model by deploying a small number of Members, but does not describe how.