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### Executive Summary

Community Action, Inc. (CAI) is a charitable 501(c)(3), non-profit corporation established in 1965 and has a successful history of delivering services, helping families achieve economic independence and improving the community. CAI is dedicated to providing and coordinating activities which alleviate poverty, promote family self-sufficiency and advance community prosperity and strives to be recognized as a premier organization dedicated to solving social and economic problems of the community. CAI has sponsored RSVP since 1971.

CAI's Senior Corps-RSVP will serve an estimated 475 volunteers. Volunteers will provide assistance to frail seniors and low-income families with children by: delivering meals; assisting with Medicare/Medicaid questions; providing health screenings; assisting individuals remain independent and in their homes; assisting at food pantries; assisting veterans find volunteer opportunities; and assisting non-profits achieve their goals and mission. The service activities will be accomplished through a network of 55 volunteer stations including: Area Agencies on Aging; food pantries; hospitals; libraries; Head Start Centers; faith-based organizations; proprietary health care facilities; and non-profit organizations. The Primary Focus area is Healthy Futures. At the end of the performance period, CAI expects to maintain or recruit and place 475 volunteers and achieve the following outcomes: (H9) number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who report having increased social ties/perceived social support; (H14) number of caregivers of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who report having increased social ties/perceived social support; and (H12) number of individuals who report increased food security for themselves and their children (household food security) as a result of CNCS-supported services. The outcomes will be accomplished with a CNCS Federal investment of \$60,847 and \$27,750 of non-federal support.

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### Strengthening Communities

CAI Senior Corps-RSVP Project will serve the Pennsylvania Counties of Clarion, Indiana and Jefferson. The service area is very rural covering 2,087 square miles. The combined service area population is 174,068 (Clarion, 39,988; Indiana, 88,880; Jefferson, 45,200, based on the 2010 U. S. Census Bureau data.) There are no cities located in the service area. Clarion County is comprised of 34 municipalities; Indiana County is comprised of 38 municipalities; and Jefferson County is comprised of 34 municipalities. The average population of persons age 65 and older is 17%. The median percentage of population by race is 97% white non-Hispanic and 3% other. The median income for the service area is \$39,553, and 16% of the population lives below the Federal Poverty income guidelines. Most manufacturing has faded from the area leaving many under employed or unemployed. State and federal budget cuts have had a significant negative impact on human service and non-profit organizations; many are unable to meet their goals and provide needed services. The need for a vibrant network of volunteers to meet increasing community needs and assist elderly is clear, and CAI's Senior Corps-RSVP plays a significant role helping the community meet their goals.

The CAI Planning Director will conduct a Community Needs Assessment in 2013. The results will enable CAI and the Senior Corps-RSVP to identify unmet needs, gaps in service areas, and build partnerships to focus on volunteer opportunities that address community needs and contribute to solutions. CAI's RSVP will select volunteer stations and community partners that have a focus on Healthy Futures. Volunteer stations will sign a RSVP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and staff will work with volunteer coordinators to develop volunteer job descriptions and train coordinators on record keeping and data collection to report outputs and outcomes.

Twenty-five percent (119) of 475 volunteers will be placed in the Healthy Futures focus area. Service

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activities in the Healthy Futures focus area will be as follows:

The objective: Access to Care - ensures individuals are educated and informed in their selection of health insurance plans that fit their needs, and assist individuals in long-term care settings to prevent elder abuse. APPRISE Counselors: volunteers will provide manpower for the statewide hotline and answer questions concerning Medicare/Medicaid and long-term health insurance plans, as well as conduct public information presentations. Ombudsman: volunteers will be advocates for elderly who live in long-term or personal care settings; volunteers have the opportunity to enrich residents' lives by providing them information regarding community services and encouraging them to advocate for themselves for the highest quality of life. The output will be (H2) number of clients to whom information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits programs is delivered. There are no outcomes for these activities.

The objective: Aging in Place - ensures elderly in need receive nutritious meals, transportation services, and companionship. Home Delivered Meals and Friendly Visitors: volunteers will package and deliver meals to homebound individuals as well as provide companionship and transportation services. The output will be (H8) number of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently. The outcome for this activity will be (H9) number of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support.

The objective: Obesity and Food - provide support to local food banks, pantries and other feeding programs. Volunteers will assist with participant registration, sorting, packaging and distributing food. The output will be (H10) number of individuals receiving emergency food from food banks,

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food pantries, or other feeding programs. The outcome for this activity will be (H12) number of individuals that reported increased food security for themselves and their children (household food security) as a result of CNCS supported services.

The objective: Aging in Place - provide respite services to families and individuals who have household members with disabilities and/or terminal illness. The output will be (H13) number of caregivers of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving respite services. The outcome for this activity will be (H14) number of caregivers of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support.

RSVP will recruit and offer volunteer opportunities to veterans and military families to become involved in their communities. Annual volunteer service projects will collect items to donate to area veteran hospitals, veteran organizations, and military troops stationed overseas.

Additionally, volunteers will be placed in the following Community Priorities:

### Education

The objective: School Readiness - volunteers will assist in Head Start Classrooms. The output will be (ED 21) number of children that completed participation in CNCS-supported early childhood education programs. The outcome for this activity will be (ED23) number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of social and/or emotional development.

### Economic Opportunity

The objective: Employment - volunteers will assist individuals obtain basic adult education, tutor to

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obtain their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and learn English as Second Language (ESL). The output will be (O2) number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job training and other skill development services. The outcome for this activity will be (O10) number of economically disadvantaged individuals placed in jobs.

The objective: Financial Literacy - volunteers will assist elderly and low-income individuals prepare federal, state and local income tax and property tax rent rebate forms through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA). The output will be (O1) number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving financial literacy services. There is no outcome for this activity.

### Veterans and Military Families

The objective: Veterans and Military Families Served - volunteers will be placed in Healthy Futures activities or other focus areas which assist veterans and military families with food delivery, companionship, APPRISE Counseling and Ombudsmanship. The output will be (V1) number of veterans that received CNCS-supported assistance. There is no outcome for this activity.

### Environmental Stewardship

The objective: At Risk Ecosystems - volunteers will monitor area streams for water quality, provide recycling services, preserve trails, and assist with land restoration and debris removal. The outputs will be (EN4) number of acres of national parks, state parks, city parks, county parks, or other public and tribal lands that are improved and (EN5) number of miles of trails or waterways owned/maintained by national, state, county, city or tribal governments that are improved, and/or created, and (EN6) number of tons of material collected or recycled. There are no outcomes for these activities.

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### **Disaster Services**

The objective: Assistance Provided - volunteers will respond to emergency situations and assist in disaster mitigation. Volunteers will also provide health and first aid services. The output will be (D6) number of RSVP volunteer service hours in disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. There is no outcome for this activity.

### **Capacity Building**

The objective: Capacity Building and Leveraging - volunteers will assist the American Red Cross at blood mobiles. The output will be (G3-3.17) dollar value of in-kind resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants. There is no outcome for this activity. Volunteers will also assist area thrift stores with operation and garnering donations. The output will be (G3-3-16) dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS supported organizations or national service participants. There is no outcome for this activity.

### **Recruitment and Development**

High quality volunteer assignments will be created by participating in interagency collaborations with members of the community, faith-based organizations and non-profit organizations, as well as those organizations serving as volunteer stations. Staff will attend community meetings and serve on local boards and/or councils to: assess community needs; bring together people from diverse backgrounds; mobilize community resources to enhance the Senior Corps-RSVP Project; and promote volunteerism. High quality volunteer assignments that align with the CNCS Strategic Plan will encourage all citizens to give back to their community. By serving, volunteers will build new skills, develop leadership skills and enhance their quality of life by remaining active.

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Senior Corps-RSVP staff, volunteer stations and lead project volunteers will provide training to volunteers for specific projects. Volunteer stations will provide volunteers with the training necessary to complete their volunteer assignment. Volunteers serving in the capacity of ombudsman, APPRISE Counselor, hospice visitations, and VITA preparer will require more extensive training by professionals in each respective field. The training will be arranged by the volunteer station.

Recruitment of skilled volunteers is a priority for capacity-building of both the Senior Corps-RSVP and volunteer stations. The Project will participate in recruitment activities by disseminating Senior Corps-RSVP volunteer information to local businesses; civic clubs; educational institutions; faith-based and non-profit organizations. In addition CAI will recruit via public service announcements. Additionally, the Project will recruit and develop volunteer membership through community speaking engagements; collaborating with organizations; making individual contacts; attending fairs and community events. These recruitment strategies will bring together diverse volunteers including: veterans; men; low-income individuals; skilled individuals; and individuals with special needs to participate in volunteer activities and become active in their communities.

Recognition accents the spirit of volunteerism and results in renewed motivation, commitment and retention. Volunteers will be honored and recognized annually at volunteer recognition events as well as Project specific recognition events throughout the year. Awards will be presented to volunteers for years and hours of service. Volunteer station coordinators will be given the opportunity to nominate a volunteer for the Volunteer of the Year. These events will provide a forum to highlight and publicize the individual and community impact of senior volunteer service. The media will be sent news releases highlighting volunteer activities, special projects, and volunteers who are making a difference in the communities. By utilizing the media we hope to foster volunteering to sustain and grow RSVP in Clarion, Indiana and Jefferson Counties.

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### Program Management

The Senior Corps-RSVP Project has a memorandum of understanding with 50 volunteer stations which details the responsibilities of being a volunteer station. MOUs will be updated and reviewed every three years with the station supervisor. Senior Corps-RSVP staff will train volunteer stations in their roles and responsibilities to include: accurate record keeping of volunteer hours and statistics; reporting procedures; job description development; conducting recognition; and documenting in-kind donations.

Staff will work with volunteer stations, community interest groups, faith-based organizations and other non-profit organizations, as well as the local AMERICORPS to expand and build a strong Project that offers meaningful, rewarding volunteer opportunities to attract a new generation of volunteers.

Staff will ensure Project goals and objectives are achieved through surveys, assessments, and detailed record keeping. Annual surveys will be administered to volunteer stations to gather Project feedback and statistics. Surveys will determine if particular assignments meet National Performance Measure Outcomes. Data will be stored in an electronic file. In addition Staff and the Advisory Council will perform informal assessments through conversations, e-mails and telephone calls with volunteers and site supervisors. If it is determined a volunteer station is not meeting community needs it will be graduated to offer an alternate volunteer opportunity to meet CNCS priorities while incurring minimal disruption to the volunteers. If necessary, volunteers may be reassigned to capacity building assignments.

Volunteer hours will be submitted monthly by volunteer station supervisors and volunteers. CAI will

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utilize volunteer software, Volunteer Reporter Version 6.0, to manage data and create reports.

Software will be updated as new versions are released. Hours and statistics will be reviewed monthly by the Project Director to ensure goals of the Project are being met. Staff and/or Advisory Council Members will review annually volunteer stations and their volunteer opportunities to ensure opportunities align with the CNCS Strategic Plan. If there is a need to graduate a volunteer station the Project Director will meet with the site supervisor and discuss the current needs of the community, what volunteer opportunities are available at the station and possibly assign the station and volunteers to a capacity building assignment with minimal disruption to the current volunteers.

CAI's fiscal staff has over 40 years of experience managing federal grants. Fiscal staff and the Project Director approve all financial transactions. In-kind contributions will be secured through community donations and volunteer stations and recorded by the Project Director on a monthly basis. The Director will also periodically review the Project through a self-assessment (re: appendix ten of the Operations Handbook) to ensure all goals are being met and how the Project can be responsive to meet community needs.

### **Organizational Capability**

CAI has successfully operated federal and state grants since 1965 and has sponsored the Senior Corps-RSVP since 1971 meeting or exceeding contractual standards. CAI is subject to an A-133 Single Audit and there have not been instances of non-compliance reported to the Audit Clearinghouse. CAI's fiscal staff comply with OMB circulars and prepare and manage financial aspects of the Project including completing and submitting the Project Budget, the Financial Status Report and the Federal Cash Transaction Report which are reviewed and approved by the Project Director and CAI's management.

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A full-time Project Director will be sustained through CNCS funds. Janeen Love will serve as the Project Director assisted by an active ten-member Advisory Council of skilled individuals from diverse backgrounds. The Project Director has a Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology, an Associate Degree in Accounting, and eleven years of Project volunteer management and recruitment experience. The Director attends trainings on a regular basis to improve and ensure quality Project programming. The Director also serves on local advisory boards to promote volunteerism and increase the awareness and expand the Project. She is also a member of the National Association of RSVP Directors and the Pennsylvania Senior Corps Directors Association where she has served two-two year terms as President and currently serves on the Executive Committee. In addition, a part-time staff will serve the Project as needed for special projects. A part-time fiscal staff will also prepare financial transactions including the Federal Financial Report (FFR).

During the 41 years of successful Project operation in Clarion, Indiana and Jefferson Counties, CAI has recruited and placed over 1,400 senior volunteers. CAI works closely with Clarion Area Agency on Aging, Aging Services, Inc. (Indiana County) and Jefferson County Area Agency on Aging as well as faith-based organizations to ensure Healthy Futures focus area community needs are being met including: ombudsmanship; food distribution; companionship; home delivered meals; and APPRISE Counselors. CAI utilizes Outcome Results System (ORS), a software application to collect, track, analyze and report critical impact and outcome data.

CAI is governed by a 18 member tri-parti Board of Directors representing low-income, elected public officials, and private organizations. In 1987, the CAI Board of Directors appointed Robert A. Cardamone, Executive Director, to lead and manage CAI. Susan K. Fusco, Community Services Supervisor, supervises all community services to include the Senior Corps-RSVP. The Project

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conforms to CAI's policies and procedures regarding purchasing, travel, risk assessment, personnel procedures, etc. CAI provides facilities, equipment, supplies and other support needed to successfully operate the Project. The Project will maintain a ten-member active and diverse Advisory Council including but not limited to those over the age of 55. The Advisory Council will meet at least six times per year and assist with Project management, operations and assessment.

The Project Director is responsible for securing 30% in-kind match through community and local donations including: meals; mileage reimbursements; clearance fees; meeting space; etc.

### **Other**

N/A

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

N/A