

SUMMARY REVIEWER COMMENTS

2013 RSVP Competition

Legal Applicant: United Way of East Mississippi

Applicant ID: 13SR143443

Project Name: RSVP Meridian/Lauderdale County

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 only the external reviewer on the blended panel. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

External Reviewer's Summary Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant's 57% of the unduplicated volunteers are included in outcomes work plans. This is well above the required 10%.

The applicant provides strong programmatic oversight evidenced by the active involvement of the CEO and the Board of Directors to ensure that the RSVP Director is meeting the needs of community stations. Further, the Director works closely with the stations to ensure community needs are being met or collaborates with the stations to make adjustments, such as when a local food bank was running out of food, the Director helped organize a drive to collect food items.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states in the executive summary that 225 RSVP volunteers will be utilized, but the total number of volunteers in all work plans totals only 212.

In the work plans, performance measure 5.1, Veterans and Military Families, the applicant states that it will arrange for children to send letters to active military service members, but the applicant fails to explain how this will be a significant veteran and military service activity and how it will involve RSVP volunteers in the activity.

The applicant does not provide any information in the application concerning recruiting senior volunteers who are veterans or from military families, from diverse racial/cultural groups, or who are disabled.

The applicant requires volunteer stations to submit appropriate documentation for review to ensure compliance with RSVP regulations and other applicable laws. No information is provided regarding other compliance monitoring techniques to prevent or identify prohibited activities such as conducting site visits or obtaining feedback from volunteers, services recipients, etc.

The RSVP Program is being used, in part, to pair young students with home-bound seniors at local retirement homes (the Mississippi Angels). No information is provided that explains how older adult volunteers are involved in this activity; therefore, this appears to be an unallowable expense.

It is unclear why the budget requests funds to purchase only 30 uniform shirts, when the application's executive summary states it will use 225 senior volunteers.