

Narratives

Executive Summary

An estimated 585 RSVP volunteers will serve at the Westbay Community Action Program (Westbay) in a network of 83 different stations. They will perform, among others, the following service activities: food delivery and companionship at meals on wheels programs and at senior centers, companionship services through the Friendly Visitors Program and military veterans mentoring other veterans. The Primary Focus area of the Westbay RSVP project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the 12-month performance period, the following outcomes will have been achieved: 1,620 homebound or older adults and individuals will report, by survey, having increased social ties/perceived social support; this program goal includes 82 veterans. The service stations will be primarily located in Kent County, Rhode Island; although some will be located in Providence County and Washington County, both of which are adjacent to Kent County. As a community action program, Westbay provides comprehensive human services to this population with a full time staff of 65 employees and 26 case managers. Westbay will integrate many RSVP stations into its service platform.

The CNCS federal investment of \$77,706 will be supplemented by \$49,863 in matching funds from Westbay.

The Veterans and Military Families focus area will be advanced through the Veteran Mentor Program, which will assist veterans involved in the criminal justice system. RSVP volunteer mentors will offer mentoring and referral assistance to veterans that are participating in an alternative sentencing project. Westbay expects 7 RSVP veterans to participate at this workstation. Westbay's RSVP program will have an expected 40 veterans participating at other workstations throughout the program. These veterans will become members of the RI Vet Corps, a project started by Westbay this year. RSVP veterans who volunteer for the Corps will be trained with the latest information on veterans' services. The RSVP veterans will then act as mentors and referral agents for fellow veterans.

Strengthening Communities

Narratives

The Primary Focus area for the RSVP Program at Westbay will be Healthy Futures. Kent County, the geographic area served by Westbay had a population of 166,158 in 2010, according to the American Community Survey (U.S. Census). That year in Kent County, there were 36,656 seniors over 55 years of age and 26,069 seniors 65 years and older. The 2010 American Community Survey also reported that the poverty rate among Kent County individuals 65 years and older was 8.6 percent. Food security is both a continuous obstacle and a high priority among these seniors. These individuals as well as a number of people struggling due to the State's current economy (with an unemployment rate over 10%) are seeking the services of food distribution organizations. Recent information gathered from the Rhode Island Food Bank reports that seniors, age 65 years and older, are 11.1 percent of those who pick up food at a pantry. Rhode Island ranked 19th in a ranking of states by rates of food security among senior Americans.

Survey work completed by the Rhode Island Department of Health between 1998 and 2010 also indicates an issue with seniors' nutrition. The results of the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey in Rhode Island shows that only 31.3% of people 65 years of age and older in Kent County have the appropriate diet (five a day servings of fruits and vegetables). Further, the survey indicates that 11% of those 65 years of age or older in Kent County do not receive any social and emotional support.

A total of 35% (9,198) of Kent County's elderly population (65 and older) is living alone, according to the 2011 American Community Survey, completed by the U.S. Census Bureau. There are several factors that make companionship and transportation services important among this population. Inability to drive due to poor health, reduced vision or other changes in driving performances makes getting to appointments difficult. Minimal family or friend support or interaction and increased loneliness can be ongoing issues with the elderly, yet, many are still determined to live independently. Basic companion assistance helps this population maintain their level of independence and safety. Westbay case managers that work with this population report that transportation to doctor's

Narratives

appointments and grocery shopping and regular interaction with a friendly visitor can greatly increase the chances of these seniors maintaining their independence.

Senior veterans also benefit from companionship services. According to the 2011 American Community Survey, there are 13,391 veterans in Kent County and 46% of these veterans are 65 years and older. A Needs Assessment and Service Plan completed by Serve Rhode Island in November, 2011 revealed a large gap between the number of veterans in Rhode Island and those veterans who are accessing healthcare benefits. Based on data from the Providence VA Medical Center approximately 26,400 of the 71,863 Rhode Island veterans are enrolled in the VA healthcare system. VA Staff cite the need for additional outreach as a means to decrease the gap between the number of veterans in the State and the number of enrollees. Information on veteran services and other non-health care benefits may also assist veterans. The dynamic of veterans working directly with other veterans has become a successful program model promulgated across the nation, as exhibited in Volunteer West Virginia's VetCorps program and Volunteer Tennessee's Veterans Priority program.

Senior centers also offer a need and an opportunity for seniors to exercise, learn new skills and craft, participate in organized activities, gain information on available services, take part in free or low-cost health clinics and give back to the community. According to the National Council on Aging, research shows that older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and delay the onset of chronic disease and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental, and economic well-being. Veterans congregating at senior centers also present a need and an opportunity. Veterans need companionship and information on veteran services and benefits as well as companionship from fellow veterans.

PLANS AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO MANAGE RSVP VOLUNTEER AND THEIR STATIONS

The Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures, with the Objective of "Aging in Place", will consist of a

Narratives

total of 37 service stations with 516 total volunteers and 351 unduplicated volunteers. Those service stations, which will be continuing their work from the previous RSVP programs, will be managed through proactive steps through the staff, the Access database and outcome and output instruments. Many of the 37 stations and the RSVP program will have seniors serving seniors.

Westbay will plan and manage RSVP volunteers and their stations with four specific steps. First, Westbay has structured a database, using Microsoft Access, to support management of RSVP stations and volunteers through data. Second, Westbay has specific agency wide protocols in place to deal with all federal and state grants, including financial and management controls that give Westbay the ability to operate programs within stringent regulatory parameters. Third, for a significant number of service stations, Westbay will exercise direct management and administration. Several of Westbay's programs will be the stations for RSVP volunteers. Westbay also has an effective network with other non-profits. Historically, there has been enthusiastic interest by local non-profits to host RSVP stations, as a way to increase their program outreach in the community. Finally, Westbay has a seasoned track record of 30 years hosting the RSVP program.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES IN THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA, OUTPUT OR OUTCOMES

To meet needs in the Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures, with the Objective of "Aging in Place", the RSVP program at Westbay proposes to institute a total of 37 service stations with 516 total volunteers and 351 unduplicated volunteers.

RSVP volunteers will serve as Meals on Wheels drivers or at Kent County Rhode Island food banks and pantries. Training will be provided by the appropriate stations, as needed. Volunteers will also serve as Friendly Visitors and provide transportation for seniors living in the Kent County section of Rhode Island. Each client will be seen one day a week for approximately 2 hours or at the request of a medical ride. Volunteers will receive training from RSVP staff at an initial orientation, periodic phone monitoring and newsletters throughout the year. In addition, station specific training will include an

Narratives

overview on care giving, safety, activities that interest seniors, community resources and communication skills.

The output targets for food distribution and companionship include 2,300 clients for food distribution and 198 clients for companionship. It is anticipated that 80% (1,538) of the clients served will report having increased social ties and or perceived social support as an outcome of receiving food or companionship. In addition, senior veterans will be matched with senior veterans indicating a need for companionship. The output target is 102 senior veterans visited and the outcome will be 80% (82) of these veteran clients served will report having increased social ties or perceived social support.

MAJOR ELEMENTS IN THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA, INCLUDING VETERAN NEEDS, SERVICE ACITVITIES, OUTPUTS OR OUTCOMES

Westbay selected Healthy Futures as the RSVP Primary Focus Area, in part, to enable seniors to serve seniors in need. Kent County seniors (65 and older) have the following needs: 8.6% live in poverty, 35% live alone, 11% lack social and emotional support, 56% are overweight and only 31% consume a balanced diet. The veteran population, particularly veterans returning from combat zones, suffer from post traumatic stress syndrome, physical injuries and a high unemployment rate. Only about 36% of veterans in Rhode Island are enrolled in the VA healthcare system, which can help address these issues.

Westbay plans to institute a total of 37 service stations with 516 total volunteers and 351 unduplicated volunteers to serve this need. Service stations will provide Friendly Visitors for senior companionship; meals on wheels, for companionship and nutrition; and meals at senior centers, for companionship and nutrition. A total of 2,300 clients will be assisted through food distribution and 300 clients will receive companionship services. Veterans will account for 102 of the clients helped through companionship services.. In terms of outcomes, 1,620 homebound or older adults are expected to report having increased social ties/perceived social support.

Narratives

A total of 40 RSVP veterans, or members of veteran families, are expected to become part of the RI Vet Corps, a veteran outreach program at Westbay. The Corps project is designed to gather and disseminate accurate information about veterans programs, including programs at Providence Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The 40 RSVP veterans who are part of the Corps will receive special training. It is anticipated that 82 veterans will report having increased social ties or perceived social support as the result of services they received through the RSVP.

Recruitment and Development

Westbay creates high quality volunteers assignments based on experience with service delivery, recruiting and managing volunteers as well as an interagency network which supplies work stations. Westbay has administered a successful RSVP program for 30 years, which has given Westbay direct, meaningful experience. Westbay understands the organizations and stations that will accommodate volunteers in meaningful positions. In a broader context, Westbay is connected to the community with other ongoing programs for education, nutrition, housing, employment and veterans affairs. The RSVP program is an integral part of this platform of vital service programs within the Primary Focus Area. However, creating volunteer opportunities at specific stations is only half of the equation. Westbay understands how to screen and place volunteers by assessing the interest and aptitude of the volunteering senior. For instance, some volunteers want to deal with children while others want to serve fellow seniors. The program's present high rate of volunteer retainage is a mark of Westbay successful approach.

RSVP placement by Westbay RSVP staff will have several steps, based on current program experience. First, Westbay staff will interview each individual to obtain the information that will assist them in placing that individual in a fulfilling volunteer position. Volunteer information documented in this interview includes, along with other information: general background, work experience, hobbies, other volunteer experience, available time, restrictions on physical activity and

Narratives

transportation flexibility.

Second, detailed, updated job descriptions are maintained for each station, enabling RSVP staff to provide volunteers with an accurate portrayal of the position as well as the learning and contributory opportunities existing with each station. Finally, a joint placement decision will be made between the staff and volunteer after all the options are reviewed with the individual. The station will then be notified of the new volunteer by the RSVP volunteer coordinator. RSVP and station staff exchange contact information and assign a date for the volunteer to begin. Frequently, the RSVP director or the volunteer coordinator accompanies the new volunteer for an introductory visit to the volunteer station. This ensures compatibility and a comfortable beginning to the volunteer assignment. At a minimum, each volunteer station provides the new volunteer with an overview of the agency and the volunteer position.

Veterans will have a noted distinction in the Westbay RSVP, with an option to become part of the RI Vet Corps program. One service activity, which assigns veteran volunteers to the Veteran Mentor Program at the Kent County Court, will assist veterans involved in the criminal justice system. The broader based application of the RI Vet Corps to the RSVP program will offer all RSVP volunteers, who are military veterans or in a veteran's family, the opportunity to become part of the RI Vet Corps with special training. The veteran RSVP volunteer will then bring this enhanced training to their workstation. The training will familiarize the veteran RSVP member with programs available to serve veterans in Rhode Island.

With this program, Westbay is responding to A Needs Assessment and Service Plan for veterans that was completed by Serve Rhode Island in November, 2011. Westbay staff were members of the stakeholder group for the study. The needs analysis pointed out that despite significant resources for veterans, veterans have a difficult time connecting with those resources. Veterans informing veterans with accurate and up to date information is one preferred approach. RSVP veteran volunteers'

Narratives

designation as a member of the RI Vet Corps will offer veterans an important opportunity to serve fellow veterans.

Periodic structured monitoring with the volunteer is part of the previous and proposed RSVP program. This monitoring includes an initial 30 day phone assessment to determine each volunteer's response to their new assignment. A written survey is then solicited on an annual basis. If responses indicate volunteer satisfaction, "quality checks" will continue throughout the volunteer's participation. If there is an issue, an immediate effort will be made to resolve that issue at the present workstation. If a resolution is not achievable then the volunteer can be assigned to another workstation.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Training for the volunteer starts with the first orientation meeting. Again, this individual session includes an overview of the program and all RSVP policies and procedures. The latter addresses scheduling and timesheet requirements, staff contacts; absences and (general) interaction between the volunteer and client population, including non-discrimination. Community partners who host RSVP stations, will be required to have volunteer training, This training will vary depending on the position requirements. A key determinant for the level of training depends on how the volunteers interact with the clients and general public at any particular station. For example, RSVP veterans volunteering in the Veterans Mentoring Program at the Kent County Court will have extensive training on alternative sentencing. Volunteers mentoring adults as part of the Westbay GED program will receive specific training on educational mentoring. Alternatively, volunteering at the senior center may involve self-directed activities with fellow seniors.

Project staff, station supervisors and community participation groups will be regularly informed by email from the RSVP office about local trainings pertaining to volunteerism. Such trainings include webinars regarding volunteer recruitment, local seminars such as the Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island as well as workshops addressing medical issues such as flu epidemics. Another station

Narratives

that offers detailed technical training, is Westbay's Community Action Tax Assistance Program.

Volunteers undergo training and receive a certification by the Internal Revenue Service.

Online communication is a critical element in Westbay's organizational infrastructure. The RSVP quarterly newsletters provide detailed information for service stations and volunteers. The newsletter includes information on events, staff development, outstanding service recognition and broader Westbay programs available to volunteers and their clients.

A brown bag lecture series as well as quarterly caregiver newsletter have been developed to provide information/training to volunteers in caregiver/Friendly Visitor positions. All RSVP volunteers are welcome at these lectures. Income tax and Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) volunteers are informed yearly of upcoming trainings for certification and re-certification.

RSVP staff receive technical support from an information services employee of Westbay Community Action. These project staff participate monthly in trainings and in-services related to volunteerism and associated topics. Several of these trainings will be conducted by the National Council on Aging, the Coalition on Human Needs and Volunteer Match.

In addition to the Veteran Mentor Program at the Kent County court, RSVP veteran volunteers will be invited to become members of the RI Vet Corps, formed at Westbay in response to the Serve Rhode Island veterans' needs assessment. As part of the RI Vet Corps program, Westbay will develop a database and training program for veteran volunteers who are charged with informing other veterans about available resources. RSVP veteran volunteers will have the opportunity to attend training modules conducted by staff from the U.S. Veterans Affairs Office in Providence and the Providence Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

These training sessions will provide detailed, accurate information about available programs that the RSVP veteran volunteers can refer to other veterans. In addition, other agency and non-profit programs available for veterans will become part of the database and training. Westbay is instituting

Narratives

the RI Vet Corps as a comprehensive program for information, referral and mentoring for veterans by veterans.

RECRUITING THE VOLUNTEER POOL

Westbay will implement a multi-faceted recruitment program for RSVP. Throughout their 30 years of experience, Westbay has found that the most successful marketing tool is word of mouth. Engaged RSVP seniors are ambassadors of goodwill and living referral sources. RSVP volunteers will attend community events and senior expos where they interact with others, expressing the value that service to their community has provided for them. The substantial Westbay communication network, with 65 employees, is also used for recruitment. GED classes and other educational programs at Westbay distribute RSVP information. In addition, Westbay will use the follow vehicles for RSVP recruitment: www.westbaycap.org, Twitter, Facebook, the Westbay quarterly newsletters, Serve RI, the CNCS Rhode Island Office, distribution of updated brochures, local senior centers, statewide and local newspaper listings, senior fairs and information booths.

Westbay's RSVP program will also use the Volunteer Center at Serve Rhode Island, Volunteermatch.com, AARPS's Create the Good volunteer site and CVS Caremark Community Crew website. Affinity groups, like retired teachers associations, will be targeted as a potential opportunity to promote the program and recruit more volunteers. Members of the RSVP advisory council (see organizational capability below) are also charged with recruiting new volunteers.

Community partners with RSVP stations are effective recruiters. Since each of these organizations reach out to different segments of the community, Westbay is able to connect with a diversity of races and ethnicities; different sexual orientations and people of limited English ability. For instance, Westbay will recruit through the Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL), which serves clients with disabilities. Senior centers also recruit seniors with age-related disabilities. One example of an agency that will recruit seniors with a diversity of race, ethnicity and limited English ability is

Narratives

the International Institute. The Kent Center will help recruit people with different sexual orientation. Westbay will complete specific outreach for veterans and their families. Westbay has established a network of contacts for veterans including: (U.S.) Veterans Affairs Office in Providence, Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Providence; Rhode Island Division of Veterans Affairs; Rhode Island Veterans Action Center; Office of Transition Assistance, Rhode Island National Guard; Operation Stand Down, Vet Inc., Disabled Veterans of America; Veterans of Foreign Wars; Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; Vietnam Veterans of America; Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. and others. Westbay also has a client base with 500 veterans. This network and of veterans and veterans organization will receive information about the RSVP program through their membership in RI Vet Corps. The RSVP director and volunteer coordinator will contact specific agencies to talk about RSVP.

RETAINING AND RECOGNIZING THE RSVP VOLUNTEERS

The experience of current volunteers at an organization is invaluable and therefore the retention of volunteers is an essential part of the volunteer process. Great emphasis will be placed on making volunteers feel comfortable and welcome at their position and an essential component of the process. Westbay provides information to the volunteers regarding certification, which is tailored to their volunteer placement. Written and internet material is also provided to help strengthen the volunteer experience. With increased expertise, volunteers are able to take on a higher level of responsibility and leadership, such as overseeing the tax program. Station managers provide the volunteers with the necessary in-house training which can lead to increased responsibility, if the volunteer desires this progression.

Strong working relationships are created between the stations and the RSVP office through ongoing contact about each organizations' mission and services. Communication with the registered volunteers is made via personal visits, phone conversations or email throughout the year in order to

Narratives

discuss their level of satisfaction with their current position, any demographic changes or to speak about new volunteer opportunities. Staff uses the volunteer written survey to gauge satisfaction and identify issues which are resolved through appropriate staff action. The initial placement is also critical for volunteer satisfaction. Westbay takes several steps (see above) to ensure well tailored placements.

Volunteers will be recognized formally each year at the Recognition Luncheon held in spring. This event includes a sit down dinner, entertainment and an awards presentation. Throughout the year, correspondence via cards, letters, emails and phone calls is made to recognize a volunteer for a particular task or to just thank them for their continued dedication.

Program Management

Four elements of the proposed Westbay management are indicative of the organization's quality approach to volunteer and service management:

1. Westbay has structured a specific software program, using Microsoft Access, to provide database management of RSVP. This automated reporting system provides a platform for mailings, the activity log and customized program reports.
2. Westbay has seasoned experience with federal and state grants and the ability to operate programs within stringent regulatory parameters
3. With 83 stations and over 500 RSVP volunteers, Westbay has a seasoned track record (30 years) with the Corporation.
4. For a significant number of service stations, Westbay will exercise direct management and administration, as supplement to program outreach in the community.

Within the Kent County geographic focus area, Westbay has a proven track record. Westbay serves over 10,000 clients each year, meeting basic needs for housing, food and shelter. Of that total, over 500 clients are veterans. The full range of services is detailed below in Section E: Organization

Narratives

Capacity.

The Westbay RSVP program will support two types of volunteer stations. Some stations will be within Westbay and these stations will be managed by Westbay personnel, reporting to the RSVP director and volunteer coordinator.

The second volunteer station type will be with a partner non-profit. For the latter, several critical steps occur between Westbay and the agency managing the station. First, a memorandum of understanding is executed to agree on detailed program responsibilities and shared expectations. Next, regular site visits by RSVP staff provide visual and interactive assessments of the effectiveness of stations and volunteer service. A survey of each station will also be conducted annually. Finally, continuous interaction between staff and volunteers assist in ensuring volunteer satisfaction and utilization. These protocols help yield high achievement of service activity outputs and outcomes.

The Microsoft Access database includes base line information on the volunteer stations such as: address, telephone numbers, email addresses and points of contact. Other information is maintained in Access, including: number of volunteer hours recorded for each volunteer, station and workplan (hours are calculated monthly, quarterly and yearly); memorandum of understanding data and the number of volunteers per station. The Access software allows RSVP staff to run queries and reports that compare data and generate such information as stations listed by workplan, volunteer recognition data and volunteers by station. These reports enable staff to follow volunteer placements, recognize years of commitment and extrapolate demographic information. Westbay also gathers and reports information regarding caregiver clients. Data such as the number of clients, the number of new clients and the number of visits are documented.

RECRUITING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEER STATIONS OUTSIDE THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA

In addition to the primary focus area for Healthy Futures, the following focus areas will benefit from

Narratives

the RSVP program at Westbay: education, veterans and military families, environmental stewardship, economic opportunity and disaster services. Again, Westbay has an organizational advantage in developing capacity to recruit and manage volunteer stations because of its extensive programmatic service to Kent County and areas outside Kent County.

For instance, for the education focus area, one station will be the Westbay GED program. Westbay has operated this program for over 30 years, with an annual enrollment of 50 students. RSVP volunteers will tutor students who are preparing to take the General Educational Development tests during scheduled meetings. Since both the director of the GED program and the RSVP director are a part of the Westbay organization, coordination is facilitated and supervising managers can ensure a priority is given to the RSVP program. The tax preparation program, which falls under the economic opportunity focus area, is directly managed by Westbay staff, providing assistance to an anticipated 450 people during the tax season. Volunteers are trained and certified by the Internal Revenue Service.

In addition, Westbay has strong network of relationships with non-profits throughout the service area. Station experience with the Westbay RSVP program dates back 30 years with some of these partners. For instance, the Senior Environmental Corporation does clean up and light maintenance activities at Warwick city park facilities. Three seniors are expected to participate in that project. For disaster services, RSVP volunteers will distribute critical information for the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency. It has become increasingly important due to increased risks such as natural disasters and health epidemics to distribute material containing information on prevention and preparedness to residents of the area. Westbay played a critical role in the disaster recovery efforts that resulted from the devastating storms experienced by the State in 2010. Paul Salera, the Director of Family and Elder Services at Westbay, is the chairman of the Rhode Island Disaster Long Term Recovery Group. This is just one example of Westbay's leadership and recognition in the community

Narratives

of non-profits. This leadership also assists in facilitating recruitment and management of RSVP stations.

One example of effective coordination for veterans and military families will be at the Veteran Mentor Program workstation located in the Kent County Court. An expected 7 RSVP seniors, who are also veterans, will become part of a project working with veterans in the criminal justice system, mentoring them and referring them to appropriate resources.

GRADUATING VOLUNTEER STATIONS TO MEET CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Project staff has regular interaction with volunteer stations as well as RSVP's active volunteer base. Discussion of changing needs, general relations between volunteers and sites and pertinent issues are attended to on a frequent basis. With continual interaction, the project staff is able to keep abreast of the growing needs and concerns of the area. These observations lead to the development of new volunteer assignments (including capacity building work), the improvement of current assignments and the maintenance of productive volunteerism. Three-year memoranda of understanding are completed with each station and volunteer job descriptions are updated as needed or as new volunteer opportunities are added. Information from a yearly volunteer survey is analyzed by staff and used to improve the volunteer experience as well as identify areas of need. Information retrieved from these surveys includes ratings for: the placement process, support and training, the impact of each volunteer experience, meeting goals/objectives. If those goal/objectives are not being met, appropriate changes will be made.

ASSURING OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS ARE MEASURED AND COLLECTED

Three important elements of the RSVP program at Westbay provide the platform for measuring outcomes and outputs for the new program. First, activity logs (primary output measurement) are maintained by each service station. The logs are reviewed monthly by station supervisors and the RSVP Director. Second, the logs are entered into the Access database and reports are run to extract

Narratives

the number of volunteers and unduplicated volunteers as well as the hours of volunteer support. The Access database is updated monthly, a system which has successfully operated for 2 years.

Surveys will be an important part of the outcome measurement system. Client surveys have been administered at Westbay for over 10 years. The questions pertaining to RSVP outcomes will also be incorporated into the existing Rhode Food Bank survey. The objective of the surveys will be to measure whether the client's feeling of a sense of social support increased after the food delivery.

Friendly Visitor program clients will be surveyed annually. The objective of the survey will be to measure whether the client's feeling of a sense of social support increased after their experience with the companionship program. The surveys will also have questions for the self-identification of veterans. These surveys will be reviewed by the station supervisors and submitted to the RSVP volunteer coordinator before the RSVP director enters the data into Access. For the disaster preparedness project, referral logs will report information distributed and for environmental stewardship, a census of debris collected will indicate the effectiveness of clean up campaigns.

MANAGING PROJECT RESOURCES

Westbay Community Action, the program's sponsor agency, provides significant support in the areas of fiscal and human resources which assures that the program's financial and employee resources are managed appropriately and that the necessary record keeping and reporting are conducted by staff.

The RSVP director reviews project implementation line items on a monthly basis. This report, reviewed by the CFO, includes all non-payroll expenditures. The Westbay CFO and CEO also review and approve all annual budgets. All activities are subject to the annual audit. Funding for RSVP will be provided by the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs and the Rhode Island Legislature, in the form of legislative grants. In-kind donations are accepted and recorded in the program and agency files.

Monthly assessments of volunteer timesheets are made to ensure the continual participation in work

Narratives

plan projects. Specific days, number of volunteer hours and volunteer sites are documented on timesheets, which supplies the necessary information to determine each volunteer's status for the month. Station supervisors sign and submit these timesheets monthly and report any additional needs of the volunteers at that time. Any problems or issues are dealt with immediately to prevent interruption in meeting goals and objectives of the volunteer station. Westbay also provides a pleasant and efficient work space as well as updated equipment such as computers, copy machines/scanners/fax machine. RSVP will be a management priority for Westbay.

Organizational Capability

PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL OVERSIGHT, OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AND DATA COLLECTION

Westbay Community Action (Westbay) has been in operation for 45 years, implementing RSVP for 30 years. As a mark of fiscal integrity and superior financial management, the annual audit for Westbay has had no findings. Westbay also provides a wide range of referral services for volunteers and the community they serve. Westbay's annual budget totals \$9 million dollars. Budget oversight and processing is the role of the finance department. The financial management system used is in accordance with government auditing standards issued by the comptroller general in the United States. Policies and procedures relating to financial management such as cash, petty cash and inventory, are in place and enforced by the agency's CFO. For instance, travel records are completed monthly by both staff and volunteers. Once travel expenses have been approved, documentation is sent to the finance office and reimbursement is provided according to a set rate per mile.

STAFF POSITIONS, AND HOW THEY WILL BE SUSTAINED; CURRENT STAFF

Tanisha Simpson is the RSVP Director at Westbay. Ms. Simpson has managed the Westbay RSVP program and is familiar with the volunteer network and 83 workstations where volunteers have been and can be assigned. She has a depth of experience in managing volunteers and in classroom

Narratives

education. Ms. Simpson was a classroom teacher for the school district in Warwick for over 5 years, including classes for those with autism. Ms. Simpson has a proven ability to communicate with a wide range of clients/students, including people with significant disabilities.

Ms. Simpson has also worked teaching and organizing foster care volunteers for the State of Rhode Island. With this work, she achieved a transferrable skill set for matching volunteer interests with detailed program requirements. The Westbay job description for the RSVP director includes the following: develop program work plan and budget; work with advisory council in areas of needs assessment, program goals, evaluation, fundraising and information sharing; define roles and responsibilities of program staff; supervise program staff and volunteers; oversee operations of the program; manage budget and finances, working to ensure compliance with program work plan and budget; develop volunteer opportunities for senior/others in compliance with the work plan; train volunteer stations in the management of volunteers; recruit volunteers, assessing their interests and skills; provide placement, training and advancement and monitor volunteer activities; maintain computerized data bases (both RSVP and Tracker); develop and implement a public relations strategy.

Patricia Martucci will be the volunteer coordinator for the RSVP. Ms. Martucci has extensive experience working with seniors in this position now and as Executive Director of the Pilgrim Senior Center in Warwick. The Westbay job description for volunteer coordinator includes the following duties: develop and maintain a working relationship with other agencies, community and business leaders and government officials; recruit volunteers and volunteer placement opportunities; prepare job descriptions; develop and implement orientation and training programs for volunteers and volunteer sites; screen volunteers and place them in assignments, matching skills and interests to the opportunity; monitor each placement/volunteer site; when necessary, mediate solutions to problems between volunteers and sites; oversee data collection; ensure accurate and timely reporting of program activities; maintain accurate records on volunteers and volunteer stations; manage satellite

Narratives

office activities; develop and implement recognition programs for the volunteers. Ms. Martucci will report to the RSVP director.

Ms. Simpson, the RSVP Director, will report to Paul Salera, the Director of Family and Elder Service. Mr. Salera has been in his position for 9 years, supervising a staff of 42, including program directors, case managers and a senior aide. He has a master's degree in Agency Counseling and is HMIS trained. Currently, Mr. Salera is the Chairman of the Rhode Island Disaster Long Term Recovery Group. Ms. Jeanne Gattegno is the President/CEO of Westbay. Ms. Gattegno provides knowledgeable and well recognized executive leadership, serving in this position for 30 years. She is a founding member of the Rhode Island Food bank, the Rhode Island Donation Exchange and the Warwick 13, a coalition of social services agencies in Warwick, formed to provide an efficient cross referral network. Ms. Theresa Cabral is Westbay's CFO. Ms. Cabral is a Certified Public Accountant and has worked in the private and non-profit arena for over 15 years

WESTBAY'S TRACK RECORD IN PRIMARY FOCUS AREA

Westbay serves over 10,000 households annually with a broad range of emergency, nutrition, housing and educational services. Nutrition service most closely match the general descriptions of healthy futures, the primary focus area for the RSVP program.

The following examples illustrate how Westbay addresses basic and emergency services:

1. Housing. Westbay provides emergency rental payments to prevent homelessness. Also, utility and heating payments are paid on an emergency basis.
2. Food. Westbay provides emergency food assistance to individuals and families and longer term food supplement for nutrition through the United States Department of Agriculture's Commodities program. For one annual period, Westby provided 350,000 pounds of emergency food to clients. Westbay also provides links to Women Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program, congregates meals, school lunches and food stamps.

Narratives

3. Clothing. Westbay provides clothing through the Working Wardrobe Clothing Collaborative program, with a storefront in Warwick. The organization also distributes Salvation Army clothing vouchers through Westbay's role as the Salvation Army representative for Warwick.

4. Health. Westbay makes direct referrals to comprehensive primary health care providers which provide service regardless of ability to pay. On a one time emergency basis, Westbay pays for prescription drugs. The WIC program, a provider of health for woman with small children had 2,000 active enrollees at Westbay, in a recent one year period.

Westbay's service delivery system is built on the following tiered system. Emergency services address an immediate crisis such a shelter, food utility shut offs and medicine. Once the crisis is alleviated, short term case management provides access to ongoing supports such as heating assistance, food stamps, rental assistance, child care assistance, mental health/health services, employment and education services to begin to stabilize the household. Once stabilized, participants move into longer term case management and services which can include: working towards their GED, entering college or training programs, and/or going to work; placing their children in early education/child care and learning about financial literacy. For other clients, like the elderly and disabled, it includes staying at home in the community with in-home supports to prevent hospitalizations and nursing home placements for as long as possible.

Service to seniors is a hallmark of Westbay's programs. Seniors compose 25 % of Westbay's client base and they receive many of the services indicated above. One example of senior service is the nutritional program to senior centers. Each day, Westbay prepares and delivers over 450 nutritionally balanced noontime meals daily to 18 senior congregate dining sites. Seniors in need are referred to these dining sites.

Advocacy is performed at every level of the service delivery system and organization. It is done to secure resources for a client or program, to create public policy supportive of the low income and

Narratives

disadvantaged seniors and to create new and more efficient service delivery systems.

Westbay has proved itself in service delivery by volunteers, including the RSVP program, with an average of over 500 annual volunteers. Westbay established RSVP service stations with 60 memoranda of understanding with non-profits. Westbay has operated a complete and successful placement and monitoring program for seniors that retained most volunteers in meaningful service. Separately, Westbay manages the services of over 100 non-RSVP volunteers. Volunteer activity includes: assisting with clerical duties in case management; children's center maintenance, children's center reading groups, food distribution from Westbay's marketplace, holiday program gift distribution and holiday basket setup. Westbay utilizes volunteers from local businesses who donate goods to Westbay, including WalMart and Pepsi. Also high school students volunteer at Westbay to fulfill a requirement for community service. Volunteers range in age from 14 to 70 years.

Westbay measures staff performance with annual employee evaluations. Each staff member has annual goals in the areas of program knowledge, attendance, communication skills and initiative. The evaluation for supervisors includes all those categories plus supervisory skills such as: ability to lead, solve problems and provide team cohesiveness. Each supervising employee has annual goals and is required to complete a self-evaluation. This process is set by the personnel policy, adopted by the Westbay Board of Directors and implemented by the human resources department.

DESCRIBE ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Westbay is committed to providing strong organizational infrastructure support to the RSVP program. Logistically, Westbay will provide ample office space, utilities, supplies and access to office equipment. Organizationally, Westbay provides a sound financial, management and human resource platform, with a total of 65 employees. Each position has a job description and each employee has an annual employee review. Financial management includes approval procedures and approval by the CEO and CFO. An annual independent audit is completed in accordance with OMB Circular A 133 as

Narratives

applied to recipients of federal funding. There has been no "finding" in this audit for 5 years.

Westbay is governed by a Board of Directors, which has a set of bylaws that is reviewed annually. The Board, which meets monthly, is composed of representatives from local government, low-income residents and the community. The RSVP program will also have an Advisory Council that includes leaders from local business and non-profit sectors. These individuals will provide a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds, which help to promote RSVP within the community. Members of the Advisory Council will be recruited from ranks of former business owners, bankers, program directors, retired professionals as well as current RSVP volunteers. The Council reviews the progress of the program, markets the program, recruits and recognizes volunteers and raises funds.

Westbay has administered multiple programs since 1964 with federal funding including funding from Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Energy (Energy), the Department of Justice, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as well as the Corporation for National and Community Service. Rhode Island state funders include: the Departments of Elderly Affairs, Corrections, Education and Energy Resources. Westbay also receives legislative grants to support the RSVP program.

The RSVP project staff at Westbay has many years of expertise, with educational, employment and volunteer knowledge. The full-time program director has experience working in the non-profit world with membership bases, grant writing procedures and fundraising efforts as well as working with volunteer and community-based human resource programs. Her background has fostered a team work approach, enabling staff to work cohesively and efficiently. A daily staff meeting helps to cultivate interaction between staff members and promotes cohesiveness of the program. New methods have been introduced for data collection, volunteer and staff interaction as well as protocols for reporting information.

The volunteer coordinator has brought innovative ideas to the position such as a new system to

Narratives

collect volunteer hours, which encourages the volunteer stations to submit monthly hours. Timesheets are now received via mail, email or fax which has resulted in acquiring monthly volunteer hours in a timely manner. The coordinator uses the ACCESS database and has greatly improved data entry, recording and reporting capabilities. The responsibilities of the caregiver and medical transportation program responsibilities are also held by the volunteer coordinator.

SUSTAINING THE PROPOSED REQUIRED NON-FEDERAL SHARE

Westbay has been able to meet the matching requirement for RSVP for 30 years and will extend that commitment as follows: Westbay will continue to provide the required program match of 30 percent. Westbay's total annual budget is \$8 million with total net assets of \$3.2 million. The State of Rhode Island, Department of Elderly Affairs (DEA) will provide part of the program match as well as Community Service Block Grant from DHS. DEA and DHS have been partners of Westbay for 40 years.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A