

Narratives

Executive Summary

An estimated 168 Reno County RSVP Volunteers will serve in the Healthy Futures primary focus area. Through a network of volunteer stations, including Meals on Wheels, Reno County Department of Aging and the Food Bank of Reno County the volunteers will serve in four main service activities which at the end of a 12-month performance period will result in:

- *190 homebound and persons with disabilities receiving independent living services,
- * 120 senior citizens receiving information on health insurance, access and benefits,
- *3,000 individuals receiving emergency food assistance from food banks/food pantries.

The federal investment by the Corporation for National and Community Service will be \$69,672 and will be supplemented by \$58,763 in non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

According to 2010 Census data, Reno County, Kansas has a population of 64,511. It is a transitional community, situated on the edge of both urban and rural regions. Less than 50 miles to the east is Wichita with a population of 382,368. To the south, west and north is an open countryside of farmland and sparsely populated communities dependent upon the agricultural economy.

Hutchinson is the county's largest city and county seat. It is home of Hutchinson Community College, which has served as sponsor of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) since submitting its first funding application in 1973.

Reno County RSVP will place 169 senior volunteers in positions where their efforts help address community needs in the Healthy Futures primary focus area. The needs in this area are indicated and supported by the following information. 17% of the Reno County population is over age 65, higher than Kansas and the nation at 13%. Of those over age 65 in Reno County, 20% are over age 85. Many retirees from the rural areas move to Reno County to be closer to shopping and health care providers, including a hospital which provides cardiology, dialysis, and other specialized services.

Narratives

According to the Reno County Department of Aging (RCDA) there are many frail and isolated seniors who are striving to remain independent in their own homes. These seniors are isolated with no one to check on them or provide encouragement and support. This isolation results in insecurity, loneliness and a rapid decline in health. In 2011, RCDA conducted 503 well-being assessments of seniors referred by neighbors, social workers and others concerned about them. The assessments found many unable to carry out activities of daily living. 103 of those assessed and in need of assistance were determined to have no ability to pay for support services. In order to remain independent in their own homes, many frail and isolated seniors need grocery shopping and transportation to and from doctor appointments.

Reno County also has a higher number of people living below the poverty level. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/county-level-data-sets/poverty.aspx) 14.6% of Reno County residents live with incomes below the poverty level. This is higher than Kansas at 13.5%. Another indicator of the financial difficulties facing many people in the county can be seen in the 1,888 low income taxpayers who used the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site staffed by RSVP Volunteers in 2012. The average adjusted gross income of those using the free tax preparation service was \$14,820, indicating again the extremely low incomes many people in the community live on (SPEC 2012 Taxwise Report). In Hutchinson, the median household income is \$41,536 which is lower than the Kansas median of \$47,709. (2010 Census)

In order to provide assistance to those struggling to remain independent in their own homes and those struggling financially in the community, RSVP Volunteers will be placed in volunteer positions where their efforts will provide direct support to elderly persons aging in place and people of all ages struggling with food insecurity. Initially, staff will retain and place RSVP volunteers with stations offering service activities that lead to the Healthy Futures outputs and outcomes. Staff will also work to identify additional service opportunities with other community organizations addressing this

Narratives

Primary Focus Area throughout the grant cycle.

RSVP Volunteers will be placed in positions where their services will help elderly persons remain independent in their own homes as long as safely possible. Volunteers will be placed with Meals on Wheels and Friendship Meals Home Delivery program providing hot nutritious meals to homebound seniors five days per week. Supplemental meals for the weekends will also be available.

RSVP placements will also be made with the Friends in Action (FIA) program where volunteers will be matched with frail and isolated seniors to provide weekly companionship, grocery shopping and/or medical transportation. FIA will provide volunteer screening which will include background checks, volunteer training, on-going supervision and support.

Outcomes will be measured by survey, with frail and isolated seniors receiving encouragement and support through weekly visits, assistance with grocery shopping and meals, and medical transportation reporting increased social ties/ perceived social support.

Another need in Reno County is for seniors and people with disabilities needing help as they strive to make informed choices, understand the benefits available to them, and enroll in health insurance programs that best fit their needs. However, the options can be confusing for seniors, persons with disabilities and their caregivers. To complicate matters for many, the Medicare Part D program requires those eligible to access information and enroll on-line. Many people, in need of the program, do not have access to computers or if they do they struggle to navigate the Medicare Part D options for prescription drugs.

The Reno County Department of Aging (RCDA) will oversee the work of RSVP Volunteers placed in their Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) program. Trained RSVP Volunteers will assist Medicare beneficiaries and/or caregivers to understand their prescription drug policy options through Medicare Part D and answer their questions. Using laptop computers they will help individuals access the state SHICK Internet database to enter information regarding the prescription

Narratives

drugs they are on. The data base filters the information and generates a list of Medicare Part D prescription drug plans that best match the senior's needs. The Volunteers will not make specific recommendations about which plan to choose, but they will provide a list of options specific to the medications the client takes and help the client enroll in the plan of their choice. RCDA will track the number of people served by the program.

RSVP Volunteers will also be placed in positions at the Food Bank of Reno County where they will collect, sort, weigh, and record donated food items. The volunteers will rotate stock, record disbursements and assist those needing emergency food assistance. Working under the guidance of the Food Bank Site Coordinator, the volunteers will be cross trained and do whatever is needed. The output for this volunteer effort will be measured in the number of people in need of emergency assistance receiving help.

Because of the service activities outlined above, 168 RSVP Volunteers serving in the Healthy Futures Focus Area will result in:

- *190 persons who are homebound receiving independent living services and report having increased social support.
- * 120 senior citizens receiving information about health insurance options and benefits will have an opportunity to review the options and then receive assistance with on-line enrollment applications.
- *3,000 individuals receiving emergency food assistance from food banks/food pantries.

While there are many elements to providing a highly effective approach to utilizing RSVP Volunteers in addressing these and other community needs, Reno County RSVP will remain committed to three very important pieces which contribute to a successful operation. They are: the Memorandum of Understanding, the RSVP Volunteer Position Description and a monthly volunteer timesheet submitted by each volunteer station. The RSVP Staff and volunteer stations will work together under the guidance of a signed Memoranda of Understanding. This agreement will outline

Narratives

the responsibilities of each organization and will be updated annually. All RSVP Volunteers will serve in volunteer positions outlined in volunteer position descriptions provided by their volunteer stations and approved by Reno County RSVP. Each month, volunteer station supervisors will submit volunteer timesheets which provide documentation of volunteer activity.

RSVP Volunteers will be placed with volunteer stations where veterans and their families are eligible for services. For example, 362 U.S. Veterans received free tax assistance from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site in Hutchinson in 2012. This was the second year the site was able to track veterans served. Because of Reno County's close proximity to McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita, Kansas and Fort Riley Military Base in Junction City, Kansas most recent veterans and their families access services at those locations. However, there is great opportunity for RSVP Volunteers to assist older veterans who are not able to drive through the VITA program, Robert Dole Hospital, Meals on Wheels, Friends in Action and other programs supporting those who are aging in place or disabled.

Recruitment and Development

Reno County RSVP will recruit and retain a minimum of 540 senior volunteers to serve in positions that will address the Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures in service activities helping with aging in place, obesity/ food and access to care. Volunteers will also be recruited and retained in Other Focus Areas targeting K -- 12 Success, Financial Literacy, Disaster Assistance and Capacity Building & Leverage. Up to 130 volunteers of those recruited and retained will be placed in positions with nonprofit and governmental organizations addressing local Community Priorities. Through their hours of service, area nonprofit and governmental organizations will have expanded human capacity to provide services in the community. RSVP Volunteers will continue to serve as a valuable resource for organizations working to maintain and expand their services. The volunteers will fill a wide variety of positions with area museums, community theatres, the court system, hospice and more. As with all RSVP positions, the volunteers will not displace paid employees.

Narratives

Prior to the beginning of the 2013 RSVP Grant Year, all senior volunteers will be invited to accept a volunteer position in a Healthy Futures Service Activity or Other Focus Areas. Those who choose to remain in volunteer positions that no longer are in line with the CNCS Performance Measures will be graduated. This will be accomplished with a transition to The Volunteer Center which is the umbrella department at Hutchinson Community College where the RSVP program is also located. The result will be very little, if any, disruption for volunteers or volunteer stations.

In addition, the RSVP Staff and Advisory Council will develop and follow an annual volunteer plan which will include:

1. A weekly Volunteer Opportunities section in The Hutchinson News and in Hutch News On-Line highlighting a variety of volunteer positions available.
2. An additional presence on the HutchNews.com "Calendar of Events" page will provide access to more "baby boomers," many of whom, in an effort to take on more "green" habits, do not have the paper delivered to their homes anymore.
3. Up-to-date volunteer opportunities on www.hutchcc.edu/volunteer, www.Volunteermatch.com, and Facebook.
4. Presentations to area clubs and organizations about the RSVP program and opportunities in the focus areas.
5. Volunteer recruitment booths at community events, including the Prime Time Expo and the Women's Fair.
6. Making use of Facebook for regular listings of volunteer opportunities and invitations to get involved with RSVP.
7. The RSVP Director and Assistant Director continue to work with station supervisors and nonprofit directors to expand volunteer opportunities available after 5 pm and on weekends for those volunteers who are still in the work force part or full time. In addition, staff members participate on the local

Narratives

Resource Council, Coalition on Aging, and Food Bank Board of Directors. All provide opportunity to identify and help develop new volunteer positions and lend additional support.

Well informed, trained, and supported volunteers are more successful in their positions and stay longer. Each volunteer will continue to be provided guidance on roles and responsibilities in an orientation process which includes a handbook they can refer back to. Training specific to their assigned volunteer position will be carried out by staff at their assigned volunteer station. Training will be appropriate to the position. Reno County RSVP has a history of working with volunteer stations who provide quality volunteer training opportunities, including:

- * VITA Tax Preparer Certification Training, Site Coordinator Training and Ethics Training,
- * Friends in Action Training "What Would You Do?" and quarterly team training,
- * Senior Health Insurance of Kansas (SHICK) training,
- * YouthFriends Training
- * Food Bank On-Site Operation Training

RSVP Staff will continue to identify and develop volunteer leadership opportunities. Success in this area has been demonstrated with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, where RSVP Volunteers have filled key leadership roles serving as Site Coordinators and E-File Administrators. Also, in 2011, RSVP Volunteers continued to fill leadership roles with the Food Bank of Reno County as the Volunteer Coordinator and the Et Cetera Shop where they serve as Day Managers.

RSVP Volunteers will continue to play a key role on the Advisory Council / Citizen's Participation Group. In 2012, eight of the fifteen council members are active RSVP volunteers. Their leadership is key to RSVP fundraising, recognition, recruitment and community need assessment. Advisory Council training will continue to be provided for new and veteran council members.

Key to quality RSVP Volunteer experiences will be safe and accessible volunteer work sites and prepared, supportive, engaged and informed station supervisors. For that reason, Memoranda of

Narratives

Understanding will continue to be updated annually and station responsibilities reviewed. Written volunteer position descriptions (Requests for Volunteer Assistance forms) will continue to be required before volunteers are recruited for any position. This will ensure the station have a solid plan for each volunteer placed. It will also allow RSVP staff to make sure the volunteer placed in each position has the skills needed for the position and /or that the station has a plan to provide appropriate training.

Also vital to quality volunteer experiences will be a personal face-to-face interview, intake and placement process with each new volunteer. This will provide volunteers with assignments that best match their interests, skills and time available. It will also result in a higher level of connectivity to the RSVP program, its policies and procedures and the staff. In order to make sure volunteers are having positive experiences, RSVP Staff will continue follow-up with each volunteer placement via phone calls, e-mails, and / or site visits. The importance of positive volunteer experiences will be discussed in the orientation process with each volunteer. All volunteers will be encouraged to notify staff if there is a problem with an assignment or if they want a change.

Volunteer recognition and words of thanks are important to volunteer retention. The following recognition activities are planned for 2012 and will continue: 1. An annual volunteer recognition activity for all active RSVP volunteers. Historically, this is a sit down dinner with entertainment, volunteer reflection and words of appreciation from station supervisors and community leaders. 2. A personal note of thanks will be sent to each RSVP volunteer at least once during the year, typically included on a birthday card. 3. Weekly recognition of an RSVP Volunteer of the Week on a local radio show which includes a free lunch courtesy of Ken's Pizza. 4. Highlighting of volunteer accomplishments in program newsletters, on the website, on Facebook page and in public presentations will continue. 5. All RSVP Volunteer Stations will be encouraged to provide volunteer recognition whenever possible and provide them with the dates and information for National Volunteer Week.

Narratives

Program Management

The RSVP staff will continue to update Memorandums of Understanding annually with volunteer stations. This was noted as a strength of Reno County RSVP in the follow-up letter summarizing the program's May 2012 Compliance Review. This annual update allows staff and Advisory Council to ensure that volunteer stations are in compliance with program regulations, laws, policies and procedures. In addition, volunteer station site visits will be conducted by staff and advisory council members to ensure good communication at all levels regarding all aspects of the program, including prohibited activities which include service that involves teaching religious doctrine or involves political activity.

Reno County RSVP will continue to require the following of all volunteer stations, including those that engage volunteers in service activities "outside" the Primary Focus Area:

1. Review and sign a Memorandum of Understanding each year or when there is a change in the person filling the supervisor's position or CEO/President's position at the Volunteer Station.
2. Submit a volunteer timesheet by the 5th of each month for all RSVP Volunteers serving the station.
3. Notify the RSVP staff of any changes in RSVP volunteer service activity.
4. Notify the RSVP staff of any accident or problem involving an RSVP Volunteer.

Reno County RSVP will work closely with The Volunteer Center to graduate volunteer stations that do not offer opportunities that fall under the community need outcomes addressed by the national performance measures. The Volunteer Center was developed in 1983 using RSVP as its model. Volunteer recognition, secondary insurance and other benefit have been provided for those not eligible for RSVP. With the new focus for RSVP the Center will absorb and work to fill volunteer positions that do not fit the new look of RSVP with minimal or no disruption.

In the development of the 2013 RSVP Grant Recompensation Application, the RSVP Director and Assistant Director met with Volunteer Station Staff that address the needs targeted in the National

Narratives

Performance Measures. In these discussions service activities were discussed along with how to secure output and outcome data. The RSVP grant application was developed in partnership with those volunteer stations expressing a willingness to gather data, survey where appropriate and track RSVP Volunteers and those served. These efforts should assure Reno County RSVP's ability to measure outputs and outcomes as it works to meet needs in the Primary, Other Focus Areas and in Other Community Priority Area.

Hutchinson Community College (HCC) has been in operation since 1928. It has been the one and only Reno County RSVP sponsor since the program began in 1973. In addition to federal funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service for RSVP, HCC has a long history of administering federal grants from the Department of Education, National Public Radio, Department of Labor and others. Fund Accounting is used to manage the federal and state grants.

A copy of Hutchinson Community College's (HCC) most recent complete audit report has been submitted to the Field Financial Management and is also on file with the Audit Clearinghouse. The sponsor continues to provide efficient and effective use of resources and ensure accountability through its fiscal system of checks and balances. All RSVP expenses are submitted by the RSVP Director, approved by the HCC President and HCC Vice President of Fiscal Systems. In addition, all expenses must go through final approval by the sponsor's Board of Trustees.

Fiscal cuff records continue to be maintained in the RSVP Office and compared to the sponsor's records in the Business Office on a monthly basis. At that time, the RSVP Director and Assistant Director review expenditures and revenue. Each quarter, they review the financial records with the sponsor's accountant.

All in-kind documentation indicates that items or services were not paid for by federal funds. The documents are signed by donor and by the RSVP Director. The in-kind records are maintained in the RSVP Office.

Narratives

In Reno County, RSVP works under the sponsor's Volunteer Center umbrella. The work of securing funding for Reno County RSVP falls to the Director of The Volunteer Center, the HCC President and the Advisory Council. It is important to note that the RSVP Director devotes 80% of her time to RSVP. The remaining 20% of her time is spent coordinating the sponsor's Volunteer Center which serves as the umbrella for a number of programs including RSVP at Hutchinson Community College. Fundraising and grant writing for RSVP is done under the auspices of The Volunteer Center.

The 2011 reduction in federal funds for RSVP has resulted in funds being matched at a higher percentage because of in-kind space, staff fringe benefits and other in-kind services. This higher match should not be perceived as an excess of cash available. Additional hard cash funding has come from Hutchinson Community Foundation's -- Fund for Hutch, United Way and other fundraising by the Volunteer Center. In addition, the Center provides desk top supplies, postage, telephone, office equipment and more.

Organizational Capability

Reno County RSVP is highly regarded in the community as an organization that gets things done when volunteers are needed. While many volunteers will be graduated from RSVP to The Volunteer Center, it is important to note that the program has consistently supported more than 600 volunteers for many years and in 2011 served close to one-hundred volunteer stations. Numerous volunteer stations have taken advantage of technical assistance provided by RSVP Staff on volunteer management issues related to recruitment, retention, orientation, training, recognition, and evaluation. In 2011 more than 50% of all Reno County RSVP Volunteers were serving in performance measured positions.

As program sponsor, Hutchinson Community College provides RSVP with a sound infrastructure which includes a solid accounting system, personnel policies and procedures through a Human Resources Office, purchasing and travel policies and procedures, an Information & Technology

Narratives

Department, with policies and procedures that provide for a secure computer networking environment, custodial and maintenance services and more.

Through Hutchinson Community College's Volunteer Center RSVP is equipped with supplies and equipment which includes staff computers networked to a multifunctional device that prints, copies, scans and faxes, phone lines for each staff member, a solid accounting system, much more.

The RSVP Staff continues to use the volunteer management database, Volunteer Reporter. With this software volunteers, stations, job descriptions, performance measures and volunteer hours are entered, tracked and maintained. Information is kept up-to-date and accurate. Signed RSVP enrollment forms are maintained in individual volunteer files. Volunteer Timesheets are submitted monthly by Volunteer Station Supervisors.

As Reno County RSVP begins to focus its efforts on the Primary Focus area and the Other Focus Areas, a solid track record of working closely with volunteer stations to meet community needs will be of great benefit. There are existing partnerships in the Healthy Futures area with Friends in Action, the Reno County Department of Aging, the Food Bank, Friendship Meals and others. These relationships will allow RSVP to "hit the ground running" as it works to transition and recruit more volunteers to serve in the new Performance Measure Model.

Reno County RSVP has three staff members who combined have 75 year experience administering the program on a daily basis. The RSVP DIRECTOR, Debbie Berndsen at 80% time has been in the position since 1978. She reports directly to Dr. Edward Berger, President of Hutchinson Community College. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Resource Management from Friends University. She has a solid base of knowledge and a proven track record for involving RSVP Volunteers in the implementation and development of innovative approaches to community problems. Director responsibilities include:

- Providing day-to-day operation and promotion of RSVP in Reno County.

Narratives

- Providing guidance, supervision, and training for RSVP staff on all RSVP / Senior Corps / CNS Compliance and Grant requirements, as well as, sponsor policies and procedures related to personnel, reimbursements, etc.
- Ensuring that RSVP volunteers are recruited, placed and maintained according to the Corporation for National Community Service guidelines.
- Planning, developing and overseeing a continuous program of public relations in cooperation with the Advisory Council.
- Providing for the formal recognition of RSVP Volunteers. - Working with volunteer station staff to develop service activities that result in outputs and outcomes in line with the National Performance Measures and ensure that adequate records and methods of systematic reporting of statistical data are in place.
- Meeting with Assistant Director and sponsor accountant to review financial records and ensure that expenditures are in line with federal regulations and sponsors policies.
- Collecting project data, prepare and insure required federal, state and local reports.
- Facilitating the on-going participation of an active Advisory Council (Community Participation Group).
- Establishing and maintaining good working relationships with CNSC, Hutchinson Community Foundation, Reno County Department of Aging, United Way and other governmental and non-profit organizations.
- Making public presentations about RSVP.
- Administering RSVP Program on a daily basis and interpreting the RSVP program to the community, volunteers and volunteer stations.

The RSVP ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, Leah Chandler, with 80% of her time devoted to RSVP has been employed by RSVP for 24 years. She has an Associate of Arts Degree from HCC. She served as

Narratives

program Secretary and Recruitment Coordinator before moving in to her role as Assistant Director.

The RSVP Assistant Director's primary responsibilities include:

- RSVP Volunteer recruitment and retention activities, including development of booths and presentations at public events and submitting volunteer opportunities to the local media on a weekly basis.
- Conducting face-to-face interviews and enrolling all RSVP Volunteers.
- Providing each new volunteer with orientation, handbook, nametag and copy of volunteer position description/s.
- Reviewing all on-going Requests for Volunteers / Position Descriptions received from nonprofit and governmental organizations to ensure that they fit within the Primary Focus, Other Focus or Community Priorities Areas.
- Working to develop, maintain and assist current and potential volunteer stations with information regarding quality volunteer positions and effective use of volunteers.
- In-put and up-to-date maintenance of Volunteer Position Description in Volunteer Reporter Database.
- Reviewing Memorandum of Understanding with organizations before recruiting and placing RSVP Volunteers
- Maintaining RSVP in-kind documentation and financial cuff records.

The RSVP SECRETARY, Rosalie Harper, with 75% of her time devoted to RSVP has been in her position for seventeen years. She is a graduate of Hutchinson Community College's Office Technology program. Her primary responsibilities include:

- Creating and maintaining individual volunteer and volunteer station files.
- Securing monthly volunteer timesheets, related data entry and generation of requested summaries for reports.

Narratives

- Securing supplies, handling mail, answering phones, and reception of walk-in traffic.
- Ensuring all Memorandums of Understanding are current and up-to-date.
- Calling registered RSVP Volunteers periodically to ensure emergency contact and other info is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all volunteers receive a written note of thanks each year and facilitate the Volunteer of the Week campaign with local radio station.
- Supervising a weekly RSVP Volunteer office volunteer and others who help with special RSVP Office projects.

There are job descriptions for all RSVP paid and volunteer staff positions. Any vacant RSVP staff position that develops will be filled following the policies and procedures of the sponsor. Background checks will be conducted on new RSVP Staff members and will include finger printing following CNCS guidance and requirements as required by the Serve America Act.

The RSVP Advisory Council plays a vital role in on-going RSVP program assessment, evaluation and continuous improvement. By meeting monthly, this group continues to demonstrate its willingness to help staff improve the operation. For example, in response to discussions around the need to promote service and days of service, it was the Advisory Council that led the effort to hold a Carey Park Clean-up as part of the United Way Day of Caring. It is also the Advisory Council that chooses the annual Make a Difference Day project, which in 2011 was collecting food for the Food Bank of Reno County. The Advisory Council has held discussions around the development of volunteer position descriptions to expand the capacity of the RSVP paid staff to help meet ever emerging funder requirements. Council Members will continue to visit RSVP Volunteers Stations to assist staff and help assess program impact.

The most recent federal compliance visit for RSVP was conducted in May 2012 by the Kansas CNCS staff. The findings were positive and a copy of the report is on file with the CNCS

Narratives

Kansas/Missouri State Office.

"The Reno County RSVP Program was found to be in compliance with Senior Corps legal, regulatory, and policy requirements." Program Strengths noted were:

* A very strong sponsor commitment to this RSVP project as evident from the longevity of RSVP staff and Dr. Berger (Sponsor President).

*Memorandums of Understanding are signed every year which have developed a strong community buy-in to RSVP.

*An active and well-informed Advisory Council that visits the volunteer stations conducts fundraising activities and helps with program evaluation.

* Dedication of the RSVP Director to "get it right".

*This RSVP project requires proof of 501©3 status from volunteer stations.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A