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Executive Summary

A total of 375 RSVP of Northwest Illinois volunteers will serve. It is estimated that 100 volunteers will assist homebound elderly to remain in their homes by assisting with transportation to doctors and grocery stores. They will be giving telephone reassurance calls daily, assist with the installation of Lifeline services and friendly visiting giving the homebound ties outside their home. These volunteers will assist through CONTACT, Senior Resource Centers, RSVP, faith-based partners, Freeport Health Network, hospice. The primary focus area of this project is "Aging in Place" through the Healthy Futures focus area. At the end of the 12 month performance measure period it is anticipated that 200 older adults will have remained in their homes. This will be measured through a survey of those clients being served. The CNCS federal investment of \$46,956.00 will be supplemented in the anticipated amount level of \$28,274.00 in non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

The RSVP of Northwest Illinois, located in Freeport, Illinois, has been a division of Highland Community College (HCC) for forty years. Founded when the college had been existence for only 10 years, RSVP has become synonymous with Highland Community College. The district encompasses all of Stephenson and JoDaviess counties. The HCC District also includes the northern half of Carroll County and the northwestern corner of Ogle County. Sauk Valley College in Dixon, Illinois, serves the southern half of Carroll County. The remainder of Ogle County is served by Sauk Valley College and two other community colleges: Rock Valley College in Rockford and Kishwaukee College in Malta. HCC broadens its RSVP district so that services are available to all of Ogle and Carroll County since no RSVP projects exist in these areas.

The project area is comprised of 2,368 square miles in the northwest corner of Illinois; bordered on the north by Wisconsin and on the west by Iowa. Total population is 138,553 (2011 estimated). Freeport is the largest community in the project area with a population of 25,559 persons. Other communities

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range in population of 500-5,000 persons.

The 2011 estimated census data for the service area was obtained from the US Census Bureau (<http://quickfacts.census.gov>.)

Stephenson County's population on April 1, 2010 was 47,711 declining to 47,563 by July 1, 2011

Almost 89 % of the population had a high school diploma and 17.2 % had bachelors degree or higher.

From 2006-2010 there were 4,431 veterans living in the county. The median income of households in Stephenson County was \$43,304. Almost 15% of the people in Stephenson County were in poverty.

The population of people 65 and older was 21.7 %. One percent of the population was black.

Carroll County has seen a decline in population every decade since 1960 and 1.5 % loss from April 2010-July 1, 2011. The 2011 estimated population was 15,163 declining from 15,388. According The median income for residents of Carroll County was \$44,805. Of those 11.5 percent were below poverty level. Of those living in Carroll County, 21.7 percent were 65 years of age or older. Whites make up 97.2 % of the population with blacks at 1%. There were 1,594 veterans living in the county from 2006-2011. People employed in Carroll County were involved in manufacturing, agriculture, education, health and social services, management, professional and related occupations, production, transportation and material moving occupations. Carroll's loss comes from natural decrease and out-migration.

JoDaviess County's population has remained fairly stable for the past 15 years with their population peaking in 1980. JoDaviess has seen a decline in population since 2010-2011 of .5 %. This decrease in JoDaviess comes from natural increase and in-migration. Whites make up 97.8% of the population with blacks at .6%. The median income was \$50,279. In JoDaviess county 89.1% were high school graduates and 23% had a bachelors degree or higher. Twenty-one percent were over 65.

From April 1, 2010-July 1, 2011 Ogle County's population decreased from 53,497 to 53,115. According to the census data 15.6% percent were 65 and over. Of those living in the county, 96.8% were white

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while 1.1% were black. Of those living in the county 87.4% were high school graduates and 17.8% had a bachelors degree or higher.

JoDaviess, Carroll and Ogle Counties are less diverse than Stephenson. In the service area Stephenson, Carroll and JoDaviess counties average below 5% average of those reporting language other than English spoken at home. In Ogle County, 7.2% report language other than English spoken at home. According to the National Conference on Citizenship, Illinois ranks 29th in the nation for people volunteering. The service area provides plenty of opportunities for people of all ages to volunteer. Like the national average, the majority of volunteering in the service area takes place through churches. Besides area churches, the area supports 4-H programs, Boy and Girl Scouts, church youth organizations, master gardeners and community beautification groups. There are VFW and American Legion units that support and work with our veterans, most of whom are RSVP volunteers. RSVP of Northwest Illinois partners with many of these organizations.

A highly diverse collection of business and industry is well-established in the project area; some of which are Freeport Health Network (FHN), Furst-McNess, Titan Tire, Cable Publishing, MetLife, QBE (General Casualty) and Sentry Insurance companies. Tourism is a large draw with Galena, located in JoDaviess County. Galena was the home of President General Ulysses S. Grant. Located nearby are Chestnut Mountain Ski Resort and the Galena Territory that has a large golf course and conference center. The Galena Territory also has many investment properties located within its property. With Stephenson County having the largest population base, the majority of non-profits is located in Stephenson County, but serve multiple counties. Many of these agencies have closed their doors or combined services to encompass the other counties. With the lack of state funding and the state not reimbursing in a timely manner, many agencies are severely down-sizing and reassessing how they meet the client's needs they serve. About one-fifth of the employees working in Carroll County are in

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the manufacturing sector, accommodations and food (tourism) is the leading employer in JoDaviess County, and about one-fourth of Stephenson County work is manufacturing. Stephenson County has seen the largest employment changes (a 12 percent decrease) over the past ten years. This is attributed to major manufacturing downsizing and out-sourcing to other areas. In Carroll County manufacturing has decreased since 1997 by almost 10 percent. The closing of the Savanna Army Depot and the reduction in railroad employment has been the leading cause of the reduction.

RSVP of Northwest Illinois will be focusing on the Healthy Futures "Aging in Place" focus area. In 2010 the Stephenson County Transit Partnership conducted a community survey. They gathered 1,134 surveys from residents of Stephenson County, 31% from agencies and 15 surveys from those agencies with buses and vans. The results showed the following: Do people lack transportation? Yes, per Community 28%, agency 83% and agencies said that 80% of their clients need transportation to get to the medical appointments inside of the county, while 22% of the community and 61% of agencies identified needs to go out of the county for medical appointments. The survey results also showed the following: Trip needs: Medical Community 50%, Agency 80% inside county, 64% out of county. Employment: Community 20%, Agency 68%. Family/friends visit: Community 43%, Agency 44%. Shopping: Community 56%, Agency 56%; and Social Service Appointments: Agency 80%, and Social Entertainment: Community 37%. Based on the 2010 census estimates, there are 34,186 persons 60 years or older living in the service area. This is an increase of nearly 13% since 2000. According to the Northern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, all residents in the service area are considered rural dwellers. It is estimated that 100 volunteers will assist homebound elderly to remain in their homes by assisting with transportation to doctors and grocery stores. They will be giving telephone reassurance calls daily, assisting with the installation of Lifeline services and friendly visiting giving the homebound person ties outside their home. These volunteers will assist through CONTACT, Senior

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Resource Centers, RSVP, faith-based partners, Freeport Health Network, and hospice. At the end of the 12 month performance measure period, it is anticipated that 200 older adults will have remained in their homes. CONTACT's 24 Hour Crisis Line's Reassurance Program handled over 14,000 calls in 2011. This program is used by health care providers who would send patients to rehab if not for the daily medication reminders and check-ins made by this program. Many times in order for an individual to leave rehab they have to set up a Reassurance call. CONTACT currently has 30 clients on the Reassurance Program, making 45 calls daily to these clients. RSVP volunteers also assist approximately 100 homebound elderly by friendly visiting, transporting to doctor appointments and grocery shopping. Two Hospice organizations report that approximately 30 adults will need respite care. Freeport Health Network reports that 30 individuals currently receive home delivered meals for a total of 7,923 meals per year. It is anticipated that through a year-end survey, these clients will state that they have been able to remain in their homes and continue to have social ties to their respective communities.

Through our local Veterans Assistance Commission, RSVP volunteers will also be assisting in local food drives for the military families, assisting with transportation of veterans to doctor appointments and assisting with clothing needs through their office. RSVP will also, through service projects, be collecting Christmas Cards and Valentines cards for active military personnel.

Recruitment and Development

For forty years, RSVP has been a key player in helping to meet community needs. The service area does not have a volunteer center for agencies to ask for assistance in recruiting volunteers. RSVP helps to fill this void with requests for both long and short-term volunteer assignments. These requests do not always fall within the Corporation for National Service strategic goals, but are community needs within our service area. RSVP has been successful in fulfilling many of these requests over the years. Because the college draws from a diverse population, it allows RSVP to build

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on this diversity. The diversity of volunteers lies in their cultural and work experience backgrounds and their many talents and interests. Volunteers range from housewives to bank executives. Through our various community partners and their missions, we can bring a wide variety of volunteer opportunities to all older adults wanting to contribute back to their communities. These various assignments range from short-term assignments to long standing commitments, from simple tasks to leadership roles. RSVP seeks to recruit throughout all areas of our community. We continue to strive in our local ethnic communities to recruit a diverse group of volunteers. RSVP currently and will always, strive to involve volunteers with disabilities. We have been successful in placing volunteers in areas that allow them access to their assignments. We work with age related disabilities to assure a quality volunteer experience and that they remain active as long as they are able. Over 60 community partners (see submitted list) have been identified through the United Way needs assessment. Requests from other agencies range from clerical and mailing assistance to executive board members. The project staff meets with the community partners at least quarterly through personal phone calls, visits and newsletters to assure the volunteers are continuing to meet their community needs.

Community partners are identified by needs within their own organizations and input to the RSVP Advisory Council, and through the United Way needs assessment, community forums, and planning committees. In 2011, a small group of individuals formed the "Prospering Together" work group. This was established in part with the United Way of Northwest Illinois. They held community forums pulling from social service faith-based, not-for-profit, public entities, and community service organizations and groups to identify the need community needs. Through these forums, a shared vision was established: A. a great place to live, B. a great place to work, and C. a great place to grow. RSVP was included in the focus groups. After the completion of the reports, RSVP, as a leader in volunteerism, was contacted to assist in helping recruit and maintain volunteer records of all community volunteers. This is another way RSVP can help meet community needs and make our

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service area a better place to live. When a community need is identified, the RSVP Director meets with the Agency Director to confirm the community need and determine if a task is appropriate for an RSVP volunteer. They identify the number of volunteers necessary for a task, and discuss the development of a job description for the volunteer noting duties as well as knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for a volunteer to perform those duties. Volunteer opportunities are posted on Volunteer Match which links to both the state and national websites. RSVP in 2012 established a web-based enrollment from an area for volunteers to report hours. We are looking to establish a Facebook page by summer 2013. The staff continues to work through the college's public relations department to continually publicize RSVP's name and accomplishments through brochures, newspaper articles, radio spots, speaker's bureau and the college's website. One obstacle we face is there is only one major newspaper for Stephenson County. Because of limited space, articles may not appear or may not appear timely. With the federal budget crisis, we have received more press coverage. The local television station that covers both Winnebago and Stephenson County carried a nice article on the federal budget cuts. There is no local television stations physically located within the service area. Articles are submitted to local papers that publish weekly. RSVP utilizes the two local radio stations in the service area for PSA's and radio interviews.

Through these outlets, volunteer opportunities can be posted and stories shared. This helps the RSVP staff recruit and place the best volunteers to meet the needs of the agency for that assignment. After the volunteer is placed, the staff follows up with both the station and volunteer to make sure all parties are satisfied with the placement. When a new partner is established, they are provided with the station handbook to assist them in answering questions they may have. These partnerships are reviewed every three years and a new Memorandum of Understanding is signed if the community need still exists. RSVP also provides at least two mailings to stations yearly with updates on current volunteer trends, funding updates and impact the agency has on the community.

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The RSVP project volunteers will be engaged in a variety of services from serving as hosts at the local visitor center welcoming guests to our area, assisting families and patients at the local hospital on a daily basis, to serving and assisting with inmate services at the local jail. They will serve as docents at several area museums. FHN and Freeport Memorial Hospital convey the largest need for volunteers as the only major hospital and health care provider for the service area. Through our community partners, we are better able to place volunteers at tasks ranging from management consulting, tutoring, driving/escorting, preparing taxes, assisting with mailings, to visiting shut-ins. Due to the limited financial resources of these agencies and cuts in federal and state funding they rely heavily on volunteer assistance. Volunteers assist at the local domestic abuse bookstore where they sort, catalogue, and price books; they serve as clerks and greeters helping this agency raise funds when diminishing state funds are not available and allow this agency to continue to provide assistance to over 300 individuals involved with domestic abuse, and they allow staff to assist with over 3,500 annual crisis hotline phone calls. Through this wide range of community partners we are able to attract volunteers with very diverse backgrounds, interests and talents. Our volunteers come from urban and rural upbringing, as well as varying educational backgrounds. Their work environments have been just as diverse, from manufacturing and business backgrounds, to raising families in both urban and rural environments.

RSVP plays a key role in the community. The program and staff are looked on as leaders in the field of volunteerism. Since there is no volunteer center in the service area, RSVP is viewed in this capacity and receives requests frequently for short term opportunities. Partners have requested volunteers to assist in clothing and food banks, hospital volunteers to assist in the errand escort area, receptionists, meals on wheels, and currier services. Partners have requested clerical and mailing assistance, help in preparing newsletters, welcome packets, and assisting with registration for pre-school screenings. Partners also receive our assistance during community blood drives and in assisting with exhibit

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preparation for local museums. RSVP continues to participate in local health and wellness fairs and they have assisted in a prescription drug collection project.

Highland Community College has sponsored the RSVP program for 40 years and over this time has worked closely and developed an excellent working relationship with the community partners.

Through this long standing relationship, the volunteers that have provided services to these agencies have gone on to become valued board members, offering insight and leadership, as well as serving as mentors to new volunteers assisting the agency. As mentioned earlier, the partners support the program with their donations at the Holiday Recognition. They also turn to the RSVP staff to provide valuable data to their agencies.

RSVP works closely with partners to ensure their needs are being met through the volunteers. Each year the stations are asked to provide data on the impact the volunteers provide to their agency. This enables the project director a better source for reporting to funding sources what senior volunteers are doing in the service area. When a new volunteer starts with a community partner, many partners automatically enroll them in RSVP as well. Due to this, we are better able to capture the picture of senior volunteerism in the service area. It is felt that with this cooperation they truly value their volunteers and RSVP. Beside the regular volunteer activities, RSVP volunteers are asked to assist in community special events such as the Lincoln-Douglas Celebration, county fairs, local festivals and celebrations throughout the service area.

The RSVP project staff work closely with the community partners and their supervisors to maintain the highest of volunteer management standards possible. As stated above, the staff talks or meets with the Partners on a regular basis through personal phone calls, visits and newsletters. We encourage our partners to attend workshops and training regarding volunteer management styles that may be offered across the state. We will be encouraging them to attend and send staff to the Northwest Illinois Volunteer Conference in Moline, to be held in September 2012. The partners are

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also asked to assist in contributing and participating in the annual volunteer recognition. When a volunteer joins RSVP, they indicate preferences of work times and duties. Some volunteers choose to volunteer just a few hours a month while others assist full-time. Still others choose to do temporary assignments rather than commit themselves to an on-going job. RSVP allows us to use a wide and very diverse group of volunteers. It allows us to let a bank executive work with a person who had to drop out of school to serve our country in the military or to help raise their siblings. It allows housewives and teachers to assist young mothers in raising children to be productive and responsible adults. We utilize our local senior center publications to promote and recruit new volunteer opportunities, as well as our own newsletter. Once the volunteer has been registered, we send a packet of information that includes a volunteer handbook, timesheets, name badge, current newsletter, along with a welcome letter. We offer them an opportunity to attend personal new volunteer orientations that cover volunteer placement, insurance, timesheets, recognition and what hours are accepted.

In November, every volunteer household receives an RSVP calendar that includes the address and phone number of the RSVP office. RSVP volunteers are recognized at an annual event for their years of service; receiving a pin and certificate and publication of their service years in the recognition program. RSVP sends each volunteer a birthday card during the month of their individual birthday. RSVP volunteers are committed to the program. With the long standing relationship of the project staff, most volunteers separating from the program are due to health reasons or death.

Program Management

RSVP of Northwest Illinois works with over 60 community partners in the multi-county service area. The RSVP Director meets regularly with these station supervisors either by phone or site visits. At the next meeting, the Director will be reviewing the new regulations and performance measures. He will be discussing how RSVP can address the any specified unmet community needs outside our primary

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focus area. The Director will also work with any stations that will be graduated to hopefully allow them to move into a focus area. When a new station is assigned, the Director will meet with the station's staff to discuss what RSVP does, discuss volunteer assignments, and expectations of both the volunteer and the volunteer station. When assignments (with assistance from RSVP staff if requested) are agreed upon, the station provides a volunteer job description to the RSVP office to aid in the recruitment and placement of a volunteer that best meets the needs of that assignment. Once placement of the new volunteer is done, the Director follows up with both the volunteer and the station supervisor on the compatibility of the match and to assure federal guidelines are being followed.

RSVP will also work within other performance measures to meet the following community needs. Through Capacity Building, RSVP volunteers will be assisting with fund raising to help maintain community partner programs that have had federal and state funding cuts. RSVP volunteers will be assisting in Disaster Services, when needed, by serving in the Spontaneous Volunteer Center in the event of a disaster. They will assist with disaster sheltering and possibly being deployed through the American Red Cross, they will assist in tutoring elementary students in 5 local grade schools, and they will assist in environmental programs by recycling cans and newspaper in Carroll County.

Assessment of National Performance measures

RSVP annually sends each station an impact survey to assess the work of the volunteer and to collect data that will aid the Director in completing yearly reports. This survey will use the national performance measures guide to ensure the proper data is collected through this survey; data will be collected on the impact of the job performed, what possible impact was made by the volunteer and how it assisted the agency in meeting its objectives. We normally receive at least 50% response to the surveys. This information is then shared with the stations, volunteers, federal reporting system and

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state legislators. In the past, because not all stations had email capacities, this was done manually. The project is looking into the possibility of using an electronic surveying tool which is expected to offer easier completion capabilities for volunteer stations, as well as saving staff time in tabulating results.

All volunteer records are tracked through Volunteer Reporter. The RSVP coordinator keeps all volunteer files in the RSVP office in a secure filing cabinet. Every three year grant cycle volunteers are sent a form to update address, phone, email, etc. These forms are then placed in the volunteers file. These volunteer records are accessible to both the director and the coordinator of the program. This allows the director to have direct, immediate access to reports on volunteers. The data is stored on the college's main server which is backed up daily.

Managing Project Resources

RSVP is very fortunate to have the college sponsorship for over 40 years. They have been very supportive of the program by providing ample in-kind support to meet the needs of the program. The college provides office space, a large room for RSVP activities, postal, phone, custodial, copy, and fax services. In addition, the college allows RSVP to use conference center facilities when available. This is where RSVP is able to hold the Holiday Recognition. It provides the project with ample space to serve the luncheon and provides technology that can be used in any presentations or programs that are necessary. They provide ITS support for the program. The college requires all expenditures for the program to go through the college accounting system. This also applies to payroll and human resources. The college implemented an upgraded payroll program that will provide a paperless payroll system. This upgraded system will continue to meet the specific criteria and standards as set forth in the OMB Circular A-21, section 21. The college maintains an employee Policy Manual accessible by all HCC employees that clearly outline policies used by the college. The director, Mike Shore, has

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access to all grant accounts and can print the account activity from the office computer. Mike Shore also can remotely access email and Microsoft Office documents through the college system. RSVP volunteers select library materials for delivery to senior housing; as a result, 14 senior residence facilities have small onsite libraries.

The coordinator, Cindi Mielke, generates all expenditures for the program. She then generates the report with the director Mike Shore who then submits the expenditure to Rose Ferguson, Associate Vice President of Human Resources, who also signs off on the expenditure. It is then forwarded on to Accounting Coordinator, Andria Cornelius. The checks are then generated and electronically signed by Accounting Specialist, Lynn Pacey, who mails them to the volunteer. This system applies to all check requests and purchase orders. All purchase orders are sent through the Purchasing Specialist, Theresa Williams, and then on to accounting once the invoice is received upon delivery of the merchandise. The College encourages the program and the Advisory Council to do some limited fund-raising activities that mainly consist of the ongoing quilting program and a yearly quilt raffle. The funds raised also help support salaries after federal and state budgets were cut. At this time the program is not required to seek other cash or in-kind donations.

Organizational Capability

Highland Community College has been serving northwest Illinois for 50 years and has been the only sponsor of the RSVP program for 40 years. In those 40 years they have had three project directors. The current director has served for over twenty-two years in that capacity and has twenty-seven years with the program. Over the years the college has assisted the program in building community partners. Currently the members of the board of trustees represent all parts of the college district. RSVP also has Advisory Council members from across the college's district. HCC's Board of Trustees is dedicated to the servant leadership philosophy and expects this spirit within the organization. The organization's goal is for all employees to grow as servant leaders. Servant leadership is an effort to

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encourage and promote compassionate leadership. They encourage and support the director in serving in the community. Currently all but three of the College Board of Trustees are RSVP volunteer and regularly report hours.

Key Staff Descriptions

Currently the Director, Michael Shore, serves on two college committees. He has been appointed to serve on the safety committee bringing his NIMS experience to the campus in disaster preparedness. This year he is serving on the college's 50th anniversary planning committee. He also serves on Unified Command and the Local Emergency Planning Committee for Stephenson and Carroll Counties respectfully. In the past, Michael has served on several community boards of directors taking leadership roles within those organizations. Five years ago Michael was appointed by the Mayor of Freeport to serve on a Commission to organize and promote activities for the sesquicentennial of the Freeport Lincoln-Douglas Debates. The director has also served four terms as delegate to the National Association of RSVP Directors, and four terms as president of the Illinois Association of RSVP Directors. He recently completed serving two terms as secretary of the Illinois Association of RSVP Directors. Mike has also served several terms on the University of Illinois Stephenson County Extension Council serving many years as secretary and chairman. He has represented the county at regional meetings when necessary. This past year he has been appointed to serve on the newly formed multi-county Extension Council and will be serving as that group's secretary. He has also been asked to serve on the Northern Illinois Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council and Board of Directors. The RSVP program is aligned with the human resources department and the director reports to Ms. Rose Ferguson, Associate Vice President of Human Resources. The RSVP director and the volunteer coordinator, Cindi Mielke, are included in the human resources team meetings. The RSVP Director meets regularly with his supervisor. Through these regular meetings, they discuss the issues facing

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RSVP and any programmatic changes and issues that may be affecting RSVP and Highland Community College. The college commits a significant amount of non-federal support to the program. The college maintains separate accounts for federal and non-federal monies. Corporation funds are not used to cover other operating expenses, and the funds are directly used to support the program and the staff. Both Mike Shore and Cindi Mielke work very closely together and are cross-trained in all aspects of the program. The program is also working on updating processes and having them in place so someone could step in at a moment's notice and quickly review the procedures and assume duties if needed.

Financial Management System and Experience Managing Federal Grant Funds

The college provides the accounting and payroll services for the program, as well as cleaning and maintenance of the office space. The college also provides the necessary ITS support to maintain the program and its collection software and computer hardware. The director has ready access to accounts and current fund balances. The college's yearly audit has consistently met the requirements and has had no findings within this report. The RSVP project is currently using the RSVP reporter software to record volunteer hours and maintain volunteer enrollment records. We use this software to monitor impact statements and track impact data. In the past we tracked mileage and meal reimbursement as grant funds allow and to track service awards for years of service for each volunteer. The software is used to generate mailing labels for mailings to volunteers and stations. Through this software, we can create jobs specific to community need and record those hours accordingly. Currently, RSVP has 84 percent of the seniors who volunteer serving in national performance measure assignments. The 375 volunteers serve in over 60 community partner organizations. Through the yearly evaluations of the staff, questions are asked if there are any barriers to performing your job effectively. Are there any training needs, supplies needed and equipment

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updates? The college maintains a policy manual that is available to all staff. In addition, internal procedures, travel policies, and job descriptions are available through the College's General computer drive and the HR CougarNet site.

The college continues to maintain a satisfactory rating through the AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) by North Central Accreditation, the accreditation agency for the college. In this report, RSVP was used as a model for the "Attaining Other Distinctive Objectives" through their volunteer surveys and community partner impact statements. As a community college, we are also governed and regularly evaluated by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The ICCB reviews all programs on a five-year cycle. RSVP was reviewed in summer 2010.

Other

RSVP of Northwest Illinois continues to follow and meet the Corporation's strategic initiative areas. With the loss of many of our major businesses, tourism has become a major factor in our economic development. RSVP volunteers are serving as docents in museums, assisting in Visitor centers and will be helping to sponsor a community forum on how volunteers can improve our communities to attract new businesses to the area and boost our economy. RSVP volunteers continue to work with our Soil and Water Conservations districts to improve green space, promote a greener environment and reduce our carbon footprint by distributing information, writing articles for local media and packaging trees for grade school students. RSVP also sponsors cards for the active military at Christmas and Valentine's Day. The program has begun to work closely with our local Veterans Assistance Commission to see areas RSVP can impact the unmet needs in our service area by helping with food collection, transportation and clothing assistance. RSVP has been worked closely with the four counties individual Emergency Management Agency and has been asked to be the lead agency in developing the plan for the spontaneous volunteer center. Through this effort, the director serves on the Unified Command committee and has been recruiting baby boomer volunteers to serve as part of

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the leadership team in this endeavor. The leadership team volunteers will be trained and certified in basic level NIMS courses. They will also be trained in the basic operation of running the volunteer center. December 2009 and January 2010, RSVP assisted in recruiting not only the baby-boomers, but community volunteers to assist with the H1N1 flu clinics. Through this effort we mobilized 71 volunteers to work fourteen clinics generating 340 hours and immunizing over 5,000 clients.

RSVP volunteers also continually recruit seniors in the service area to assist in identified community needs and the past 3 year, volunteers have recruited new number new volunteers. These volunteers are informed about the Corporation for National Service and all RSVP volunteers are kept updated on national initiatives and changes through the project's newsletters.

RSVP will be sponsoring a local food drive for the MLK Day of Service and also collect Valentine's Day cards for the troops. This past year, we provided over 300 non-perishable food items that were donated to the local FACC food pantry. This was very helpful when the holidays were over and low-income families still needed food.

In early September for the 911 Day of Service, RSVP and the Student Activities department at Highland Community College will collect items to be sent to our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. This will be done annually at the fall picnic for all students on campus. RSVP volunteers will be available to collect the items that day; they will then pack and prepare them to be shipped to the soldiers. We will also be encouraging the LSSI AmeriCorps to assist with this project.

RSVP will celebrate Senior Corps week by hosting an Open House. RSVP will be inviting community partners, volunteers and the general public to attend. This will allow community members the opportunity to learn and become aware of RSVP and how we help to meet community needs.

RSVP will be looking at working with the Northern Illinois Development Agency director in presenting a forum to promote the "Prospering Together" concept. This forum would give participants an opportunity to discuss and solve community issues, as well as possibly providing additional

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volunteer opportunities to meet community needs addressed

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A