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Executive Summary

Douglass Community Services (DCS) is located in Northeast Missouri and serves the counties of Lewis, Macon, Marion, Monroe, Pike, Ralls, Randolph, and Shelby. The total geographic area covered by DCS is 4,520 square miles, with a total population of 123,407. The DCS service area is primarily rural with the largest community being Hannibal, in Marion County with a population of 28,174.

The median income level for the DCS service area is \$38,896. Education, social services, and health care employ the greatest percentage of working people who are 16 years and older. This is followed closely by manufacturing and retail trade industries. Although the area has historically been accepted as having an agricultural economic base, Shelby County is now the only county with a significant percentage of employment in agriculture.

Douglass Community Services is governed by a 16-member Board of Directors with representation from the financial, education, health, and business sectors, as well as representatives from the five major DCS programs. The Board of Directors meets monthly in Hannibal, MO.

An estimated 160 RSVP volunteers will serve. They will distribute food, provide disaster recovery assistance, help garner both in-kind and cash donations for not-for-profits, complete tax forms for low-income clients, make pillow cases for military persons in combat hospitals, and council seniors selecting Medicare/Medicare Part D plans at 16 volunteer stations, such as the Monroe City Food Pantry, Kids in Motion, VITA, Douglass Community Services Support Services, the United Way of the Mark Twain Area, and the Northeast Missouri Red Cross. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the 12 month performance period, 75% of persons surveyed will self-report a greater food security and 200 seniors will have received assistance in selecting their

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Medicare/Medicare Part D plan. The CNCS federal investment of \$31,946 will be supplemented by \$50,345.

Strengthening Communities

The primary focus area for the Douglass Community Services RSVP program is Healthy Future: H10 and H11-12.

The US Census Bureau reports that in 2011, 15.8% of Missourians lived in poverty.

According to the Feed America's 2010 Survey, "Hunger in America," nearly 728,400 Missourians receive assistance from food pantries annually. Of households receiving assistance, 42% of them have at least one adult employed full-time and 75% have incomes below the federal poverty level during the previous month. The report also notes that among all client households served by emergency food programs in Missouri, 77% are food insecure, according to US government's official food security scale. This includes households who have low food security and those who have very low food security.

The Community Needs Assessment of the United Way of the Mark Twain Area (encompassing five of the seven counties covered by this grant request) indicates that area residents surveyed believe there is a high or very high need for assistance with basic needs, such as food, shelter and clothing.

In the eight county service area covered by Douglass Community Services, only one site has a paid employee whose entire job is to manage the acquisition and distribution of food to low income families. That single employee is a part-time employee in the largest population center, Hannibal. In all other sites, the management and distribution of food is handled by volunteers.

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RSVP volunteers will provide the necessary work to prepare for distribution of food, distribute the food, and handle post-distribution responsibilities.

The RSVP office will recruit volunteer stations (requiring a signed MOU), recruit volunteers for each station, assist in reminding volunteers of the distribution days if requested, provide support and recognition of all RSVP volunteers. RSVP at Douglass Community Services will also provide volunteer insurance, and mileage reimbursement or transportation, when requested. The RSVP office will also track volunteer hours, project outcomes, and outputs. We anticipate that 500 non-duplicated persons will be served each year and that, when surveyed, 75% will indicate that they eat healthier because of the food they receive from the pantry. An equal number of those clients, when surveyed, will self-report a higher rate of food security because of the assistance provided.

Each year, seniors who are on Medicare/Medicare Part D should re-examine if they are enrolled in the drug plan that best fits their medical and financial needs. RSVP has partnered with the Missouri CLAIM program to provide assistance to seniors in selecting the appropriate program. CLAIM provides training and technical support to RSVP volunteers who contribute their time and knowledge. RSVP recruits volunteers, provides office space and furniture, and recognition for volunteers. There are less than 7 trained CLAIM volunteers in all of Northeast Missouri.

RSVP at Douglass Community Services has partnered with the national organization Soldiers Angels to provide hand-crafted pillow cases for soldiers in combat hospitals. RSVP volunteers will acquire the supplies, make the pillow cases to the specifications of Soldiers Angels, and raise the funds necessary to send the pillow cases to the distribution center. RSVP at Douglass Community Services will complete 50 pillow cases each grant year.

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Recruitment and Development

Recruitment & Development

The success of the RSVP program at Douglass Community Services is based on its ability to recruit, train, and honor its volunteers. The RSVP director interviews each new volunteer, either by phone or in person. During this time, she assesses the person's skill level and the type of volunteer work that the person is interested in. During this interview, she also explores with the volunteer any skills or talents that they would like to develop. This assessment is used in placing the volunteer in a station or position. RSVP volunteers are recruited by other RSVP volunteers, station volunteer coordinators, the RSVP Advisory Council, and the RSVP director. The RSVP director recruits persons through speaking engagements and by working with station volunteer managers. One of the major recruiting efforts is the annual Senior Expo, of which RSVP is the lead community organizer. Generally, 400 senior adults attend the event and registered participants receive a follow-up letter inviting them to consider RSVP volunteer activities. The RSVP director actively solicits invitations to speak at civic and community groups. During the presentation, every person present is presented with an enrollment form

The RSVP director receives training from many sources. She attended training on trends in not-for-profits in Columbia, MO sponsored by the Heart of America United Way, in the last year. She also regularly reads the Chronicle of Philanthropy, the Not-For-Profit Times, and the Blue Avocado to stay abreast of issues facing not-for-profits and their funding. She reads the weekly newspapers of the towns that are covered by RSVP so she can stay abreast of community issues.

Training for volunteers is provided by the volunteer station, unless the station specifically requests assistance from the RSVP Director. In those few cases, the requests have been for specific skills. For

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example, the RSVP Director taught a volunteer how to use a multi-line phone, another volunteer to use a cash register, and three volunteers how to use fax machines. The RSVP program also offers educational opportunities for volunteers. The RSVP director believes that fostering an atmosphere of life-long learning encourages volunteers to move beyond their traditional comfort areas. For example, 15 volunteers took a class taught by the RSVP director on how to safely use Facebook. An additional six volunteers took a similar class on using email and Microsoft office programs.

Douglass' RSVP program is open and affirming to all senior volunteers and makes special efforts to help volunteers find appropriate placements. After reading about RSVP in the newspaper, a new volunteer came to the office. She has early on-set Parkinson's' disease and had decided not to allow the disease to continue controlling her life. Her fear was that she had been out of circulation for a number of years and was not sure what skills she had. The RSVP office has provided her opportunities to test and learn new skills. Her confidence grew and she started doing volunteer work with other stations.

The area that the RSVP program at Douglass Community Services is putting forth greater effort is in educating and training volunteer station managers. Too many of the station managers are unable to design volunteer tasks that engage and retain Boomer volunteers. The RSVP director has a presentation that she gives, upon invitation, to station managers and community groups called Recruiting and Retaining Boomer volunteers. Those that attended reported that they learned a great deal. For those stations that have expressed a need for additional help, the RSVP director works with them on a one-to-one basis. The greatest challenge is not imparting the information or getting volunteer managers to buy into the information. The challenge is getting volunteer managers to challenge existing systems and make the changes necessary to continually expand their volunteer structure.

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According to 2010 US Census data, Missouri's senior adult population (age 65 and older) increased 7% since 2000. In the areas covered by Douglass Community Services, the increase has exceeded the state average by 4% in the major population areas. The average age of the DCS RSVP volunteer falls into the traditional volunteer age. According to the Volunteer Reporter system used by this RSVP program, the average age of our RSVP volunteer is 75

To keep volunteers, community members, and elected officials abreast of the impact made by RSVP volunteers, DCS's program publishes a newsletter six times a year. Volunteers also receive special mailings when new opportunities are presented.

Volunteer retention and recognition also takes many forms. RSVP volunteers are sent birthday cards and have their birthday read on a local TV morning news program. In reading the local papers, the director also takes notes of news that involves RSVP volunteers and sends them an appropriate card. Volunteers are treated to a number of free fellowship opportunities throughout the year, such as winter parties, National Senior Corps celebrations, and educational classes. These events help reinforce the RSVP is about volunteering, but that the RSVP program is thankful for its volunteers.

Annually, volunteers are recognized at a Volunteer Recognition Event. Funding challenges have pushed the Advisory Council to consider creative ways of funding the Annual Recognition Banquet. The event is held in two locations so more volunteers are able to attend. The Advisory Council solicits funding from community groups and businesses to help underwrite the cost. In past years, volunteers have been treated to a riverboat ride, a dinner theater, and a picnic complete with a musical group. Volunteers enter the Hall of Fame for completing 20 years of service or 4,000 hours of service.

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Certificates are awarded for the first 100 hours of service, and for years of service at five year increments. Male and Female volunteers of the year are selected from those nominated by stations and other volunteers. Other awards presented during this time are the Station of the Year, and the Outstanding Board member award and the Community Partner Award. All of this information is then provided to those small town newspapers for publication.

Volunteer retention at the volunteer station is the responsibility of the station's volunteer coordinator. Retention of the volunteers in the RSVP program is the Program Director's responsibility. A number of methods are used to aid in the retention of volunteers in the RSVP program. For example, volunteers who do not get mileage reimbursement from their stations are given a small mileage reimbursement, when proper documentation is submitted, from the RSVP office. Volunteers who are unable or who do not drive are provided transportation to their volunteer assignments. Volunteers receive personal phone calls or cards from the director that celebrate life milestones, or provide get well wishes. Friendly games of bingo are held each Tuesday, where each person is guaranteed to win two prizes. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the free exercise classes that RSVP sponsors with the Arthritis Foundation. Activities are held throughout the service area, creating an opportunity for the bulk of the volunteers to participate. Creating relationships between RSVP staff and volunteers aids in volunteer retention. The RSVP director has an open door policy and volunteers drop by to discuss their hobbies and family life. These conversations assisted the director is evaluating the volunteer's needs. Increasingly in the last three years, the RSVP director is spending time making sure that volunteers have the resources (food and medicines in particular) that they need by referring them to social service agencies. The RSVP director has assisted volunteers with making and keeping appointments for food stamps, medical, and other social service assistance.

Program Management

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Using a number of community needs assessments, such as those produced by the United Way of the Mark Twain Area, and Douglass Community Services Head Start, RSVP explores which community organizations are presently working towards meeting community needs. Once agencies have been identified, RSVP will partner with them and assist them by recruiting volunteers to address identified community needs. Four years ago, the Northeast Community Action Coalition's (NECAC) and the United Way of the Mark Twain Area needs assessments both noted that senior adults believed they did not have enough information concerning the resources available to them. The RSVP director called together representatives from NECAC, Experience Works, the health department, and the park and recreation department to discuss the possibility of a Senior Expo. Vendors who offered goods or services specifically to senior adults were invited to register for the event for a nominal fee. In 2011, 60 vendors (the maximum the space will hold) and 400 persons attended. Since its inception, 85% or higher of Senior Expo participants have rated the event great or good. Vendor satisfaction numbers were higher than those of participants.

Each year, the Advisory Council establishes three to four goals for the program. In the past, those goals have included the amount of dollars the council will raise for RSVP and to increase the percentage of volunteers who attend the Volunteer Recognition Banquet. With the assistance of the program director and volunteers, those goals are monitored. At each meeting, the Council is made aware of their progress on their selected goals. Those goals and the progress are also reported to the Board of Directors of Douglass Community Services each month by the RSVP Director. The Executive Director also uses those goals as a tool in the evaluation of the RSVP Program Director.

Annually, the Advisory Council conducts a self-evaluation. Each July, the Advisory Council participates in a program evaluation that accesses their commitment to the program and how the

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program is meeting community needs. Information gained from this evaluation is used by the program director to broaden the program and strengthen the knowledge of council members concerning RSVP operations. Volunteers are surveyed every other year as to their satisfaction with the program and their needs. During a volunteer survey, we discovered that volunteers were generally very happy with their volunteer placements, but they wanted opportunities to get to know other RSVP volunteers. To meet that request, the program added more fellowship and educational events to the program and holds them throughout the seven county service areas.

Appropriate use of Volunteer Reporter, for both tracking and mining data, makes the office run more efficiently. Information entered from time sheets, MOUs, and enrollment forms enables the RSVP staff to quickly prepare station reports, demographic reports, and to assess the impact measures or work plans. It also enables the director to create a monthly birthday list to send celebratory cards to members. The software enables the RSVP director to sort a list of volunteers for a possible assignment based on their pre-determined interests. This RSVP office is staffed by one (1) full-time employee and covers seven counties of rural Missouri.

Every six months, the performance plans are evaluated by the RSVP Director. During those reviews, the director checks to see if the work plan is on schedule to meet its goal. If it is not, she evaluates why it is lacking and what needs to be corrected for the goal to be met.

After a community need has been researched and assessed as viable for the program, the RSVP director creates a vision plan for the project. This plan details what a successful solution to the assessed need would look like. After consulting with other community agencies that would have a stake in the solution, refinements are made to the plan. From the plan, an operating budget is developed. Any new

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project or commitment to a project must be self-supporting in the RSVP budget. If another community partner is willing to take the project under their umbrella, RSVP supports that project by assisting with the recruiting and training of volunteers. The community partner becomes a volunteer station, develops job descriptions for the volunteers, and trains referred volunteers. This was the case for the VITA program which is a community need met in partnership by three organizations.

Annually, the RSVP Director and the Financial Office of Douglass Community Services meet to draft a budget for the program. This budget is based on a realistic expectation of income and program requirements such as the recognition banquet, payroll and benefits. This draft budget is given to the Executive Director of Douglass Community Services for his approval. This budget includes expected grant income, the advisory council's fund raising goal, and expected expenditures. Each month, the Finance Director gives the RSVP Director a year-to-date /budgeted financial report. The two discuss any issues that are appearing in the budget. At each Advisory Council meeting, council members are presented financial reports to review and discuss.

Before purchases are made, the Program Director completes a "request for funds" and is issued a "purchase order" from the finance department. The Finance Department is consulted on budget matters when grants are written. Once grants are received, the Finance Department keeps a copy of the approved grant, spending for the grant, and a copy of the completed grant report. In-kind items are reported on an in-kind report by the RSVP Director and filed with the finance office. Every six months, the finance office updates those items in the RSVP budget. The six month updates serve as a time to evaluate the progress of acquiring the required in-kind contributions.

Douglass Community Services manages \$8 million as an Early Head Start/ Head Start grant from the

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Department of Human Services and \$32,000 from the Corporation for National Service as a RSVP grant. Annually, DCS undergoes a A133 audit. The Corporation for National Service financially provides less than 39% of the Douglass Community Services RSVP budget. RSVP at Douglass Community Services annually meets its in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions include the building space donated by the sponsoring agency, community grants such as from the United Way of the Mark Twain Area and the United Way of Randolph County, and merchant donations for special events. The Advisory Council regularly raises over \$5,000 cash for general program support. In the budget portion of this grant, the 6% of the RSVP director's time that is not paid for by the RSVP grant will be committed to fund raising.

In FY2011, the fiscal cuts to the federal RSVP program resulted in the Advisory Council reviewing the entire RSVP program at Douglass Community Services with the purpose of bringing the program into financial stability considering the cuts. The Advisory Council decided which work plans would be eliminated and which federal service categories would be highlighted. Under the director of the Advisory Council and with the approval of the Board of Directors at Douglass Community Services, volunteer stations that were not part of a CNCS focus area or those that were not willingly complying (or were in non-compliance) with RSVP policies were graduated. The few exceptions to the rule being the stations that fell under the Douglass Community Services management umbrella and two stations in the outer-most county because community funds were contributing to the management of those two stations. A letter was sent to both volunteers and volunteer stations explaining the changes that the program was undertaking. Volunteer stations that were being graduated received phone calls (in the case of smaller ones) or personal visits from the RSVP Program Director and the Executive Director of Douglass Community Services. Volunteers were encouraged to continue in their placements, even if those volunteer stations would no longer be part of the RSVP program.

Volunteers were also made aware of the many opportunities to remain in the RSVP program. Change

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is always hard. The first year, the RSVP Director had many informal one-to-one and group meetings with volunteers. Now, two years removed from the process, the program seems to be recovered. Although the total number of volunteer hours has decreased, as a reflection on losing nearly 150 volunteers, the hours per volunteer has remained constant. It has also become easier to measure the impact that the volunteers are making.

Organizational Capability

Organizational Capacity

Douglass Community Services has over 40 years of experience in providing senior adult volunteer opportunities. A grassroots organization, DCS began through efforts by the Second Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) when the traditionally African-American congregation saw a need to bring people of different races, religions, and walks of life together to form an organization that would address problems associated with prejudice and poverty in the community. Providing services that support community involvement of senior adults was a hallmark of the Douglass Community Center. RSVP has been a program of Douglass Community Services since a year after its federal inception.

All programs at Douglass Community Services utilize the assistance of volunteers. Head Start uses volunteers in classrooms and to assist with general maintenance. Kids In Motion has one major, year-long fundraising project that is managed by RSVP volunteers. A portion of the 15 CASA volunteers are also RSVP members. Community Support Services uses an all-volunteer staff to manage the thrift store. Poverty rates among children in the eight-county DCS service area (22%) are higher than that of the state (19.5%). Participation in local food pantry/banks, utility assistance, and housing assistance are also on the rise. Monthly, 50 volunteers participate in the commodities distribution where nearly 400 families are served. RSVP volunteers also help manage and distribute the food for the USDA-sponsored senior adult commodities program at Douglass. Each month, volunteers ensure that nearly

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200 seniors receive a supplemental box of shelf-stable food. Each DCS program has written policies for the use of volunteers. Skills and guidelines used at DCS in the primary focus area of using volunteers in Healthy Futures will enable DCS to strengthen those efforts at other volunteer stations.

DCS in-direct staff provides training, technical, financial, and management assistance to all five programs consistent with agency policies and applicable federal regulations under the administrative direction of Executive Director Dave Dexheimer, the DCS Board of Directors, and the various advisory councils and their committees. Executive Director Dave Dexheimer earned a master's degree in management from Webster University and is the retired Advancement Director of Hannibal LaGrange College. He has been the Executive Director of Douglass Community Services for 10 years. The Executive Director is responsible for all agency operations and activities, including financial operations.

The Fiscal Officer is responsible to the Executive Director for all financial operations. Financial duties and responsibilities are separated so that no fiscal employee has sole control over cash receipts; disbursement; payroll; reconciliation of bank accounts; etc. Bookkeeping duties are rotated among Fiscal Department staff, whenever possible. All fiscal staff are required to take annual vacations ensuring that no one person has constant control over fiscal accounts. If applicable, separate bank accounts and all Agency funds (programs) are maintained separately as required by funding source regulations. All financial forms are completed in ink or typed. All purchases and travel require pre-approval by the appropriate supervisor in the form of a "Request for Funds." Approval is in form called a "Purchase Order." Douglass annually undergoes an A133 audit.

Program Directors are responsible to the Executive Director for all program operations.

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Current job descriptions are maintained for all employees, indicating duties and responsibilities. Job descriptions are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are accurate. Douglass Community Services employees have opportunities for training within their field. The RSVP director is required to attend two educational activities each year. Meeting and travel plans are made using a purchase order system. Receipts for per diem are required within one week of returning from the event.

Douglass Community Services assures that the program has adequate facilities to accomplish its goals. The building housing Douglass Community Services at 711 Grand Ave in Hannibal, MO is 28,744 square feet. RSVP occupies or uses common areas totaling 2,305 square feet. The appraised value per square foot is \$10.49. RSVP has access to several, large common meeting rooms and kitchen facilities. Photocopiers and multi-line phone are provided. Every employee of

Staff are provided an employee handbook containing policies and procedures that effect their employment. Program Directors are also provided a financial handbook defining the fiscal policies and procedures of the agency. Updates to each book are distributed as the Douglass Board of Directors approves them.

The only position at Douglass Community Services receiving funding from the CNCS grant is the RSVP Program Director. The CNCS grant provides 55% of the salaries and benefits for that position. The program director the last five years, Stacey Nicholas is responsible for this RSVP project. A resident of Canton, MO, she has a background in marketing, events planning, and community service. She has a history of successfully working with volunteers and older adults. Nicholas earned a

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Bachelor of Arts degree from Marian University (Indianapolis); and a Masters' of Theological Studies from Quincy University (Illinois). She has been the RSVP director

The RSVP Program at Douglass Community Services is highly successful in recruiting, training, and managing a senior adult volunteer program. RSVP is making full use of its enrolled volunteers. CNCS funding provides 39% of the RSVP program's total budget at Douglass Community Services. The rest of the funding comes from state and community support. Should CNCS funding not be available, the RSVP position would become a part-time position engaged in volunteer management for all ages for the not-for-profits that are in the five county area of the United Way of the Mark Twain Area.

Annually, the DCS grant to CNCS meets its work plan goals. Programmatic evaluation for impact is important at Douglass Community Services. Each program has annual goals that are either set by federal grant requirements or by local advisory councils (in the case of programs that are not federally funded). Monthly, the Douglass Board reviews each program's steps toward accomplishing the assigned goals. The Douglass Board of Directors annually evaluates the Executive Director. Program Directors are included in that evaluation through a systematic survey.

The RSVP Advisory Council is comprised of 14 community leaders, 35% of them RSVP volunteers. There are an equal number of persons above and below age 55. One member is from the local university, three work for units of government, two are employed in social services, and one is employed by Douglass Community Services. From the RSVP volunteers on the council, two are retired business managers and one is a retired teacher. The Advisory Council meets every other month and is responsible for making strategic decisions about the program; providing some tactical assistance; generating positive awareness of the program in the various communities; recruiting

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senior volunteers and additional nonprofit or health sites; providing major assistance in raising the 60% of operating costs not covered by the CNS grant; assisting with recognition of the senior volunteers; and providing support and advice for the RSVP director.

Annually, the RSVP Advisory Council conducts a self-evaluation. In the past year, the self-evaluation indicated that while the orientation of new council members was very educational, the ability of the council to carry that knowledge over and into the bi-monthly meetings was difficult. Provided with this knowledge, the board chair and RSVP Director are spending more time creating programmatic conceptual frameworks during the discussion portion of meetings. Volunteers are surveyed every other year as to their satisfaction with the program and their needs. A previous volunteer survey showed that volunteers were generally very happy with their volunteer placements, but they wanted opportunities to get to know other RSVP volunteers. To meet that request, we added more fellowship and educational events to the program and hold them throughout the seven county service areas.

Other

not applicable

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

n/a