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### Executive Summary

Pender Adult Services, Inc. (PAS) based in Burgaw, NC is the sponsor for the RSVP Program in Pender County. Pender County has one of the fastest growing rates of the over 65 population in NC and the nation. PAS operates two Senior Centers and a Wellness Facility providing a continuum of services to meet the needs of seniors in the county. The Pender County RSVP Program has entered its third year of successful operation recruiting approximately 125 volunteers providing valuable services throughout the county. The 2013 request is \$65,464 to help support and maintain the RSVP Program in Pender County utilizing a total of 125 unduplicated volunteers. \$27,653 in nonfederal matching funds or in-kind resources will be provided by Pender Adult Services, Inc.

The focus area for the 2013 - 2015 RSVP Project will be Healthy Futures with activities including providing meals in the homes of the disabled and seniors as well as providing transportation as needed. The Healthy Futures focus will also include providing RSVP volunteers in the home to provide support activities helping to maintain the disabled person or senior in the home. Following the 2013/2014 grant year, it is estimated that 85 seniors and disabled individuals will be provided meals and social support in their homes through the services provided by RSVP Volunteers. In addition, RSVP volunteers will also provide mentoring services for the developmentally delayed in the community. Many are Cape Fear Community College students or participants in local support programs. It is proposed that approximately 65 volunteers will provide services in the Healthy Futures focus area.

Eleven volunteer stations have been established in Pender County to contribute to the success of the Pender County RSVP program. The stations and partner organizations include TEFAP Food Bank, Pender Christian Services, Armour of God and the Pender County Library providing the opportunities for RSVP volunteers placement to work one-on-one with Developmentally Delayed young adults. Pender Adult Senior Centers, both in Burgaw and Topsail, and Fitness Fusion also serve as stations to

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provide resources for homebound clients. Four Middle Schools in Pender County claim the remaining Stations. Each of these stations support volunteers that tutor in the Pender County School system. The remaining middle school in Pender County will be provided RSVP tutors sometime this grant year, thereby providing all county middle school students the same opportunity to grow their reading skills.

Respite care for homebound seniors and the disabled will provide the client assistance with two or more activities of daily living enabling the individual to continue living in their own home. Volunteer services provide assistance and educational information to caregivers ensuring that the client can remain at home. RSVP workers provide such assistance needed including Respite Care. Especially in clients with dementia, the provision of respite care is vital to allow the caregiver the opportunity to receive the mental and physical relief needed to rebuild their strength for daily care giving. Currently, PAS reports a waiting list of over 110 individuals requesting services for home or respite care services. Due to federal & state budget cuts the need for respite and home care is increasing. RSVP volunteers visit 2-4 hours a week and attend to the needs of these clients. The main concern of the homebound is that they be able to live out the remainder of their lives in their own communities. RSVP volunteers attend to their needs through Meals on Wheels, delivering an additional bag of groceries monthly (through a partnership with Burgaw Holiness Church), transportation arranged for trips to Doctors and Nutrition Center, and emergency and safety repairs being done through additional partnerships with area churches, agencies, and large corporations.

Mentoring will also be provided for the developmentally disabled. Participants from Cape Fear Community College and a local residence for the disabled have been assisted by RSVP volunteers to identify volunteer and employment opportunities in the local community.

### **Strengthening Communities**

Pender County, located in the southeastern region of North Carolina is the fourth largest county in

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North Carolina by area with a population of 51, 853. While the county is large geographically it is considered 93 percent rural presenting significant difficulties in service delivery. Further complicating service delivery, the county is separated by a large wildlife game preserve limiting travel from east to west. While significant population growth has been experienced over the past six years approaching an 18 percent growth rate, the county continues to have an economy based largely upon agriculture with minimal industrial development. The region has been hard hit by the current recession with an unemployment rate over thirteen percent. Median household income is \$42,872 per year with a poverty rate of 14.8 percent. The local Employment Commission Office estimates a real unemployment rate of approximately 18% to account for those that have exhausted unemployment compensation.

Approximately 74 percent of the population is white and nearly 21 percent African American. Hispanics comprised nearly five percent of the county's population. Literacy and education attainment levels remain an area of concern. Only 13.6 percent of the county's residents possess a bachelor's level or higher degree. The county school system continues to develop programs to reduce drop-out rates and provide skill training for appropriate students. Each new school year RSVP tutors in the 4 middle schools study the base-line reading scores of the students they are assigned. Reading levels for students in 6th and 7th grade averaged 3rd-4th grade reading levels. Eighth graders are usually 5th grade reading levels. Principals reported RSVP volunteers made an impact on students academically, socially and emotionally. One Middle School used 3 RSVP tutors all summer to work 1-on-1 with 3 8th graders retained from Middle School graduation. After summer school a plan was set in place to tutor every day for 1 hour, 1-on-1, and with teacher, tutors and counselor all working together RSVP and the Principal feel these students will be ready in January 2013 to go on to High School. We all know that reading is the key to doing well in every subject, so focus on reading is of utmost importance. Now with Core Curriculum being enforced nation-wide, there is much

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anticipation as to whether the students and the teachers will be able to keep up with the requirements. Even more reason RSVP tutors will be needed to help strengthen the Pender County School District meet the criteria they are now mandated to follow. RSVP also provides volunteers to proctor end of year exams. All schools reported that RSVP proctors were the most reliable and consistent volunteers they had.

Local input for the development of the Pender County RSVP Program began with the development of an advisory committee representing the educational, civic, business, and governmental sectors of the community. A special effort was made to represent the diversity of the county by including individuals from different socio-economic levels as well as ensuring ethnic diversity. While a level of collaboration currently exists between Pender Adult Services, Inc. and several community organizations, the focus of the new RSVP Program formalized mutual efforts and enhanced efforts to educate the community about the RSVP Program. The project identified community needs and provided volunteer opportunities for the public. Awareness efforts included presentations to various civic groups, churches, and local government as well as media outlets reaching African American and Hispanic groups. Community forums, civic group presentations, and press releases have been prepared to publicize the program and generate community support for the program as well as to recruit volunteers for opportunities. Additional supporting agencies have been identified to assist in addressing the three impact areas and additional partners will be identified in the future to support this endeavor.

The RSVP Program has identified stakeholders in the community to address the needs of the homebound elderly and disabled, low-income youth and adults seeking employment, and the developmentally disabled requiring support services. Organizations providing services to clients of these populations have assisted in the compilation of data identifying individual client needs in order to better equip senior volunteers to address the gap in services to the disabled population and the

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homebound. Through the development of a well-equipped volunteer base, local agencies providing services to the identified individuals will be in a position to better meet community needs. In addition, client needs will be met in a more efficient method through the pooling of community resources. At a recent CNCS conference we learned that 1 out of every 8 in our Nation are 55 years of age or older. Prediction is that by 2031, one out of every five will be over 65 -- that is 20% of the United States population. Senior Care needs to be ready for the needs of our near future. RSVP volunteers do simple things like change light bulbs and then they also do the big things like help connect the elderly and handicapped to resources which will help them to stay in their community for their lifetime. Pender County RSVP has taken big steps this year to provide the necessities for this group in our community by taking care of the main concerns of the elderly and disabled. We provide transportation to Doctor's appointments and nutrition centers. RSVP volunteers deliver Meals-on-Wheels so they receive a nutritious, hot meal each day. We also recently partnered with Burgaw Holiness Church and RSVP is able to deliver a full bag of groceries (including fresh fruit & vegetables) to our homebound clients. Lastly we have been able to connect with various agencies/churches/large companies and together we have been able to provide Emergency and Safety home repairs. Transportation, food and shelter are the three main worries of our homebound and RSVP has stressed relief in all 3 areas of concern. 43% of RSVP Pender County volunteers served our homebound and disabled clients.

Due to demographics, Pender County does not house many military families or large amount of Veterans. Therefore we do not have a specific work plan outlined but we do honor our Veterans and active military by planning a special ceremony on September 11th and providing a service to the community. In 2011 RSVP participated in a special Day of Remembrance in our town park and served as the hosts for the event. We also ran a successful food drive to stock the 2 primary food banks at each end of our County. This year RSVP participated in the local community remembrance-

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day and we created thank you cards which were mailed to the 3 firehouses in NYC that were first responders at the twin towers. In addition RSVP remembers and honors our Veterans. Last year we were on-sight at the Wilmington Airport when World War II Vets returned from their visit to the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC. To honor our Veterans RSVP ran a successful food drive to stock the shelves of a church food bank that was providing holiday meals to those in need. This year we are sending cards to the Wounded Warrior Program, placing flags on graves of Veterans at an old church cemetery, and we are putting on a short play at 2 of the middle schools that will depict Veterans of different wars.

RSVP Director has added to their info form "Are you a Veteran?" On the Volunteer form we now have data to input into our Volunteer Reporter (software data program) so we do not forget to thank our RSVP volunteers that served our Country. On our Client info form, it now gives us the opportunity to help connect client to services through the VA. Director has noted that many clients have not applied for benefits, did not know they could apply for benefits, have felt the red-tape is not worth it, etc. The next few years, this will become more prominent as "Baby Boomers" will beneeding more of these services. There is also a new Veterans Clinic being built at the Wilmington Airport, 30-45 minutes for most residents in Pender County. Ground breaking is Spring 2013. It is RSVP plan to recruit RSVP volunteers that can help with the paperwork clients need to request VA benefits. These volunteers can then help our homebound clients get the information to those in command at the VA Centers. These volunteers will be a valuable resource for our homebound veterans.

### **Recruitment and Development**

A Volunteer Recruitment Plan has been developed by the project director in collaboration with community organizations, advisory members as well as through consultation with existing RSVP Programs in neighboring counties. The plan includes the identification of volunteer stations and the development of volunteer job descriptions. The plan includes volunteer related policies and a public

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relations and recruitment plan.

Community awareness strategies include utilizing media outlets, arranging speaking engagements to civic organizations and churches, presentations to governing bodies, and developing web based volunteer information detailing volunteer opportunities. The project linked with an area attorney that connects a national web base that connects those researching for help with older members of their family to Pender County RSVP resources, agency newsletters and local newspapers have featured monthly articles highlighting volunteers, volunteer opportunities, and success stories of how lives have been impacted through the RSVP volunteers. This project sponsored a Community Senior Resource day in which 22 agencies/businesses participated and over 100 people attended to pick up valuable information that will help them make better decisions.

A particular focus on recruitment has been achieved through the recruitment of volunteers with skills in public relations and recruitment. A Volunteer Recruitment Strategy has been implemented to equip volunteers with skills and necessary materials to recruit others throughout the community. RSVP purchased a large upright banner which travels around Pender County as a reminder that volunteers are needed in our community.

Records show that since initial date of Grant in 2010 through August 2012, RSVP recruited a total of 128 volunteers . 43% served in private homes 12 RSVP volunteers are over 85 years of age and 15 ages 75-84,( with our oldest volunteers boasting ages of 91 & 87). These valuable volunteers served a total of 7,380 hours from Oct 2010 through August 2012. According to a report from the Corporation for National & Community Service, the estimated value of a volunteer's time for 2011 is \$21.79 per hour. 26.3% of the adult population gave 8.1 billion dollars of volunteer service worth \$173 billion in 2010. That means that in Pender County our RSVP volunteers gave a service worth

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\$160,810.20 (7,380 x \$21.79)

Detailed information of volunteer stations and related volunteer job descriptions for each volunteer opportunity has been developed. Agreements between the RSVP program and participating agencies has been implemented indicating responsibilities. In addition, volunteer agreements have been developed and implemented.

A Volunteer Recognition Plan has been developed to acknowledge volunteers for their diligent work in the community and acknowledge the difference their efforts make in the lives of others in the community. Monthly meetings with refreshments, specific training planned each month, and a time to share with one another concerning the experiences gained through the volunteer opportunities have been held. Volunteers will receive recognition for hours of service and particular goals achieved in service later this year.

Comprehensive training sessions have been developed with participating agencies and other community resources to equip volunteers for their assignments. Trainings include sessions with Pender County Schools, home care agencies, hospice, and the local department of social services to assist in counseling clients. Representatives for the local school system and Cape Fear Community College provide mentoring techniques for volunteers assisting youth and the developmentally disabled in preparing for skills development and eventual job searches. Volunteers are provided continuing education opportunities to further assist the volunteer in developing skills thereby ensuring a better volunteer experience. Advocacy training has also been provided for volunteers to develop leadership skills.

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The utilization of an electronic database and volunteer program software ensures that the RSVP Program operates efficiently in scheduling and contacting volunteers as well as recording volunteer data. Greater efficiency along with maximizing local resources in the community ensures that clients receive quality volunteer services and volunteer data is properly maintained.

### Program Management

The RSVP Program has developed volunteer stations and work plans in year three of the initial grant to largely meet the new program requirements. Volunteer stations have been established to address the focus area, Healthy Futures as well as the community needs outside of the primary focus area.

The RSVP volunteer recruitment will address:

- 1) increasing seniors ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible
- 2) providing respite and related services for the homebound elderly or disabled clients,
- 3) providing home delivered meals for the elderly and disabled that are homebound,
- 4) mentoring services for disabled youth and adults seeking employment,
- 5) Tutoring resources for middle school age children to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary, and
- 5) recruiting volunteers to service outside the primary focus area to address other community priorities and other county volunteer opportunities.

In respect to the NOFA 2013 requirements, volunteer stations will generally remain similar to those in the initial grant. Changes that are required should be small and volunteers will be transitioned gently, but quickly as most activities between the grant cycles are very similar.

Following the addition of the three new volunteer stations last year, the Pender RSVP Program boasts a total of ten volunteer stations. The RSVP Advisory council has developed memorandums of understandings. Participating agencies and organizations developed agreements indicating

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responsibilities for providing training, soliciting volunteers and providing related resources. These agreements are updated as program requirements and work plan changes occur. In cooperation with participating agencies, task specific volunteer job descriptions have been developed. Agreements with volunteers have been developed along with policies and procedures for the volunteer program.

RSVP focus area for Recompetition is Healthy Awareness and this program took steps to secure more resources for it's homebound seniors and disabled. Meals on Wheels became part of the security for a senior to receive a well balanced meal delivered daily to their home by a RSVP volunteer. With a shortage of food in the homes of many, RSVP partnered with a local church food bank and RSVP volunteers deliver a large bag of staples, fresh fruits and fresh vegetables monthly to their clients. Seeing the need for home maintenance and emergency repairs, RSVP connected with various resources in the community to have handicap ramps built, roofs repaired, porches replaced, steps replaced, railings secured, and other important needs of our seniors, if they are to continue living in their homes. Our mentally challenged group of young adults are referred from Cape Fear Community College program . In addition RSVP receives referrals from Highsmith Agency which is an adult center that helps people with disabilities develop every day skills. At the encouragement of one of our RSVP Advisory Board members, who is also a retired nurse, we will be now calling this group "Developmentally Delayed". The reason for the name change is that "Developmentally Delayed" encompasses both physical and mental disabilities. This will be a more suited description.

The county government will provide matching funds for the RSVP program through a direct award of funds to Pender Adult Services, Inc. and additional support whether in-kind or cash will be requested. A strong relationship exists between the local municipal and county government and Pender Adult Services, Inc. as both organizations share in the mission to extend services to the citizens of Pender County.

Quarterly and annual evaluations of the RSVP program will be conducted to ensure community needs

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are being appropriately addressed. Evaluation measures have been developed to determine whether the program goals are met or if additional measures are necessary which may include program modifications. Findings of evaluation measures are reported to the RSVP advisory committee as well as the Pender Adult Services board of directors. Evaluation tools currently exist for the evaluation of home care services and additional tools will be developed to more appropriately evaluate other volunteer services. Existing measures recommended through the Senior Corp Volunteer Program and the National Resources database will be utilized for reading tutoring and support services for the disabled.

Pender Adult Services, Inc. maintains sound accounting practices and a database management software package to effectively manage volunteers. An annual independent audit is performed and presented to the agency board of directors. Current independent audits have not identified any deficiencies or findings in financial management practices.

### **Organizational Capability**

Pender Adult Services operates three facilities in Pender County with a total square footage of over 25,000 square feet. The agency provides office space as well as supplies and equipment to effectively and efficiently operate the RSVP Program. Pender Adult Services has provided a range of volunteer opportunities for several years. With the award of the RSVP grant in 2010 the agency moved quickly to employ an RSVP Program Director. The program director quickly garnered community support, began volunteer recruitment, and has been providing valuable volunteer services throughout Pender County. The RSVP Program also includes clerical staff to assist in maintaining service data, generating reports, and providing communication with volunteers and community organizations. Work plan goals have been achieved on a timely basis with reports submitted on a timely basis.

Pender Adult Services maintains adequate staff to ensure compliance with program regulations and

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provide financial reports. Financial staffing includes a Fiscal Manager and Accounts Manager to properly account for revenues and expenses. Appropriate policies and procedures have been developed and annually reviewed to ensure program compliance. The agency has received clean independent audits with no findings or deficiencies noted.

The agency operates more than seven different programs with an annual budget of \$3.2 million and a staff of over 125. The agency maintains a computer based general ledger adhering to Generally Accepting Accounting Practices. An annual audit and 990 form is completed by an independent auditor. The agency is the lead agency for transportation services for Pender County and is the lead agency for aging services in the county. Pender Adult Services provides two Medicaid community-based programs, Community Alternatives Program and the Personal Care Program in an effort to maintain the elderly and disabled in their home. In addition, the agency provides all aging services including meals on wheels. Pender Adult Services, Inc. has an administrative staff including an executive director, assistant, finance manager, accounts receivable manager and an accounts payables manager. The agency manages state and federally funded programs. Furthermore, the agency has been a United Way member agency for over twenty years and has been designated as a "Center of Excellence" by the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services.

The agency maintains a computer based volunteer management software program capable of tracking volunteer service hours. Pender Adult Services, Inc. maintains Policies and Procedures which meet state and federal laws and program requirements. The Policies and Procedures are reviewed and approved by the agency board of directors. Personnel Policies and Procedures are maintained by the agency and approved by the board of directors. The agency is reviewed annually by the Area Agency on Aging and the NC Department of Transportation. The agency is licensed by the NC Department of

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Facility Services to provide Home Care. Quarterly and annual self-assessment and self-evaluation policies are maintained by the agency with the assessments conducted and findings reported to the board of directors quarterly.

A current relationship exists between Pender Adult Services, Inc. and numerous organizations involved in volunteer programs and recruitment. These relationships have been strengthened since formation of the RSVP Advisory Committee as well as new relationships forged to meet the stated work plan goals. Joint efforts currently include the Pender County School System, Cape Fear Area United Way, Cape Fear Community College Developmentally Disabled Program, Work Force Community Investment Program for Youth, the Area Agency on Aging, Highsmith Agency and the Pender County Library. These collaborative relationships have proven vital in the enhancement and development of volunteer programs to address community needs.

### **Other**

NA

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

NA