

## PART I - FACE SHEET

<b>APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE</b>		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction														
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to confirm to the Corporation's eGrants System)																
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS): 10/17/12	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 13SR143887	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY: 10/17/12	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:														
<b>5. APPLICATION INFORMATION</b>																
LEGAL NAME: Merrimack Valley Community Service Corps Inc. DUNS NUMBER: 144836512	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Guy F. Kelley TELEPHONE NUMBER: (978) 686-9407 FAX NUMBER: (978) 557-5849 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: guyterryk@aol.com															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 264 Essex Street 2nd Floor Lawrence MA 01840 - 1516 County: Essex																
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 020697834	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Self-Incorporated Senior Corps Project Volunteer Management Organization															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION      B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):	9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: <b>Corporation for National and Community Service</b>															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.002 10b. TITLE: Retired and Senior Volunteer Program	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Greater Lawrence Retired and Senior Volunteer Program 11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): MASSACHUSETTS Opportunity #1 Lawrence, North Andover, Methuen, and Haverhill of Massachusetts																
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 04/01/13      END DATE: 03/31/16	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF:    a.Applicant <input type="text" value="MA 005"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="MA 005"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: 1	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 127,342.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 54,577.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 37,997.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 2,196.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 14,384.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 181,919.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL	\$ 127,342.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 54,577.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 37,997.00	e. OTHER	\$ 2,196.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 14,384.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 181,919.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
a. FEDERAL	\$ 127,342.00															
b. APPLICANT	\$ 54,577.00															
c. STATE	\$ 0.00															
d. LOCAL	\$ 37,997.00															
e. OTHER	\$ 2,196.00															
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 14,384.00															
g. TOTAL	\$ 181,919.00															
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Martha Velez	b. TITLE:	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (978) 620-3541														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 10/17/12														

## Narratives

### Executive Summary

The Greater Lawrence Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is sponsored by the Merrimack Valley Community Service Corps, Inc. MVCSC sponsors RSVP, FGP, and a YVCA (Youth Volunteer Corps of America) programs. Its mission is to promote meaningful volunteer opportunities and service within the Greater Lawrence/Haverhill area for those of all age, race, creed and ability.

MVCSC is committed to meeting community needs with its 401 RSV's and through its inter-generational volunteer model (VIP) that includes RSV's, FGP'S and YVC's. MVCSC is able to provide efficient and effective service to all work sites.

MVCSC's proudest moment was being invited to the Cannon House Office Building Rotunda in Washington, DC where a piece of our public art dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr. "Make it a day on, not a day off" was displayed. This exhibit was created by our family of volunteers.

MVCSC is requesting \$127,342. to continue offering services that are needed to enhance senior's quality of life. Services provided include healthy meals, obesity awareness, support services, sight, hearing and diabetes testing, and most importantly provides service or assistance in obtaining services to the huge population of the areas non-English speaking inhabitants.

Information is gathered from both the volunteer and the work sites in the form of questionnaires, time sheets, and site visits. Projects are then monitored at each of the work sites while coordination and streamlining of providing the service is handled at the home office.

We anticipate positive outcomes in all of our service projects, seniors will learn to live more healthy life styles, will learn what services are available and how to obtain them, will learn the importance of early detection of things like diabetes, eye and hearing issues. With our Cuddles program we see seniors that create dolls of joy for those that have suffered traumatic events. Finally, we as an organization are able to see the relationships that are built and the knowledge that is gained by pairing RSVS with YVC's.

## Narratives

### Strengthening Communities

MVCSC's RSVP Program has volunteers and worksites in the Greater Lawrence/Haverhill area.

These communities are almost always old manufacturing cities and are usually located on or near the Merrimack River. The cities have a high population of retirees.

The unemployment rate(s) as of August 2012, provided by US DOL, show the national unemployment at 8.1%, MA unemployment at 6.3% and Lawrence at a 11.2% unemployment rate. The median income of Lawrence residents is \$32,337 and residents living below the poverty level is 27.3%, well above the 14.3% national average.

Lawrence has a very high foreclosure rate with one foreclosure in every 750 households, a 40% increase since 2007. Ten homicides in 2011 made Lawrence experience its most murderous year in 20 years.

To address budget shortfalls, a state overseer monitors city spending, and on January 1, 2012, MA State Education Commissioner, Mitchel Chester, took control of the city's public schools citing their chronic under-achievement.

The community has a high population of immigrants, most are Hispanic or Latino. According to the US Census Bureau Lawrence's population is 73.8% Hispanic or Latino. Our goal is to include our volunteers with meaningful opportunities. Volunteer's interests and skills are matched with the needs work sites so the sites needs and volunteers skills are optimized.

The Latino population can be broken down into different groups Dominicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Colombians, Mexicans, Central and South Americans. One of our priorities is to engage these groups in service by providing them volunteer opportunities that reflect the diversity of their communities. One example of this is our health activity volunteer program where our volunteers participate in education of these different groups at different sites.

The US Census Bureau notes that one of the most striking characteristics of the older population in

## Narratives

the United States is the number of women age 55 and over compared to the number of men.

Currently, the ratio (men per 100 women) drops steadily with age. The ratio of widowed women rises rapidly with age, by age 65 to 84 the ratio increases to 41% and for those 85 and over the ratio is 79%.

These ratios are been evident in our programs with approximately 70% of our volunteers being female. Our female volunteers understand and are able to meet the needs of their peers and some rely on the program to fill the void when left by their partner.

As an agency that is dedicated to providing meaningful volunteer opportunities to people of all race, age and ability, we are constantly striving to develop signature service activities that address specific community needs and that captivate the attention of the population we wish to engage. We do this by creating service activities that are inspiring and that provide tangible results. Many of our signature service activities are designed for volunteers that have certain special skills and that are willing to not only volunteer but to be an active participant in the planning and development of these activities. An example of this would be our Cuddles program where craft skills are coupled with volunteers that both participate in sewing the dolls and distribution of dolls.

MVCSC conducts research through meetings and telephone inquires and then works with other community organizations to create service activities that will help revitalize and engage new retirees. A sampling of these organizations are the following, but not limited to the YWCA, Cor Unum, FINA House, Food for the World, The Community Group, Essex Art Center, Lawrence Public Schools, Lawrence/Methuen Community Coalition, and Communities Together. A recent telephone conversation led to our RSV's, FGP's and YVC's assembling hygiene bags that were donated to the homeless.

MVCSC's ability to respond to various needs over the past 39 years has led to strong involvement by community members and local service agencies; this allows the RSVP program to reflect the community's needs and diversity and to be able to change as the residents of the community change.

## **Narratives**

A recent example would be the need for assistance at a local Food of the World pantry where RSV'S and YVC'S assisted in the distribution of food baskets. For the last six years MVCSC has strived to make signature activities Intergenerational allowing members of the Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC), supervised by a VIP (Volunteer Intergenerational Program) member, to work alongside senior volunteers from the FGP and RSVP programs. This in turn has made volunteering a much richer experience for both age groups.

MVCSC also adds programs that address current needs, for example this year we will add a program in financial literacy. It is unfortunate that fraudsters have found that they can thrive preying on the senior population. They have also had great luck in preying on minority populations. Lawrence is ripe as it has a great population of both. The new program will offer financial literacy workshops designed to help seniors protect themselves. It is a known fact that many seniors that are victims of fraud are afraid to report it to anyone even family and friends. There will be workshops that teach seniors how to deal with, report and talk to family about their victimization. It is important that these victims do not feel alone or embarrassed.

### **Recruitment and Development**

RSVP volunteers are recruited through flyers, public service announcements, live local radio programs, visits to elderly housings, visits to Senior Centers, and any other areas frequented by seniors throughout the greater Merrimack Valley area. Efforts are made during recruitment of the RSVP volunteers to reflect the neighborhoods in heritage and diversity. The RSVP program in the Merrimack Valley has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Latinos that have joined the program. In an effort to continue recruiting a diverse group of volunteers the RSVP staff develops service activities that reflect the interest and needs of these groups.

Special attention is paid to follow up, on a timely basis, any potential interest in the program. Station supervisors and RSVP staff are always sensitive to RSV's needs and check in with volunteers on a

## Narratives

regular basis. We make sure that no volunteer feels isolated; all volunteers are placed in RSVP work sites and where feasible, work in teams. In this way, the volunteers can form and build a sense of unity and friendship. The Corps or Team relies on each other for support and advice and ideally form friendships beyond the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. Recent volunteer surveys have revealed that for a great number of the RSV's the socialization they get while volunteering is the only form of regular social interaction they have, in this sense the friendships formed at the RSVP program are of great benefit to the volunteers.

A great majority of the projects and activities that the volunteers perform take place at or are coordinated by their local senior center. Hence, many of the volunteers are recruited at the senior centers or referred to the program by the local senior centers' staff. Complementary recognitions and dinners are planned, as well as special events to honor the RSVs. Workstations and community agencies are educated on the mission of the Senior Corps and the role Retired and Senior Volunteers play in their community. Every RSVP workstation is visited by management members and the mission and goals are covered and discussed before the workstation begins operating a RSVP activity.

All volunteers receive Pre-Service Orientation with the goal of increasing knowledge of the RSVP/CNCS as well as enhancing volunteering skills. This is done in one on one interviews with all candidates as well as an RSVP informational brochure. All RSVs receive on the job training, which is provided by the site supervisors, staff. School Dept., Councils on Aging and Hospitals personnel also provide any additional training and support necessary to allow for the best volunteering possible. An example of additional training that our health volunteers have received is how to identify symptoms of diabetes, Alzheimer's, strokes, breast cancer and prostate issues, they have also received subsequent training in prevention of these diseases. The training is conducted by Lawrence Family Health Center, Lawrence General Hospital and the LGH Imaging Center. It is the MVCSC's goal to make all

## **Narratives**

volunteers feel confident in the training they receive and feel they have the skills necessary to work to their full potential and serve their community to their best ability. RSVs have the opportunity to request special trainings if deemed necessary and RSVP and MVCSC staff are constantly researching opportunities for future training and development to honor those requests.

In order to ensure that RSVP Volunteers are provided with challenging, enriching, and meaningful experiences, RSVP staff works to provide volunteers with prompt placement at sites, adequate training, and the support of other RSVP volunteers. The goal is to have volunteers see their service as meaningful and beneficial to themselves and the community. Their service should also be fun and educational. A sense of belonging and being part of a team is strived for at their site and within the program. Volunteers are called on a regular basis to ensure they are satisfied in their placement and enjoying their activities. Annual surveys are also performed by RSVP staff to measure the impact the program has had on the volunteer and their sense of satisfaction. Should a volunteer feel isolated or a sense of not being utilized to their full potential; efforts are made to rectify the problem immediately. RSVP volunteers must feel a sense of fulfillment and know that they are part of a community-based program. Furthermore, the RSVP program encourages volunteers to develop and create new service activities that address specific community needs and use their talents, interests or knowledge.

### **Program Management**

Over the years the Merrimack Valley RSVP program has established a system of workstations and volunteer placement that assures adequate volunteer management and impact driven service activities. All the current RSVP work stations are established under a Memorandum of Understanding and prior consultation with RSVP staff. Once a workstation has been created they are educated on Senior Corps and its mission and the RSVP specific program principles. RSVP workstation placement reflects the RSVP volunteers' skills and degree of need.

Once a station has been established and a RSVP volunteer is placed there, and depending on policies of

## Narratives

the station, a three (3) month probationary period, may take place, to ensure a proper match between the RSV and the station. To ensure RSVP Volunteers feel comfortable and welcome at their site, On the Job training is required and is provided to RSV's by the workstation staff. Stations are made aware of the role of the RSVP Volunteers and who the service recipients will be. Stations are required to submit monthly volunteer hours by activity and this information is entered into our software package called Volunteer Reporter.

RSVP volunteers serve in a variety of sites throughout the Greater Lawrence and Haverhill Communities, their activities range from receptionists in hospitals and to companions for home bound seniors. Volunteers have the liberty of choosing the activity that best fits their needs and are encouraged to experience a variety of service opportunities in order to ensure that their placement is appropriate for them. It is very important that volunteers derive valuable experience from their choice. The RSVP program also seeks to ensure that volunteers are properly trained and have time for reflection. Reflection is done in group settings after an activity and based on feedback from staff and volunteers changes or additions to activities are agreed upon in the same manner. An example of this was the need to revise activity times so staff, RSV'S and activity participants could all commit or be available for an entire activity. Volunteers are also informed of the specific community need that their service activity addresses and what the plans are to achieve the desired results. This aspect of service activity development is documented in the RSVP work plans. RSVP volunteers often serve to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community in which they serve. Depending on the type of service, some activities are one on one, others are group based.

To ensure all goals and objectives are met under the programming for impact principles RSVP staff utilizes project work plans, Project Progress Reports and yearly project accomplishment tools to assess the program on a regular basis. RSVP volunteers also complete a self-report based on satisfaction and feeling a sense of accomplishment and belonging in the program and at their site of service. Projects

## **Narratives**

and degree of usefulness and impact are also evaluated through volunteer satisfaction surveys. RSVP work sites are also assessed on a regular basis to ensure there is a continued need for RSVP volunteers to serve at them and also to ensure that volunteers are appreciated at the workstations. All programs being served by RSVP volunteers are evaluated through volunteer satisfaction surveys and questionnaires. The extent to which the volunteers help improve the community will also be recorded through observation and service recipient surveys.

All site supervisors and RSVP staff evaluate RSVP volunteers' accomplishments and impact on the community they serve on an annual basis to determine if the service they perform is being effective.

Workstation supervisors use written documentation to record assessments

Furthermore, sample assessment tools created by CNS are duplicated and modified to reflect the MVCSC's RSVP and utilized in assessing the program and its impact. All data is managed and kept on record at the MVCSC/RSVP office.

The Staff Accountant/Financial Manager, Tom Robinson, manages all project resources, both financial and in-kind. Tom provides monthly financial reports, indicating any and all cash draw downs and in-kind contributions and expenses, to the RSVP director and the MVCSC board of directors.

### **Organizational Capability**

Merrimack Valley Community Service Corps is governed by a twelve member Board of Directors made up of active RSVP volunteers, local Senior Center staff, and community members. An Executive Director oversees the program management of the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program and also supervises the management of the Foster Grandparent Program, and Youth Volunteer Corps of America Project. A Latino Outreach Coordinator helps recruit Latino volunteers and coordinates the Multi-Cultural program at the Lawrence Senior Center, A Program Assistant assists the RSVP Director in the management of the program and keeps and maintains all volunteer records, although this

## Narratives

position has had its hours reduced. This years budget allows for a part-time Inter-generational Program Coordinator/VIP and is supplemented with non federal funding. The Inter-generational Program Coordinator/VIP provides direct supervision and program development for RSVP/FGP/YVCA members. To ensure proper fiscal management of RSVP, a quarter time financial manager handles all bills, finances and in coordination with the project director prepares financial status reports. The MVCSC's finance manager also assists on overseeing payroll, fringe benefit services and financial advising when needed. A yearly audit is also done on the MVCSC and its programs. MVCSC is an agency that strives to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities to people of all ages and all abilities. Some of these meaningful volunteer opportunities include VIP experience, safety, disease prevention, and healthy living habit training. MVCSC sponsors three major volunteer programs the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the Foster Grandparent Program and the Youth Volunteer Corps of America Program. These programs attract a diverse group of individuals that come together for the purpose of serving their community. Service activities often become service learning laboratories in which people of all ages and all diversities come together in service and are able to learn from each other. The inter-generational component of service programming has been very successful in the past five years and has motivated MVCSC/RSVP staff to create more service activities for different age groups to come together. For this reason, MVCSC continues to enlist the services and skills of one part-time VIP coordinator that is responsible for developing and implementing inter-generational service activities, training volunteers, and coordinating volunteer efforts during the year. MVCSC's RSVP and FGP programs receive funding through the federal grant system. A part time Finance Manager performs all weekly and monthly reporting as well as required federal grant reporting. The finance manager is also responsible for filing any final annual report, accounting or expense reports to non-federal agencies that we may get funding from. Examples of these reports

## Narratives

have been filed with Amelia Peabody Foundation, the Rotary Club, Lawrence Cultural Council and Essex County Community Foundation. An audit is performed by an outside audit firm on an annual basis to confirm accurate reporting and ensure program requirements are being met.

Resource development and fundraising are sought out by program staff on an ongoing basis to offset and support the cost of impact programming as well as securing the required non-federal funding.

Furthermore, the RSVP program is assessed on a yearly basis to ensure it is complying with the CNCS and its sponsor policies.

All MVCSC/RSVP staff is well versed in the Programming for Impact principles: developing quality volunteer programs and creating tools to assess those activities. Once volunteers are recruited and go through a selection process, MVCSC/RSVP staff ensures their proper management, support and placement. Communication between RSVP staff, volunteers and workstations is always a priority to ensure volunteer and station satisfaction.

All staff members have clearly defined responsibilities pertaining to the RSVP and all work under a written job description and are assessed annually. Project staff receives training and supervision and are assured clear lines of communication between project staff, the MVCSC and the state program office. All staff members (MVCSC, FGP and RSVP & YVC) are encouraged to work as a team and communicate to ensure that all program goals are addressed, properly managed, and assessed.

Program staff also attends trainings related to volunteer management and CNCS sponsored trainings and conferences. RSVP volunteers and staff are reimbursed at .40 per mile for local travel. In some cases volunteers are provided with bus passes. Any overnight travel by staff members requires prior approval and is reimbursed through expense reports. RSVP staff is versed in the program and its initiatives and aware of the needs of the volunteers and the community being served. All staff members are aware of required paperwork and complete all the necessary documentation for project assessment. Staff is encouraged to attend workshops on professional development and skill building.

## Narratives

All staff have performance goals to set for them to work on and complete them on an annual basis.

The achievements of the project staff will be recognized through activities and recognition events.

MVCSC is aware of the diverse community it serves and works to recruit and train staff to be sensitive of the cultural needs of the community and its volunteers.

MVCSC/RSVP staff uses the CNCS's recommended check list for project self-assessment as described in the RSVP Operations Handbook. The RSVP staff will make appropriate adjustments to ensure continuous improvement and program success, based on quarterly and annual assessments of project staff, program components, volunteer assignments, volunteer impact, and workstation satisfaction. Any and all evaluation forms created and utilized will be kept on file at the RSVP office. All stations will work under an MOU and all volunteers will work under job descriptions and site plans. Project Work plans, GPRA reports, and financial status reports will be sent into CNCS staff on a regular and timely basis. The MVCSC conducts an annual assessment of the RSVP program to ensure that MVCSC and CNCS requirements are being met.

### Other

The Greater Lawrence/Haverhill Retired and Senior Volunteer Program has been able to work in three areas that are considered priority under the 2011 - 2015 Strategic priority areas, Healthy Futures, Capacity Building and Financial Literacy. We offer services that are meant to promote healthy futures. Services provided in this area include healthy meals, obesity awareness, vision testing, hearing testing and diabetes testing. We anticipate positive outcomes as seniors learn to live more healthy life styles, will learn what services are available and how to obtain them, will learn the importance of early detection of things like diabetes, eye and hearing issues, safety, disease prevention, and healthy living habit training.

Early this year we partnered with Mass Mentoring and the Highland Street AmeriCorps. We solicited donations for and helped assemble hygiene bags that were donated to the homeless. When there was

## Narratives

a need at a local food pantry we assisted in the assembly and distribution of food baskets.

Collaboration like this leads to success in the area of Healthy Futures.

RSV's and FGP's worked with YVC's this past summer, in the VIP activity , as a partnership to teach economics. RSV's/FGP's and YVC's worked together and overhauled a donated cart/wagon and converted it to a colorful circus "style" wagon. The wagon was used at the local farmers market once a week where RSV's/FGP's taught YVC's and/ or helped create items to sell from the cart. The YVC's learned many things but the most important things learned were related to economics. YVC's, under the tutelage of RSV's/FGP's, were responsible for budgeting to procure inventory for cart, learned skills in dealing with cash, collecting payments, making change, recording inventory and learned about customer interaction as they had to promote the products they sold on a weekly basis. The net of proceeds earned from the farmers market cart were used to for recognition activities.

Finally, we provide service or assistance in obtaining services to the huge population of the areas non-English speaking inhabitants. We believe that this is the first step in contributing to improved educational outcome. The Lawrence/Haverhill area has a huge population of economically disadvantaged people that do not know where to turn or how to start.

Many Lawrence MA families are concerned with the younger generation, their education and the performance of the local school system. As an organization we are able to offer information relating to community support groups like the Arlington Community of Excellence, the 21st Century afterschool and summer programs, and are able to give information on alternatives to the neighborhood schools that include information on how to be part of the two community charter schools lotteries. We are also attending preliminary strategic planning session with Jeff Riley, overseer of the Lawrence public school system to make him knowable of the VIP program and to revisit the idea of bring the ROSES program back into the schools. ROSES promotes friendship, feelings, family, healthy living habits and safety.