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Executive Summary

The Riverside County Office on Aging (RCOoA) is dedicated to assisting and providing services for older adults. It is also the appointed Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) for the County of Riverside recognized by the Administration on Aging (AoA). The RSVP Coachella Valley program is celebrating its 42nd year of local operation. It was brought to the Coachella Valley in 1971 through the combined interest and commitment of the valley's municipalities because it was recognized as a valuable asset to keep aging adults engaged, vital and actively involved in their community. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors assigned this program to the RCOoA in 1992 to continue and grow the volunteer base and increase the types of services offered in the community. Today, the RSVP Coachella Valley program is recognized for its impressive contribution to the service delivery of local community based organizations, non-profits, schools and governmental agencies and the meeting of community needs by providing access to volunteer opportunities, special recruitment activities for volunteers; by assisting all RSVP volunteers and sites with mediation; assignments that allow local organizations to sustain their level of service delivery; and special recognition activities that celebrate the spirit of volunteering and the work of our volunteers. RSVP services are critical because studies have found that between 40 and 50 percent of costly hospital readmissions are linked to social problems and lack of community resources (Proctor et al. (2000). Adequacy of Home Care and Hospital Readmission for Elderly Congestive Heart Failure Patients. *Health and Social Work: 25(2):87-96(10)*). The safety net of community based services and supports are vital to the health and wellbeing of older Californians. These findings are particularly significant today as Baby Boomers reach retirement age at an average rate of 330 per hour in the United States.

The broad program goals of RSVP Coachella Valley are to

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provide volunteer recruitment, orientation, individual support, and recognition; develop opportunities for seniors to broaden their life experience through volunteer service develop and maintain quality volunteer service opportunities that will succeed in measurable outcomes and outputs that meet the needs of the communities and citizens of the Coachella Valley and Blythe.

An estimated 600 RSVP volunteers will continue to serve during FY 2012/2013. They will provide services to children, seniors, law enforcement, community based organizations and others through programs that are consistent with the CNCS Strategic Plan and provide outputs and outcomes through a network of 53 sites, which provide a variety of services, such as food assistance, chronic disease self-management, fitness programs, tutoring and mentoring, community policing, and medical services. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures, which also coincides with the Riverside County Office on Aging's (sponsor agency) Strategic Plan, "Focusing on a Healthy Tomorrow," for FY12/13 through FY15/16. At the end of the first 12-month performance period 14% of our volunteers will be in outcome based assignments. The CNCS federal investment of \$61,082 will be supplemented \$18,325 by the anticipated level of non-federal resources or match funding.

The RSVP Coachella Valley program is a successful, rooted, organized, well known program in the region. In past years, we have had over 700 volunteers who worked at 100 volunteer sites. With the new direction and outcome measurements, we will be graduating volunteers from non-output/outcome assignments into other volunteer programs under the RCOoA as we will continue to serve the older adult volunteers.

Sincerely,

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Edward Walsh, Director

Riverside County Office on Aging

Strengthening Communities

The County of Riverside (also known as part of the Inland Empire, which includes, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties), is one of the largest counties in California encompassing 7,206 square miles including a combination of semi-arid and desert land. . It forms a unique shape similar to a long rectangle and is approximately 180 miles wide from the east to the west side of the county and 40 miles north to south. Riverside County is made up of 26 incorporated cities, unincorporated areas, and 11 Tribal reservations. Riverside County's landscape features everything from lush, irrigated farms to desert sand dunes; has altitudes ranging from 200 feet below sea level at the Salton Sea to 10,804 feet above sea level at the top of Mt. San Jacinto; has urban populations ranging from the City of Riverside with almost 300,000 residents to the rural communities of fewer than 5,000 residents in Anza and Mecca.

Nestled in the center of this expansive county, is the Coachella Valley. The Coachella Valley is located just eighty miles east of the largest population center, the City of Riverside. Naturally bordered by the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, this area is the historical home to agricultural workers, seasonal visitors and a small number of affluent and famous part time residents who saw and enjoyed the great offerings of this oasis that experiences temperatures of up to 120 degrees in the summer and mild winter temperatures. Seasonal visitors, often tourists and part time residents with second homes in the Coachella Valley, swell the population between the months of November and April annually. Riverside County is the fourth largest populated county in California with a population of 2,189,641 (2010 US Census). The County's growth rate between 2000 and 2010 was 41.7%, twice that of the State of California and the second fastest growing county in California behind Imperial County.

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Nationally, residents are expected to live longer and older adults of the Baby Boomer generation are turning age 65 at a rate of 330 per hour until the year 2029. This is an unprecedented increase in the senior population! Within Riverside County, the number of residents between 55-69 years old is expected to double by 2015, to almost a million permanent residents over 55 years old.

The population of the Coachella Valley has grown by 58.1% since the U.S. 2000 census and now has a population of 324,767 permanent residents (2010 Census). The Coachella Valley includes the cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage, unincorporated areas of the county and four tribal reservations. Since the 2000 census, two of the Coachella Valley's cities have outpaced the others in growth. Indio is now the largest Coachella Valley city with 76,036 residents followed by Palm Desert with 48,445 and Coachella with 41,648 residents. The Coachella Valley continues to be primarily agriculturally based, with rural communities that are typically isolated, more poverty stricken, and lacking access to many core services, including health care and many Coachella Valley residents are economically disadvantaged. According to Health Assessment Resource Center (HARC), 47.8% of residents reported living in households with incomes above 300% of the federal poverty guideline.

According to the Centers for Excellence Demographic Analysis of 2009, in the Coachella Valley, residents over 60 years old comprise 21.35% of the total population compared to 13.24% of the entire Inland Empire. In direct relation to the broader Riverside County area, Coachella Valley, with its many rural areas and retirement communities, including Palm Springs and La Quinta will also experience double digit growth among our 55-75 year old population over the next 5 years.

*In addition, the HARC Riverside County Health Monitor of 2010 conducted a survey of approximately 70% of the Coachella Valley's full time residential population: 44.6% reported living in households with incomes at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines; 33.8% of respondents classified themselves as non-White.

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*23.1% of respondents classified themselves as Latino or Latino, making them the largest minority group;

*15.7% were in the early retirement age group of 55-64.

*32.4% or respondents were 65 years of age and older

*15.9% aged 75 or older.

The Coachella Valley's ethnic diversity is 66.1% White, 23.1% Latino and a total of 10.7% of residents are Native Americans, African Americans, Asian and other ethnic groups. (HARC Health Monitor 2010). In addition, the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transsexual (LGBT) community is well represented in the region. RSVP strives to match the volunteer base to the ethnic profile of the communities, but there still exist challenges despite consistent efforts to recruit volunteers specifically from the Latino community. We continue to explore new methods to acquire a more ethnically diverse volunteer base that does better represent our demographic profile.

The City of Blythe is a small, remote, rural community that lies 102 miles east of the Coachella Valley and almost 200 miles from the City of Riverside and the County Seat. This area will be included in the RSVP Coachella Valley program because of its remote geographic location and isolation from mainstream services creating challenges with access. However, there are many older adults that will utilize and appreciate having the opportunities that RSVP offers. Although it lies within the desert region on the boarder of California and Arizona, Blythe is an agricultural mecca. The population of Blythe is 20,817 (2010 Census) with residents aged 55+ estimated at approximately 2,000. The rural location of this area is a banner to direct service provision and Riverside County Office on Aging is currently targeting efforts to provide more services to this area. Although RSVP is new to the area, the program infrastructure already in place through the Riverside County Office on Aging (RCOoA) RSVP, will assist with incorporation of this program into this area.

The Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) conducted research on the benefits of

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volunteering and found that older volunteers are more likely to receive greater health and physical benefits from volunteering. Studies have found between 40 and 50 percent of costly hospital readmissions are linked to social problems and lack of community resources. (Proctor et al. (2000). Adequacy of Home Care and Hospital Readmission for Elderly Congestive Heart Failure Patients. Health and Social Work: 25(2):87-96(10)

The safety net of community based services and supports are vital to the health and wellbeing of older Californians. These findings are particularly significant today as Baby Boomers reach retirement age at an average rate of approximately 8,000 per day in the United States.

According to the Healthy Aging Fact Sheet from the National Council on Aging: Approximately 91% of older adults have at least one chronic disease; 73% of older adults have at least two chronic diseases; Chronic diseases account for 75% of the money our nation spends on health care, but only 1% of health dollars are spent on public efforts to improve overall health; by 2011 the cost of chronic disease is estimated to be \$2.8 trillion -- an average of \$9,216 per person; 90% of Americans aged 55+ are at risk for hypertension or high blood pressure.

One in four older adults experiences some mental disorder including depression, anxiety disorders and dementia. This number is expected to double to 15 million by 2030.

Programs related to health outcomes are more critical now than in prior years and will become increasingly more important as the overall population of the United States grows older.

RCOoA's mission statement is: "To provide leadership in addressing issues that relate to older Californians; to develop community-based systems of care that provide services which support independence within California's interdependent society, and protect the quality of life of older persons and persons with functional impairments; and to promote citizen involvement in the planning and delivery of services." This mission directly aligns with the goals of CNCS and RSVP. The RCOoA is designated as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and the Aging and Disability Resource Connection

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(ADRC) for the entire County of Riverside. As part of each AAA's responsibility, a strategic plan must be developed every four years. The RCOoA recently completed their Strategic Plan for FY12/13 through FY15/16, entitled, "Focusing on a Healthy Tomorrow". RCOoA's four year Strategic Plan coincides with the CNCS Strategic Plan and primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures by addressing ways to keep our aging population active, engaged and giving benefits that older adults bring through volunteering in their communities.

The RCOoA identified five (5) goal areas upon which to focus the agencies efforts for the next four years including, Community for All Ages; Vital Aging; Aging Forward; Aging with Independence; and Caring for One Another. As part of the process of developing RCOoA's Strategic Plan, the agency conducted research and focus groups to gather feedback on the needs of the communities. Many community needs can be addressed through the RSVP program including: The need for services for older adults and caregivers to help individuals remain independent and in the community; Recognition that competing priorities exist between public and private sectors and cities and counties due to silos, limited funding, and lack of collaboration as they all seek to meet the needs of the fastest growing population group; the 85+ age group; The need for increased collaboration and community integration to allow improved access to services; Riverside County is becoming more ethnically diverse which necessitates infrastructure changes to meet new demands; A lack of knowledge of and sensitivity to the aging process and unique needs of diverse cultural populations, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT); The reduced capacity, dissemination of and access to available services continues to be a challenge; The need to develop positive solutions to keep older adults active and engaged in the local community; The need to create activities that allow seniors to participate in the delivery of services that seek to meet their needs.

The RSVP program responds to these needs by:

*Assisting the one in five older adults who struggle with mental health issues, including depression,

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anxiety, brought about by isolation and loneliness; Providing opportunities to build the types of social relationships that keep older adults vital and engaged in the community, which will alleviate the need for elevated spending in entitlement programs and community and social services; Promoting collaboration to promote better self-management of chronic diseases; Providing volunteers to augment local non-profit and public sector organizations that are balancing staffing reductions, work furloughs and less revenue. In 2011 alone, 1,104 RSVP volunteers worked at 117 sites located throughout the Coachella Valley. These volunteers contributed a combined total of 150,855 service hours, saving struggling organizations \$3,533,024.10 (based on the dollar value of volunteer hours for the State of California of \$23.42/hour);

*Providing intergenerational services that encompass a variety of community services. Seasoned and experienced RSVP volunteers bring their professional knowledge and expertise to a variety of assignments including, socialization of isolated persons, delivering food to the needy and underprivileged, disaster preparedness and environmental stewardship and preservation

As the program's reputation and profile have grown over the last 41 years, non-profit agencies in the desert are directed to the RSVP program through referrals from partners throughout the community. Both RSVP staff and the Advisory Council regularly network to identify potential areas where RSVP volunteers will enhance services. The Director of RSVP regularly makes presentations and attends meetings with the local municipalities, community memberships/clubs and non-profit agencies to stay abreast of initiatives or needs that they have identified. RSVP currently has the volunteer assignments in the identified Healthy Futures Focus Area in place and functioning. Some of the assignments are actually RCOoA evidence based programs and have been integrated well with RSVP. The current RSVP project sites reflect a wide scope of issues and functions including targeted Focus Areas. While many of the sites have been with RSVP for many years, new projects are added to the program that further enhance the breadth of opportunities for the volunteers and meet a broad range

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of community needs. The key to the program's overall success is to ensure that all assignments maximize volunteer potential and are meaningful. All sites are required to develop and provide comprehensive job descriptions that address how the volunteer contributes to the agency. They are required to describe: what the job is expected to accomplish for the agency; how the specific tasks the volunteer will carry out advances the objective of the agency; what skills, work experience and/or education is required; what the specific commitment of time is required; what training will be required or provided; what the specific benefits of working in this assignment will be and the form of evaluation. This level of specificity in job descriptions enables the RSVP Program to match volunteers with meaningful assignments that allow them to utilize their expertise. Each new volunteer is contacted within the first thirty days to follow up on the placement, to assess his/her satisfaction level, to identify any concerns and to obtain candid feedback on the sponsoring agency and the assignment. RSVP staff also makes contact with the sites on a regular basis to collaborate on special event needs, clarify reporting responsibilities, or follow up on site requests with technical assistance. Additionally, many of the sites include RSVP staff in their recognition events. While there is no fixed site visit schedule, staff provide regular visits with the site projects based upon an individualized plan. RSVP is well represented in a variety of community partnerships including the Latino Outreach Network, the Coachella Valley Health Collaborative, and the Senior Inspiration Awards Initiative. Each of these community organizations provides a conduit for involving and mobilizing the RSVP volunteers. Each of these partnerships provides in-kind support through the use of program space, staff assistance and event locations. These relationships provide more opportunities to integrate the RSVP volunteers into the community and to assess how the RSVP program can better address community needs. All of the current agency volunteer sites are considered partners and work in collaboration with the program to keep older adults active, engaged, and healthier by offering challenging and rewarding opportunities for older adult volunteers.

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The RCOoA works closely with RSVP to identify areas where volunteers can be involved in special initiatives or in forums that seek to gain feedback and develop solutions to address senior and community needs. RSVP works closely with the RCOoA and utilizes its existing infrastructure to integrate volunteers into the fabric of the Coachella Valley community and into the new initiatives and services.

More than 27 RSVP volunteers make up the "fitness trainers" of the RCOoA "Fit After 50" Program. This evidence based program, specifically targets strength and balance training for persons aged 50+ and is a recognized fall prevention program. RCOoA and RSVP are adding another new evidence based program and initiative to their lineup of volunteer opportunities to address Chronic Disease Self-Management (CDSM). Studies have found between 40 to 50 percent of costly hospital readmissions are linked to social problems and lack of community resources and that improving collaboration and community integration will to promote better self-management of chronic diseases. (Proctor et al. (2000). Adequacy of Home Care and Hospital Readmission for Elderly Congestive Heart Failure Patients. Health and Social Work: 25(2): 87-96 (10)). To that end, the RSVP Director and another RCOoA staff member have been certified by Stanford University as Master Trainers for this initiative to train volunteers as peer facilitators throughout the Coachella Valley and Blythe.

In the Coachella Valley of Riverside County, 5% of adults (age 55+) report cutting the size of or skip meals because there was not enough money for food. Latinos were twice as likely to skip meals due to cost. (HARC Eastern Riverside County Health Monitor Executive Report, 2010). To alleviate food scarcity issues among the older population, RSVP has over 200 dedicated and intermittent volunteers working to address this issue related to better health and quality of life.

During 2012, our three food banks had:

*215 total RSVP volunteers;

*35,053 persons receiving first time food assistance;

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*92,333 persons receiving repeat food assistance.

There are 45 volunteers regularly working in local food pantries or meals on wheels programs within senior centers throughout the area. These food pantries and meals on wheels programs continue to serve the community's aging adults who face food insecurity and lack resources. The three food banks throughout the Coachella Valley are volunteer sites for the RSVP and we will begin the new Volunteer Recruitment Events at these sites. There are 47 volunteers permanently placed at the three food banks serving this valley. Assignments in the food banks vary from drivers and food delivery to packing food into boxes for delivery.

1. Community Needs Identified: The Older Americans Act and the Older Californians Act mandate that each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) develop an Area Plan every four years, with updates each year under the guidance of the California Department of Aging. In order to develop the four-year plan, the RCOoA must assess the needs of the community. To enhance the demographic data currently available through various sources as well as existing data and to get community involvement and active solicitation of community needs, OoA conducted 19 focus groups, both internally and externally throughout Riverside County, utilizing a survey instrument developed in conjunction with HARC. A few of the service needs identified that relate directly to RSVP included: Nutrition, Disease and/or Medical Management, including health promotion and exercise; Employment and Volunteer Services, focused on keeping older adults engaged with their community; Meal Services, either on-site or home-delivered.

2. Service Activities To Be Carried Out: The activities that will be carried out by RSVP volunteers include, but are not limited to:

Volunteers will hold, train and/or guide older adults through a six week workshop for self-management of chronic diseases. Several workshops will be held in various locations throughout the Coachella Valley; Volunteers will be certified as Fit After 50 (evidence based fitness and fall prevention

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program) fitness trainers in order to hold classes in the community to get older adults and adults with disabilities engaged in physical activity;

*Volunteers will serve in food banks to collect, separate, deliver, and box donated food; Volunteers will collect and pick up food donated to food pantries; Volunteers will deliver meals to the homebound through the Meals on Wheels programs throughout the valley; Volunteers will be trained and prepared to respond in the event of a disaster; Volunteers will meet with, check on, and participate with other older adults in various activities to keep socialization a prominent factor in older adult lives; Volunteers will be trained to educate others about ways to keep the environment safe from degradation due to the impacts of population growth and urban expansion.

3. Anticipated Output(s)/Outcome(s): Anticipated output(s) or outcome(s) are as follows:

*Meals on Wheels = OUTPUT: Estimated number of older adults served (100); OUTCOME: Older adult feels increased social ties with the delivery of meals 70

*Safe Checks/Companion = OUTPUT: Estimated number of older adults served (30).

*Food Distribution = OUTCOME: Estimated number of recipients of emergency food (35,000);
OUTCOME: Recipients surveyed see how the food assistance helps them (21,000)

*Chronic Disease Self-Management = OUTPUT: Estimated number of volunteers who will be certified as Leaders (12) and number of participants who attend the workshops (84)

*Fit After 50 = OUTPUT: Number of participants in the exercise program (500)

Recruitment and Development

The Baby Boomer generation has more chronic diseases than previous generations facilitating an increase in medical expenses and hospital admissions (Boomers Turning 65 -- AARP.org). In the Coachella Valley 109,265 respondents to HARC's survey of 246,861 older adults described their health as fair or poor. All respondents specified a reason for their health problems: 43% indicated they have a chronic illness and 1 in 4 is disabled (HARC's Eastern Riverside County Community Health Monitor

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July 2011). Studies have found between 40 and 50 percent of costly hospital readmissions are linked to social problems and lack of community resources. This increase in both the aging population and in the prevalence of chronic illness among seniors will require all service agencies to fortify and begin the process of expanding their existing program infrastructure in order to meet the coming need. RSVP plans to assist public sector service organizations, medical services organizations and local non-profit organizations by providing them with a cadre of willing volunteers whose skills match their needs. In addition, RSVP hopes to stem the tide empowering older adults to better manage chronic illness by ensuring that many older adults remain active, independent, fit and healthy.

The RSVP program supports volunteers by providing a specific set of services including secondary insurance that covers RSVP volunteers to and from their homes and during service hours. Volunteer sites will be supported by services such as data collection, program monitoring, specialized recruitment, interviewing, placement and mentoring of volunteers.

While all volunteer programs can expect some percentage of turnover, the long-term success of the Coachella Valley RSVP Program lies in the strong partnerships that have been established between volunteers, local sites and residents in the community. RSVP employs specialized recruitment techniques that match volunteers to assignments, conducts effective yet sensitive screening of volunteers and organizations and consistently delivers a positive, satisfying volunteer experience.

The impact of Baby Boomers to the volunteer corps will continue to grow in significance. The numbers of aging Baby Boomers are increasing in the Coachella Valley and the demand for sites with appropriate and appealing volunteer opportunities will increase as well. As a result, the RSVP program will conduct ongoing volunteer recruitment and reach out to new organizations. The support of the RCOoA, which allows the RSVP program to identify new opportunities and the ability to concentrate recruitment through existing RCOoA programs, is an asset most RSVP programs do not have. The RCOoA is a long standing governmental office, which provides a variety of services to older adults and

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caregivers and RSVP has full access to the resources and opportunities that come with such an influential partnership. The RCOoA has sponsored the RSVP Coachella Valley program for the last 20 years and will continue to support and assist the RSVP program. RCOoA will continue support for other volunteers as they are graduated from RSVP sites not qualifying under the new parameters of the program into other volunteer programs, as part of the agency's overall strategy to assist older adults in the Coachella Valley and Blythe.

All volunteers receive a general training on volunteerism, program orientation, and specialized training leading to their assignments. RSVP staff works closely with all sites to ensure the volunteers are trained to perform a generic set of duties. RSVP encourages all project sites to include their volunteers in all of the agency training offered. This is an important component for strong volunteer engagement and as a way to deepen the volunteer's level of competency as well as his/her commitment to the agency. Further, the RSVP job description/application process encourages sites to develop training, recognition and evaluation as core components of each volunteer job description.

The Volunteer Recognition event also provides the opportunity to provide direct volunteer training to 150 -- 300 of our volunteers. The 2011 event's training topic was on "Healthy Aging" presented by Ed Walsh, M.S.W. and Director, of the RCOoA.

The Older Americans Act defines a number of "target populations" that have to be taken into consideration by the Area Agency on Aging in their effort to plan, advocate, coordinate and provide services, and develop systems for older adults. These target populations include older individuals who are experiencing social and economic need, with special emphasis on those who are frail, isolated, neglected, and/or exploited, low-income minorities, limited English speaking, those residing in rural areas and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Elders. RCOoA has made concerted efforts to include these target populations in the planning and delivery of community-based services. RSVP will utilize the County's infrastructure and existing programs to recruit members of these targeted

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populations for volunteer opportunities. RSVP already regularly utilizes the RCOoA Info Van Outreach Program and attends relevant events and meetings along with RCOoA staff members to increase knowledge about the program amongst other providers.

A principle effort to recruit volunteers from the Latino community is through the Riverside County Office on Aging's Info Van Program, which focuses on the eastern part of the Coachella Valley. The Info Van program is focused on reaching the most rural and isolated locations in the eastern valley, where the largest concentration of Latino persons live. The bi-lingual Service Assistants and bi-lingual volunteers diligently work to recruit volunteers from the many organizations and schools located in Indio, Coachella, Thermal and Mecca, which are predominately Latino communities. RSVP has specifically recruited active members of the Latino community to serve on the Advisory Council. These key leaders function as RSVP Ambassadors in the Latino community and have been instrumental in including the RSVP program in many events and fairs. The partnership with the Office on Aging Info Van program has expanded outreach and recruitment in the Latino community, and while RSVP has had some success valley wide with the recruitment of Latino volunteers, we continue to strive to match our volunteer pool to the population of the desert. The LGBT community has demonstrated a strong commitment to involvement in service to the community with noteworthy numbers active in RSVP. The LGBT community has a strong presence, from local political leadership to involvement in many of the programs operating in the desert. To strengthen our efforts to recruit for cultural and ethnic diversity, the RSVP program has LGBT representation on the Advisory Council. Additionally, RSVP volunteers support the Office on Aging's participation in the annual Coachella Valley Gay Pride Event.

Specific examples of efforts to meet the needs of the other targeted populations include the following: Ongoing mandatory cultural & diversity training for all staff of the OoA and RSVP; Outreach, events and focus groups hosted for older individuals who speak limited English; Presence at specific LGBT

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events, such as the annual Palm Springs Pride event, to distribute information about the services available through OoA, including RSVP; Direct service delivery systems development in rural areas, such as Blythe, where contracted providers are not available; Conducting on-going Fit After 50 classes, a free fitness program for seniors aimed at fall prevention and prolonging healthy independence through strength, balance & flexibility training.

The RSVP Director continues to explore new ways to recruit volunteers for the program. RSVP outreaches through local and specialized area newspapers and publications; public service announcements and advertisements; interviews with local media; in-person presentations to community groups ranging from small church service organizations to subsidized housing activity meetings, to large gatherings of Rotary, Kiwanis and Soroptomists Clubs; presentations at large retirement community luncheons, current RSVP volunteers who outreach to peers and targeted outreach strategies through the Advisory Council, OoA Director and 'Volunteer Match' (a website specializing in volunteer recruitment). RSVP recently partnered with the Regional Access Project (RAP) Foundation to further RSVP recruitment efforts. The RAP Foundation traditionally recruits only young adults for its programs. The partnership with RSVP allows RAP to place a link to RSVP registration on their website for all older adults who meet the criteria for the RSVP program. RSVP also utilizes new and popular forms of social media, like Facebook, and the KPSP Local 2 news station's website, "Our Neighborhood", which provides a continuous feeds of events and local public service announcements for specialized programs within the Coachella Valley, to outreach to the younger members of the Baby Boomer generation who utilize these avenues to socialize and participate in community activities. Additionally, RSVP participates in many community volunteer, health and information fairs, always with the message that there is something of interest for everyone. Our broad range of volunteer opportunities, our strong relationships with the site coordinators and staff enthusiasm for the program are a winning combination in recruiting and

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placing volunteers. We also utilize our sponsor's Info Van Outreach Program to inform potential volunteers through existing County-wide community education and public information programs. However, since RSVP is utilizing the CNCS Focus Area, those volunteers who want to volunteer in areas outside the focus area will still be able to due to the generosity of the RCOoA, keeping all volunteer sites active to engage older adults in volunteering.

RSVP will utilize the County's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) partnerships (with disability and independent living collaboratives) infrastructure and existing programs to recruit volunteers with disabilities, including individuals with age-related disabilities for volunteer opportunities. RSVP already regularly utilizes the RCOoA Info Van Outreach Program and attends relevant events and meetings along with RCOoA staff members to increase knowledge about the program amongst other providers. The infrastructure for the RCOoA is well established and follows the guidelines of local, state and federal regulations.

Retention: The RSVP program plans to retain volunteers by paying attention to the four (4) key elements that ensure a high quality volunteer experience:

- (1)RSVP will continue to encourage site agencies to develop thoughtful job descriptions for each volunteer position;
- (2)RSVP will continue to conduct in-depth volunteer and organizational screening to insure that all volunteers are matched with the right positions and the right organization;
- (3)RSVP will continue to encourage volunteer feedback related to each volunteer placement and to provide multiple training forums, supportive materials and additional resources with the project sites.
- (4)RSVP will continue to assist and support volunteer sites through a set of ongoing services including data collection, program monitoring, specialized recruitment, interviewing, and placement and mentoring of volunteers.

Recognition: The RSVP program plans to recognize volunteers in the following ways:

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(1)The bi-annual RSVP newsletter includes a standing feature that profiles an outstanding volunteer(s), thanks all volunteers for their service and usually contains an article that features a project site or special event.

(2)The RSVP program hosts an annual recognition event for all volunteers, with special recognition to those who contribute more than 100 hours in the prior year. The annual recognition event provides the opportunity to honor and recognize RSVP volunteers in a public forum with community leaders and the RSVP Advisory Council actively participates in planning and hosting the recognition event. Each year a keynote speaker provides some type of presentation and/or training that enhances volunteerism or healthy living and a local dignitary or elected official acknowledges the volunteers on behalf of the entire Coachella Valley community. Volunteers with more than 100 hours receive certificates of achievement and honors from dignitaries, and individual cities and organizations are honored and given special awards for their continued support of the RSVP program. RSPV volunteers consider this event the highlight of the volunteer experience and RSVP volunteers look forward to it each year. The next recognition event will be held in February 2013.

(3)Many of the RSVP volunteer sites also recognize their RSVP volunteers in separate events each year. RSVP staff is invited to and attends these recognition events and assists the sites in recognizing the individual volunteer's time and service.

(4)RSVP staff also nominates volunteers to be recognized at other events throughout the County of Riverside, including the Senior Inspiration Awards (SIA) of the Coachella Valley and Riverside County's annual volunteer service recognition at the County Board of Supervisors meetings. The SIA honors a specific volunteer from each of the nine cities in the Coachella Valley and two from the unincorporated areas. It is sponsored by the 4th District County Supervisor, John J. Benoit, and Mayors from each of the nine cities who participate each year. The RSVP Director is a member of the SIA Committee and is responsible for planning and orchestrating these events each year. The

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Riverside County Board of Supervisors also pays tribute to a Volunteer of the Year from each County department. The RCOoA nominee process is linked to the RSVP pool of volunteers.

Program Management

The 48 project sites reflect a wide range of issues and functions. While many of the sites have been with RSVP for many years, new projects are added to the program that further enhance the breadth of opportunities for the volunteers, to meet a broad range of community needs and to concentrate on the Focus Areas that CNCS has identified. The key to the program's overall success is to ensure that all volunteer assignments maximize the potential of each volunteer and are meaningful. All sites are required to develop and provide comprehensive job descriptions that address how the volunteer can contribute to the agency. They are required to describe: what the job is expected to accomplish for the agency; how the specific tasks the volunteer will carry out will advance the objective of the agency; what skills, work experience and/or education is required; what the specific commitment of time is required; what training will be required or provided; what will be the specific benefits of working in this assignment and in what form will there be an evaluation. This level of specificity in job descriptions enables the RSVP Program to match volunteers with meaningful assignments that allow them to utilize their expertise. In addition, each new volunteer is contacted within the first thirty days to follow up on their placement, to assess his/her satisfaction level, to identify any concerns and to obtain candid feedback on the sponsoring agency and the specific assignment.

RSVP staff also makes contact with the sites on a regular basis to collaborate on special event needs, clarify reporting responsibilities, or follow up on site requests. Additionally, many of the sites include our staff in their recognition events. While there is no fixed site visit schedule, staff provide regular visits with the site projects based upon an individualized plan.

As a long standing and successful program in the Coachella Valley, RSVP will continue to access the resources and utilize the infrastructure of the RCOoA. Although RSVP and RCOoA are already

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collectively working together to meet the needs of older adults as expressed by the 19 RCOoA focus groups, more volunteers are needed to meet the community's needs. RSVP and RCOoA will follow-up on all sites and conduct bi-annual surveys to gather feedback from volunteers and site coordinators and both agencies will continue to look for more innovative ways to place RSVP volunteers in areas of need in the Coachella Valley and Blythe. RSVP staff will work with each site to develop appropriate reporting tools that will reflect the outputs and outcomes required for the main focus group and the other focus groups that are proposed in this grant. Because RSVP has a good working relationship already built with the local organizations and the foundation of this program is well established, more avenues for obtaining the outputs and outcomes will be sought.

Although the CNCS is concentrating on specific focus areas in the future, the RCOoA will continue to offer, manage and grow the volunteer base within the Coachella Valley and in other areas of Riverside County. RCOoA's mission speaks to keeping older adults engaged in and contributing to their local communities to better insure that seniors age with dignity. RCOoA and RSVP will work to insure that local seniors remain independent longer, live healthier lifestyles with less depression and isolation and better manage chronic health issues. RCOoA is committed to keeping the sites currently being utilized that are not included in this new RSVP program with specific focus areas in order to provide a variety of sites and activities available for all seniors who want to volunteer.

Therefore, there will be no known graduation of volunteers, from the perspective of the volunteer. The current volunteers will be offered the opportunity to move to a site that responds to the focus areas but they will also have the ability to remain where they currently serve without any disruption. The RCOoA is more than qualified and well established to handle the conversion of RSVP volunteers and sites to a general volunteer program. The infrastructure is already in place for this conversion.

All volunteer coordinators will be trained in the new reporting process and the outcomes that are required for the program. The current reports will be revised to accommodate the requirement for

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outcome and output measures. All sites will be required to report outputs and outcomes monthly (see work plans for outputs and outcome measurements) Questionable or incomplete reporting will be followed up with phone calls and/or in person visits. The RSVP program staff will offer assistance to site coordinators to insure timely and complete reports are submitted.

The RCOoA is unique among the 55 Riverside County Departments, in that it is 85% grant funded. The RCOoA Deputy Director of Finance and Administration oversees all fiscal management for the RCOoA. He has over 28 years of public service, serving the last nineteen as Chief Fiscal Officer for the RCOoA. The RCOoA, as part of the Riverside County financial system, maintains all financial records. A Single Audit of all Riverside County financial records is conducted annually by Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP, and Certified Public Accountants. The annual Riverside County audit for 2012 will be available and forwarded by late May, 2013.

RSVP Coachella Valley has been active for 20 years with the RCOoA as its sponsor. The RSVP program is stationed in the RCOoA La Quinta satellite office, chosen for its central valley location. As part of Riverside County, the RCOoA uses the County "Oasis" financial system which serves other county government throughout the State of California. All RSVP program purchasing, financial reporting, budget creation, budget reporting and fund reporting, while directly managed by the program managers, is supported by the 12-person administration/fiscal staff of the RCOoA and approved by the Deputy Director of Administration. Personnel management support is provided through the RCOoA Leadership Team, of which the RSVP Director is a key member.

The program relies on several long-standing sources of funding. We have many community partners whom we rely upon each year to make the cash donations and in-kind contributions that assist in underwriting the cost of the volunteer recognition event. Each year we submit a written request to the nine (9) cities in the Coachella Valley to support their proportionate share of the cost of running the RSVP program (based on the number of volunteers in their city). While many cities have stopped

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funding the program due to California's economic crisis, the loss of redevelopment funds and each city's financial concerns, RSVP still receives annual support from five (5) of the nine (9) cities. RSVP also receives grant funds from United Way of the Desert, and four (4) of the nine (9) cities each year for operating support. These grants are vital to meeting our match requirement. Our sponsor agency, RCOoA, ensures the program's stability by providing other funding as needed when outside funding fluctuates. The RSVP Director and the members of the RSVP Advisory Council are constantly looking for new avenues of outside funding for support in order to enhance and expand the program.

Organizational Capability

The Deputy Director of Administration functions as the RCOoA fiscal officer and oversight agent for personnel and ensures all County personnel policies and procedures are known and followed. The Deputy Director also ensures that job descriptions, roles and responsibilities for all staff, including RSVP staff, and administrators and the department are clear and current. All reviews, staff recommendations or changes are reviewed and approved by the Deputy Director. Additionally, the Deputy Director provides oversight and approval of all travel expenses and ensures that the travel policy for Riverside County is followed.

The Deputy Director of Senior Services oversees the RSVP Program Director to ensure stability and consistency throughout the program.

The La Quinta office serves as the desert and eastern county presence for the RCOoA. As the face of the RCOoA for the desert, the RCOoA ensures that space, furniture and equipment are maintained at the highest level and equal to that of the main RCOoA office. The RSVP program has on-site access to a laser printer, high speed copier, and fax machine. Additionally RSVP staff each has her own desk top computers, and color ink-jet printers. All supplies are managed and ordered by the RSVP Program Director to meet all the needs of the program.

RSVP follows all RCOoA, county, state and federal regulations for compliance within the program.

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The RSVP program is operated by one (1) full time staff person (FTE) and one (1) part time staff member who split their duties with another program. The staff members and their duties are as follows:

RSVP Director (FT) --- Lori Weathers

Direct and monitor program development and organizational capacity of Coachella Valley RSVP program including:

Supervise 1 direct report Services Assistant P/T (.60) staff responsible for data input, general administrative support and new volunteer placements; Develop funding strategy with Coachella Valley Cities, United Way and Corporation for National and Community Service; Prepare all grant applications;

Provide all grant reports and interface with Grant Managers regarding RSVP operations; Prepare all CNCS reporting: Annual grant application, Project Performance Volunteer Assessment, and Program Progress Reports and Financial Status Reports.

Submit FFR and funding requests; Develop and administer program management tools to facilitate reporting and record keeping; Prepare and supervise RSVP budget in collaboration with OOA fiscal team; Make all grant review committee presentations;

Develop media contacts, respond to media requests for program information or community relevance, write press releases;

Make presentations regarding RSVP to community leaders, community organizations, and media;

Develop and direct RSVP Volunteer Coordinator Trainings; Write RSVP newsletters; Coordinate annual RSVP Recognition for volunteers and agency/community leaders; Develop community sponsorships for Recognition funding; Develop and interface with RSVP Community Advisory Council; Interface with community agency leadership regarding MOUs, volunteer training, and RSVP program benefits.

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Provide linkage and leadership to OOA Leadership Team for desert programs and community needs. Represent RSVP and Office on Aging at Coachella Valley community partnerships and committees -- ACT I, Senior Inspiration Awards, Community Access initiatives, County Supervisor, State and Federal representative initiatives.

Services Assistant (PT) --- Susan Fornelius

Provide office and program support for the program which includes but is not limited to:

*Data Entry *Answer phones *Interview and meet with volunteers or potential volunteers *Meet with potential volunteer sites to discuss the program *Register volunteers and volunteer sites *Ensure Letters of Agreement (or MOUs) are current *Follow through with volunteers and sites on new placements *Attend meetings regarding RSVP.

The RSVP Coachella Valley program has consistently grown over the past 20 years while under the sponsorship of the RCOoA. This program has measured outputs on volunteer sites for:

*Food Banks (which are in the main Healthy Futures Focus Area)

*Fit After 50 Exercise program (which is in the Main Healthy Futures Focus Area)

*Tutors in schools and after school programs

*Citizens on Patrol (COPs) programs (which is included in the Disaster Preparedness Focus Group of this proposal)

RSVP has reported on these outputs in various ways to various grantors over the span of 20 years. As part of the new direction that CNCS is taking with outcomes, RSVP will enhance the reporting methods to include outcomes that are appropriate for the main focus area as well as the other focus areas being proposed. This reporting will show the impact RSVP volunteers make on the communities they serve. RSVP will follow-up on all sites and conduct bi-annual surveys to gather feedback from volunteers and site coordinators and will continue to look for more innovative ways to place RSVP volunteers in the focus areas. RSVP staff will work with each site to develop appropriate reporting

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tools that will reflect the outputs and outcomes required for the main focus group and the other focus groups that are proposed in this grant.

The organization responsible for managing and operating the RSVP program is the Riverside County Office on Aging, under the direction of Director, Ed Walsh. Mr. Walsh brings over 30 years of experience with coordinated care to meet the needs and abilities of aging adults. The Office on Aging very successfully manages multiple grant-funded programs that provide assistance to older adults (e.g., care management programs, nutrition, community outreach, employment training and referral, and Information and Referral Services). As this is a county department, all federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies are followed.

The Office on Aging is also recognized as the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and is a key advocate for all facets of successful aging, including health, independence and combating ageism. This is necessary for older adults' independence and self-determination. RSVP's on-site, day-to-day program director, Lori Weathers, is part of the agency's Leadership Team. The Team meets weekly and includes the agency Director, Deputy Directors, and other Office on Aging Program Managers. RSVP is afforded administrative support in all areas of program operation and management in order to maintain continued program assessment and sustainability.

The RSVP Advisory Council is made up of members who bring their unique background, perspective, experience, and skills to the board. They provide recommendations and input to RSVP oversight and design as well as program operation evaluation. This Advisory Council meets quarterly and is responsible for reviewing past performance, analyzing any issues, providing corrective actions and guiding the direction of the program through community relationships, assessment of the program, and fund raising. The Advisory Council members also assist in project site monitoring, and with the development of volunteer evaluation tools. The Advisory Council not only oversees the evaluation tools utilized by the program but also visit the volunteer sites in their professional and council