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Executive Summary

The mission of Marquette County's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is enriching the lives of older adults by matching their skills and interests with volunteer needs in our non-profit community.

An estimated 125 RSVP volunteers will serve in the Healthy Futures CNCS focus area. Volunteers will provide transportation to medical appointments and companionship for isolated, frail and homebound seniors, and will assist with emergency food distribution. Volunteers will serve at 14 different stations in Marquette, Ishpeming, Negaunee and Gwinn. Stations include RSVP, area senior centers, the local community action agency, as well as food bank and pantries.

At the end of the 12-month performance period an estimated 150 isolated/frail/homebound seniors will be transported by 68 volunteers to at least 600 medical appointments. Twelve RSVP volunteers will visit 18 older adults, providing an estimated 216 hours of companionship which will increase their perception of social support. Forty-five volunteers will assist with emergency food pantry support, helping an estimated 34,200 individuals -- 2,850 per month -- gain increased food security in the 12-month period. Senior citizens, children, families and single adults will be among those served by emergency food support efforts

Another 52 volunteers will be engaged in the Disaster Preparedness and Veteran focus areas.

Community Priorities will be addressed by the remaining 75 RSVP volunteers.

The CNCS federal investment of \$6,158 -- or \$24.44 per volunteer for each of the 252 unduplicated volunteers proposed in this application -- will be supplemented by \$113,043 in non-federal resources.

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Strengthening Communities

RSVP of Marquette County serves Michigan's largest county, covering 1,873 square miles, with a population of 67,077 according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Marquette County is located in the central Upper Peninsula of Michigan -- an area larger than nine states in the U.S. -- and has an estimated population density of 35.8 people per square mile. Marquette County is home to 18,382 adults over the age of 55 according to the Census Bureau (June 2010). Marquette County is the most densely populated area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and includes the U.P.'s busiest airport, Sawyer International as well as the largest city in the U.P., the City of Marquette. Northern Michigan University and Marquette General Health Systems, the primary hospital and medical care facility providing services throughout the Upper Peninsula, are located in the City of Marquette.

While the economy in and around the City of Marquette is stable, the out-lying areas within the county -- the largest east of the Mississippi River -- are extremely rural, remote and economically challenged. The median age for Marquette County is 37.5, slightly older than Michigan's median age of 35.5, and the median household income of \$43,599 is 10.3% lower than Michigan's median household income of \$48,606. The percent of the population below the poverty level in Marquette County is 14.2%, compared to 14.4% in Michigan, and 13.2% in the United States (U.S. Census Quick Facts 2009 estimate). The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for August 2012 was 7.9% for Marquette County, while the rate for the entire Upper Peninsula was 8.4%. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Michigan for the same time period was 9.4% according to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget.

Community needs in the Healthy Futures focus area include transportation to medical appointments for senior citizens, companionship for seniors and assistance/support for emergency food agencies in

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our communities. Current and future RSVP volunteers will be placed in stations addressing focus area needs based on volunteer skills and interests. Training will be provided by stations to ensure volunteers follow established protocols, and RSVP staff will provide support and training or scheduling assistance as needed.

In 2009, Marquette County Aging Services commissioned a survey of senior needs. The results, printed in "Marquette County 2009 Older Adults Needs Survey, Final Report," dated Aug. 11, 2009, indicated 52.9% of the 450 respondents needed transportation to access medical appointments or pharmacy services. "Coordination of transportation" was cited by 18.6% of respondents as a service they have needed over the past year but have not been able to access in Marquette County. A June 2012 survey of current RSVP Non-Emergency Medical Transportation clients supports the need for the program. From the 70 completed surveys, 97% of respondents indicated the transportation service is "Extremely Important" or "Important" in helping access medical services. Ninety-six percent indicated the transportation program has helped "improve" or "maintain" current health status. The service has "Very Much" contributed to 77% of respondents ability to remain independent, while another 14% said the program "Somewhat" contributed to independent living. If the program were unavailable, 40% of respondents said they would be unable to get to their medical appointments.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program volunteers complete an orientation session, provide a copy of their drivers' license and proof of vehicle insurance and then are added to the available driver list. Transportation requests come from either clients themselves, or from staff at area senior centers or older adult living facilities. Drivers are contacted with transportation details -- appointment time, date and location -- until one is located who can complete the transport. The driver is given the client's name and phone number, and the client and/or referring staff member is provided the driver's

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name. On the day of the appointment the driver arrives at the home of the senior client, drives the client to the appointment, escorts him or her into the office and waits until the client is finished with the appointment. Then the driver takes the client back to his or her home, stopping at a pharmacy along the way if needed. In cases where the appointment will be particularly long such as chemotherapy, dialysis or extensive tests, the driver may get the client settled at the doctor office and give his or her cell phone number to the receptionist before leaving. Once the client has completed the appointment, the driver is called and returns to take the client home. There is no cost to the senior for the transport, and volunteer drivers use their personal vehicles. RSVP provides mileage reimbursement of 30 cents per mile to drivers, and also maintains excess liability and accident insurance for all RSVP volunteers.

At the end of the 12-month period, an estimated 150 seniors will receive more than 600 transports to medical appointments from 68 volunteers. An estimated 105 transportation clients will report having increased social support because of the transportation service on a survey adapted by RSVP staff from the CNCS Senior Corps Independent Living Performance Measure Survey.

A number of studies have associated isolation -- living alone, having a small social network, low participation in social activities, a perceived lack of social support and feelings of loneliness -- with worsening health problems (Berkman and Syme 1979; Dean et al 1992; Hawkey et al 2006; Krause 1987; Thoits and Hewitt 2001). The health risks of social isolation may be particularly severe for older adults (Cacioppo and Hawkey 2003; Tomaka, Thomas and Palacios 2006), especially as they are likely to face stressful life transitions, health problems and disabilities (Brummett et al 2001). Older adults are more likely to experience bereavement and encounter health problems that increase their need for social support and companionship, so the health-damaging aspects of social isolation can be

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particularly detrimental at older ages (Cacioppo et al 2006; Heikkinen and Kauppinen 2004; House et al 1988). Older adults who experience one or another aspect of social isolation are at greater risk for all-cause mortality, increased morbidity, diminished immune function, depression and cognitive decline (Barnes et al 2004; Brummett et al 2001; House 2001; Seeman 2000; Uchino et al 1996).

Eighteen senior citizens in Marquette County will be visited by 12 volunteers for at least one-hour per month. The visits increase the senior's perceived social ties and at the end of the 12-month period 70%, or 13 seniors, will report having increased social support on a survey adapted by RSVP staff from the CNCS Senior Corps Independent Living Performance Measure Survey.

According to "Hunger in America 2012, Michigan (9923) State Report; Final Report, January 2010," the Feeding America system in Michigan provides emergency food for an estimated 1,173,700 people annually. About 196,400 different people receive emergency food assistance in any given week. The report further indicates of all client households served by emergency food programs in Michigan, 75% are food insecure according to the U.S. government's official food security scale.

In Marquette County the percent of population under the 125% Federal Poverty Level is 16.3%, while the percent of the population currently receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits is only 12% (Food Research and Action Center, County-by-County Review of SNAP Participation, June 2009).

A September 2012 informal phone survey of Marquette County food pantries indicate increasing numbers of clients seeking emergency food, rising food costs and a reduction in donations are among challenges faced by the agencies. Forty-five volunteers at six food pantries, food banks and soup

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kitchens will help serve individuals receiving emergency food. Volunteers will help sort, move and prepare supplies, with serving clients, client intake, paperwork and other necessary tasks. A survey will be distributed to an estimated 1,900 clients by food bank and pantry staff near the end of each one-year reporting period. Seventy percent of those who respond to the survey, or an estimated 1,330 people, will report increased food security.

Veterans will be among the clients served in each of the focus area -- transportation, companionship and emergency food services. Many transportation and companionship clients are veterans, as are several of our volunteer transporters. Our area food banks serve veterans as well. Other community priorities that assist veterans include friendly visiting at 13 different stations such as the D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans and area nursing homes, and helping with activities and special programs for veterans. The Veterans History Project uses volunteers to conduct interviews with veterans, which are recorded, transcribed, copied and then given to the veteran and sent to the Library of Congress. RSVP volunteers also assist at area veteran organizations, making pasties and working Bingo for fundraisers, assisting with providing benefit information to veterans and helping with coordination of volunteers at the organizations. Marquette County crafters also show their appreciation for veterans by making wheelchair/walker bags, totes, lap robes, mittens, scarves, hats and other items especially for veterans.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP provides assistance with volunteer placement, training and support for 252 older adults, who serve as valuable additions to non-profit organizations and schools serving within our community. RSVP, which began in Marquette County in 1990, continues to recruit and support volunteers with meaningful volunteer placements that include opportunities to develop new skills and interests.

Leadership opportunities are available through working on project committees, providing guidance to

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other volunteers, assisting with planning events and helping organizations with program or policy development. Interested volunteers may also serve on the RSVP Advisory Council.

Face-to-face contact is an important aspect of volunteer recruitment. The RSVP director and advisory council members conduct presentations about the program at senior centers, housing units, senior groups, medical centers, area churches, community events and service clubs.

Volunteer stations continue to be active in volunteer recruitment, generating interest in the program by those who may not yet have come into contact with RSVP. A quarterly newsletter containing volunteer opportunities, educational articles, items of interest and other RSVP information is mailed out to volunteers, stations, media, senior service agencies and some service clubs, which also generates interest in RSVP. Satisfied volunteers continue to be the most successful recruitment mechanism. Often new volunteers will come to the program after hearing an RSVP volunteer share stories of his or her experiences with RSVP.

RSVP brochures are available at many of these locations and events as well. RSVP also coordinates a weekly volunteer opportunities column in the local daily newspaper, The Marquette Mining Journal. A notice is printed weekly about current RSVP volunteer needs, whether for the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program, Friendly Visitors, Veterans History Project, Crafters or upcoming special projects. The four senior centers in Marquette County publish newsletters, which are distributed throughout the county, and often contain a call for new volunteers along with information about RSVP.

While Marquette County does not benefit from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds -- 93.8% of

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the county population is Caucasian according to 2011 U.S. Census figures -- volunteers of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, degree of English language proficiency and those with disabilities are invited and welcomed into the RSVP of Marquette County program. Those with disabilities often choose volunteer assignments they can complete from home, or in facilities that can accommodate any needs they have. Veterans continue to be an important section of our volunteer team -- they often work at organizations serving other veterans and at stations with their peers.

Volunteers are provided with educational and training opportunities, supplies, mileage reimbursement, excess accident and liability insurance and ongoing support from the RSVP office. RSVP has developed procedures and policies to ensure the success of special programming such as the RSVP Non-Emergency Medical Transportation and Friendly Visitor programs. Volunteers also take part in training specific to each opportunity provided by volunteer stations. Information about educational opportunities or training is provided for interested volunteers with emphasis on safety, aging issues, confidentiality and other aspects of human service.

RSVP encourages and helps facilitate open communication between the agencies requesting assistance for their senior clients, RSVP volunteers providing the service, and clients who receive the service -- RSVP and station staffs continually evaluate and develop projects to meet the needs of all involved.

Periodic satisfaction surveys provide volunteers with an opportunity to provide input about their service within the community through RSVP, how volunteering has affected their quality of life, as well as the chance to provide suggestions for improvements to the RSVP program. The most recent volunteer satisfaction survey was compiled June 2011 and indicated a general satisfaction with the RSVP of Marquette County program. Of the 68 volunteers who responded, 79.4% (54 people)

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indicated they were "extremely satisfied" with their volunteer experience; 17.6% (12) said they were "somewhat satisfied"; while 1.5% (1 person) indicated "extremely dissatisfied." Since becoming an RSVP volunteer, 41.2% (28 people) indicated their quality of life was "greatly improved"; 27.9% (19) checked "somewhat improved"; 22.1% (15) said their quality of life was "not changed"; and 1.5% (1 person) checked "slightly declined." Additionally, 94.1% (64) indicated their volunteer experience had a positive impact on their lives, while 2.9% (2) said volunteering did not provide a positive impact.

The primary recognition event takes place at the annual appreciation dinner in September. Those who give at least one hour of service each year are invited to the dinner. Volunteers who have achieved more than 4,000 hours of service are presented with the President's Volunteer Service Award Lifetime Award during a special ceremony. Anniversary pins are handed out to attendees celebrating their years of service with RSVP. A meal, entertainment, dessert, awards and door prizes are all part of the appreciation dinner. Volunteers receive a birthday card each year, and complimentary notes or comments from stations, RSVP staff and those they come into contact with are passed along to volunteers. Because of recent funding cuts, the RSVP Advisory Council has begun discussions about scaling back the appreciation dinner and instead offering two or three small recognition events each year. Smaller events that have been discussed include a simple picnic, ice cream social and coffee and cake events. No decisions have been made to change recognition plans for 2013.

Volunteer enrollment with RSVP has remained steady through the last several years. Most volunteers who leave the program pass away or move from the area. And the rate of volunteers leaving or "retiring" from volunteering has been matched by the number of new volunteers joining in recent years.

Program Management

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The RSVP Project Director provides direct programmatic oversight of program volunteers and communication with station representatives. The RSVP director, who has been with the project for two years, is also responsible for collecting data for measurement of outcomes and assuring the program follows Federal Register regulations. The Marquette County Aging Services (MCAS) Administrative Assistant, with more than 12 years of experience in the Aging Services department, helps provide coordination of volunteers and required record keeping. The Marquette County Finance Manager provides assistance with general program management, including fiscal oversight and resource deployment. The MCAS Administrative Assistant also completes financial support functions of bookkeeping, cash disbursements and record maintenance.

The financial resources of RSVP are reviewed monthly -- the county accounting department supplies detailed monthly expense and revenue reports which are reviewed by RSVP staff and the county finance manager. Any in-kind donations are logged on a monthly basis as well.

Stations that have a need for more volunteers contact RSVP, and staff refers to the volunteer database to find potential new volunteers. Volunteers joining the RSVP program are provided with information about opportunities that fulfill Healthy Futures focus area objectives, followed by Disaster and Veteran Support efforts. If these opportunities do not match the skills, talents and interests of the new volunteer, opportunities addressing other community priorities are reviewed until the volunteer chooses his or her placement(s).

As all volunteers are accounted for in the Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families, Disaster Services focus areas, and the Community Priorities area, at present there is no plan to graduate any volunteers or stations to meet CNCS focus areas. New volunteers will be encouraged to participate in

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opportunities that fill needs in the CNCS focus areas.

The State of Michigan's Office of Services to the Aging maintains Volunteer Information System (VIS) for Michigan programs. The VIS database tracks volunteer information, the number of volunteers, volunteer hours by time periods, volunteer stations, service categories and state emphasis areas, the number of volunteers per geographic area, etc. Volunteer hour data is entered monthly, and volunteer information is updated as needed. Reports can then be drafted from information entered into VIS as another tool to monitor the program.

Data pertaining to the transportation and companionship portions of the Healthy Futures performance measure will be collected each month from transporter log and volunteer hour sheets. Emergency food information will be collected from food bank and pantries on a monthly basis through direct contact with agency staff.

Organizational Capability

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Marquette County is sponsored by Marquette County Aging Services. The mission of Marquette County Aging Services is ensuring that county seniors have access to services and volunteer opportunities to serve, which can enhance and promote a better quality of life. RSVP assists the MCAS in meeting this mission by providing volunteers with meaningful volunteer opportunities. MCAS is a department within the governmental offices of Marquette County. The MCAS's current budget of \$1,042,406 provides a multitude of services for seniors and those who care for them who live in Marquette County. MCAS provides leadership and participates in forums that inform or reflect needs in the senior community.

The county has a strong financial management system in place, with administrative and financial

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oversight of the MCAS department and RSVP provided by the Marquette County Finance Manager. The Finance Manager is a certified public accountant with more than 30 years of experience in the financial field. She currently oversees a county budget of \$49 million, with federal funds averaging over \$5 million annually.

RSVP staff follows all Marquette County financial procedure and policies including those regarding budget control/expenditures, comprehensive purchasing, revenues, accounting and financial reporting, and use of county credit card. Policies are available on the country intranet and are referenced as needed. Employees from the accounting department and treasurer's office are also available to offer guidance. Personnel management issues that cannot be resolved in office are referred to the county human resource manager.

Marquette County implemented new internal procedures effective Jan. 1, 2011, in order to improve internal controls and efficiency of operations at the treasurer's office. All incoming deposits are promptly receipted in the general ledger software and the cash/checks are deposited daily at the bank. Each cashier balances his or her drawer daily, and then prepares a cash summary for the day. The summary with the daily reports, receipts and supporting documentation are then reviewed the next day by the chief deputy/treasurer.

All cash accounts and receivable/payable accounts are reviewed monthly, by the 15th of the following month, and any discrepancies are promptly reviewed and resolved. The reconciliations are reviewed by the chief deputy treasurer/county treasurer, independent of the preparer.

Financial support for RSVP of Marquette County includes a Michigan Office of Services to the Aging

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grant, which this program has successfully maintained since 1990. Support also comes from Marquette County, which has sponsored RSVP for more than 20 years, providing funding, office space, equipment, financial and administrative support, and oversight for the program. County staff also provides legal counsel, information technology, risk management and human resources support. The United Way and several businesses and service groups within Marquette County provide annual donations to RSVP. For the past several years the program has also received a portion of 2% gaming funds provided to the county in support of the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program. New fundraising opportunities and funding sources are continually sought.

RSVP has provided Non-Emergency Medical Transportation and Friendly Visitor companionship for seniors almost since the program began. As illustrated by the stable volunteer count, volunteer management continues to be a strength of the program. The program has used the same method of tracking volunteer data for more than 10 years, and a majority of volunteers report hours by the fifth day of each month. Those who do not send in hour sheets by the second full week of the month are contacted by a staff member or RSVP volunteer.

The 0.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) RSVP project director is responsible for reporting, volunteer and station coordination, special projects, recruitment, fundraising, as well as any other functions necessary to the program. RSVP is also staffed by a 0.5 FTE administrative assistant who, in addition to her RSVP duties, is also a 0.5 FTE administrative assistant for millage-funded services provided by the MCAS department. She has more than 12 years experience with the department, and has developed an excellent rapport with volunteers and personnel from volunteer stations.

RSVP activities are continually monitored by the RSVP Advisory Council which meets monthly to

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reviews volunteer hours, number of new volunteers, areas served, upcoming events and special projects, as well as feedback from stations and volunteers. As many of the Advisory Council members are also volunteers, they are also able to discuss organizational needs from the perspective of the senior volunteers served.

Council members are very active and assist with a variety of functions including policy and procedure planning, volunteer and advisory council recruitment and fundraising. Advisory council members and other volunteers are also available to help in the RSVP office as needed.

The RSVP project director attends monthly meetings of the Marquette County Senior Provider's Network and the Marquette County Aging Services Advisory Council, and maintains regular contact with volunteer stations. RSVP staff members prepare monthly project reports for review by the RSVP Advisory Council and an annual program summary is also presented to the Marquette County Board of Commissioners.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A