

SUMMARY REVIEWER COMMENTS

2013 RSVP Competition

Legal Applicant: Northwest Community Services Agency

Applicant ID: 13SR143988

Project Name: Northwest RSVP2

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from only the external reviewer on the blended panel. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

External Reviewer's Summary Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant provides ample information about recognition and retention plans/activities, including following-up with volunteers who are no longer asking for assignments and providing problem resolution.

The application includes careful consideration of how to ensure management of volunteer stations to meet compliance with RSVP program regulations including how to remove volunteers who are noncompliant, distribution of the RSVP Handbook to each volunteer, quarterly onsite programmatic monitoring and keeping station managers abreast of any changes to regulations.

Weaknesses:

The application identifies other community needs of hunger, access to medical and mental health providers, maintaining independence, etc., but again, does not provide specific information stating how these needs were assessed and provides little information for how the needs will be met. Additionally, the work plans do not provide sufficient detail to support that these needs are unmet. For instance, Performance Measure 1.1, Distributing Information, the applicant states, "Direct referrals to get services such as food stamps, medical assistance, social security or doctor/dental." No information is provided to explain who, where, and how this activity will be performed.

The applicant connects the three major elements in the Primary Focus Area, but the third need ("households frequently need assistance in rehabbing/weatherizing their homes") was not included in the applicant's work plans. While the applicant's veterans and military family members do receive some services from the applicant such as from the food pantry, Meals on Wheels, and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), no significant activity is provided.

The applicant states that its volunteers receive two applicant-hosted seminars covering customer service and leadership skills, as well as training associated with their job placements/work stations; no other information is provided making it unclear as to how the proposed training activities relate to services activities.

While the applicant's work plans state that 21% of the unduplicated volunteers are included in the work plans, not all Performance Measures in the selected Focus Areas include selection of outcomes.

The application does not provide actual job descriptions. Descriptions of past work experience of the key staff are provided.

No explanation is provided in the budget narrative as to how some costs such as meals and insurance were calculated.

No explanation is provided in the budget as to why criminal background check costs are not included.