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Executive Summary

An estimated 127 RSVP volunteers will serve. They will impact our community through a network of three volunteer stations that focus on aging in place through our R-U-OK? Program, which assists seniors in living independently by filling transportation needs as well as companionship and phone support for the homebound. Our Handyman Brigade station accomplishes this objective as well by making light home repairs for the disabled, frail elderly, and other senior citizens. Our local food pantry is manned and under the direction of RSVP volunteers, serving over 10,000 needy individuals each year. The primary focus area of this project is HEALTHY FUTURES. At the end of the three-year grant, over 10,000 residents will have experienced increased food security and 500 elderly and/or homebound seniors will be better able to live independently in their homes. The CNCS federal investment of \$48489.00 will be supplemented by \$71000.00 in non-federal resources, including cash support and in-kind resources through our sponsor and local government agencies.

Strengthening Communities

Hancock County Mississippi is nestled along the scenic gulf coast, encompassing approximately 435 square miles in the western portion of the state. The diverse population of just over 40,000 residents enjoys scenic beaches, hunting and fishing, and access to nearby New Orleans's sports, cultural and community events. The quirky art culture of the City of Bay St. Louis has been recaptured in the rebuilding process and is flourishing with the Main Street USA Program. The City of Waveland continues massive rebuilding efforts, post Hurricane Katrina, having been literally wiped off the map. Industry and tourism fuel the economy, especially the Stennis Space Center. These two closely knit, intertwined towns, as well as the rural portion of the county, embody small town living at its best. The beauty of the area is sometimes challenged by the massive hurricanes that have set a bull eyes on Hancock County. In fact many of the seniors that participate in the RSVP Hancock County Program will tell you that they have been through three major hurricanes in their lives, and some will even tell

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you that they have lived through the loss three homes due to Hurricanes; the Hurricane of 1947 (Category 5), Hurricane Camille (Category 5), and Hurricane Katrina. The resiliency of our senior population is inspiring and will be a cornerstone to help Hancock County create a healthy future for all seniors in the county.

Hancock County is still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. Population is about 2% higher than it was in 2000. Between 2000 and 2005, population was growing by about 2% per year in the county. In 2010, about 43,000 people called Hancock County home. Population in the city of Bay St. Louis and the City of Waveland is still lower than it was in 2005, when Hurricane Katrina struck. As predicted, the population that is still living in both of these cities tends to be older than and not as prosperous as the population average in 2000. The population over the age of 65 had increased from 14.0 of the population in 2000 to 15.2% of the population in 2010. Fully, 15.9% of the County's population lived below the poverty level in 2010, including 412 senior citizens.

The labor force is currently at 20,500 with over 10% unemployment rate. Small businesses flourish here, as there is little in the way of mainstream shopping. The ethnic makeup is currently at 88% white with the remaining 12% a mix of black, Asian and Hispanic. This makes diversity in our program challenging, but we are exploring new ways to add incentive to that sector. Census figures show that the median age is rising coast wide and especially in Hancock County. Since 2000, the median age increased to 41.8 from 39.1 for the white population and to 33.7 from 31.1 black for the black population. These figures indicate that our senior population will continue to grow rapidly, enabling our program to continue to have a pool of volunteers to recruit from, but also indicate that there will be a need for our healthy senior population to provide support and companionship to our frail senior population.

Hancock County RSVP Advisory Council is made up of 25 community and business leaders, who support, promote and recognize our senior volunteers. Members also include representation from all 3

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branches of city and county government. These members assist in procurement of cash support and In-Kind funding. The Advisory Council is an active and involved group - they help guide program initiatives, offer ideas and resources and annually assess the results. As well respected community leaders, our council members offer our program access into many social, charitable and community organizations, where they promote our volunteers as well as our stations. Our business community assisted us in financing our annual recognition dinner this year, after the budget cuts were implemented. Business leaders, elected officials and many others donated food and money, as well as volunteering to cook and serve, during our luncheon.

The Hancock County RSVP director sits on the steering committee of our local Excel by 5 early childhood education initiative, the S.A.L.T. and Triad Council of Hancock County, and is co-chair of a county wide non-profit coalition, which offers networking and support of our program as well as opening the door to new stations. This coalition provides innovation and new ideas, as well as the opportunity to share effective practices. It has opened doors for our program and helped us integrate our senior volunteers into service programs, partnering with other nonprofits. Excel by 5, our interfaith disaster and recovery services, The United Way volunteer center and many other programs have helped us grow and expand. This coalition meets quarterly and works together on many community events and participates in raising community awareness of all the local non-profit programs available in our area, as well as capacity building, community support and public awareness. RSVP, Excel by 5, and the United Way, along with the Hancock County Leadership Organization, put together a WALK IN MY SHOES workshop for our local business, civic, nonprofit and government officials to promote Excel by 5. This program has been requested by the business community, to be repeated in the coming year. It allowed participants to gain insight into what young single mothers and grandparents raising grandchildren go through when attempting to access social services. We utilized RSVP volunteers to create a resource directory, based on the findings of the

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workshop.

RSVP Hancock County utilizes our local media to promote and recognize our program and volunteers. We invite the media to our events, write up newspaper articles and send photographs and announcements in to them as well. RSVP has a face book page as well as a website to promote the program and communicate information to the community. The chamber of commerce, Tourism department and community coalitions promote and support our program through their newsletters, email blasts, websites and face book pages as well. RSVP's volunteers and staff are involved in many social organizations and we are proud that virtually all of our service funded stations are headed up by volunteer directors who are also RSVP members. RSVP uses volunteer recruiting ambassadors in all of our stations and has ambassadors present at the many special events where we have booths and promotion tables. RSVP participates in many community functions as well as providing volunteers to assist during the event.

RSVP Hancock County institutes a major program initiative every year, involving the Advisory council, station managers, other nonprofits and our volunteers in the planning process. Discussions with community leaders, non-profits, business leaders and our volunteers help to gauge the community participation and response before the programming is finalized. Goals are defined and RSVP strives to form new program initiatives that encompass activities and service areas that have not been utilized in the past and are impactful and meaningful to our volunteers. Seniors helping seniors live independently, mobilizing resources for children in foster care and the Excel by 5 program through Mississippi State University are some of the recent additions to our program that our volunteers and our community have asked for and participated in developing. Our SALT council is working at implementing the YELLOW DOT program - similar to files of life, based on the State of Alabama's program. We plan on hosting a town hall meeting next month to gauge the public need for a neighborhood watch program. The INFINITY Space Center at Stennis Space Center has requested

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RSVP volunteers when they are open this spring. Volunteers will act as tour guides and museum guides. The center is projected to create heavy growth in the area of tourism for our county. RSVP volunteers assist at the State Welcome Center several days a week as well.

RSVP addresses community awareness through use of the media, mass mailings, volunteer signs and t-shirts, our website, newsletters, our annual Senior Fair and our nonprofit coalition meetings and networking booths. Our advisory council president is the publisher of our local newspaper and has been invaluable in assisting us with advertising and recognition.

Service Activities Primary Focus Area: RSVP Hancock County will implement four service activities in the primary focus area that will have National Performance measure outputs or outcomes. These four service activities include: Hancock County Food Pantry, the "R-U-OK?" program, "Handy Man Brigade Program" and disaster assistance, which encompasses the manning of American Red Cross Storm Shelters. Three of these programs address the Healthy Future Focus Area and one program addresses the Disaster Services Focus Area.

RSVP Volunteers administer programs which collect, organize and distribute emergency food through the Hancock County Food Pantry. The pantry director is an RSVP Volunteer. He manages other RSVP Volunteers who secure food through donations and food drives and distribute the food to eligible clients. RSVP Volunteers determine eligibility based upon approved policies and maintain a client tracking database. This database will be used to determine the number of individuals receiving emergency food from the food pantry. Additionally, RSVP volunteers will implement a survey to track the number of individuals that report increased food security for themselves and their children. This survey will be implemented during in-take.

100 RSVP volunteers participate in the "R-U-OK?" program by providing transportation, phone support and companionship to 400 homebound or frail seniors, enabling them to live independently and age in place in their own homes. Service hours and mileage are tracked and recorded into our

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software program. In addition, RSVP strives to combat isolation in our own senior volunteers by including many social components in our volunteer service activities. These include game days, serving home cooked meals during service activities, phone checks by staff, and birthday/get-well/sympathy cards sent to our volunteers.

RSVP Volunteers support the American Red Cross by staffing a disaster evacuation shelter in Hancock County. The RSVP Volunteers participate in all mandatory Red Cross training and are available to staff the shelter when called upon by the Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Red Cross. In this capacity, RSVP volunteers sign in all shelter evacuees, communicate with Red Cross to request meal delivery, and enforce shelter rules during the emergency event. RSVP Volunteers will assist with post-disaster housing transition during severe events. This year, RSVP Volunteers were called to action during Hurricane Isaac, and shelter was opened for nearly one week due to the slow moving storm. Veterans and military families participate in two programs implemented by RSVP Hancock County. These two programs include the "R-U-OK?" Program in which volunteers contact and follow up with homebound senior citizens in Hancock County and the "Handy Man Brigade" Program, in which volunteers perform light home repairs for people requesting assistance. These two programs do not specifically target military families or veterans, but veterans and military families have utilized these programs in the past. Additionally, Hancock County has a USO station, with one volunteer who regularly serves at this station.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP offers workshops and training events throughout the year to all of our seniors to further enhance their knowledge and quality of experience. Training includes workshop sessions with SHIPPS (Area Agency on Aging), disaster preparedness (American Red Cross), and information sessions with SALT and Triad, AARP, Excel by 5, and many other stations, as well as our R-U-OK? Program. Training in the form of meetings and workshops, is offered to our Volunteer Ambassadors

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as well. This training is provided so that RSVP volunteers can go out into the community to recruit; volunteers can act as hosts at health and senior fair booths, and volunteers can recruit new volunteers at their stations. Staff training and communication is cornerstone to the organization and we are always exploring ways to more efficiently and effectively manage our program. RSVP invites station managers, volunteers, and other nonprofits to attend workshops, initiative planning sessions and meetings. These events encourage our volunteers to take on leadership roles at their stations and within our organization, and allow staff and station managers to gauge skill level and interest of the volunteer. Every effort is made to insure that our volunteers make the most impact possible in our community. RSVP encourages our volunteers to contact us if an opportunity in the community exists that they would be interested in pursuing, as well as, encouraging our volunteers to challenge themselves in broadening their horizons and trying new stations.

Our RSVP volunteer coordinator (an RSVP member now that we no longer have the budget funds to hire staff) makes phone contact on a regular basis with our volunteers, to assess needs and communicate information. We utilize our newsletters and special events notices, as well as many social functions, to maintain contact as well. RSVP Hancock County makes special efforts to enhance the social atmosphere of special events, including home cooked meals, social time and recognition of efforts. Thank you notes, sympathy cards and annual birthday cards are sent to all of our volunteers. Photos of our volunteers engaged in service are sent to the newspaper for added recognition of service. The media is also invited to numerous events and functions.

RSVP volunteers are vocal about the fulfillment of their service and staff contacts volunteers after any new placement, whether it is a new volunteer or a seasoned one. Efforts are made to obtain feedback on all volunteer service, via phone and in - person communication. Volunteers are encouraged to share their experiences with staff and station managers, as well as our advisory council members. Hancock County RSVP holds an annual volunteer recruitment drive, as well as actively recruiting

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volunteers at local events, stations and in the local media. We host a monthly "bring a friend and a dessert" Game Day to enhance socialization and recruit new volunteers. We also utilize the existing volunteers to recruit and spread the word amongst their peers. Our volunteer numbers are increasing at a steady rate. We are still at a disadvantage since Hurricane Katrina ~ many of our volunteers have moved away and do not plan on returning to our community. Our retention rate is 95 %, primarily due to death and illness.

RSVP has a diverse group of volunteers which reflect the social, cultural, economic and racial diversity of our community. Like many coastal communities, Hancock County has a large segment of the population that moved to the community to retire. Many of volunteers are retired military or federal employees. To recruit additional military retirees, RSVP Director will meet with the County Veteran's Affairs Officer and ask the director to alert military retirees of the opportunities offered through RSVP. Additionally, the director will submit requests for volunteers to be included in the Keesler Air Force Base Retiree bulletin and the Navy Retiree bulletin for Stennis Space Center and the Gulfport Seabee Base.

RSVP Hancock County hosts an annual volunteer recognition dinner to recognize all of our hardworking seniors, as well as awarding our life time achievers, special groups and individuals. Station supervisors also participate in our recognition event, handing out awards and prizes. Our Advisory Council members and elected officials serve lunch during recognition.

RSVP utilizes our quarterly newsletter to recognize volunteers and stations and encourage our volunteers to try new volunteer activities. For Senior Corps week, RSVP and our stations hand out awards to the member of the year, new members, lifetime achievers, and spotlight awards. We also sent out a special newsletter announcing the winners, as well as had the information published in the local newspaper.

Program Management

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RSVP Hancock County ensures that management of volunteer stations in compliance with RSVP program regulations and applicable laws by requiring monthly visits to the station by the RSVP director. The RSVP director has a checklist of items which are discussed at each station during these meetings. Stations which are managed by RSVP volunteers are contacted more frequently to provide support to the organization and to ensure compliance. In addition to the monthly visits, RSVP Advisory Council Members perform annual assessments of the stations. Advisory Council members assess the stations on level of satisfaction with the program and volunteers.

In an effort to recruit stations, RSVP Hancock County formed a county wide non-profit coalition several years ago, which now meets annually to network, communicate and assess community needs, areas of service and gaps in services. The coalition hosts volunteer job fairs and other events as well. RSVP networks with other SENIOR CORPS programs along the gulf coast. This has opened the door to a variety of information about our community, enabled us to form new partnerships and expand our stations, as well as create new opportunities for our volunteers. Following these meetings, our volunteers, advisory council members and station supervisors are invited to attend our new initiative planning sessions, where feedback, questions and level of interest are encouraged. We feel this strategy helps guide us in not only providing the most meaningful volunteer experience to our seniors, but also assisting us in meeting community needs. This process also insures that our volunteers feel involved and committed to new projects, as they have helped form and develop them.

RSVP Hancock County had to graduate volunteers out of the monthly mail-out service activity that we had in place for many years. This station was ideal for introducing new volunteers into service because they had the opportunity to meet and socialize over the meal that followed these activities. At the beginning of 2012, the station went all electronic, and therefore the service activity was discontinued. RSVP took the opportunity to replace these particular positives by hosting a quarterly game day. Volunteers bring a dessert and a friend to game day, allowing RSVP Hancock County

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another recruiting opportunity with zero expense involved to the program and the opportunity for our volunteers to connect with and to socialize with their peers. This activity alleviates the sense of isolation so many seniors live with. At Game Day, the RSVP director meets with volunteers to gauge their interest in available stations, or works with the volunteer to find a new station that is a fit for their skills and their desired volunteer activity.

RSVP will enhance their existing reporting and assessment procedures to document the National Performance Measures outcomes and outputs that are identified in this application. Currently, the director meets monthly with all stations to determine compliance and satisfaction, along with any additional need for support. Many of the stations already provide this information to RSVP Hancock County, with their monthly report of volunteer activities. For those stations which do not report monthly, such as special events, special projects or blood drives, the director will request from the station documentation on the performance measure outcomes and outputs on a quarterly basis. Where the outcome or output is designated as volunteers or volunteer hours, RSVP will utilize VOLUNTEER REPORTER SOFTWARE to track volunteer service hours.

An annual financial audit of RSVP Hancock County is performed through our sponsor, The City of Waveland. The results of the audit is reported to the Mayor and Board of Alderman in a public meeting and the results of the audit is submitted with the RSVP annual federal grant renewal, as part of our accountability process. RSVP uses QUICKBOOKS to manage our finances, track the federal funds and track the in-kind and cash support. A professor with the Home Extension Department at Mississippi State University Professor maintains and updates our QUICKBOOKS and budget program at no cost to RSVP Hancock County. Hancock County RSVP follows CNCS guidelines, and program operations rules and regulations. Reporting is done in a timely manner. Our policy for distributing funds is in accordance with the City of Waveland's bi-monthly process of board approval for all income and outflow of funds.

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The RSVP director actively pursues other grant opportunities through Mississippi Commission on Volunteer Service, United Way and other agencies. The director and advisory council members pursue cash support through sponsor and local governments, as well as In-Kind support for space, utilities and van insurance, funding and assisting us to find ways to help fund recognition dinners, find new funding sources and recover from our budget cuts. All of our recognition costs for 2011 were raised by our board and plans for a repeat are in the works for 2012. The director attends training sessions and reports back to the Advisory Board and City of Waveland Mayor and Board of Aldermen.

Organizational Capability

Hancock County RSVP has been in existence in Hancock County for the past 38 years. The Hancock County RSVP organization maintains one full-time paid staff member who is the director of the organization and has two RSVP volunteers that share the position of the volunteer coordinator. The director has been employed by RSVP for the past 12 years, and became director in January 2009, upon the retirement of the previous director. The director was the full time volunteer coordinator prior to the promotion. The director is responsible for managing the federal funds, grant writing and administration of the grants, maintaining financial records and operating the QUICKBOOKS system of financial records. The director is responsible for recruiting stations, recruiting and training volunteers, and developing and implementing programs to retain volunteers and public and community relations. Two RSVP volunteers fill the roles of volunteer coordinator. One RSVP volunteer is primarily responsible for scheduling volunteers, sending out birthday cards and providing other scheduling and administrative support as needed basis. A second RSVP volunteer inputs hours and maintains logs of volunteer service, using VOLUNTEER REPORTER SOFTWARE PROGRAM. Both volunteers work at the office on a part-time basis.

The City of Waveland provides RSVP their offices, conference room and meeting facilities, and storage space in the Waveland Community Center. The City of Waveland provides the utilities for this

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building, and maintains the building, including cleaning and all maintenance costs. This historic building was renovated after Hurricane Katrina and it is the only public historic building left within the City of Waveland. RSVP moved into these offices in 2009, after spending many years housed in an office trailer located in the temporary Hancock County government complex. Besides a newly renovated location, RSVP owns a van used to transport volunteers. The van was donated to RSVP by the City of Demopolis, AL. The City of Waveland maintains insurance on the van. In addition to the van, RSVP owns its own furniture, computers (desk top and laptop), and a copier/printer. RSVP maintains the licenses for all software on its computers.

RSVP maintains detailed policies and procedures, job descriptions and financial accounting procedures. The City of Waveland became the sponsor of RSVP in 1994, and since that time, RSVP adopted many of the City's procedures. All checks issued by RSVP are required to be approved by the City of Waveland Board of Aldermen. Checks and Invoices for services are placed on the City docket after review by the City Clerk. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen review the docket and the docket is approved, approved with restrictions, or disapproved at the two meetings each month. Actions taken by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen are documented in the minutes of the meeting. Once the items are approved the check is signed by the Director of RSVP and the Mayor of the City of Waveland. Hancock County RSVP has an active Advisory Council, consisting of 18 community members. The community members include elected officials, and non-profit and business community and civic leaders. The Mayor of the City of Waveland is also a member of the Advisory Committee. The volunteers that serve on the Advisory Committee have been active members of RSVP for more than 25 years. The Advisory Committee meets quarterly and RSVP's staff reports on the work of the volunteers, the stations served, the budget, and training programs. The Advisory council is extremely involved in the program, and RSVP staff is often in contact with them between meetings to ask advice, support, leadership, recognition and participation in many functions throughout the year. The

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Advisory Council evaluates the program annually with volunteer satisfaction surveys, involvement in annual program initiatives, workshops and training sessions, and quarterly reporting and feedback sessions. They, as well as our sponsor, are involved in charting our future growth and planning for the future.

The RSVP Director co-chairs a nonprofit coalition in our County and the nonprofit coalition workshops are invaluable in gauging community involvement and community need. Their insight and input assist RSVP in keeping our goals of volunteer satisfaction and community need by providing insight and service information to our program. This year we are implementing the University of Wisconsin Extension nonprofit management self-evaluation plan www.uwex.edu. Director and advisory council members are looking forward to evaluating the results and utilizing them in our upcoming year.

Hancock County RSVP is a well-known and respected member of both the business and non-profit community. RSVP enjoys membership in many community and charitable organizations. The director is honored to often be invited to attend or speak at local functions. RSVP has earned the reputation of dependable service, innovative project design and a well - managed program of community participation and volunteer service. RSVP volunteers are known for their leadership, excellent customer service and dependability. RSVP is proud of our many volunteers who manage several stations, acting as director(s) of the Hancock County Food Pantry, the Hancock County Medical Center Ladies Auxiliary, the Hancock County SALT Council, The Hancock County Historical Society, the Diamondhead Dancers and the AARP program. RSVP volunteers that manage these organizations have earned recognition for their leadership and management, creating first class service organizations. In the past, RSVP volunteers hosted the first NASA volunteer station, RSVP volunteers managed the local American Red Cross office, RSVP volunteers assisted the local court systems, and RSVP volunteers managed several local museums. Our long history of an innovative

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and successful volunteer program is evident in our low staff turnover, a long term volunteer base and station base.

RSVP maintains a robust management system and has experience managing federal grants. This RSVP program has been providing effective volunteer management services for 39 years. Since 1994, the program has been sponsored by the City of Waveland, adopting city policies on purchasing, notifications of meetings and personnel management. These policies ensure that RSVP can effectively manage federal grant funds.

RSVP will sustain the proposed non-federal share for this program, continuing its relationship with the City of Waveland and the Hancock County Board of Supervisors. RSVP Hancock County is sponsored by the City of Waveland and also receives cash support through our county government.

Both entities are very supportive and are assisting in our search for more funding.

Other

n/a

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

n/a