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Executive Summary

TVCCA's Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Southern New London County, Windham and part of Tolland Counties proposes to have 333 RSVP volunteers actively serving by year end March 2016. The 333 is 90% of the number of volunteers listed in Appendix A, Connecticut Opportunity #6. TVCCA, is seeking the funding amount of \$111,074. 127 volunteers will serve in the Primary Focus Area (38%) TVCCA's RSVP Primary Focus Area - Healthy Futures will support independent living by providing companionship and respite care, grocery shopping assistance and Meals on Wheels delivery for frail seniors and caregivers of homebound seniors and will have 67 of the 127 volunteers serving in these outcome based performance measures workplans. The areas to be served will be located in Southern New London County Windham and a part of Tolland County.

Through a network of approximately 56 volunteers stations with signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) the RSVP will assign volunteers to serve in activities that align with the primary focus areas , other focus areas, Capacity Building and the community Priority area.

Volunteer stations will include: Adult Day Care; Chamber of Commerce; Community Development Non Profits; Congregate/Meals on Wheels; Day Care/Pre Elementary;Elementary; Food Banks/Gleaning Programs; Head Start; Hospitals; Multi-Purpose/Senior Centers; Non Head Start (education focused); Parks /Recreational Agencies; Service Organizations; Public School; Thrift Shop; and Total number of Faith based Stations.

The CNS federal investment of \$111,074 will be supplemented by ongoing funding proposals to the Connecticut Department of Social Services; Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging; the City of New London; the United Way of South Eastern Connecticut; and local foundations such as the Pfizer Foundation, Connecticut Light & Power, etc.

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Strengthening Communities

1. Program Design

(a) Strengthening Communities

Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. (TVCCA) currently provides RSVP services in Eastern Connecticut's New London, Windham and parts of Tolland Counties. The absolute number and percentage of residents in New London and Windham Counties that are age 60 and older have increased over the years. Extrapolating from online CT Department of Public Health age demographics, there were 44,689 and 17,761 persons age 60 and over residing in New London County and Windham County respectively in mid-year 2002; by midyear 2009, those totals had increased to 52,198 and 20870 respectively. More illustrative, the percentage of persons age 60 and over relative to the total population in each county over the same time period had increased from 17% in New London County to 19.6% and from 16% in Windham County to 17.8%. We expect that this aging trend in the general population has continued, if not increased.

The following 2010 statistics compiled from the Meals on Wheels web site clearly describe a community need -- food security especially among seniors - for which demand is increasing more rapidly than funding and service levels can keep up with and, thus, is unmet. We assume that many of these statistics have worsened in the last two years.

"In 2010, 14.85% of seniors, or more than 1 in 7 experienced some form of food insecurity. By comparison, Ziliak et al. (2008) reported that as of 2005, 1 in 9 seniors or 11.4% faced the threat of hunger. From 2001 to 2010, the number of seniors experiencing the threat of hunger has increased by 78%. Since the onset of the recession in 2007 through 2010, the number of seniors threatened by hunger increased by 34%." "Seniors age 80 and older were less likely to be food insecure than 60-69 year olds.

Seniors living in a rural areas were more likely to be at risk of hunger. Seniors in non-metro areas

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faced the threat of hunger that was significantly higher in 2010 than seniors in metro areas." Large tracts of New London County and especially Windham County encompassed by Connecticut Opportunity #6 in Appendix A of this NOFO are definitely non-metro if not indeed rural. "The hunger threat among divorced, widowed or separated seniors was two and a half times greater than for married seniors. About 29% (11.3 million) non-institutionalized older persons live alone (8.1 million women; 3.2 million men)."

Exacerbating these findings, the U.S. Census Bureau released during 2011 a Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) of seniors which takes into account regional variations in the living costs, non-cash benefits received and non-discretionary expenditures. The SPM does not replace the official poverty measure. Nonetheless, the SPM shows a poverty level for older persons of 15.9%, an increase of over 75% over the official rate of 9.0% mainly due to out-of-pocket medical expenses.

While "enduring effects with respect to food insecurity for older Americans has been more severe than for the general population, ... there was also a 39% increase in the general U.S. population facing the threat of hunger during the decade from 2001 -- 2010. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported in September 2011 that 12.7% of Connecticut households did not have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living in 2010. That represents a 44 percent increase from the USDA 2009 report. The same report also said that the percentage of households nationwide experiencing food insecurity remained essentially unchanged from 2009 to 2010. The Feeding America/Food Banks web site dated 2012 states that the food insecurity rate in Connecticut has risen further to 13.7% of households. The same web site reports more alarmingly that food insecurity for Connecticut's children has risen to 18.8%. Likely deepening this threat, the Bureau of Labor Statistics recently stated that food inflation was 2.6% from June 2011 to June 2012. A Bloomberg News report released October 4, 2012 reported that the United Nations' Food & Agriculture Organization stated that "world food prices rose in September 2012 to the highest in six months as dairy and meat producers passed on higher

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feed costs to consumers". "The FAO dairy-price index jumped 6.9% ...since August 2012, the biggest advance since April 2010. "U.S. Class III milk futures gained 5.6%...last month (September 2012) after climbing 7.9% in August 2012" and "up 23% since the start of the year". The index for meat prices rose 2.1%" since August 2012". "The index for grain prices in July 2012 surged 17%, the biggest jump since February 2008." Previous to this September 2012 report, the Bureau of Labor Statistics stated that food inflation was expected to rise another 3% -- 4% in 2013. That projection may need to be revised given the September 2012 report, but we are led to conclude that the rate of food insecurity in Connecticut and nationwide will likely continue to climb --perhaps rampantly.

Connecticut is considered to be one of the least impoverished states in the country because its statistics are heavily skewed by relative prosperity in the western and southwestern parts of the state. The overall State unemployment rate was 9.0% in August 2012 (up from 5.8% in August 2008).

Considering that

this "official" unemployment percentage does not include individuals who have used up all unemployment benefits and/or given up seeking new employment, likely the real percentage of unemployed should be increased by at least 7% -- 10% statewide as well as the counties' and municipalities percentages of unemployed that are noted in the following paragraphs. However, regional conditions can and do vary especially in New London and Windham Counties which are a mix of old mill towns and rural areas in Eastern Connecticut. The Connecticut Department of Labor pegged the unemployment rate for Windham County in August 2012 at 10.4% (up from 6.5% in August 2008). In August 2012, the county's main city, Windham, experienced 12.5% unemployment and Killingly and Plainfield each experienced 11.3% unemployment. These three municipalities were once thriving mill (textiles, etc) and/or factory towns. The unemployment rate for New London County was 9.2% in August 2012 (up from 5.7% in August 2008) despite being buoyed by the presence of two major casinos -- Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun -- near/in Norwich as well as a major U.S.

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naval submarine base; submarine contractor Electric Boat; pharmaceutical giant Pfizer headquarters; and, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in the New London/Groton area. In August 2012, the City of New London experienced 12.7% unemployment; neighboring town of Groton experienced 9.3% unemployment; the City of Norwich experienced 9.8% unemployment; and, neighboring mill town Sprague experienced 11.4% unemployment. Furthermore, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Norwich -- New London, CT region (i.e. New London County) had the fourth highest percentage rate in the U.S. at 4.3% of job losses between April 2011 -- April 2012. The area lost 5600 jobs -- down to a total of 123,900. That brought the total of lost jobs in the area since 2008 to more than 13,000. No other region in Connecticut had net job losses over that time period.

Alarming, Connecticut Voices for Children, a New Haven-based nonprofit public policy group reported on August 29, 2012 that 62% of Connecticut workers age 55 and older who were unemployed and seeking jobs had been unemployed for more than 26 weeks. The report further stated that Connecticut "had the sixth-highest long-term unemployment rate nationally" among workers age 55 and older.

Equally illustrative of disparities in Connecticut are the following median hourly wage levels compiled by the Connecticut Department of Labor as of the first quarter of 2012: statewide median hourly wage was \$20.13; median hourly wage in the Willimantic/Killingly (Windham County's main urban areas) labor market was \$16.88; and, median hourly wage in the New London/Norwich labor market was \$17.26. Windham County and New London County occupy the two lowest median hourly wage levels of the eight labor market areas tracked in Connecticut. This has been the counties' consistent ranking for years.

The demographics noted in these preceding pages demonstrate that the community needs related to the Healthy Futures category clearly exist in our geographic service area; are increasing steadily and sometimes rampantly; and, thus, are currently unmet. 127 (38%) of TVCCA's 333 (90% of 370 target

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in year three) RSVP volunteers will be deployed in year one in several types of activities/stations to address these needs as our Primary Focus Area. 24 unduplicated RSVP volunteers will assist TVCCA's Meals on Wheels Program (MOW) on average three days per week picking up freshly prepared meals at our Bozrah, CT commissary and delivering them to eligible homebound seniors in the MOW's service area - much of which mirrors the RSVP's service area. Currently, a lesser number of RSVP volunteers assist MOW on a fluctuating schedule. The MOW is also a program undergoing dire financial constraints. Thus, the MOW operation currently has wait lists in numerous towns throughout Windham County as well as Montville in New London County. Commitment of 24 RSVP volunteers three days per week to this station could/should be a significant enhancement to MOW's capacity to hopefully fill the unmet need and help serve more homebound seniors than MOW's current funding allows. These RSVP volunteers will receive orientation and training from MOW's paid staff members. In

addition to RSVP oversight and management, the volunteers will be managed and instructed ultimately by MOW management, thus, ensuring that management of the volunteer stations are in compliance with RSVP regulations and vice versa. Importantly, MOW staff members and RSVP volunteers who deliver the meals are trained to play a key role by observing/evaluating the elderly participants' health and cognitive status; reporting emergencies or need for further professional observation; and, at least providing the elderly a small amount of verbal and social interaction to enliven their day. In numerous situations, the delivery person may be the only person that a homebound senior may see and communicate with for an entire day.

TVCCA has successfully operated Meals On Wheels (MOW) for nearly forty years. In the last fiscal year, MOW delivered 319,497 nutritionally balanced meals to the homes of 1426 eligible, homebound seniors aged 60 years and older residing in the 39 municipalities that it serves throughout New London, Windham

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Counties and a part of Tolland County -- a service area spanning approximately 1300 square miles and requiring 51 delivery routes in order to make deliveries in a timely, efficient manner that importantly preserves the quality and safety of freshly prepared food. Complementing stationing 24 RSVP volunteers with our MOW operation, the RSVP will also deploy 24 unduplicated volunteers to assist senior clients that are still able and desiring to prepare meals but perhaps are not mobile or ambulatory enough to shop for themselves. These volunteers will develop a listing for the general purpose of facilitating grocery shopping needs for the disabled senior. The volunteers will visit clients at least bi-weekly; assist with planning a meal and shopping list; sort coupons to minimize costs; perform shopping activities; assist the client with putting groceries in proper storage; review and justify receipts with the client to verify costs and change due; and, request client signature verifying satisfaction with the service provided.

As with RSVP volunteers stationed with our MOW component, these volunteers will also be trained to play an additional key role by observing/evaluating the elderly participants' health and cognitive status; reporting emergencies or need for further professional observation; and, at least providing the elderly a small amount of verbal and social interaction to enliven their day.

RSVP volunteers' involvement in both of the above stations and activities relates directly to National Performance Measure Output (NPMO) H8: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food...or other services that allow them to live independently; and Optional Outcome H9: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support.

Concurrently, 19 other unduplicated volunteers will be matched with primary caregivers who are in need of respite services from living with and attending to homebound older adults who are trying to remain living at home. Eligible caregivers will be identified to receive assistance by TVCCA's Senior

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Nutrition Program (Meals on Wheels plus Senior Congregate Site workers and volunteers); municipal agents for the elderly; and, personnel of local chapters of the Alzheimer's Association. RSVP volunteers will provide basic household services, prepare light meals, etc, but the volunteers primary focus will be providing companionship for the homebound older adult while the caregiver has an opportunity to have a social outlet and/or take care of their own personal needs and business. Volunteers will provide respite care one day a week based on the caregiver's duration need for respite.

RSVP volunteers' involvement in these stations and activities relates directly to NPMO H13: Number of caregivers of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving respite services; and Optional Outcome H14: Number of caregivers of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support. 30 unduplicated volunteers will serve at six sites that function as food pantries or distribution facilities for low-income families and individuals at risk of food insecurity. The RSVP Program Director projects that a minimum of 2500 families and individuals will be served. Evidencing this projection, the main food bank in the City of New London area -- Gemma Moran -- reported that they provided food for 18,000 in all of 2011. Between January 2012 through August 2012, Gemma Moran had already provided food for 20,000. The volunteers will assist unloading deliveries; sorting products; stocking shelves; processing client referrals to receive food items; packing orders; and, essentially performing various duties to sustain the operation(s). The volunteers will serve two days weekly. Younger, healthier and more energetic volunteers will be welcome to serve five days per week. Also, 30 unduplicated volunteers will coordinate and/or physically staff a minimum of six food drives each year at various locations in the RSVP's service area. The volunteers will seek out partnerships with local grocery stores, schools, Boy and Girl Scout troops, businesses, etc. to assist with marketing, donating goods and money, collecting goods and delivering/storing food collected at local food banks like Gemma Moran. RSVP volunteers' involvement in either food pantry or food drive stations and activities relate

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directly to NPMO H11: Number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger; and Optional Outcome H14: Number of individuals that reported increased food security of themselves and children (household food security) as a result of CNCS-supported services. To assist in these outputs/activities, the RSVP of Southern New London, Windham and parts of Tolland Counties will continue to seek out new partnerships and recruit RSVP volunteers from various sources to include: veteran organizations; military family members connected with the major naval submarine base; submarine contractors; and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London/Groton; individuals of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, and degrees of English language proficiency; and, individuals with disabilities, including age-related disabilities. As well, RSVP volunteers will continue to provide services to eligible clients from all demographic subgroups including those noted above regardless of individual persuasions. Not only is this policy the correct one but also it is a policy of necessity. The presence in or nearby our service area of two major casinos -- Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun -- especially attract low-income service-job type employee candidates of numerous nationalities, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, languages, etc. that ultimately settle here. As well, the major U.S. naval submarine base; submarine contractor, Electric Boat, and other submarine contractors; and, the U.S Coast Guard Academy in the New London/Groton area bring a constant influx of new Americans and their families from various backgrounds and places to our service area. In addition to the many veterans returning home to this region after active service, many of the veterans and workers who have served their country at the naval submarine base, Coast Guard Academy or submarine contractors in the area return to live and retire in Eastern Connecticut. Given that the U.S. has moreless been involved in actual wars, cold wars, conflicts, "police actions" and various tense situations worldwide since 1941, the percentage of veterans in our population is very high.

Recruitment and Development

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(b) Recruitment and Development of Volunteers

TVCCA's RSVP is committed to developing and implementing programs that address specific community needs. For the grant cycle April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2016 the focus will be on recruitment for placement in specific focus areas as designated priority by the Corporation for National and Community Service. To effectively recruit and place volunteers in performance based programs, the Program Recruiters will spend approximately 60% of their time on outreach efforts to recruit volunteers. The RSVP Program Recruiters will use local media resources (radio, cable, newspaper, community partners etc.) as they have in past years to target individuals 55 years of age and older for the RSVP. Outreach efforts will include targeting the baby boomers. Areas to target will include local exercise facilities, veterinary clinics, libraries, municipalities, clubs and organizations. This type of outreach and contact has been successful in past efforts. Marketing materials this past year were designed to show a much younger volunteer engaged in volunteer activities that reflect the types of volunteer opportunities and assignments that meet the proposed areas of service in the 2013 Performance Measures Work Plans. The RSVP Program Recruiters will maintain an updated listing of volunteer opportunities that align with the selected focus areas of the 2013 RSVP work plans. The outreach plan for the next 3 years will be specific to the recruitment of volunteers for the proposed focus areas. The RSVP has established strong partnerships and relationships with other non-profit agencies and organizations, the business community and volunteer stations over the years and will continue to work with our partners as we continue to strengthen our efforts to meet the needs of our community. Volunteer satisfaction is key to volunteer retention. Volunteers will be placed in volunteer assignments that best meet their specific interests and skills. If the volunteer is enjoying the volunteer experience, he or she will be committed to the program. The volunteers will be mentored by a staff member for the first month of placement to ensure that the assignment is a good match and that the needs of the volunteer and volunteer station are being met. In the case of in-home services, the staff

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member will follow up with both the volunteer and homebound by phone or home visit. The volunteers will receive quarterly newsletter and an updated listing of new volunteer opportunities. A volunteer recognition event will be held annually to recognize each of the volunteers for their contribution and service to the community. During the course of the year, several mini-recognition events will be held. Staff will seek out donations from the business community to give out as door prizes at recognition. Staff will contact media outlets when special events are happening and the volunteers are a key part of the event. Although volunteers do not seek out recognition for their service it is also key to letting them know their service is valued and that their contribution is appreciated. RSVP Program Manager/Recruiters provide training for new volunteers entering the program. Training for specific programs and activities managed directly by RSVP staff (independent living services) is provided prior to placement. Volunteer stations are required to provide trainings and orientation for new volunteers and on-going trainings as needed. Trainings for volunteers being reassigned to new activities will be provided as needed utilizing community resources when available. The RSVP Program Recruiters are required to attend workshops and conferences related to the position. TVCCA's IT department provides technical support and the Human Resources provides training to improve or add to already acquired skills. The RSVP Director attends workshops and conferences. The RSVP Director and staff will utilize the resources and training guides of the Corporation for National and Community Service available on their web site. The RSVP of Southern New London and Windham/Tolland partners with other agencies to utilize their resources and together strengthen the delivery of services to the community. The RSVP has a long time partnership with the Town of Killingly Recreational Department. They have partnered with the RSVP on projects to benefit the senior community such as providing space for trainings, presentations and space annually for the Children's Winter Boots. Each year community partners such as local radio stations invite staff to present live on the show to help get sponsors for the boot program. Many local

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businesses adopt the boot program as their employee holiday community contribution. New partners are identified by the types of services they provide and the target population they serve. Capacity Building Programs such as the Winter Boot Program and the Back to School Supplies Program are generously supported by the community and our community partners. Our goal for this next 3 years is to add new partners to our listing to provide additional resources for our Food Security Programs.

Program Management

(a) Program Management

TVCCA's Retired & Senior Volunteer Program placement sites are 100% serving with Memorandums of Understanding and consists of groups serving the needs of low-income and minority populations. The RSVP placement sites are selected and approved based on program needs, program regulation, policy and procedure and volunteer preferences. Staff visit sites bi-weekly to provide support for both the station staff and the volunteers. The RSVP volunteer station list is comprised of a diverse group of non-profit agencies and organizations that will align with the 2013 RSVP Grant and proposed focus areas. These groups provide services to the community and serve to meet the needs of individuals and families in crisis. Staff interview new volunteers and offer appropriate volunteer placement. RSVP Program Recruiters maintain a current listing of volunteer opportunities that includes requests for volunteers with specific skills and backgrounds. Volunteers will be recruited for specific volunteer assignments based on program goals and objectives. The next procedure would be for staff to contact volunteer stations and arrange for the volunteer to meet with the staff person responsible for volunteer supervision. This has been a practice in past years and is a good way for both the volunteer and station staff supervisor to meet and discuss the assignment to see if it meets both their expectations. Communications with the volunteer and station staff is an on-going process from the point of placement. Visits to the volunteer stations are scheduled when the volunteers are on site to ensure that the volunteer is appropriately placed and the station and community needs are being met.

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In one Other Focus activity that our RSVP will provide, 24 unduplicated volunteers will tutor approximately 3rd and 4th grade students for three hours per week during the school year at six elementary schools. They will work one on one or in small groups tutoring students in mathematics, reading, writing and social skills. Volunteers will be trained and monitored by the classroom teachers to follow the curriculum prescribed for 3rd or 4th grade students respectively. RSVP volunteers' involvement in 3rd or 4th grade tutoring stations and activities relates directly to NPMO ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs; and Optional Outcome ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring of other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement. Also, 18 unduplicated volunteers will partner with the New London Rotary Club and the City of New London Superintendent of Schools to communicate with; mentor; provide socialization opportunities for; and, essentially, keep middle school students from New London motivated and academically involved during the part of summer vacation after the students have finished with six weeks of camping at the Rotary Club-funded Camp Rotary and throughout the school year that follows. RSVP volunteers' involvement in this mentoring activity relates directly to NPMO ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period; and Optional Outcome ED27 Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

In another Other Focus Area 30 volunteers will leverage local support from community members, business partners, children and youth by coordinating local food drives to support the food banks and food pantries in Southern New London and Windham Counties and part of Tolland Counties. The food drives are essential to ensuring that adequate food resources are available for the high numbers

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of individuals and families at risk of food security and depending on the food banks and pantries to help them. RSVP volunteers involvement in this activity relates directly to National Performance Output H11: Number of individuals getting support, education and/or referrals for hunger.

In another Other Focus Area 30 unduplicated volunteers will serve the local food pantries and food banks volunteering to perform the necessary functions to sustain the daily operations of the food distribution sites. They will assist with unloading deliveries, sorting and stocking shelves, processing referrals and packing appropriate supplies based on individual or family needs. Their efforts will help the already strained and limited staff resources at local food pantries while helping to meet the needs of an at risk population many who have never used a food pantry however given their employment and economic status are depending on community services to sustain daily life functions. The RSVP volunteers involvement in this activity relates directly to National Performance Output: H11.

In another Other Focus activity that our RSVP will provide, 20 unduplicated volunteers will combine to complete and deliver disaster preparedness kits for homebound seniors and/or disabled people -- especially those residing in the more rural parts of our service area. It is expected that each volunteer will work a minimum of 30 hours over a period of approximately eight months in various aspects of the activity such as soliciting donations, marketing, clerical functions, packaging and delivering the kits. Items sought for the kits will include 911 emergency phones; hand-crank or battery-operated radios and flashlights; smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; blankets; and, resource manuals of emergency and assistance providers/information. Successful foundation grants likely will be needed to purchase some of these items as in the past. Volunteers will seek client referrals from TVCCA's Meals on Wheels Program, municipal agents, visiting nurses, etc. Volunteers will also seek assistance from local volunteer fire departments to provide personnel to safely install detectors. RSVP volunteers' involvement disaster kit stations and activities relates directly to NPMO D1: Number of individuals

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that received CNCS-supported services in disaster preparedness. Currently, there is not an Optional Outcome related to this NPMO. As a Capacity Building activity, 24 unduplicated volunteers will plan and conduct the RSVP's 18th Annual Santa Anonymous Winter Boot Project. Volunteers will seek sponsorships to donate winter boots or monetary donations for the volunteers to purchase winter boots to be packaged, delivered and gifted as Holiday presents to at-risk elementary school children from low-income families which may not be able to afford such items. In December 2011, 944 pairs - an all-time record -- were gathered and distributed (30% higher than 2010). This project is an excellent complement to area coat and toy drives. As in the past, successful foundation grants likely will be needed to accumulate so many pairs. RSVP volunteers' involvement in the Santa Anonymous Winter Boot Project stations and activities relates directly to NPMO G3-3.16R: Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants. Currently, there is not an Optional Outcome related to this NPMO.

In another capacity building activity, 20 unduplicated volunteers will work year round to partner with community members and local businesses to provide ongoing support for schools requesting items that students will need to complete the school year. RSVP volunteers' involvement in these stations and activities relates directly to NPMO G3-3.17: Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants. Currently, there is not an Optional Outcome related to this NPMO.

Finally, 100 unduplicated volunteers will provide adjunct support for non-profit organizations and municipalities throughout our service area. These organizations -- especially in the smaller towns and villages - depend on the community to provide valuable support services that cash-strapped municipalities cannot pay for. RSVP volunteers have and will services in many type organizations including Health, Human Services, Community Development, Cultural, Economic and the Arts. Last year in Southern New London County alone, RSVP volunteers logged 33,639 hours of such various

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services. Independentsector.org places a value per hour of volunteerism in Connecticut at \$27.77 in 2010 (latest available data); thus, these volunteers contributed a minimum of \$934,155.00 value added service in their communities in various roles, municipalities and organizations including the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut. RSVP volunteers' involvement in these stations and activities relates directly to NPMO OT1:

Grantee met their target for community priority activity. During the months of November and December of 2012 the RSVP Director and staff will host groups of volunteer meetings to review the changes that will be implemented in April 2013. It will be important to let the volunteers know that their service is valued and that the community they serve can continue to benefit from their contribution. Activities that the RSVP will not be able to support in 2013 such as large numbers of knitters and sewers, volunteers processing bulk mailings can still continue to be a support service for the non-profit agency and organization

however not as a sanctioned RSVP activity or active status as an RSVP volunteer.. If the volunteers wish to continue to participate in those activities the RSVP will make the connections for them directly with the non profit agencies and organizations they will be serving. Volunteers wishing to remain an active volunteer with the RSVP will be given a listing of volunteer opportunities that will meet the requirements of the focus areas and performance measures. The RSVP Director and RSVP staff will review current volunteer stations upon completion of the 2013 grant application to align the stations with the work plans and performance measures proposed. Stations that may not currently fit under the criteria for 2013 may be able to partner in a new area of volunteer service. The RSVP Program Recruiters will schedule meetings with the Station Representative to review the proposed areas of services and community needs. The stations do not have to remain with the RSVP if they are unable to fit into the new areas of service however they will be informed that if the volunteers wish to continue to volunteer for them it will be as a community member and not an RSVP volunteer. The

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goal is to have 50% of current RSVP volunteers serving in areas that meet the performance Measures requirements. The volunteers will be able to continue as an RSVP volunteer in current roles until March 31, 2013 however may begin to volunteer in areas that will be priority in 2013.

It is our goal to have all of our volunteers and volunteer stations on board and well informed by the end of January 2013 in order for the transition to begin by April 2013. Every effort will be made to meet the individual needs of our volunteers. We will provide trainings for volunteers who take on new assignments in areas they have not previously served in. The Program Director reviews monthly and quarterly staff reports to monitor program activity and to ensure that the number of volunteers, goals and objectives of the program are on target. Staff meetings are held monthly and project performance is reviewed to ensure goals and objectives are being met. Staff completes quarterly progress reports and monthly outreach reports. Program and volunteer evaluation surveys are completed annually. On-site volunteer station visits are included in the evaluation process and a written report submitted to TVCCA's Executive Director. The Program Director reviews all completed surveys for any necessary follow up action. Survey results are shared with staff to review and discuss any areas of recommendations suggested or improvement needed and respond as necessary. Volunteer station staff are required to complete bi-annual and year end survey tools. As of April 2013 outcomes will be measured using the designated performance measurement outcome tool for the specific activity. RSVP volunteers submit time sheets signed and approved by the volunteer station supervisor monthly. The Program Recruiters enter the data from the time sheets into the "Reporter" software program. The Program Recruiters are responsible for ensuring that all volunteer applications, Memorandums of Understanding, Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement Claims and all forms required for specific volunteer assignments have the required information and signatures prior to submitting for approval and signatures by the Program Director.

The Program Director participates in Community Forums and Focus groups to stay current on

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community needs and issues. The RSVP Director partners with other community service providers, agencies and organizations to help build healthier and safer communities utilizing the talents and skills of the RSVP volunteers. Applications to secure funding are on-going. Applications to various foundations are on-going. Requests for monetary and material donations from local businesses are on-going. Gifts for volunteer recognition events are requested from local business owners.

Applications are submitted annually by the RSVP for funding from the State of Connecticut Department of Social Services; United Way of Southeastern Connecticut; City of New London; and, the towns of Groton and Waterford. TVCCA's Planning Department seeks funding opportunities from various foundations, if available, on behalf of the RSVP. Purchase orders are issued prior to making purchases. Financial reports are provided by TVCCA's Comptroller quarterly and financial meetings are conducted with TVCCA's Comptroller, TVCCA's Chief Operations Officer and the RSVP Director.

In-kind donations are

from non federal resources and value is assigned by the contributing donor on a signed in-kind form.

TVCCA's financial management systems and past experiences are reported in detail in the Organizational Capacity of this application. The information on the TVCCA's capacity and experience is also included in the Organizational Capacity section

Organizational Capability

(b) Organizational Capability

TVCCA is New London County's private, non-profit Community Action Agency. When incorporated in 1965, TVCCA operated one program. We currently operate 28 programs that serve low-income, at risk individuals and families of all ages. The agency also collaborates and/or operates some of its services in Windham County and limited parts of Tolland County.

TVCCA has successfully operated a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) since 1990, so we are well-experienced in managing volunteer programs. From 10/1/10 to 9/30/11, 26,231 non-

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duplicated and eligible clients accessed our services across all programs that we operate. Our nearly \$31,000,000 program base includes: Retired and Senior Volunteers; Senior Companions; Foster Grandparents; other volunteer programs; Meals On Wheels; Senior Congregate Meals; and other nutrition services; a food services commissary in Bozrah; Head Start; Early Care & Education; literacy initiatives; comprehensive case management services; a 45-bed Shelter for Homeless Families; Housing Services including RAP; Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing; other Supportive Housing services; eviction mediation; rental assistance; budget counseling; infant and pre-natal (WIC) nutrition programs; Financial Education Training; tax services including free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Energy Assistance; Weatherization; information, intake and service referral through the statewide Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) initiative that we helped champion; JFES and WIA employment services; and advocacy services.

Beyond RSVP, several of the programs that we operate welcome and rely to varying degrees on volunteerism from community people -- especially Meals on Wheels; Senior Congregate Meals; and VITA. Head Start and Early Care & Education Programs include parent involvement not only as classroom volunteers but also participating members of the programs' respective advisory councils. Paid staff positions of our RSVP include a .65FTE Program Director and two Program Recruiters -- one full-time in Southeastern Connecticut and one .8FTE in Northeastern Connecticut. TVCCA has successfully operated an RSVP with a part-time Program Director for approximately 18 years. TVCCA has been previously approved by the Corporation for National and Community Service to have a part time Program Director position. Furthermore, TVCCA has demonstrated the ability to effectively manage the RSVP with a part-time Program Director. The agency believes that .65FTE is a reasonable and effective allocation for the RSVP Program

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Director of Southern New London, Windham and Tolland Counties. This percentage will be reflected in our attached budget. The Program Director is responsible for the overall management of the RSVP Program of Southern New London County and Windham County. This director will ensure that all program components are carried out in an efficient and effective manner in accordance with agency, CNCS, State and Federal regulations, policies and procedures. The Southeast Program Recruiter and the Northeast Program Recruiter are responsible for the recruitment, training and placement of individuals in various volunteer stations throughout Southern New London County and Windham County respectively. The Program Recruiters are responsible providing program support to include arranging meaningful volunteer opportunities; opening sites and adding new volunteer stations; handling public relations initiatives in their respective region; processing necessary data for funding sources and agency compliance reporting. Catherine Visco is/will be the Program Director. Helen Granskog is/will be the Southeast Program Recruiter and Sheryl Lambert is/will be the Northeast Program Recruiter. In addition to funding requested of the CNCS herein, these positions have been and will be sustained by combined ongoing funding proposals to the Connecticut Department of Social Services; Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging; the City of New London; the United Way of Southeastern Connecticut; and local foundations such as the Pfizer Volunteer Foundation, Connecticut Light & Power, etc.

All TVCCA programs including our Retired and Senior Volunteers (RSVP) utilize the Results-Oriented Management & Accountability (ROMA) guidelines to track, tabulate and review programmatic compliance with pre-established outcome targets of services rendered on an annual basis. ROMA criteria enable our RSVP and agency to ascertain the effectiveness of our service programs and delivery methods in providing assistance to a wide range of clientele in our service area. We also utilize this ROMA information in order to determine where and how we may need to make improvements, adjustments, etc. of our services, funding needs, staffing structures and the like.

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We forward results annually to the Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) to be included in statewide reports to State and Federal agencies and overseers who utilize the information to determine future Community Service Block Grant allocations and the such.

All TVCCA programs are linked through comprehensive case management & assessment; share internally-developed integrated software (KeyWare) designed to improve client intake, assessment, tracking, service referral, etc; are outcome-based; and, have adopted the statewide Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) model of service delivery that we helped champion. Utilizing this approach, our staff members are greatly more enabled to assess client eligibility and needs for other services and then, if needed, to recommend or refer clients to other service programs offered by TVCCA or other social service, medical, financial, etc. organization in our service area. This integrated service delivery approach is valuable for all at-risk individuals and families of any age or other subgroup. Following is the most recent summary of property and equipment from page 11 attesting to the significant level of tangible assets that TVCCA manages: land, buildings and improvements -- \$9,592,764; vehicles -- \$717,068; computer equipment - \$400,427; appliances - \$453,660; furniture and fixtures -- \$273,207; telephone equipment -\$256,107; and, office equipment -- \$47,881. Total property and equipment as of March 31, 2012 is, therefore, \$11,741,114.

TVCCA's Chief Fiscal Officer supervises a highly professional full-time staff of individuals specializing in critical components to assure that compliance, accuracy, monitoring, reporting, etc. functions are performed to the highest standards. This staff is comprised of a Senior Director of Human Resources, Benefits Director, Senior Director of Finance, Finance/Payroll Supervisor, Payroll Manager, two Accounts Payable Managers and a Revenue Services Agent. They utilize a flexible computerized accounts payable/receivable, payroll and general ledger software system from Blackbaud which generates complete financial statements. All modules within the Blackbaud Accounting System operate on the accrual method of accounting; include payroll transactions and

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recording of taxes; and are fully integrated. The software is specifically designed for use by non-profit organizations.

TVCCA incorporates an effective system of internal controls that reasonably assures that following goals are met:

Authorization: Transactions are executed in accordance with general or specific authorization as approved by management and in compliance with federal and state law.

Safeguarding: Access to assets is permitted only in accordance with the administration's general or specific authorization.

Verification: The recorded accountability for assets is compared with the existing assets at reasonable intervals, and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences.

All TVCCA employees, officers and directors who are authorized to receive or deposit funds into project accounts, or issue financial documents, checks or other payments are bonded as a condition of employment. Staff members that are covered include (but are not limited to) all of the positions noted above under the supervision of the Chief Fiscal Officer.

TVCCA provides its funding sources with the following reports in order to fulfill due diligence, full disclosure, transparent activity, legal duty and ethical handling of all records and transactions: 1) monthly expenditure and costing reports on both an accrued and projected basis;

2) monthly reimbursement request reports segregated for programmatic activities and administrative items; 3) cash management reports to be included; 4) separate fund accounts for each programs' cost categories to ensure adequate audit trails and expenditure levels.

To ensure security, all financial transactions and records are maintained on a separate, secure server.

Periodic reports are provided to all the entities from which TVCCA receives funds to ensure compliance with contractual, government and agency goals and requirements. The agency updates its Board of Trustees regarding financial condition at all meetings (usually monthly).

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The agency is also subject to an annual single audit.

TVCCA's tripartite Board of Trustees serves the role of a community participation group for all TVCCA-operated programs including the RSVP. The Board's function ensures input from our community as highlighted in the remainder of this paragraph. Our Board currently includes representatives of seven different municipalities in our service area; employees from six local private or public organizations including a representative each from the City of Norwich, CT branch and the New London, CT branch of the NAACP; as well as seven representatives of the low-income, needy population groups that we serve - including a representative of Senior Corps Programs; a representative of Senior Nutrition Program; a representative of Early Care & Education; and, two representatives of Head Start. Essentially, our Board is advised of and must approve all TVCCA activities, initiatives, plans, financial matters, etc. Each and every grant, contract, etc. must be approved and ratified by our Board. All trustees are invited to attend meetings at least nine times per year, and a quorum is required. Ad hoc Board committees meet as needed. The composition of our Board of Trustees demonstrates the diversity of our efforts and the breadth of support that we receive from our communities. 86% of TVCCA's nearly \$31 million funding revenue is provided through Federal and State government agencies, so we are well-experienced in the responsibilities, accountability, documentation, etc. of handling such contracts. Examples of recent federal awards include approximately \$8,857,431 Energy Assistance funding during the 2010-2011 heating season; approximately \$5,668,072 Energy Assistance funding during the 2011-2012 heating season; approximately \$1,000,000 in ARRA funds through our partnership with the ACCESS Community Action Agency of Windham County to provide Weatherization services; nearly \$1.5 million from HUD passed through Connecticut's Department of Social Services to lead a ten-agency collaboration for the provision of Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing

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services throughout Eastern Connecticut; and, \$900,000 in ARRA stimulus funds which we used both to build our capacity as well as provide pass-through funding (approximately \$400,000) to other community providers that were not directly eligible to receive the federal stimulus funding. As well, we have contracted with the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board for numerous years to lead a two-agency collaboration in New London and Windham Counties providing nearly \$1.8 million this year of employment and training services for low-income WIA and JFES clients. Also, TVCCA is the only Community Action Agency in Connecticut to manage a HUD Housing Choice Voucher program.

Other

Nothing to enter

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A