

Narratives

Executive Summary

Applicant: Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay, Inc. (SiS)

Description and mission;

Incorporated in Hillsborough County in 1984, as a nonprofit organization SiS's mission is to recruit, train and place volunteers to help children succeed and elders remain independent. The organization serves Hillsborough, Pinellas and Polk counties, managing volunteers to meet the challenges of the community with services that offer mentoring, tutoring and companionship through customized training, support and volunteer recognition. Fiscally sound and innovative, SiS mobilizes senior volunteers to make positive impact on the lives of more than 1,700 vulnerable children, low-income seniors, and at-risk elderly daily!

482 RSVP volunteers proposed.

\$80,539.00 requested.

Service categories addressed: Healthy Futures, Education, and Capacity.

Community needs addressed:

Aging in place, school readiness, veteran's needs and capacity building.

Volunteer management practices employed are accredited by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration.

Anticipated outcomes:

Narratives

• Homebound/older adults and individuals with disabilities report having increased social ties/perceived social support.

• Organizations implement three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants.

• Children demonstrate gains in school readiness in terms of social and/or emotional development.

Strengthening Communities

Community Description - Hillsborough County is centrally located within the state on Florida's west coast with a 2010 population of 1,229,226 and is the 32nd most populous county in the nation. The county's racial makeup was 71.3% White, 16.7% Black or African American, 24.9% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race. There were 474,030 family households, 44.2% were married couples living together, 22.6% of all households had individuals age 65 years and older and 7.9% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. Among the population age 65 years and older, 44% are known to have a disability. Median income for a household was \$40,663, and \$48,223 for a family. The per capita income for the county was \$21,812. About 9.1% of families and 12.5% of the population were below the poverty line. Florida has the third largest veteran population in the U.S. numbering almost 100,000 and Hillsborough has the fourth largest veteran population in Florida. A RAND research study revealed 34% of military youth experienced moderate to high levels of emotional and behavioral problems, compared with 19% national sample of all youth.

Local input into program design and evaluation is assured through RSVP Advisory Council members, to include those knowledgeable about human and social needs of the community, competent in the field of community service and volunteerism, capable of helping us meet and ensure the

Narratives

administrative and programmatic responsibilities including fund raising, publicity, program outcomes and impact, with an interest in and knowledge of the capability of older adults, and of a diverse cultural and life experience composition that reflects our service and our demographics. Community resources will be effectively mobilized as RSVP staff support station and volunteers through resource sharing/match/identification, issue resolution, knowledge exchange, and providing technical support as appropriate.

Staff will enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions within the community by providing information to agency volunteers concerning its program and benefits, and recruiting content experts to provide volunteer training/education opportunities to build volunteer's knowledge and skills, increase volunteer performance, an understanding of the strategies and interventions that may be most effective in working with the clients with whom they engage.

b. Developing opportunities to integrate and grow senior service activities into other service programs within our community is imbued with our organizational culture. Staff network extensively, participate and are linked to a diverse array of ongoing community coalitions, workgroups, public schools, children and family coalitions, military service organizations, and community service organizations to develop partnerships to most effectively serve the community and provide enriching and rewarding volunteer services opportunities. If awarded the RSVP grant, SiS will take a leadership role in partnering with the Hillsborough Association for Volunteer Administrators to develop and improve the skills and knowledge of local volunteer coordinators and to promote the value of senior volunteers to serve the needs of local agencies.

Community partners may be selected as volunteer stations, volunteer recruitment/networking

Narratives

locations and/or a stakeholder agency with whom an individual/expert is connected and serves as a member of our RSVP Advisory Council. SiS will Promote RSVP volunteer opportunities on agency website, press release, speaking/networking and distributing Program brochures at numerous community-based events and presentations where staff engage.

Recruitment and Development

a. RSVP Project Coordinator will actively develop high quality volunteer opportunities through new stations and existing stations. The Project Coordinator will strengthen the service opportunities by recruiting five to seven Volunteers Ambassadors annually in leadership roles, who will share "their story" (experiences, abilities, and skills) at places including Chambers of Commerce, City Council Meetings, Health Fairs, VA Hospital Volunteer Coordinator meetings, local nonprofit providers, libraries, and other targeted groups as identified. The RSVP Project Director will assist in creating high quality volunteer assignments by recruiting content experts to provide volunteer training/education opportunities. The training/education builds the volunteer's knowledge and skills, increases their performance, strengthens their understanding of the strategies and interventions that may be most effective in working with the clients with whom they engage. SiS staff recognizes and values the wealth of life experiences, leadership potential and power of senior volunteers, and is committed to ensuring they are matched in positions that effectively enhance their lives and provide meaningful volunteer service.

b. A contingent of 600+ active RSVP volunteers currently exists, and has been well supported through Hillsborough County's Aging Service Department. This entity is supporting SiS's application (see letter of support) and has committed to assist SiS, if awarded this grant, with volunteer/volunteer station 'transition'. RSVP Project Coordinator will actively recruit volunteers through networking and public awareness activities designed to encourage seniors to volunteer, and provide linkages to volunteer

Narratives

through RSVP. Upon acceptance volunteers are provided program orientation and training, individual support and assistance to link to the appropriate agency and their volunteer position. Volunteer retention is accomplished through continuous information exchange, ongoing education and recognition. Volunteers are encouraged to frequently check the SiS website and RSVP webpage for program updates, training announcements, organization newsletter, volunteer tips, and valuable resources.

The annual RSVP Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon includes service recognition gifts for volunteers taking leadership roles that impact their volunteer organizations and communities, and for providing significant numbers of service hours. The Advisory Council will actively design this recognition activity taking a role in designing the award categories, decision criteria, soliciting nominations and making final award decisions. Volunteer recognition throughout the year occurs by featuring a RSVP volunteer in the monthly SiS newsletter and website.

c. Staff receives training and technical assistance from the supervisor, no cost online training tools provided by the CNCS, technical assistance from their CNCS State Office staff, and State and National trainings provided by the CNCS. RSVP staff will also be provided knowledge-based resources such as Points of Lights newsletters, and other volunteer development opportunities.

RSVP staff will employ successful strategies utilized in other programs to provide training and TA to volunteers/stations, supervisors and community participation groups including: 1) Providing volunteers with the appropriate/required initial training(s) and orientation to be effective and safe; 2) Building a rapport with the station sites through weekly communication via email, phone, and/or face-to-face; 3) Becoming a resource to the station sites for subject matter experts who can provide

Narratives

training to their staff and volunteers; 4) Encouraging station sites to host lunch-n-learns that include the volunteers; and 5) Providing implementation examples for station sites to cross-train volunteers. RSVP Project Assistant will track and identify the volunteers who are approaching annual retraining/recertification.

Program Management

a. SiS has clearly identified a RSVP Program staffing pattern to ensure effective management of volunteer stations to be in compliance with RSVP Program regulations. The RSVP Project Coordinator will visit each site up to two times annually, at a mutually agreed upon date and time. During the visit the RSVP Project Coordinator will utilize a SiS created checklist/tool which contains questions consistent with the signed MOU. Completed assessments will be analyzed and any gap/deficient areas identified, discussed and corrective action noted. Assessments are used as measurement indicators to ensure compliance with RSVP Program regulations at future follow up visits. As appropriate, the Project Coordinator will schedule a follow up site visit to provide assistance/expertise to resolve the gap/deficient areas identified.

b. RSVP staff in partnership with members of the Advisory Council performs an annual quantitative assessment to determine to what degree the program's goals and objectives have been met. Program performance is assessed against measures articulated in the program's detailed work plans and includes recommended corrective action, if needed. Annually, a volunteer satisfaction survey will be implemented to secure qualitative data and determines how volunteer service has enriched their lives, expanded their knowledge base and/or skill set, and /or improved their overall satisfaction with life.

Narratives

c. SiS will utilize its "new org" database to capture program information related to volunteer and station files, hours of service, volunteer requests, etc. Agency requests for volunteers are recorded in the system, and can be readily matched with a volunteer's skills, interests and abilities. New org database can generate reports including total volunteers serving, their total service hours, total daily service hours, total number of locations served, respective service history dates. Reports assist staff to readily analyze progress towards goals monitor and demonstrate program impact.

d. SiS's Finance Department is under the leadership of the Director of Operations who has a BS in Accounting from the University of Florida, 25 years experience in management including for profit experience as controller with five years of international-related government business experience. SiS's accounts are maintained in accordance with GAAP, accounts and documents for each contract are separately maintained, as well as the current status of funds and the level of services provided. Annually, SiS undergoes an independent financial audit; Single Audit results for the YE/December 31, 2011 identified no disallowed costs, no questioned costs, no instances of noncompliance, no matters relative to internal control structure, and no management letter recommendations. Each year the audit is presented to the Board by the auditing firm. The Finance Committee reviews financial statements quarterly (minimum). Established policies and procedures ensure accuracy of document processing, segregation of duties, and risk mitigation.

e. SiS has an excellent track record of securing cash and inkind operating/ongoing funding from an array of sources to ensure program delivery, expansion and/or sustainability. Our Board of Directors assists to make linkages and introductions to prospects as identified and our full-time Director of Community and Strategic Partnerships, with more than 20 years successful non-profit and corporate

Narratives

management experience, ensures continuous implementation of a well-planned fund development process. SiS Board and staff leadership are in the process of developing a social enterprise to provide a source of unrestricted funds to support areas not always covered by grants funds.

Organizational Capability

a. SiS has more than 25 years experience tracking performance and program service delivery for volunteer programs to ensure performance standards are met. The organization's experience includes adapting program service delivery to meet compliance for federal, state, county, foundation and corporate funders. Staff is adept at formative and summative evaluation methodologies including process and program evaluation measures, empowerment evaluation, and results-based accountability.

b. RSVP Project Director, Ms. Lupe Procter has 15 years experience in volunteer, program management (Senior Corp programs) and human resource fields including strategic partnership development with for-profit and non-profit leaders, project analysis management, staff development training. As a 20-year retired US Air Force Veteran, Ms. Proctor is culturally competent and understands the needs of our Veteran community. Ms. Proctor will be responsible for overall program management, fiscal oversight and program development/sustainability and oversee the full-time RSVP Project Coordinator (TBD). Additional staff TBD include: part-time RSVP Project Coordinator and part-time RSVP Project Assistant.

c. SiS currently administers numerous programs and services on an operating budget of \$1,565,606. With more than 25 years successfully managing federal contracts, local city and county contracts, fee for service agreements including Medicaid Waiver and Community Care for the Elderly, and dozens of private foundation and community organization grants, SiS has excellent management experience

Narratives

and knowledge base with an array of funding sources.

d. For more than 26 years SiS has successfully managed Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs in impact-based programming including programming that assists children at-risk succeed in school and in life, and seniors and those with disabilities to live independently. We provide approximately 250,000 community service volunteer hours annually; engaging more than 550 volunteers for active volunteering to address community needs; positively impacting the lives of more than 2,000 children and improving the lives of more than 500 seniors and disabled persons. Volunteers impact more than 1,700 lives daily.

e. SiS maintains a full complement of advanced office and computer technology onsite. RSVP staff will be provided appropriate office space, technology resources, initial orientation and training and ongoing supportive/in-service training to be fully effective in their positions. The organization has a clearly established purchasing policy that addresses: Authority, Conflict of Interest, Authorized Purchases, Purchasing Code of Ethics, Expenditure of Funds, Competitive Bid Process, and other topics. Staff's written job description clearly defines the reporting line of authority which is reflected in the agency organizational chart. Written and adopted policy and procedures are reviewed annually and address travel reimbursement for staff, volunteers and board members.

f. RSVP Advisory Council is responsible for strengthening the program by evaluating results and impacts of program activities and recommending changes for improvements. The committee provides a basis for decision-making on amendments and improvements of strategies and volunteer engagement, and assists in promoting accountability for resource use against established objectives. Members of the committee document, provide feedback on, and disseminate results and lessons

Narratives

learned to ensure ongoing, real-time and continuous quality improvements are realized throughout the organization with a focus on maximization of limited resources. Satisfaction surveys are completed by volunteers and station representatives, and reviewed by members of the Council. Members make recommendations for program improvements that are incorporated into the program design on an ongoing basis. These efforts ensure regular participation of our target audience.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A