

# SUMMARY REVIEWER COMMENTS

## 2013 RSVP Competition

**Legal Applicant:** St. Mary's Foundation

**Applicant ID:** 13SR144314

**Project Name:** Central SD RSVP

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

### External Reviewer's Summary Comments:

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides statistics related to the unmet community need focused around food insecurity. Among the five targeted counties, the rise in food insecurity has risen over a range of 85 to 18%. In the five county service area 32% of the seniors live alone and prefer to remain in their own homes.

The applicant's volunteers receive initial as well as ongoing training. Each receives a Volunteer Handbook covering policies and procedures. They also provide specific training for volunteer stations such as the Reading Buddy and meal delivery services to seniors. The Program Director and Program coordinator participate in the trainings to gain insight on training gaps or issues so they can be immediately addressed by the program staff.

The applicant's offering of challenging service opportunities and a supportive staff is discussed as a primary reason for the retention of volunteers. Also discussed is the recognition given volunteers by volunteer stations such as in Pierre, fort Pierre and Winner. The RSVP staff, local leaders and officials, state legislators and U.S. congresspersons are invited.

The applicant's secondary focus of education is discussed as well as six other specified unmet needs outside the Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures; thrift store, military family event and items for displaced veterans to assist with securing housing. The applicant was able to provide outcomes for FY 2012 when serving in some activities like 569 Medicare beneficiaries being assisted in the five county service areas.

The St. Mary's Foundation and the Healthcare Center provide support to RSVP with office space and equipment. IT, Human Resources and fiscal oversight is provided by the Catholic Health Initiatives demonstrate a strong foundation for the RSVP.

The applicant's breakdown of the sources for non-federal funds such as cash donations such as \$13,000.00 from the United Way, and bake sales as fundraisers.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant indicates that veterans and their families are naturally served under the Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures and even the secondary focus of education. However, no description is given on how these services will be delivered.

The applicant plans to graduate 40 of the current volunteers from community programs to accommodate the new national Performance Measures. However, the plans for making this a non-disruptive process was not discussed and the RSVP staff indicate volunteers not taking advantage of other opportunities being offered could remain at the churches where they have worked, but not under the auspices of the RSVP project.