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Executive Summary

Senior Services Associates, Inc. sponsors RSVP of McHenry and Kane Counties, in Illinois and has done so since 1987.

The program will support a total of 575 volunteers who annually report approximately 95,000 hours of service. These volunteers support 90 stations throughout McHenry and Kane Counties.

The primary focus area of service where volunteers will be making the most impact will be "Healthy Futures". Volunteer activities will include: Delivering hot meals to frail seniors up to five days per week, throughout our service area. These meals will be delivered to homebound and frail elderly that have been assessed and considered "at risk". As the meals are delivered, a wellness check is also provided as many of these seniors rarely get other visitors on a daily basis. A Transportation Program is available to senior who are looking for viable resources. Seniors will be healthier because they will have more money to spend on healthier food and medications as RSVP volunteers provide rides free of charge. Transportation is provided to necessary appointments and regular trips to the grocery store and pharmacy. Small Home Repairs will be offered by skilled RSVP volunteers who will assist with small home repairs insuring the homes are kept in good repair resulting in a safe living environment. A Friendly Visiting Program is offered as many seniors risk isolation because of transportation issues, family separation, etc., RSVP volunteers will be recruited, screened and matched with homebound seniors.

All of the above services will allow for "Independent Living" for the seniors in McHenry and Kane Counties. RSVP volunteers will provide these services allowing homebound seniors to continue to live independently and in their own homes, without the risk of institutionalization.

In support of the project, \$41,966 CNCS federal funds are requested. \$42,435 will invested by the State and through local funding sources.

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Strengthening Communities

McHenry County is a large county (603.51 square miles). The total population for McHenry County in 2010 census was 308,760. The 2010 census indicates 512 persons per square mile. McHenry County is located about 35 miles west-northwest of Chicago. Its rural area occupies largely the western section of the county. Census records indicate, the county had 26.7% of its population under the age of 18, and 10.6% are 65 or above. The percentage of the population below the poverty level stands at 6.2%, this number compared to the state of Illinois which is at 12.6%. The 2006-2010 median household income was \$76,482 versus \$55,735 for the state. The county has a relatively high percentage of white population at 94.3% compared to the state average of 78%. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin are recorded at 11.7%.

Kane County is also a large county (520.44 square miles). The total population for Kane County in 2010 census was 515,269. The 2010 census indicates the population at 991 persons per square mile. Kane County is located about 35 miles west-northwest of Chicago. Its rural area occupies largely the western section of the county. It has a small rural area (about 2% of total population), mostly in the western half of the County. Most of its urban population is clustered around the Fox River. In the 2010 census records, the county had 28.7% of its population under the age of 18, and 10% age 65 or above. The percentage of the population below the poverty level stands at 9.1%. The 2006-2010 median household income was \$67,767 versus \$55,735 for the state 87.4% of the county's population is white, with 6.1% black and a large Hispanic or Latino population of 31.1% as compared to the state, which is 16.2%. The population in the city is relatively more diverse than the state with 68.1% white versus 73.5% statewide. 25.1% of the residents speak a language other than English.

Senior Services Associates has been providing services to the senior population in McHenry, Kane and Kendall counties for 40 years. Mission Statement: Senior Services Associates, Inc. is a non-profit

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agency dedicated to sustaining and improving the quality of life for mature adults by providing access to the social services they need. We are dedicated to preserving their independence, promoting mental and physical well-being, protecting their rights and dignity. This respected agency serves 27,000 seniors every year with programs including; caregiver assistance and respite, ombudsman, case management, senior protective services, home repair, transportation, as well as many other programs. These services fit well with the Primary Focus area we have chosen to address.

"Healthy Futures" is the Primary Focus area RSVP of McHenry and Kane Counties will be address. Aging in Place is the area that will be addressed as 257 RSVP volunteers will assist 300 home bound seniors with transportation, 900 recipients will be assisted with home delivered meals, 30 seniors will be helped with small home repairs, 50 isolated seniors will receive weekly "friendly visits". Volunteers are asked to commit to visiting at a minimum of once a week and activities can include visiting in the home or taking them local senior centers for social events. Respite for caregivers will be provided to 15 families throughout our service area. The following stations will be supported: Faith In Action, Salvation Army, Provena Hospital Meals on Wheels, Senior Services Transportation, Friendly Visiting Program, and Home Repair Programs. These stations work closely with RSVP, signing a Memorandum of Understanding and have frequent communication with RSVP staff in order to assure appropriate volunteer referrals. Stations are educated as to the importance of reporting.

Once RSVP volunteers are oriented to the program and identify their area of interest, a background check is run by the "station" with which they are assigned ensuring the safety of the senior. Training is done by the station, including shadowing with other volunteers or coordinator direct supervision. Monthly logs kept by station staff as reported by volunteers measure results. As available and requested, volunteers are reimbursed for mileage, are insured through excess liability, and are invited

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to annual recognition events.

A Transportation and Home Repair Programs are both sponsored by Senior Services, thanks to information gathered from sources listed. This community is fortunate to have a Faith In Action program, who also administer a friendly visiting program, offer transportation, and respite for caregivers. Other community agencies address nutrition for homebound seniors.

The Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, mandates the McHenry and Kane County Department of Health, as part of its re-certification process, (77 ILL. Adm. Code 600) to conduct a community needs assessment formally known as the Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs (IPLAN). This process is required every 5 years. IPLAN addresses the core functions of public health by monitoring health status, researching innovative solutions to health problems and mobilizing community partnerships to identify and address health problems.

(www.co.mchenry.il.us/departments/health/pdfDocs/ADM/MAPP/MAPPIPLAN07.pdf)

(<http://kanehealth.com/planning.htm>)

"Pace Service and Expanded Dial-A-Ride Service in McHenry County - Curb to curb, wheelchair accessible service is available in limited areas. Everyone (the general public, senior, and people with disabilities) is eligible to make trips originating within the city boundaries of Crystal Lake, McHenry, and Woodstock."

"The Ride in Kane Program was launched on February 15, 2008, providing much needed expanded transportation services for many senior, disabled, and low-income individuals in Kane County. This program covers much of Kane County." Registration for Ride in Kane is currently closed and they have a year waiting list.

The need for companionship is critical for area seniors. According to the National Institute of Mental

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Health, while 13% of the population is 65+, they represent 20% of all suicides. Social isolation is an important risk factor for suicide among the elderly as well as alcoholism, prescription drug abuse, and other illnesses. The two area friendly visitor programs match carefully screened volunteers with local seniors who are socially isolated, lonely, or home bound. The need for positive social contact is met through these relationships, which are often characterized by deep respect and mutual regard. In addition, the program alleviates some stress on caregivers who, because of work and other family responsibilities, do not have enough time to provide their loved one with all the socialization and companionship they need. The companion may substitute physically and emotionally for children, grandchildren or spouse by helping with household chores, celebrating holidays, including the senior in daily plans, as well as communicating love and a sense of self-worth to the seniors. The relationship developed through the match can make a significant positive impact on the mental health of both the senior and the volunteer companion. Volunteers are often also in need of a means of social engagement. The program provides a much-needed purpose for volunteers who need socialization, enhanced self-esteem, and a reason for being; especially during retirement.

As of June of 2012, the unemployment rate in McHenry County 8.6% and 9.6% in Kane County. These figures compared to the State of Illinois 9.3%. (source Business Journal). These numbers along with rising fuel costs are forcing more families to seek supplements to their family's food sources. Statistics gathered from the Northern Illinois Food Bank website www.northernilfoodbank.org -- one in eleven people in Illinois is "Food Insecure". U.S. Department of Agriculture defines "food insecure" people as those who do not have adequate access on a regular basis to enough safe, nutritious food to sustain an active and healthy life. These households have reduced quality and variety of meals, and may have irregular food intake. From the 2010 "Hunger In America Study" 43% of households include at least one unemployed adult.

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The Fish Food Pantry in McHenry coordinator reported a 9.25% increase in demand one year ago in March and stated "Family unit numbers have also increased because they are combining households out of necessity."

Data received from the coordinator of the Algonquin Food Pantry revealed a 25% increase of people served from January of 2009 to January of 2010. Of that amount, an increase in demand of children served was 11%, and an overall increase of 37% increase in the number of families served was reported.

RSVP of McHenry and Kane Counties works closely with several veterans' organizations in the area, VFW, TLS Veterans -- Education & Training for Veterans (tlsveterans.org), Veterans and Family Services Advisory Group, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, and Veterans Assistance Commission of McHenry County. We work with these organizations in different ways, providing transportation options for veterans and recruiting volunteers for monthly food distribution at a mobile food pantry that serves veterans and their families (approximately 150) throughout McHenry County.

Staff attends advisory meetings in order to bring information and available services to members. 20% of our current roster of volunteers are veterans and the involvement that we have with the listed groups provides access to those willing to serve.

Two annual events in McHenry and Kane Counties are held; "Veterans' Summit Job and Resource Fair" is held at Elgin Community College and "Helping & Hiring Home Town Heroes" is held in Woodstock. Both events are supported both by volunteers who want to assist that day along with providing resources to the veterans who attend.

*sources: QuickFacts, McHenry County website, McHenry County Development Corporation, Kane County website, Kane County Development Corporation.

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Recruitment and Development

RSVP started operations in McHenry and Kane Counties in 1987 to recruit individuals age 55+.

Individuals interested in community service find out about RSVP through various means such as the internet, periodicals, and learning of the experiences of other volunteers. Once interest is established, we provide information about the program and what is offered to volunteers. Our volunteer roster of 575 volunteers consists of a 21% Baby Boomers our volunteers being 65 or younger. Senior Services Associates, our sponsor covers the two counties where Sun City, Huntley is situated. Sun City appears to attract a younger, more active population. Outreach is vigorously pursued to recruit the residents of that community with success through news releases in their community publications and through opportunities to speak to neighborhood groups.

Individual volunteers join RSVP with the expectation of a high quality volunteer experience. We learn of their personal interests through an enrollment form. This form assesses previous experience and attempts to pique their interest by introducing a wide range and variety of service opportunities. Upon receipt of the form, a meeting is scheduled with the new recruit (three coordinators are available to conduct these individual interviews). During the interview, we introduce them to the Volunteer Handbook and provide an overview orientation to RSVP. As indicated, the National Sex Offender Public Registry is checked and as indicated by their assignment a Criminal Background Check is run. Through the interview process and the volunteer's own inclinations, we find we can make assignments that the individual volunteer finds rewarding and satisfying. Many volunteers prefer to stay within an area of their background-developed expertise, while others are interested in trying something very different. The list of opportunities for service is as varied as the individuals willing to volunteer. We presently work with approximately 118 agencies throughout McHenry and Kane Counties. The requests listed through these agencies provide a wide range of volunteer positions. Our working relationships with these agencies are offer assistance through materials or staff involvement.

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Some recruits are looking for "projects", assignments that have a beginning and end, while others are interested in assisting with on-going assignments, which give them the opportunity to develop social networks and relationships with peers which as stated in the materials below provide many health benefits. Once a volunteer has been assigned to a station, the station provides necessary orientation, any necessary background check process is completed and the volunteer is supplied with on-going training as provided by the agency. Communication is continual insuring hours served and impact is reported.

Older volunteers are most likely to receive greater health benefits from volunteering. Research has found that volunteering provides older adults, (those age 60 or older), with greater benefits than younger volunteers. These benefits include improved physical and mental health and greater life satisfaction. In addition, while depression may serve as a barrier to volunteer participation in mid-life adults, it is a catalyst for volunteering among older adults, who may seek to compensate for role changes and attenuated social relations that occur with aging. (Li and Ferraro, 2006; Van Willigen, 2000) Volunteers must meet a "volunteering threshold" to receive significant health benefits. When considering the relationship of the frequency of volunteering to improved health benefits, researchers have found that there is a "volunteering threshold" for health benefits. That is to say, volunteers must be engaged in a certain amount of volunteering in order to derive health benefits from the volunteer activities. Once that threshold is met, no additional health benefits are acquired by doing volunteering more. The definition of considerable volunteering has been variously defined by these studies as 1) volunteering with two or more organizations; 2) 100 hours or more of volunteer activities per year; and 3) at least 40 hours of volunteering per year. (Oman et al., 1999; Lum and Lightfoot, 2005; Luoh and Herzog, 2002; Musick et al., 1999) Volunteering leads to greater life satisfaction and lower rates of depression. Evidence indicates that volunteering has a positive effect on social psychological factors, such as a personal sense of purpose and accomplishment, and enhances a person's social networks to

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buffer stress and reduce disease risk. (Herzog et al., 1998; Greenfield and Marks, 2004; Harlow and Cantor, 1996) According to one study, when older adults volunteered in 1986, they experienced lower rates of depression in 1994. (Musick and Wilson, 2003) Volunteering and physical well-being are part of a positive reinforcing cycle. A study of longitudinal; data from the Americans' Changing Lives survey found that those who volunteered in 1986 reported higher levels of happiness, life-satisfaction, self-esteem, a sense of control over life, and physical health in 1989, while those in 1986 who reported higher levels of happiness, life-satisfaction, self-esteem, a sense of control over life, and physical health were more likely to volunteer in 1989. (Thoits and Hewitt, 2001)

*excerpts from Health Benefits of Volunteerism: A Review of Recent Research (from the National Service website.

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An annual recognition event is held for active volunteers. We are well aware that even simple forms of

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recognition are truly appreciated. Local dignitaries are included and are anxious to laud their appreciation for the service provided to the community. A banquet facility is utilized for the affair; entertainment is arranged, and special recognition of individuals for longevity and other awards are presented. Donations from local merchants and the community at large in addition to grant funds allows us to provide small gifts to each volunteer. In addition to the annual event, birthday cards are sent to our volunteers and articles featuring their accomplishments are printed in local newspapers, and in the volunteer E-newsletter. Most stations at which we place volunteers have their own yearly events, some of which are elaborate affairs.

Program Management

Senior Services Associates, Inc. sponsors RSVP of McHenry and Kane Counties, in Illinois and has done so since 1987. The RSVP Director has been in place for 21 years and receives consistent positive feedback on annual grant applications as well as progress reports. There have been no issues addressed during compliance visits by Program Specialist, James Watts.

The sponsoring agency has an active board and advisory council who oversee the operations of this well-established program. With the feedback from a "Stakeholder Survey" which was done as a self-assessment of the project, both strengths and challenges were addressed. RSVP works closely with area agencies and those who provide service in the communities we serve. United Way organizations, the Health Department, and other agencies perform needs assessments. This provides our program with information insuring that we are collaborating with programs/agencies that are working to meet the needs of the community.

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As new stations are added to our roster, which is currently at 118, the MOU is signed. At the same time, in most cases, the station has a volunteer request that is also submitted. On the request form, we ask for information about the impact this volunteer assignment would make on the agency. We ask the agency to give us data reflecting information such as the number of clients served, the amount of revenue they hope to raise through an event, or pounds of food that are collected as a result of the volunteer efforts, etc. Time sheets are an essential part of measuring impact.

RSVP works with the local AARP program where tax counselors are recruited and are trained through the national program. 40 hours of training are provided as the tax laws are constantly changing 50 volunteers are processing 2,000 returns annually. Resale shops depend heavily on the recruitment by RSVP. 45 volunteers are in place locally where funds are raised to assist with Home of Sparrow (benefits homeless women and children), Habitat Restore (Habitat for Humanity), House of Hope Resale (helping local families in crisis through Project Hope), Hi-Hat Resale Shop (Delnor Foundation), Bethesda Thrift Shop (benefits Bethesda Lutheran Communities), and Centegra resale shop (proceeds going to the Centegra Foundation). Over 8,500 hours are given annually at seven resale shops. Administrative and clerical assignments are managed with the help of 100 RSVP volunteers at 19 stations throughout McHenry and Kane Counties. Volunteers assist with answering phones, data input, and mailings. These tasks are important and to struggling non-profits who have experienced financial cuts, this volunteer support has become even more critical.

The balance of volunteers working in Primary Focus Areas is currently 85%, there are few "active" stations that risk "graduation". Several stations were non-responsive when it was time to update paperwork, so it was easy to eliminate them getting our station number down to a manageable 118. Encouraging volunteer participation in Primary Focus Areas is always a key component during

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orientation and placement.

To be sure that goals and expectations are established, we maintain contact with our station coordinators. Currently three offices in our two counties have RSVP volunteer coordinators. Because there have been relationships built between the stations and RSVP staff, it is not difficult to obtain necessary information for reports. We periodically contact active volunteers to assure their assignments are satisfactory and personally rewarding for them. This is a challenging area because we need to balance our need for ongoing assessment and feedback without over-managing or otherwise interfering with volunteer/client relationship.

Our sponsor, Senior Services Associates, maintains a separate cost center for the RSVP program, both for revenue and expenses. We utilize a twelve-digit system of account numbers to ensure that direct and indirect expenses are recorded by location, funding body, as well as by program. This system allows us the flexibility to share resources with other programs and locations for more effective use where needed, yet maintains accurate allocation of funding and expenses to the proper program. The sponsor also applies for supplemental grants, such as County Senior Referendum funds. The sponsor conducts fundraising events where both cash and donations in-kind from recipients to help to provide additional funding.

Organizational Capability

*Management Experience. Senior Services Associates, Inc.(SSA) sponsors the RSVP programs of McHenry and Kane Counties, Illinois. Senior Services began service in 1973 in the Elgin area and since that time has expanded the service area to cover all of Kane, Kendall and McHenry Counties. Beginning with an adult day center, the agency began on a very small scale and has grown until today it offers a wide range of programs, enabling seniors to remain independent in their own

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residences as long as possible. In 1987, Senior Services undertook sponsorship of RSVP in McHenry and Kane Counties. In 2012, RSVP successfully wrote the grant to cover Kendall County.

***Program Leadership.** Bette Schoenholtz, our Executive Director, began serving the community in 1973 when the agency opened its doors and she is still in that position today. This longevity coupled with her vast experience in the non-profit world is a major asset. The Senior Services Business Manager likewise has been in her post for almost 20 years, and the Volunteer Coordinator responsible for the Elgin area has been with the organization since 2001. Overall, the stability of the Senior Services staff provides a base of knowledge and experience that is of immense value when administering to the senior population and interacting with community leaders. The current RSVP Director, Deborah Danitz, started working with the senior population in 1977 and assumed her RSVP directorship in 1992. More recent additions to the support staff have been involved with the agency for at least two years. Staff is encouraged to attend appropriate trainings (recruitment, fundraising, board training, etc.), some are provided very affordably through the United Way's Volunteer Center

***Financial and Grants Management Experience.** The sponsoring agency, Senior Services Associates, utilizes Blackbaud (Intuit) Fundware financial and grant accounting software. SSA receives several grants from the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging. Reports are done quarterly on finances and demographics. The Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, and an independent auditing firm perform annual audits and SSA repeatedly receives the highest audit evaluation, an "unqualified opinion," and have not had an accompanying management letter for over 15 years. Form A133 is filed annually by our sponsoring agency. The non-Federal share will be supported by State funding, McHenry County Referendum, and foundation dollars, as well as fundraising efforts.

***Managing Volunteer Programs.** Our sponsoring agency, Senior Services Associates deals with large numbers of senior citizens each day at our four senior centers. These senior centers offer activity programs to enhance senior living. They count approximately 15,000 seniors (resident(s) in Kane and

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McHenry Counties) among the clients they assist. Case Managers who deal with their issues are all professionally certified. Seniors come to us with a multitude of issues/concerns and seeking information. Our sponsor's staff encourages those who are able, to consider volunteering through RSVP. Many of our best recruits come from referrals made by our Information and Assistance staff. Many of our highly active and skilled volunteers to assist with Senior Services programs, encompassing many of the Healthy Futures focus area (benefits assistance, friendly visiting, transportation, and others). These programs fit well with the Agency's mission of allowing seniors the opportunity to remain independent and in their own homes.

*Organizations Capacity & Management Support. Senior Services Associates has a Board of Directors, which includes a finance committee, resource committee and personnel committee that meet regularly to assure adequate resources for programs. They annually review and revise policies and procedures, including travel, all necessary expenditures, and additional expenditures depending on budget constraints. The sponsoring agency is eager to send staff to appropriate trainings, conferences, in addition to mandated events sponsored by CNS and IDOA. Personnel policies are reviewed annually and job descriptions were updated in 2009, adding focus areas and necessary skills to perform assigned duties. Under contractual agreement with the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, our Policies and Procedures Manual and Personnel Policies must be updated at least every 2 years. Supervisors perform annual personnel evaluations; the Executive Director evaluates supervisors. Satisfaction surveys are sent to clients annually and shared with Board and other funding bodies. We conduct a Strategic Planning meeting annually, attended by staff, Board, and Advisory Councils, whose job it is to bring to Senior Services the needs of the senior community, and community members. This meeting produces a review of existing programs and creative ideas to improve our operations and services. The previous year's plans and accomplishments, as well as difficulties, are reviewed and goals are set for the coming year.

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*Organizations Procedures for Self-Assessment. Supervisors perform annual personnel evaluations; the Executive Director evaluates supervisors. The results of Satisfaction Surveys sent to clients annually are shared with the Board, Advisory Councils, and other funding bodies. We annually conduct a Strategic Planning meeting attended by staff, Board, and Advisory Councils, whose job it is to bring to Senior Services the needs of the senior community, and community members. The previous year's plans and accomplishments, as well as difficulties, are reviewed and goals are set for the coming year.

Other

MLK Day of Service -- The third week in January 5 RSVP volunteers will be supplied with materials provided by CNS -- book marks and stickers will be given to children at two Head Start sites in McHenry County 50 children will be provided materials and along with staff, volunteers will present a program on the work of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Senior Corps Week -- During the first week in May volunteers will be recognized through press releases, letters to the editors, highlighting the impact RSVP volunteers have made on the communities they serve. Recruitment efforts will be done through open house events in McHenry and Kane Counties.

Sept 11 Day of Service -- 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service -- This September 11th event is held at the Johnsburg Library where a veterans organization works with RSVP volunteers who will sing patriotic songs as they form the "Circle of Flags". This event has grown in the four years that they have been organized and the impact is shown on the faces of those who attend.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A