



# Narratives

## Executive Summary

An estimated 160 RSVP volunteers will serve in Carbon County. They will provide healthy futures to families and individuals struggling to meet their daily needs, educate and mentor our youth, engage our veterans, provide economic opportunities for those who are struggling, protect our environment, perform outreach in disaster preparedness, build the capacity of local organizations to better serve the community, and fulfill other community priorities. They will do this through a network of 22 stations, including two Home Health Agencies, the Food Bank, Senior Center, three Elementary schools, the detention Center and Head Start. Additional sites include United Way, our Veterans Clinic, the recycling Coalition, Emergency Services office, Hospital, Museums, and Community Clothing Closet. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, 44 volunteers will have provided ongoing companionship to 100 homebound individuals extending the time they can remain independent in their own homes, provided respite for 40 families dealing with end of life care of their loved one, and provided over 400 families (monthly) with healthy, nutritious food, and education on extending their food dollar. The CNCS federal investment of \$40,486 will be supplemented by \$63,200 in local support.

## Strengthening Communities

Carbon County is home to 21,403 residents. Of those residents, 3,146 individuals (15.1%) are living below the poverty level, which is higher than both Utah and National averages. Of those in poverty 62% are female head of households. The median age in Carbon County is 33, yet the senior population of 2,903 individuals (65 and over) is 5% higher than the state average at 14% and growing. Of those seniors, 7.6 percent are in poverty (also higher than the state average).

Carbon County saw only a 4% growth in population over the last 10 years, as compared to 11% nationally, and 23% in the State of Utah. This may be due to the fact that the main industry in Carbon County is Coal Mining, which first brought settlers here in the late 1800's, and is the source of our

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diversity in this small rural town. Due to the unstable nature of coal mines and the move to alternate energy sources, residents often find themselves facing joblessness and economic hardship; young people also tend to move out of the area as they look for more diverse and better paying jobs elsewhere. This hurts our community as a whole. Carbon County's median family income of \$44,68 is also significantly less than both the Utah and National figures (55,183 and 50,221 respectively). All told, we are an economically disadvantaged, slow growing, aging community.

That being said, our struggles are also our strengths; residents and organizations are very good at working together and pooling resources to get things done. Our county has a strong history of helping each other, and Carbon County RSVP plays an integral role in continuing that tradition.

Carbon County RSVP utilizes an online database to track and manage volunteers; as well as develop and post volunteer job descriptions for Stations. From this system we are able to track volunteer hour and numbers, check the status of MOU's and what follow-up is needed with stations and volunteers. We are also working with the software developer to be able to enter and track outcomes directly into our system as we collect the data. We will continue to keep all paper copies -- but are working to streamline the data into one easy to use system.

We work closely with our volunteer stations, visiting with them monthly to check-up on volunteers and assure the needs of the station and volunteers are being met. We also invite all human service agencies to a monthly gathering of information and resource sharing. It has allowed us to build strong ties with non-profit programs, agencies, and government offices, and be seen as a dependable resource in our community.

We have partnered up with our local Food Bank, Community Action, our local United Way, and our Youth Services Program to work on a County-wide Needs Assessment. We are in the first year, and have completed the survey portion, collected hard data, and held two community forums. We have engaged human service agencies, city and county government, the business sector, low-income

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clients, and the community at-large in the process. This County-wide assessment will be an ongoing "living" document, and utilized as a guide for all of us, as we continue to work towards meeting the needs in our community. (see attachment: Goal of Community Needs Assessment)

In our Primary focus area -- Healthy Futures - Volunteers will focus on the efforts of the Food Bank , and our Home Health and Hospice programs. Volunteers will work with the food bank to increase the food available to clients, will help manage the warehouse and greet clients. Volunteers will also be used in the Community Garden to plant, tend and harvest fresh vegetables during the growing season. It has been just over a decade since the Community Garden was first started in our area, and was the result of one of our RSVP volunteer's dedication and effort to get land donated and work begun.

Though he's no longer with us, and the garden has since moved to a larger location -- our volunteers are still an integral part in making it a success. In addition the Food Bank has also been given access to a fruit orchard thanks to a connection that our program made with a local landowner. Volunteers are allowed to come in and harvest as much fruit as they can -- and in return keep the property maintained (in regards to the fruit trees). According to our Community Needs Assessment -- individuals and families are also in need of additional education on choosing healthy food -- and stretching their food dollar. Our volunteers will assist the Extension Agency to provide nutrition classes to clients (or potential clients) of the food bank -- by helping to expand the size of classes through targeted outreach efforts in the community.

Also under Healthy Futures, volunteers will visit with homebound elderly through our two local Home Health care programs. Volunteers will visit with clients in an informal setting -- checking on their needs and well-being, and providing companionship on a weekly basis. This program, originally the Circle of Friends Program, was also started with the help of several RSVP volunteer's and a local Nursing student about a decade ago. It has since been embraced by both of our local Home Health agencies and sponsored by them. Volunteers are managed by the agencies volunteer coordinator and

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clients are picked not only through their referrals, but referrals from our office as well. Volunteers will also work with the Hospice Programs -- internal to both Home Health agencies -- by providing respite on a weekly basis to families who are caring for loved ones in the final stages of life.

Throughout all of our volunteer activities we are working to engage our local veterans. We have a working relationship with Veteran's of Foreign Wars and American Legion Auxiliary, and plan to continue to ask for their time, talent and expertise in our volunteer efforts. Though we will try to place them in our focus areas, we also want to place them wherever they feel most engaged and fulfilled.

We are currently working with our veterans to get them engaged with our local schools beyond the one or two that go in and talk about their military service, to engage in more one-on-one relationships as appropriate within each school system.

Volunteers are also given the opportunity to participate in several large scale community activities throughout the year -- including MLK Day, Volunteer Week, and Make A Difference day. We partner with agencies to assure intergenerational interaction, broad community support, and to ensure we are meeting some basic human needs. Volunteers also serve in over 20 agencies within our County on an ongoing basis. Volunteers help all of the agencies that we work with to stretch their limited resources and enhance the programs and services they offer to the community.

In addition to volunteers, we help enhance the capacity of organizations within our community by providing advice and resources on recruiting and retaining volunteers within their agencies. We help agencies clarify their needs, so that we are able to better meet them through volunteer placement.

Since we also work well with other government agencies and sit on several community councils, we are able to refer many organizations to additional resources and advice from outside sources -- which further enhance their ability to serve the community and their volunteers. We have also placed at least one volunteer at each agency that falls within our Community Priorities to help with recruitment, training, and management of volunteers.

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### Recruitment and Development

We assure a high quality experience for volunteers by working with agencies to develop a broad spectrum of volunteer opportunities. During our initial sit-down meeting with agencies, we ask that they look at all of the ways that volunteers can serve in their agencies -- in addition to traditional roles. Each community organization or agency is given a sheet that asks them to think about their needs, how volunteers can meet those needs, and the impact that will make. We utilize these sheets not only to write performance measures, but also to help agencies think outside of the box in terms of how volunteers can best serve them. We also help develop the leadership potential of volunteers by engaging them in RSVP specific activities, such as our Cell phones for Senior's program, MLK Day, National Volunteer week activities, and Make A difference Day. Volunteers are then able to reflect on their service through an online forum on our Volunteer Solutions site, as well as an in-house journal, that lets them record their thoughts and feelings about their specific volunteer service and how it impacts both themselves and their community. We also send out an annual volunteer satisfaction survey -- to gauge how our volunteers feel about their service, and to find out how we can better meet their needs as volunteers.

Providing Training to Volunteers - Orientation is provided one-on-one with each volunteer at time of sign-up. They are also provided with a Volunteer Manual, and required forms. All volunteers also have the opportunity to attend a yearly re-orientation - which is held once every six months. Volunteers are also provided with on-site orientation and training at their Stations. Volunteer Station Supervisors - Station supervisors are provided with orientation about RSVP and our policies. They are also provided with a binder at signing of the MOU which includes all of the information needed to effectively manage RSVP volunteers - including forms required by RSVP, and the volunteer manual.

We will continue to build and retain our corps of volunteers by recruiting, engaging, and recognizing volunteers. Recruiting Volunteers - We recruit volunteers by speaking bi-monthly to the seniors

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attending lunch at the Senior Center; Submit a monthly article or photo (with caption) to the local papers, on volunteering; keep a current F.Y.I. (short synopsis and tag line about Carbon County RSVP) in the paper on a weekly basis; and speak bi-monthly to other service groups, church groups, and businesses about RSVP, it's benefits, and volunteer opportunities. We also create flyers, and use current RSVP posters and brochures, putting them up in places frequented by the senior population; and submit a monthly article to the Senior Center Newsletter about volunteer opportunities, and the benefits of getting involved with RSVP. PSA's are updated as new messages come out, and are sent into the local radio and TV Station for occasional playtime. In addition, we have a website, which we promote heavily in all media venues and community agencies as a place to both recruit and request volunteers. Retaining Volunteers - Included with the volunteer application is an Interest/Skills Assessment form to give us a better understanding of our volunteer's needs. At sign-up a one-on-one orientation is conducted to familiarize the volunteer with the program - a volunteer manual, list of volunteer activities, required forms, and contact card are also given to each volunteer. A bi-annual orientation is held for existing volunteers to keep them up-to-date on information related to RSVP, as well as give them a chance to have their questions and concerns addressed. A quarterly RSVP newsletter is sent out, which features volunteers and highlights stations, and includes additional information of interest to volunteers. We also try to call an average of 2-5 volunteers weekly to discuss their placement and satisfaction with their volunteer activities. Recognizing Volunteers - A formal recognition is provided on an annual basis for all volunteers. It includes gifts, prizes, and special recognitions - including special thanks from volunteer stations and elected officials. Volunteers are also recognized in the local newspaper - through articles or pictures, submitted on a monthly basis - and highlighted in the RSVP newsletter. Birthday cards are also sent out monthly as a way to let volunteers know that we are thinking about them, and value their efforts.

### **Program Management**

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Carbon County RSVP develops and manages Volunteer Stations and Volunteer Assignments in the following ways: Volunteer Stations - The Director participates in local meetings that address community needs, such as the Interagency Council, Council on Aging, and the Healthy Families Coalition. In this way the Director is able to stay informed of pressing community needs, best determine placement of volunteers, and find new stations in need of RSVP volunteers. New stations and staff are given orientation on RSVP, the MOU, Volunteer benefits, and Performance Measure requirements. The MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is updated at least every three years -- and includes responsibilities of both the Station and RSVP, ensuring compliance with RSVP regulations. Volunteer Assignments - The RSVP Director meets with stations monthly - while picking up time sheets - to get updated job descriptions and assignments, and to address any needs or concerns of the station. New stations are assisted in filling out a Volunteer Assignment & Job Description form at the time of signing the MOU.

We will fortunately not have to graduate any stations within our project -- but have realigned where we focus our recruitment and placement efforts. We have also worked with current stations that don't fall under any of the focus areas -- to identify volunteers that will help to recruit, manage, and train volunteers in their organizations. These stations have been placed in our Community Priorities section -- albeit with lower volunteer numbers. If at a later date -- we need to graduate any of our stations -- we have already set up the framework by educating them on the new focus of our CNCS federal grant, and setting up volunteers within their organizations to spearhead recruitment and retention efforts.

We have worked closely with each of our stations to make sure they are aware of our need to track both Performance Measure outcomes and outputs -- and have either offered tools to track performance or utilized the tools they already have in place. We will collect and review progress on a quarterly basis with each station. In addition all volunteer hours, mileage, and placements are kept

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track of in our online volunteer database -- as well as, stations, and service activities. Reports are generated quarterly to share with our sponsoring officials and community stakeholders, as well as with our Advisory Council. We also produce an annual Progress report for CNCS based on our quarterly compilations. Performance measures are reviewed yearly for updates, and will be written for new stations as appropriate.

**Managing Project Resources:** Financial and in-kind resources are kept track of through the County Clerk's office -- which is held to high government standards and audited annually. In addition, we review monthly balance sheets (provided by the clerk's office) to ensure we are on track. In-kind donations are kept track of quarterly, with a report generated at the close of every year, of which both the project director and in-kind donator sign off on before being filed with the clerk's office for audit. Any resources that are brought in are designated to a specific area in our budget, and the advisory council and our appointed commissioner approves of its use and designation.

**Securing Resources:** We work with many agencies within our community to share current resources as well as leads for attaining new resources. We are part of our Utah Senior Corps Directors Association, and the Utah Volunteer Center Directors Association -- and use these affiliations, in part, to find additional resources within our community and on a statewide level. We also look within our own community for additional funding opportunities -- and have received financial support from our local United Way, Association of Governments, and the Council on Aging.

### **Organizational Capability**

Carbon County RSVP was one of the original pilot programs started in 1973, and has been sponsored by Carbon County Government for the last twenty-seven years. The organizational capacity of Carbon County RSVP includes administrative support, record keeping, and financial management from the Clerk/Auditor's office. The Auditor's office has provided any assistance RSVP has needed for staff training, audit requirements, computer systems, tracking, rules and regulations, management

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and liability training, and policies/procedures. The Carbon County Clerk's office provides fiscal record keeping/tracking and payroll responsibility. The Personnel office helps with developing comprehensive job descriptions for all employees, and assists in interviewing, hiring, and firing of all employees. All of this is in-kind support. Carbon County provides in-kind space to the Program, including all utilities, office telephone and all IT support (including purchase of equipment).

Carbon County has been very successful at managing the Carbon County RSVP volunteer program, which has kept a regular influx of volunteers who give back over 30,000 hours of volunteer time annually in Carbon County in activities that continue to meet pressing community needs. The County has also added on an additional Volunteer Center Component (including additional funding), which enables the Director to recruit, place, and recognize volunteers of all ages. The County also runs a successful weed and abatement volunteer program, county fairgrounds volunteer program, and Court-appointed volunteer program, to name a few. We have a Community Advisory Council of 17 members who represent a broad spectrum of our community, including law enforcement, schools, health and human services, people with disabilities, government, business, youth organizations, and current volunteers. These individuals offer their insight and advice on the needs of our community. They are responsible for conducting our program/community assessments annually, and help with strategic planning for our agency. Our council meets quarterly.

In the Primary Focus area of Healthy Futures -- Carbon County's RSVP Program and Volunteers have been instrumental in both setting up a Community Garden and starting a Senior Companion type program (Circle of Friends) over a decade ago. Carbon County has given the Director flexibility to support and help start-up needed programs/projects that meet critical community needs in Carbon County and are beneficial to residents. In 2011 the RSVP Program worked in conjunction with Americopr's VISTA's, Campus Compact VISTA's, United Way, and our County's Economic Department to start up a Community Clothing Closet that serves over 500 households monthly, gives

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out thousands of needed items of clothing monthly (including coats, jewelry, handbags, shoes, and backpacks), and is ran and managed completely by volunteers.

Carbon County Commissioners are strong supporters of our senior population and has shown it over many years with support for both Carbon County RSVP and the Carbon County Senior Center with large monetary and in-kind support. The County was able to secure a grant and zero interest loan funds to complete a multi-million dollar Senior Center, in which Carbon County RSVP & Volunteer Center is now housed. The county also supports any additional training that the Director needs to more effectively implement impact-based programming, and also requires periodic trainings and gives technical assistance in areas of budgeting, financial management, personnel issues, and safety.

Carbon County Commissioners also assess the Director's performance annually, and provide feedback on strengthening overall management practices of the RSVP program.

The Executive Director is located in the Carbon County Senior Citizens Center in Price, Utah. Rebecca Mason, Executive Director of the program will have principal responsibility for the project (See attachment: RSVP Director Job Description). She has served as the director for the past thirteen years. Rebecca is well known and respected in the community as a person who gets things done. She has an extensive history as a solution finder and community volunteer. Her experience includes past work as a VISTA, a VISTA Leader, VISTA Supervisor, and the Executive Director of the Helper Main Street Program (a non-profit organization). She has training and experience in grant writing, public relations, volunteer management, and fundraising, as well as many other things associated with non-profit/volunteer programs. She has served a two-year term as the Chair of the Utah Senior Service Corps Directors Association, and is in her second two-year term as treasurer. Personally, Rebecca reflects her commitment to making volunteering a priority in everyone's life, by her own example. She has been involved with Soroptimists, a local women's service organization for the past 12 years, and currently sits on the Region Board, directing policy, aiding in the success of clubs, and develop long-

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term strategic plans for over 26 clubs in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, western Nebraska, and eastern Oregon. She has also served as the PTA President at her children's elementary school, and periodically volunteers in the classroom.

Carbon County's fiscal management and oversight of the Project is done through the County Clerk-Auditors office and the County Treasurer. The County Clerk-Auditors office is responsible for all payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable. The County Treasurer's office monitors all actual money that goes in and out of the County. Carbon County uses Caselle financial software for all the County's needs. Funds that are monitored include all tax money that the County runs under -- which has two funds -- General and Municipal Services. All other funds are individually managed: including RSVP, Travel Bureau, Economic Development, the Children's Justice Center, Leisure Services, and the Senior Center, to name a few. Though individual, they all have to come through the Clerk's office for managing and auditing. These are programs which receive local, state and/or federal dollars. There are strict policies and procedures in place for managing all money. Purchasing is completed through a rigorous claims process, and monthly financials are prepared by the Clerk-Auditors office for each department, for their review. All Budgets are prepared by department heads, reviewed and adjusted (if needed) by the Clerk-Auditor, and approved annually by the County Commission. Finally, an Independent Audit of all County's records is conducted annually by Smuin, Rich, and Marsing. Both the Clerk-Auditor and Treasurer are elected officials. The Clerk-Auditor has been in his position for 17 years, and his staff has a combined total of over 30 years experience in fiscal management. All departments and employees have and adhere to: a Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, County wide Safety manual, and a strict Travel Policy.

The CNCS federal investment of \$40,486 will be supplemented by \$63,200 in local support. Of that, \$25,000 comes directly from Carbon County's general fund. Another \$13,200 comes from in-kind support of office space and utilities. The remaining support comes from pass through funding from

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State Action money (which is given to all Senior Corps programs within the State of Utah to provide mileage reimbursement to volunteers), and Title XX money through our Association of Governments office (also used for mileage reimbursement), our local United Way, volunteer-driven fundraisers, and in-kind meal reimbursement to volunteers from Stations. The County builds the funding into their budget every year for our program, and Commissioners approve the County budget at an annual public meeting every November. Both our County Government and our community support our program -- and our non-federal share is very reflective of that commitment.

### Other

N/A

### PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A