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Narratives

Executive Summary

KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Inc. (KI BOIS CAF) is a multi-purpose community action agency. Its mission is to remain dedicated to eliminating the causes of poverty and bettering the economic, mental, physical and social well being of all people, most importantly the disadvantaged, by utilizing effective coordination and administration of available resources.

Through this project, an estimated 223 Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers will serve their communities. They will provide services to veterans in a number of settings to help with emergency needs, medical needs and document completion assistance. They will deliver meals to the homebound, prepare taxes, help in classrooms, help with blood drives and Make a Difference Day.

They will also assist in disaster preparedness and capacity building by recruiting community volunteers. All of this will be carried out through a network of 61 volunteer stations. Stations include: Disabled American Veterans Centers, Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts, Veterans Administration medical clinics and hospitals, Head Start, senior citizen centers meal delivery, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, capacity building sites and other community sites. The primary focus area of this project is veterans and military families. At the end of the performance period, RSVP volunteers will have served over 2,450 individuals and their families, improving the quality of their lives, school readiness, disaster recovery, and social support.

KI BOIS CAF is requesting \$26,644 in budget support from the Corporation for these activities. KI BOIS CAF will supplement the federal budget support with \$29,268.00.

Strengthening Communities

KI BOIS Community Action Foundation (CAF) RSVP serves four counties in eastern Oklahoma; Haskell, Latimer, LeFlore and Pittsburg. These counties have a population of 120,122 persons. The area represents an area covering 4,193.27 square miles. The 18 yr old and under population represents an average 24.3% and the over 65 represents an average 16.43% of the population. The counties range

Narratives

in percentage of poverty population from 17.2 to 20.5. The average across all counties is 19.2%. The state average is 16.1%. The median household income average for the counties is \$38,923.25 which is below the state average of \$41,716.00. The population is predominantly white accounting for 74.75% of the population. American Indians are the next largest group at 15.75%. This is almost double the state average. Two or more races account for 7.08% and Black 1.9%.

The primary focus area for this project will be Veterans and Military Families. According to the website StateMaster.com, Oklahoma ranks 6th highest in the nation for civilian population who are veterans. Veterans account for 12.4% (11,329 persons) of the 18 and older population in the four county service area. Almost 50% of these veterans are from the Vietnam era. The Vietnam era veterans are part of the Baby Boomer generation and many have reached or almost reached retirement age. With this attainment there are new systems to navigate such as Medicare, Pensions, Social Security, etc.... KI BOIS CAF RSVP volunteers will be there to help with contacts, connections, help completing forms and other general information and services.

Veterans with a service-connected disability rating account for 20% of the veteran population. 8.7% of veterans ages 18-64 had income in 2010 below poverty level; 59% of those have a disability. 8.4% of veterans age 65 and over had income in 2010 below poverty level; a staggering 78% of those have a disability. Given the high percentage of veterans with a disability living below the poverty level, one of the work plans of this project will include activities to connect disabled veterans and their families to community resources to improve their quality of life.

Due to the rural nature of the service area, many resources are not available in the small communities where veterans and their families live. Many service agencies do not have the necessary staff or budgets to meet requests. It is well documented by many sources that as the Baby Boomer generation ages, they place a greater burden for services on agencies. Consequently, the Baby Boomers also provide a pool of community members with seemingly unlimited skills, experience, and knowledge.

Narratives

According to the State Department, not only does Oklahoma currently have the 8th highest suicide rate in the nation, one fourth of those are veterans. The State of Oklahoma is working to address the suicide rate among all persons but especially youth and veterans. The Project Director will be working with the veterans organizations in the service area over the next 12 months to determine how RSVP volunteers can provide service activities to assist in the reduction of suicide rates among veterans.

All statistics are taken from the 2010 Census: specifically the State and County Quick Facts, American Community Survey and American Fact Finder, unless otherwise noted.

The KI BOIS CAF RSVP project director will handle the daily management of the project volunteers and their stations. The project will maintain frequent contact with volunteers and stations through in-person/on-site visits, e-mails, phone calls, cards and social media to ensure there is a harmonious working relationship with all partners. This is the first step to highly effective assignments. Volunteer stations submit reporting paperwork on a monthly basis. As these reports are collected, the Project Director reviews them to determine if volunteers are working the prescribed number of hours in order to meet the desired outcome. If the hours are too many or too few, the Project Director will research to determine if the output/outcome can be achieved in fewer hours, the specified number of hours or if it is more labor intensive than originally planned. Once this is determined, the Project Director will confer with the site supervisor and the volunteer to determine the best course of action to maintain a highly effective approach to meeting the community need.

The Project Director prepares a weekly status report detailing activities of the program. In this report, there is an opportunity to discuss items of concern, urgency, or requiring attention, as well as, milestones achieved. This report is submitted to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for review. One of the uses of this report is to determine the need for management contact, guidance, or intervention. As this report is weekly, it keeps management current and allows for adjustment in project activities or direction as needed prior to significant departures from its mission. This helps maintain the

Narratives

effectiveness of the project director and the project activities.

RSVP volunteers will work with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) centers in the area. The volunteers will be trained by DAV to become service officers. Service officers help determine need, connect the veteran with resources to help with bills, food, transportation and other identified needs. Service officers are trained to assist with the ratings process that determines degree of disability for the Veterans Administration. They can assist veterans trying to navigate the disability system and help them understand the legalities involved pertaining to guidelines. Service officers are also trained to assist in other areas and benefits.

RSVP volunteers will also work with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Posts in the area. As veterans request assistance, volunteers will help determine need, connect the veteran and/or family with resources to help with bills, food, transportation and other identified needs. Most VFW Posts in the area hold a weekly activity for families. Volunteers help plan and staff these activities. Volunteers help plan and carry out special events throughout the year such as Easter dinner, summer fun days, back to school fairs, Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas parties with food and gifts for the children and other holiday celebrations. Many of the VFW Posts provide hot meals for their veterans. Volunteers also help represent the VFW Posts at community events and other activities that help the project achieve the desired output/outcome.

RSVP volunteers will provide services at the Veterans Hospital in Talihina, Oklahoma. This is a very small, very rural community. The hospital provides intermediate to skilled nursing care and domiciliary care for wartime veterans. Most veterans in the hospital reside there permanently. Volunteers help collect daily living items for the patients, provide visits and increased social ties, and make or donate Christmas presents. They also provide other service activities as needed.

RSVP volunteers will work with the Veterans Administration (VA) outpatient clinic in Hartshorne, Oklahoma. The clinic provides primary care, mental health, social work and lab onsite to enrolled

Narratives

veterans who live in a six-county area. Volunteers provide a number of services at the clinic to improve the patient experience.

RSVP volunteers will provide transportation whenever possible for veterans needing to access medical services at the Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center or other services at the VA Regional Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Muskogee is anywhere from a one hour drive to a three hour drive from different locations in the service area.

As mentioned above, Oklahoma ranks 6th highest in the nation for civilian population who are veterans. In this service area, veterans are drawn to the areas where more veteran's services are available, such as the outpatient clinic, a larger VFW Post, the American Legion, and the DAV Center as well as job opportunities and mainstream services. Census statistics show a large number of the veterans living in the service area are below the poverty level and are disabled. Proposed service activities will connect them to needed veteran and community services, help them traverse the paperwork and necessary documentation and possibly help them apply to re-evaluate their disability rating thus leading to an improved quality of life for them and their family. Disabled veterans residing in the hospital will benefit in a number of ways from service activities including having access to everyday items to improve their hospital life. Veterans, in general, will be educated about available resources, benefits and how to access them. RSVP volunteers will be the catapult to move veterans and their families toward greater quality of life through education, knowledge, accessibility of services and benefits and connecting them with their community.

As noted, the Primary Focus Area for this project is Veterans and Military Families. As detailed in the paragraphs above, there are significant service activities planned to benefit veterans and military families. Veterans and military families will also receive services through other Focus Areas as well.

These include Education, Economic Opportunity, Healthy Futures and Capacity Building.

Recruitment and Development

Narratives

It is the goal of KI BOIS CAF to provide a high quality, mutually satisfying experience for volunteers, volunteer stations, beneficiaries, project staff and the sponsor. In order to achieve this goal, a commitment has been made to considerable planning and preparation of a recruiting and training agenda. The recruiting plan addresses various methods for approaching, recruiting, and retaining volunteers and stations. Recruiting will be year round and achieved through a variety of methods. Community Action Agencies (CAA) provide a number of services from prescription assistance to housing for potential volunteers. Efforts will be made to showcase volunteer opportunities to participants of these and additional programs offered. Recruitment will also be conducted through contacts with clergy, church auxiliary groups, senior citizen centers, civic and ethnic groups, and community engagement through special events and every day activities. KI BOIS CAF will also utilize web-based recruiting methods and is already signed up with VolunteerMatch.org.

A high quality experience begins with appropriate training for both the volunteers and the station supervisors. Volunteer station supervisors will receive an orientation to the Senior Corps and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. They will also receive training on what is expected of the station and procedures for completing required paperwork. Station supervisors will work with project staff to identify the needs and priorities to be addressed by the assignment(s) and how to appropriately evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of volunteers and their assignments. Volunteers will receive a pre-service orientation and on-site assignment specific training. Every effort is made to place the volunteer at a site that will be mutually beneficial for them and the site and provide a personal growth experience for the volunteer through sharing and service learning. The Project Director will follow up with new volunteers at 30 day intervals for the first three months to determine if they are satisfied with the assignment and/or need additional training. Additional training will provided during the year and will include topics pertinent to seniors, enhancing the volunteer experience, changes to the project, leadership and other issues as they arise.

Narratives

As noted in the Strengthening Communities narrative, the population is predominantly White. The next largest population is American Indian. The majority of these are members of the Choctaw Nation. Recruitment and outreach are conducted at the Choctaw Nation senior citizen centers, Choctaw specific events and activities. Recruitment is also conducted in rural minority communities throughout the service area at their senior citizen centers, fairs and events. Veterans and their families are recruited at Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and/or Disabled American Veterans sponsored events in addition to the normal venues. Persons with disabilities are recruited through the already mentioned venues as there are no other specific places to approach this target population.

Part of ensuring a high quality experience for volunteers is providing consistent on-going recognition of their contributions to their assignments, volunteer stations and communities. Simple recognitions can be made by the volunteer stations on a regular basis and the project will also recognize, document and publicize outstanding achievements by volunteers throughout the year. The project will sponsor two formal recognition events on an annual basis. One will cover volunteers in Haskell and LeFlore Counties; the other will cover volunteers in Latimer and Pittsburg Counties. Funds are included in the budget to accommodate these two events. Recognition is key to retaining volunteers, so is adequate training for the placement. Volunteers are surveyed annually and given the opportunity to provide feedback on their assignment and the program. The Project Director also makes personal contact at other times during the year to assess volunteer and station satisfaction.

Program Management

KI BOIS CAF, as the sponsoring agency, will conduct the RSVP Project Self-Assessment on an annual basis. Section I Programming for Impact reviews the "Development and Management of Volunteer Stations" and "On-site Volunteer Training and Supervision by Volunteer Station." Once completed, the strength rating in these sections is an indicator of how effective the management of stations is and if it is in compliance with the RSVP program regulations and applicable laws. Any line item with a

Narratives

rating below "Good" will be reviewed by the Project Director and the Chief Operating Officer. A plan of action will be developed to improve program performance in that area. Items with a plan of correction will be reviewed monthly until the rating improves to "Good" or above.

KI BOIS CAF is active in local service coalitions forging valuable partnerships with agencies and providers across the service area. These relationships allow for increased capacity to recruit volunteer stations that address specified community needs. The Project Director will work with community partners and the Advisory Group to identify and approach potential stations. Volunteer stations providing assignments that address community needs outside the Primary Focus Area will be managed in the same manner as those inside the Primary Focus Area. The Project Director will provide pre-service training to the site supervisor and other appropriate staff. The Project Director will conduct in person visits on a monthly basis for the first six months of service. The Project Director will continue regular visits as long as there is an active assignment or Memorandum of Understanding. The Project Director will also maintain frequent contact through e-mails, phone calls, cards and social media. All these methods of contact help streamline management of stations, volunteers and progress toward specified outputs and outcomes.

As community needs change, program design will change. This may require volunteer stations and assignments to change. In order to express our appreciation to existing sites, volunteer stations that no longer align with the program design will be given the opportunity to participate in capacity building activities. Volunteers with assignments at these stations will be offered the opportunity to perform capacity building service activities at their current station or they may elect to choose an assignment at a different volunteer station or remain as volunteer outside the RSVP project.

Narratives

The RSVP project uses the Volunteer Reporter software package to accurately track and report on volunteer activities. Volunteer stations submit reporting paperwork on a monthly basis. As these reports are collected, the Project Director reviews them for accuracy and completeness then enters them in Volunteer Reporter. On a quarterly basis, the Project Director reviews volunteer and station activities to ensure they are still aligned and progressing toward the outputs and/or outcomes in their respective work plans. If adjustments are needed, the Project Director will make contact with the station and the volunteers to identify any issues or barriers. The Project Director will work with both parties to make any necessary changes and to ensure appropriate data is being collected and measured for reporting purposes.

KI BOIS CAF draws from over 40 years experience operating a multitude of state and federally funded programs requiring management of financial and in-kind resources. KI BOIS CAF has established both internal and external controls to ensure compliance with state and federal rules and regulations concerning the management of federal funds. The Financial Procedures Manual governs all transactions relating to financial and in-kind resources. Expenditures are approved by the Program Director and their supervisor. The Fiscal Officer ensures funds are available for payment. Budget meetings are held quarterly between accounting and program staff. Financials are reviewed monthly by management, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee to ensure efficient and effective use of resources.

Organizational Capability

KI BOIS CAF has in place an organization chart that governs the staff structure. The daily operations of the agency are supervised by an Executive Director/CEO who has been with the agency for 40+ years, Associate Director/CFO (more than 26 years), Associate Director/COO (almost 20 years), and

Narratives

a Fiscal Officer (more than 16 years). Also in place are a Human Resources Director, Accounting Supervisor, Director of Planning, and numerous support staff. An RSVP project director is in place to manage the daily activities of the program. Day to day operational support will be provided to the project director by the Associate Director/COO and the Director of Planning. KI BOIS CAF has extensive controls in place and outlined in the agency's financial procedures manual to ensure that federal funds are safeguarded. KI BOIS CAF has established both internal and external controls to ensure state and federal compliance with rules and regulations concerning the management of federal funds. The KI BOIS CAF Financial Procedures Manual is reviewed annually by an outside auditor during the agency's independent audit, as well as other funding sources. Financial data collection is carried out by the agency's fiscal staff. Programmatic data collection is the responsibility of the Project Director.

The KI BOIS CAF RSVP will employ one project director. Ms. Marcia Mitchell is the current project director and will continue in that role if this application is funded. This position is sustained through multiple funding streams including CNCS, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, and Community Services Block Grant funds.

KI BOIS CAF RSVP project been providing services to veterans for seven years. KI BOIS CAF also provides a multitude of services to veterans through their other programs; such as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, transportation, housing, emergency services, The Oaks Rehabilitative Services Center, and others. KI BOIS CAF has operated a Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) for more than 35 years in 4 counties and also operates a Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) in 14 counties. KI BOIS CAF utilizes volunteers in several programs and in the past operated a Volunteers in Action program. In 2011, the agency had 3,681 volunteers and 79,654 volunteer hours donated. KI BOIS CAF has

Narratives

operated and continues to operate multiple programs that directly benefit seniors; i.e. FGP, Rx for Oklahoma, Medicare counseling, four HUD Section 202 housing complexes, ADvantage case management, the Living Choice program, and, previously, a Green Thumb Project. KI BOIS CAF has multiple programs that are outcome/impact driven and has operated 3 Corporation programs: RSVP, FGP and Americorps.

KI BOIS CAF has an administrative office and outreach offices in the 5 counties that comprise the agency's base service area. The agency has additional programmatic offices and a presence in as many as 21 counties. The office supplies and technology equipment is in place to sustain these locations. KI BOIS CAF is governed by a tri-partite board with representatives from the low-income, private and public sectors. The Board of Directors is comprised of 30 individuals representing the three named sectors. The Board of Directors sets and monitors overall agency strategic priorities and operational systems. Internal policies and purchasing procedures are detailed in the financial procedures manual described above. Personnel policies are in place to govern the management of staff. All policies and procedures are reviewed by an independent auditor, as well as, multiple funding sources. The Board of Directors approves all policy and procedures documents. Each year KI BOIS CAF distributes and collects community surveys to determine what the general population perceives as the greatest needs and causes of poverty in their community. Low-income families, business and community leaders, and elected officials participate in the survey. The RSVP Advisory Council is an integral partner in ensuring these surveys are completed by seniors in their communities. The compiled results of the survey are presented to the KI BOIS CAF Board of Directors. The Board then formulates a strategic direction for program planning and current services in the coming year. This information is also disseminated to the programs for use with their advisory councils in planning their future direction. For over 40 years, KI BOIS CAF has managed both federal and state funds with

Narratives

multiple funding streams and allocated costs to different funding sources in accordance with general accounting practices and Office of Management and Budget requirements. The Accounting staff currently manages a budget of over \$35,000,000.00 annually and, as mentioned above, has a Financial Procedures Manual in place to govern all financial activities of the agency.

KI BOIS CAF will provide financial support for the non-federal share through multiple funding streams including Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Community Services Block Grant funds and local agency funds.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A