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Executive Summary

This planning grant will be used to develop an AmeriCorps program which will engage AmeriCorps members to address the needs of Tribal disconnected youth as well as provide preventative measures to decrease the number of Tribal youth who become disconnected in the future in Michigan's Upper Peninsula; specifically the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians' seven county service area.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count Indicator Brief Reducing the Number of Disconnected Youth, Native American youth are nearly twice as likely to wind up without a high school diploma or be employed between the ages of 16 and 19 years. The national average for Disconnected Youth is 8% for all youth with a 15% average for Native American youth.

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians serves a seven county area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Although Michigan is not classified as a rural state due its population of 175 persons per square mile, the seven county service area is drastically different at 20.6 people per square mile. This leaves neighborhoods under resourced. Residents struggle with acquiring proper supports due to transportation issues or even lack of services.

By developing a service program that provides special attention to Native American youth, Americorps members will help to reduce the number of youth becoming disconnected in their community. A thorough process of data collection will be implemented, starting with a Native American census being performed through a partnership with Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University, and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians during the summer of 2013, this Planning Grant will allow for further information gathering that draws an even closer look into what is causing Native American youth to become disconnected at twice the rate of their national counterparts. Information will be gathered via a household survey of Native American households, community forums in each of the seven counties within the service area, and online data collection methods.

Through use of an expert evaluation consultant, gaps in support services will be identified. Youth Education and Activities staff will then work with the expert to determine how bridging those gaps can happen at each of the service sites. Member activities will be defined. Performance

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measurements will be developed as well as the tools to collect the data necessary to guide the work of the project. Special attention will be given to follow Native American youth who are at-risk of becoming disconnected throughout several years to determine success and assist with project adjustments when necessary.

The evaluation expert will be available throughout the planning year to ensure appropriate staff support and understanding as performance measurements are tested.

An intensive training plan will be developed to ensure member success. Staff and member training activities will include but not be limited to the following:

MEMBER - data collection, cultural sensitivity, area resources, intervention tactics, partnership development, positive youth development, and all necessary Americorps content.

STAFF - solid member development and supervision, expand networking skills to identify, build, and maintain partnerships with tribal and non-tribal programs, services, and organizations that work with youth and young adults, especially those that work with young adults who are disconnected from school or work, all necessary Americorps content, and performance measurement.

Staff training will take place no less than bi-weekly. One training each month will take place in the typically scheduled face to face staff meetings. The other training will take place via online conferencing using GoTo meetings and conference calls. This rigorous schedule for training will prepare all staff with project knowledge, ownership, and direction. Discussion of project plans will be ongoing throughout grant cycle.

Member activities are predicted to target Native American youth beginning in middle school; to prevent academic performance gaps through tutoring, high school ages; to continue academic support services as well as assisting with career planning, and college access, and beyond high school up to age 24 years to ensure services available are being accessed. These activities will see that disconnection rates are reduced.

Targeted effort will be given to recruitment of Native American people, low income residents, and area

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residents who understand the disparities of the rural community. Native American Elders will also be targeted for recruitment. Recruitment will take place via the Tribal monthly newspaper, radio, print, and social networking announcements of the opportunity to serve. Information sessions will also be held to allow for deeper understanding of interested potential members. Local universities will receive position announcements as well.

The timeline for the above activities is as follows:

August 2013 - 1. Planning, Evaluation, and Training Consultants recruited. 2. Grant announcement released via media.

September - 1. Planning Consultant and Project Director attend grantee meeting in Washington DC. 2. Evaluation Consultant meets with Project Director, Planning coordinator, and YEA staff to acquaint with the team and process 3. Prepare survey and community session questions 4. Begin recruitment for community sessions

October - 1. Hold community sessions 2. Write, print, and conduct mailing survey 3. Staff training begins

November - 1. Data and Information gleaned from Community Forums processed into comprehensive report. 2. Staff training continues.

December - 1. Evaluation report released to staff and then community via newspaper, social media, etc. 2. Staff training continues 3. Staff begin discussions of current resources, needed resources, and potential member activities in order to develop work plans.

January - 1. Member work plans finalized 2. Staff training continues 3. Member training development begins 3. Performance measurement tools developed

February 1. Member training development continues 2. Staff training continues 3. Performance measurement tools developed and finalized

March - 1. Site exploration begins to best acclimate Planning consultant with view of programming options (prep for site application) 2. Staff training continues 3. Member training finalized

April - 1. Site application begun 2. Staff training continues

May - 1. Site application written and submitted

June - Member Training materials developed and ready for print

July - Member recruitment sessions held

August - Members recruited

Organizational Capability

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The Sault Tribe has a history of demonstrated organizational capacity and is well-poised to work in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service to realize an Americorps initiative.

Since the time of federal recognition in 1972, the Sault Tribe has experienced enormous growth. The Sault Tribe is now the largest employer in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, with over 3,300 employees and a payroll of \$40 million. The Tribe's annual economic impact is estimated at more than \$300 million and it is expected to exceed half a billion dollars within the next two years. This is a major accomplishment for the Sault Tribe, which in 1972 had to fight for paved roads and city water and sewer services for members living within the city limits of Sault Ste. Marie.

The Sault Tribe operates a variety of enterprises in order to strive towards a goal of becoming economically self-sufficient. The largest of these enterprises are the five Kewadin Casinos, which are located within the service area. Kewadin Casinos, while providing employment opportunities for tribal members and other residents of the eastern and central Upper Peninsula, are modest ventures which do not realize the lucrative profits of other tribal gaming enterprises. The region's tourism-dependent economy supports seasonal businesses rather than year-round stable economic development.

A Law Enforcement Department, a juvenile detention facility, and a Tribal Court (including a juvenile justice system) are operated under the authority of the regulatory branch of the Sault Tribe. Other regulatory branch divisions include a Housing Commission, Natural Resources, Human Resources, Tribal Prosecutor's Office, Tribal Registrar, and a Tribal Legal Department.

The Sault Tribe provides over 100 membership service programs including Education, Health, Culture & Language, Recreation, and Elderly Services. Social services are provided through the Tribe's Anishnabek Child & Family Services (ACFS), which serves as the foster care agency for tribal children, advocates for victims of crime, and provides direct assistance for basic subsistence and emergency needs.

The Tribe has successfully managed hundreds of grants for over 35 years, including local, state, and federal projects and cooperative agreements. Some of the major grants received by the Sault Tribe include U.S. Dept of Agriculture: \$4.5 million (Manistique Community Center, low interest loan) and

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\$2.5 million (Munising Community Center, low interest loan), \$70,000 grant (Fisheries feasibility study), U.S. Dept. of Energy: \$140 K (Wind Energy feasibility study).

Historically, the Sault Tribe and the Education Division have managed numerous Federal and State funded grants with good success for over 35 years. The organization has established processes and procedures that define organizational expectations: financial reporting, record keeping internal controls, budgetary controls, allowable costs, source documentation and cash management. The Tribe has a large Accounting Department that is empowered to control and implement the approved financial policy and procedure processes of the tribal organization. In addition, the department manages all tribal assets of the organization via annual capital asset inventories. The Sault Tribe Board of Directors conducts monthly financial reviews with all program directors and contracts for an annual independent audit.

Fiscal oversight of the project will be managed through the Sault Tribe Financial Services Division. This Division has a well-developed management system implemented organization-wide for financial management and resource control. There are three Divisions that share the responsibilities of the financial management processes for the Tribe: Fiscal Administration, Appropriations Administration and Purchasing. The current tribal accounting and procurement system meets the minimum specifications as defined in 25 CFR Part 900.

The Tribe has vast experience in operating public health programs and identifying at-risk youth. The Tribe has operated its own health delivery system since the mid 70's and has continued to expand services across the eastern and central Upper Peninsula. Services and programs offered within the Health Services Division include: medical and preventative services, dental, community health programs, contract health services, wellness services, mental health services, pharmacy, optical, clinical laboratory, radiology and ultrasound, physical therapy, nutrition services, and substance abuse services. The administrators supporting these programs include the Division Director, Behavioral Health Program Director and Behavioral Health Supervisors. Service aspects of the program are overseen by a doctorate level clinical psychologist. Direct services are provided by 6 FTE bachelor level counselors. The Health Division, the Tribe's largest government program has an operating budget of almost \$27.1 million in 2006 and employs over 250 people. Approximately 58% of the overall budget is made up of Federal, State and Local contributions the remainder is contributed by the Tribe.

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Data collection and management efforts resulting from this planning grant will be handled through the Sault Tribe Management Information System (MIS). The MIS Division is well equipped to provide services to the planning work for data collection, storage, and retrieval. The MIS Division provides technological assistance through all phases of the implementation process and on-going maintenance of the Tribe's computer system. MIS technician support is available 24 hours per day. These services include technology purchases, project management, problem resolution, network services, security services, data storage, data retention, and many more to meet the Tribe's information needs. The MIS Department is responsible for covering a seven county service area and supports approximately 1,000 PC's, 1,200 phones, and 100 servers. The MIS Department follows standard security and data protection protocols and is audited annually to insure compliance.

The Sault Tribe Education Division, the division which will oversee this grant as well as the resulting Americorps program, offers programs across the lifespan--from infants to Elders.

The Sault Tribe Education Division's Youth Education and Activities Program (YEA) is the ideal program to coordinate the Sault Tribe Americorps Initiative. This is due to the age range of the target population, ongoing collaboration with all Sault Tribe public health programs, the collaboration with schools for providing services, and the existing and potential reach from the YEA Coordinators to Tribal youth in the seven county service area.

The goal of YEA is to work with Tribal youth to provide academic and cultural enrichment activities. There are seven YEA office locations throughout the service area: Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Hessel, Kinross, Manistique, Escanaba, and Munising. There is one YEA Coordinator and at least one part-time tutor located at each YEA office location. YEA employees work closely with the Sault Tribe Cultural Division staff and local public school Title VII (Indian Education formula grant) staff.

The primary contact for this grant application is Angeline Boulley, the Sault Tribe's Education Director. The secondary contact will be Kristina Beamish (grant writer) at beamish.kristina@gmail.com

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

This planning grant will allow the necessary means to gather and process information, and determine

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the best approach for Americorps members to help prevent Native American youth from becoming disconnected from their communities.

By acquiring consultancy services to oversee the planning process, perform evaluation activities, and development of training for staff and Americorps members, the Sault Tribe will be well poised to sustain the work of becoming an Americorps site from within its current infrastructure. A total of \$44,000 is allocated for these services.

Community forums will accommodate open discussions with the constituency of this initiative. This will ensure appropriate supports can be determined and addressed by future member activities. A total of seven forums will be held at each of the YEA activity sites. CLARIFICATION SECTION E* In order to accommodate strong participation of target population it is imperative for the Sault Tribe to eliminate all barriers to participation. Transportation, child care, and meals will be provided at each forum. (25 \$10 gas cards will be available, 1 each for potential participants, and \$250 has been allocated to provide a meal for up to 50 people at each forum, including but not limited to participants, their children, child care volunteers, and forum facilitators. The budget for each forum is \$500.) A total of \$3500 has been allocated for this item.

A survey of Native American households in the seven county service area will be performed in order to accommodate member participation when forum attendance is not possible. A total of \$1000 has been allocated for this activity.

Because geographic distance and rural location hinder outreach for member services, travel throughout the seven county service area will be imperative for the planning consultant. This will allow the planner to determine the best resources and approaches for member activities during the project term. A total of \$6,726 has been allocated for travel.

CLARIFICATION SECTION C * Travel funding has been allocated for an Expert Evaluation Consultant as the likelihood that a qualified candidate will be accessed from outside the Upper Peninsula due to the scarcity of this service in the area. Calculations are based on acquiring the services and/or recommendations from mid-Michigan, headquarters of the Johnson Center for Philanthropy which houses the Community Research Institute.

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A well laid out training plan for staff oversight and member implementation will play a crucial role in the success of the Sault Tribe Americorps Initiative. Training development and facilitation has been budgeted in the amount of \$11,750. CLARIFICATION * (\$10,000 consultant services, \$1200 online conferencing subscription, \$550 training materials for 11 staff members at \$25 per day = \$275 x 2 days) Training will be provided to staff in order to prepare for site supervision. Member training content and materials will be developed once member activities are determined.

As a means to prepare staff to serve as site supervisors of the Sault Tribe's Americorps project; a professional training consultant will facilitate training that supports a well-rounded understanding of the important factors of member development. These factors will include communication training to ensure supervisory skills are sharpened, reinforcing knowledge of Sault Tribe's current internal and external resources for partnerships and services available to the target population, and overall sensitivity training for proper member support throughout their service year.

CLARIFICATION * \$225 has been budgeted for 3 criminal history checks at \$75 each if determined by Corporation staff that consultants must be cleared by this method. (Unknown at time of writing if this amount is necessary per Kerry Lupher - July 12, 2013 approximately 1:00pm)

The required match for this grant will be provided by allocating 10% of Youth Education and Activities Program staff time. The match amount provided is set at \$22,946

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Clarification Summary

In regard to serving disconnected youth, please describe whether the program will focus entirely on improving academic strengths, or provide other services to youth.

The Sault Tribe's AmeriCorps program will focus on supporting Native American Disconnected Youth within the seven county service area with academic, social, emotional, and basic human needs resources. ACADEMIC (including but not limited to afterschool tutoring and college access resources), SOCIAL (including but not limited to positive role modeling activities through current recreation programming, cultural activities and mentoring activities), EMOTIONAL (including but

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not limited to identifying and assisting with access to current counseling and human service programs within the Sault Tribe's Anishnabek Community and Family Services and partner agencies that provide counseling services), and BASIC HUMAN NEEDS resources (including but not limited to identifying and assisting with access to current programs within the Sault Tribe's Anishnabek Community and Family Services and partner agencies that provide food, shelter, and clothing resources).

The application describes services that may be provided to disconnected youth in middle school, high school and beyond. Specifically, what age groups do you intend to serve?

The Sault Tribe's AmeriCorps program will focus on supporting Native American youth who are or are at risk of becoming disconnected in their community and are between the ages of 14-24 years old.

What will be the primary roles of AmeriCorps (AC) members in addressing the needs of Tribal disconnected youth; from what you know at this time?

AmeriCorps members will be tasked with identifying and/or providing support services in the areas of academic, social, emotional, and basic human needs. It is predicted that although all members will be a part of one large team, their duties will fall under one of the above categories rather than encompassing all. Additionally, some members will be tasked with basic coordination duties of the overall project such as basic clerical functions that assist the project director, oversee communication and delivery of information with all involved professional staff, and recording of project progress and results.

The application notes that AC members will receive training in data collection. What data collection responsibilities do you intend for AC members to have?

Members will be tasked with recording and reporting of basic participation and attendance of activities, recording baseline data as well as progress achieved through academic improvement efforts, and records of service referral, access, provision, and results. Information will also be gleaned from the youth who participate in activities as a means to record the personal impact made on the individual from their point of view.

How will \$1,000 provide enough resources to perform the household survey in the seven county service area? It appears from the budget that the survey will be mailed to 500 households. Does this

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budget line item account for survey creation, production/copies, mailing, data entry and analysis of results? Are any additional funds needed for the online data collection?

The household survey will be developed through work sessions held with the expert evaluation consultant. The survey will be printed in-house as a means to keep costs low. Data will be compiled through a joint effort between Americorps members performing data entry and the Sault Tribe's MIS Department. Interpretation and reporting services will be handled by the expert evaluation consultant. Postage for delivery and return will be covered by the amount budgeted.

The timeline mentions that Planning, Evaluation and Training Consultants will be recruited. How many consultants will be contracted, for what length of time, and for what specific purpose? Up to three individual consultants will be contracted to perform specific tasks. The evaluation consultant will be contracted for a specific number of hours to perform survey development, processing and analysis. This consultant will also lead professional staff to understand the results in order to best determine appropriate and feasible tasks for members (once in place) that address the issues identified. The Planning Consultant will be contracted for the duration of the grant cycle and will coordinate all activities related to this proposal. The Training Consultant will be contracted for the duration of the grant cycle and will coordinate development, delivery and documentation of staff and member training. Training of project supervisors will take place throughout the grant cycle as a means to prepare for site operations. Development of member training will take place once member activities have been determined.

In the timeline, the abbreviation YEA is used. What is this acronym?

Youth Education and Activities

The timeline indicates that staff training will take place October through April. Please describe what topics will be covered over these seven months.

The early training within the cited timeline will include time spent with the evaluation expert to determine, develop and understand the approach that will be taken in order to serve the target population of Native American Disconnected Youth. This will surely develop staff ownership and support in the overall project. The evaluation expert will also provide coaching via conference calls and webinars as needed with Project Director, Planning Consultant, Training Consultant and YEA staff. As a means to prepare staff to serve as site supervisors of the Sault Tribe's Americorps project; a

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professional training consultant will facilitate training that supports a well-rounded understanding of the important factors of member development. These factors will include communication training to ensure supervisory skills are sharpened, reinforcing knowledge of Sault Tribe's current internal and external resources for partnerships and services available to the target population, and overall sensitivity training for proper member support throughout their service year. Training will take place at regularly scheduled staff meetings as well as via webinars and conference calling.

Once the comprehensive report has been completed and released, what process will there be to develop a theory of change that links the findings to the development of work plans? Please describe the process for designing an AmeriCorps program, identifying member service activities, and developing the nuts and bolts of the program. Further, how will you determine that AmeriCorps is a promising approach for addressing the identified needs?

Once data has been derived and interpreted into a comprehensive report, the expert Evaluation Consultant will facilitate the process for the Project Director, with input from all consultants, to determine if using AmeriCorps has feasibility for project success. Once that has been determined, evaluation expert will work with YEA staff to determine appropriate tasks for members. Much will be reliant on current services available being aligned with appropriate member activities to fill gaps identified. Member activities will be focused on academic, social, emotional and basic human needs of the target population.

Please verify that the activities occurring April through August are not associated with enrolling AmeriCorps members, since this is a planning, not implementation grant.

With a priority being given to recruitment of Native American residents to become Americorps members, it is imperative that education sessions be held throughout the seven county service area. These sessions will bring a clear understanding of the project proposal submitted for site operations, member tasks that will be performed, and overall understanding of Americorps. Sessions will be open to the general public however a concentrated effort will be given to accommodate the Sault Tribe's membership awareness. Additionally, member training content and materials will be developed during this period in order to accommodate appropriate preparation once site operations commence.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics