

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The WI Association for Runaway Services (WARS) will have 35 AmeriCorps members providing an array of support services for runaway and homeless youth including street outreach, community education, community outreach, and aid in transitional living programs and shelters for homeless pregnant and parenting teens. These services will be provided in 15 communities in WI (Appleton, Menomonie, Sheboygan (2), Green Bay (2), Milwaukee (2), Madison, Racine, La Crosse, Rhinelander, Superior, West Bend and Eau Claire). At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for having had 40,000 contacts with runaway and homeless youth on the street, offering them information on healthy alternatives. In addition, members will be working more intensely with 3,000 youth, providing support to staff with family mediation and crisis intervention. Of these youth, 2,850 (95%) will return home or to a safe alternative. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will aid in leveraging an additional 1,200 volunteers that will be engaged in aiding with street outreach, community outreach, and working with youth in the runaway programs, providing 55,000 hours of service. The CNCS investment of \$375,941 will be matched with \$422,419 in private funding.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

2. a. NEED: Based on existing research, the National Network for Youth estimates that each year one million to 1.3 million youth run away from home. Many experts estimate actual numbers to be much higher since it is common for many runaways to go unreported to the authorities. Reasons given by youth for running away indicate that they are in desperate need of assistance. Most runaways are not running to some place, but rather are running away from a negative family situation. In most instances, they leave because of a family conflict, typically caused by lack of communication. Other times they are forced out of their homes by parents or leave to escape sexual or physical abuse. Returning a young person to this environment without an attempt at resolution can result in more running episodes, continuing family conflict, or even more tragic consequences. Runaway programs assist these youth with their crisis situations and provide services to both youth and their families. Runaway programs operate 24 hours a day, working to resolve crises that are threatening youth and their families. Young people seeking services are runaways, throwaways, or are in a state of crisis as a result of family related problems. These programs provide free 24-hour crisis intervention services, face to face counseling for youth and families, temporary shelter for youth, education, prevention, outreach, and aftercare.

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Why Runaway Programs? Due to their status as minors, many runaways are afraid or distrustful of established service providers. Runaway programs serve youth who tend not to utilize traditional agencies. In runaway programs, a unique counselor/youth relationship is established, which stresses the qualities of trust and confidentiality. Youth make their own decisions in a supportive environment with appropriate advice as to their alternatives. By diverting youth from the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, runaway programs offer a unique, cost effective approach to meeting the needs of youth in crisis. Youth are provided with early assistance and links to service on issues of substance use and abuse, mental illness, and family conflict before reaching crisis. Dollars spent by runaway programs on prevention and early intervention help to avoid costly intervention through juvenile correction, mental health services, or residential programs.

According to the federal Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) (Basic Center Fact Sheet 2013), runaway programs were established specifically to address the widespread national concern of youth who ran away from home and were in at-risk situations often through no fault of their own. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (Public Law 93-415) was established to create community shelters (Basic Centers) to address specific needs (food, clothing, shelter, outreach counseling and aftercare) identified by FYSB. The 15 programs in this proposal are the ONLY programs in their communities providing these critical services to runaway and homeless youth.

In the 2012/13 school year, the state McKinney-Vento data (federal school homeless youth program) reported 13,317 homeless youth within the 54 county service area included with this proposal. In 2012, police departments reported over 1,740 arrests of runaways in the 54 counties (WI OJA). This vastly under-reports the total number as it does not include youth who are homeless due to poverty or other circumstances or those who were not arrested. In 2012-13, 13 sites (25 members) had over 35,000 CONTACTS with youth on the street with over 3,000 youth receiving additional services. Factors that contributed to running away were: physical abuse (17%), sexual abuse (8 %-known to be underreported), emotional abuse (9%), and parental neglect (8.2%) (WARS Data Report 2012). Of youth served by the programs in this proposal, 19% report the abuse of drugs and alcohol by themselves or a family member as a contributing factor to running away. Twenty-nine of the 54 counties are rural (Beale code of 6 or higher) (USDA) and 13 have an unemployment rate that meets or exceeds the national level of 7.3% (US Dept of Labor). Of the 54 counties, 20 exceed WI poverty level of 13.4% (US Census).

This project was developed in response to the following identified needs in the communities served:  
A. A formal needs survey of WARS program members identified the need for increased Street

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Outreach and Community Education. B. Police consistently reported a lack of resources to respond to runaways therefore a need for onsite response is required. C. School counselors requested on-site response to referrals. D. WI shelter regulations put an additional burden on programs regarding the required ratio of supervisors to youth. E. Sites need to rely heavily on volunteers to meet essential service requirements. Responses to a WARS survey demonstrated program interest in collaborating on this proposal to address these needs. AmeriCorps members have proven to be a critical resource for runaway programs by meeting the needs of hard-to-reach street youth, evidenced by the program growth from 12 original Member slots to 35. This proposal covers both the major urban areas of the state (Milwaukee, Racine, and Madison), as well as rural areas that cover large geographic areas (54 counties). Both urban and rural youth are vulnerable to a myriad of social problems such as gangs, drug abuse, and poverty.

WARS recognizes that it currently is not within the scope of AmeriCorps national focus areas and the WARS mission of providing services to runaway and homeless youth does not fit into the national performance measures, which puts this proposal at a disadvantage in the priority rankings. It is the belief of WARS board, membership, and, most importantly, our clientele that the proposal should be funded due to the incredible impact the AmeriCorps program has on the most vulnerable youth in WI. Due to the amazing work of hundreds of Members in the past 15 years, countless abused and neglected children have found a safe haven and were provided life-saving resources, aiding them in securing a healthy future. Last year, WARS was identified by the state as being the most effective AC program in WI. The generation of 1,122 volunteers last year, donating over 50,000 hours of service, demonstrates that WARS is an outstanding example of a program that fits into the State Service Plan, which emphasizes meeting community needs through increased volunteerism.

Members will be serving in rural communities, covering large geographic areas (Appleton, Sheboygan (2), LaCrosse, Rhinelander, Menomonie, Eau Claire, Superior and West Bend) as well as urban areas (Green Bay (2), Milwaukee (2), Madison, and Racine). The programs service areas cover 54 counties. WARS is requesting 30 FT and 5 HT members (32.5 MSYs).

2.b AMERICORPS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT: The target population members will be working with is runaway and homeless youth and youth/families in crisis. The majority of WARS members are young adults (either in college or recently out of college) or people with life experiences similar to the clientele. Youth in crisis tend to be very distrustful of social services or police. Past members have demonstrated unique abilities in gaining teens' trust and successfully linking them with appropriate

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services such as family mediation, counseling, mental/physical health treatment, and basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Teens are willing to discuss their problems with members they can relate to and to listen to them regarding prevention services such as alcohol and drug abuse prevention, pregnancy prevention, etc. Many members have been hired as permanent staff by their host sites, further demonstrating their value in service provision. AC members are also unique in their enthusiasm and ability to hold teens' attention when giving presentations in schools or working in groups. Members report a high level of self satisfaction in aiding youth and families, an experience that has aided many of them in securing employment.

Members will aid in solving community problems through the following activities:

- a. Street Outreach: 29 Members will work in teams and identify youth in crisis throughout the community, providing critical resources such as food, clothing, and access to shelter. Members also aid teens by providing prevention information on safety, alcohol and drug abuse, pregnancy prevention, and other issues. Referral options for mental and physical health services are provided, including transportation.
- b. Crisis Intervention Programs; 29 Members will aid staff in the Basic Center programs (short term) by providing 24/7 hotline coverage, youth supervision, co-facilitating groups and providing support in individual and family sessions.
- c. Parenting Teen program: Two members will aid staff in providing supervision and care to pregnant and parenting teens and their infants. Life skills are taught (infant and child care, nutrition, money management, etc.) to enable the youth to move to self-sufficiency within an 18-month period.
- d. Transitional Living: Four members will aid teens in developing living skills in long-term (18-month) transitional living programs.
- e. Community Outreach: 29 Members will be trained and then responsible for providing community presentations in order to educate the public on issues facing teens in crisis and services available.
- f. Volunteers: 35 Members will support staff in the recruitment, training, or management of volunteers. Approximately 20% of the volunteers are episodic, working mostly on aiding with events such as homeless night. Long term volunteers work in the runaway program providing hotline coverage and co-counseling youth and families after 30-40 hours of training. These volunteers commit to weekly shifts which aid shelters in the provision of 24 hour coverage. Peer volunteers aid street outreach workers and participate in groups. Licensed volunteer host homes provide short term shelter in many communities.

Members will be working with youth in crisis for their full 12 month term (32 hours per week avg. FT and 16 hours per week HT). Members work in 8 hr. (FT) or 4 hr. (HT) shifts. Members provide street outreach approx. 5 days a week (3-5 hours per day) throughout the year. Contacts with street youth can be brief (simply providing them with food, clothes, and/or prevention information) or can

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be more intensive with members and staff providing crisis intervention services on the street. Youth that access the Basic Center crisis shelter typically stay 5 days, meeting with staff/members on a daily basis and attending groups. Youth that are provided non-residential services can meet with members/staff numerous times until their crisis is resolved and/or they are referred to long term services. Pregnant and Parenting Teens and teens utilizing the Transitional Living Program live at the programs for up to 18 months.

Program impact will be measured utilizing the following activities. Contacts with youth will be recorded on street outreach logs. Youth who decide to access additional services will be provided intake services utilizing the federal RHYMIS intake/data collection system, which tracks demographics, contributing causes, and the successful return home or to an alternate placement. Aftercare is recorded in client files including 30, 60, 90 day follow-up contacts to identify further needs of the family and to track if the client has run again. Police and school meetings are recorded in logs, as are community presentations. WARS staff complete the Progress Reports (3x/yr.+ Final) through compiling site data and analyzing the Member reports that detail how project goals are being met.

Criteria used to evaluate the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the project include: number of youth served (site client logs, WARS/ AC report); number of youth receiving counseling (intake forms, WARS/AC reports); outreach (outreach logs, WARS/AC report); quality of services (peer/client/AC Member evaluations /feedback); youth finding positive living alternatives (client files, WARS/AC reports); and number of youth who ran again (follow-up contacts, WARS/AC report). During follow- up contacts, input is gathered on program effectiveness, repeat running episodes, continued family counseling, and long-term treatment plans. Client feedback forms are utilized in program review, planning, and revisions. Program targets are based on data from the most recent year. For the past 3 years WARS has hired an outside evaluator, Organizational Skills, who will continue the external evaluation in the next 3-year grant cycle.

Following demonstrates the relation between the stated needs and proposed interventions: **NEED:** Runaway/homeless youth are not aware of services available and are distrustful of social services and police. **AC INTERVENTION:** Members will provide outreach to youth on the street and in schools, linking them to runaway services. Members will have 40,000 CONTACTS with youth. **NEED:** Runaway and homeless youth have little or no resources, which severely hinders reconciliation with their families or their ability to find a safe alternative. **AC INTERVENTION:** Members will aid with family mediation, shelter services, prevention groups, crisis intervention, and aftercare. It is projected that 3,000 youth will accept further services. 2,850 (95%) of these youth will return home or to a safe

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alternative with follow-up services. 2707 (95%) will not run again. NEED: School and police personnel are often unable to aid youth in crisis. AC INTERVENTION: AC Members will meet with police, school staff and other community representatives in order to educate them on runaway and homeless youth issues and the services available (approx. 1900 meetings). Members will also provide on-site response to referrals, which will enhance the likelihood of long-term youth and family stability. NEED: Community lack of awareness of issues affecting youth and services available. AC INTERVENTION: Members will be trained on public speaking and provide community presentations on runaway issues. Members will provide approximately 600 community presentations (25,000 participants) resulting in an enhanced knowledge of the issues and services. This will be demonstrated by over 90% of returned evaluations being positive. NEED: Runaway programs rely heavily on the services of volunteers. AC INTERVENTION: Members, trained on recruitment techniques, will aid in recruiting and training approx. 1200 volunteers, providing 55,000 hours of service. NEED: New regulations increase adult supervision requirements in shelters. AC INTERVENTION: Six FT Members will aid staff in shelters.

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT IMPACT; The program has impacted thousands of youth, providing them with life saving resources such as food, clothing and shelter. Last year, 3,646 youth were provided additional support services. Impact is measured through 3,536 of these youth either being reunited with their families or finding a safe alternative, with ongoing support (97%). Of these youth, only 2.6% ran again, evidence that the program was successful in stabilizing families. Community presentations reached 31,169 individuals. Positive evaluations (95%) further demonstrated by the high quality of members' services.

EVIDENCED BASED INTERVENTIONS: The interventions to be utilized by the AmeriCorps members in Street Outreach, Basic Center, and Transitional Living Program settings will include Motivational Interviewing and Trauma Informed Care, both of which are evidence based-practices effective with the population of homeless youth and youth at risk. The street outreach practices of the members will be based on the "StreetWorks Best Practices and Standards in Outreach Methodology to Homeless Youth" (Trudee Able-Peterson and Richard A Hooks-Wayman). This manual is a compendium of evidence-informed practices, including the application of Trauma Informed Care, in a street outreach environment. Motivational Interviewing is included in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations' (SAMHSA) National Registry of Evidence Based Programs and Practices and is defined as being effective with young adult populations across gender, race and ethnicity in varied community settings and environments (Miller and Rollnick, American

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Psychologist, 2009). It is specifically demonstrated to improve outcomes related to social functioning and family relationships as targeted in this proposal. Members and staff have received training in the use of Motivational Interviewing techniques in their particular environment through an intensive 2 day training (followed up by another training and individual technical assistance) provided October, 2012 (Scott Caldwell-State of WI MI Trainer).

Trauma Informed Care is also recognized by SAMHSA as an effective practice in serving populations who have been impacted by homelessness. This approach utilizes a strength-based framework grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for providers and survivors and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. (Hopper, et.al, 2010, Shelter from the Storm: Trauma Informed Care in Homelessness Services Settings; Open Health Services and Policy Journal). Literature reviews demonstrate evidence of a positive impact on housing stability, improved relationships and self-identity, and consumer satisfaction with care provided (Finkelstein, 2005 Building resilience in children of mothers who have co-occurring disorders and histories of violence: intervention model and implementation issues, J Behav Health ServeRes; Noether CD , 2007 Promoting resiliency in children of mothers with co-occurring disorders and histories of trauma: impact of a skills based intervention program on child outcomes, J Commun Psychology; Community Connections Final Report: Trauma Informed Pilot Project 2003). All of the WARS programs, including AmeriCorps members, received a 2-day training on Trauma Informed Care from the National Runaway Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Coalition (RHYTTAC) in October 2011 and October 2013. StreetWorks (Able-Peterson and Hooks-Wyman) is an evidence informed compendium of best practices in street outreach methodology, utilized by the DHHS in training street outreach service providers. It integrates evidence-based practices such as Trauma Informed Care and Harm Reduction (see studies cited above) to provide recommendations for evidence informed practices in a street outreach environment.

2c MEMBER TRAINING : Pre-Service orientation (2 days-Sept. 2014) includes discussion on member roles as participants in a national service organization, benefits, prohibited activities, data collection, work plans, reporting, position descriptions, Evidence-Based and Informed Street Outreach Practices and Direct Service Practices, Family Mediation, Juvenile Justice, Conflict Resolution, Diversity and Volunteer Recruitment. Members also receive orientation at their sites on working with youth in crisis (35-40 hrs.). Staff accompanies Members when they begin street outreach activities and partner with Members in the provision of crisis intervention, family mediation, and group

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facilitation.

ONGOING TRAINING: Members are provided ongoing training at their sites based on individual and community needs. Topics include: additional family mediation training, education and career opportunities, drug/alcohol abuse, self-mutilation, gangs, HIV/AIDS, community resources, juvenile justice, suicide/depression, diversity, anger management, presentation format-skills, facilitating groups, networking and more. Members also receive training on public speaking and conducting meetings. They are paired with experienced staff when performing these duties until their supervisors feel confident they are able to conduct these on their own. A mandatory 2-day training is sponsored by WARS in the Fall (mid-October 2014) responding to needs survey responses, such as motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care and disaster response and recovery. Members are provided additional street outreach and citizenship training.

Members and volunteers are informed of Prohibited Activities (PAs) at their orientation. Supervisors review PAs with Members when signing the Member agreement. Supervisors and trained program staff monitor Members and volunteers on a daily basis to ensure compliance.

2 d MEMBER SUPERVISION: Members receive direct supervision by site supervisors who report to their agency Exec. Director. Members are paired with experienced staff when providing street outreach or working directly with clients. Supervisors are available daily for consultation and meet with Members weekly to ensure staff, Members, and client needs are addressed. Supervisors provide written evaluations of Members semi-annually. The WARS AC Program Director (PD) and Executive Director (ED) are available for mediation if conflicts occur. The WARS Prog. Direc. communicates with supervisors and Members on an ongoing basis to ensure Members are receiving the supervision and guidance they need on site. In the start of the program year the PD communicates with supervisors and members on a weekly basis. Throughout the remainder of the year, the PD and ED are in contact with supervisors weekly, and members monthly or as needed. Site supervisors are trained extensively by their individual sites. Training covers every program aspect (30-40 hours initially) including direct service techniques, reporting procedures, and administrative protocols. When a supervisor is newly hired, WARS provides training on site; WARS ED (administrative), AC PD (AC-specific issues) and the Assis. Dir.(direct services).

2 e COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION: AmeriCorps participation is stressed through: a. position is advertised as AmeriCorps; b. initial interview stresses the position is AmeriCorps member; c. Position Description clearly designates it is for AmeriCorps members; d. Member Agreement clearly designates AmeriCorps position; e. Pre-service and ongoing site training

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provides history and discussion of AmeriCorps membership; f. AmeriCorps clothing with logo is mandatory when putting in service hours; g. AmeriCorps members are recognized at annual WAHRS banquet.

At the WARS pre-service orientation, Members are informed of the importance of identifying themselves to community partners and the media as participants in a National Service Organization while serving at a local site. Individual sites periodically have articles in local newspapers highlighting the AmeriCorps members. When attending meetings or giving presentations, Members begin by introducing themselves as AmeriCorps members performing service for their individual site. The AmeriCorps program and logo are prominently featured on the WARS website and agency materials. Sites also have AmeriCorps posters and AmeriCorps information visible to visitors and clients. At orientation, Members are provided a sweatshirt, T-Shirt, pin, and clothing patch displaying the AC logo. Members and Supervisors are instructed that whenever Members are putting in service hours they are required to wear AC identification.

As community presentations are a major role of WARS AmeriCorps (as evidenced in Performance Measure) extensive training is provided to each member on site. Members are encouraged to speak not only of the issues facing youth in crisis, but also on the services available and their role as an AmeriCorps member providing those services. Members initially are paired with experienced staff to aid in learning how to present effectively and to provide support with questions.

### **Organizational Capability**

3.a ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING: WARS, formed in 1979, is a coalition of community-based, voluntary, nonprofit agencies. Umbrella agencies, such as Lutheran Social Services, Family Services, and the Boys & Girls Club collaborate to house the runaway programs. WARS was instrumental in the development of 19 of the 23 runaway programs and three transitional living programs in WI. WARS has had five federal reviews and received outstanding compliance findings on all of them. WARS is audited yearly and has always been in fiscal compliance. WARS has met all goals and objectives in every year for 15 years.

WARS Executive Director, Patricia Balke, is responsible for WARS budgeting and programming (31 years). Patricia was instrumental in the development of 19 of the 23 runaway programs in Wisconsin. She has administered all of WARS state and federal grants and is in the 15th year of administering the AC grant. The AC Program Director, John Babbitt (15th year), was instrumental in the programmatic development of the AC grant and is responsible for oversight of the project, including site visits, phone consultation, Member support, and reporting. Mr. Babbitt has worked with over 350 Members

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successfully with no complaints on his advocacy for the Members by either the Members or the site supervisors. Site supervisors oversee the Members on a daily basis. Site Supervisors have been extensively trained and have degrees in Social Services, and/or at least five years experience. Program E.D.s have been with the program for 7-25 years, further ensuring quality staff and program oversight. Staff are hired utilizing a wide search on an equal opportunity basis. Criminal background checks are performed. Programs strive to hire diverse staff and members, including those with disabilities, to reflect ethnicity of clientele. All of the host sites comply with federal standards for handicapped accessibility.

The WARS staff has been administering the AC grant for 15 years, therefore orientation is not necessary. All current site supervisors were provided pre-service orientation (30-40 hours) and training in the first month they were hired. If a site supervisor or director is newly hired during the program year, the WARS PD, ED, and Assis. Direc. provide site visits to provide training and orientation on administration and direct services. Programmatic TA is provided through: a 24-hour WARS administrative hotline for Members/site supervisors, on site consultation, phone and email consultations, follow-up on individual TA requests, and quarterly meetings. WARS staff is provided TA through state and federal DHHS staff, AC state commission staff, and the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Commission (RHYTTAC).

The WARS ED oversees the general administration of the grants, ensuring match requirements are met and reporting requirements are fulfilled. The ED supervises the WARS AC Program Director (PD). A board of directors, consisting of 17 community reps. elected bi-annually, governs WARS. The WARS ED is responsible to the Pres., Executive Committee, and the Board. The EDs' annual evaluation is conducted by the Executive Board. Meetings are held quarterly and are open to all AC Members and program staff. Program updates are given for board input and review. Fiscal oversight is provided by the WARS ED, Treasurer, and bookkeeper. Quarterly financial reports are reviewed by the Treasurer and board. Outside financial audits are conducted yearly. Sites are non-profit agencies governed by a community board with similar structures.

For 31 years WARS has administered numerous multi-site federal grants including: federal TA (\$38,000); state TA (\$68,000); Basic Center (7 sites-\$134,000); Fed. Alcohol and Drug Abuse (\$200,000, 10 sites); 2 federal Street Outreach Grants (10 sites-\$200,000); VISTA (8 programs); and TANF (23 sites-\$225,000). WARS has been administering the AmeriCorps grant for 15 years.

3.b COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: The Prog. Direc. (PD) and E.D. conduct an initial site visit to aid in program planning and implementation. The ED conducts site visits to monitor program

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and fiscal capabilities, including match requirements and compliance with prohibited activities. The PD conducts site visits, phone, and e-mail consultations with supervisors and Members to ensure the program is running smoothly, is on target to meet goals and objectives and is complying with AmeriCorps regulations. Sites are required to submit reports (3-4 x yearly) which collect data and monitor program activity, ensuring goals and objectives are on track. Through the site visits, phone and e-mail communication and reports, WARS is able to ensure programs are in compliance with grant activates and regulations. If there is an issue identified at any of the sites, WARS will develop a corrective action plan with set dates for the issue to be resolved. In the 15-year history of the program, all of the sites have been in compliance with no issues identified. The WARS PD and ED are available to Members to aid in working out any issues that may arise at their sites. Member's hours are monitored by supervisors and the PD. Members are placed in host sites that employ staff that are available 24/7 and are closely supervised in regards to ensuring compliance with AmeriCorps and program rules and regulations, including prohibited activities. WARS Code of Conduct : "...All staff, board Members, AmeriCorps Members, and volunteers shall act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives for the organization. Failure to follow these standards will result in disciplinary action including possible termination of employment....and possible civil or criminal prosecution if warranted....A person's concerns about possible fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of resources or property should be reported to the ED. If for any reason a person finds it difficult to report his or her concerns to the ED, the person may report the concerns directly to the President or any member of the WAHRS Executive Committee...to facilitate reporting of suspected violations where the reporter wishes to remain anonymous, a written statement may be submitted to one of the individuals listed above." WARS follows the AC guidelines in regards to disciplining and terminating Members.

3.C PAST PERFORMANCE: All targets in the past 15 years have been met or exceeded as demonstrated by 2012 PROGRAM TARGETS: Goal: 45,400 contacts with youth (actual 54,090) Goal: 3,100 youth access services (actual 3,646) Goal 95% safe placement (actual 97%) Goal: 8% or less will run again (2.6 % actual) Goal: 15,000 participants at community education events (actual 31,169) Goal: 90% positive evaluations (actual 95%). No problems with meeting objectives were identified. No compliance issues have been cited in the 15 years of the WARS AmeriCorps program. The Enrollment FY 2012-13 was 100% and the retention rate was 100%

3.D CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: Information from individual sites is collected via the WAHRS data report 4 times per year. Client feedback is provided via follow up calls and evaluations. Community feedback is provided via presentation evaluations. Data and feedback is reviewed by the

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WARS E.D., Program Director, and site supervisors throughout the year to ensure goals and objectives are being met (see evaluation/data collection section above).

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

#### 4. a COST EFFECTIVENESS

The cost per member is \$11,533, which is lower than the previous year (\$ 11,565) despite reduced federal funding and higher costs. The addition of the AC Project to runaway programs greatly enhances the ability to meet community needs. AC street outreach services enables program's to have contacts with youth, providing clothing, food, prevention education, referral services and access to shelter and program services. Youth accessing services are able to be reunited with their families through mediation or aided in finding a safe alternative (95% success rate). Members prevent harm and exploitation of youth on the street and deter them from entering the juvenile justice system. The longer a youth is on the street, the more likely it is that they will resort to survival crimes. The total request for federal funding for the 2014-15 AmeriCorps program is \$375,941. Non-federal match is \$422,419 (53%), demonstrating the programs' umbrella agencies commitment. With this funding, the 15 host sites expect to have over 40,000 contacts with youth through street outreach work, with 3,000 youth being referred to the Basic Center Program. This averages to less than \$1 per contact (federal funds) and only \$125 per youth seen through the Basic Center program. This figure does not take into account other services provided by the programs such as outreach, education, and prevention. The 15 host sites in this proposal rely heavily on volunteers recruited and managed by members. This proposal ensures access to services for youth in rural settings, who are often difficult to locate . The community at large benefits through awareness of services provided through community presentations and by members providing vulnerable youth a safe alternative to the street, therefore reducing street crime. Police and schools benefit by having on site response to runaway youth, which prevents the revolving door of youth running and also frees up staff time spent returning youth home.

By diverting youth from the juvenile justice system, residential programs, and/or child welfare systems, programs offer a unique, cost-effective approach. In 2011, the cost for 535 youth to spend two weeks in a runaway shelter was approximately \$15,807, compared to \$294,940 in state foster homes or \$2,325,960 in juvenile corrections (state analysis 2011). This does not take into account the thousands of youth Members are seeing who are not sheltered, but instead return home or to a safe alternative which is a huge benefit to communities.

4 b BUDGET ADEQUACY: Non-CNCS funding and resources: The non-federal match for this project is \$218,900 (in kind) and \$203,519 (cash). The sources of the match are 15 non-profit

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community partners and WARS. The program budget is very reasonable given the scope of services that will be provided. The majority of federal AC funding is spent on Members living allowances. The budget provides for 35 Members, with support funding for activities such as street outreach and community education. The federal AC funding also provides staff time for the AC Program Director (40% match) who provides critical support services to Members. Outside resources that have benefitted the AC project include: shelter, counseling and outreach (federal basic center funding); supervision time (federal Basic Center and Street Outreach funding); licensed host homes; police training (Juvenile Justice); AODA training (WI DOT); and Mental Health training (Mental Health Assoc.). Businesses donate food, bus vouchers, hygiene products and clothing, which are not included in budget match. Community resources have been established which include many referral services including long-term physical/mental health treatment, shelter, and counseling. In-kind operational costs included, such as travel and supplies, are based on previous experience and are sufficient to cover costs. The above stated community support ensures the proposed budget will adequately cover the program costs. Cash and in kind match have been committed by the 15 sites and WARS. Contributions from local businesses include food vouchers, clothing, bus passes, hygiene products, infant supplies, and more. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS are conducted according to AC requirements and are paid for by sites as a cash match. All in-kind and cash matches have been committed.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

Yearly internal evaluations are outlined in the grant narrative. WARS hired Organizational Skills to conduct an external evaluation for the past 3 years. The evaluation assesses the goals and objectives and member development with pre/post components over a 3 year period. WARS will continue to use Organizational Skills for external evaluation in the next three year cycle.

### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

Clarification Summary April 4, 2014

A. Programmatic Clarification

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1. Roles of 6 FT members in shelters: The six members providing services in runaway and homeless youth transitional living shelters and shelters for homeless pregnant and parenting teens (18 months) aid shelter staff by providing assistance in coordinating and performing intake/crisis intervention services, coordinating/assisting with providing residential shelter, aiding in supervising residents, assisting case coordinators in therapeutic activities, conducting nightly support and education groups, supervising meal preparation, providing support with pregnant and parenting teens, and participating in community education activities. These activities differ from the other AmeriCorps members activities which focus mainly on street outreach, providing services to youth in the community, meetings with local entities to encourage referrals. responding on site to police and school referrals and aiding staff in short term (14-21 days) shelters with crisis intervention.

2. Grant Start Date: The proposed grant start date and member enrollment date is September 1, 2014.

3. Change to Executive Summary: Complete-please see Executive Summary

### B. Strategic Engagement Slots Clarification

1. While there is not a specific targeted number of members with disabilities recruited, WAHRS programs make every effort to ensure people with disabilities are included in the recruitment and hiring process. For example, Pathfinders in Milwaukee sends out position announcements to the Milwaukee Center for Independence and Independence First. These organizations specialize in working with people of differing abilities. Individual sites are all handicapped accessible.

2. Additional MSYs request to target members with disabilities: No additional MSYs are requested to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities.

### C. No cost MSY Clarification

No request for additional No-Cost MSY's is being made

### D. Healthcare Clarification Items

1. Name of Health Care Provider; WAHRS is planning on continuing to utilize Willis (Summit

## Narratives

America).

2. Summit America was selected after WAHRS staff compared providers from a list provided by AmeriCorps. WAHRS chose Willis (Summit America) as it offered the best benefits for the price.

3. MEC Coverage: Currently Summit America does not meet MEC. WAHRS aided members in requesting waivers for the current year to avoid being penalized. It is anticipated that Summit America will meet MEC standards by the beginning of the grant period (9/1/2014) per the following communication from :

Julie Nelson, Assistant Vice President

Willis of Seattle, Inc.

"This is a transition period. Our plan is to adapt The Corps Network Plan to any new rules determined by CNCS as they develop, working toward a strategy that will provide Minimum Essential Coverage status and fit within grantee budgets. We will attempt to work that out over the next several months as the future requirements are released. "

4. Budget Adjustments: Per communication from Summit America, insurance costs may rise as much as \$50 per member in order to meet MEC standards. If this is the case, WAHRS may need a budget adjustment to request additional funding to cover a portion of these costs.

5. N/A

### Continuation Changes

N/A

### Grant Characteristics