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Executive Summary

Wisconsin Emergency Management will have 20 AmeriCorps members who will develop jurisdictional emergency volunteer management plans and deliver emergency preparedness training in 14-18 locations with municipal, tribal, and/or county government. Host sites will represent a broad geographic and demographic cross-section of Wisconsin, from larger urban areas of Milwaukee and Madison, mid-size communities such as Fond du Lac and La Crosse, and small rural communities in the northern and western parts of the state, such as Grant and Sawyer counties. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for completing and exercising emergency volunteer management plans in 14-18 jurisdictions, and delivering personal preparedness instruction to 3,240 individuals. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 360 volunteers that will be engaged in executing the jurisdictional emergency volunteer management plans. This project will focus on the CNCS focus areas of capacity building and disaster services. The CNCS investment of \$130,503 will be matched by \$47,444 in public funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

PROBLEM/NEED - Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8) on National Preparedness, enacted December 17, 2003, directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national all-hazards preparedness goal. That goal identified 37 specific capabilities that communities, the private sector, and all levels of government should collectively possess in order to respond effectively to disasters. The Community Preparedness and Participation (CPP) Target Capability encourages a "whole community" commitment by engaging all sectors in preparedness, exercises, ongoing volunteer programs, and surge capacity response. As FEMA Director Craig Fugate observes, "We know of the great capacity of individuals to care for their families, friends, neighbors and fellow community members, making our citizens force multipliers rather than liabilities. . . . Through engaging the 'Whole Community,' we maximize our limited funding and leverage the capabilities of our partners, who play a critical role in the process."

No event in recent United States experience more graphically demonstrated the magnitude of the need for strengthening individual and community disaster preparedness than Hurricane Katrina, nor has any event been more comprehensively studied.

When residents fail to prepare, they often find themselves: 1) unable to escape/evacuate a hazardous area; 2) stranded without sufficient food and water with no access to emergency services; 3) forced to leave home without many of their most necessary supplies and resources; 4) separated from family,

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caregivers, and pets; and more. When residents fail to prepare, they often put emergency responders at greater risk when they have to be rescued from situations they could have avoided. The majority of Americans have done nothing to prepare for an emergency. Almost half simply have not thought about it. One-third do not think an emergency will happen to them or their families. Twenty-one percent say that not knowing what to do is a major reason for their lack of preparedness.

In the wake of Katrina, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with a comprehensive host of stakeholders, designed, tested, validated, piloted, and implemented the Public Readiness Index (PRI), a survey-based tool to measure the preparedness of individuals, families, and communities. Nationwide surveys found Americans scored an average 3.31 on the 10-point scale. A number of subsequent investigations have further validated, detailed, and explored these data:

1) "Methodological Considerations and Key Findings in Preparedness Research," Citizen Preparedness Review: Community Resilience through Civic Responsibility and Self-Reliance 1 (2005); 2) "A Post-Katrina Assessment." Citizen Preparedness Review: Community Resilience through Civic Responsibility and Self-Reliance 2 (2006); 3) "Patterns in Current Research and Future Research Opportunities," Citizen Preparedness Review: Community Resilience through Civic Responsibility and Self-Reliance 3 (2006); 4) "Update on Citizen Preparedness Research," Citizen Preparedness Review: Community Resilience through Civic Responsibility and Self-Reliance 5 (2007); 5) Personal Preparedness in America: Findings from the Citizen Corps National Survey, Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency (June 2009).

In April 2002, a National Leadership Forum on Disaster Volunteerism convened leadership and operations experts from over 45 organizations to identify the challenges and opportunities, and develop recommendations for a strong national disaster volunteer management system. The Forum reports its findings in Preventing a Disaster within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers, Washington, DC: Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network (2002). The strategies outlined in the report have proven to be successful in numerous disasters since then.

Following the May 22, 2011, Joplin, Missouri tornado, AmeriCorps St. Louis opened a volunteer reception center that, over the course of a full year, registered 72,504 individual volunteers, including 2,176 volunteer groups, which worked 494,146 volunteer hours. Wisconsin, however, does not currently have the capability of executing an operation of this magnitude. In Wisconsin that capability will require 1) the completion of emergency volunteer management plans in all counties; 2) recruitment and training of volunteers to run emergency volunteer management operations; and 3)

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development of plans to surge trained volunteer managers to the site of a disaster.

While emergency management directors in Wisconsin have a strong commitment to disaster preparedness and volunteerism, their offices are understaffed and underfunded, and they do not have sufficient resources to dedicate to preparedness and volunteerism to have a measurable impact. What they lack is a corps of dedicated preparedness ambassadors to make a personal community connection.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS; EVIDENCE-BASED/EVIDENCE-INFORMED AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT - Research into individual behavior prior to and during disaster as it relates to any existing theoretical framework is in its infancy. As demonstrated in research cited throughout this proposal, the data suggest that: 1) individuals who believe that they have some vulnerability to disasters AND who are already contemplating taking preparedness action (41% of those surveyed) have the greatest potential for change (FEMA, 2009); 2) messaging and community outreach should focus on efficacy and should support those already considering taking action (FEMA, 2009); 3) individuals who have a strong interest in acquiring training and volunteering (65% of those surveyed) are best recruited and managed through social networks, and intervention designs should engender a civic responsibility to educate and encourage others to prepare (FEMA, 2009); 4) emergency workers' willingness to respond increases with efficacy-based training intervention.

FEMA's four-part "Ready" model (<http://www.ready.gov/>) , launched in February 2003, uses a progression of preparedness steps -- Be Informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, Get Involved -- that correspond to the Stages of Change progression (The Stages of Change/Transtheoretical Model [Prochaska, J. O., and C. C. DiClemente. 1982. Transtheoretical Therapy: Toward a More Integrative Model of Change. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 20, 161-173] --.), to the Extended Parallel Process Model's (EPPM's) perceived threat profiles (Witte, K. 1994). Fear Control and Danger Control: A Test of the Extended Parallel Process Model. *Communication Monographs*, 61(2), 113-134.), and to the Personal Disaster Preparedness (PDP) threat/efficacy profiles ("Citizen Corps Personal Behavior Change Model for Disaster Preparedness," *Citizen Preparedness Review: Community Resilience through Civic Responsibility and Self-Reliance* 4 (2008)). The Stages of Change model posits a five-step progression of changes through 1) pre-contemplation, 2) contemplation, 3) preparation, 4) action, and 5) maintenance. The EPPM, typically used when messaging seeks to elicit healthy behaviors from audience members, assesses behavior outcomes relative to interventions based on self-efficacy, response efficacy, susceptibility, and/or severity. The

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PDP model sees three distinct Threat Efficacy Profiles: 1) low threat, 2) high threat/low efficacy, and 3) high threat/high efficacy.

The Ready model, which WEM has promoted since 2008 (ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov), addresses individuals' low perceived threat levels in the "pre-contemplation" Stage of Change by providing concrete information on hazard-specific disaster vulnerability -- Be Informed. With a raised perceived threat, the Ready model's message for individuals who have moved into the "contemplation" and "preparation" Stages of Change -- Make a Plan -- is to demonstrate how easy it is to take basic preparedness measures, aiming directly at building self-efficacy. The Build a Kit phase of the Ready model, continues to build self-efficacy by prompting individuals entering the "action" Stage of Change to take a series of simple steps over time to assemble preparedness supplies. Finally, the Ready model encourages individuals who are at the "maintenance" Stage of Change to Get Involved by promoting disaster preparedness and volunteerism.

The ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps project employs the following interventions to achieve the dual program objectives of raising individual disaster preparedness and developing and expanding emergency volunteer management capability: 1) deliver disaster preparedness presentations to community organizations, schools, and businesses -- pre-contemplation/contemplation; low threat/low efficacy profiles; 2) deliver continuous reinforcement and expansion of preparedness and motivational messaging through social media and social networking -- preparation/action; high threat/low efficacy profiles; 3) recruit organizations (social networks) to partner with the jurisdiction (by coordinating preparedness presentations for their members and by recruiting and coordinating member volunteers to form/join teams to conduct emergency volunteer management activities during exercises and disasters), building organizational capacity -- maintenance; high threat/high efficacy profiles; 4) complete and exercise jurisdictional emergency volunteer management plans -- building organizational capacity; 5) recruit, train, and manage teams of volunteers to execute emergency volunteer management plans -- maintenance; high threat/high efficacy profiles -- building organizational capacity.

The attached Logic Model Chart illustrates how each intervention prompts a progression for the recipient through the Stages of Change. The following discussion provides additional evidence to support the program design.

EVIDENCE BASE - Johns Hopkins Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center researcher Daniel J. Barnett notes (Daniel J. Barnett, et al., Health Communication (2013): EPPM and Willingness to Respond: The Role of Risk and Efficacy Communication in Strengthening Public

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Health Emergency Response Systems, Health Communication, DOI :

10.1080/10410236.2013.785474), "To date . . . most preparedness training has been uninformed by any particular behavior change model." While the application of theory of change modeling to the design, delivery, and analysis of disaster preparedness interventions is a quite new field of research, two recent studies support the two primary components of our project. Those two primary components are 1) disaster preparedness -- the delivery of messaging and training to increase the public's disaster resilience and 2) volunteer management -- the recruitment and training of volunteers to manage spontaneous volunteers who show up to help during disaster response and recovery. The first of the two studies we reference, *Personal Preparedness in America: Findings from the Citizen Corps National Survey*, Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency (June 2009), provides an evidence-informed context for designing interventions in disaster preparedness. The study analyzed the results of a 2007 Citizen Corps National Survey of 2,400 U.S. households via random digit dialing. While aimed primarily at assessing levels of individual preparedness, barriers to preparedness, and demographic factors relating to preparedness behavior, the 2007 Citizen Corps National Survey also sought to identify at which stage of the Stages of Change model the respondents were, relative to disaster preparedness. The study then went on to examine how the findings inform the PDP model, which integrates the Stages of Change model with the EPPM to describe three Threat/Efficacy Profiles and propose related foci of outreach and social marketing to prompt three stages of outcomes. Finally, the study used regression analysis to examine threat severity, susceptibility, and urgency, and self-efficacy and response-efficacy to see which were most likely influencing the Threat-Efficacy Profile relationship to Stages of Change. "Self-efficacy" and "response-efficacy" indicate respondents' belief that they are able to take preparedness actions and in the effectiveness and value of preparedness actions. The study found: 1) relative to the Stages of Change model, 27% of respondents fell into the pre-contemplation stage, 20%, contemplation, 7% preparation, 14% action, and 32% maintenance; 2) all of the hazard Threat-Efficacy Profiles used in the PDP model were positively correlated with preparedness Stages of Change, supporting the PDP model's presumption that people move from low threat to high threat/low efficacy, to high threat/high efficacy; 3) self-efficacy and response-efficacy (as framed by the PDP model) in natural disasters and hazardous materials accidents were significant predictors of Stages of Change; 4) perceived severity (as framed by the PDP model) had an inverse relationship with preparedness for terrorism and disease outbreaks. These conclusions from the 2007 Citizen Corps National Survey suggest that raising individuals' perception that they are competent to perform preparedness and response tasks and that

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these actions will successfully control their disaster risk pose the greatest potential for raising their status along the preparedness Stages of Change spectrum from "pre-contemplation" (not thinking about change) to "maintenance" (sustaining the change).

The study that provides a degree of evidence-based support for the volunteer management component of our program design is Barnett et al. (2013). This study examined "the attitudinal impact of an EPPM-based training curriculum on local public health department (LHD) workers' willingness to respond to representative public health emergency scenarios" (a weather-related emergency and a radiological "dirty" bomb event). Barnett et al. (2013) studied 71 U.S. LHDs in urban and rural setting across nine states. It explored changes in response willingness and EPPM threat and efficacy appraisals between randomly assigned control versus intervention health departments using a pre-curricular intervention (baseline) and post-curricular assessment design. The study found statistically significant impacts from the training intervention on self-efficacy, response efficacy, and response willingness. These data provide the first evidence-based validation of the potential for an efficacy-based curricular intervention to change behavior in the context of disaster preparedness and response. It remains the challenge for this proposed project design to demonstrate comparable outcomes using its own efficacy-based curriculum among responders who are not public health workers.

MEMBER TRAINING - Team members will begin their term of service with a multi-day residential orientation retreat at the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. The length and content of the orientation will be tailored to the specific needs of the incoming members. In recruitment for members for the 2013-2014 ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps project, we are seeing candidates who are highly experienced emergency managers and responders. While providing for an abundance of teambuilding opportunities, training content will be customized, and may include parallel tracks for experienced and inexperienced members.

The project leads, with support from relevant subject matter experts, will design a carefully structured plan of service for the entire service term and will align the curriculum to support it, including classroom instruction, computer-based training, exercises, and workshop activities. Some of the courses will be standard FEMA classes that the team members can apply toward the Wisconsin Certified Emergency Manager program if they choose. The curriculum will include:

- 1) service rules and tools -- AmeriCorps rules and prohibited activities; record-keeping and reporting systems; plan of service;
- 2) emergency management -- introduction to emergency preparedness and planning; the Ready four-step model; accommodating access and functional needs;
- 3) communications -- delivering the ReadyWisconsin presentation; sensitizing to language choices

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among people with access and functional needs; 4) disaster volunteerism -- introduction to the tools and systems for emergency volunteer management; process for advising recruited volunteers of AmeriCorps rules and prohibited activities.

Instructors will include certified emergency management instructors, directors of key disaster relief agencies in Wisconsin, county/tribal emergency managers, and WEM staff.

Team members will attend monthly WEM regional meetings along with all the emergency managers in their regions and will have the opportunity to participate in training and exercises offered by the host jurisdiction, WEM, and FEMA. The project leads will continually assess the team members during all meetings and consult with their host emergency management directors to determine whether there are needs for additional training.

MEMBER SUPERVISION - WEM will recruit host site supervisors from among the emergency management directors of the 72 Wisconsin counties, the 11 tribes, and interested municipalities.

The member service plan will provide the basis for team member supervision. The WEM preparedness coordinator will lead the preparedness component of the project; the WEM voluntary agency liaison will lead the volunteer management component. Each will lay out a logical and detailed, yet flexible, strategy and set of tasks designed to provide structure for the team members and coach them to achieve the project objectives in a relatively standardized and consistent manner. More highly experienced members will provide mentoring, facilitated by WEM, for their less experienced counterparts. Orientation training will be designed to foster team- and relationship-building among the members. A system of gathering and sharing of best practices among the sites will provide a network for members to exchange communications among the other sites.

Team members will keep a daily journal of their service activities, with their host EMs' signatures, submitted weekly to the WEM central office. They will participate in monthly conference calls and quarterly refresher training events with the project leads, with the host EM joining in as needed. The project leads will also conduct monthly conference calls with and maintain open dialogue with the team members' host EMs and regional directors, to be alert to emergent performance issues. Since all team members will be following the same service plan, we will expect that activities and service products should be relatively consistent in number and impact across all host sites. The system described above will quickly reveal instances where these outcomes are falling short, allowing the project leads to promptly investigate and address relevant issues.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION - WEM, the host sites, and the members will use Americorps branding in reference to all meetings, trainings, and other

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Americorps ReadyWisconsin events and activities. The ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps Project will integrate the AmeriCorps logo into all Ready Wisconsin products the team uses/creates, including powerpoint presentations, brochures, meeting announcements, and training materials. WEM public information staff will distribute Americorps-branded press releases, web site stories and social media postings for significant Americorps events that highlight member activities. WEM will include in its partnership agreement with the host EMs that the ReadyWisconsin and AmeriCorps logos be included on all documents and promotional products associated with the project, including the host county/tribe's website. It will be one of the roles of the 2 central office ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps team members -- in coordination with the WEM public information officers, the preparedness coordinator, and the voluntary agency liaison -- to develop, customize, and distribute project materials, and to work with host EM offices to brand local materials as necessary. WEM will provide the team with AmeriCorps-branded apparel to wear during presentations, appearances, and all other service activities and nameplates and signage to use at their service sites. Members will be required as part of their member contract to wear this logo during all Americorps activities, and host-site supervisors will monitor this for compliance. Americorps members will receive training on public presentations at the member orientation, and will receive refresher training at quarterly sessions. These presentations will be branded as Americorps ReadyWisconsin and will include highlights of members' experiences. In addition to presentations to local community groups, Americorps members will speak on their experiences to an audience of emergency responders as part of a panel at the annual Governor's Conference on Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and other statewide conferences as opportunities are available.

Organizational Capability

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING - WEM is a division of the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, which also houses the Wisconsin Army National Guard and the Wisconsin Air National Guard. WEM has a staff of approximately 60, most of whom are located at the central office, at 2400 Wright Street, Madison, Wisconsin. Six regional offices -- in Spooner, Eau Claire, Wausau, Fond du Lac, Waukesha, and Madison -- each house a WEM regional director with support staff. WEM contains two bureaus -- Planning & Preparedness and Response & Recovery. The Bureau of Planning and Preparedness directs the project and coordinates the training.

Since virtually all WEM programs are funded in whole or in part by federal or state grants, all management and program staff have considerable experience in managing funding streams and documenting program outcomes. WEM is currently in its first year of managing the ReadyWisconsin

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AmeriCorps Disaster Preparedness Project.

Most Wisconsin counties and tribes receive federal emergency management grant funds through WEM. The WEM regional directors coordinate the fulfillment and evaluation of jurisdictions' grant obligations through the annual WEM plan of work (POW). The POW is the jurisdiction's "contract" with WEM for producing the intended grant outcomes. The WEM AmeriCorps project host contract will operate in a very similar manner. AmeriCorps members will attend monthly regional meetings with county/tribal EM directors and other AmeriCorps members in their regions and receive the same briefings and instruction as the salaried emergency management staff. WEM public affairs staff, attached to the administrator's office, will work very closely with the project defining messaging, integrating the team's outreach activities with the WEM calendar of annual awareness campaigns (e.g., September Preparedness Month, Winter Awareness Week, Tornado Awareness Week, etc.), and crafting new outreach strategies.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY - As a state agency that administers over \$123 million in state and federal grant funding annually, WEM has extensive procedures and systems in place to ensure fiscal and programmatic compliance and accountability. The project will contain multiple levels of member performance oversight: 1) the host EMs, who will monitor daily member performance; 2) the 2 WEM central office project leads, who will coordinate the member plan of service through the host EM; 3) the project leads' respective supervisors; and 4) the bureau director, who is the project director of record.

All coordinating and supervisory staff, including host EMs, will be trained on AmeriCorps rules and prohibited activities. Host EMs will be required to ensure team members receive a workplace rules orientation from their host jurisdictions. Part of their hosting agreement will include a commitment to monitoring members for compliance and accountability and will provide processes for reporting noncompliance issues. It is a binding condition of the member hosting agreement that all site supervisors attend the sessions at the initial orientation retreat that address compliance and prohibited activities. The orientation retreat will provide a thorough training on all rules, identify consequences for violation of rules and regulations, and prescribe strict accountability procedures. These procedures will include: a daily journal of service activities; monthly conference calls with the team members and host EMs; quarterly refresher training; quarterly and final reports; full use of the OnCorps reporting system for recording and tracking member time and performance; and formal mid-term and end-of-term evaluations, conducted by the host EMs. Should instances of risk or noncompliance occur, the bureau director, in consultation with the project leads, will initiate corrective measures including

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suspension and dismissal if necessary. In the event that host jurisdictions are unable to adhere to the program guidelines, team members will be removed from that site and assigned to another.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT - Americorps members will distribute evaluation forms to all recipients of preparedness presentations. These forms will provide an opportunity to provide feedback on the presentation and will all include a survey of preparedness. As part of this evaluation, recipients will be encouraged to voluntarily provide an email address. WEM will then distribute follow-up surveys that will enable the program to track the percentage of recipients who take preparedness steps after receiving the presentation. This data will be used as a performance measure to track the success of the program, and will provide feedback on the success of the presentations in encouraging preparedness behaviors. WEM will track long-term sustained volunteer engagement, which will be used as an indicator of the success of volunteer engagement efforts. Members and host sites will also solicit feedback regularly with community volunteers through email and volunteer events. This feedback will be used to improve volunteer engagement.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

COST EFFECTIVENESS - This proposal requests \$130,503 from CNCS at a cost of \$13,050/MSY. The cost/MSY in this application is slightly lower than the amount found in our initial 2013/14 proposal. The rate of \$11,213/MSY in the 2013-14 Supplemental Formula funding grant we actually received forced us to substantially lower our member living allowance to a level we find undesirable. We have returned our proposed rate to last year's request.

Were WEM to replicate the delivery models advocated in this proposal by other means, such as employing twenty limited-term employees, costs in salary and FICA alone would top \$350,000. Any conceivable alternative model of service delivery would be prohibitively costly for WEM or the host jurisdictions. The cost effectiveness of the program increases when calculating the multiplier effect of the 18 field members, each of whom will recruit an average of 20 new volunteers over the course of the term. Based on an estimated 50 hours of service per volunteer, calculated at the 2011 value of volunteers in Wisconsin at \$18.20 per hour, (http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html), this will add up to an additional \$330,000 in total value. A number of studies have independently calculated that disaster preparedness mitigation activities, which include preparedness awareness and education, are extremely cost-effective, returning up to \$4 for every \$1 invested (CBO Potential Cost Savings from the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Congressional Budget Office, September 2007 at <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/86xx/doc8653/09-28-Disaster.pdf>; "Mitigation Generates Savings of Four to One and Enhances Community Resilience,"

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Natural Hazards Observer, vol.xxx, no.4 (March2006), p. 1 at

<http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/o/archives/2006/mar06/mar06a.html>).

Beyond the economic value, the potential value to life safety and health are incalculable. Increasing the number of Wisconsin residents who prepare for an emergency by just 5% represents nearly 300,000 citizens. Increased preparedness means that individuals and families can protect themselves in a disaster, neighbors can help neighbors, and emergency responders can concentrate resources on those who are in greatest need. The value of community preparedness has been dramatically demonstrated in recent disasters across the nation, from the Joplin tornado to Hurricane Sandy.

BUDGET ADEQUACY - WEM proposes to provide a 27% grantee share/match from public funding sources. With AmeriCorps funding WEM will be able to leverage Wisconsin's well-established spectrum of emergency management and preparedness programs into a model capable of achieving greater depth at the jurisdictional level. The AmeriCorps members will help to expand the ReadyWisconsin program, funded through the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant, state funding, and a Citizen Corps grant of approximately \$110,000 per year. This grant funds the community preparedness coordinator position as well as promotional materials and a public service media campaign. Our project will support and expand these investments. It will also complement the Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program, a FEMA-designed preparedness curriculum that will be delivered to 10,000 fifth-grade students across Wisconsin in 2013-14. STEP is funded by \$15,000 in Homeland Security grants along with a \$15,000 grant from AT&T. Considering that STEP reaches not just the students but also their families, the program is extremely cost-effective at \$6 per student. AmeriCorps members will be available to promote STEP and assist its implementation in schools throughout Wisconsin. WEM will continue to seek Homeland Security grant funding to fund continued preparedness and training programs for the AmeriCorps members and their client volunteers in 2014-15.

The institutional in-kind support of the statewide emergency management community will ensure that the budget is reasonable and sufficient to achieve program objectives. Each member will be supported by a host EM department that has agreed to provide space, supplies, travel resources, and organizational support. The members will also receive state-level support and coordination by WEM, which will provide administrative support, personnel services, training, and supervision to the members, provided through normal existing program activities.

Adequate training is critical in the emergency management field. Fortunately, the members will have many opportunities to receive training through extensive existing emergency management training

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programs funded through other sources, which are adjuncts to the proposed budget as non-matching funds, and do not appear in the budget. These include: 1) a statewide emergency management program administered by WEM and funded through Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) that provides \$160,000 and supports an average 82 training courses per year, including volunteer management; and 2) an additional \$200,000 in HSGP funds that supports a statewide emergency responder exercise program coordinated by four WEM exercise officers who provide assistance to counties for 70 exercises per year. Since each county is required to hold at least one exercise per year, AmeriCorps members will have multiple opportunities to participate in exercises throughout the region, helping to test and train volunteer management in the process.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

4-8-2014

A. Budget Clarification

1. In our original 2013-14 application our requested cost per MSY was \$13,054. This original request was based upon a careful evaluation of what was required to attract and retain high-quality members, and is necessary to build and sustain a healthy program over the long-term.

When we eventually were notified of our award in September 2013, we were informed that our award had to be reduced to \$67,278 due to the limited amount of Supplemental Formula funds available. We were also notified that the cost per MSY needed to be reduced as a result. This reduction was accompanied by a significantly reduced performance period and a higher weekly hourly commitment while our performance measures remained the same. These developments combined to have a direct negative impact on the initial stages of our new program, including:

- 8 of the 13 host organizations that had initially applied to host members dropped out of the program as a direct result of reduced funds and time frames.
- Several prospective candidates who were interested in serving stated explicitly that the low living

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allowance relative to the hourly commitment was the reason that they could not enroll.

- Several members have experienced difficulties meeting living expenses while serving and are looking for other employment. We are concerned that this will force them to search for paid employment and exit the program early.

Despite the challenges that resulted from our late and reduced grant award, we have successfully started up the program and have enrolled 13 half- and quarter-time members who are providing high-quality disaster preparedness education and service to their communities. Because of the specialized nature of emergency management, our membership is made up of mostly full- or part-time students and professionals in the field. For our program to continue to grow and remain healthy, it is important for us to retain some of these experienced members in 2014-15 and to attract new qualified members.

This will be extremely difficult if we remain at the same reduced cost per MSY as we received in 2013-14. In 2013-14 the reduced living allowance of \$4,950 was distributed over a reduced performance period--18 pay periods rather than 26--offsetting somewhat the reduction through a correspondingly higher bi-weekly payment.

However, it also required members to serve significantly more hours--approximately 25 hours per week vs. 17 as originally planned. This has made it more difficult for our members to meet actual living expenses through other paid work or, for those of our members who are employed full-time, to meet their hourly service requirement.

Calculated on the same cost per MSY, our 2014-15 living allowance would remain \$4,950 per member but would be distributed over 26 pay periods. Thus, while the overall stipend might be the same, for a member trying to meet day-to-day living expenses it would be a weekly reduction of 30%. It will be difficult for many of our current members to re-enroll under this scenario.

Therefore, in our 2014-15 application, we requested to restore our cost per MSY to our original amount. Our cost per MSY is calculated to limit the burdens on our members, reduce barriers to serving, and maximize their experience as AmeriCorps members. For this reason our program distributes 95% of our grant funds directly back to our members in the form of their stipend and

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associated benefits. We cover nearly all other program expenses through other sources, and provide a significant amount of matching funds. In fact, we anticipate easily exceeding our 37% match in 2013-14.

2. As stated above, our members are highly-qualified professionals or students with experience in public safety and emergency management. As a result, the value that they are providing to their host organizations and communities far exceeds their costs. In most cases, the members are bringing a level of knowledge and expertise commensurate with a career professional that would command a salary of 10 times the cost of the stipend.

Most county and local emergency management host organizations are staffed by a single full-time or even part-time individual who simply does not have the time or resources to provide community outreach or engage in volunteer management. The AmeriCorps members are proving to be an extremely cost-effective resource to local emergency management in this regard.

Each year, federal, state, and local governments as well as businesses and non-profit organizations spend billions preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. An informed, educated, prepared public can help to reduce these costs considerably. Likewise, affiliated emergency volunteers can be a significant asset during disaster recovery. Examples include:

- Organized volunteers help to clear debris, clean-out homes, and repair damage from floods and tornadoes. Volunteers after the Joplin tornado, managed in part by AmeriCorps members, provided assistance worth over \$17.7 million in in-kind costs that was used to defray state and local disaster assistance match.
- Survivors of a disaster who arrive at shelters and evacuation points prepared with "go kits" of important documents and medications greatly increase the efficiency of mass care operations and reduce the burden on emergency management officials.
- Households that have supplies and water on hand during a power outage reduce their reliance on emergency responders, enabling responders to concentrate their efforts and direct resources to the most vulnerable.
- Schools, churches, business, and other organizations that plan, train, and exercise for emergencies protect their members and recover more quickly from disasters.
- The simplest steps that the public can take, such as purchasing a \$40 weather radio, can save lives.

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For an example of that, see this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSSXu3EjtTE>.

During their terms of service, each member will make contact with hundreds of community residents, local officials, community organizations, and emergency responders. They will educate the public on life-saving actions like the ones above, and recruit hundreds of people to serve as emergency volunteers. Through the education and inspiration provided by AmeriCorps members, these individuals will become more prepared and involved, improving the ability of their families, organizations, and communities to recover from a disaster. Viewed in these terms, the cost-benefit of persuading families, businesses, and communities to take these kinds of steps is incalculable.

B. Programmatic Clarification

1. AmeriCorps members will help promote the program in their presentations to community organizations. They will include flyers for STEP when they hand out materials at community events and include a slide on STEP in power point presentations, with information on how to sign-up for STEP. For example, at a recent Weather Day event in Milwaukee attended by 8,000 students and teachers, participants received a bag of informational materials that included a STEP fact sheet, and several teachers inquired on how they can get involved. Schools that use STEP are encouraged to involve county and local public safety officials, who often attend STEP classroom presentations. AmeriCorps members may assist county emergency management in visiting classrooms if asked.

2. STEP is included as one of the programs and resources on preparedness that will be promoted by AmeriCorps members in their presentations. Promotion of STEP is integrated into their regular preparedness outreach; AmeriCorps members will not dedicate specific time to it unless requested on a case-by-case basis.

Since STEP is not a curriculum that the members will regularly be directly presenting in most cases (it is designed for classroom instruction by teachers), we did not feel it required a performance measure. We are tracking members' involvement as a "Special Project."

3. Our requested start date is 9/1/2014 and our end date is 8/31/2015.

Narratives

C. Performance Measure Clarification

1. Survey recipients are unduplicated attendees of preparedness presentations. In addition to making the requested changes, we increased the output target based upon early reporting results for the current year's program.
2. The outcome target number is calculated as 30% of the D1 output target.
3. We were counting recruited volunteers in one measure, managed volunteers in the second. They are the same volunteers. To correct, we removed G3.2 and increased the 3.1 target based upon early reporting results for the current year's program.

G3-3.1 Member numbers and hours will not be counted toward this measure. Only the numbers of volunteers recruited by the members, and the hours served by these volunteers will be counted. The minimum is 12 hours.

4. G3-3.4 Members receive training in incident management, volunteer management, emergency sheltering, functional assessment services, and other FEMA emergency management courses. Members are mentored and supervised in the development of volunteer management plans by county emergency management, and work closely with local public safety stakeholders.

D. Strategic Engagement Slots Clarification

1. We recruit members with disabilities through our membership recruitment process, which uses State of Wisconsin recruiting best practices as an equal opportunity employer with an approved affirmative action plan. We do not specifically target slots for members with disabilities.

Our plan for training members includes outreach and services to people with disabilities. We are integrating the FAST (Functional Assessment Service Teams) into our training, which will provide education to members on providing services to people with functional needs in a disaster.

2. We are not requesting this.

Narratives

E. No-Cost MSY Clarification

We are not requesting this.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics