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Executive Summary

The College Advising Corps at Brown University will have 14 full-time AmeriCorps members who will serve as college advisers in 13 high schools in RI's core urban districts as well as at the Community College of Rhode Island. At the end of the 1st program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for serving 3000 students, of whom 2000 will be high school seniors. At least 1500 will complete a college application, and 1000 will receive college acceptances. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 50 volunteers from Brown University community programs that will be engaged in academic enrichment and standardized test preparation with students served by the program.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Education. The CNCS investment of \$185,237 will be matched with a total of \$231,993 of which \$0 is from public funding and \$231,993 from private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

A. Problem/Need: Our nation is facing a crisis in access to education and opportunity. Too many students are not receiving the advice and support they need to identify and enroll in colleges where they stand a good chance of graduating--with lasting consequences not only for these students, but also for our nation. Ninety percent of the fastest-growing jobs today require post-secondary education, yet the U.S. lags behind other nations in young adults enrolled in higher education (US Dept of Ed, 2006). By 2025, there will be a shortage of 23 million college-educated adults in the U.S. workforce. The number of jobs requiring postsecondary education continues to increase while careers for workers with a high school diploma or less education have plateaued.

Low-income students are disproportionately impacted by the lack of advice and support for higher education. Nearly a quarter of low-income students who score in the top quartile on standardized tests never go to college, and many of those who do attend college never complete enough courses to attain their bachelors' degrees (College Board 2007). A recent study found that many low income students who do attend college are often "under-matching": attending schools that are less selective and less challenging than those they are qualified to attend (U Chicago, 2008). Approximately 62% of underprivileged students enrolled in a college that was below their presumptive abilities, and among the highest-achieving students (who presumably would have qualified for a selective college), only

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27% applied and enrolled in college, while another 29% enrolled in a two-year college or did not enroll at all.

The decision to attend a four-year higher education institution can have a profound economic impact on the life of a young person. On average, bachelor's degree holders earn approximately one million more dollars over a lifetime than high school graduates. In addition, studies show that underrepresented students (students of color, low-income and first-generation students) realize greater economic gains from attending college than students from other racial and socioeconomic groups, and those who have attended college are less likely to become unemployed or live in poverty (American Sociological Review, 2010). According to Rhode Island KIDSCount, "Between 2009 and 2011 in Rhode Island, the median income of adults with bachelor's degrees was \$51,157, compared to \$29,828 for adults with high school degrees, and the unemployment rate for Rhode Islanders with bachelor's degrees (4.1%) was one-third as high as for Rhode Islanders with only a high school diploma (12.1%)."

In Rhode Island, low-income and minority students are substantially less likely to enroll in and complete college. Among Rhode Island's 2010 high school graduates, 64% of higher-income students and 37% of low-income students enrolled in college the following fall (RI KIDSCount 2013). Getting in is just half the battle: degree completion in Rhode Island is low, with only 34% of students who attend a four-year college in Rhode Island graduating in four years and 58% graduating in six years (RI KIDSCount 2013).

In Rhode Island's urban districts, the numbers are even more grim. Fewer than half (48%) of Providence public schools graduates enroll in college; of those enrolled, just 45% earn a degree within six years--overall, just one in five Providence high school graduates actually earns a college degree within six years (College Visions, Providence Public School District).

The gap in college-going and college-completion rates is unlikely to be closed unless the gap in college advising is first closed. College counselors are critical to ensuring that students are supported during the college application process to make well-informed decisions about college fit and match; however, the national student-to-guidance counselor ratio of 467:1 means that the average student spends 20 minutes per year talking to his or her counselor (collegeboard.org). Moreover, low-income and first-

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generation students are particularly underserved, with many never seeing a college adviser.

B. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems; Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact: The College Advising Corps (CAC) recruits and trains recent college graduates to serve as full-time AmeriCorps members, providing college advising in Rhode Island schools. Working collaboratively with school staff, members provide individual and group college access information and advising to students of all grades. By taking a non-cohort, whole-school approach, the CAC positively impacts the college-going culture at partner schools while targeting high-need populations. CAC partner high schools are selected in consultation with school districts, based on factors such as low college enrollment rates, high rates of free and reduced fee lunch eligibility (a proxy for poverty), and high numbers of underrepresented and first-generation college students.

According to RI KIDSCount, "students from low-income families, minority students, and first-generation college students are much more likely to go to college when they go to high schools where students are encouraged to attend college, get help with the application process, and are academically prepared." The College Advising Corps (CAC) helps meet this critical need. With guidance counselor caseloads at more than 350 students per counselor in Rhode Island, our AmeriCorps members are able to work one-to-one with the students who need them. (NCES Common Core of Data, State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Education, 2009). CAC members help each student search for an appropriate two-year or four-year college, complete admissions and financial aid applications, and take the final steps needed to complete his or her enrollment. The CAC also works to foster a college-going culture in our low-performing schools through innovative interventions and support.

By placing well-trained, talented, recent college graduates as full-time advisers in Rhode Island schools with substantial populations of students who are under-represented in the college admissions process, the CAC supports high-need students as they chart their path toward higher education. CAC members focus on students who are not being served by other college access programs, and target first generation and low-to-moderate income students. Members provide a combination of services that includes: college awareness, financial aid and preparation workshops for students and families; college visits and college fairs, college entrance exam registration and preparation; college application completion assistance for students and families; coursework advising and after-school homework

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help; and other student engagement activities. One full-time member is placed at the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), working in close collaboration with CCRI and CAC staff to increase retention, graduation and transfer rates of students at CCRI, with particular attention paid to CAC "alumni" (current CCRI students who were served by CAC while they were high school students). This placement addresses a critical need, as each year roughly a third of high school students served by a CAC member will matriculate at CCRI. CAC members work with site partners to target underrepresented students for services. Of the 3000 students that the CAC will serve, at least 75% will fall into one or more of these target groups.

The College Advising Corps has several unique characteristics that set it apart from other college access programs:

- * Intensity: The CAC is the only access program in Rhode Island with a full-time presence in the schools.
- * School-Based Partnership and Collaboration: CAC members work collaboratively with school staff in Rhode Island's largest urban districts, as well as CCRI, to develop strategic work plans and target students for services.
- * Near-to-Peer: The program recruits recent college graduates as advisers whose backgrounds are similar to the high school students they serve.
- * Non-Cohort: CAC members provide an open-door, whole school approach to advising to foster both a school-wide college-going culture and provide targeted assistance to underrepresented students who, while capable and qualified, are at the greatest risk of not attending college.
- * Executed Through University Partnership: The program leverages university resources (Annenberg Institute, Ed Department, Financial Aid and Admission offices) to recruit and develop members.
- * Focus on "Fit": CAC members focus on helping students identify and apply to postsecondary programs that will serve them well academically, socially and financially--thus increasing the likelihood that these students will earn their degrees.

A typical member's day begins with individual or small group meetings with students before school starts. Members meet one-on-one with student by appointment, typically during elective courses, and can sometimes work with students during class if the teacher permits or the student must complete an urgent college application activity. The member may conduct one or more college workshops during the school day in advisory or core classes. At lunch, the member will check in with students or make

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announcements to students about college application or testing deadlines. After school, more individual meetings or group workshops are held. To further immerse themselves in the culture of the school, members attend - and occasionally host or chaperone - afternoon and evening school events such as athletic and academic tournaments or parent/teacher nights. This level of participation increases their visibility among students, staff and families.

The CAC has been highly effective. In 2009, Stanford University researchers initiated a comprehensive evaluation of direct outcomes for the National College Advising Corps (NCAC) across the US. Initial evaluation results found that, nationally, schools served by the CAC see an 8-12 percentage point increase in college-going rates versus control schools in the area. In Providence, Rhode Island, students in schools with a CAC member are 14.4 percentage points more likely to attend college and persist than students in schools without a CAC member, the highest in the NCAC network. Before the CAC arrived in the RI schools served, the baseline higher education enrollment rate was 38% (including two and four year institutions). After a CAC member was placed in the schools, total enrollment jumped to 43%--a five percentage point increase, and once again the highest percentage point increase among active CAC programs in the nation.

Through student surveys conducted in 2012, the Stanford University evaluation team measured the impacts for high school students who meet with a CAC adviser. More than 30, 000 students were surveyed across 168 CAC partner schools in 14 states. Students who work with a CAC adviser are: 42% more likely to apply to a college/university; 73% more likely to apply to a four-year institution of higher education; 67% more likely to be accepted to a college/university; 84% more likely to be accepted to a four-year institution of higher education; and 31% more likely to be committed to attending college in the fall (as indicated by having submitted a deposit to a college/university).

The Stanford researchers also found that, upon the introduction of an adviser, partner high schools see an average increase of one million dollars in additional scholarship funds per school for their college-going students. Surveys of partner high schools demonstrated an overall increase in the number of college visits per student, attendance at college fairs, FAFSA completion, SAT/ACT registration and overall school morale. The Advising Corps provides a unique, much-needed and highly beneficial service to schools that lack the counseling resources and time to thoroughly promote college and work with students to gain admission.

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As the CAC enters its seventh year at Brown in 2014, our immediate need is to sustain the program by renewing our current funding sources. With the renewal of these funding commitments, and assuming level funding from prior years, we are projecting modest but significant growth: from a Corps of 12 FT members in 11 high schools and one CCRI campus to a Corps of 14 FT members in 13 high schools statewide and one CCRI campus.

C. Member Training: The CAC provides intensive training before the start of programming. Full-time members receive roughly four weeks of pre-service training in July and August that contextualize college access work; strengthen their knowledge of local communities, partner schools and districts; and equip them with college access skills. Members participate in pre-service training on prohibited activities under AmeriCorps rules, typically conducted by staff from our state commission. Trainers include national and local experts in the field, school partners and Brown staff and faculty members. Topically, the training centers on college access context and systems, serving urban districts, and the practice of college advising.

After completing the pre-service training, CAC members receive a site orientation and training upon starting their placement. They are introduced to school faculty and staff members; learn about the school's unique culture and priorities; review the comprehensive summary report and reflection, written by the member from the previous year; attend and present at a general school-wide staff meeting; shadow their site supervisor during the first week; and begin drafting a strategic work plan in collaboration with the school stakeholders.

During the school year, members meet as a "Learning Community" (LC) for 3+ hours/week. These staff-facilitated LC meetings build networks of support amongst the members, and sharpen the skill-set that each member brings to the work. School-year training topics are aligned with the college access calendar (e.g., a FAFSA refresher in advance of financial aid deadlines). The CAC engages other college access programs, high school guidance counselors, and teachers as trainers. In addition, the National College Advising Corps convenes all advisers at least once per year to share best practices and provide additional training.

D. Member Supervision: Our members are placed in fast-paced and complex service environments;

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not surprisingly, as recent college graduates with little professional experience, they often need support and advice. Members are directly supervised by the CAC Program Director and also receive on-site supervision from a designated partner school staff member, in most cases either the head of the school guidance department or the school counselor who works with 12th grade students. At the Community College of Rhode Island, day-to-day supervision is provided by the campus head of the advising and counseling office.

Members are provided with workspace, including desk, computer, telephone, and school mailbox. This workspace is located either within the guidance suite in a designated 'College Access Center/Room'. Members are also given access to school IT resources (network, email address) and receive electronic and paper mailings sent to faculty and staff. Members act as an extension of the guidance staff, and, as a result of our efforts fully integrate the members into the fabric of the school, students interact with members as they would other school staff or faculty.

The CAC Program Director frequently checks-in with members and site supervisors via phone or email, and makes scheduled and random site visits. This allows us to understand the member's performance or workload, gauge the partner school's satisfaction, and troubleshoot emergent situations. Other Swearer staff members are available for on-going mentoring, dedicating substantial time each week to check-in with members. Our experienced second-year members actively mentor first-year members, offering seasoned perspectives on the practice of college advising. The CAC has historically had a high percentage of returning members each year. Fifty percent of members in the 2013-2014 program year are second-year college advisers.

E. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: Identification as AmeriCorps members begins during CAC member recruitment. All application and informational materials for prospective advisers bear the AmeriCorps logo. Explicit language is included in applications to inform prospective advisers that all positions are AmeriCorps positions and to educate them on the terms of AmeriCorps service.

During the first week of adviser pre-service training, members receive a comprehensive training from Serve RI staff on the history and structure of AmeriCorps, member expectations, AmeriCorps code of conduct, and their rights and responsibilities as AmeriCorps members. The AmeriCorps logo is featured prominently at all of our program sites, on highly-visible banners or posters. Members are

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required to wear AmeriCorps pins each day. Additionally, each year the CAC members are provided with AmeriCorps logoed attire, which they wear to special college access events hosted at their sites as well as to any local or state-wide events where they will be representing the CAC/AmeriCorps.

Organizational Capability

A. Organizational Background and Staffing: The CAC program is housed within the Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University, which for 25 years has been connecting the capacities of Brown University with those of the larger community in order to address inequalities in our society. By offering a variety of student-led public service programs, the Swearer Center nurtures collaborative and sustainable campus-community partnerships alongside college student civic engagement. More than half of the public service programs at Swearer are focused on educational equity and opportunity, and operate within RI public schools.

Daily operations of the Advising Corps are managed by the CAC Program Director and the Program Director for K-12 Education; the Swearer Center's Director, Associate Director, and Financial Analyst provide additional direction, support and guidance. Brown's Human Resources Department and Offices of Sponsored Projects and Development also play key roles in personnel matters, financial oversight of grants and fundraising strategy, respectively.

* Program Director for K-12 Education: Betsy Shimberg is responsible for guiding the Swearer Center's education strategy, overseeing our robust elementary school community program, managing four high school community programs, and supervising the College Advising Corps Program Director. Betsy served on the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education for five years, and has experience in advocacy, education policy and nonprofit management.

* CAC Program Director: Ashley Greene brings a wealth of experience in the college access arena, having served as a CAC AmeriCorps member for two years at Alvarez High School in Providence. She re-joined the CAC as Program Director after serving as the Acting Director of Outreach and Admissions for Year Up in Providence. Ashley is the staff person primarily responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the program (partner relationships, support to the members, liaison to Serve Rhode Island).

Having successfully operated the CAC program for the past six years, the Swearer Center has demonstrated our capacity to effectively administer the AmeriCorps grant and programming. In addition to our multi-year AmeriCorps grant for the CAC, the Swearer Center has administered

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Scholarships for Service awards, hosted a VISTA volunteer for each of the past three years, and received a Recovery AmeriCorps grant in FY2009. Both the CAC and Swearer staff members are well-versed in AmeriCorps requirements and protocols, and we have made great strides in educating relevant university departments (Human Resources, Office of Sponsored Projects) in the particulars of the program.

B. Compliance and Accountability: Swearer Center staff members have strong understanding of AmeriCorps regulations and the attention to detail necessary to ensure full compliance. Our state commission is responsive and helpful when we have questions. Swearer/CAC staff attend all state commission network meetings, trainings, and retreats to stay current on changing regulations.

We ensure compliance at our partner sites through the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which clearly spells out AmeriCorps prohibited activities as well as the respective goals, roles and contributions of the CAC and partner school. At the beginning of each service year, program staff meet with site supervisors and school leadership to review and execute MOUs. Regular monitoring visits to sites (announced and unannounced) and frequent communication allow us to maintain compliance as well. Because most CAC sites have partnered with the CAC for five or more years, they are familiar with basic AmeriCorps rules and procedures.

C. Past Performance: Overall, the CAC is a stable and mature program with a strong record of past performance, a well-honed cache of best practices and sustainable relationships with partner schools.

* Based on our annual assessment, the Rhode Island State Commission has designated the CAC a low risk sub-grantee.

* Since 2011, the CAC has enrolled 100% of its AmeriCorps slots (both full-time and minimum time), and successfully retained and/or exited (with awards) 100% of our members.

* Since the CAC began in 2007, the CAC has worked with more than 20,000 high school students.

* In the current grant cycle (2011-2014), the CAC has met or exceeded all performance targets. In the last program year (2012- 2013), RI advisors worked with 3,741 students, 1,576 of whom had four or more meetings with advisers. 1,060 seniors completed the FAFSA and submitted one or more college applications (target=1,000) and 1,023 were accepted to one or more institutions of higher education (target=750).

* The CAC has successfully recruited strong and diverse corps of full-time members from Brown and

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other colleges and universities. In the current program year (2013- 2014), our Corps of 12 FT members includes 5 males, 7 females, 11 ethnic minorities, 7 first-generation college students, and 4 native Rhode Islanders, all of whom are graduates of high schools served by the CAC. This diversity helps members better relate to their students and informs their work at partner sites.

Past compliance concerns have centered on missing elements of the member files (member signatures on self-appraisals and member development plans, time-off documentation, media consent forms). This year, multiple staff members have thoroughly reviewed our files and checklists to ensure that all elements of the files are included and properly executed. During last year's compliance visit, our state commission also noted that our members should wear AmeriCorps shirts or some other form of identifying gear; this year, we have distributed AmeriCorps pins to all members and made clear the expectation that these should be worn whenever the member is in service. Site visits will enforce this policy.

D. Continuous Improvement: Our efforts at continuous improvement begin by conferring with high school guidance staff and administration at the beginning of the school year to solicit feedback on the previous program year and set benchmarks and expectations for the upcoming year. Within the first 30 days of the academic year, members develop strategic work plans to guide their on-site activities for the duration of the program year. Members solicit feedback from school stakeholders and revise these work plans in collaboration with site supervisors to ensure that their activities are transparent and aligned with school policies, procedures and goals. Site supervisors and other school stakeholders are asked to complete performance reviews of the member placed at their site every three months. This feedback is integrated into mid- and end-of-year performance reviews of each member.

The CAC's customized Excel data collection platform allows us to capture and analyze the most relevant program activity and outcome data. Complete with pivot tables, multiple tabs, and both pre-set and customizable data collection, this data platform has proved to be our strongest tool for goal-setting, tracking and follow-up. It allows for day-to-day and longitudinal program data collection, as well as self and group assessment and benchmarking. Members use data to target students who are not receiving other college access services and follow-up with students who are approaching a critical deadline. The tool provides for a quick self-assessment for CAC members and an easy real-time method for staff to identify high performers and extract and replicate their best practices, or rapidly

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provide additional support to members who may be lagging behind in their work.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

A. Cost Effectiveness: AmeriCorps funding is critical to sustain the CAC program and leverage other funding sources. We are requesting \$185,237 in CNCS funding, slightly less than our last award of \$187,727. Our proposed share of costs remains relatively constant (58% in the 2013-2014 program year and 56% proposed in this application). The reduction in the overall budget totals (from \$449,820 to \$417,230) reflects programmatic and staffing adjustments resulting in cost savings. The proposed budget also reflects a minimal reduction in our Member Service Years from 14.12 to 14 due to the elimination of our minimum time slots and the addition of two new full time slots. We anticipate that the new FT members will increase our impact in partner schools, while allowing us to continue to leverage Brown undergraduate volunteers through the Swearer Center's regular programming.

We require \$231,993 in non-Corporation funding to sustain the CAC program and are actively seeking new and diverse funding sources. We are optimistic that our prospects for renewing both the NCAC and van Beuren Charitable Foundation funding are strong, which will cover the vast majority of this match. In addition, the Brown development office and NCAC national office are working with private and corporate foundations, alumni, and friends to build resources in this area. As state, municipal, and school budgets stabilize, we will also explore opportunities for long-term support through those and other sources.

In addition to external funding opportunities, the in-kind support provided by Brown and the Swearer Center are substantial. All program staffing will be provided in-kind either through other funds raised or Brown resources. The Center's endowment will provide space and infrastructure for this effort, integrating it into the ongoing supervision and support provided to all Swearer Center programs. Brown will share expenses for several other direct costs (e.g., transportation, equipment, office space), provide ongoing university support (e.g., services of grants and budget offices and HR, library services), and contribute (in-kind) the expertise, guidance, and support of education department faculty and staff, university administrators, and the Swearer Center Director, Associate Director, and Financial Analyst. Projected cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is \$13,231, less than the maximum allowable cost levels and previous years' cost per MSY of \$13,295.

B. Budget Adequacy: In total, combining the Corporation funds requested and the match we will

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provide, we consider the budget adequate to run the proposed program. Corporation funds are requested to support a portion of Member costs (living allowance, fringe benefits and health insurance), modest conference expenses for one staff member and 14 members, and allowable indirect costs. Matching support covers all professional program staffing (salaries and fringe); the remaining conference travel expenses; supplies; consultants/training; and the remainder of Member costs.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

In the upcoming grant cycle, the CAC at Brown University will, in conjunction with the National College Advising Corps, execute the evaluation plan outlined below. Our research on the effectiveness of CAC's ongoing college advising efforts can be classified into two broad categories: (1) program impacts and (2) program implementation. Information from both strands of research will be used to guide program improvement as well as contribute to the broader field of research on college access. As part of the National College Advising Corps (NCAC) network, Rhode Island's program will also benefit from comparative data collected by 17 other partner institutions in 13 other states across the US.

Program Impact Research

This strand of research examines the impact of CAC's ongoing college advising efforts on multiple outcomes, including:

- 1) What is the program's impact on college enrollment? To what extent have CAC members increased the likelihood that students attend any college once they complete high school?
- 2) What is the program's impact on the pathways to college? What are the key milestones in CAC's students' academic careers that correlate most strongly with subsequent high school completion, college attendance, and outcomes in college?
- 3) What is the program's impact on school culture? To what extent are the members able to affect change beyond the triage done with seniors by working with freshmen, sophomores, and juniors? How does the college access work undertaken by CAC members complement the efforts of the professional guidance staff?
- 4) Does the current program engage parents in meaningful and productive ways?
- 5) What impact has participation in the program had on the members' attitudes and life choices?

Program Implementation Research

A second, complementary strand of research examines CAC's program implementation in various settings nationwide. This information will aid CAC in determining how to improve current efforts.

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Studying the program's effects will also serve the more practical element of assisting in the program's fundraising and expansion efforts. Our specific program implementation research questions include:

- 1) How was the program organized? Did the treatment group receive services as planned? What kinds of services did the comparison group receive? What were the most important ways in which the model as implemented differed from the model as planned? How much variation in implementation fidelity was there across sites? On what aspects of implementation was the greatest variation?
- 2) Did the types of students actually receiving services have the expected characteristics? Were they eligible to participate?
- 3) What was the cost of the program? Did the cost vary across sites or different types of participants?

College Enrollment/Completion Outcomes: The first outcome that we hope to measure is the impact of CAC on students' eventual college enrollments. College enrollment and eventual graduation are likely the most important outcomes that students can accomplish with CAC's help. We can also identify key auxiliary outcomes that not only help us understand whether students attend but also how they attend, e.g., type of institutions attended (2- or 4-year; public or private) and part-time versus full-time enrollment.

Our hope is to provide both descriptive and causal evidence. The descriptive evidence will document the outcomes of students who participated in CAC offerings, showing the number of college attendees and their engagement in the early years in college. The causal evidence will attempt to establish whether CAC has directly affected students so that they are more likely to attend college than they would have been in the absence of CAC advising.

Pathways to College Outcomes: We hope to measure critical intermediary outcomes leading to eventual college enrollment, including: taking Algebra II in high school, taking a college entrance exam (e.g., SAT or ACT), and completing the FAFSA. We will try to measure CAC's impact on these intermediary outcomes and identify key places where students either continue to progress or fall short in their preparation for college attendance and completion. We also hope to identify how the pathways to college differ according to key demographic factors (e.g., race, gender, socio-economic status, state residence). We will use simple multivariate regression analysis to identify the specific correlations and to test whether they are similar across student characteristics.

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School College-Going Culture Outcomes : One of the primary goals of the corps is that the members should support the entire school with the hope of shifting the school culture to have a stronger focus on college attendance. While CAC members focus on seniors, they spend time with underclassmen in an effort to promote earlier preparation for postsecondary education. To the extent that CAC can create a school-wide culture of college going, many students are likely to benefit, and those benefits are likely to accrue over time as younger students are exposed to a college going culture in high school over many years. Both quantitative indicators and qualitative descriptive data are used to examine the nature and strength of college-going culture in program schools.

Data Collection and Methodology: With a strong emphasis on data collection on both a local and national level, the CAC uses a customized in-house Excel tool, allowing us to capture and analyze the most relevant program activity and outcome data. We track the frequency and nature of contacts with individual students as well as individual student achievement of milestones for outcome analysis.

The internal data-tracking tool is supplemented by a national effort that incorporates additional databases and evaluation methodologies. A centralized national evaluation of all NCAC partner sites is conducted by NCAC in partnership with Stanford University. NCAC also plans to hire an in-house evaluator to interpret results and serve as a liaison between Stanford and partner institutions.

Evidence for the college enrollment outcomes has come from matching lists of graduates of the partner schools with the National Student Clearinghouse. Baseline data has been collected to conduct pre- and post-test research. Evidence for the pathways to college has come from annual surveys of students at the partner schools. Finally, evidence of school college-going culture outcomes has come from site visits that include interviews of administrators, teachers, counselors, and NCAC advisers as well as focus groups of students and parents.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

College Advising Corps at Brown University- April 2014 Clarification Summary

BUDGET CLARIFICATION

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A1: Contractual & Consultant- PST & academic year training-Please provide the daily rate for each training and consultant.

The daily rate for our trainers and consultants is \$500 maximum.

A2: The CCR Registration information for this DUNS number does not appear in the system as active. Please remember the registration must be current and active to receive an award form CNCS. Please confirm the DUNS number is correct.

Our DUNS number was outdated and incorrect on the initial submission. The correct number for Brown University is 001785542 and is corrected on the resubmitted Application Face Sheet.

PROGRAMMATIC CLARIFICATION

B1: Please provide additional description about the target communities and schools where the AmeriCorps members would serve, as well as more detail outlining the need for the proposed interventions in these communities and schools.

In Rhode Island, low-income and minority students are substantially less like to enroll in and complete college. Among Rhode Island's 2011 high school graduates, 69% of higher-income students and 44% of low-income students enrolled in college the following fall (RI KIDSCount 2014). This 25% disparity shows the need to increase college access resources and supports to low-income students across the state.

Getting in is just half the battle: degree completion in Rhode Island is low, with only 34% of students who attend a four-year college in Rhode Island graduating in four years and 58% graduating in six years (RI KIDSCount 2013).

CAC targets schools where a significant proportion of the student population is affected by one or

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more barriers to college enrollment and completion. The following factors are considered:

EconDisad: economic disadvantage as gauged by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch eligibility (a proxy for low household income);

Racial/Ethnic Minority: the percentage of the student body that is a member of a racial or ethnic minority group; and

FirstGen: Percentage of the student body that would be the first in their family to attend college.

Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School (Providence): 82% EconDisad ; 96% Racial/Ethnic Minority

Central High School (Providence): 84% EconDisad; 97% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 76% FirstGen

E-Cubed Academy (Providence): 74% EconDisad; 90% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 89% FirstGen

Hope High School (Providence): 74% EconDisad; 91% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 35% FirstGen

Mt. Pleasant High School (Providence): 83% EconDisad; 94% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 99% FirstGen

Rogers High School (Newport): 45% EconDisad; 51% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 39% FirstGen

Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex (Providence): 97% EconDisad; 13% Racial/Ethnic Minority;

92% FirstGen

Shea High School (Pawtucket): 86% EconDisad; 86% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 39% FirstGen

Tolman High School (Pawtucket): 62% EconDisad; 63% Racial/Ethnic Minority; FirstGen N/A

West Warwick High School (West Warwick): 39% EconDisad; 18% Racial/Ethnic Minority; 68% FirstGen

Woonsocket High School (Woonsocket): 63% EconDisad; 48% Racial/Ethnic Minority; FirstGen N/A

B2: Please provide additional explanation for how the members work with the school staff to determine which students will be targeted for advising services.

At the beginning of each school year, program staff and members work with guidance counselors and administrators at partner sites to develop a school-specific work plan. This plan outlines strategies for targeting students for services using student-level school records to identify high-need or at-risk students. The program also works with the school to administer surveys to identify the population of

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first generation students who may also be targeted. Throughout the year, members will also target services to students based on direct referrals from faculty and staff.

B3: Please describe how the program's site selection and placement process ensures that AmeriCorps members will not be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff.

At the beginning of each program year, the program staff meet with school guidance and administrative staff to review and execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU clearly outlines AmeriCorps member prohibited activities including those relating to non-displacement and non-supplantation. There is a clear separation of duties/role between members and school staff. Members are offering services not otherwise available/offered by the school.

B4: Based on a review of the cost effectiveness section in your application we feel your program did not make a compelling case for the requested cost per member service year (MSY). Please consider decreasing your cost per MSY by revising your CNCS share of the program budget or explain why your program is cost effective in terms other than what exists in the application

We believe that the cost per MSY reflected in this proposal both cost effective and the minimum required by the program. Projected cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is less than the maximum allowable cost levels and lower than our previous years' cost per MSY.

AmeriCorps funding is critical to sustain the CAC program and leverage other funding sources. We are requesting \$185,186 in CNCS funding, slightly less than our last award of \$187,727. Our proposed share of costs remains relatively constant (58% in the 2013-2014 program year and 56% proposed in this application). The reduction in the overall budget totals (from \$449,820 to \$416,802) reflects programmatic and staffing adjustments resulting in cost savings.

In addition to external funding opportunities, the in-kind support provided by Brown and the Swearer Center are substantial. All program staffing will be provided in-kind either through other funds raised or Brown resources. The Center's endowment will provide space and infrastructure for this effort,

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integrating it into the ongoing supervision and support provided to all Swearer Center programs. Brown will share expenses for several other direct costs, provide ongoing university support, and contribute the expertise, guidance, and support of education department faculty and staff, university administrators, and the Swearer Center staff support.

B5: Grant Start Date and Member Enrollment Period: While we will prioritize early submitted start dates in award processing, the earliest possible start date we can consider is 06/01/2014. It is not permitted for an applicant to re-submit with an earlier start date than previously submitted. In the Clarification narrative field, please enter a statement confirming the desired grant award start and member enrollment period start.

Our proposed grant start date is 07/01/2014 and our enrollment period will begin on 8/1/14; this is later than the earliest possible start date of 6/1/2014 specified by CNCS.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE CLARIFICATION

C. 1. For performance measure output ED1 and the proposed target of 3000, please explain the program's definition for "one contact with a CAC member" to allow a student to be captured within this output, and also please explain the program's rationale for why this dosage is sufficient.

C.2. For performance measure output ED2, please demonstrate that the students captured within this output come from schools in which the largest percentage of students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and/or have special or exceptional needs, as defined in the ED2 performance measure instructions.

C.3. For performance measure ED10, the program states that receipt of a college acceptance letter will be the marker for entering a post-secondary institution for high school seniors who participate in the program. However, the National Performance Measure instructions require registration records that confirm student enrollments or self-report on follow-up surveys in order for participants to be captured under ED10. Please adjust your ED10 measure so that it meets the National Performance

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Measure requirements, or select another outcome for this measure.

NOTE: These questions are addressed in the PM Module.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT SLOTS CLARIFICATION

D1: What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

The CAC does not have a targeted recruitment strategy for members with disabilities. However, the CAC and Brown University adhere to strict equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies in our hiring practices. Working in close collaboration with Serve Rhode Island, the CAC has implemented procedures to ensure that reasonable accommodations are provided to members who disclose a disability or request accommodations at any point during their term of service.

D2: If you would like to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities, please describe your intent as requested above. Also indicate how many MSYs your program would like to request, the number of slots by slot type, and where the additional members will serve. Add these additional MSYs to your budget.

The CAC is not requesting any additional MSYs for members with disabilities.

MSY WITH NO PROGRAM FUNDS ATTACHED CLARIFICATION

E. Applicants may request No-Cost MSYs. These additional no-cost MSYs are national service positions in which no grant funds will be awarded.

The CAC is not requesting any No-Cost MSY slots.

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HEALTH CARE CLARIFICATION

F1: Please provide the name of the health insurance provider you use to insure your AmeriCorps members.

Starting with the 2013-2014 year, Rhode Island AmeriCorps State programs used the Corps Network AmeriCorps health insurance to ensure those members electing to enroll in AmeriCorps coverage. Members who did not enroll through the Corps Network were required to sign a waiver and provide documentation of their alternate health insurance upon the start of pre-service training. Non-AmeriCorps insurance options have included spouse/parent coverage, private insurance, public insurance, or insurance purchased through the RI exchange/marketplace, operated by HealthSource Rhode Island (after January 1, 2014). As The Corps Network has indicated its intentions to be ACA or MEC compliant by September 1, 2014, we will continue to offer this option while encouraging members to explore the other options listed above. All members will be required to document that fill out a health insurance form and indicate whether they want to enroll in AmeriCorps sponsored insurance or waive and provide documentation that they are insured through another insurance option at the start of service.

F2: How did you select the provider? (for example, direct marketing, through the Health Insurance Marketplace or other means)

The Corps Network was selected because of its tailored plan for AmeriCorps programs and because of the affiliate membership held by Serve Rhode Island that allows our RI AmeriCorps program to opt into Corps Network. HealthSource RI is the official health care portal for the state of RI, and as such is used as the statewide exchange/marketplace.

F3: Does your proposed budget for member healthcare provide for Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) coverage, as defined by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), for your full-time members?

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Yes, our proposed budget for member healthcare provides for Minimum Essential Coverage/Affordable Care Act coverage for full-time members. Willis and The Corps Network have provided their best estimates for its 2014-2015 plan, which was used as the basis for our projection along with research into plans offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace, HealthSource RI.

F4: If not, what adjustment to your budget is necessary in order for you to provide Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC)?

Not applicable. Our program intends to provide Minimum Essential Coverage to full-time members.

F5: If you do not have enough information to answer question (6), please explain why not and/or what prevented you from being able to obtain the necessary information.

Not applicable. Our program intends to provide Minimum Essential Coverage to full-time members.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics