

## **APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY**

### **2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition**

Legal Applicant: Project Homecoming, Inc.  
Program Name: Project Homecoming, Inc.

Application ID: 14AC156216

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### **Reviewers' Summary Comments:**

##### **Strengths:**

The applicant cites recent data from multiple sources to effectively establish the need to provide assistance with home repairs and rehabilitation to low-income homeowners in New Orleans.

The applicant clearly demonstrates the severity of the need, citing recent data showing the high rate of poverty in New Orleans and the number of homeowners who cannot document that their homes are adequately reconstructed.

The applicant presents a compelling narrative of the need in the communities where Members will serve by detailing the dramatic increase in individuals applying for the applicant's service due to the closure of various programs such as Rental Assistance.

The applicant cites data provided by outside sources including other service providers that clearly details the severity of the problem and the need in the target service area.

The applicant clearly describes the severity of the need for home rehabilitation by providing relevant data pertaining to the number of properties in the service area considered blighted and uninhabitable.

The applicant presents a feasible and well-aligned Theory of Change that describes a logical progression from inputs through outcomes.

The applicant presents a compelling Theory of Change in which the proposed program addresses identified community problems with a high likelihood of having a positive community impact. Members will recruit and organize volunteers to help rehabilitate housing for low-income homeowners in the Orleans Parish.

The applicant provides pre-preliminary evidence that the proposed program will effectively utilize volunteers to rehabilitate housing and lower the cost involved for low-income homeowners in the Orleans Parish.

The applicant presents a clear and consistent Theory of Change with its Narrative and Logic Model that identifies the key components necessary, specifically labor and financial resources, to improve the lives of displaced homeowners in the service area.

The applicant clearly articulates how the proposed program will effectively bring about the change it is seeking, specifically renovating or rebuilding homes in the targeted areas, through evidence-based studies that have shown success in similarly distressed communities.

The applicant cites studies from reliable sources that demonstrate the effectiveness of volunteers and AmeriCorps members in rehabilitating unsafe housing conditions for at-risk, low-income individuals.

There are no significant strengths noted for Past Performance.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to provide any data regarding unemployment in the proposed service area.

The applicant did not specify whether or not the Orleans Parish includes all of New Orleans; the two names appear to be used interchangeably. If not, then specific data for the targeted service area of Orleans Parish was not provided.

The applicant does not clearly explain whether the service area of Orleans Parish encompasses New Orleans proper. Therefore, while the applicant cites poverty data for New Orleans it does not cite the poverty rate for the service area of Orleans parish.

The applicant does not provide data on the number of homes without repairs and basic services that are currently occupied or the number of individuals residing in these blighted homes.

The applicant does not provide data related to uninsured/underinsured homeowners or unemployment rates in the service area.

The applicant does not provide research evidence supporting its adopted practices for volunteer recruitment and management.

The applicant intends to recruit more unemployed and economically disadvantaged individuals to serve as AmeriCorps members but does not provide any evidence of Change information in its Logic Model.

The applicant does not provide either quantitative or qualitative data that measures community impact for like or similar programs.

There is no indication of how information was collected to arrive at the stated results of the cited studies.

The applicant is not a current or prior grantee and does not provide information on past performance; however its parent organization has been the recipient of an AmeriCorps grant and the applicant has served as an Operating Agent

for that grant.

The applicant has not previously hosted an AmeriCorps program.

The applicant has seven years experience in rehabilitating housing units in the area ravaged by Hurricane Katrina utilizing volunteers assisted by AmeriCorps members under the direction of other agencies, however they did not provide any past performance accomplishments