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Executive Summary

The American Red Cross of Northeastern New York (ARC/NENY) will have 28 AmeriCorps members who will increase individual and community disaster resiliency by educating individuals on the importance of disaster preparedness; build disaster response capacity by engaging and recruiting community volunteers for American Red Cross (ARC) programs; and help ARC with its own disaster response preparedness by developing supply, storage, distribution, shelter and other logistics planning for effective and rapid response in all ten New York State AmeriCorps Regions of Service. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for 31,500 New Yorkers becoming more prepared for disasters by taking training and learning how to become even more prepared for disasters, and providing support for the Red Cross to provide basic, immediate needs and excellent services to 400 individuals affected by disaster. Finally, AmeriCorps members will provide Volunteer Development Assistance by recruiting and supporting 200 community volunteers from all age levels, helping regions grow and maintain their base of volunteers.

This program will focus on the focus area of Disaster Services, as well as Capacity Building through the recruitment and management of community volunteers. The CNCS investment of \$346,417 will be matched with \$214,582 in private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

1. Problem/Need: ARC strongly believes that all elements of resiliency (preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation) are critical in emergency situations, but places an emphasis on the importance of preparedness. A number of surveys that have been conducted in recent years suggest that individuals and communities often lack the necessary information and tools to prepare for emergencies. An ARC survey conducted nationwide by ORC International in October 2011 found that only 25% of respondents had received disaster preparedness information from ARC in the last 12 months. While this is an increase from 19% of respondents in September 2006, it suggests that as much as 75% of the survey population has not received basic disaster preparedness information that could make a significant difference in an emergency situation.

With more than 19 million residents, New York is one of the most populated states in the country. While ARC most frequently responds to residential fires, residents of New York must also be prepared for flooding, hurricanes, tornados, ice storms and manmade threats such as terrorism. Since 1953,

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New York has had 22 Emergency Declarations and 68 major disasters, which resulted in presidential disaster declarations, making New York the 4th most affected state for major disasters in the country. On average, the regions of ARC in New York respond to 10 local disasters, such as home fires, a day. Based on the Customers and Partners Survey System distributed to individuals who receive ARC assistance following a disaster, between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013, 0% of survey respondents had taken an ARC disaster education class; only 27% had practiced an emergency plan and only 25% had a disaster supplies kit. Although not all disasters can be prevented, being prepared creates more resilient communities and can aid in the recovery process.

The need for adequate emergency preparedness and volunteer capacity in New York has been demonstrated with significant intensity several times in the recent past as a result of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011, and Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Between the 3 storms, nearly every one of New York's 62 counties was impacted with high wind and flood damage. Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee caused 5 deaths and over 1 million power outages, and resulted in 33,000 citizens registering for individual federal assistance amounting to nearly \$156 million. Hurricane Sandy caused 53 fatalities, damaged over 150,000 buildings and homes on Long Island and in New York City, caused over \$32 billion in damage, and left over 1.5 million people without power days after landfall. These events required the mobilization of nearly 10,000 ARC volunteers, a level of volunteer workforce that would not be available without the capacity-building work of ARC, including that of AmeriCorps programs. These events also demonstrate the need for communities to develop adequate resiliency to prepare for and respond to future events. Despite these recent storms, an ARC and The Weather Channel survey in May 2013 showed that only 49% of New York and New Jersey coastal residents had taken more steps to prepare for the 2013 hurricane season. Even with some increased preparedness measures, only about half of the residents have an evacuation plan and three in ten have no idea where they would stay if they were forced to evacuate, both being the same results as an August 2007 survey.

Along with being at risk for major natural and manmade disasters, New York has a poverty rate of 14.5% compared to the national poverty rate of 14.3% (US Census Bureau, 2007-2011). Each of the four ARC regions in the state has areas of poverty that exceed 20%, and in some regions the rate exceeds 40%. Although our AmeriCorps members will strive to increase disaster resiliency of all New Yorkers, they will especially focus on providing disaster education and preparedness to those living

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below the poverty level. Residents of low-income communities have fewer resources to prepare for and recover from disasters. Our targeted community preparedness training will provide low-income individuals with the necessary information to prevent certain emergency situations, be informed of potential risks that may impact their community, make a plan to leave with necessary possessions and have supplies ready to respond in times of emergency.

There is also a demonstrated need for greater volunteer capacity in New York. The recent CNCS Volunteering and Civic Life in America study found that New York ranks 50 out of the 51 states and the District of Columbia, with only 20.7% of people engaging in unpaid volunteer activities, a number that actually decreased from 2010. The ARC AmeriCorps project will directly address this need by recruiting volunteers to increase emergency preparedness capacity and develop more resilient communities.

2. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems & Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact: AmeriCorps members in our program will engage the community with service work and interventions in three main areas. AmeriCorps members will provide Disaster Preparedness Assistance by conducting community disaster education, emergency preparedness presentations, and emergency skills training including Be Red Cross Ready, which teaches general population participants how to create a preparedness plan, build a supply kit, and stay safe and informed during times of disaster; Masters of Disasters, a series of ready-to-go lesson plans that educate youth about important disaster safety and preparedness; and the "Scrubby Bear" youth hygiene program. This training is a critical step to providing a level of preparedness competency that prepares the public, especially vulnerable populations such as children, seniors, and members of low-income communities, for emergencies and is a foundation to resilient communities.

AmeriCorps members will also work with ARC response experts and other volunteers to provide Emergency Services Assistance by developing the emergency services planning needed for effective disaster response. This includes identifying and scouting shelter sites, developing mass care plans and logistics, identifying volunteer and donation opportunities, coordinating supply inventory, storage, and delivery, and liaising with other relief and response agencies. AmeriCorps members will be available to directly assist the ARC regions in statewide disaster responses if the need arises. These AmeriCorps

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activities build on the preparedness training foundation that is focused on public education by developing and strengthening the institutional networks that are called into action during a disaster. This is a vital component to ensuring that a community can respond when a disaster strikes.

Finally, AmeriCorps members will provide Volunteer Development Assistance by recruiting and supporting community volunteers from all age levels, helping regions grow and maintain their base of volunteers. Members will engage in planning, organizing, and staffing events that recruit volunteers in regions, including working with our Volunteer Connection online volunteer management site to maintain volunteer lists and post volunteer opportunities. Members will also seek out collaborative capacity-building and preparedness opportunities with local businesses, non-profits and community organizations, and develop strategic training and implementation plans. These AmeriCorps activities help exponentially expand the reach of ARC by developing new volunteer capacity and directly addresses the need for greater volunteerism in New York. Taken together, all three activities directly address the spectrum of critical needs (training, preparedness planning and volunteer capacity-building) for building resilient communities.

Our regions will rely on AmeriCorps members to increase ARC disaster resiliency services to communities across New York. The amount of work in community preparedness and response far exceeds the ability of existing staff and volunteers at the regions in New York, leaving a significant amount of unfilled capacity in providing direct training and community outreach. The service of our proposed AmeriCorps members will help fill this gap and allow us to increase the services provided to the community. AmeriCorps members are also well--suited to address this need because they bring experience, energy, and enthusiasm that are vital to volunteer capacity-building and driving home the message of the importance of resiliency. As volunteers themselves, they can provide a first-hand perspective on the sense of mission and accomplishment that volunteering in a community provides. After receiving appropriate training, they will engage and empower individuals and groups to embrace disaster resiliency in their community and provide a mechanism to support their community's readiness through volunteer work. They will also assist the ARC in its response efforts, ensuring for more effective and rapid response to those in need. In addition to the value of a more resilient community, the members themselves will benefit from the added value of being trained in community preparedness, volunteer capacity-building, and in being service driven individuals who continue giving and making a difference in the lives of others, wherever they choose to live.

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As mentioned in earlier sections, recent ARC surveys have shown that as much as 75% of the surveyed population has not had received any Red Cross disaster preparedness training or information. Additionally, there is other evidence that suggests that adequate disaster preparedness training like that provided by AmeriCorps members has a measurable impact in making individuals and communities better prepared for emergencies. A 2010 FEMA literature review that was released in conjunction with a corresponding national summit on youth preparedness recommended several methods for training children for disaster preparedness employed by our AmeriCorps program, including demonstrations by credible and likeable guest speakers, and practicing preparedness using simulations and interactive exercises. Hands-on training is also a very effective means of getting individuals to take concrete steps to prepare for disasters. A review of the City of Bellingham, Washington employee disaster training program found that 76% of the employees who received training took a measurable preparation action after the training, with the most common step being using materials and information provided in the training in family disaster planning. Over half of the employees said that personal preparedness steps and mock exercises (similar to that provided by AmeriCorps members) were the most useful information and interesting parts of the training.

There is also evidence that shows the financial investment in disaster preparedness pays significant dividends when disasters strike. According to a 2005 study by the National Institute of Building Science's Multihazard Mitigation Council, every \$1 spent to prevent and reduce disaster losses results in \$4 in future benefits. While this is an impressive return on investment, even more important than the financial savings are the 220 lives estimated to have been saved and 4,700 injuries prevented from implementation of FEMA disaster response grants between 1993 and 2003 for events like floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes. The report used these findings to recommend that the federal government invest in the type of preparedness activities that our AmeriCorps members will engage in, suggesting that these activities "increase the resilience of communities by increasing knowledge and promoting institutional commitments to (natural hazard) mitigation at the local level."

The United Nations Disaster Relief Organization has found that poverty is a major factor in increasing disaster vulnerability (The Protection of Human Settlements from Natural Disasters, Geneva, Feb. 24, 1976). More recent studies have also focused on the connection between income and disaster preparedness in the United States. One article published in National Hazards in 2004 analyzed studies

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that showed that disaster preparedness increased as income increased and that those with lower incomes were not as likely to invest in mitigation efforts, such as flood insurance or fire extinguishers due to their economic situations. The article also discussed that low income populations are more vulnerable to disasters due to lower quality construction of affordable housing. A 2011 Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management article regarding social vulnerability analyzes several studies that show that individuals affected by poverty are disproportionately affected by disasters due to the lack of resources needed to prepare for disasters or recover following a disaster. Each of the four ARC regions has areas of high poverty rates where our AmeriCorps members will focus their efforts to increase disaster resiliency. Some of these areas with high poverty rates include: Greater NY Region: Bronx County-- 28.5%, Kings County -- 22.1%; Northeastern NY Region: Fulton County -- 16.5%, City of Albany -- 25%, City of Poughkeepsie -- 25%; Central NY Region: Otsego County -- 16.4%, Tompkins County -- 20.4%, City of Syracuse -- 32.3%, City of Ithaca -- 44.9%; and Western NY Region: Yates County -- 15.4%, City of Rochester -- 31.1%; Allegany County -- 16.6%, City of Niagara Falls -- 21.7%, City of Buffalo -- 29.9% (US Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Finally, there is evidence collected by ARC that demonstrates that our disaster preparedness training is very effective in reaching individuals and groups, and has measurable individual and community impact. An internal effectiveness survey of the ARC Community Disaster Education efforts in New York for July 2012 -- June 2013 found that 93% of participants felt prepared to face unexpected disasters at home, work, or in the community and felt confident of knowing what to do during a disaster after taking an ARC preparedness training. The survey also indicated that 94% of respondents indicated they will discuss and practice a family disaster plan, and prepare a disaster supplies kit after training and 99% rated their ARC presenters' knowledge as very good or excellent. These findings strongly suggest that the ARC Disaster Education training provided by our staff and our AmeriCorps members is a highly-effective way to make a significant difference in the disaster preparedness of individuals, organizations, families, and communities.

With our most recent AmeriCorps program ARC set a 2012 performance target of providing information and resources to effectively prepare for, prevent and respond to emergencies to 25,000 individuals in the following targeted groups: community organizations, schools, businesses, voluntary organizations and volunteer groups. Our AmeriCorps members exceeded that target, training more than 26,500 individuals in community disaster education, health and safety courses and basic

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preparedness programs including Be Red Cross Ready. Our AmeriCorps member activities also directly benefited more than 900 individuals affected by disasters, greatly surpassing our target of 350.

3. Member Training: To integrate members into our AmeriCorps program, a statewide kick-off orientation is planned and will be hosted by the Program Manager for all AmeriCorps members in Albany. During the orientation, expectations will be defined with regard to roles and responsibilities, including prohibited activities. To reinforce this information, members will be required to sign a guideline of understanding document outlining allowable and prohibited activities under the program. The Program Manager will also discuss prohibited activities during monthly all member conference calls. During the orientation and monthly calls, members will also be instructed on how to ensure their generated volunteers do not participate in prohibited activities. Once members are ready to begin service at their site, they will be required to attend an orientation at their local region, which will outline a comprehensive guideline for implementation of their overall goals and individual work plans. This orientation will include an introduction to the agency, the service community, and an outline of the purpose of the AmeriCorps program at their service site. During their term of service, members will participate in ARC trainings, such as CPR/AED/First Aid, Fulfilling Our Mission, Sheltering: An Overview and Sheltering: Simulation. All members will participate in training on volunteer recruitment, management and retention as well as a Life After AmeriCorps training towards the end of their service term. Members will also have the opportunity to participate in trainings hosted by New York State Office of Emergency Management and local emergency management agencies as they arise.

4. Member Supervision: Each of the ARC regions will select staff members to be site supervisors based on their department and their supervisory experience for both staff and volunteers. The Program Manager will host training for the site supervisors to review roles, responsibilities and AmeriCorps policies and procedures, including prohibited activities. Each site supervisor will be required to sign guidelines of understanding document outlining allowable and prohibited activities under the program. Site supervisors will be required to have weekly meetings with their AmeriCorps members to review member progress towards their goals as well as address any needs or concerns the member may have. The site supervisors will also perform midterm and end of term evaluations with the members. The Program Manager will have regular contact with each of the site supervisors to address any questions and ensure procedures are being followed and that members are performing allowable

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activities that align with our program. Along with site supervisors, the Program Manager will provide support and guidance to AmeriCorps members through regular communication and trainings. The Program Manager is available at all times to address any questions, needs or concerns of the AmeriCorps members.

5. Organizational Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: ARC is committed to identifying our AmeriCorps members as National Service participants and all of the ARC regions will take measures to identify members. When AmeriCorps members begin their term of service and participate in National Days of Service, ARC regions will produce press releases that will include the name of the members as well as a description of AmeriCorps and the AmeriCorps logo. In their program orientation on their first day of service, members will be given information on National Service Programs, including AmeriCorps, and how they fit into the National Service structure. They will also be given information on how to discuss the AmeriCorps program with individuals in the community, including how to properly identify themselves as an AmeriCorps member and how they should describe their AmeriCorps experience. Members will also be provided with attire that includes both the AmeriCorps and ARC logos that they will wear while serving in the community and will identify themselves as AmeriCorps members and include the AmeriCorps logo in email signatures for all service related communications. When giving disaster preparedness presentations and tabling at community events, such as preparedness fairs and volunteer recruitment fairs, members will identify themselves as AmeriCorps members and will have information and brochures about AmeriCorps. ARC regional websites, including social media sites, will include the AmeriCorps logo to demonstrate that they proudly host AmeriCorps members at their sites.

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing: ARC, a humanitarian organization guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors. Led by a workforce that is nearly 95 percent volunteers, ARC annually mobilizes relief for families impacted by more than 60,000 disasters, trains nearly 10 million people with lifesaving skills, and keeps U.S. military families connected worldwide. Since 1905, ARC has helped residents of New York prevent, prepare for and respond to disaster situations. In New York, the ARC is comprised of four regions, 22 community chapters and the New York-Penn Blood Region. Over the last year, ARC in New York responded to more than 3,900 disasters and delivered

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basic preparedness, health and safety, and lifesaving training to more than 300,000 New Yorkers. Through our history of diverse financial support from individual donations, grants from both public and private organizations, and government appropriations, ARC regions have provided essential services to individuals and communities in need. An average of 91 cents of every dollar ARC spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs.

The regional structure in New York makes communication and coordination among chapters highly effective. Each of the regional executives reports to the Division Vice-President and National CEO. As affiliates of our national organization, local sites align strategic goals with priorities set by national headquarters. Each fiscal year our regions led by their respective board of directors set goals to measure service delivery and effectiveness. Regions communicate regularly and seek technical or programmatic assistance from each other or from national headquarters when questions or issues arise. Statewide, regions communicate goals and needs for the state through several organized committees including the State Council and separate advisory committees for primary service areas. Development of the ARC AmeriCorps program is done in consultation with regional executives and staff. After the application is submitted and the program is started, ARC/NENY staff will provide administrative support, and progress reports will be provided to regional executive managers and regional boards, who in turn will provide leadership, guidance, and overall support for the program. Guidance and oversight for our statewide program will be provided at the state, regional, and local levels to ensure a cohesive delivery of goals.

In the past year ARC has gone through a major reengineering effort to improve the services we provide throughout the disaster cycle, which includes preparedness, response and recovery. The process was driven by changes that have occurred to the ARC business model in the past several years as well as data, stakeholder input, and especially client experience. As a result of the reengineering process, increased emphasis has been placed upon preparedness and the importance of our volunteer workforce in the disaster cycle. As a result, the ARC regions in New York will be looking to our AmeriCorps members to improve and increase our preparedness programs as well as recruit and train a strong volunteer workforce that will participate in preparedness, response and recovery efforts alongside staff members on a regular basis.

The AmeriCorps Program Manager (Lauren Putney) will oversee the administration and support of

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AmeriCorps members while day-to-day guidance is provided in coordination with local site supervisors. Program oversight will be provided by the Chief Program Officer in the Northeastern New York region (Thomas Lindberg). Mr. Lindberg will serve as primary contact for the application, while Ms. Putney will serve as secondary contact. The Program Manager will work directly with ARC finance staff to manage all fiscal requirements, with additional support provided through Human Resource Partner Services. With approval of this grant application, Ms. Putney will be in her fourth year of successfully managing the ARC AmeriCorps State program. Ms. Putney also has experience managing an ARC VISTA program and an ARC AmeriCorps National program, and has two years prior experience providing administrative support to ARC volunteer program management. Mr. Lindberg has 10-plus years of executive-level personnel and program management at New York State agencies, as well as private sector business management experience. He is currently in his third year with ARC.

To ensure consistent program administration amongst the statewide chapters, all finances will be administered from the applicant region, ARC/NENY. Through this process the living allowance payment schedule will be the same for all members and all full-time members will receive health benefits under the same contract from the Corps Network. To ensure programmatic compliance, all supervisors will attend a program orientation prior to the start of the member service year, and all sites will be required to sign a memorandum of agreement and guidelines of understanding document.

2. Sustainability: To ensure sustainability at a local level, AmeriCorps members will work through existing agencies, local schools, community based organizations, organized volunteer groups and other institutions for support. Through their activities, AmeriCorps members will establish a sustainable working partnership among local agencies through the duration of this program and reinforce the need for continuing community disaster preparedness efforts after the end of the program. Through this collaboration, local agencies and other groups will be in a position to continue local disaster preparedness efforts after the AmeriCorps members have completed their service. AmeriCorps members will also build and sustain relationships with government partners such as FEMA, OEM, and local government agencies, as well as other response organizations through statewide Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). The response planning work done by AmeriCorps members will strengthen these relationships, which are crucial to meeting the needs of New Yorkers in preparation for and in response to disaster situations.

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3. Compliance and Accountability: To ensure financial compliance throughout the program, all program grant finances will be administered through the ARC/NENY region. This will provide a single source of internal control for the ARC regions hosting AmeriCorps members that will ensure that financial rules and regulations are being met. The Program Manager and Chief Program Officer will coordinate the information flow between the ARC/NENY administrative staff and the regional site supervisors to ensure that the program remains compliant through the service year. The Program Manager and Chief Program Officer will be responsible for ensuring programmatic compliance. During the service year, the Program Manager will conduct compliance visits based on the guidelines of the program and AmeriCorps administrative regulations. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring that AmeriCorps members are not engaging in prohibited activities. Each member will receive the list of prohibited activities prior to starting their service year, and member understanding of those activities will be reinforced throughout the year in training and other formal sessions, as well as regular correspondence from the Program Manager. The Program Manager will review monthly reflection forms as well as biweekly timesheets and activity forms from each member to ensure activities align with member work plans and the program and are allowable. AmeriCorps site supervisors will also receive training at the required program orientation prior to the start of the member service year on looking out for and detecting prohibited activities and steps to take should a member engage in a prohibited activity, including notifying the Program Manager immediately so it can be reported to the State Commission. Each site supervisor will also sign an agreement that includes a list of the prohibited activities. All host regions will be required to sign a memorandum of agreement and guidelines of understanding document, which includes the list of prohibited activities, with the sponsoring organization to indicate that they have received the guidelines and list of prohibited activities and a pledge to follow them. Finally, site supervisors will be asked to review member position descriptions to ensure that there is a clear separation between member activities and prohibited activities. The Program Manager, in consultation with the Chief Program Officer, will develop an appropriate response should a member engage in a prohibited activity. This may include a counseling session, if appropriate, with the member to explain why the activity constitutes a transgression and why it must cease. Any cases of prohibited activity will be reported to the Commission, along with the Program's response.

4. Continuous Improvement: On a monthly basis the Program Manager will be hosting monthly

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conference calls and collecting reflection sheets from members. Members will also have an opportunity to provide feedback on the program midyear and at the end of the year. In all forums members will be asked if they see any areas of the program that can be improved and will be encouraged to give any suggestions for improvement. The Program Manager will also be in regular contact with site supervisors and executive staff in all regions to discuss any weaknesses of the program and how to address those weaknesses. Site supervisors and other regional staff members will regularly observe AmeriCorps members in their day to day activities, whether it be providing presentations or interacting with volunteers, in order to offer suggestions to improve their performance and grow their skills. Members will also be providing surveys and having regular conversations with the organizations in which they provide presentations, the volunteers they recruit, train and manage, and other organizations they partner with. These surveys will not only help members identify ways in which the services our program provides can be strengthened, it will also improve ARC services as a whole, which is something the organization always strives for.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. Cost Effectiveness: The Corporation cost per member service year (MSY) for our statewide AmeriCorps program as calculated in eGrants is \$13,072, which falls within the \$13,300 maximum for the 2014 program year. To support the grantee share of \$214,582, the regions hosting AmeriCorps members will provide \$165,156 in cash match to cover the living allowance, health and other benefits, and other service-related costs, such as travel, training, and supplies. NENY, with support from central finance staff, will also provide grant administration administration processing valued at \$49,426. Regions will build these costs into their FY15 budgets as they have in previous years. For in-kind, the Greater New York Region provides MetroCards to their members that allow them to use public transportation throughout New York City for their service work, which will be valued at \$1,140 per member for a total of \$9,152. Regions will also provide office space, phone, computer and Internet, basic office supplies and direct supervision from staff at \$680 per MSY, which totals \$18,020. Finally, the Northeastern New York Region will provide in-kind support of office space and basic office supplies to house and support the Program Manager and Chief Program Officer valued at \$6,000 annually (based on a per staff estimate of \$250 per month), which makes a total in-kind ARC contribution of \$33,172. Between cash and in-kind contributions, ARC will provide \$247,754 of non-Corporation funding towards our AmeriCorps program, or 42% of the total cost.

2. Budget Adequacy: The budget for our statewide AmeriCorps program includes sufficient funding to

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support our requested 25 full-time and 3 half-time members through the program year. The majority of the budget is allocated towards the member living allowances (\$13,500 for Metro New York City area full time members; \$12,500 for upstate full time members, and \$6,000 for half-time members) and fringe benefits which include \$1,740 in health benefits for full-time members, FICA at the required rate of 7.65%, and Workers Compensation at 4%. We have budgeted for member background checks, including the required NSOPR, FBI and criminal history checks, at \$75 per member. Funding to support staff salaries is included in the budget at 95% for the Program Manager and 10% for the Chief Program Officer. The requested rates for salaries for these staff are within the range for comparable ARC positions and fringe benefits for these positions have been allocated at our agency rate of 30%. Funding for staff travel for member supervision has been requested for the Program Manager at \$3,284. This amount allows for the Program Manager to visit each site a minimum of one time during the service year to ensure time is spent with each member and supervisor, and includes 1,330 miles reimbursed at the current IRS rate and 8 trips to New York City using Amtrak. Funding is also included for the staff to attend CNCS events in the state and the 2014 National Conference on Volunteering and Service. For member travel to attend AmeriCorps events, training, and service work we have requested \$4,746, estimated at per member travel cost of \$170 which is consistent with what has been spent in prior years and is based on 300 miles in travel for each member reimbursed at the current IRS rate. Funding for supplies at \$3,160 is based on \$1,200 to provide the Program Manager with cell phone service to communicate with members, plus a per member supply cost of \$70, consistent with the per member cost in prior years. This amount includes program office supplies and uniforms for AmeriCorps members to wear to service-related activities. All purchased uniforms will include the AmeriCorps logo and our statewide ARC logo. Members will be required to wear apparel for group events hosted by our agencies and will be requested to wear these uniforms for all public events held in communities across New York. Funding for member training is included at \$2,160 to provide them with the information and skills they will need for their service work. The \$77 per member training cost is based on previous years' experience with member training. We have requested \$600 for the Program Manager to attend professional development training and conferences during the program year, such as the disaster preparedness conferences and events sponsored by CNCS. As required, our program has allocated \$1,750 for our outside program evaluation, and the Corporation Fixed Percentage Method was used to allocate administrative funding for our program.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

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ARC will hire an independent evaluator at the rate of \$30 per hour for 50 hours to evaluate whether or not individuals trained by our AmeriCorps members are becoming more prepared for disaster, and therefore more resilient, following ARC disaster preparedness training. As in past years, ARC will most likely seek a graduate student in a relevant area of study. Towards the beginning of the program year, the evaluator will work with the Program Manager and Supervisor to develop a thorough evaluation and analysis plan, as well as create a survey to be sent to individuals who received preparedness training from our AmeriCorps members. The survey will ask individuals: their view on the importance of preparedness; if they have taken steps to prepare since the course and what those steps were; if they have been affected by a disaster since taking the course and if any preparedness steps that were taken assisted during the disaster and during recovery afterwards. The survey will also ask those who have not taken any steps to become more prepared since the training course, why that is and what would motivate them to take those steps. After the survey questions are complete, the evaluator will distribute the survey using contact information from course attendance sheets compiled by AmeriCorps members. The evaluator will set a return deadline for the surveys for several weeks after the distribution date, and once that return date arrives, the evaluator will compile and analyze the responses. The specific information that ARC will be looking for in the evaluator's report will include: the percentage of individuals who believe preparedness is important; the percentage of individuals who have taken preparedness steps and the types of steps that have been taken; the percentage of individuals affected by a disaster after taking preparedness training and whether or not any preparedness steps taken proved to be valuable; and what motivates individuals to take steps to become more prepared. Based on this information, ARC will make programmatic changes if necessary in order to increase the number of trained individuals who take preparedness measures and become more resilient to disasters as a result. The total budget for the evaluation plan will be \$1,750, which includes \$1,500 to hire the evaluator and \$250 for any expenses related to the evaluation work (ie travel, supplies).

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

A 1) The correct match source was entered.

1). Executive Summary has been revised.

2). All Red Cross offices are chapter offices, although each Red Cross region has one chapter office

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that also houses regional functions. AmeriCorps members will serve at local chapter offices.

3). NENY will provide grant program management, while grant processing will be provided by the Grant COE (which was recently moved to the Buffalo office). This recent change is part of ongoing efforts to centralize ARC administrative functions. Lauren Putney will remain the day-to-day ARC program contact, and will work with Julie Maroni from the Grant COE on processing activities like voucher submission.

4). Our proposed program is very efficient in terms of cost per MSY. The amount of funding the Red Cross contributes to the AmeriCorps program has steadily increased each year we have hosted members, from 31% in 2009 to 38% as proposed in the application. The 2014-15 Red Cross contribution increases to 42% when in-kind support such as office space, vehicles, and MetroCards for GNY members are included in the total (they were not included in the original application and therefore not changed during clarification per direction from OFCS but will be going forward). Also, our cost per MSY has steadily decreased each year since 2011. We have always been very careful to ensure that the cost per MSY in our application is well below the allowable cost per MSY, and have been conscious about increasing the Red Cross share towards the program each year, so that we can continue to demonstrate the value of our program and how important the program is the Red Cross. We believe we provide a tremendous opportunity for AmeriCorps members to serve their communities by making them more prepared for disasters, and providing the support necessary for the Red Cross to assist those who have been impacted by disasters. For a modest investment of \$13,072 per member, our members will ensure that thousands of New York citizens are better prepared, and hundreds more receive basic needs of shelter, food, and clothing when disaster does strike.

5). Program end date revised to 9/30/15.

Performance Measure Clarification

1). Capacity Building measures removed.

2). Individuals who participate in disaster preparedness training for at least 30 minutes in length will be counted for this measure, with the change being that they have become more prepared by taking the training. Additionally, all individuals who participate in training will be surveyed to determine if they intend to take specific preparedness steps, such as assembling a home disaster kit or developing a family emergency action plan, as a result of the training. Based on our experience, we expect to see 90% of participants indicate that they will take a specific step to become more prepared, which of the total 35,000 we project to reach with training would indicate 31,500 intend to take pro-active preparedness steps beyond the training they received.

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3). OUTCM5462 revised accordingly.

4). For this performance measure, the change being measured will be individuals who do not have immediate access to shelter, food, or other essentials due to a disaster situation (house fire, flood, etc.) who will have their basic immediate need for shelter, clothing, and food met to their satisfaction by the Red Cross as a result of AmeriCorps member activities such as shelter scouting and volunteer capacity building. In terms of capacity building, members will actively recruit, train and manage disaster services volunteers who respond to local disasters. Through their activities, members will increase the number of disaster services volunteers and increase the number of volunteers trained to respond to disasters and ensure the immediate needs of disaster victims are fulfilled. The service being counted for this measure will be at least 400 individuals indicating the meeting of their immediate needs as "Excellent" or "Very Good" in our disaster client surveys.

5). OUTCM5464 revised accordingly.

6). For both performance measures, surveys will be reviewed to ensure that duplicate beneficiaries are not counted in the totals towards meeting the performance measures. However the risk of this is quite low, since preparedness training is rarely offered more than once in the same location in one year and the Red Cross rarely provides disaster assistance to a single individual more than once in a year.

Strategic Engagement Slots Clarification

1). The AmeriCorps program is administered in compliance with Red Cross policy on employment of persons with disabilities, which states that the Red Cross values, promotes, and manages diversity by providing programs that foster employment and volunteer participation by persons with disabilities. While we do not plan to dedicate any specific member slots for persons with disabilities, we will actively recruit members from and promote AmeriCorps member opportunities using existing relationships with the disabled community. For example, the NENY chapter currently hosts persons with disabilities for volunteer opportunities from the Schenectady ARC, while GNY works with the RUSK Rehabilitation/Ambulatory Care Center for volunteer opportunities. We will use these longstanding relationships and those with similar organizations in the other regions to promote AmeriCorps member opportunities to persons with disabilities.

2). We will not be requesting additional MSYs at this time.

MSY with No Program Funds

1). We will not be requesting additional MSYs at this time.

Healthcare Clarification Items

1). Corps Network Insurance Plan through Corps Network.

Narratives

2). We have been using the Corps Network since our first AmeriCorps grant in 2009.

3). Yes.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics