

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The City of Davenport, as a Governor/Mayor Initiative applicant, will have 73 AmeriCorps members who will improve high school graduation rates in Davenport, Iowa. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for raising the attendance rates and course grades, and decreasing the high-risk behaviors and disciplinary actions, for at least 1,000 at-risk youth in the Quad Cities region. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 600 volunteers who will be engaged in one-to-one youth mentoring each year. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Education. The CNCS investment of \$418,918 per year will be matched with \$254,858 locally: \$198,109 in public funding and \$56,749 in private funding.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

### A. PROBLEM/NEED

This project will use AmeriCorps members to address the low graduation rates in the Davenport Community School District (Davenport Schools).

Education is a top issue for both Governor Branstad of Iowa and Mayor Gluba of Davenport. Governor Brandstad has made "Iowa will have the best schools in our nation" one of the four top priorities of his administration, holding town halls statewide and making substantive changes to the school system to improve outcomes. Mayor Gluba has been championing education initiatives to get more of the city's students through high school and into post-secondary education, training, or career. "The people of Davenport value the importance of education and continuing education beyond high school," he said at a City Council meeting on January 8, 2014. "I think it will grow the city with young, upwardly mobile families." Our AmeriCorps program will allow the Mayor to focus localized impact to support the Governor's overall education objectives.

The graduation rate of Davenport School, at 78.97%, is one of the lowest in the state -- significantly lower than the state rate of 89.26%. Several risk factors contribute to low educational outcomes for students in Davenport Schools.

Davenport is the largest city in the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island Metropolitan Statistical Area, known locally as the Quad Cities. Of the total Quad Cities population of 382,630, one quarter (99,685) live in Davenport (U.S. Census, 2012). As the third largest city in Iowa, Davenport has a

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concentration of at-risk populations, particularly when compared to the Quad Cities metro area as a whole and to the State of Iowa. About one-fourth (24.9%) of Davenport residents ages 0-17 live in poverty, compared to 12.3% in the Quad-Cities and 11.9% in Iowa. Nearly a quarter (23.8%) of local families are led by single mothers, compared to 17.3% in the Quad Cities and 13.8% statewide. (U.S. Census, 2012).

All four high schools in the Davenport Community School District are classified as Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA). Davenport's dropout rate of 6.04% is the state's highest -- a full percentage point higher than the next highest district -- and greatly outpaces the Iowa rate (2.18%). (Iowa Department of Education, 2013)

Academic problems at every grade level contribute to the low graduation rate. At the intermediate level, almost one-fifth (18.8%) of all 7th and 8th grade dropouts in the state in 2011-12 were Davenport Schools students. In 2012-13, the percent proficient in reading in Davenport Schools was 58.57% in 6th, 59.05 in 7th, and 52.27% in 8th grades. All six intermediate-level schools in the district are SINA (Iowa Department of Education, 2013).

At the elementary level, a third of Davenport Schools' 3rd-graders cannot read at grade level. The district's 3rd-grade reading proficiency rates are consistently lower than those of the other Scott County districts: 64% compared to 82% in 2009, 63% compared to 77% in 2010, and 67% compared to 78% in 2011. Sixteen of the district's 18 elementary schools are SINA (Iowa Department of Education, 2013).

The problem of low graduation rates is exacerbated by social and emotional factors. The Gates Foundation study "The Silent Epidemic" (2006) found that 65% of dropouts are not struggling academically and 70% were on track for graduation when they dropped out. Instead, these students leave school for economic and social-emotional reasons: to get a job (32%), because they became parents (26%), because they had to stay home to help their families (22%), or simply because they weren't engaged in their own educations (47%).

We see all of these factors at work in our community. A survey of local middle schoolers conducted by the Search Institute in 2006 found that 60% felt they had little control over what happens in their

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lives, 36% were not motivated to do well in school, 77% believed that the community does not value youth, and 64% felt their parents were not engaged in their education. More than half (57%) of our middle schoolers lacked the number of Developmental Assets necessary for them to avoid high-risk behaviors, including dropping out of school.

### B. AMERICORPS MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS / EVIDENCE BASE AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT

#### B.1. THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL

Theory of Change: As demonstrated in the Problem Statement (Section 2A above), in order to improve educational outcomes in the district, one must provide interventions at every point throughout students' careers. Similarly, one cannot address the issue solely with academic solutions, but must address social-emotional needs as well.

The City of Davenport's AmeriCorps project will place members into multiple service opportunities, creating a continuum of academic and social-emotional supports which guide at-risk students through elementary and intermediate grades to successful high school completion with the skills they need to pursue post-graduation education or career.

Logic Model. To guide more Davenport students through school and to graduation, this project will provide academic and social-emotional supports at every level, with each prevention and intervention strategy geared to the specific needs of that age group. As shown in the Logic Model, we will engage the service of 73 AmeriCorps members to accomplish this work. Specifically, we will place members with three partner organizations, listed below. Each AmeriCorps team will provide at-risk students with specific Academic and Social-Emotional supports, as follows:

Davenport Schools Team:

\* 4 half-time members in the Davenport elementary schools' "Stepping Stones" afterschool program. Academic supports: homework help, experiential learning opportunities. Social-Emotional supports: exercise, group activities, healthy snack. Members will also coordinate with the schools' Family Involvement Liaisons to engage parents in their children's education.

\* 2 half-time members at J.B. Young Intermediate to support that school's AVID program. Academic supports: study skills instruction; Social-Emotional supports: instruction in the "executive" or "soft"

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skills necessary to attend college (time management, study skills).

\* 4 half-time members -- one at each of the district's 4 high schools. Academic supports: Identifying, enrolling, and supporting students in the Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (I-JAG), "Drop Back In," and credit recovery programs. Social-Emotional supports: working with the district's "Safe and Supportive Schools" program to improve the safety, engagement, and environment of the schools' culture. In addition, these members will identify sophomores and juniors over the age of 16 to serve in our summer Youth Corps program (see below).

We will measure the outcomes of these members by tracking the number of students who complete participation in these member-supported programs (National Performance Measure ED2), the number of these students who improve their academic performance (National Performance Measure ED5), and the number of these students who demonstrate improved academic engagement (National Performance Measure ED27). (See "Evaluation Summary or Plan," below)

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Mississippi Valley Team:

\* 4 full-time members to support BBBS's Enrollment and Community Partnership functions. One will promote the program throughout the community, engaging new mentor volunteers. The other 3 members will engage, screen, and train community volunteers to serve as mentors to these students. Academic supports: mentors of elementary school students have access to academic resources provided by Davenport Schools in reading instruction and tutoring. Mentors of middle and high school students take part in BBBS's "Career Navigators" program, which offers career-engagement tours of local workplaces and post-secondary institutions as well as "soft skills" training. Social-Emotional supports: Mentors will provide youth with individual attention, providing them with a source of guidance: in personal matters, risk-avoidance, and career planning.

\* 11 full-time members to support BBBS's Match Support functions. These members will monitor the mentoring matches in progress and coordinating career-exposure activities to match each student's individual interests and goals. Academic supports: working with the child's parent(s), teachers, school counselors, and mentor volunteer to develop annual SMART goals for each child's progress. Match Support also creates and supervises the career-engagement opportunities for middle and high school mentored students. Social-Emotional supports: making regular contacts (monthly in the first year; quarterly in subsequent years) with each mentor, parent, and child, to track the strength of the match and the child's social-emotional gaps. This information, as well as the results on BBBS's three

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assessments, will inform the child's SMART goals for the coming year.

We will measure the outcomes of these members by tracking the number of mentoring relationships that last more than 12 months (National Performance Measure ED4A), the number of these mentored youth who improve their academic performance (National Performance Measure ED5), and the number of these mentored youth who demonstrate improved academic engagement (National Performance Measure ED27). (See "Evaluation Summary or Plan," below)

City of Davenport Team:

\* 4 half-time AmeriCorps members to assist with the Park & Recreation's out-of-school-time programs. Academic supports: instruction in environmental education, community service, and performing arts. Social-Emotional supports: team sports and group activities, Adaptive & Inclusive programs for students with special needs, healthy snacks.

\* 4 quarter-time, summer-only AmeriCorps members to support summer programming for low-income students. Academic supports: educational content to combat summer learning loss. Social-Emotional supports: team sports and group activities, community service, nutritious meals.

\* 40 minimum-time Youth Corps members -- at-risk high school sophomores and juniors (identified by other members of the AmeriCorps team) who will engage in community service during the summer in the city's programs benefiting low-income youth (Sports Camp, Junior Theater, Stepping Stones) or in other local social service agencies. Academic supports: Career engagement in city government, youth service, and environmental science. Education Awards will make it possible for low-income Youth Corps members to pursue post-secondary education. Social-Emotional supports: Instruction in soft skills such as responsibility, self-regulation, and workplace/team etiquette.

We will measure the outcomes of these members by tracking the number of Youth Corps members who complete their service (National Performance Measure ED2), the number of Youth Corps members who improve their academic performance (National Performance Measure ED5), and the number of Youth Corps who demonstrate improved academic engagement (National Performance Measure ED27). (See "Evaluation Summary or Plan," below)

### B.2. EVIDENCE BASE

Our program is based on multiple research studies that indicate (1) that the risk factors that

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contribute to a student dropping out of high school are not just academic but also social-emotional, and (2) that students accumulate these risk factors not just in high school but in elementary and middle school as well.

These research findings are best summed up by a meta-analysis produced by the California Dropout Research Project in 2009. Russell W. Rumberger and Sun Ah Lim reviewed 203 published studies from the previous 25 years that collected data on the local, state, and national level. Rumberger and Lim discovered many trends that cut across all of these research studies:

Rumberger and Lim write: "No single factor can completely account for a student's decision to continue in school until graduation. Just as students themselves report a variety of reasons for quitting school, the research literature also identifies a number of salient factors that appear to influence the decision" (p. 66). Furthermore, the meta-analysis revealed that the academic reasons many dropouts cite as being instrumental in their decision "do not reveal the underlying causes of why students quit school, particularly those factors in elementary or middle school that may have contributed to students' attitudes, behaviors, and performance immediately preceding their decision to leave school" (p. 2).

For example, Rumberger and Lim cite a study by Jeremy D. Finn which links dropping out of school to early academic failures and the social-emotional reactions to those failures: "As the child becomes embarrassed and frustrated by school failure, he or she may exhibit increasingly inappropriate behavior that becomes more disruptive with age" (Finn, 1989, p. 119). This disruptive behavior disengages the student from the educational process, resulting in ultimate failure, expulsion, or dropping out.

At the middle school level, Rumberger and Lim found a positive correlation between behavioral problems and graduation rates: "Of the 17 analyses at the middle school level, 14 found that misbehavior in middle school was significantly associated with higher dropout and lower graduation rates in high school" (p. 26). Rumberger and Lim also that "[a]t the middle school level, all 13 analyses found a positive relationship" (p. 25) between school engagement (tracked by attendance) and likelihood of dropping out of school.

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This led Rumberger and Lim to their overall conclusion: "Dropping out of school is more of a process than an event; for many students, the process begins in early elementary school.... The two most consistent [early] indicators were early academic performance and social behaviors" (p. 67).

Davenport Schools has strong evidence-based interventions to address the academic performance risk factors:

- \* "Stepping Stones" (Elementary): A meta-analysis of 69 different out of school time programs, some of which had randomized, experimental design methodologies, concluded that participants engaged in high quality programs like Stepping Stones demonstrated significant increases in positive social-behaviors, bonding to school, and reduction in problem behaviors as a result of their participation (Durlack, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010).

- \* "AVID" (Intermediate): Research shows that AVID is an effective mediator of socio-economic status as a risk factor (Watt, Huerta & Alkan, 2001; Watt, Herta & Reyes, 2013) and that AVID students' attendance rates improve and surpass the general student population (Black, Little, McCoach, Prucell & Siegle, 2008). In a year-long study tracking the academics of 1,291 students in 10 separate AVID programs, AVID students outperform their peers on standardized tests and grade point averages (Watt, Powell & Mendiola, 2004).

- \* "Jobs for America's Graduates" (High): A recent comprehensive survey of the 820 JAG programs nationwide showed that 92.3% of program participants -- all identified as being at risk for dropping out of school -- received their diplomas and that 89.1% of graduates found full-time employment or part-time employment combined with postsecondary education or training (Partee & Halperin, 2006).

Our program will place AmeriCorps members in the school district to enhance the work of these three evidence-based interventions.

At all three age levels, our AmeriCorps members will engage at-risk youth in the one-to-one mentoring program administered by the local chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America's service model is the product of over a century of experience in the field. Their most recent outcomes report (Valentino & Wheeler, 2013) compared the results of their in-house assessment tool -- the "Youth Outcome Survey" -- to student academic records for more than 65% of the youth nationwide who were mentored through BBBS. The report shows that 83% of these youth improved in the category of Scholastic Competence, 85% in their Educational Expectations, and 94%

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in their avoidance of Risky Behaviors.

An nationwide review of BBBS caseloads has determined that matches that are chosen more intentionally, supported more specifically, and more embedded in natural support structures for the youth (e.g. school) result in more sustainable matches, and better outcomes (Grossman, Chan, Schwartz, & Rhodes, 2012). To ensure strong matches for the youth we serve, 5 of our AmeriCorps members' service activities will be in "match support" -- a process for monitoring and strengthening mentoring relationships developed and validated as effective by BBBS of America.

The common theme among effective practices in dropout prevention strategies is that they impact the motivation of students by addressing underlying psychological variables shown to be critical in school completion: competence, control, beliefs about the value of education, and a sense of belonging (National Research Council, 2004). By using a data-driven approach to identifying high-risk youth, and by addressing prevention and intervention at various ages and with multiple strategies, we will provide the at-risk students in our community with academic, social, and emotional engagement that will mediate risk factors and build assets for Davenport's youth.

### C. MEMBER TRAINING

The Scott County Extension Office of Iowa State University will conduct member training, implemented by the Office's Families, Youth and Communities Educator, Jen Best. Ms. Best holds a professional credential as a Certified Family Life Educator from the National Council on Family Relations, a professional credential as certified in Human Development from the American Association of Family Consumer Sciences, and a post-graduate certificate in Family Life Coaching from North Carolina State University.

These trainings will take place monthly, focusing either on AmeriCorps service or on professional development:

September: Orientation for new members, including an in-depth discussion and role-playing session on AmeriCorps members' prohibited activities

October: Communication Skills

November: Risk and Resiliency

December: Diversity Training

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January: Leadership Skills

February: Citizenship and Civic Engagement

March: Disaster Preparedness

April: Volunteer Management

May: CPR and First Aid

May: Orientation for new Youth Corps members, including soft skills training and a role-playing session on AmeriCorps members' prohibited activities

June: Team Building

July: Career Planning and Resume Building

August: Life after AmeriCorps

These monthly trainings will also provide an opportunity for AmeriCorps agency leads to provide administrative and program updates, instruction in AmeriCorps rules and regulations, or planning for upcoming group service projects.

In addition, any volunteers generated by the AmeriCorps members will be made aware of and held to the rules regarding prohibited activities. For example, the AmeriCorps members on Big Brothers Big Sister's Enrollment and Community Partnership team will instruct new volunteers on prohibited activities, and the AmeriCorps members on BBBS's Match Support team will monitor adherence to these restrictions as part of their monthly match support contacts with these mentor volunteers.

### D. MEMBER SUPERVISION

Each of the three partner organizations (the City, Davenport Schools, and BBBS), has an overall lead -- the one person at the agency who is responsible for overseeing the recruitment, placement, service activities, and compliance with AmeriCorps regulations for that agency's AmeriCorps members.

In addition, each AmeriCorps member will have a direct on-site supervisor -- an agency employee who reports directly to the agency lead. It will be the duty of the three agency supervisors to evaluate the support and guidance of these site leads, and to provide additional training on AmeriCorps members' supervision practices where necessary.

The staff -- both the agency leads and on-site supervisors -- at all three partner organizations have

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previous experience supporting and guiding AmeriCorps members through their current AmeriCorps projects. (See "Organizational Background and Staffing," below).

Because of their at-risk status, the Youth Corps members will have two dedicated levels of oversight and support -- direct supervision and personal development. To provide direct supervision, a Youth Corps Director and Assistant Program Director, both temporary staff hires of the City, will coordinate all Youth Corps member activities.

Youth Corps service is also intended to teach personal responsibility and workplace "soft skills," to properly prepare students for post-secondary education, training, or career. The school district's four AmeriCorps members placed with the high schools -- the ones who identified and prepared the Youth Corps candidates during the school year -- will spend the summer providing the Youth Corps members with this soft skills instruction. They will be able to build upon the trust they earned throughout the school year to serve as role models for these at-risk youth.

### **E. COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION**

As part of their orientation and regular training sessions, members will learn the history, structure, and purpose of the AmeriCorps program, as well as the ways AmeriCorps service can enhance their future plans for education or career. They will coordinate with other local AmeriCorps and VISTA members from other Quad-Cities-based CNCS grants on large-scale community service projects, giving them perspective on the larger program to which they belong.

The AmeriCorps members placed with City Parks & Recreation, the school district, and BBBS will wear AmeriCorps pins whenever they are conducting service activities. In addition, the members in the parks programs will wear AmeriCorps jackets and T-shirts during their service, and the members in the four high schools will explain the AmeriCorps program in detail when recruiting and preparing at-risk students for Youth Corps service.

The 40 Youth Corps workers, whose service activities will take place mostly in public spaces, will have the highest visibility in the program. The grant budget will supply each Youth Corps member with 5 AmeriCorps-logoed T-shirts, one for each day of the week. This will not only increase the community's awareness of the AmeriCorps program but also foster team spirit among the Youth Corps members.

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## Organizational Capability

### A. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING

This grant blends and coordinates two existing successful AmeriCorps programs: one by the City of Davenport and one by Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Mississippi Valley.

The City has successfully administered its AmeriCorps program, and overseen the service activities of members placed at multiple sites and with multiple agencies, for the past two years. BBBS has successfully administered multiple AmeriCorps programs -- often simultaneously and at multiple sites -- since 2006, including its current program funded by the Iowa Commission, which places AmeriCorps members with Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies across the state.

All agency staffers who will be supervising AmeriCorps members have already served this function in existing AmeriCorps programs.

For the City of Davenport, the agency lead will be Theresa Hauman, Senior Recreation Manager for Davenport Parks and Recreation. Directors of the various programs into which AmeriCorps members are placed will serve as site supervisors: Ashley Sharrod for the Youth Programs, Daniel Sheridan for Performing Arts, Greg Wolf for Environmental programs, and Sherrie Fischer for Adaptive and Inclusive programs.

In Davenport Schools, the agency lead will be Sarah Harris, the District's Community Education Project Manager. The AmeriCorps members placed in the schools will each report directly to their building's principal or to the staff person designated by the principal. The four half-time AmeriCorps members placed in the District's after-school program will be supervised by Shaney Ford, the Out-Of-School-Time Program Manager.

At Big Brothers Big Sisters, the agency lead will be Courtney Jones, BBBS's AmeriCorps Manager. The AmeriCorps member who is promoting youth mentoring in the community and the 3 AmeriCorps members who are screening and enrolling new mentor volunteers will be supervised by Sarah Walker, the agency's Senior Director of Enrollment and Community Partnerships. The other 11 AmeriCorps members, all involved in match support and coordinating learning opportunities for the mentor-child matches, will be supervised by Kim Aboyure, Senior Director for Mentoring Services and Outcomes.

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The management of member enrollment and hours will be administrated by BBBS's AmeriCorps Program Coordinator Courtney Jones.

All site leads will report directly to their agency supervisor. The supervisor will ensure all site leads manage their AmeriCorps members appropriately, and will provide additional training where necessary.

Theresa Hauman, the agency lead for the City, will serve as the overall lead for the entire AmeriCorps/Youth Corps program. She will contact the other two agency leads regularly throughout the service year, collect status reports from each agency monthly, and hold quarterly meetings with the other two site leads to ensure that the program is complying with AmeriCorps regulations and is working as a single, unified continuum of service for at-risk youth.

### **B. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

All agency and site supervisors for our three partner organizations have multiple years of experience administering AmeriCorps programs and ensuring compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations. In particular, at the start of the program year, Theresa Hauman from the City will provide the site supervisors with refresher training in prohibited AmeriCorps member activities.

In addition, each AmeriCorps member's orientation training will include a review of the rules and regulation that govern AmeriCorps service.

Any member who has violated an AmeriCorps regulation, and any site supervisor who has directed AmeriCorps members to take part in prohibited activities, will receive special one-on-one retraining in AmeriCorps rules and regulations from the agency lead.

### **C. PAST PERFORMANCE FOR CURRENT GRANTEES AND FORMER GRANTEES ONLY**

The progress report for the City of Davenport's second program year of our current AmeriCorps project showed:

#### **YOUTH CORPS**

\* A 100% enrollment rate for our Youth Corps program, and an 83.3% retention rate despite the fact

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that only at-risk students were selected for these slots.

\* 48 applications from high school students for our 25 Youth Corps slots in Year 2, which indicates effective word-of-mouth about Year 1 Youth Corps program.

### AMERICORPS

\* A 100% enrollment rate, including 4 returning members from Year 1. An 82.5% retention rate -- an increase over Year 1.

\* One Year 1 Youth Corps member returned as an AmeriCorps member in Year 2.

### OUTCOMES

\* In Year 2, AmeriCorps members recruited, coordinated, or supported 139 community volunteers who provided a total of 644 volunteer hours, completing 4 volunteer projects.

\* 100% of Youth Corps members in Year 2 were either successful high school graduates or began the 2013-14 school year on track to graduate high school.

ANALYSIS: Year 2 was more successful at achieving program outcomes than Year 1, despite the departure of the person overseeing the program at the start of the summer Youth Corps program. Theresa Hauman from Davenport Parks and Recreation, who has been a supervisor in the program since the start of Year 1, stepped in as the City's project lead. This allowed for more effective and experienced program planning for Year 3 and beyond, which we expect to be reflected in higher retention rates and stronger outcomes.

### D. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The AmeriCorps site supervisors will track the service activities of, and solicit feedback from, the AmeriCorps members they are supervising. In addition, they will evaluate the extent to which each member's service activities integrate with their own programming (i.e.: AVID and I-JAG at the school district, match support at BBBS). When they see room for improvement in program implementation, they will make recommendations to their agency leads.

In turn, the three agency leads (the City of Davenport, Davenport Schools, and BBBS) will meet at least quarterly to evaluate the progress of their AmeriCorps program: the service activities and retention of their AmeriCorps members and the outcomes of the students whom these members have served. They will identify and seek solutions to any shortcomings in the program design or integration between program partners.

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At the end of each summer session and the end of each school year, the site leads will collect all student outcome information, which will be compiled into a single report for the three agency leads to review. These outcome data will guide the agency leads in the fine-tuning or redesign of our program activities for future implementation.

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

#### A. COST EFFECTIVENESS

Our overall project budget is \$673,776, with 38% of that amount (\$254,858) being provided in match from our three partner agencies. This match percentage is well above our minimum required match of 26%. Our CNCS share of \$13,291 per FTE is below our maximum allowed share of \$13,300 per FTE.

A \$418,918 CNCS investment, used to serve a minimum of 1,000 at-risk elementary, intermediate, and high school students, equals \$419 in CNCS funds for each student served.

#### B. BUDGET ADEQUACY

In order to support such a large team of AmeriCorps and Youth Corps volunteers with a broad range of activities at multiple sites reaching diverse populations, we propose a multi-level staff structure to provide proper member oversight. This increased the Grantee Share of our program budget, but it ensures proper training, supervision, and evaluation of all members and their service activities.

The City, School District, and BBBS will cover these costs entirely with non-grant funds.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

At-risk youth will be served by our AmeriCorps members through participation in City of Davenport Parks & Rec programs, Davenport Schools interventions, and BBBS one-to-one youth mentoring. Many students will receive services from two or three of these partner agencies, progressing from one intervention to the next throughout their academic careers. In all, a minimum of 1,000 at-risk Davenport elementary, intermediate, and high school students will benefit from the service activities of our team of AmeriCorps members.

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At the end of each school year and summer session, the three agency leads will evaluate the strength of the program. They will use three metrics: (a) AmeriCorps members retention rates, as well as their satisfaction with the overall program as collected on member exit interviews; (b) the output of the number of at-risk students directly impacted by the members' service activities; and (c) the outcomes that these students have achieved, as measured by student attendance, behavior, and grades within the school district. In addition, those students being mentored through BBBS's program will have outcome measurements determined by two national-level standard assessments: the "Youth Outcome Survey" (completed separately by the mentor and child) and the "Program Outcome Evaluation" (completed by the child's teacher).

Specifically, the site leads will track:

1. The number of chronically absent students (20+ absences in the previous school year) who are no longer chronically absent, as reported by the school district.
2. The number of students who reduce their number of disciplinary incidents by a minimum of 50%, as reported by the school district.
3. The number of students who improve their grades in three classes or more, as reported by the school district and by teachers completing BBBS's Program Outcome Evaluation assessment.
4. The percentage of youth in a mentoring relationship of more than 12 months who show improvement in each of three categories on the BBBS Youth Outcome Survey: Educational Expectations, Risk Avoidance, and Truancy.

This wealth of data will not only allow us to track the impact of each separate intervention available, but also to measure the impact of combining specific interventions (e.g.: out-of-school-time activities with participation in AVID, youth mentoring services provided for students in I-JAG). This will indicate which mix of services best addresses individual student needs.

Ultimately, this program will serve three groups. We will track CNCS National Performance Measures separately for each group, as follows:

FOR THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN OUR YOUTH CORPS PROGRAM:

ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs.

ED7: Number of students with fewer disciplinary referrals or suspensions.

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ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

FOR THE STUDENTS MENTORED THROUGH BBBS:

ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period.

ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

FOR THE LOW-INCOME STUDENTS SERVED BY THE AMERICORPS MEMBERS PLACED IN THE CITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS:

ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs.

ED5: Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math.

ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

### Amendment Justification

n/a

### Clarification Summary

2014-2015 CLARIFICATION SECTION ONE: BUDGET

1. SECTION B - THE BASE AMOUNT FOR THE BENEFITS FOR CITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES IS INCORRECT. THE BASE AMOUNT SHOULD BE \$129,470.

Actually, in double-checking our figures, we find that the base amount should be \$119,470, which reduces the Grantee Share for Benefits from \$38,841 to \$35,841. We have made the change in the Section B line item.

2. SECTION C, MEMBER TRAVEL - PLEASE NOTE THE PURPOSE OF THE BBBS MEMBER

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MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT AND NOTE THE REIMBURSEMENT RATE.

The purpose of this line item is to reimburse the AmeriCorps members assigned to Big Brothers Big Sisters for the travel necessary for them to carry out their service activities.

A budget for Mileage Reimbursements regarding BBBS AmeriCorps members was created due to an expectation of the AmeriCorps members to have "regular contact with all mentors, children, and guardians of the children" enrolled in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. This expectation correlates directly with national standards of safety in Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Frequently, members are asked to recruit volunteers at local businesses and maintain regular contact with children enrolled in our program by meeting with them at their school. In addition, there are times when members are asked to meet with low-income families at their own homes, because they are unable to come to the BBBS office for an interview to enroll their child (due to a lack of transportation). We recognize and take into consideration that the member's living allowance is very modest; therefore, we budget \$0.43 per mile, paid on a monthly basis. All members are required to submit a detailed expense report at the end of each month accounting for the children, guardians, and volunteers they have had to drive to; to either, interview, recruit, or maintain match support with.

3. SECTION E - PLEASE CONFIRM THE AC MEMBER GEAR AND YOUTH CORPS GEAR DISPLAY THE AMERICORPS LOGO?

The AC Member Gear and Youth Corps Gear will all display the AmeriCorps logo.

4. SECTION F - PLEASE CONFIRM THIS LINE ITEM IS NOT DUPLICATIVE OF SECTION H. CLARIFY THE PURPOSE AND INDICATE THE NUMBER OF HOURS.

Iowa State University's Scott County Extension will be handling two separate functions for our AmeriCorps program. One will be to undertake the training of the members, the costs for which are listed in Section F. The other will be to serve as outside evaluator for the entire City of Davenport AmeriCorps/Youth Corps Program, and these costs are listed in Section H.

## Narratives

Since the same Iowa State Extension team will handle both duties, the hourly rate is identical. 30 hours x \$50/hour=1500

### 5. SECTION G - MEMBER TRAINING - WHAT COSTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE TEAM BUILDING TRAINING LINE ITEM?

For the Team-Building Exercise, we bring all AmeriCorps and Youth Corps members out to a rope-climbing and zip-line course at a local YMCA camp facility. Scott County Family Y conducts this training, and offers it to our AmeriCorps program at the reduced fee of \$20 per member.

### 6. SECTION H - PLEASE CONFIRM THIS LINE ITEM IS NOT DUPLICATIVE OF SECTION F. CLARIFY THE PURPOSE AND INDICATE THE NUMBER OF HOURS.

Iowa State University's Scott County Extension will be handling two separate functions for our AmeriCorps program. One will be to undertake the training of the members, the costs for which are listed in Section F. The other will be to serve as outside evaluator for the entire City of Davenport AmeriCorps/Youth Corps Program, and these costs are listed in Section H.

Since the same Iowa State Extension team will handle both duties, the hourly rate is identical. 30 hours x \$50/hour=1500

### 7. SOURCE OF FUNDS - THE AMOUNT, TYPE, AND SOURCE OF MATCH NEEDS TO BE ENTERED.

Entered in budget. All grantee share funds are in-kind (staff and services) and cash contributions from the City of Davenport, Davenport Schools, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Mississippi Valley, drawn from each organization's internal budgets and revenues.

### 8. PLEASE EITHER JUSTIFY OR REMOVE THE \$2,300 FOOD LINE ITEM FROM THE BUDGET.

This expense is for all supplies for our all-day training sessions for AmeriCorps members. Food is part

## **Narratives**

of this expense, but so is training materials, room rental, etc. We have changed the calculation for this line item to more accurately delineate these expenses.

### **2014-2015 CLARIFICATION SECTION TWO: PROGRAMMATIC**

#### **1. PLEASE VERIFY THAT THE APPLICANT WILL PROVIDE SPECIALIZED PRE AND IN SERVICE TRAINING FOR TUTORS AS REQUIRED UNDER 45 CFR 2522.940**

The only mention of tutoring in our narrative is the academic support provided to mentored children through coordination of the school district and each child's mentor volunteer. The actual tutoring is conducted by school employees only. AmeriCorps members will not provide tutoring services as part of the service activities of this project.

In addition, although the AmeriCorps members in the Stepping Stones program provide "Homework Help," this is also not a tutoring activity. Homework help consists of creating an environment conducive to study, and occasionally helping students to understand what a specific assignment is asking for. These members will have no curriculum, will teach no concepts, and will not provide methods or answers to the students in the Stepping Stones program.

### **2014-2015 CLARIFICATION SECTION THREE: PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

#### **1. PLEASE REMOVE PERFORMANCE MEASURES ED5 FROM THE YOUTH CORPS AND THE BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS COMPONENT OF THE APPLICATION.**

We have removed ED5 from the performance measures for our Youth Corps and Big Brothers Big Sisters members.

#### **\* CLARIFICATION SECTION FOUR: STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT SLOTS**

#### **1. 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?**

## Narratives

Our recruitment plan includes recruitment of members with a disability through participation in volunteer/job fairs targeted at this population, ongoing contact with workforce development navigators and other outreach activities with high school guidance counselors and teachers. While we do not have an established disability slot target, we have experience and are committed to having our program reflect the population, including members with disabilities. In Iowa, approximately 10% of the population (aged 18-44) has a disability and we believe our program is reflective of this diversity. However, it is difficult to ascertain this with confidence, since many individuals with disabilities do not disclose their circumstances to the program.

2. IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVING AS AMERICORPS MEMBERS, CNCS IS OFFERING APPLICANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL MSYS TO BE FILLED BY AMERICORPS MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES.

Although our recruiting efforts will include outreach to individuals with disabilities, our program design does not require additional slots specifically set aside for these individuals.

2014-2015 CLARIFICATION SECTION FIVE: MSY WITH NO PROGRAM FUNDS ATTACHED

We will not be pursuing no-cost MSYs.

2014-2015 CLARIFICATION SECTION SIX: HEALTHCARE

1. PLEASE PROVIDE THE NAME OF THE HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDER YOU ARE PROPOSING TO USE TO INSURE YOUR AMERICORPS MEMBERS.

Our grant does not provide our FT members with a health insurance provider. We plan to use the state exchange or Medicaid program.

2. HOW DID YOU SELECT THE PROVIDER? (FOR EXAMPLE, DIRECT MARKETING ,THROUGH THE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE OR OTHER MEANS)

## Narratives

We want to ensure that our FT members utilize the healthcare.gov website or connect with other health coverage options such as the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan (Iowa's Medicaid expansion) and the Iowa Health Insurance Marketplace to obtain Minimum Essential Coverage, as defined by the Affordable Care Act.

3. 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?

Our proposed budget for member healthcare does not provide minimum essential coverage, as defined by the Affordable Care Act, for our full-time members.

4. IF NOT, WHAT ADJUSTMENT TO YOUR BUDGET IS NECESSARY IN ORDER FOR YOU TO PROVIDE MINIMUM ESSENTIAL COVERAGE (MEC)?

At this present time, we are unsure what adjustment to our budget is necessary in order to provide MEC. We are trying to decipher multiple plans that provide equitable and sufficient coverage to our members.

5. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO ANSWER QUESTION (4), PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY NOT AND/OR WHAT PREVENTED YOU FROM BEING ABLE TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY INFORMATION.

We do not have enough information to answer question 4 because there are multiple variables that will affect the outcome of cost per member in the case that we were to provide all of our FT members with minimum essential coverage as defined by the Affordable Care Act.

Specifically, what prevents us from being able to obtain the necessary information needed to answer

## **Narratives**

question 4 is that, in our current experience of members who have went to the marketplace, all of them have qualified for Medicaid, due to Iowa's Medicaid expansion. Therefore, we recognize that an adjustment to our budget would be necessary but without knowing all of the variables, such as member age, household income, etc., it difficult to determine the exact cost per member in order to provide Minimum Essential Coverage.

We have budgeted \$110.00 per month (per 15 FT members) in the case that the member does not qualify for Medicaid or the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan and is required to select a provider through the Health Insurance Marketplace that meets the Minimum Essential Coverage, as defined by the Affordable Care Act.

### **Continuation Changes**

n/a

### **Grant Characteristics**