

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA) is the incumbent project sponsor of The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) through The Corporation for National and Community Service and has been 1972. CVCA is also a sponsor for the Senior Companion Program. The RSVP project currently serves Tazewell County in Virginia. An estimated 310 RSVP volunteers will serve during the grant timeframe of 4/1/2014 -- 3/31/2017. Some of their service activities will include but not be limited to Disaster Preparedness, Independent Living support, calling reassurance, capacity building (fundraising), transportation to medical and essential activities, and food security services at food banks. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, these volunteers will be placed and serving in a network of over 30 community-based service organizations such as food pantries/banks, calling reassurance programs, thrift stores, veterans organizations, community action agencies, hospices, and emergency services. Anticipated results of these volunteer services include increased food security for households; increased community support and resources for veterans and their families; decreased social isolation for homebound seniors and disabled citizens; and increased disaster preparedness for at-risk disabled and senior citizens. The CNCS federal investment of \$71,366 will be supplemented by \$25,541 in non-federal resources.

## Strengthening Communities

The RSVP program at Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA) operates in Tazewell County in Southwestern Virginia. Tazewell is a rural county and has no formal public transportation systems. The local Area on Aging organization provides a limited, low cost transit system with set routes on main highways Monday through Friday during daylight hours. Southwest Virginia is part of the Appalachian Mountain chain, which dominates both the scenery, the way people live, as well as the way needs are addressed. Tazewell County has a landmass of 520 sq. miles. Coal mining and farming along with businesses that provided mining and farming support services used to be the long-term bulk of Tazewell County's primary industries. Currently Tazewell County's top industries include Health Care, Social Assistance, Retail, and Manufacturing. Tazewell County's population according to the U.S Census report was 45,078 in 2010. This reflected a tiny increase (1.1%) in population of 480 residents since 2000. Approximately 7,757 people or 17.2% of Tazewell County's population are over the age of 65 compared to 12.2% in Virginia as a whole (2010 U.S. Census). Of those, 2,493 or 33% have a disability that cannot be managed only with self-care. This means that those individuals require care through in-home community based services (Meals-On-Wheels, Medicaid Waiver

## Narratives

services, Hospice, Senior Companions, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program services, etc.) to be able to continue living independently while aging in place in their own homes. The Tazewell County Department of Social Services and Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens carry a waiting list for Homemaker and Personal Care Aide (PCA) services. Medicaid Waiver is eligibility based while the Homemaker Service is private pay or/and eligibility based. The Senior Companion Program at CVCA averages having 50 or more on a waiting list for Independent Living and Respite services and is a free service to the households served. In 2011, the average annual cost (comparison of two Nursing Homes and two Assisted Living Centers) for residency in long-term care facilities in Tazewell County was over \$60,000. The majority of this cost in Nursing Homes was provided through Medicaid services. The number of older people within the population continues to increase and according to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau this trend will continue for the next seven years. Veterans are emerging as a constant subset of the elderly and disabled population in Tazewell County. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs reports that 3715 Veterans, 1883 of which are disabled, lived in Tazewell County as of September 30, 2009. These numbers are expected to increase by approximately 10% each year through 2015. According to Kids Count Data Center statistics, the Virginia median household income in 2011 was \$61,877 compared to \$35,521 in Tazewell County. Tazewell County citizens living at or below the poverty line in 2012 was 18.0% compared to Virginia's rate of 12% (Kids Count). Kids Count statistics reported that 62.6% of Tazewell County grandparents lived with grandchildren where they were responsible for the grandchild in comparison to Virginia's rate of 4% in 2011. Tazewell County is working toward a better economic outlook with investments in technology and training for future workforce needs. Coal mining was once a large and well-paying employer in the area and even though there is currently a small revival in the industry, technology improvements has greatly reduced the need for general laborers. Transportation plays a significant role in the delivery of services in the area. In Tazewell County 22% of the 603 miles of highways are primary roads. The area is showing progress in diversifying industry and business opportunities and is currently building an expansive and modern technology park. The July 2013 Unemployment rate was 7.4% for Tazewell County; 7.4% for the U.S., and 5.7% for Virginia (Virginia Employment Commission). Food Insecurity is strongly present in Tazewell County with the area seeing continuous growth in the number of households needing and receiving services from area food pantries, food banks, and churches. In 2011 Tazewell County Schools reported that 51.1% of their enrolled students received Reduced Price or Free Lunches. That number was up by 1.8% (49.3% in 2010) from the prior year reported statistics. The Tazewell County Department of Social Services reported 4,779

## **Narratives**

households enrolled in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in 2011. Tazewell County has been struggling for over a decade with the legal, social, spiritual, medical and economic crisis brought about with issues related to substance abuse. The abuse of Opiate substances, especially Oxycontin, has created a monster in the mountains. Results include deaths by overdose, vehicular homicide and murder; lost jobs, homes and businesses; three to four times the built-for occupancy in area jails; strained legal, social, service organization and medical resources; children with one or both parents incarcerated or unaccounted for; and much more. The county formed an organization to help confront this crisis. Substance Abuse Intervention and Training in Appalachia (SATIRA) is a local organization that provides in-school prevention programs, information on treatment resources, youth activities, and brings together a host of agencies, individuals, law enforcement and treatment programs to deal with this great concern. Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. and RSVP volunteers have served SATIRA in a variety of roles over the past 14 years. In the organizational phase, RSVP volunteers worked with CVCA staff involved with the organization of SATIRA to prepare and serve meals and snacks for committee meetings; copy agenda material and flyers; and called committee members with reminders of meeting dates, places and times. RSVP activities on behalf of SATIRA in 2011 included the preparation of 107 camper treat bags for children attending Camp Joy. Camp Joy is a summer children's camp for at-risk and low income children and the treat bags contained positive image messages and items with SATIRA anti-drug messages such as pencils and wristbands. Camp Joy is a project of CVCA and strongly supported by RSVP volunteers. Over 75% of the children attending Camp Joy receive a free or partial scholarship with many of them directly affected by the before mentioned levels of poverty, family and economic crisis due to substance abuse, or live with grandparents who are responsible for their full care. Progress has been noted in a reduction in drug use, increase in arrests and successful drug investigations, growth in community support and increase in treatment programs and awareness.

The RSVP program works with a 10 members Advisory Council. Representatives come from RSVP and SCP volunteers, Volunteer Stations, businesses, human service agencies and faith-based organizations. Current council members come from several walks of life. These include an Administrator of a local Social Security Service Center, one current serving Senior Companion, three RSVP volunteers, an Adult Protective Service Case Worker with the Department of Social Services, an agency Marketing Director for the local area on aging, and a retired WV Health Department Administrative Assistant. The council helped design and administer the 2010 (assessed in 2011) annual assessments of the RSVP and SCP programs. The council also participated in a Self-Assessment in

## Narratives

2012 with overwhelming positive results in assessment of the council's community and social service base of knowledge (especially related to senior services); level of member volunteerism; interest and knowledge of the capacity of older adults; and membership diversity. There was a five member turn-over on the Advisory Council in 2010 and basic board training was provided in 2010-2011 for everyone on the council as a refresher course. This board training included overview information for the purpose of a not-for-profit board/advisory council; ad hoc committee ideas; updating outdated bylaws; assessments and survey development, and more. A committee of the council presented By-Law change requests at a recent council meeting and ad hoc committees replaced the formal committee format that the council had used in the past. The diversity of the background of this council and the diversity of programs/clients, as well as the of the backgrounds of the members of CVCA's Board of Directors, is a positive influence on policy decisions and brings good checks and balances to bear on program development, data management, performance goals, and program reporting. The Board of Directors at Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. consists of representatives from four incorporated towns, Tazewell County Board of Supervisors, a SCP Companion, a Head Start parent, Tazewell County Schools, and is rounded out with business leaders, organizations serving low-income citizens, and civic organization members. David Larimer, II, currently serves as chairman of the board and is the Treasurer of Tazewell County. One commonality among all of the members of the board is that they have volunteer spirits and recognize that it is important for all voices in a community to be represented on a community action agency board. CVCA uses input from clients, volunteers, businesses, civic and service organizations, government and other citizens to update an annual agency assessment which weighs heavily with information and survey data on the growing senior and disabled population. A public hearing is held at least every three years for input on any CVCA program and ideas are solicited to address identified needs in the communities. Publicity with recognition and fundraising events raise the level of community awareness of the efforts and successes of the program. Local media often contact the RSVP office for updated information on the program's goals and offer to run human-interest stories on what our volunteers and volunteer stations are doing in their communities. Recent newspaper articles showed photos and storylines related to the September 2012 display of 9/11 support banners in Tazewell County sponsored by the RSVP and SCP programs and the successful 2013 Volunteer Recognition. Grocery stores and department stores participate in fundraising and volunteer marketing activities. Volunteers participate in the Tazewell County Fair, TRIAD's Senior Safety Day, 9/11 Recognition programs, Veterans Day events and more. RSVP volunteers have enjoyed serving as volunteers for sign-in and registration at these events and

## **Narratives**

for distribution of flyers and posters marketing the events in their communities. Volunteers have helped market and participated in past MLK Day services and community projects, one of which included volunteers marketing the local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for free preparation of tax returns for low-income individuals and families. Currently RSVP volunteers are represented on a new Disaster Preparedness Council in Tazewell County that is working to register at-risk seniors and disabled citizens in the county's E/911 databases to ensure appropriate and timely response and services for these most at-risk citizens in the event of a local or larger disaster. This council is a project of CVCA's RSVP program in conjunction with such area organizations as area on aging, health department, hospitals, mental health, independent living services, emergency responders and services, law enforcement, and government at-large. Tazewell County was hard hit in 2001, 2002 and 2005 with severe flooding in many areas creating urgency and need for better disaster planning, preparedness and response.

RSVP volunteers serve in many Volunteer Stations that have seen an explosion in the need for services related to all of the before mentioned community needs. Current stations provide volunteer services in Independent Living, Food Security, Friendly Visiting, Calling Reassurance, Transportation, and fourteen stations have RSVP volunteers working in Capacity Building through fundraising efforts.

Lilies of the Field Thrift Store is a faith-based Volunteer Station with RSVP Volunteers serving in fundraising. In 2012 over \$30,000 was raised for use in the community for scholarships, monthly free meals open to the entire community, support for victims of Domestic Violence and home fires, prisoner support services, as well as funding for a variety of other community projects. Food pantries have also benefited greatly with an increase of 37% more RSVP volunteers serving in these stations since 2009. This is a trend that has sustained for over four years. Veterans and family members serve as volunteers and also clients for RSVP services. Six Volunteer Stations serve Veterans, Active Military and their Families. Services include: holiday greeting cards for active duty military, transportation, calling reassurance for the homebound, facilitation of benefits paperwork, and providing military funeral rites.

RSVP at Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA) receives funding from United Way, the Tazewell County Government and local fundraising efforts. Stations such as hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and food pantries often provide meals for volunteers. During Senior Corp Week in 2011, the RSVP and SCP programs at CVCA received excellent coverage through newspaper and television of a special Press Conference and Reception held to promote the activities and successes of both of these vital volunteer programs in Tazewell County.

# Narratives

## Recruitment and Development

RSVP of Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA) encourages volunteers to "stretch their wings" and try new volunteer opportunities. Many new volunteers are looking to serve in areas not related to prior careers. We stress to volunteers that new skills can be learned at any age. In the application process, they are encouraged to share issues that concern them as community members. Volunteers, like most people, like to feel they are part of the solutions and that they can initiate change in their communities. With the backing of CVCA, the RSVP program has helped to develop programs that went on to become independent. For example, the Literacy programs of our agency were started by RSVP and became separate programs that operated under our sponsor. CVCA performs a community needs assessment and this information is used to develop new programs and stations that will meet the found community needs. In our rural community we have found that the testimony of other RSVP Volunteers tends to be our best source for recruitment. We also blanket the community with flyers, public service announcements on radio and television for our program. Local media are faithful to cover events sponsored by RSVP and this is a great recruitment tool. The Senior Volunteer Services programs at CVCA have been sponsoring four segments per month of local news and resources for area seniors on a local television station. The program is called 'Wisely Said' and has been well received by the Baby Boomer and senior population in our area. This media opportunity has provided RSVP with the ability to recruit new volunteers, promote volunteerism and to develop relationships with other human service agencies and not-for-profit organizations that can serve as volunteer stations and program partners. The Wisely Said program has been recognized to be responsible for one new station (Legacy Hospice) in 2009 and multiple new volunteers, as well as providing a platform for communicating with area Baby Boomers and Senior citizens for marketing RSVP and the value of volunteerism. Our highly attended annual RSVP recognition luncheon is held each spring and the local newspapers and/or television always attend and cover the event. We invite local dignitaries, our state Senators and Delegates as well as station managers. Recognition is a year round effort and includes birthday messages, get-well cards, picnics, certificates and gifts. A total of 274 people attended the 2011 volunteer recognition with 243 (64% of 373 total) of those being RSVP volunteers. Volunteer meals are often provided to those that volunteer more than three hours at a time. Volunteer Stations often provide these meals at no expense to the volunteers or RSVP program and the value of the meals are used as In-Kind for the program. Meals are also provided by the program to volunteers that serve in special group projects such as the signing of Veterans Appreciation cards in the Operation Thank You project.

## **Narratives**

With 40 years of program experience in our community, our RSVP volunteers average 8 years of tenure. Volunteers receive the RSVP handbook when they are approved for service. The station is responsible for individual training of the volunteers assigned to them and seasoned RSVP volunteers and RSVP Station Managers/Supervisors often provide this training. Volunteers receive basic volunteer station provided training in tracking and reporting service hours; codes of conduct, confidentiality and ethics; safety practices; volunteer shadowing; task description (job descriptions); and volunteer chain of command or protocols. Many of our Volunteer Stations are well organized with Volunteer Coordinators responsible for recruitment, training and development. Several stations only use RSVP volunteers during specific events or are for the most part fully run and managed by RSVP volunteers. RSVP staff members take as many opportunities as possible to provide in-person, hands on training and use written, verbal and other successfully demonstrated methods to ensure effective teaching. 2011-2012 training activities for RSVP staff included over 23 hours of instruction with Veteran Service activities, 13 hours of training in Disaster Service activities, and 21 hours in Nutrition and Health Service activities. The Assistant RSVP Director and Volunteer Coordinator call, visit and email Volunteer Stations and community partners. Program updates, initiative goals, and training opportunities are communicated as needed with the stations and partners. Thirty-four volunteers received an average of 4 hours training in 2012 in the new Talking-Listening-Caring (TLC) calling reassurance program. RSVP staff provided this training in three different locations in the county and also provided one-on-one training in the TLC curriculum. RSVP's Advisory Council is kept informed and receives training concerning any changes in funding requirements, etc. by the director of the program. CVCA provides training for the entire staff on a quarterly basis. Additional training for RSVP staff is provided as funding allows. In 2013 two RSVP staff members attended training at the Faces of Leadership conference in Charleston, WV and the director attended the CNCS sponsored conference in Washington, DC. Training sessions included social media for volunteer programs, brainstorming techniques, stakeholder and community marketing, strategic planning, service projects and more. The RSVP program is also listed on VolunteerMatch and the Virginia 211 system.

One of our program's strongest volunteer development and retention tools is its frequent contact with volunteers and stations. RSVP staff average telephone or personal contact with our volunteers eight times per year. During these contacts volunteers are encouraged to consider new or additional volunteer opportunities and to update the program on any concerns or ideas they have about their current volunteer activities. This is the main reason that current volunteers refer 80% of all new

## **Narratives**

volunteers in our program. A new twist in being in contact with our volunteers and stations is the use of the One Call program. This group calling/emailing program provides RSVP the opportunity to send out important messages to all or sub-groups of our volunteers, stations and partners while saving hundreds of in-house calling hours each month. One Call is being utilized to remind volunteers when it is time to mail or call in service hours, special volunteer opportunities, community and volunteer events, birthday messages, etc.

The 2012 Volunteer Satisfaction Assessment (administered in 2013) was completed by 100 volunteers. This was a self-administered and anonymous paper survey with six questions. Volunteers were asked to check all answers that applied and space for additional comments was provided. One of the questions listed reasons for volunteering. The top two reasons reported were helping others (87%) and doing useful and worthwhile activities (68%). 91% rated their experiences with RSVP staff during the last year as being very good or good and felt appreciated for their services as a volunteer. 98% would recommend the RSVP program to others looking to volunteer.

### **Program Management**

RSVP has built strong relationships with its current stations and partners. The program provides volunteers for the local Head Start/Early Head Start program, VITA and Camp Joy. Head Start/Early Head Start serves over 150 children and families each year with a host of vital services and resources; VITA provides free Federal and State income tax preparation and filed over 479 returns in 2013; Camp Joy served 130 children in 2013. RSVP networks with several faith-based organizations in providing volunteers to assist in distribution of food, clothing and supplemental meals to the needy, disabled and low income in our communities. Our partnership with the local TRIAD has brought many new volunteer opportunities in recent years and these volunteers distribute safety equipment to citizens and participate in TRIAD's annual Senior Safety Day. RSVP volunteers will be involved in the current efforts to revamp and grow the TRIAD program in Tazewell County. Larger volunteer centers are managed through board of directors, advisory boards or sponsor agencies. These centers use RSVP Volunteer Station Managers to assign volunteer jobs, direct volunteer training and capture volunteer hours/activities for reporting. Volunteer stations are recruited through a variety of means. Many are brought on board when current volunteers start reporting hours through the stations programs, projects or services. Some new stations are developed with information from the CVCA annual community assessment which updates needs and service opportunities in the counties served by the agency. Other new stations are recruited through contact in the community and local government. Volunteer opportunity information is also shared with the Cumberland Mountain

## **Narratives**

Mental Health Services and Clinch Independent Living Services. These partners provide liaison and direct services to citizens with cognitive, physical and mental assessed needs. Tazewell County is a rural county with stretched resources in every sector, especially medical and in-home care. One of the newest Volunteer Stations in the RSVP program was developed due to the need for volunteers in a newly formed Hospice program. RSVP staff was contacted by the new Volunteer Coordinator for the hospice with a request for help in finding reliable and caring volunteers that could serve families and clients receiving hospice services in a variety of ways. This service needed volunteers for card and letter writing, fundraising through a gift shop, and provision of respite for caregivers. RSVP and the coordinator worked together to create volunteer job descriptions and training requirements. The new MOU was agreed upon and jointly signed. RSVP staff recruited three new volunteers in 2009 for this project. Each new and current volunteer station has formal contact from an RSVP staff member minimum of twice yearly while many receive monthly contact. Station contact, safety and accessibility information and volunteer needs are updated yearly or as needed. Volunteer Station training is available in the areas of volunteer training (handbooks, job descriptions, etc.), volunteer recruitment and recognition, and especially in volunteer records (contact information, training updates and volunteer hours) and retention. Each new Volunteer Station enters into agreement with RSVP through a jointly signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). All Volunteer Station MOU's are updated and signed each three years or sooner if updating is appropriate. MOU's provide the framework for the partnership between RSVP and the organization including details on service activities and reporting service hours, volunteer training, provision of in-kind by the station, effective dates, protocol for changing station or RSVP information, support opportunities, accessibility, safety and more. Potential volunteers provide a signed application with birthdate, contact information, driver's license and auto insurance information for those that drive their personal vehicle to and from volunteer assignments, emergency contact information, beneficiary determination/contact information, prior employment and volunteer experience, a signed release for use of photographs and a statement of confidentiality. Upon confirmation of the provided information, RSVP staff contacts the new volunteer and provide them with a welcome packet which includes the Volunteer Handbook, list of acceptable and unapproved volunteer activities, Volunteer Job Description(s) and a new member lapel pin. The handbook explains the policies/procedures of the program, lists staff and contact information, stations, and volunteer opportunities.

The CVCA's Executive Director and program staff review the various reports required by the funding sources for RSVP in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The Executive

## Narratives

Director receives a monthly report for each program detailing service activities, numbers served, planned events, negative factors affecting service, funding requests, etc. Program Progress Reports, CNCS and CVCA financial reports, and reports from CVCA's in-house tracking program (Tracker) are reviewed frequently. Recent and ongoing actions resulting from the findings and observations of these reports include changes in staffing, marketing and recruitment. Increases in program costs and funding reductions across the board resulted in changing one full-time volunteer coordinator position to a part-time position and reducing hours for the RSVP Assistant Director. Rapid losses in volunteer numbers due to illness and death resulted in increased marketing efforts for RSVP partnered with broader volunteer recruitment efforts. The financial manager, assistant financial manager, agency planner, agency executive director and program director work closely together to insure the financial structure of the program is sound. Our agency uses the Grant Management Financial system. The program director receives a monthly expenditure report and is responsible for oversight of the budget. All cash, in-kind and expenses are shown on this monthly report. The program director is responsible for writing grants to local funding sources and completing reports to each funding source as required.

RSVP has many community partners that supply in-kind support. These include Christian Appalachian Project that has provided RSVP with recognition items such as lamps, candles, quilt hangers, books, canvas bags and calendars. Volunteer Stations such as hospitals, food pantries, nursing homes and assisted living centers provide in-kind support through meals for volunteers. All cash and in-kind donations require rigorous documental process at Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. CVCA financial policies clearly outline the procedures for handling all cash and in-kind donations. Cash must be receipted as soon as possible after receipt (within 2 business days) and must be appropriately coded with the funds/receipt/coding hand delivered to the agency's finance office. In-kind donations have to be reported on forms specific to the program receiving the donation. This form contains the name and address of the donor along with the items donated and their value assessed by the donor. There is also noted assurance on the form that the donated items were not purchased with Federal funds. Three signatures are required: donor, staff member and program director.

Statistical information from events sponsored by RSVP such as the Make-A-Difference Day, Martin Luther King Day, etc. are collected and compiled by RSVP staff. The Assistant RSVP Director is responsible for directing the RSVP Coordinator in facilitating surveys and other data/documentation needed to support performance measures, service activity, inputs and outcomes. This data is used in measuring impact for grant purposes and program assessment. Some data is collected directly from

## Narratives

stations and is assessed by the staff and Advisory Council for results. The Advisory Council plays a role in conducting an annual assessment of the program. The assessment includes a review and recommendations for addressing the program's impact on addressed community needs; Advisory Council effectiveness; data collection and report effectiveness; marketing strategies and successes; community awareness of program; volunteer recruitment; staff and sponsor communications; funding consistency, management and development; and program risk management. This information is used to enhance the performance of the program, staff and volunteers. The Advisory Council is responsible for the annual assessment of RSVP program goals and community impact on identified needs. The 2010 (surveyed in 2011) RSVP Program Assessment focused on the program impacts with RSVP volunteers serving at two area food pantries. Seven Senior Volunteer Services Advisory Council members returned completed surveys. The remaining three council members in attendance at the meeting when the surveys were completed had less than one month of time on the council and did not have the experience required to appropriately complete the surveys. Four (57%) surveyed were aware that low-income families and/or senior citizens had been food insecure (fear that they would not have enough to eat) in 2010. All seven (100%) were aware of both of the food pantries and many of them were also aware of four additional resources for food in Tazewell County. One-hundred percent of the council members surveyed agreed that more RSVP volunteer resources could be utilized to alleviate food insecurity in Tazewell County. Advisory Council training is currently in effect due to the results of this assessment. Recent and planned training includes modules on the roles and responsibilities of council members; what effective councils look and feel like; strategic planning; effective committee techniques; and more.

The RSVP program uses the volunteer management software program, Volgistics, to keep detailed and reliable information on volunteers, stations, volunteer assignments and hours.

Funding opportunities are researched by the program director and submitted to the Advisory Council for review before submission is made. The program averages two applications to foundations each year for new funding opportunities.

Currently RSVP staff members are training in the programmatic changes related to the 2014 Competition Grant and new guidelines for Primary Focus Area, Other Focus Area and Capacity Building, and Community Priorities Performance Measure Requirements. All Volunteer Stations and volunteers have been reviewed for effectiveness, areas of focus, input and output, and strengths. Inactive or under-productive Volunteer Stations and volunteers will be made inactive or incorporated into other broad coverage stations with the same service activities. These graduated stations are not

## Narratives

currently providing volunteer service hours reporting through the station and volunteer hours are being captured through mailed timesheets or calling. All active volunteers in these stations serve in more than one service area and can be easily incorporated in the remaining broader coverage stations. All stations that are graduated will receive personal contact by an RSVP staff member and a letter of explanation. Volunteers assigned at that station will receive the same.

### Organizational Capability

Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA), the sponsor for RSVP in Tazewell County, has been incorporated since 1965. CVCA has the following mission statement: Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. provides resources and opportunities to individuals, families and communities in a supportive environment to improve the quality of life. Clinch Valley Community Action treats individuals with respect and dignity in a professional manner. CVCA sponsors many programs and has provided economic leadership in our community since its incorporation. Members of CVCA's Board of Directors are very involved in the oversight of the agency, services and programs. CVCA has a new executive director, Doug Sheets, who leads the program managers in all aspects of direction of their programs. Doug has been with CVCA for 37 years as an employee with experience serving as a supervisor and assistant executive director. He has strong skills in capacity building, grant management, fiscal management and program management. The agency also has a full-time finance manager and assistant finance manager that oversee the fiscal management of the programs. These finance employees have over 34 years of experience in working with not-for-profit finances and program reporting. CVCA is audited annually by an independent auditing firm and has a great track record of good to great audits. The Grants Management System is used to track and manage the financial aspects of the grants and funding that support CVCA's programs. CVCA has over 45 years of experience managing federal, state, local, foundation and other grant funding. The agency has been successful with management of several long-term programs including Workforce Initiative Act (WIA), Head Start, Weatherization, Retired Senior Volunteer Program and Senior Companion Program. New programs on the block include Section Eight Housing and Early Head Start. The current RSVP Program Director has served in this position for seven years and has a long and diverse employment history. Susan White, program director, has experience in sales, marketing, education, customer service, supervision and more. Her last position before joining CVCA was as Executive Director for the Tazewell Area Chamber of Commerce. She dedicates 49% of her time as the Co-Director of the Senior Companion Program at CVCA. The assistant RSVP director is a 5-year veteran staff member and brings strong organizational and technology skills to the program. The Volunteer

## Narratives

Coordinator is the newest addition to the RSVP team. This employee came to RSVP as an Experience Works intern and became a solid member of the team with wonderful skills in communications and record management. The RSVP program has a part-time director (49%), an assistant director funded at 98%, and one part-time volunteer coordinator that is funded at 98%. Full-time positions at Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. are at 30 or more hours per week. In addition to the paid staff for the RSVP program we are fortunate to have the added support of two Experience Works interns. Experience Works is a program designed to help people 55 and older enter or reenter the workplace with a paid training income. The Experience Works interns assist SCP and RSVP staff with a variety of tasks including filing, making copies, data management, calling volunteers for special assignments, and more. The program is served by an Advisory Council made up of RSVP and SCP volunteers, station managers, business, and community organization representatives. The council takes an active role in advising and assisting the program director and staff with local policy and procedures for the program. CVCA has been a sponsor of the local RSVP program for over 40 years and the SCP for over 23 years. RSVP has become well-known and respected in the community and with the media through the dedication and hard work of the first two program directors and the sponsor agency. This reputation continues to this day through the work of the volunteers, staff, and service partners. Many CVCA employees look forward to the annual luncheon recognition of the RSVP volunteers. The executive director and board chairman along with the program director, share in the presentation of the pins, certificates and awards. CVCA has and continues to provide, staff and volunteers with as much training as possible. Agency sponsored training is held for staff on a quarterly basis. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to submit ideas and requests for any form of training that is needed to improve the programs and agency. CVCA has always been willing to send staff to outside seminars and training as budgets and time allow. Staff trainings for the agency have included job safety; recognizing and reporting sexual and personal harassment; timesheet procedures and guidelines; teamwork and motivational speaking; client rights and responsibilities. RSVP staff has attended training in recognizing issues in adult abuse and reporting protocols; case management ideas; volunteer recruitment and management; social networking and non-profits; outcome based grant writing; survey and assessment tool development and implementation; CNCS regulations and reporting; and much more. These trainings have been provided at the annual volunteer conferences held at state and national levels, local partner agency training sites, in-house at CVCA and at meetings of the Virginia/DC Association of Senior Corp Directors. The trainings have been provided by CNCS State Office staff, professional and partner presenters, and fellow directors. An estimated 73 hours of

## **Narratives**

training was attended by three RSVP staff members in 2012. The agency has established policies and procedures for staff and project directors. These include procedures for travel requests and documentation; personnel policies; financial procedures/ policies; equipment purchases are well defined with price quotes required for purchases of \$300 or more. All out of the service area travel must be requested in a detailed and documented process that has to be pre-approved by the executive director. An additional travel reimbursement process is in place that must be completed within five work days following the return of the employee's out of the area travels. These procedures help insure that funds are being frugally and appropriately spent in order to support the program's needs for training, equipment and or large purchases of supplies. Job descriptions are utilized and supervisors evaluate employees annually with directors being evaluated by the executive director. A Directors Planning Session is held annually to evaluate performance and set goals for one year, three year and five year timeframes. This is used as a self-assessment tool and has proven to be of vital importance. An agency planner works with individual program directors on securing additional funding and program development.

### **Other**

NA

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

NA