

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

RSVP of Oakland County is currently in the final year of its initial 3 year grant. Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan is the sponsoring agency for this project. The primary focus area for RSVP of Oakland County in this grant application is Healthy Futures with work plan objectives of Access to Care, Aging in Place and addressing Obesity and Food to residents of Oakland County. Access to Care is currently and will continue to be addressed by partnering with local health care organizations including American Red Cross, St. John, St. Joseph and Providence Hospitals and the Oakland County Health Department. These organizations sponsor health screening and health education programs staffed by RSVP volunteer health professionals and other non-professional RSVP volunteers throughout the year with the higher concentration being April through September. The volunteers provide free blood pressure checks, health education demonstrations and workshops and assist with influenza clinics for adult residents including target veteran groups. Follow up services are provided for those individuals found to be in need of additional care. Health screenings and education events are held at senior and community centers, senior housing, community health fairs and events, and Veteran service organizations. These services will increase the health and well-being of the individuals. RSVP of Oakland County is currently one of only eight existing RSVP projects in the country participating in the Corporation for National and Community Service's pilot project " Bridging Health and Human Service with National Service Initiative". In this project 25 RSVP volunteers link uninsured individuals to primary health care with information about available and affordable health insurance programs. Aging in Place will be addressed by providing hot home delivered meals, transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, pharmacy visits, companionship and assist with locating needed resources to the elderly, disabled and homebound residents helping them to live independently. Volunteers will work with agencies such as St. Patrick Center and Lighthouse to achieve this goal. In the area of food security, RSVP volunteers will assist individuals requiring emergency food, including veterans, low-income families, the unemployed, seniors on fixed incomes and the disabled through food pantries such as Lighthouse and Open Door. Volunteers will sort food items, prepare food bags, distribute and deliver food bags, and conduct workshops on healthy recipes and safe food preparation. Clients who received emergency food assistance will report increased food security for themselves and their children. A total of 358 unduplicated volunteers will serve in the program through 25 volunteer stations. The proposed federal funding level is \$50,440, which will be supplemented by \$46,213 in state and local sources.

## Strengthening Communities

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For the past 25 years Catholic Social Services of Oakland County has been the sponsor of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Oakland County. As of January 1, 2013 Catholic Social Services of Oakland County became a part of a larger organization, Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM), which now sponsors the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Oakland County.

According to the latest Census data, Oakland County has 1,194,156 people, ranking as the 2nd most populous county in Michigan. The population increased by 110,564 people or 10.2% since 2010. 116,934 persons in Oakland County are below poverty level, increasing from 64,718 persons in 2010. Oakland County ranks 2nd among all Michigan counties on the number of persons in poverty and 79th on the poverty rate. The poverty rate for seniors is 9%. This is up from 2010 when the poverty rate was 7.4%. Between 2000 and 2010, households in Oakland County experienced a decrease in real median income of 9.2%, from 55,263 to 50,614. Compared to other Michigan Counties, Oakland County ranks 2nd in median household income.

Of the 1,194,156 people who live in Oakland County, 63.5% are between 18 and 64 years of age, the remaining 36.5% includes 6.7% children under the age of five, 18.5% youth ages 5 to 17 and 11.3% over the age of 65. The fastest growing age group is 45 to 64 year olds, which includes the oldest "baby boomers". This group grew by 69,071 or 32%. Seniors age 65 and over grew by 17,513 or 14.9% since 2000. One in eight Oakland County residents is age 65 or older.

Oakland County's average unemployment rate is 9.7%. Oakland County exceeds Michigan for those persons age 25 and over with a college degree. In 2010, 17.4% in Michigan had a college degree, in Oakland County the rate was 30.2%. Oakland County ranks 2nd among Michigan's 83 counties for persons age 25 and over with a college degree.

49% of Oakland County's population is male and 51% is female. For Michigan, males represent 48.7% and females 51.3%. 74% of the population own their home and 25.3% rent. 81.4% of Oakland County residents are White, 10% are African American, 2.4% are Latino, 4.1% are Asian, .2% are other and 1.6% are two or more races.

Most growth in Oakland County took place in the Eastern part of Oakland County in the affluent area of Novi. The services industry accounted for 38.7% of all employment, leading retail and wholesale trade by 16.7%. Low paying jobs in the service industry have risen fastest of all major industries.

Oakland County has been hit extremely hard in the last few years due to the downturn in the economy.

RSVP of Oakland County determined that Healthy Futures will be the primary focus area based on several published reports including the 2012 report by the Oakland County Health Division, which

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stated 35% of Oakland County residents surveyed reported their health status was "fair to poor". The report also stated 67% of individuals using emergency rooms for care were uninsured. Crowding in emergency rooms due to treatment of non-emergency problems placed people with real emergencies at risk. 21% of those interviewed had no transportation or access to health care. 37% earned less than \$15,000 per year and listed their health status poor to fair. According to the 2011 report by the Planning & Economic Development Services for Oakland County, stated "Oakland County encompasses over 25 emergency and urgent medical care facilities, which are overwhelmed due to the current economic crisis and lack of preventative health care measures by the residents." According to the Oakland County Health Division, in 2010 49% of adults over age 65 had received a flu shot in the last twelve months and 21% of all adults had received a pneumonia vaccination at some point in their lives. In 2012, there were 3,424 preventable hospitalizations recorded for pneumonia in Oakland County. According to the Oakland County Commission Report, there is a 45% increase in people who are uninsured. Most are not working, working part-time or underemployed. According to the Southeast Regional Senior Collaboration report in 2011, poverty rates among older adults has increased dramatically in Oakland County in addition to the demand for personal assistance with everyday activities, which is an indicator of the need for increasing health services for the aging. A report by the Area Agency on Aging in Oakland County stated that 80% of adults age 65 and older have at least one chronic health condition; 50% have at least two. In addition, 20% of seniors suffer from depression and at least 31% do not participate in leisure time physical activities (CDC, DHHS). According to the Oakland County Health Department statistics, in 2009 9% of Oakland County residents were in need of assistance with basic needs to sustain life, which included food, shelter, transportation and financial assistance. In 2012, the number increased 19% due to the downturn in the economy. The public transportation system in Oakland County is paid for by each individual city for their own residents. Poor communities cannot afford to pay into the system, which leaves them without public transportation. Many residents in these communities are left without transportation and are homebound and isolated, especially the elderly and disabled persons. According to Lighthouse, a local food pantry and RSVP volunteer station, the number of individuals served by food assistance programs increased 75% over the last four years. According to the Food Bank Council of Michigan, the food security rate (with and without hunger) in 2011 nationally was 12.4%; in Michigan it was 12.3%. The food security rate (with hunger) in 2011 nationally was 4.1%; in Michigan it was 4.3%. RSVP volunteers will also provide information regarding local community gardens and fresh food programs that will help clients maximize their food budgets.

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The Center for Disease Control characterized hypertension as the second most deadly condition in a 2012 report. The report also states that hypertension is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, the first and fourth leading causes of death in the United States. It is estimated that more than half of American adults with the condition do not have it under control. Recently (2013) the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) identified Oakland County as one of the top three counties in Michigan to have the highest number of uninsured individuals. Currently RSVP of Oakland is working with CNCS, Administration for Families and Children and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to link uninsured individuals to primary care.

RSVP of Oakland collaborates with volunteer stations on an ongoing basis to achieve the desired outcomes in the primary focus area. RSVP staff meet annually with all volunteer stations to discuss volunteer performance, service activities, survey results and outcomes. Those volunteer stations involved in a primary focus area are visited on a quarterly basis.

RSVP volunteers and volunteer station personnel complete an annual survey providing information that assists in the continued improvement of RSVP.

Results of the survey are reviewed by the RSVP Community Advisory Group and the sponsoring agency. Adjustments in programming are made as necessary.

Local input into program design and evaluation is achieved by maintaining close communication with volunteer stations as well as community groups. Volunteer stations must be non-profit and include such agencies as hospital auxiliaries, food pantries, senior centers and public schools.

Within the Healthy Futures focus area, RSVP of Oakland County will address the three objectives of Access to Care, Aging in Place and Obesity and Food through numerous service activities working with many community agencies.

In addressing the issue of Access to Care, RSVP of Oakland operates free health screenings throughout the year, which focus on influenza clinics, blood pressure checks, health education, workshops and client follow up. The screenings are staffed by RSVP volunteer health professionals, with oversight by local hospital nurses and doctors. Health screenings are yearly with a higher concentration conducted April through September. Health screenings are conducted at senior centers, community centers, senior housing, veteran service organizations and community health fairs. Individuals receive influenza clinics, blood pressure checks, health education materials and workshops on proper nutrition, exercise, information on health maintenance, alcohol and tobacco use, and other health-related issues.

Individuals who are identified as needing treatment for a medical condition, a referral for treatment

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and a follow up call is made to remind them of the appointment. Transportation is provided if needed. 92 volunteers provide these services to 300 individuals who will have a healthier and more productive life.

Additionally the Corporation for National and Community Service's pilot project "Bridging Health and Human Services with National Service Initiative" allows 25 RSVP of Oakland volunteers to link 300 uninsured individuals to primary health care with information about available and affordable health insurance programs. Other support services in this pilot project include linking individuals with veterans benefits, tax preparation assistance and transportation to medical appointments. As a result of this project, individuals will have greater access to primary and preventive health care.

The community need for support to assist the elderly, disabled and homebound individuals so that they can live independently in their own home is addressed through the services of 40 RSVP volunteers who provide hot, home delivered meals, companionship, transportation and other support services to 125 of these individuals.

In response to the increasing need in Oakland County for food assistance, 15 RSVP volunteers will assist in food pantries sorting food items distributing and delivering food bags and conducting food preparation workshops to 250 low income families, veterans, disabled persons, seniors on fixed incomes and the unemployed to improve their food security status. The American Legion, Veteran of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans Centers have hosted health and education workshops/screenings for veterans and their families. Additionally, RSVP volunteers provide in-home companionship to several disabled veterans on a daily basis.

### **Recruitment and Development**

RSVP of Oakland County assures a high quality experience for volunteers by ensuring all volunteers are provided adequate orientation by the volunteer station and RSVP. In addition to the orientation, a review of individual skills, interest and availability is done in coordination with volunteer opportunities, in which a match is based on those criteria. The individual chooses the volunteer opportunity they would like to be involved with and RSVP refers that individual to a respective volunteer station and the station is notified by RSVP of the referral. The volunteer station must contact the volunteer within a week to begin the process. All volunteers are adequately trained for their assignments by the volunteer station.

Once a placement has been done and training has been completed, RSVP staff does follow up with the new volunteer and the volunteer station to ensure things are working smoothly. This is done within a month. If there are challenges with the assignment, RSVP makes the corrections or another

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assignment is made. Volunteers are also recruited to lead projects within the RSVP program and at stations in the primary focus area and capacity building activities. These opportunities provide meaningful skill development opportunities for the volunteer. For many, volunteering is an opportunity to gain new skills and insight.

We encourage volunteers to share how they have been touched by volunteering, which allows them to reflect on what it means to serve in their community, while raising program awareness. This is often done through our quarterly newsletter, which goes out to volunteers, volunteer stations and community agencies.

Each volunteer station has a Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP, which requires that they provide the necessary orientation, training and supervision for each volunteer to successfully perform the duties of their assignment. Job descriptions offer a clear understanding of services that volunteers are to provide.

Volunteers frequently report to RSVP and others in the community that their service has enhanced the quality of their lives by allowing them to remain active and make a positive impact in the quality of the lives of those they help.

RSVP conducts computer classes on a monthly basis for volunteers who might want to improve their computer skills. The classes are conducted by RSVP volunteers.

The majority of volunteers are recruited through our quarterly press releases in local newspapers. Since the newspapers don't print the press releases at the same time, it allows for almost all year recruitment through the papers. Many new volunteers join through referrals of current RSVP volunteers. Other techniques are used as well, including speaking at community group meetings and placing flyers at various community locations. Also, articles about the program are frequently written by local newspapers including ethnic and minority publications, in order to further public awareness as well as to cultivate diversity within the program. Public recognition of volunteer achievements in local publications and the program newsletter is also a recruitment tool.

As the demographic data reflects the average for Oakland County is 81.4% White, 10% African-American, 2.4% Latino, 4.1% Asian, .2% other and 1.6% are two or more races. Roughly, RSVP of Oakland County reflects the demographics of the county. Presentations about the program are made at African-American and Hispanic churches as well as the Chinese American Center in Troy, Michigan. Currently RSVP of Oakland County has a Memorandum of Understanding with Hispanic Outreach Center, which assists the Hispanic community with social services. Currently Hispanic RSVP volunteers from Hispanic Outreach Center provide translation services to hospitals and students

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and give assistance with completing job applications.

RSVP of Oakland has conducted health and education screenings at the American Legion, Veteran of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veteran Centers. Veterans will be included in recruitment efforts through presentations and personal contact with these groups. Additionally, veterans and military families who receive services from volunteer stations are also among the pool of potential volunteers for recruitment.

RSVP of Oakland works with Area Agency on Aging 1-B to recruit and place volunteers with disabilities including age-related disabilities in our "Service with Love" project in which a volunteer provides telephone reassurance calls to homebound seniors and make hand-crafted items for homebound seniors.

Retention is increased by effectively matching volunteers to appropriate activities with quality training and support from volunteer stations and the RSVP Program Manager. Publicity regarding RSVP volunteer services also provides recognition and serves as a retention tool as well. An annual volunteer recognition luncheon is held every September. All volunteers are invited to attend free of charge. They are served a meal and enjoy a program along with receiving a gift of appreciation.

### **Program Management**

RSVP staff monitor each station at least once a month, surveying volunteers to determine their placement satisfaction level as well as what can be done to enrich their experience. Volunteer station staff are provided training in order to properly manage volunteers. RSVP volunteers are encouraged to offer suggestions regarding programming and have input in developing their roles. Each volunteer station signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreeing to the terms and conditions of being a part of RSVP of Oakland County. The MOU includes a section on the responsibilities of RSVP of Oakland County and another on those of the volunteer station. There is also a section of the basic provisions of RSVP, which provides guidance on religious and political activities, prohibition of discrimination, displacement of employees and other program requirements. The MOU has been reviewed and approved by the state CNCS office as meeting all RSVP requirements.

To ensure and reinforce compliance by volunteer stations, a meeting is held annually with representatives of all stations to review the MOU, answer questions and reinforce positive volunteer management practices. At this annual meeting, each volunteer station also completes a verification of safe and accessible conditions, which assures they are providing a safe working environment for the volunteers which must also be accessible for persons with disabilities. All volunteer stations receive a quarterly newsletter and information, which reinforces the RSVP regulations and operating

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procedures.

Outside of the primary focus area, RSVP of Oakland County has addressed other focus areas and capacity building activities to be part of the program. RSVP of Oakland has placed 107 volunteers in Community Priorities in which volunteers assist adults with low literacy skills, tax preparation assistance to seniors, providing tours at museums and zoos and other activities. Also under Capacity Building, volunteers will assist with American Red Cross blood drives approximately 40 times per year. These areas will be managed the same as primary focus areas.

To meet the changing community needs, it has been necessary to graduate volunteer stations, however RSVP staff have been able to consolidate some volunteer stations as well as move volunteers into other assignments. Many of the stations that were graduated, we were transitioning out over the years anyway so they had very few volunteers, so the transition didn't present a major challenge. We have found that the responsible graduation of these stations have improved the overall quality of volunteer services.

RSVP volunteers will provide tracking of service activities, outputs and outcomes through specific measurement instruments designed by RSVP. Tracking will be supervised by the volunteer station directors who will ensure all follow up information is complete. The RSVP Program Manager will check for accuracy and completeness and then enter the output/outcome data into the program database, Volunteer Information System (VIS). The RSVP Director will have the ability to recall the outputs and outcomes for the National Performance Measures for reporting purposes, as well as print reports for the community.

Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan accounting department manages all RSVP financial resources. The accounting department maintains financial audit records in compliance with State and Federal regulations as detailed in OMB Circulars A-122 and A-110, and generally accepted accounting procedures. Monthly statements of expenses and revenues are available to the RSVP Director two weeks after the end of each month. The receipt of any in-kind resources are tracked by the RSVP Director and reported on a monthly basis to the accounting department.

### **Organizational Capability**

For 59 years, Catholic Social Services of Oakland County (CSSOC) has supported programs that provide quality services to individuals and families at all stages of their lives and supported the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program for 25 of the 59 years. As of January 1, 2013 CSSOC became a part of a larger agency, Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM). Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan is a merger of county-based social service agencies to form a new regional organization,

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which is mission driven and has a unified vision to meet clearly defined human needs of the people of Southeast Michigan. The counties include Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, St. Clair and Wayne. The merger did not displace any agency staff including RSVP personnel. The merger kept all agency systems in place and added new systems and procedures, which made the agency stronger and better equipped to serve the community. CCSEM provides RSVP with training and technical assistance, as well as administrative support. This includes financial management, public relations, grant writing, purchasing, record keeping and internal guidelines such as travel policies and operating procedures. CCSEM maintains a financial management system which provides for operational efficiency and adequate internal control of funds. Our records easily identify the source and application of funds for grant activities. The Accounting Department maintains records in compliance with State and Federal regulations, and generally accepted accounting principles. An independent Certified Public Accountant performs annual agency-wide audits. CCSEM is accredited by CARF (Commission on Rehabilitation Facilities). Our computer hardware and software is invested in and kept current including VIS (Volunteer Information System) supplied by the State, which allows precise program tracking and outcome reporting of RSVP volunteers and activities. CCSEM has a full time IT person to maintain the computer system. CCSEM maintained its experienced and knowledgeable staff who work with volunteers and community agencies. CCSEM has a strong organizational infrastructure which includes: 1. tangible assets such as facilities, equipment and supplies 2. governance structure and operations, such as internal policies, purchasing procedures and personnel management 3. role of a community participation group, such as an RSVP Community Advisory Group to ensure input from the community and 4. existence of robust management systems and past experience managing federal grant funds. As part of a larger agency, CCSEM has 59 years of experience in operating federal and state grant funded programs dealing with older adults, impact-based outcomes and volunteers making CCSEM more than capable of successfully continuing to administer RSVP.

All agency programs work to address the needs of the area served. Many of our programs depend on volunteers, such as Hispanic Outreach, Foster Care, the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program and the Refugee and Resettlement and Immigration Program. The Foster Grandparent Program and the Senior Companion Program are both Corporation for National and Community Service programs, which utilize seniors as volunteers and have impact-based outcomes. These programs have been a part of the agency for 39 and 38 years respectively. The culturally diverse governing Board of CCSEM is made up of 12 members representing the diversity of the counties served. The CEO, Jason Shanks, oversees agency operations as a whole and supervises the 8

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program directors including the RSVP Director. Mr. Shanks has a Masters Degree in Non-profit Administration. The RSVP Director, Herschell T. Masten, has been Director of RSVP for 21 years and is responsible for reporting to funding agencies, oversight of federal regulations, overall program management and program development. Mr. Masten has a Masters Degree in Education. Over the years he has gained knowledge of CCSEM and the management of different programs including Adult Day Programs, the Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program and Hispanic Outreach Program. RSVP Program Manager Patricia Finn has been with the program for two years. Ms. Finn is responsible for placing volunteers, monitoring RSVP volunteer stations, the volunteer newsletter and public speaking engagements. Ms. Finn has a BA in Social Work.

RSVP has a proven track record in the community for addressing community needs in the primary focus area, senior service, managing volunteers and in measuring performance.

Track record in the primary focus area: In 2012, 120 volunteers provided over 13,000 hours of service with health checks and health education at local, community events including blood pressure checks, influenza clinics, workshops and demonstrations. 81% of the clients referred for follow up services reported that they attended their follow up appointments and were receiving treatment as a result of the transportation provided by and RSVP volunteer. An average of 78% of the clients felt positive about their health-related experience, 57% felt there had been an improvement in their health and 87% felt their knowledge of health-related issues had increased.

Senior service: 25 RSVP volunteer counselors gave assistance to 183 seniors in Medicare information including prescription coverage and health insurance. 87% of the clients reported that they were better able to access services as a result of the help provided by RSVP volunteers. Additionally 2 RSVP volunteers operate MiCAFE (Michigan's Coordinated Access to Food for the Elderly), a program that enrolls low income seniors in a state funded food and health program. Many seniors receive an average of \$60 each month on their Bridge Cards to pay for food at the grocery store freeing up extra income to pay for other needs such as medicine. 47 seniors were enrolled in the program in 2012 by 2 RSVP volunteers trained as application assistants.

Managing volunteers: Over the years RSVP has successfully managed up to 500 volunteers and 30 volunteer stations. Due to budget reductions and graduating some volunteer stations, that number has been reduced. Currently, RSVP manages 358 volunteers through 25 volunteer stations. RSVP of Oakland utilizes volunteer and volunteer station satisfaction surveys to ensure that volunteers are pleased with the placement and the volunteer position has positively impacted the volunteer and the station. Additionally, CCSEM manages two other Corporation for National and Community Service

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Senior Corps programs, 54 Foster Grandparents and 90 Senior Companions.

Measuring performance: Several instruments are used to measure performance; surveys, phone interviews, face to face interviews, follow up phone calls and community meetings. The RSVP Community Advisory Group (CAG) plays an important role in the planning and operation of RSVP of Oakland County. The CAG meets at least four times per year in order to fulfill the objectives of the program, which include, development of volunteer stations, meeting the needs of the volunteers, assistance with recruitment of volunteers, coordination with community organizations and agencies, instituting sound community and financial support sources, developing in-service activities for volunteers and stations, as well as recognition and social activities, preparation of an annual program evaluation survey, and financial management and administration.

Currently 73% of the CCSEM budget is made up of federal grant funds. The programs receiving federal funding include the three Senior Corps programs, Foster Care and Adoption and Counseling and Mental Health. Several of these programs have been managed by the agency for over 50 years and each year the federal audit conducted by the outside agency, Plante Moran reveals excellent audit results with no exceptions or recommendations. There is an employee handbook and all staff participates in an annual personnel evaluation with their supervisor.

The policies and financial systems within CCSEM are well established. All reimbursements require bills or receipts and internal documentation with signatures prior to payment. Internal audits of expense accounts and donation procedures are conducted. All bills are reviewed by the accounting clerk and the project director prior to the internal payment being processed. Fiscal reports are reviewed monthly by staff. There is a board policy manual as well as an internal operating policy and procedure manual. As an established non-profit with over 20 employees, there are policies and procedures in place to hire, provide orientation and support for the program. Forms and policies available for personnel include mileage and expense reimbursements, employee handbook, nondiscrimination policy and detailed time sheets for breaking down time by functional areas.

Currently RSVP of Oakland has a \$15,000 grant from United Way of Southeast Michigan and a \$16,518 grant from Office of Services to the Aging, which helps to sustain the proposed non-federal share. We would expect these grants to continue in the upcoming year. Additionally, RSVP of Oakland partners with local businesses and organizations to assist with financial and in-kind support. The Community Advisory group has placed an emphasis on fundraising and accessing local grants. CCSEM will sponsor at least 2 annual fundraisers to help sustain the non-federal share.

### **Other**

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N/A

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

N/A