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Executive Summary

An estimated 230 RSVP volunteers will serve. Some of their activities under Healthy Futures' Aging in Place Objective will include: providing food delivery, transportation and companionship to homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities by Meals on Wheels, ITN Racine County, Racine Dominican's Senior Companion Inc. respectively.

Under Healthy Futures' Obesity and Food Objective, RSVP volunteers will provide services to help alleviate long term hunger at three facilities: St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry, St. Luke's Hospitality Center (homeless, near-homeless) and HUB of Senior Services.

The Primary Focus Area of the RSVP-Racine County project is HEALTHY FUTURES.

At the end of the three-year grant, it is anticipated that 265 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive food that allow them to live independently with 225 of those individuals reporting having increased social ties/perceived social support; 100 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive transportation assistance that will allow them to live more independently with 80 of those individuals reporting having increased social ties/perceived social support; 75 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive visits/contacts that allow them to live independently with 65 of those individuals reporting having increased social ties/perceived social support; 550 individuals will receive food to alleviate hunger from food banks, food pantries or other non-profit organizations.

The CNCS federal investment of \$94,759.00 will be supplemented by \$53,384.00 in non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

RSVP-Racine County's service area is Racine County, located in southeastern Wisconsin midway between the Milwaukee and Chicago metro areas on the western shore of Lake Michigan.

Our geographic area continues to experience the after-effects of the national and regional economic decline exacerbated by the economic shocks of 2007 -2008.

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2010 Census figures show the population of the City of Racine declined by nearly 3,000 between 2000 and 2010. The 3.7% percentage decline led Wisconsin's 20 largest cities. (Journal Times, March 11, 2011).

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (WDWD) recently reported that Racine County lost about 600 jobs from July 2012 -- July 2013. WDWD estimated Racine County's July 2013 jobless rate at 8.8 percent. The City of Racine's rate was reported as 12.3 percent this July, the state's highest rate among cities. (Racine Journal Times Aug 27, 2013).

The [Racine] Journal Times recently reported that in the city of Racine "...almost half the housing market is foreclosed properties...homeowners are increasingly opting for bankruptcy, rather than going into tax foreclosure and losing their homes.

"Even as the recession recedes, bankruptcy is being used more and more by county homeowners facing the possibility of tax foreclosure."

According to the Racine County Treasurer Jane Nikolai, across Racine County, bankruptcies grew by 31 percent between June 2012 and June 2013. In the city of Racine, bankruptcy protection against foreclosure increased by 54 percent.

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater economics professor Russell Kashian, who tracks Wisconsin foreclosure trends, called the numbers "astounding." (Journal Times, July 29, 2013
alison.bauter@journaltimes.com)

In Racine County, 26.1% of the population lives below the limit of eligibility for supplemental food services (185% of the poverty level). The predicted food insecurity rate in Racine County is 13.7%. (The Wisconsin Food Security Project (WFSP), Applied Population Lab, University of Wisconsin Madison (foodsecurity.wisc.edu)).

Food insecurity is defined as "... [the] limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways." (Andersen, 1990). Food insecurity is considered to be a household-level economic outcome according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2012).

According to a recent article in Racine County's Journal Times, "... a vast swath of the city [Racine]...constitutes a 'food desert'."

The Journal Times article further reported that ..."according to the rankings released this spring by UW's Population Health Institute, 8 percent of Racine County is considered a food desert. USDA data

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shows this 8 percent is almost entirely in Downtown Racine. In the areas identified, household incomes are low and the number of people without access to a vehicle is high, about 20 to 30 percent..."

"The term 'food desert' is used to describe a neighborhood of mostly low-income individuals who can't easily access healthy and affordable food. Those areas are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, based on census data. An area qualifies as a food desert if it meets USDA defined low-income and low-access thresholds.

"Low-income is defined as a poverty rate of 20 percent or greater, or a median family income at or below 80 percent of the statewide or metropolitan area median family income. Low-access is when at least 500 people and/or 33 percent or more of the population lives more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in a city, or 10 miles away in the case of rural areas.

" 'We know that access to healthy food correlates with better health outcomes,' said Amanda Jovaag, data lead for the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute's county health rankings, which recently scored Racine among the state's 10 least-healthy counties. Research shows a relationship between poverty, access and food-related health problems like obesity and diabetes, Jovaag said. (Alison Bauter Journal Times, July 7, 2013).

"...about one in five City of Racine households receives assistance through FoodShare and an ever-growing number of Racine schoolchildren are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program...since 2001, the eligibility for free or reduced lunch for Racine Unified School District students rose from 32 to 58% (PCHHS, 2010).

Racine County's senior population has continued to increase over the last five years. According to 2010 census data, 19% of Racine County's population of 195,408 is over the age of 60. 10.5% of Racine County seniors are living in poverty. "7% of the seniors in our community are living alone, with 33% being women and the majority of them widowed. 33% of people with dementia are living alone." (Racine County 2013-2015 Aging Plan, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Racine County).

The "American Fact Finder Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Racine County WI" cites similar data, stating that there are currently 2061 females and 5382 males 65 years

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of age and over living alone in non-family households (www.sewrpc.org).

Jeanette Daury writes in the Albany Senior Living Examiner, "While health problems can cause loneliness by isolating the individual, loneliness can also cause health problems. A study done in 2005 by a University of Michigan psychology student concluded that loneliness among elderly is becoming more widespread.

"According to this study, over 70 percent of the elderly feel isolated and lonely. It is important for family and friends to try to help the individual get more involved in a social group or activity, because the longer they stay isolated, the harder it will be for the person to overcome this feeling, and health problems can occur." (www.examiner.com).

Tina Kirk, Lincoln Lutheran Nutrition Director with Racine County Meals on Wheels recently cited similar statistics: "The average age of a homebound senior in Racine is 84 years old; 70% of the senior population are women who have learned to live on their own after their husbands have passed away and have a very limited income; 30% of those seniors live in poverty.

"But no matter their circumstance, all of these seniors are depending on the nutritious lunch and the volunteers who visit them five days a week. Meals on Wheels gives more than a meal, it is a safety check for homebound seniors."

In a series of focus groups conducted for the Community Needs Assessment (Aug 2010) commissioned by Community Action of Racine-Kenosha, local transportation issues were targeted as a daunting challenge for lower-income individuals, i.e., the relative lack of buses in Racine County, limited bus routes (no routes outside of the city of Racine) and buses not running frequently or late enough.

"In the next 25 years, the number of elderly residents in Wisconsin is projected to grow by 90 percent or nearly three quarters of a million people. When older drivers stop driving or self-regulate in response to declining abilities or safety concerns, they face increased isolation from social, family and civic activities and decreased access to medical services." (Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2012).

The Racine Belle Urban System (BUS) reduced its budget in 2012 by \$400,000 reflecting less transit

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aid from the State of Wisconsin. Several curtailments of service within the system were subsequently implemented including diminished weekend and late night service; fares were increased by about a third.

Racine County's SPARC program that previously provided select senior transportation services eliminated its routes east of the I94 North-South corridor that bisects Racine County, retaining only its west of I94 service in 2012. (Sarah Street, Racine County Transportation Coordinator)

Due to additional decreased state funding and increased costs, the Belle Urban System eliminated two Saturday bus routes in the City of Racine as of the middle of January, 2013. The "...funding designated for the bus system in the latest biennial state budget decreased by about ten percent...meanwhile, costs have continued to rise, not only for utilities... but more importantly the cost of health care premiums as a result of the Affordable Care Act." (Racine Transit and Parking System Manager Al Stanek, Journal Times Jan 9, 2013).

Service activities in the Healthy Futures Primary Focus Area leading to National Performance outputs/outcomes:

Objective: Aging in Place (H8/H9)

Identified community need: People aging in place, needing social support -- Service activity: RSVP members will deliver nutritionally balanced meals on assigned routes Monday -- Friday as part of the Meals on Wheels Program -- OUTPUT: 265 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive food that allow them to live independently -- OUTCOME: 225 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities will report having increased social ties/perceived social support.

Identified community need: People aging in place, seeking social support --Service activity: RSVP volunteers will provide curb-to-curb transportation alternatives through the ITN Racine County program. OUTPUT: 100 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive transportation assistance that will allow them to live more independently. OUTCOME: 80 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will report having increased social ties/perceived social support.

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Identified community need: People aging in place needing social support -- Service activity: RSVP volunteers will provide companionship by making weekly, one hour home visits and phone calls to homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities in the Racine Dominicans' Senior Companion Program. OUTPUT: 75 homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive visits/contacts that allow them to live independently. OUTCOME: 65 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will report having increased social ties/perceived social support.

Objective: Obesity and Food (H11)

Identified community need: Alleviation of long term hunger issues for individuals dealing with food insecurity -- Service activity: RSVP volunteers will provide food pantry support at three Racine locations -- OUTPUT: 550 individuals will receive food to alleviate long-term hunger from food banks, food pantries or other non-profit organizations.

The RSVP Project Director is assisted by two key RSVP volunteers in gathering data on project progress and results.

The RSVP Volunteer Supervisor Liaison concentrates primarily on the Healthy Futures Primary Focus Area in addition to Other Focus Area projects. This volunteer regularly monitors attendance reports and sustains systematic contact with the corresponding volunteer coordinators to ensure that the volunteer counts and service hours are accurate and kept up-to-date.

Information leading to reporting National Performance Measure (NPM) Outputs and Outcomes is collected from volunteer stations at the request of the Project Director and the Volunteer Supervisor Liaison. Depending upon the project, the data may be in the form of point-of-service counts, surveys and spreadsheets. All information is collated by the Project Director and RSVP volunteers for the annual Project Progress Report (PPR).

Another volunteer and several assistants regularly record the number of RSVP volunteers and their

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hours in the latest edition of Volunteer Reporter (VR). The current VR version (6.1f) includes enhanced features to assist in collecting, tracking and reporting on NPM's. Each RSVP volunteer listed in VR is assigned a "primary" placement, to ensure that unduplicated volunteers' attendance and service hours in Focus Areas are reported accurately.

Activities in service to veterans and military families are currently being carried out in one volunteer station under the Other Focus Areas category:

The Navy Retiree Activities Office (NRAC): During the last reporting period, five RSVP volunteers, all military veterans residing in northern Racine County, served approximately 300 hours helping to staff this liaison service for retired veterans of the United States military.

The NRAC fields service requests from all military retirees, since the other United States military branches do not offer a similar service in southeastern Wisconsin. Volunteer Coordinator Larry McCalvy, a retired Master Sergeant with over 20 years of service, estimates that in 2012 an average of 50 former military personnel a week contacted the Navy Retiree Activities Office either in person or by phone.

The RSVP veteran volunteers in the NRAC are experts on current veterans' retiree benefits including travel options, insurance coordination, employment and educational opportunities, and medical referrals.

Many of NRAC's clients are in the prime of their life and have many years of productivity to contribute to their families, community and their country. The NRAC has staffed by RSVP-Racine County members for over ten years and continues to be a vital link between military and civilian life.

Army Retiree Activities Office: RSVP -- Racine County is addressing its pool of 32 veterans serving as RSVP volunteers as well as its wider volunteer base regarding the possibility of staffing a potential Army Activities Office serving Racine County. Training would be provided, in part, by a contingent affiliated with the Army Reserve unit at nearby Ft. Sheridan IL. Our project has identified nine

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veterans organization in Racine County that are a potential source of volunteers for this project. Mr. McCalvy is heading up this project as well.

The Wisconsin Veterans' Home in Union Grove, WI: The Veterans' Home offers assisted living residences, memory care and skilled nursing to elderly and disabled veterans with long term care needs. Though the Home had been an RSVP volunteer station for over ten years, recent administrative and personnel shifts at the Home have pushed the renewal of the Home's expired Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) into the autumn of 2013. Once the new MOU is in place, our project estimates that at least five RSVP-Racine County members will contribute to several service activities at the Home.

The Veterans' Treatment Court: RSVP - Racine County and the Volunteer Center have been instrumental in helping the Court publicize its mission and its need for volunteers in that project's formative stage. Judge John Jude, a former Volunteer Center of Racine County board member, and early advocate of the Court, has been a key force in this outreach to Southeast Wisconsin veterans currently involved in the judicial system. The Court is being considered as a future service activity in a Veterans and Military Families Work Plan.

Recruitment and Development

In 2013, RSVP-Racine County has created a volunteer recruiting campaign that includes print ads, radio spots and a weekly radio program. The Project Director and/or the Volunteer Center's Executive Director have addressed such groups as the Racine County Retired Employees, the Racine County Retired Federal Employees and faith-based groups interested in RSVP-Racine County's mentoring project.

The Volunteer Center's website features an RSVP-Racine County tab that incorporates the newly acquired Web Assistant, a proprietary program from Volunteer Software. Web Assistant highlights interactive electronic "buttons" that connect future and current RSVP volunteers with the latest Healthy Future Primary Focus Area and Other Focus Area's service opportunities. Electronic enrollment forms, time sheets and a message center are also featured in Web Assistant.

The recently revised enrollment form lists the six CNCS Focus Areas, their associated local projects

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and selected "Other Community Priorities" activities. Particular emphasis is placed on projects associated with the Primary Focus Area -- Healthy Futures.

Once a potential RSVP member has submitted an enrollment form, the Project Director arranges a phone or in-person visit. The ensuing discussion concentrates on discussing potential volunteers' current interests, experiences, abilities and skills. Often an applicant's vocation or avocation leads to a successful match. Other times, the applicant is looking in a different direction.

Central to the discussion is determining if the potential volunteer would have an interest in projects associated with the Healthy Futures Primary Focus Area. The conversation includes reviewing the rationale for concentrating on specific projects and how volunteers can make a positive difference in the lives of their fellow Racine County neighbors.

Ultimately, the key to creating high quality volunteer assignments is to ensure that RSVP members are satisfied with their matches and that they feel they are making a positive contribution toward a better quality of life for Racine County citizens. That is why some of our members work on multiple projects that span the Focus Areas spectrum.

The Volunteer Stations that administer Primary Focus Healthy Futures projects have training programs specific to their missions. Meal on Wheels and ITN Racine County utilize proprietary programs for all of their drivers, while Senior Companion Inc. offers orientations for its volunteer visitors. St. Luke's Hospitality Center, St. Vincent de Paul and HUB of Senior Services all provide project specific training to the volunteers who work in their long-term hunger alleviation projects. RSVP-Racine County is developing a survey to further identify and evaluate the training methods utilized by our volunteer stations, challenges encountered and how our RSVP project might assist in enhancing current training programs.

In the Other Focus Area category, new volunteers in the RSVP-Racine County Education mentoring program with the Racine Unified School District (RUSD) attend three "Introduction to Mentoring" sessions at the Volunteer Center. RSVP Mentor Coordinator Mary Rath, an RUSD veteran of forty years as a teacher and principal, leads these meetings which are reinforced with monthly Monday

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afternoon debriefing sessions.

Our mentoring project is certified by Mentor KR at the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Wisconsin -- Parkside where all mentors are encouraged to attend complimentary advanced research-based mentoring sessions and conferences. Like all RUSD volunteers, mentors must be approved by the "Wings" background check system prior to entering a school.

The Other Community Priorities Safe Assured ID digital identification project, run under the auspices of the Volunteer Center, provides training for new and existing volunteers to handle data input, video production and electronic fingerprinting.

According to the Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc. (PCHHS), Racine County ethnic and racial minorities are concentrated in the City of Racine, comprising 35% of the County's population. Nearly one quarter (22%) of the city's population is black, and 18% of city residents identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

PCHHS indicates that between 2006 and 2008, Racine County population under 55 years of age totaled 75%. Those 50-54 comprised 8%; 55-59, 7%; 60-64, 5%; 65-69, 4%; and over 70, 9%.

RSVP-Racine County has been encouraged by the emergence of key African-American mentors and volunteer coordinators as our mentoring program has expanded from its initial venue to four urban elementary and middle schools in RUSD.

An RSVP-Racine County campaign initiated in 2012 to inform local business and government human resource professionals of RSVP programs and opportunities is designed to recruit a volunteer base reflective of our service area's diversity as represented by Racine County's work force.

The Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. (VCRC) has recently formed an association with volunteers from Racine's LGBT community. RSVP-Racine County is looking forward to exploring future synergies LGBT volunteers would bring to our Focus Area projects.

Thirty two of our project's RSVP volunteers are U.S. Military veterans. We are addressing that pool of volunteers as well as our wider volunteer base regarding the possibility of staffing future veterans-oriented projects referenced in the preceding Strengthening Communities Narrative. The RSVP

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Project Director and the RSVP Outreach Coordinator are Vietnam Era Veterans.

Our project pays particular attention to the section of the RSVP Enrollment Form that asks potential volunteers to list physical or medical considerations. That information allows our project to respond sensitively and sensibly when presenting volunteer opportunities.

Retaining and recognizing RSVP volunteers is an important element of project recruitment and development when dealing with a volunteer base that is, by definition, susceptible to attrition. RSVP-Racine County has an ongoing program of electronic and USPS correspondence with its members, apprising them of new, evolving and continuing senior volunteer opportunities. One of our octogenarian volunteers is responsible for sending out birthday cards to all active RSVP volunteers.

RSVP volunteers are recognized each month in the Racine Journal Times' Volunteer Connections column that is a regular feature of its Lifestyles pullout tabloid section.

This series alternates stories on individual volunteers with Focus Area and Other Community Priorities projects and their volunteer teams.

The Volunteer Center hosts a Volunteer Recognition Awards Luncheon during National Volunteer Week in April of which RSVP is a major component and contributor. In 2012, two winners were RSVP volunteers, in 2011, seven RSVP volunteers were recognized.

Also in 2012, to commemorate the Center for Community Partnership's certification of the RSVP-Racine County Mentoring Project, members of the mentoring team were luncheon guests of the Volunteer Center at their own table and introduced to an audience of three hundred.

The Volunteer Center of Racine County and RSVP co-sponsor an annual Volunteer Recognition Open House. This joint collaboration has been driven by budgetary considerations and the desire to recognize both RSVP and Volunteer Center volunteers.

Proclamations from the City of Racine and the County of Racine are highlights of the program. This year's Open House will be held at the Lincoln Lutheran headquarters, home of one of RSVP-Racine County's signature Primary Focus Area projects, Meals on Wheels.

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RSVP- Racine County co-hosted the local Mayors' Day of Recognition for National Service with City of Racine Mayor John Dickert on April 9, 2013. The ceremony recognized both RSVP-Racine County and AmeriCorps volunteers; each member of the RSVP-Racine County Advisory Council received a Mayoral Proclamation from Mayor Dickert. Mayors' Day was well publicized through local newspaper and radio advertising.

Feedback from RSVP-Racine County volunteers guides our project in making any necessary mid-course adjustments to complement our volunteers' experiences. Our volunteer staff is currently concluding evaluation of a twelve question volunteer satisfaction survey that was mailed to our 230 active RSVP members in June, 2013; postage-paid reply envelopes were included to expedite replies.

To date, about half of the surveys have been returned. Preliminary results indicate that the highest rated factor influencing enrollment in RSVP-Racine County was an opportunity to help people and the community (79% - 'extremely important'). 75% were 'extremely satisfied' with their current volunteer assignments. At least 50% of the survey respondents gave RSVP-Racine County, its service and communication an 'extremely satisfied' rating. 78% of responders said they had spoken to friends and acquaintances about volunteering since joining RSVP-Racine County.

The survey also provided for extemporaneous expressions regarding the best aspects of the RSVP project and how it could be changed or improved. Preliminary interpretation of the survey seems to reinforce the perception that recognition and retention of volunteers are intertwined aspects of volunteer outreach, each complementing the other.

Program Management

RSVP-Racine County recently completed two surveys with its volunteer stations: an Accessibility Checklist and a Safety Checklist. All of the surveys were returned and subsequently reviewed by the Project Director who will be conducting future volunteer station site visits to follow-up on individual questionnaire responses and project specific issues.

RSVP-Racine County monitors volunteer stations' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) expiration dates through the Volunteer Reporter (6.1f) system. If it is mutually agreed upon to renew an expiring MOU, the Project Director discusses with respective Volunteer Coordinators the mutual

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expectations set forth in the most recent CNCS MOU template for both RSVP projects and volunteer stations. This is an excellent opportunity for principals to discuss the goals and challenges unique to individual projects.

Volunteer attendance and hours served reports are continuously monitored as they are received. The RSVP Project Director, assisted by RSVP volunteers, ascertains that established patterns of volunteer service are being sustained by reviewing at least monthly relevant statistics generated by Volunteer Reporter.

RSVP- Racine County projects are developed and set in motion to address unmet community needs based on the latest available research. RSVP-Racine County subscribes to the Community Needs Assessment commissioned by Community Action of Racine/Kenosha and executed by the Planning Council for Health and Human Services Inc. (PCHHSI).

In order to sustain relevance of current and future projects in the Healthy Futures and other Focus Areas that address the continuing needs of Racine County, our RSVP project also regularly reviews the research of the Racine Unified School District, United Way of Racine, the Racine County Food Bank, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Racine County (ADRC), Meals on Wheels, the Wisconsin Center for Workforce Development, the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The national and local TRIAD organization is a rich source of resource material centering on senior citizen service and safety issues.

As community needs evolve and present themselves, RSVP-Racine County is prepared for the prospect of placing RSVP volunteers in satisfying assignments falling outside the current CNCS Focus Areas and Other Community Priorities categories. Since the Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. (VCRC) is the grantee for RSVP-Racine County, our project has the option of graduating RSVP volunteer stations and their respective volunteers to VCRC where often volunteer activities can continue uninterrupted and volunteer counts and hours can accrue to the benefit of VCRC.

Correspondence templates that can be used for oral or written communication have been developed to

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assist in the process of conveying the message of change of volunteer status from RSVP to VCRC for both stations and volunteers. Transitioning volunteers and volunteer station are aware that mileage reimbursement and CIMA supplementary insurance coverage options will not follow them to non-RSVP assignments.

National Performance Measure (NPM) output and outcome data for the annual Project Progress Report (PPR) are supplied by the Volunteer Coordinators of individual stations periodically during the current reporting period so the compilation and preparation of data for the annual Project Progress Report (PPR) is completed logically, accurately and methodically.

Accordingly, the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator Liaison and other RSVP volunteers assist in preparing, distributing and collecting requests for activity logs, surveys and other documentation to assure timely receipt and recording in eGrants for the annual Project Progress Report (PPR).

The most recent CNCS Wisconsin State Office PPR critique for the second year of the current grant period stated: "The numbers in the data updates section seem accurate and reasonable. All volunteers are accounted for in your work plans".

RSVP-Racine County's track record in the Healthy Futures Primary Focus Area reflects a consistent improvement in meeting volunteer counts, volunteer hours, outputs and outcomes goals as National Performance Measures were introduced and began to evolve during the three year tenure of the current Project Director.

In the last two years, two new projects have been developed in the Aging in Place and Obesity and Food sub-categories respectively: ITN Racine County, to meet the alternative transportation needs of the elderly and disabled, and St. Luke's Hospitality Center that makes a significant contribution toward nutritionally sustaining the homeless and near-homeless population of Racine County.

Meals on Wheels and the Senior Companion Program Inc. complete the suite of projects for Aging in Place; two other food pantry projects contribute to the Obesity and Food objective. These four projects have been associated with RSVP-Racine County since its inception nearly fourteen years ago.

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Since some volunteer projects involve non-RSVP volunteers, our RSVP Project is diligent in isolating RSVP volunteer counts, hours served, and data leading to outputs and outcomes to preserve their accuracy and integrity. Through the guidance of the CNCS Wisconsin State Office, our RSVP project is becoming increasingly proficient with the rubric of the CNCS National Performance Measurements.

RSVP-Racine County is conversant with the rules and regulations set forth in the RSVP Handbook including the most recent updates, revisions and interpretations. Guidance provided by the CNCS Wisconsin State Office is invaluable in reinforcing RSVP-Racine County's understanding and compliance with CNCS policies and procedures.

The RSVP-Racine County project recently completed a major Enrollment Form update to ascertain that all active RSVP members have provided date of birth, insurance beneficiary designations and valid signatures in their signed applications.

Within the last twenty four months, the RSVP-Racine County project completed a critical review and upgrade of Volunteer Station MOU status using the most recent CNCS-approved MOU template. Today, MOU status is monitored closely to assure that RSVP volunteers are assigned to currently compliant volunteer stations.

The RSVP-Racine County Advisory Council (AC) is composed of five RSVP members that include retired as well as active professionals from the engineering, business and social service/non-profit sectors. The AC meets quarterly and is a vital liaison with the Racine County community our project serves.

During the tenure of the current Project Director, the AC has been an invaluable component in the process of viewing the priorities of Racine County in the context of key components of the CNCS Strategic Plan, like Focus Areas and National Performance Measures.

Some members of the AC also sit on the VCRC Development Committee which is responsible for raising, among other sums, the Grantee's match of CNCS funds. In the future, the RSVP-Racine

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County project plans to leverage the anticipated increase of AC members by emphasizing a fund-raising element to the AC itself since CNCS guidelines for maximizing the efficiency of Advisory Councils suggest recruiting members who provide or solicit financial support for the RSVP project.

The RSVP-Racine County project is currently bolstering AC enrollment as some members have rotated off over the last year. A list of six AC candidates will be submitted to the VCRC Board for approval by the end of the third quarter of 2013. RSVP-Racine County's intermediate goal is to at least double membership of the AC to include volunteer station representatives of some Primary Focus Area projects.

Organizational Capability

The Executive Director (ED) has emergency and planned succession plans on file for all staff members. The contingency plan is given to the Finance Administrator and/or Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. (VCRC) Board President anytime the ED is out of town. It is designed to address a range of exigencies including day-to-day responsibilities of each RSVP staff member.

The Executive Director, RSVP Director, Finance Administrator and RSVP Outreach Coordinator are building a "redundancy guide" to assure smooth operation of the RSVP project in the event of an individual or collective unexpected absence among the professional staff. Volunteer Reporter Data is backed up on the VCRC server, which, itself, has built-in redundancies, as well as on an 8 GB external drive that is carried off premises by the Project Director when VCRC offices are closed.

Financial management systems are directed by the Finance Administrator with oversight by the VCRC ED, Board of Directors and its Budget Committee. A sub-committee composed of select current and former VCRC Board Budget Committee members, the VCRC ED, RSVP Project Director and Finance Administrator was formed to address the Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy aspect of the current re-competitive grant proposal. The VCRC Board, at its August 2013 meeting, voted to make the sub-committee a permanent entity responsible for formulating and implementing RSVP fiscal policy and issues for future RSVP grant applications, yearly continuations and periodic financial reports.

Cash and in-kind resources secured by VCRC adequately sustains the 30% required non-federal share of the RSVP budget with grants, donations and fund raising events monitored by the VCRC Board's

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Development Committee and Budget Committee.

Financial reserves, which VCRC presciently established at its inception, help sustain RSVP-Racine County's mission despite the vagaries of the current economic environment and help ensure there is support for current RSVP programs. As of July 31, 2013, VCRC cash reserves totaled \$39,984.27 with \$66,259.00 in federal funds available from the current RSVP grant.

Due to federal funding reductions put in place during the summer of 2011, and continued uncertainty concerning future federal funding levels, the VCRC Budget Committee has assembled several alternative budgets reflecting varying hypothetical income streams.

The Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. has served as a "Fiscal Agency" role model for several local organizations seeking non-profit status.

RSVP-Racine County's project staff includes:

Albert Volmut, Executive Director (ED) of VCRC, joined the Volunteer Center in May of 2011. Mr. Volmut has a BA in Mass Communications from the University of Illinois -- Chicago, and has over 30 years of experience as an executive trainer and a college business instructor.

Bruce Davis, RSVP Project Director, joined VCRC in October 2010 after retiring from a 30 year career as a financial planner. Mr. Davis has a BA in Speech from the University of Vermont and is a graduate of the Defense Information School (DINFOS).

Joseph Povkovich, VCRC Finance Administrator, joined VCRC in January of 2012. Mr. Povkovich, a Dominican College graduate, is a retired accountant with forty years of experience in corporate accounting and auditing.

David Voss, RSVP Outreach Coordinator, has been with VCRC since 2003. Mr. Voss is a retired City of Racine police lieutenant with over 30 years in law enforcement with special expertise in disaster

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services and amateur radio communication.

Mr. Volmut regularly confers with the RSVP Project Director about the status and performance of current projects. Mr. Volmut is a reliable source of new ideas for growing the RSVP volunteer base and volunteer station roster, especially in the Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures.

Mr. Davis is responsible for day-to-day operations of the RSVP - Racine County project. He regularly confers with the CNCS Wisconsin State Office to assure compliance with applicable RSVP statutes, regulations and OMB circulars. Concurrently, he maintains systematic contact with key volunteer stations to ensure the accomplishment of program goals, with particular emphasis on Primary and Other Focus Areas projects.

Mr. Povkovich supplies the ED and Project Director with the current financial status of the RSVP-Racine County project and files periodic financial reports with CNCS and governmental agencies. He also consults on and prepares the RSVP budget while keeping the Finance Committee of the VCRC Board apprised of the latest financial developments.

Mr. Voss is a ham radio operator providing input to the four amateur radio clubs that contribute to the suite of preparedness service activities performed under the Disaster Services Focus Area. Mr. Voss is a goodwill ambassador for RSVP visibility and recruitment through his involvement with the Safe Assured ID digital identification program. Safe Assured ID operates under the auspices of the Volunteer Center's volunteer station in the Other Community Priorities category of service activities.

VCRC's capacity to assure the RSVP-Racine County project has adequate facilities, equipment, supplies, purchasing procedures and personnel management support is the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Finance Administrator with oversight by the VCRC Board of Directors and its Budget Committee.

VCRC's office facilities are leased at an attractive non-profit rate that is significantly discounted below the local market. The facility is easily accessible from all points within Racine County on one of the major east-west U.S. Highways.

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VCRC is handicapped accessible with adequate operational space and equipment. Up-to-date technology, assistance and related maintenance are assured by several RSVP volunteers who are employed as IT professionals. Office equipment and proprietary and standard software is up-to-date and is replaced as needed.

The role of the VCRC Board of Directors is defined in the bylaws of VCRC. The Directors provide oversight, support and management for all VCRC programming. The RSVP-Racine County project is regularly reviewed by the Board. Board members also serve on at least one committee to assist with the general operations of VCRC. They annually review bylaws, mission and vision statements to ensure the VCRC is continually and efficiently serving all constituents as a leader, catalyst, connector and advocate for volunteerism.

The RSVP-Racine County Volunteer Handbook is in the process of a major revision and will be available in print or electronic versions. Individual job descriptions have been developed for all in-house volunteer positions at the Volunteer Center.

Current best practices volunteer management and training techniques are utilized to ensure proper training for in-house volunteers. Volunteers periodically meet with the Executive Director and other staff informally to discuss their performance and what, if any, additional training is needed to assist in their performance and development.

Personnel management is the responsibility of the VCRC ED with oversight by the Board of Director's President, who is an HR professional serving as the Racine County Personnel Manager.

Clearly defined roles and job descriptions are provided staff, administrators and volunteers and are reviewed semi-annually. VCRC is current with all required policies and bylaws, Governance Committee obligations, as well as internal policies specific to nonprofit organizations.

A travel policy for staff and RSVP volunteers has been implemented based on CNCS guidelines and is

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available both in hardcopy and electronic versions.

VCRC's systems for self-assessment, evaluation and continuous improvement for all programs and projects are the ultimate responsibility of the Board of Directors. A formal semi-annual verbal and written evaluation is conducted by the Executive Director with each staff member reviewing individual projects and performance. Each staff member submits a self-evaluation and program appraisal in writing, simultaneously with the Executive Director's assessment.

The Executive Director and each staff member subsequently meet to discuss the evaluations and make recommendations for self-improvement and program progression. This information is shared with the Board of Directors, which may make recommendations, amendments or changes.

In 2008, VCRC completed an organizational assessment to ensure best practices for volunteer management. Since that time areas of recommended improvement have been put into effect. A three-year strategic plan was developed and implemented in 2009. It is annually reviewed by the Board of Directors with revisions made as needed.

The Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. (VCRC) has held the RSVP grant serving Racine County since its inception in 2000. VCRC serves as a key facilitator matching volunteer opportunities with qualified, motivated volunteers; and its expertise in identifying the needs of Racine County and the subsequent recruitment and retention of volunteer stations and volunteers to meet those needs translates well to the criteria specific to the RSVP universe of 55+ volunteers.

VCRC's most recent audit was judged as satisfactory by Ritz Holman LLP, Milwaukee, WI. VCRC uses the 2012 version of Quick Books Premier Non-Profit Edition. Financial data is backed up both on the VCRC central server and is carried off-premises in two separate thumb-drives by the Finance Administrator and the Executive Director.

Other

NA

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

NA