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Executive Summary

Calhoun County Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) will be sponsored by the City of Jacksonville, Alabama. The mission of RSVP is to encourage Calhoun County residents age 55 and older to use their time, talents, and experience to improve their community's critical needs. The RSVP staff will provide the training, support, and encouragement that senior volunteers need to carry out their volunteer duties and achieve their own personal goals. A primary part of our goal is to educate our community on the valuable services that RSVP provides in our community.

An estimated, unduplicated 245 RSVP volunteers will be recruited and trained to serve in 29 non-profit agencies. The Primary Focus Area of this project is Healthy Futures with the objective of aging in place. These services include

home delivered meals, social activities and access to information from the community such as nutrition education program to promote better health by providing accurate and culturally sensitive nutrition, physical fitness, or related health information. Anticipated outcome is that at the end of the 3 year grant period more than 700 individuals will be living independently due in part to services provided by RSVP volunteers. Volunteer stations such as American Red Cross, Master Gardeners, Golden K, School Volunteers, Benevolence Center, Habitat for Humanity Restore, Jacksonville Public Library, Jacksonville Hospital Auxiliary, and Gentiva Hospice(Vets Caring for Vets) will serve to help the needs of the other community projects including computer training, tutoring in public schools, training in disaster preparedness, food distribution, supporting terminally ill veterans and their families, beautifying and maintaining trails and parks.

Calhoun County RSVP is requesting \$46,211 in Federal Funding beginning April 1, 2014 and ending March 31, 2015. The non-federal match for this grant has been secured at a total of \$140,677.

Strengthening Communities

The relationship between Calhoun County RSVP and the Calhoun community has been in existence 41 years. Calhoun County RSVP began in 1972 in Jacksonville, Alabama.

Calhoun County is located in the Northeast corner of Alabama; it is 90 miles West of Atlanta, Georgia. According to the 2010 census, there were 118,572 people residing in the county. The population density was 195 miles. There were 53,289 housing units at an average density of 84 miles. The racial makeup of the county was 74.9% White, 20.6% Black or African American, 0.5% Native American, 0.7% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander, and 1.7% from two or more races. 3.3% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

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Fort McClellan, formerly site of the U.S. Army Military Police Training Academy and Chemical Warfare training center, was de-commissioned in the 1990's. A commission of local city and county leaders known as the Joint Powers Authority deals with the redevelopment of the old fort. Plans for a research park, retail development, and new homes light the hopes of some, hoping it will spur more growth in the north Anniston region. A portion of the former fort is now home to the Alabama National Guard Training Center. Another 9000 acres of the fort were set aside for the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge in 2003. The Department of Homeland Security also uses a portion of the decommissioned fort for training and fieldwork.

The top employers in Calhoun County include the Anniston Army Depot, Northeast Alabama Regional Medical Center, Calhoun County School System, Jacksonville State University, Homeland Security, BAE Systems, N.A.B.I., Alabama Power Company and Federal-Mogul Corporation. The median income for a household in the county is \$39,467. The per capita income for the county is \$20,903. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 612 miles; 608 miles of it is land and 4 miles of it (0.63%) is water. The adjacent counties include Cherokee, Cleburne, Talladega, St. Clair, and Etowah. The core cities in Calhoun County include Anniston and Oxford according to statistical data. The suburbs with more than 5,000 inhabitants include Jacksonville, Saks, Choccolocco, and Piedmont. Suburbs with less than 5,000 inhabitants include Alexandria, Bynum, Hobson City, Ohatchee, Weaver, and West End.

- a. The community has been and will be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project activities. The staff attends quarterly meetings of a group of other agencies in the community to discuss the needs of what services are needed in the community. (Human Services Council) The group discusses ways to better serve our community and forms partnerships to implement new programs. RSVP provides the volunteers to the agencies for their new projects.
- b. There are strong community partnerships, including well-defined roles for community partners. RSVP has several strong partnerships which include American Red Cross, Internal Revenue Service, Emergency Management Agency, Regional Medical Center, United Way, United Cerebral Palsy, State of Al. Dept of Senior Services, and Calhoun County Dept Human Resources. Our agency provides volunteers for these agencies. Active management of our volunteers has been a key driver in our successful effort to build capacity and deliver our program.
- c. Public awareness and support for the program will be built. RSVP is continuing to promote the program by appearing on local TV programs, radio stations, newspaper articles promoting our events, and at public speaking events.

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d. The project will bring together people of diverse backgrounds. RSVP is located in a college town that has a strong international program. Also being near a former military base, several military families chose to retire in the area. Also there is a military army depot located in the county that recruits from around the world. Less than 25 miles to the east is the Honda plant that employs more people from outside our area. RSVP is tapping into the different groups to encourage them to volunteer in the community.

e. RSVP will use community resources to promote healthy futures for the aging. We help and promote several programs concerning senior wellness with Jacksonville State University's Continuing Education Dept. and also with East AL Dept. of Area Aging, and the Senior Day sponsored by Regional Medical Center. Activities include Masters Games (dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles for active adults 50 and over through social, mental, and physical activities. Each year there are between 600 and 800 participants from across the state). Exercise programs include PACE (Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program), line dancing low impact aerobics, stretching/flexibility classes, resistance training, Wii Bowling Leagues, Nutrition Services, and Health and Fitness Programs. Information and referral, legal assistance, health insurance counseling, and prescription assistance are also provided. Some of the instructors are volunteers.

f. The project will enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions within the community. RSVP has utilized other agencies to help with projects. Because of the limited amount of revenue, we rely on expertise in the field of technology and computer support. We share information with other organizations to promote the county as a whole and try not to duplicate services.

g. The project will work to integrate senior service into the activities of other service programs in the community. RSVP has partnered with the Jacksonville Community Center to provide afternoon programs, such after school care, to the community. RSVP also has partnered with the Jacksonville Public Library to provide basic computer training to the community.

h. Service activities to veterans and military families will be provided by "Vets Caring for Vets" volunteers who are willing to share some of their time and talents to help patients and their families who are dealing with end-of-life issues. The hospice program will provide education on the hospice philosophy . Training will also help veterans understand their role as hospice volunteers.

Recruitment and Development

Volunteer Recruitment will be the primary responsibility of all program staff, the Calhoun County Advisory Council, and Senior Advisory Committee appointed by the City of Jacksonville. The advisory council will be representatives of a cross section of Calhoun County, while the senior advisory will be

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citizens of the City of Jacksonville. The advisory board members and RSVP sponsors in the community are also encouraged to "talk-up" RSVP with the contacts they have that may be overlooked or are unclear regarding the benefits of RSVP. It is a continuous routine of action to strengthen community awareness regarding the RSVP program and also to attract new agencies and volunteer developments

Efforts are on-going to recruit volunteers and workstations, retain them, and develop new, along with expanding existing, volunteer sites. To gain new interest in volunteering, we encourage current volunteers to speak to their friends and associates, neighbors, and church members regarding all the benefits of volunteering; it is the feeling of the RSVP program that "word of mouth" is truly the best way to advertise. The procedures that Calhoun County RSVP uses to recruit new volunteers are through the media which includes television, newspapers, and radio, along with presentations before civic groups, organizations, senior groups, as well as PTA groups. In addition, every effort will be made to educate and recruit the Baby Boomer population. Many Baby Boomers are still gainfully employed, traveling or helping raise grandchildren. The volunteer coordinator will review and develop volunteer opportunities that will provide for a flexible schedule. Every effort to ensure a well balanced pool of volunteers will be monitored by the Advisory Council and Senior Advisory Committee. A diverse pool of volunteers will be represented by every race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background and individuals who have disabilities including many of those which are age related. Effective programming provides an avenue for volunteers to remain active and share their skills and knowledge while participating in service learning project program which enrich their lives and the recipients of their service. A volunteer management system is in place that provides several different elements. Potential volunteers will be able to review with the coordinator an overview of each volunteer station and job description that provides the basic elements that the volunteer needs to know about the assignment. Potential volunteers will be well informed about the particular volunteer station(s) that they may be interested in and volunteers are also made aware of the flexibility they are able to have with their volunteer opportunities. To assure a high quality of experienced volunteers we offer volunteer opportunities at these agencies which match their talents, skills, and abilities.

Volunteers will also meet the site supervisors to ensure appropriate volunteer placement. Upon the volunteer and site supervisor meeting, the volunteer then decides if that particular placement is a good fit for them.

Station supervisors will be aware that they may contact our office whenever they feel the need. The stations will have an open door policy with the RSVP staff by encouraging them to visit the station

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whenever there is a need to do so. This forms a bond between stations, volunteers, and Calhoun County RSVP. This increases the interest and development of the RSVP agencies and attracts new volunteers

Volunteer Training

New volunteers will receive an orientation about the RSVP on national and local level and an overview of the Senior Corp program serving under the umbrella of the Corporation for National Service. An RSVP volunteer handbook of Policies and Procedures will be provided to each volunteer as well as a job description. Where applicable, volunteer will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. Training will provided one on one or in group settings and by volunteer stations coordinators. . The volunteer job descriptions, instructions, and orientations are provided to build new skills toward increasing agencies activities. Our volunteers are happy to be able to represent themselves by expressing in words what they do to contribute;. Training might include how to use the agency telephone system, copier and other machines in that agency. Technical assistance is provided by several RSVP volunteers who teach computer classes at the library. Some agencies provide an information packet concerning their agency procedures and policies. Assistance may include guidance by email, by phone, by fax or in person or any combination thereof. RSVP provides training, organizational support and technical expertise which allows out volunteers to harness the skill and enthusiasm of their volunteer assignment. Skilled volunteers serve as force multipliers and as community ambassadors both of which are vital in helping the agency. When CNCS or the State Association offers training to the project directors, the information is brought back and shared with the staff members. In this way everyone is more actively involved in the services that our program is responsible for doing, while giving the staff a better understanding for the need of volunteer and station development in the RSVP Program.

Volunteer Recognitions

Our goal is to promote positive reinforcement to our volunteers and their work; it is our goal to constantly strive to display our appreciation. Recognizing our RSVP community volunteers for their services is a motivation al tool to help maintain high quality volunteers. We recognize their birthdays, illnesses, surgeries, or the loss of a loved one by sending a card. RSVP also has news articles in the local newspapers concerning our volunteers and all program sponsored functions.

Advisory Council hosts an annual volunteer luncheon to honor our volunteer and recognize the oldest, the ones that have serve the longest and our newest members. Each year RSVP nominates a volunteer for the Volunteer of the Year. These efforts include obtaining other nonprofit community

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partners that are willing to provide needed services to the community, and also to recruit volunteers to assist in building stations which helps with the development of the volunteer program.

Strategies for Leadership:

There may always be volunteers willing to serve in leadership roles, but the challenge today is to recruit the best and the brightest that will ensure a strong future for RSVP.

The top ten strategies identified are:

1. Understand and meet people's needs
2. Be a matchmaker
3. Set people up for success
4. See volunteers as customers
5. Designate a volunteer resource professional
6. Maintain a positive organizational climate
7. Welcome diversity
8. Be flexible
9. Don't burn people out
10. Recognize contributions

The volunteer leaders of the future will have different characteristics, roles, and expectations. They'll be recruited for their talents, experience, and business focus on specific tasks. These new leaders will expect and be expected to accomplish specific goals and objectives with fewer, shorter, and more highly concentrated meetings.

Program Management

The Calhoun County RSVP staff will work collectively to ensure that all volunteer stations are in compliance with Federal laws and regulations. The Program director will be responsible for the day to day operations of the total program. However, the implementation and daily management of all volunteer assignments and volunteer stations will be the responsibility of each volunteer station coordinator. Coordinators will survey quarterly their volunteer stations for quality to assure program success. Program director or staff volunteer coordinator will visit volunteer stations annually to monitor for volunteer compliance.

Process for Assessment:

Data collection tools will be developed by Program Director, implemented by the Volunteer coordinators and compiled by the staff volunteer coordinator. The data collection process will be generated through surveys, observations, client participation, pre and post test and self assessments.

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The outcome of our data collection will be shared with volunteers, volunteer stations, advisory council, and financial contributors. and potential financial contributors.

The goal for RSVP is to develop outcome information that can be used by the program director and staff to improve services on a continuing basis. When managers make decisions based on outcomes, the result is more effective programs with increased benefits to clients and the community year after year.

The major impetus for the collection of outcome information to our agency is probably funder requirements. However, regularly collected outcome information has many other vital uses, including the following:

1. Identify where improvements are needed--for which client groups, which offices, and which staff. This is likely to be the single most important use for RSVP.
2. Determine how effectively program modifications improved services. This will help identify whether further changes are needed.
3. Motivate staff to continually strive for service improvements.
4. Identify agencies and staff that have performed well and deserve recognition.
5. Encourage innovation.
6. Improve fundraising and community relations by including outcome information in communications.

Program Improvement and Evaluation :

Probably the ultimate use of outcome management is program improvement. The data provides the starting point for identifying problems, such as the information broken out by key client and service characteristics. The analysis can identify which particular client groups, which particular offices, or which particular caseworkers or clinicians are doing well, or not well. This starts off the dialogue about where problems exist, or about major accomplishments achieved. The search for explanations will provide information as to why the problems occurred. And "How Are We Doing?" sessions will help identify causes and action plans.

A plan to improve outcomes based on analysis of the data might include who is responsible for each component of the improvement plan list of actions for those responsible deadlines for the completion of the actions list of expected results Subsequent outcome reports should be used to assess the extent to which the improvements have led to the expected results. This will help determine whether further actions are needed.

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Motivating Employees:

Most nonprofit personnel are clearly dedicated to helping their clients and communities.

Outcome management, however, can encourage nonprofit staff (and volunteers) to maintain an explicit, continuous focus on results (outcomes) and program improvement. Outcome measurement is intended to provide an independent and objective assessment of the extent to which clients have been helped and to identify problem areas. To encourage staff to pursue continuous learning and continuous improvement efforts, the following actions might be considered.

Provide recognition awards to individual and/or groups whose outcomes have met or exceeded targets and/or have significantly improved.

Disseminate each outcome report to all interested employees, and post it in each office, if appropriate. Values that represent greater-than-expected, as well as worse-than-expected, outcomes.

Hold "How Are We Doing?" sessions with managers and staff using the latest outcome report as a basis for discussion. The group should be asked why certain functions have been going well and what is needed to extend successful strategies to underperforming areas. For problem areas, the group should attempt to identify why outcomes are not as expected and suggest ways to improve the situation. In subsequent "How Are We Doing?" sessions, the group should assess whether the actions previously taken have led to the expected improvements. This process--used constructively, rather than as a finger-pointing opportunity-- can be one of the best ways to motivate personnel. Such sessions held regularly after the release of each outcome report will also show management's commitment to outcome management and continuous improvement. Encouraging Innovation

Having outcome information available on a regular basis can also encourage managers and their staff to identify and try innovative approaches to service delivery. For example, a program might test different lengths, and numbers, of sessions with clients, or use different ways to present information to clients, and use the outcome measurement process and resulting data to compare the old and new service delivery procedures. This would provide strong evidence on the merits of the innovation, compared to the previous procedure. For example, if program staff want to try different ways of presenting information to clients, clients coming into the program could be assigned on an alternating basis to the different presentation approaches. After sufficient time to measure results has gone by, staff could then compare the outcomes for each of the two groups. This type of experiment would only require a minor modification (to identify which clients received which service approach) to the ongoing outcome measurement process. Subsequent outcome tabulations would identify the outcomes for each group. While not yet widely implemented, this use of outcome information appears

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to have considerable promise.

Improving Fundraising and Communicating with the Public:

Outcome information can also be used in proposals and other materials seeking funding. It is assumed that organizations that can document the beneficial outcomes of programs to clients and the community are more likely to receive support. Such information can also encourage potential clients to use the services of the nonprofit.

Reassignment of volunteers:

To meet the changing community needs and minimize disruption to current volunteer stations, bi annually meeting will be held with designated station managers to discuss program changes and solicit their input to meet program needs. Coordinators will work with volunteers toward developing an interest with National performance programs for possible volunteer reassignments.

Project Resources:

The management project resources, both financial and in-kind, to assure accountability and is vital to daily operations. Required in-house procedures are followed as instructed and reports are submitted in a timely manner to federal, state, and local sponsors. The City of Jacksonville, sponsor of the Calhoun County RSVP has the responsibility of all financial records for the program. A certified public accountant is under contract with our program since 1972 and will continue under contract through our sponsor. The CPA provides financial management of our program by processing financial statements, tax returns and preparation of the 990. The Program Director will meet monthly with the city finance manager to review program performance, monthly expenditures, in-kind contributions and any other financial reports.

The records of RSVP are kept in the RSVP office and balanced on a monthly basis with the city. All volunteer records, applications, time sheets, job descriptions and memorandums of understanding and posting of volunteer time are kept in the RSVP office.

To secure financial resources to maintain and expand our program, grants from independent sources (Honda, Dollar General, etc), as well as fundraising opportunities are continually sought, In-kind services are provided to our program from various sources. The hospital provides one free meal to their volunteers. During the tax season the stations where our sites are located provides the office space.

National Performance Measures and Outputs:

The Advisory Council, Program Director, staff will work together in developing a comprehensive toolkit guide to measure outcomes and inputs for implementation to be used in the primary focus area

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project. Volunteer coordinator, volunteer stations, and program director will work collectively to distribute and collect the output and outcome data for compilation in Volunteer Report.

The program will be managed to address community needs. The project director is continually attending meetings of local service agencies to evaluate the requests of the community needs and to assure the needs are being met, as well as, emphasizing the importance of all the needs. The importance of the director in knowing about the volunteer activities is beneficial to the community, as well as, to the program management.

In Calhoun County the percentage (14.3%) of senior citizens 65 and over are in need of hot nutritious meals, medical assistance, and companionship. These conditions have led the community to become aware of the need of accessible services oriented to the community needs. It has created more non-profit agencies that provide the types of services for our community. Agencies such as; Meals on Wheels, American Red Cross, Tax Program, United Way, to name a few. Calhoun County RSVP has partnered with these agencies and others like them. At the American Red Cross our volunteers help with blood services, disaster relief, and general office work. Drivers are provided for meals on wheels. Volunteers assist at United Way in preparing pamphlets for the United Way annual campaign project. Free tax preparation is provided by the Tax Program.

The key staff members are assigned to manage activities and volunteer recruiting. To make sure that the volunteers are meeting the standards required, agency supervisors are encouraged to notify RSVP of any problems or needs. RSVP staff members often remind the volunteers of the role they play in senior service.

The volunteer time sheets will be maintained and prepared at the station by the station supervisors, after which they will be submitted on a monthly basis to the RSVP office. Our volunteer coordinator will check the timesheets and record the hours served using the Volunteer Reporter software.

The management of data collection demonstrates both the accomplishments and impact of the project.

Volunteer station supervisors will be asked to develop the volunteer assignments to address that particular station's community needs. Calhoun County RSVP will also use random surveys to determine the impact that the stations have on certain community needs. The tax program and Meals on Wheels are two of the main stations that benefits from these surveys.

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National Performance Measures and Outputs:

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Organizational Capability

Calhoun County RSVP organizational capability is adequately and successfully conducted with the help of a full time staff and approximately 300 volunteers.

The number of volunteers wavers as new volunteers are enrolling, and older volunteers are being inactivated due to moving, health issues, or death. This program will continue to expand volunteer opportunities for those persons 55 and older in Calhoun County.

Calhoun County RSVP has 3 full-time staff members. These staff members are dedicated to the volunteer program, recruitment and retaining the volunteers, their policies, and procedures that are implemented by the local sponsor and Corporation.

The financial management of RSVP is provided by the City of Jacksonville. All federal, state, and local reports are prepared and submitted by the RSVP office staff. Annual audits are conducted by a CPA firm with no findings of any errors or wrong doing.

Key staff positions are: Project Director, Bookkeeper/Grants Coordinator, and Volunteer Coordinator. The staff works as a team for effective program management. The day to day management of the program will be provided by the Program Director who has thirteen (13) years with RSVP including eleven (11) as director. The director has over 30 years experience in financial management, a BS degree in Law Enforcement-Sociology as well as 24 hours of college credit in accounting. She is also involved in several civic organizations: Calhoun EMA, CERT, Calhoun Critical Stress Management Team, Girl Scouts, Leadership Calhoun County with the Chamber of Commerce, Exchange Club, etc. The Bookkeeper/Grants Coordinator has 8 years experience with RSVP. Before that, she held the position of secretary for an insurance agency. The Volunteer Coordinator has 10 years experience with RSVP with more than 15 years working with volunteers and young adults. She is very active in her church.

There are no problems to report concerning the success of managing our volunteer program. The number of volunteers and stations has been stable throughout the last 40 years.

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The staff of Calhoun County RSVP strives to improve the program, community needs, and any other areas that can be improved.

For self assessments, monthly reports and quarterly time reports are completed in a timely manner.

The Calhoun County RSVP advisory council meets on a monthly basis to discuss finances, fundraising ideas, and any other business that will benefit the program, volunteers, and stations.

Senior Service:

The director and coordinators have a combined total of thirty-one (31) years experience working with senior adults in providing meaningful volunteer opportunities for volunteers to share their skills and knowledge while participating in service learning projects. Today's volunteers desire to spend their time in meaningful well-developed and organized volunteer programs that enrich their lives as well as those they serve. The program director has served 2 terms as President of the AL Association of R.S.V.P. Program Directors, FGP Directors and SCP Directors, served two terms as treasurer and vice president of AARSVP. In addition, on a state level she has a good working relationship with the AL Department of Senior Services and East AL Agency on Aging in Calhoun County.

Managing Volunteers and Measuring Performances:

The program director has 13 years experience recruiting and managing volunteers with a background in managing over 5,000 volunteers during a disaster.

A strong organizational infrastructure of facilities, equipment, and supplies:

Office spaces, including electricity, water, and garbage disposal services, will be provided as an in-kind service. Equipment: All equipment is provided as an in-kind service. Supplies: Adequate and customary supplies will be provided to each employee. Purchases must be requested in writing, approved by the program director for purchase, a purchase order number is assigned for payment for supplies.

Governance Structure and Operations:

The City of Jacksonville and the Advisory Council will govern the program by providing program and fiscal oversight. The Mayor's office will supervise the Director, the Director will supervise the RSVP staff and the day to day program operations. The Advisory Council will assist with recruitment and aiding the coordinators in managing volunteer stations. An Internal Policies guidance handbook has been made available by the city attorney and financial director. The Internal Policy guidance covers every aspect needed to operate the nonprofit organization effectively. The director has continuing education from Jacksonville State University in volunteer management.

Role of Advisory Council:

Narratives

The Advisory Council will provide program recommendations for the board and program director, survey the community to provide input, provide committees to develop program goals, assist with recruiting volunteers and volunteer stations, develop and implement fund raising activities and seek grant opportunities.

Management System:

The director has 13 years in managing state and local grants and 16 years in managing federal grant funds. Strict financial policies and procedures are implemented to ensure that all Federal and non-Federal grant funds are managed to the highest level possible. The sponsor has a certified CPA on contract to review all federal and non-federal funds.

Other

Engaging Students in their Communities:

RSVP in our community recognizes the need to engage students in volunteers activities. When a student of any age requests an opportunity to volunteer, we find them the opportunity or contact the agency that can assist them. RSVP in Calhoun County regularly has college students that volunteer in our office. These volunteers usually volunteer for 15 hours per month. The college student helps with volunteer recognition, cataloging the items at the Dr. Francis Medical Museum and helping at the old train depot at some of the activities.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

Not applicable