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Executive Summary

An estimated 500 RSVP volunteers will serve. The volunteers will serve in one of four key initiatives: Tutoring, Senior Ambassador, Telephone Reassurance or Veterans. The primary focus area of this project is Education. At the end of the three-year grant cycle, 50% of the 3,000 students who received tutoring will show grade appropriate growth in reading skills, as opposed to the current 15% rate among these targeted students. In addition, 70% of these 3,000 students will demonstrate increased academic engagement as measured by their teacher. The CNCS federal investment of \$145,887 will be supplemented by \$159,688 dollars of local, non-federal financial support.

RSVP in Milwaukee County will be sponsored by Interfaith Older Adult Programs Inc. Interfaith's mission is "Linking Older Adults With a Caring Community." This mission is achieved through providing services and opportunities to older adults in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. One of these opportunities is the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, or RSVP.

The key priority area of RSVP in Milwaukee is the priority of Education. According to 2011-12 academic proficiency tests, only 15% of Milwaukee Public School third graders are at grade level proficiency for literacy. Lacking this key academic skill, these students will continue to struggle in school, increasing their likelihood of dropping out from school, and decreasing their opportunities for success in life. Milwaukee RSVP has made it a priority to address this need by launching and growing a tutor program to include over 70 schools and 250 volunteer tutors in 2013.

RSVP of Milwaukee County has a Veterans Program with the goal of providing 75 volunteers to local veteran service organizations. In addition, RSVP of Milwaukee County also maintains 2 initiatives in the CNCS priority area of Healthy Futures that combined engage 75 volunteers annually. The first is the Senior Ambassador program. The second is the Telephone Reassurance program. Telephone Reassurance is a free service for adults, age 60 and over.

Strengthening Communities

Q1. Milwaukee RSVP serves all of Milwaukee County. The County is located in the southeast corner of the State of Wisconsin. Milwaukee County is also home to the largest urban population in the state. Milwaukee RSVP's office is centrally located within the City of Milwaukee. Milwaukee RSVP also serves the 18 suburban communities within the County.

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Choosing Education as the primary focus for Milwaukee RSVP was a clear choice. The City of Milwaukee is home of the state's largest school district, the Milwaukee Public Schools District (MPS). Of the 80,098 students in the district, 82% receive free or reduced lunches due to their family living in poverty, which is a reflection of Milwaukee being the 4th poorest city in the nation. As part of Senior Corps' effort to focus on economically disadvantaged students, Milwaukee RSVP has chosen to work exclusively with MPS and none of the surrounding, higher socio-economic school districts. Coupled with the challenge of being economically disadvantaged, many students are falling far behind in core competencies as early as the 3rd grade.

In 2010, the Annie E. Casey Foundation published *Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*, a report that demonstrated the clear link between reading proficiency in the third grade and children who succeed academically and do well in life and career. Follow up reports in April 2011 and June 2013 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation confirmed that students who fail to attain reading proficiency by third grade are more likely to struggle in the later grades and drop out before earning a high school diploma.

This reality is painfully clear in the Milwaukee Public Schools District (MPS). In 2012 the high school graduation rate was just 64% in MPS. When you trace this student cohort back to 3rd grade, the 2002-03 school year, according to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Data, only 56% of these MPS students in their third grade tested as proficient or advanced in reading. Regardless of performance, at the end of each year, 97% of the students advanced to the next grade level. In the 2011-12, the State of Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction aligned state standardized testing with national standards for the first time. The results were eye-opening. Milwaukee Public Schools District scores for 3rd graders in the 2011-12 school year show only 14% were proficient or advanced in reading, and again 98% were advanced to the next grade. Following the research of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, these test scores foreshadow a dire future for the youth of the City of Milwaukee.

As this pressing need was escalating, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) was forced to cutback on volunteer engagement in the district. In 2008, MPS ended their district-wide volunteer tutor program due to funding constraints. Seeing Milwaukee RSVP's success in volunteer management, MPS requested Milwaukee RSVP assume leadership and management of the tutor program.

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Because of the numerous factors listed above, Milwaukee RSVP has chosen education as its primary focus area. In 2010, after securing funding and updating the program design, Milwaukee RSVP re-launched the volunteer tutor program for MPS at select schools. Milwaukee RSVP now is working to take the volunteer tutor program district-wide and play a key role in improving education and student achievement in the City of Milwaukee. Currently, Milwaukee RSVP and MPS collaboratively recruit, train and support volunteers who will focus on improving the academic performance (ED5) and engagement (ED27) of MPS students.

Q2. To achieve the goal of improving academic performance (ED5) and improving academic engagement (ED27), Milwaukee RSVP supports underachieving and economically disadvantaged students of Milwaukee Public Schools by providing them with direct academic support from well trained RSVP volunteer tutors in a structured classroom environment who have access to highly qualified teachers and volunteer managers to support them.

The first step in providing this service activity is to ensure each volunteer is properly prepared to work in the classroom setting with students. Prior to being assigned a classroom, each RSVP volunteer receives 4 hours of training in best practices as tutors, effective communication, understanding the urban school setting and the district's Comprehensive Literacy Plan. Only after attending training and being properly screened, volunteers are placed in the classroom to work alongside the teacher during the 90-minute literacy block. RSVP volunteer tutors then have the opportunity to attend in-service trainings held by Milwaukee RSVP throughout the year to further improve their skills, in addition to the monthly support calls and classroom visits from Milwaukee RSVP staff.

Once trained, the service activities of the RSVP volunteers in the primary focus area are directly tutoring children in reading or math. Volunteer Tutors work with MPS students either one-on-one or in small groups at least once per week for 90 minutes. Volunteers sign a commitment pledge to serve a minimum of one academic year. The MPS students are selected by the teachers as being behind in either subject according to their most recent test scores.

Rather than develop our own tutor curriculum or introduce an outside curriculum, Milwaukee RSVP looks to support the students within the curriculum they are both taught and tested. In MPS, the

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curriculum is the Comprehensive Literacy Plan (CLP). The structure of the CLP is based on three main elements: The lesson begins with whole group instruction designed to introduce grade-level skills and concepts; next, students break into small group instruction during which time they work at literacy stations that are designed to meet their specific needs; and finally, all students reconnect with whole group instruction to conclude the reading or writing portion of the literacy block. This three-element design is based on best practice in instructional design.

Due to this distinct structure, RSVP Tutors work with students both on an individual and small group level. We recognize that small group instruction is not the traditional one-on-one design structure, but following this model allows our tutors to better support the needs of the students within their current learning environment. Choosing this structure has three benefits: 1) flexibility for teachers to assign and reassign students to RSVP Tutors based on real time MAP scores 2) it is the preferred model of the teachers in MPS using tutors because it follows MPS classroom structure and curriculum 3) it increases the students' time on task in the curriculum activities.

Due to this targeted, well designed, and well supported service activity, Milwaukee RSVP is already seeing an improvement in both the academic performance (ED5) and academic engagement (ED27). As an illustration, in the 2013-2014 Request for Volunteer Survey, a teacher who has participated in our program for 3 years wrote in regards to her volunteer, "Ms. G has worked with me for the last 3 years. She is truly a gift. I want a volunteer to be placed in my classroom again next year because I need someone who can continue to work with a small group of students who need one-on-one attention." This success is a clear example of the strength of the RSVP model in being flexible enough to meet MPS's specific needs, while being acutely focused on quality impact based programming that is recognized by the school community as a helpful solution for struggling students.

Q3. Measuring the degree to which the service activities in Milwaukee RSVP's Tutor Program lead to National Performance Measure outcomes in ED5 and ED27 is accomplished requires close collaboration with Milwaukee Public Schools and their Data Management office. In 2011, Milwaukee RSVP and MPS Data Management office implemented a data-driven evaluation process that provides aggregated student test scores to chart improvement among the students as well as the effectiveness of the individual tutors.

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The test scores used are from the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests, which are a series of computer based, state-aligned, adaptive assessment tests that identify a child's current level of academic achievement and also measures their progress in school. Each school year students in MPS take these MAP tests three times: once in the fall, once in winter, and once in spring. MAP tests are adaptive meaning the computer program automatically adjusts the difficulty of the questions so that each student takes a unique test to ensure the most accurate rating of student reading proficiency. At the end of each year, MPS provides the aggregated data of MAP test scores for all students who receive academic support from Milwaukee RSVP volunteer tutors.

This aggregated data shows how each student progressed in his or her reading. Since the MAP tests align with national standards, we are able to compare the progression of students tutored by Milwaukee RSVP volunteers to the national average for student progression for each grade. As the students who are receiving tutoring are already significantly behind in reading, Milwaukee RSVP expects to see higher than both the MPS average and the national average in progression rates reported from the MAP test scores. This will demonstrate that the tutored students are at least moving closer to grade-level proficiency in reading, and hopefully attaining it.

Due to this, we expect students tutored in the Milwaukee RSVP Program to gain at least the national yearly growth that is typical for each grade to be counted for academic improvement. This national average for progression is quantified into what is called a RIT score. The RIT score is the number of points by which a student improves each year in their MAP test. Each grade has a national average for improvement. For example, the 2012 RIT score average gains were the following: a gain of 13 points in measured reading proficiency for 1st grade, 11 points for 2nd grade, 8 points for 3rd grade, 6 points for 4th grade, and 4 points for 5th grade from Fall to Spring.

As a result, to measure academic improvement (ED5), Milwaukee RSVP will compile the test scores received from MPS each Spring and report the percentage of tutored students who achieved or exceeded the national average for reading proficiency progression.

To measure the improved academic engagement (ED27) of tutored students, Milwaukee RSVP conducts an annual survey of all teachers who partnered with an RSVP volunteer during the school year. This survey is conducted through Google Forms, which allows the distribution of the survey via

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email, and the completion of the survey online by the teachers. This allows Milwaukee RSVP staff to oversee the survey completion, see results in real time, and provide a list of incomplete surveys for follow up.

This end-of-year teacher survey asks multiple questions ranging from change in student attendance, change in interest in learning, change in behavior, perceived improvement in academic performance, and then the number of tutored students who demonstrated overall improved academic engagement. Milwaukee RSVP compiles the number of students who are reported by their teacher to have improved academic engagement due to being tutored by a Milwaukee RSVP volunteer tutor. It is this number that is reported for the ED27 performance measurement.

Q4. During Milwaukee RSVP's process to create a 2012-14 Strategic Plan, both the CNCS priority of serving veterans, as well as the unmet needs of local veterans were identified. As a result, one of the key action steps of the 2012-14 Milwaukee RSVP Strategic Plan was to identify several high quality volunteer placements that serve veterans, and secure resources to provide quality support services to these organizations.

In June 2012, Milwaukee RSVP competed for the national RSVP grant augmentation for additional funding to serve veterans. Milwaukee RSVP was successful in securing \$30,000 to support the recruitment and management of 75 volunteers serving veterans at local partner organizations. Following this award, Milwaukee RSVP then signed MOU's with six organizations: Dryhooch, the Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative (MHVI), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the Milwaukee VA Medical Center (VA), Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Services (MHVS) and the Center for Veterans Issues (CVI). From these partnerships, we have created direct service job descriptions for each partner in order to offer a variety of volunteer opportunities for RSVP Members to choose from to serve Veterans. Volunteer roles include opportunities such as providing peer mentoring, transporting veterans to appointments, conducting home visits, delivering food to homebound veterans, serving as a family liaison in the VA Hospital and many other direct service roles.

Q6. In addition to the Primary Focus Area of Education and the Veterans Program, Milwaukee RSVP maintains two additional work plans: The Senior Ambassador Program and The Telephone Reassurance Program. Both of these work plans are in the Healthy Futures focus area. The Senior

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Ambassador program will address Access to Care (H2) and will have 25 volunteers. The Telephone Reassurance Program will address Aging in Place (H8) and will report on increased social support (H9) and will have 50 volunteers.

Recruitment and Development

Milwaukee RSVP has developed a series of best practices for volunteer management that we adhere to for the design, implementation, and continuous improvement of each of our key volunteer initiatives outlined in the work plans. The goal is to provide a high quality experience for each volunteer from recruitment, then enrollment, through ongoing service and into eventual "retirement" from volunteering.

Q8. Throughout all of Milwaukee RSVP's volunteer initiatives and programs, we keep a strong focus on properly designing each opportunity for RSVP volunteers. The first step is to provide meaningful opportunities to address pressing community needs, particularly in the areas of education, veterans and older adults. This is done by designing volunteer assignments where Milwaukee RSVP volunteers are providing services that directly impact the identified need. In education, it is tutoring. In both veterans and older adults activity areas, it is providing direct service to clients.

But our design goes beyond this, as Milwaukee RSVP is deliberate in providing avenues for RSVP volunteers to share their unique talents, skills and experience. For example, in the RSVP tutor program, volunteers with a background in education have the opportunity to serve in leadership roles such as Lead Tutors. Lead Tutors serve within a school where they coach fellow tutors and share their knowledge through leading volunteer trainings and in-services. In the Senior Ambassador program, volunteers with a background in the Aging or Social Service fields have the ability to mentor new Ambassadors through providing shadowing opportunities and ongoing support. Then of course, there is the opportunity to serve on one of our Advisory councils, whether it is the main Milwaukee RSVP Advisory Council or the sub-council set up for the primary focus area of education the Tutor Program Advisory Council.

During the strategic planning process which occurs every three years the Milwaukee RSVP Advisory Council reviews current research, identifies areas of improvement, and recommends adjustments to program offerings to ensure Milwaukee RSVP maintains relevant, meaningful opportunities for new and current volunteers.

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Q9. Having a variety and depth of volunteer opportunities is only the first step towards quality program design. The next step is to ensure each RSVP volunteer is properly trained and prepared to serve in the opportunity of their choosing. To accomplish this, Milwaukee RSVP provides initial training, regular ongoing trainings, and annual in-services for volunteers to develop their own skills and grow.

To ensure continuity among all RSVP volunteers, Milwaukee RSVP requires each RSVP volunteer to attend an initial orientation. During the orientation, which is face-to-face or over the phone, Milwaukee RSVP staff discuss with each potential volunteer the nature and purpose of RSVP, the opportunities available to them, the expectations of their volunteer service, and the support they can expect to receive from Milwaukee RSVP staff. Once a potential volunteer is properly screened and the volunteer has identified his or her placement, the new RSVP volunteer is then scheduled for a training specific to their placement.

For the Milwaukee RSVP Tutor Program, volunteers attend a 4 hour introductory training. The training content was created in a joint effort by Milwaukee RSVP and Milwaukee Public Schools staff, and is annually reviewed for relevancy and effectiveness. After the initial training, RSVP volunteer tutors have the opportunity to attend monthly education workshops led by our Tutor Program staff who has a Master's Degree in Educational Policy and Foundations. Such opportunities have made the tutors feel supported, united and well-informed. Tutors who attend the workshops have a greater understanding of effective ways to work with students, best practices in literacy instruction and receive applicable tips and training that they can apply to a variety of situations in the classroom making them more effective tutors. Of the tutors who have attended a workshop, 98% are highly satisfied with the additional training.

For volunteer placements at our veterans partner volunteer stations, Milwaukee RSVP assesses and ensures the stations provide thorough training and orientation for each Milwaukee RSVP volunteer, and when needed, Milwaukee RSVP provides supplemental training for these volunteers to ensure they are equipped with all the necessary tools to succeed in their roles.

RSVP volunteers in the Senior Ambassador program undergo 6 hours of initial training that is

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conducted jointly by Milwaukee RSVP and Milwaukee County Department on Aging staff. After the initial training, Senior Ambassadors meet monthly to hear from local service providers on new or existing resources available to older adults. To accommodate the volunteers in the Telephone Reassurance program, many of whom are homebound, Milwaukee RSVP staff conduct over the phone orientations and provide ongoing support through regular phone calls.

Q10. With the plan and infrastructure in place to provide both quality placements and quality training to all Milwaukee RSVP volunteers, Milwaukee RSVP then turns to the recruitment of volunteers from among the Milwaukee community.

The Milwaukee community is diverse. According to 2012 Milwaukee County Department on Aging Demographic Report, the total population of Milwaukee County residents ages 60+ is 158,982, and the racial diversity of Milwaukee County residents over age 60 is: 81% White, 16% African American, 4% Hispanic, and 1% Other. In addition, the US Census Bureau estimates there are 55,726 veterans and 127,930 individuals with disabilities in the County. To recruit a volunteer pool reflective of this community, Milwaukee RSVP implements a deliberate and widespread marketing and volunteer recruitment effort.

The first step to this effort is to provide clear messaging as to the mission and opportunities of Milwaukee RSVP. Milwaukee RSVP staff work closely with the sponsor's Public Relations Director to create consistent messaging across the website, print materials and presentations. From this foundation Milwaukee RSVP actively recruits new members from the community. This is done through three main approaches. The first is web based recruitment. This begins with the sponsor's website including a Milwaukee RSVP page with program information. In addition, Milwaukee RSVP also posts opportunities through VolunteerMatch.org and the Volunteer Center of Greater Milwaukee. Finally, Milwaukee RSVP has also posted information on Facebook, Twitter, and Milwaukee's local non-profit social media platform, MKE123.org.

From the foundation of web based recruitment, Milwaukee RSVP builds recruitment partnerships throughout the community that will provide ongoing referrals for membership. Examples of these include local Senior Centers, Senior Dining Sites, local community groups, congregations, businesses, unions and universities' life-long learning programs. Milwaukee RSVP's sponsor, Interfaith Older

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Adult Programs Inc., has been essential in building these partnerships. Currently Interfaith enjoys the partnerships of 180 local congregations and over 200 community organizations and local businesses. In addition, Interfaith manages 5 Senior Centers, giving Milwaukee RSVP access to over 6,000 participants annually.

Of these partnerships, the most successful example of this effort is Milwaukee RSVP's partnership with Milwaukee's Recreation Department. Milwaukee Recreation prints a quarterly activity guide and mails it to over 200,000 households in the City of Milwaukee. As a part of our signed MOU with Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Recreation highlights the RSVP-MPS Tutor Program. We are provided a free quarter page ad in the older adults section of each edition. This effort now accounts for over 75% of new volunteer tutors for the program.

Web and partnership based recruitment account for the vast majority of Milwaukee RSVP's recruitment efforts. The remaining direct efforts fall into the category of general marketing. This includes posting fliers, writing articles for local periodicals, holding informational sessions, attending resource fairs, and conducting presentations. These recruitment strategies are focused on raising awareness of Milwaukee RSVP more than recruiting specific individuals.

Finally, Milwaukee RSVP recognizes the most powerful recruitment tool available is the membership of Milwaukee RSVP. As a result, Milwaukee RSVP volunteers are also active and engaged in Milwaukee RSVP's recruitment efforts. The most common form of this is in building partnerships with local groups of older adults. In the last three years, Milwaukee RSVP members have bridged the program with groups such as the local teacher's union, administration union, senior housing, and various fraternal organizations. For four of Milwaukee RSVP's work plans, RSVP members have significantly contributed to volunteer recruitment: Telephone Reassurance, Senior Dining Sites, Senior Ambassador, and the RSVP-MPS Tutor Program.

Throughout all of these recruitment strategies, Milwaukee RSVP focuses on bringing together to a volunteer pool that is reflective of the community it serves. However, achieving this diversity does require targeted strategies beyond the general recruitment efforts. The first such strategy is by providing volunteer stations and locations that are convenient for all demographics. For example, in 2009 a review of volunteer stations revealed the majority of stations were outside of parts of the city

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where the highest concentration of African Americans or Hispanics lived. It was no surprise that the combined engagement of these two groups in the program was less than 10%. As a result, Milwaukee RSVP identified new stations in these communities, particularly schools for the tutor program, and by 2012 the percent of volunteers who were either Hispanic or African American was above 20%. This is now representative of the demographics of older adults in Milwaukee County.

The second strategy was to target partnerships on other under represented groups. To reach the large Spanish speaking population, Milwaukee RSVP hired a bi-lingual staff who can reach out to develop partnerships for the tutor program. To encourage LGBT involvement in the program, Milwaukee RSVP networked with the Milwaukee County Department on Aging and has conducted recruitment through a non-profit that serves LGBT older adults. For veterans, this has taken on the form of Milwaukee RSVP developing partnerships and conducting speaking engagements at local American Legion, VFW posts, and other veteran serving organizations. These are just a few examples of Milwaukee RSVP's deliberate approach to inclusion of all demographics in our recruitment efforts.

The third strategy to ensuring diversity is to maintain a variety of volunteer placements that allow individuals with all levels of ability to participate. This ranges from in-home, phone based opportunities to active in-school or community-based opportunities. Building on this continuum, Milwaukee RSVP also maintains relationships with organizations who serve individuals with disabilities, such as IndependenceFirst in Milwaukee County.

Q11. Once recruited, Milwaukee RSVP focuses on providing layers of support to each RSVP volunteer to ensure the highest rate of volunteer retention possible. The first layer for each of our volunteer placements is the Milwaukee RSVP staff member assigned to each volunteer. For example, our Tutor Program Coordinator and two School Support Coordinators and the RSVP Programs Coordinator provide monthly face-to-face or over-the-phone support to each volunteer tutor. The primary goal of this contact is to ensure RSVP volunteers are enjoying their placements as well as to identify potential roadblocks to future success. During these contacts, RSVP volunteers are also invited to upcoming trainings and in-services. Similar support contacts are provided to the volunteers in our other work plans as well. This direct, regular, and personal support of each Milwaukee RSVP volunteer is the key to high volunteer retention.

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Building on this, is Milwaukee RSVP's use of each volunteer's unique talents, skills, and experience. Often times, RSVP volunteers prepare and conduct in-service trainings for their fellow volunteers, participate in partnership development, and are given the opportunity to take a key role towards meeting our community's needs. These efforts foster a feeling of ownership for the program among our volunteers.

In addition to this, after each year of service, the Milwaukee RSVP volunteers complete the annual program evaluation survey. This survey is used to measure overall satisfaction and provide an avenue for Milwaukee RSVP volunteers to offer suggestions for program improvements.

Finally, to ensure high quality experience is to maintain regular communication with both volunteers and volunteer stations. Milwaukee RSVP provides monthly updates via mail and email newsletters and conducts regular meetings with volunteer stations to discuss the successes and challenges of involving senior service in their organization. The information from both the volunteers and stations are utilized by the Advisory Council in program improvement and development with a strict focus on maintaining high volunteer retention.

In addition to providing regular support focused on volunteer retention, Milwaukee RSVP facilitates annual recognition events for our volunteers. In 2013, Milwaukee RSVP held a recognition event at Washington Park Senior Center with over 250 volunteers in attendance. We had local stakeholders serve the meal to our volunteers to show their appreciation of the RSVP Volunteer's service to the Milwaukee community which included the Mayor of Milwaukee, the County Executive, the MPS Superintendent, and other key leaders in the community.

Supporting these activities and events, Milwaukee RSVP has our what has become our most popular form of recognition, which is our birthday cards, get well soon cards, or sympathy cards with handwritten greetings to each volunteer.

Program Management

While Milwaukee RSVP maintains an emphasis on program design, recruitment, and retention, the main focus of daily activities for Milwaukee RSVP staff is maintaining effective program management. This is essential not only to ensure compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, but also to provide a quality experience to each Milwaukee RSVP volunteer and make the greatest

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impact possible in our community.

Q12. One of the essential elements of achieving this is ensuring that each volunteer station is in compliance with RSVP program regulations. For the 85% of Milwaukee RSVP volunteers who serve in roles directly supervised by Milwaukee RSVP staff, this is very straightforward. The Milwaukee RSVP Director remains current on all regulations from CNCS regarding the program. The Director implements program design changes as needed and trains Milwaukee RSVP staff to ensure each member of the Milwaukee RSVP staff team understands the expectations and regulations around each placement. In the Milwaukee RSVP Tutor Program, it is the responsibility of the Tutor Program Coordinator to monitor volunteer placements and enforce regulations as needed. For the Senior Ambassador Program, it is the responsibility of the RSVP Program Coordinator and for the Telephone Reassurance Program, it is the responsibility of the Telephone Reassurance Coordinator.

For the Veterans work plan which places Milwaukee RSVP volunteers in stations with external supervision, Milwaukee RSVP's approach is two-fold. First, the Milwaukee RSVP Director meets with any potential volunteer station to explain the RSVP regulations, tour the volunteer locations, and assess the appropriateness of the placements. If the potential station meets RSVP regulations and is deemed appropriate for a current Milwaukee RSVP work plan, then an MOU is signed outlining the regulations and committing the station to maintaining compliance throughout the length of partnership. The second step to maintaining compliance is regular Milwaukee RSVP staff communication and visits. The Veterans Program Coordinator conducts visits to volunteer stations in the Veterans work plan.

Q13. In addition to ensuring compliance to all applicable regulations, Milwaukee RSVP also actively ensures volunteers are performing in their assigned service activities. While site visits are helpful in achieving this, Milwaukee RSVP has found that additional strategies are needed to identify and address issues as soon as possible to preserve the volunteer's engagement.

The primary tool Milwaukee RSVP utilizes for ensuring volunteers are performing their assigned activities is regular communication with both the station and volunteer. For the station, Milwaukee RSVP checks in periodically via email, phone, or in person to assess the station's satisfaction with the volunteers. Milwaukee RSVP staff then address any concerns that are raised. In addition, volunteer

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stations at times have given volunteers tasks outside their assigned activities. To ensure this doesn't happen, Milwaukee RSVP also maintains regular communication with volunteers. This is done through regular email, phone, or in-person support contacts. If the situation escalates, whether with the station or volunteer, the Milwaukee RSVP Director is available to assist in addressing any situations of improper volunteer activities.

The secondary tool Milwaukee RSVP relies on to ensure appropriate performance and placement of volunteers is the annual review of the program. This is done by administering an annual survey to all Milwaukee RSVP volunteers, compiling program metrics, and processing the findings with the Milwaukee RSVP Advisory Council. Each year the annual volunteer survey reveals additional information in regards to the quality of volunteer management in both internal and external placements. This information is utilized to ensure that not only are volunteers performing assigned activities, but are also meeting program expectations.

Q14. While the annual review process provides sufficient short-term oversight of program activities, Milwaukee RSVP also completes a Strategic Plan every three years. This process includes researching sector trends and changes, reviewing program data trends over multiple years, holding focus group meetings with volunteers, stations, and community stakeholders, as well as reviewing CNCS priorities and initiatives. The Milwaukee RSVP Advisory Council then meets to review the findings, assess the program, and chart the strategic path for the program for the next 3 years.

This process has repeatedly been successful in identifying long-term anticipated changes in demographic trends, volunteer interests, and CNCS priorities. With the anticipated changes being identified, Milwaukee RSVP was able to shift program resources to bolster key initiatives and start new programs, while minimizing the disruption to current volunteers.

For example, in 2010 Milwaukee RSVP identified CNCS's de-emphasis of non-impact programs and anticipated the future recommendation for the minimizing or even removal of volunteer stations who provided non-impact placements for volunteers. In response, Milwaukee RSVP began positioning ourselves to navigate this change. To start, we maintained the support for current active volunteers in non-impact placements. We then phased out volunteers who were still serving at the station but did not report hours and no longer demonstrated an affiliation with Milwaukee RSVP. Then Milwaukee

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RSVP began shifting staff time to recruitment efforts for impact placements in a proportional amount equal to the decrease in volunteers serving in the non-impact placements. Through this process, Milwaukee RSVP noticed over time normal volunteer attrition led to many non-impact stations no longer had Milwaukee RSVP volunteers serving at their location. When the station's MOU was set for renewal, the Milwaukee RSVP Director would meet with the volunteer station regarding the strategic shift in RSVP nationwide, and a mutual understanding was reached and the partnership was cordially and agreeably ended. Now that CNCS regulations have officially changed, and Milwaukee RSVP has aligned all placements to these new regulations. This same approach will be used to anticipate and navigate future changes in program regulations or community need.

Q15. All of these efforts stem from the core priority of Milwaukee RSVP and our sponsor to provide the highest quality program implementation and management possible. The fruits of this emphasis are most clearly seen in the successful track record of our Tutor Program, which encompasses our efforts in our primary focus area of Education.

In January 2010, with funding from the 2009 national RSVP augmentation grant award, Milwaukee RSVP launched our Tutor Program in the Milwaukee Public Schools District. The initial goal was to serve 16 schools through recruiting and placing 150 RSVP volunteers. In September 2010, Milwaukee RSVP met this goal and began planning for further expansion. During which, Milwaukee RSVP volunteers were building a track record of providing high quality service and facilitating real improvement in student academic achievement and engagement.

This track record was put on display when the Milwaukee Public Schools District (MPS) recently conducted a thorough examination of our Tutor Program. The examination was a part of a grant MPS secured from GE Healthcare to facilitate district-wide improvements. Part of this grant was to conduct Six Sigma process improvement projects for 5 key areas in the district. Milwaukee RSVP's Tutor Program was selected as a key area and underwent a detailed evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses. This included MPS staff holding meetings with administrators, teachers, volunteers and students to discuss all the aspects of the program.

The results were clear. The GE Healthcare grant administrator, upon reviewing the Six Sigma results, stated that Milwaukee RSVP has the best volunteer process and program among all the non-profit

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organizations currently working in MPS schools. The MPS School Board, Superintendent, and key Central Office administrators agreed. In addition, the review of student test scores demonstrated a clear quantitative improvement in student achievement in the classrooms served by a Milwaukee RSVP volunteer. So as a result of the Six Sigma project, MPS formally requested in the Summer of 2011 that Milwaukee RSVP's Tutor Program expand to all 113 elementary schools in the district and a program size of 350 volunteers.

In 2012, Milwaukee RSVP secured \$60,000 in additional funds to begin the program growth. This allowed Milwaukee RSVP to double the program size from the initial 150 volunteers to now 300 volunteers. Milwaukee RSVP and MPS continue to work together to identify ways to secure the remaining funds needed to scale the program to the district-wide level by 2017.

Q16. This track record for quality program management is laid on the foundation of a series of structures which Milwaukee RSVP has put in place to ensure compliance with all of the RSVP regulations.

The first piece of this foundation is the Milwaukee RSVP Advisory Council. To create the highest level of effectiveness for the council, Milwaukee RSVP has set the requirement for each work plan to be represented by one volunteer and one community member who is passionate and experienced in the work plan area. For example, the Advisory Council has a volunteer Lead Tutor as well as a retired MPS Principal to represent the Tutor Program. This is also true for the Veterans, Senior Ambassador, and Telephone Reassurance, work plans. To keep RSVP in the focus of the sponsor's Board of Directors, Milwaukee RSVP ensures one Advisory Council member is a representative from the sponsor's board of directors. This board representative is also selected for their ability to lead and facilitate conversations around fundraising strategies. Finally, Milwaukee RSVP maintains a minimum of two Advisory Council members who represent key organizations in the Milwaukee community. For 2013 these members represented the Volunteer Center of Greater Milwaukee and the Milwaukee County Department on Aging. In addition to these requirements, Milwaukee RSVP also encourages diversity among the council and maintains 20% representation of minorities and 10% representation of individuals with disabilities.

Building on our Council members' diverse experiences and backgrounds, the Milwaukee RSVP tasks

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the Advisory Council to provide guidance, feedback, and support to the program. This is primarily done through the drafting and review of the grant work plans and annual action plans for the program. These action plans include Milwaukee RSVP's Fund Development Plan, Marketing Plan, and Communication Plan. At the end of each program year, the Advisory Council reviews the program year-to-date data and progress and identifies key steps for improving program performance for the following year. Every three years, Milwaukee RSVP's Advisory Council conducts a strategic planning process to create a three-year Strategic Plan.

The second piece of Milwaukee RSVP's structure which ensures compliance with all RSVP regulations is the database utilized by Milwaukee RSVP. The ServTracker database tracks all demographic and volunteer service data for each volunteer in the program. The report functions are utilized to ensure compliance in regards to volunteer age requirements, volunteer activity, and to track in-active volunteers so that we can end their service in a timely manner. All Milwaukee RSVP staff are trained by the Milwaukee RSVP Director on how to use the database, and the importance of data integrity.

The third piece of the structure of Milwaukee RSVP which ensures compliance is the full-time Milwaukee RSVP Director. The fundamental role of this position is to track and oversee all program activities and records, conduct random audits of the records, and ensure compliance in all aspects of the program. This includes maintaining hard copies of all MOUs for the program, running regular database reports to identify any irregularities, and supervise program staff activities.

Through these three key structures, Milwaukee RSVP ensures the compliance with all RSVP regulations, which is the foundation of a successful effort to implement a high level of quality for our program's management.

Organizational Capability

Q17 & 18. To ensure compliance of all RSVP statutes, regulations, and applicable OMB circulars, as well as ensure effective organizational capacity, Milwaukee RSVP maintains a team of dedicated, professional, and experienced program staff. The Milwaukee RSVP program staff equate to 5.3 full-time equivalent positions (FTE). RSVP staff members have been selected for their knowledge of the community as well as specific skills they bring to make the program successful.

The RSVP Director is a full time (1.0 FTE) position. The Director is responsible for the compliance,

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long term planning, organization and success of Milwaukee RSVP. This is done through oversight of all operations and completion of any additional responsibilities as required. The position is also accountable for reporting to funding sources and partners. The Director serves as a secondary contact for all RSVP programs as needed. The position is responsible for the regular mass-communication to participants (both volunteer and client) through e-newsletter, newsletter and website. Finally, due to the excess funding that is dedicated to account for 23% of the Director's salary, the Director is allowed by RSVP regulations to spend up to 23% of her time building the capacity of Milwaukee RSVP through grant seeking, soliciting donations, and developing financial sponsors and partners. The current Director has extensive experience in both volunteer coordination and program development within the Milwaukee community. She holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree. She has also previously served as an AmeriCorps member. Her first role with Milwaukee RSVP was to start-up and oversee our very successful RSVP Tutor Program, after which she was promoted to the position of RSVP Director. Due to her experience, she also serves on various committees in the non-profit sector.

The RSVP Programs Coordinator is a full time (1.0 FTE) position, whose primary responsibility is to provide general support to all the RSVP programs as well as leadership and coordination to the Senior Ambassador work plan and additional support to the primary focus area. General support of Milwaukee RSVP is accomplished through maintaining mileage logs, tracking and documenting hours, enrolling new volunteers, planning volunteer recognition events and sending birthday cards as well as keeping a group of RSVP volunteers engaged in data entry and general office tasks. The current RSVP Programs Coordinator is a nonprofit professional with four years of experience coordinating program development, volunteer management, special events, and administrative duties.

The Tutor Program Coordinator is a full time (1.0 FTE) position. This position is responsible for the Milwaukee RSVP and MPS joint Tutor Program. Duties include the recruitment, screening, training, placement, supporting, and recognition of all volunteers placed in the Milwaukee Public Schools District. The Tutor Program Coordinator works with MPS and other partnering organizations to ensure that the talents and skills of older adults are maximized to increase the academic performance of MPS students. The current Tutor Program Coordinator has experience as a classroom teacher and administrator. She also lived in Honduras for a year where she directed a local school and developed its curriculum. As a result of this experience, she is fluent in Spanish and frequently uses this skill in the Tutor Program. She also has a Master's Degree in Educational Policy and Foundations.

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The School Support Coordinator is a part-time (0.5 FTE) position working 20 hours a week. This position's primary duty is to serve as a liaison between volunteers and school staff to facilitate those good working relationships. This position also conducts ongoing teacher training, school staff meetings, and after school placement meetings between cooperating teachers and tutors. These duties are completed during regular school visits, on average 3 per day for the academic school year. This position also supports the Tutor Program Coordinator in partnership development and recruitment efforts to advance the program. The current School Support Coordinator is a retired MPS principal. She comes with extensive knowledge of what works in a school setting for volunteer programs, and has great insight on how to effectively work with teachers and principals.

The Veterans Program Coordinator is part-time (0.8 FTE), 32 hours per week position. This position is responsible for the recruitment, screening, training, placement and retention of all volunteers serving in the Veterans work plan. This program launched in 2012 and this position is actively building a network of partnerships for both recruitment and placement to meet the goal of having RSVP volunteers serving in veterans serving placements. The current Veterans Program Coordinator has extensive knowledge in volunteer recruitment and management. Prior to coming to Milwaukee RSVP, she was integral in providing the marketing and volunteer recruitment for a local non-profit.

The Telephone Reassurance Coordinator is a part time (0.5 FTE), 20 hours per week position. This position's duties consist of connecting volunteers with clients, collecting and typing intake reports on clients and maintaining the ServTracker database for TR clients. A daily schedule of each client is maintained by this position. Each day at least 25% of time is spent on phone calls to clients or volunteers regarding issues that arise daily. The current Telephone Reassurance Coordinator's most valuable asset is her level of care she provides each client. She takes the time to know each one individually and build rapport. This is also true of her working relationship with the volunteers. Through this, she has built a sense of community within a program that would normally be rather routine. Additionally, the coordinator is an older adult with a disability. She telecommutes and works in the Milwaukee RSVP office one day per week.

The Telephone Reassurance Assistant is a part time (0.25 FTE), 10 hours per week position. This position is responsible for the daily tasks two days per week. This includes tracking volunteer contacts,

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contacting clients and special projects. The current TR Assistant is a retired individual who was looking for a part time position. She comes with excellent customer service skills that she has developed through working in retail and office support during her career. She is 86 years old and an African American. She takes the mission of Telephone Reassurance very personally and is dedicated to making sure each client is accounted for and doing well.

Milwaukee RSVP also has a .25 FTE ReServist. ReServe matches "continuing professionals 55+" with rewarding part-time service assignments at nonprofit organizations and public institutions in order to strengthen their communities while earning a modest stipend. Milwaukee RSVP's ReServist focuses on data entry and program support. The duties include collection of volunteer hours reports, entry of hours served into the ServTracker database, entry of Telephone Reassurance client service records, and other duties in support of Milwaukee RSVP program staff. The current ReServist comes with a long professional history of data entry and non-profit program support.

Q19 & 20. To support the efforts of the Milwaukee RSVP staff members, our sponsor provides significant resources to provide governance and manage risk. These include the Accounting, Human Resources, Office Management, Information Technology, Public Relations, Volunteer Director, and Executive Leadership.

Milwaukee RSVP's sponsor, Interfaith Older Adult Programs Inc. has well defined Accounting procedures which are controlled and managed by a full time Accounting department. These include payroll management, budget oversight, expense approval, tracking and reports, mileage reimbursement procedures, and finally, the annual audit. The annual external audit consistently finds Interfaith's internal controls to be not only sufficient but effective in minimizing risk and ensuring compliance.

Milwaukee RSVP's sponsor also has a full time Human Resources department. This HR department ensures Milwaukee RSVP's policies and procedures are compliant with all federal, state, and local laws as well as any addition regulations applicable to RSVP. This department facilitates the vacancy postings, job interview, and candidate screening processes in conjunction with the Milwaukee RSVP Director.

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The sponsor's Office Manager provides support to Milwaukee RSVP by purchasing equipment and supplies in collaboration with other agency programs, and coordinates the maintenance of office copiers, printers, work space, and phones.

The sponsor's Information Technology Department provides Milwaukee RSVP with a wealth of experience and knowledge in how to effectively leverage technology to improve staff productivity. The sponsor's IT department has been integral in helping Milwaukee RSVP move to cloud-based work systems such as Google Docs, providing equipment to create high quality program media, and installing low cost yet highly effective computer systems.

The sponsor's Public Relations department provides expertise and support to Milwaukee RSVP's marketing and recruitment efforts. This includes print media, speaking engagements, and assistance with developing Milwaukee RSVP's Marketing Plan.

The sponsor's Volunteer Director provides support to Milwaukee RSVP through creating best practices, procedures, and policies to ensure the best experience for all of Interfaith's volunteers.

Finally, the Executive Director and Associate Executive Director of Interfaith Older Adult Programs Inc, Milwaukee RSVP's sponsor, provides oversight of all program activities with a focus on strategic development of the program. These executives also serve as mentors and coaches for Milwaukee RSVP staff as they perform their assigned tasks.

"Linking Older Adults With a Caring Community" is a mission that the sponsor of Milwaukee RSVP, Interfaith Older Adult Programs, Inc., has taken very seriously throughout its 35+ year history of providing programs and services for Milwaukee County older adults. In addition to Milwaukee RSVP, the sponsor has managed grants and contracts from federal, state, and local governments as well as private foundations and organizations. In 2013, these funds were used to implement the following programs: Neighborhood Outreach Program providing services to over 10,000 older adults annually; Employment Services which assists job seekers age 50 and over; Foster Grandparent Program with 40 volunteers; Supervision and Program Development of five Milwaukee County-owned senior centers; Supervision and Program Development of nine Senior Dining sites; Personal Care Plus (PCP+) that provides paid in-home personal care and homemaking; Milwaukee County's Family Caregiver

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Support Network (FCSN) that offers information and support for family members and friends helping older adults; Good Neighbor Project connecting seniors with volunteers to provide hands-on services for lawn mowing and snow shoveling; Case Management Unit (CMU) contracts with Milwaukee County to provide Family Care members with a team of care managers; ReServe engages individuals 55+ to work in part time, professional, stipended service positions at local non-profits to lend their lifetime of experience to these partner organizations.

Furthermore, Interfaith is well versed in Impact programming. The United Way of Greater Milwaukee is a leader in ensuring high impact results through developing and tracking outcome measures for its funded programs. Interfaith has been providing outcome based programming results to United Way since 1997. Interfaith provides outcome based programming results to other funding sources as well, such as the Milwaukee County Department on Aging and other federal programs.

In addition to Milwaukee RSVP's strategic planning and annual assessment, Interfaith Older Adult Programs Inc. conducts strategic planning on a 3-year cycle. The Board of Directors meets to review the financial status of the agency, the program weaknesses and strengths, and discuss strategic goals. The board identifies specific actions the agency can make to (1) ensure sustainability, (2) maximize the quality of programming, and (3) identify and obtain additional funding, (4) and expand into to new programs that align with Interfaith's mission. As the board progresses in the process, the management team is included to collaborate on the final goals.

Overall, the Milwaukee RSVP project, sponsored by Interfaith, has a strong and stable organizational capacity. Both RSVP and Interfaith are considered leaders in reaching out to the 55 and older community in Milwaukee County. This is evident in the many programs and grants with which Interfaith and the Milwaukee RSVP have been entrusted. Building on this strong foundation, the Milwaukee RSVP project continues to be the premier source of 55 and older volunteers for Milwaukee County.

Cost Effectiveness

As demonstrated in this narrative, it is clear Milwaukee RSVP has designed and structured our program to maximize both program quality and cost effectiveness. Our sponsor also contributes

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substantially to this goal through the pooling of administrative resources between multiple programs such as HR, IT, and the others mentioned above. This cost effectiveness also includes the costs associated with supporting volunteers as well as our required matching funds.

Q21. Traditionally, the main form of direct financial support to volunteers has come in the form of mileage reimbursement. Milwaukee RSVP's current mileage reimbursement policy allows reimbursement for only miles traveled during a volunteer assignment. This currently applies to only volunteer drivers in the veteran program and Lead Tutors assigned to multiple sites. After assessing current usage among RSVP volunteers, Milwaukee RSVP estimated that a volunteer driver reimbursement would average \$10 per month. It is estimated an average of 20 volunteers per month will apply for mileage in 2014. This estimate is double the current usage, which will allow for budget flexibility and special accommodations for several volunteers if needed.

In addition, Milwaukee RSVP maintains the standard volunteer insurance as required by RSVP regulations. This insurance company provides a formula for Milwaukee RSVP to follow. When the total number of proposed RSVP volunteers for 2014 was entered, the total cost came to \$2,143. This amount is in line with previous years.

Q22. Milwaukee RSVP enjoys several key partnerships which significantly reduce the cost to recruit volunteers. The first is the free advertisement in the Milwaukee Recreation guide which goes to 200,000+ local households four times per year. The next is the established network Milwaukee RSVP has built that facilitates collaboration and recruitment. In addition to this, Milwaukee RSVP's sponsor provides marketing materials, radio ads, billboards, and general marketing to raise awareness for all of Interfaith's programs and Milwaukee RSVP. Finally, Milwaukee RSVP includes in our budget employee mileage reimbursement and staff time to conduct recruitment efforts in the community. Recruitment is a central part of the RSVP Director, RSVP Program Coordinator, Tutor Program Coordinator, Veterans Program Coordinator, and Telephone Reassurance Coordinator positions. To supplement all of these, Milwaukee RSVP budgets \$1,000 for any other additional volunteer recruitment needs throughout the year.

Each year, Milwaukee RSVP holds a volunteer recognition event to honor the achievements of all of our volunteers. The event is held at one of our sponsor's six senior centers. Our sponsor provides the

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space and furniture free of charge. Milwaukee RSVP partner organizations provide either the entertainment or high profile guest speakers for the event. The remaining cost of catering the food, as well as recognition items, is covered by Milwaukee RSVP, which has budgeted \$2,400 for the 2014 recognition event. This amount was determined based on the catering and item costs of the 2013 recognition event.

Q23. The last area of cost and budget effectiveness is Milwaukee RSVP's required match. Milwaukee RSVP has consistently, every year, met our required match goal since the implementation of our program in Milwaukee County over 30 years ago. From 2009 to 2012, Milwaukee RSVP experienced an increase in \$63,951 federal funding due to three successful grant augmentation awards (2 national, 1 state office). This increased federal funding requires a current match of \$62,514 for 2014. To meet this match, Milwaukee RSVP has secured \$32,915 in annual funding from the State of Wisconsin and \$35,000 in annual funding from the United Way of Greater Milwaukee. This funding is renewed annually and is anticipated to extend past the initial 2014 grant year, as it has in previous years. These two funding sources equal \$67,915 which exceeds the current match requirement from the RSVP regulations.

In conclusion, Milwaukee RSVP has a demonstrated history of providing not only compliance but excellence in the implementation of RSVP programming in our area. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve our community in these key focus areas and supporting work plans to ensure a bright future for all of our neighbors in Milwaukee County.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A