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Executive Summary

The applicant is the Volunteer Center of Brown County, a private not-for-profit agency that annually mobilizes approximately 10,000 people to meet community needs as volunteers through the agency website, community presentations, publications, and individual assistance. Federal funding of \$76,073 is requested to support at least 280 RSVP volunteers in Brown County, Wisconsin.

Service Categories & Community Needs Addressed:

*Education- School assessment tests show that slightly over 22% of students in Brown County still read below basic proficiency level by fourth grade. RSVP of Brown County will recruit, train, place and support 120 volunteers to provide literacy tutoring to at least 330 elementary school students. Progress of tutored students will be measured by classroom teachers' reports based on the schools' reading level testing. At least 75% of tutored students will improve reading skills as a result of the tutoring assistance.

*Healthy Futures for Youth- Community survey results indicate that 43% of the Brown County population regularly do binge drinking. To prevent youth from engaging in this behavior and help them develop healthy life choices, 16 volunteers will present the national researched based Beginning Alcohol/Addictions Basic Education Studies to at least 350 elementary students annually. Pre- and post testing of participating students will indicate that they have increased their knowledge of making healthy life choices.

*Veterans and Military Families- Wisconsin labor statistics show high rates of unemployment for veterans. RSVP of Brown County will collaborate with the local Wisconsin Job Center and other veteran organizations to recruit, train, and support 15 volunteers that will provide personalized assistance to military veterans with development of job seeking skills or placement in volunteer opportunities to further develop employment skills. Based on follow-up reports, at least 80 military veterans will receive employment seeking assistance from volunteers.

*Health Futures for Adults- At least 40 volunteers will support homebound people, elderly, or people with disabilities by delivering meals, providing transportation, or arranging opportunities for socialization through community agencies. Using station data, at least 200 individuals will receive assistance that allows them to continue living independently and reduce social isolation as a result of RSVP volunteer assistance.

Strengthening Communities

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Community Description - This RSVP project's service area is Brown County, Wisconsin. The county has a population of 253,032 (2012 census estimate) with 41% of that population in Green Bay, the county's largest city. Overall, 84% of the Brown County population lives in an urban setting and 16% live in rural townships. The 2012 census estimates indicated that the population of Brown County was 89.5% white with the largest minority group being Hispanic at 7.6%. The Hispanic population is also the fastest growing segment of the county population with a 60% increase since 2000. The next largest groups adding diversity to the county are Native American at 3% of the population and Southeast Asian which is also at 3% of the population.

In 2011, the Leading Indicator For Excellence (LIFE) study was done to gather information about socio-economic conditions in Brown County. This study was coordinated by the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Brown County United Way and many key community leaders. Through surveys, focus groups, personal interviews, and a review of current local data, the LIFE Study provided a view of trends, strengths, and challenges for Brown County.

The 2011 LIFE Study lists performance of economically disadvantaged students in schools as an area of concern. While poverty is not as high as other areas of the state, the percentage of the population living below the poverty level in Brown County has increased in the past few years from 4.6% in 2000 to 10.7% according to US Census statistics in 2010 (compared to 12% for the state of Wisconsin). This increase in poverty affects housing, food security, and access to health care for many people, but poverty also affects the lives of children and their success in school due to the lack of time for parent involvement in their lives. According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction a high percentage of academic achievement scores are lower than desired, especially among minority and low income students. The Wisconsin Student Assessment System (consisting of mandatory testing for grades 3 through 8) indicates that in the 2012/2013 school year, 22.75% of the 2,792 fourth grade students in the eight Brown County school districts scored below basic skill level in reading skills. The percentage of students below the basic reading level varies by school district, but the largest school district (Green Bay Area Public Schools) had 43.6% of its 1,391 fourth grade students score below the basic reading level. The Green Bay school district also had 61.4 of elementary school students eligible for free or reduced price under the National School Lunch Program (household income less than 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines). Since good reading skills are required for all learning throughout the

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remaining school years, it is important that all students are proficient in reading.

As the Primary Focus Area, RSVP of Brown County will support schools by training and placing 120 volunteers in elementary schools as literacy tutors through the Reading Coaches for Kids Program to help students in kindergarten through fourth grade. This service is currently being provided to the three largest school districts in the county through a collaboration that has RSVP recruiting and training the volunteers while the schools provide daily supervision and pay for the costs of the background checks for the volunteers. The majority of volunteers will serve in the Green Bay school district which has the highest ratio of students from poverty and from families with limited English proficiency. Since students with serious literacy deficiencies receive remedial assistance through the schools, the Reading Coaches for Kids Program will focus on providing the extra support to students who are not able to get the reading practice and additional support from home due to parents'/guardians' inability to help or lack of time to help. Through RSVP's Reading Coaches for Kids Program, volunteers will also have the opportunity to help children of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds succeed in school while also learning about new cultures that are becoming part of the county.

To measure the impact of the Reading Coaches for Kids Program, RSVP of Brown County will use National Performance Measures ED2 for the output and ED5 for the outcome. Both output and outcome will be measured by documentation provided by classroom teachers. Teachers will complete a form (developed by RSVP staff in collaboration with selected teachers) that lists students receiving tutoring assistance (coded by the teacher to ensure confidentiality), each student's reading level at the start of the tutoring period, and each student's reading level at the completion of the tutoring period. The reading level will be determined by the Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading System used by the schools at which Reading Coach Volunteers are placed. The Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading allows classroom teachers to determine each student's reading level at the beginning of a school year, measure progress throughout the school year, and determine reading level at the end of the school year. Since teachers at most of the schools in area school districts already maintain information on all their students' reading levels through this system, gathering information for RSVP outputs and outcomes will not create additional work for teachers.

The goal of Reading Coaches for Kids is to serve 350 elementary students during the first year of this

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grant cycle, 375 students during the second year, and 400 students during the third year. The majority of students will be from economically disadvantaged families because the greatest number of Reading Coach Volunteers will be placed at schools with the highest percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch programs. Approximately half of the 26 elementary school in the Green Bay school district (largest school district served by RSVP) have over 55% economically disadvantaged students and will be the main placement sites for volunteers. For outcome measurement, at least 75% of students tutored for six month or more will increase their reading ability by at least three reading levels as measured by the Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading System.

For the past five years, the Reading Coaches for Kids Program has offered a summer program at Elmore Elementary School, one of the schools in the Green Bay Area School District. The school principal and staff request and support this summer program. Other school district and community agency summer reading/other academic programs exist but not in the area of this school. Students in need of support to maintain reading levels over the summer break would have to travel to other areas in the city for such a program. With the high percentages of ethnic diversity and lower social economic levels at Elmore School, students probably would not take part in programs in other neighborhoods of the city. Through the Reading Coaches for Kids summer program, 18 to 25 students have the opportunity to read, write, and enjoy craft projects related to a theme of study. The latest summer program had a Summer Safari theme that allowed students to learn about a variety of animals as they developed their reading and writing skills. The summer program is coordinated by the Reading Coaches for Kids Program Coordinator with assistance from some of the school year volunteer tutors. The program has received financial support the past two years from a former teacher who requests to remain anonymous.

For the past decade or more Wisconsin has been at the top of the list of states for percentage of population involved in binge drinking (five or more alcoholic drinks in an hour for men or four or more in an hour for women) according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Although there appears to be a slight trend downward in Wisconsin youth using alcohol and binge drinking, the percentage of high school students using alcohol on a regular basis (39%) and binge drinking (24%) is higher than most states according to the latest Wisconsin Department of Instruction's Youth Behavior Risk Factor Survey done in 2011. The Wisconsin Youth Behavior Risk Factor Survey also showed 18% of high school students taking prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription, 11% of high school

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students taking over-the-counter drugs to get high, and a growing increase of students (23% in 1993 to 37% in 2011) using marijuana. Verification of alcohol and other drug problems among youth in Brown County is supported by the 2011 Brown County Leading Indicator For Excellence (LIFE) Study in which reduction of risking behavior through alcohol and other drug abuse is listed as a challenge for adults and youth.

As an Other Focus Area, RSVP of Brown County will prevent alcohol and other drug abuse among youth through the Beginning Alcohol and Addictions Beginning Education Studies (BABES) Program. The BABES Program is a national research based prevention program through the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. Through the BABES Program, RSVP volunteers present a series of six lessons which include a puppet show and discussion of the concepts presented in each lesson. The program includes discussions of dealing with peer pressure, developing positive coping skills, asking for help with difficult situations, developing a positive self image, and understanding the dangers of abuse of alcohol and other drugs (both illegal and prescription). The purpose of the program is to teach positive life skills to youth so they do not rely on alcohol and other drug abuse as a means of "dealing" with difficult situations in life. Through the program, 15 volunteers will present the BABES lessons to 330 students in early elementary grades through classroom or after school program settings.

RSVP of Brown County will use Measurement Output H4, but will also continue with pre and post testing of youth taking part in the BABES Program. The test was developed by two RSVP volunteer (retired social workers) and RSVP staff to measure increase in understanding of the concepts presented through the program. The number of students (clients) participating in the BABES Program will be measured by school request forms for the program submitted to the RSVP office. On these forms, classroom teachers are required to record the number of students who will be in attendance.

In May of 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development reported unemployment in Brown County, Wisconsin at 7% while unemployment among military veterans at the end of 2012 was 8.4%. The 2010 US Census records 17,310 veterans living in Brown County or about 6.9% of the population, The Office of the Actuary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs predicts a decline in total number of veterans as World War II and Korean War veterans age, but a continued increase in Gulf War Era (served since 1990) veterans, the age groups that are most likely to be seeking employment after military service. The Green Bay office of the Wisconsin Job Center has two staff

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people designated to assist veterans in a seven county service area with seeking employment, but the growing number of veterans and the special emotional and physical needs of some veterans is making it difficult for existing services to provide enough support to veterans. Through the Veteran Employment Coach Program, RSVP of Brown County will train volunteers that can provide individual assistance to veterans with resume preparation, interview practice, completion of job applications, translation of military experience into civilian language, or placement in volunteer opportunities that provide updating of job skills or reconnection to the community after military service. Through this Other Focus Area initiative, RSVP is collaborating with veteran support agencies like the Wisconsin Job Center, the Center for Veterans Affairs, the Veteran Treatment Court Program, the Green Bay Veterans' Outpatient Clinic, and the veterans' support services at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College to help veterans secure employment and/or reconnect to the community through volunteering. The purpose of the Veteran Employment Coach Program is not to duplicate any existing services to veterans but to use volunteers to supplement these current services and give more individualized assistance to veterans seeking employment or wishing to volunteer in their community.

RSVP of Brown County will use Measurement Output V1 to measure program goals. At the time a veteran receives job seeking skill assistance from a Veteran Employment Coach volunteer, the veteran will fill out a brief form that provides name, contact information, and branch of service. Each veteran's status as a veteran under United States Code definition will be verified by signing a statement on this form. A week after receiving assistance from the volunteer, each veteran will receive a follow-up call or email from the volunteer who worked with him/her to see if more assistance is needed and to get feedback on the usefulness of the assistance. The Green Bay Job Center will provide RSVP with information of which veterans referred by their agency secured employment after assistance from Veteran Employment Coaches.

RSVP will also keep records on all veterans who use project services to connect to volunteer opportunities without using the job seeking assistance. In order to get the personalized volunteer placement assistance from RSVP staff or Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers, veterans will complete a volunteer registration form that in addition to general contact information provides an opportunity to designate interests, skills, and available time for volunteering so appropriate referrals can be made. This form also requires the person to indicate if he/she is a veteran. Within three weeks

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after referral is made, follow-up by phone or email will be done by RSVP staff or Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers to determine if the veteran starts in a recommended volunteer opportunity or needs further assistance.

In late summer of 2013, a new veterans' clinic is opening in Green Bay that will serve veterans through much of the northeastern section of Wisconsin and into Upper Michigan. The RSVP Director has contacted the volunteer coordinator assigned to that facility to inform him of RSVP and its sponsor organization, the Volunteer Center. After the clinic officially opens, RSVP of Brown County will have a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the clinic, request volunteer job descriptions, and begin referring volunteers to the clinic. The new veterans' clinic expects to use volunteers in a variety of assignments including transportation, checking people in, physical therapy assistance, pharmacy assistance, and other similar positions found at outpatient clinics. RSVP of Brown County will make it a priority to work with the Veteran's Clinic to promote and fill volunteer needs.

As in other areas of the country, the older population in Brown County is increasing. The county population of people 65 years and older increased from 18.2% in 2000 to 22.9% in 2010 (Source: U.S. Census statistics) and is expected to increase 115% from 2000 to 2030. Although the county offers good services to elderly now, based on the 2011 community Leading Indicators For Excellence (LIFE) study completed in 2011, sufficient services to elderly are a concern for the future. The Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center and the Brown County United Way's 2-1-1 Information and Referral Service both report a growing number of requests from older adults or people with disabilities who need a little extra assistance to remain in their own homes and deal with social isolation. Although Brown County has many supportive services for elderly and people with disabilities, there are still needs that are not currently being met.

The Volunteer Center of Brown County, sponsor of RSVP of Brown County, and the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) are currently collaborating on development of a system to help older adults and people with disabilities remain in their own homes and decrease social isolation. Through a grant from the Humana Foundation, five Humana Insurance employees were allowed to work full time for four weeks with Volunteer Center and ADRC staff to establish a program for a year-round system for connecting community volunteers to low income or social isolated elderly and people with disabilities. The Humana Employee team developed methods for registering

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volunteers and recipients of services, integrated the data management into the existing database at the Volunteer Center, established policies and procedures for risk management, created training for volunteers, developed a marketing plan and materials for recruiting volunteers and clients in need of services, and initiated an evaluation system. The Humana Foundation grant also provides funds to initially sustain the project. This new program is called Neighborhood Volunteer Connection and is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2013.

As an Other Focus Area, RSVP of Brown County will enhance the work of the county Aging and Disability Resource Center, American Red Cross, Brown County Human Services, Salvation Army's senior programs, Brown County Triad, and other senior service community agencies to support senior citizens by mobilizing and placing volunteers at these sites to deliver meals to homebound, provide transportation to elderly and individuals with disabilities, and provide other services to help individuals remain independent and reduce social isolation. Through the Neighborhood Volunteer Connection which will be operated through the Volunteer Center of Brown County, RSVP volunteers will provide services not readily available through other community agencies such as fall/spring yard work, simple home maintenance, snow shoveling, lawn cutting, and socialization in general. The target population for Neighborhood Volunteer Connection is elderly or people with disabilities who do not have the financial means to hire services, but income eligibility will not be a requirement because of the socialization aspect of the program.

RSVP of Brown County will use Performance Measurement H9 to measure outcomes. The coordination of Neighborhood Volunteer Connection will be through the Volunteer Center of Brown County, RSVP of Brown County's sponsor. This will make access of data readily available to RSVP staff and allow for separation of impact measurement between RSVP volunteers and other community volunteers. The Humana team which developed the program also developed a simple survey for recipients of the services to complete. This survey measures impact of the services on the recipients' ability to remain living independently and reduce any feelings of social isolation.

RSVP of Brown County will continue to refer volunteers to other community priorities based on the skills, abilities and preferences of the volunteers. The Brown County LIFE Study lists acceptance of diversity, a growing rate of child abuse/neglect, housing/homelessness issues, public transportation, access to health care, air and water quality, and community infrastructure as areas of concern.

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Through the Volunteer Center's connections with community agencies, volunteer opportunities exist in these areas.

Recruitment and Development

Volunteer Assignments - Through the Volunteer Center of Brown County as the sponsoring agency, RSVP volunteers have the opportunity to select from over 2,000 volunteer positions at nearly 160 stations. These community stations include not-for-profit agencies, governmental agencies, schools, proprietary health care facilities, service organizations, and faith based organizations. RSVP staff places a high importance on meeting the needs of each volunteer through interviewing (in person, by phone, or through email messages) and providing a wide range of volunteer options from which each volunteer can choose. "Personalized placement assistance" is an important benefit of becoming a RSVP volunteer. RSVP staff will also contact stations to develop a volunteer position for a volunteer with a specific skill or scheduling need if no existing volunteer positions match the requirements. Inclusion of people with disabilities in volunteerism is a priority of RSVP of Brown County's sponsor agency, and RSVP staff will continue to make volunteering available to older people with disabilities. Through the Memoranda of Understanding, agencies will be reminded of the need to be accessible to people with disabilities. RSVP staff helps link people with disabilities to agencies like the Aging and Disability Resource Center or Options for Independent Living if they need additional assistance to remain active in the community other than volunteering. RSVP staff will also encourage stations to identify volunteer opportunities that can be done in a person's home for volunteers who are limited to or prefer "stay-at-home" projects. With the increase in episodic volunteering among all ages of volunteers, RSVP volunteers will be given the opportunity to register to be on call for short-term volunteer opportunities solely or in addition to on-going opportunities. The Volunteer Center staff prepares bi-monthly listings of short-term or one-time volunteer opportunities in the community. This list is available in print or on the agency website.

All RSVP volunteers must complete an Volunteer Registration Form that provides their birthdate (for RSVP eligibility), work experience, volunteer experience, skills/abilities they wish to share, any health/physical limitations, military veteran status, and permission to share pertinent information with potential stations. All RSVP volunteers receive an RSVP handbook and orientation to RSVP when they register. The RSVP Handbook outlines the background of RSVP, information on the insurance coverage, regulations for using the travel reimbursement, hour recording requirements, stations' expectations of volunteers, and their rights as a RSVP volunteer. Volunteer Registration Forms, copies

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of any necessary background checks, placement records, and periodic follow-up information are kept in secure file cabinets in the RSVP staff offices.

Volunteer Training - The large number of available volunteer opportunities in the county allows volunteers to use a wide range of skills and be directed to leadership positions at many of the agencies registered with the Volunteer Center. RSVP staff is currently working on materials to help volunteer managers identify volunteer leadership positions at their agencies, develop the training for these positions, and ultimately attract new volunteers - especially the growing Baby Boomer population. All approved RSVP stations must offer an orientation to new volunteers as documented on the Memorandum of Understandings.

Volunteers involved in the Primary and Other Focus areas of RSVP of Brown County will receive the training they need to achieve program goals. Volunteers in the Primary Focus Area of the Reading Coaches for Kids Program receive a three hour training presented by the Reading Coaches for Kids Program Coordinator. This training involves basic techniques and activities for helping children develop reading skills, an understanding of the schools' reading programs, how students' reading progress will be measured, school confidentiality/other regulations, and tips for developing a working relationship with the student(s) they are tutoring. The training manual was developed through resources received from America Reads and local school personnel. In addition to the initial training, all new volunteers are met at their assigned school on their first day by an RSVP staff person to acquaint them with the school, introduce them to the school personal with whom they work, and make sure they are comfortable during their first tutoring session. Reading Coach Volunteers receive a phone or email follow-up contact four weeks after their start date to ensure satisfaction with their assignment and to encourage the volunteer to contact the Reading Coaches for Kids Program Coordinator with any future questions or concerns. Reading Coach Volunteers are all given the opportunity at the end of each school year to complete a written survey that measures their satisfaction with their volunteer experience and ask for feedback on improvement of the program.

Volunteers who present the BABES Puppet Program in the schools work in groups of four. Three puppeteers present each lesson with hand puppets and one volunteer facilitator does the story narration and interacts with the students through questions and discussion. The puppeteer volunteers receive a two hour long training session on school regulations and procedures, the purpose of the

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BABES program, how to handle the puppets, understanding of concepts presented, and measurement of program impact. They are then set up to view experienced BABES puppeteers actually presenting a lesson. Each group facilitator receives an extra two hour training to better understand the concepts of each lesson and provide guidance in developing communication with the students. The RSVP Director and experienced BABES volunteers provide the training for all new volunteers. Each group facilitator also receives a copy of the BABES Handbook and Curriculum Guide produced by the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependency.

Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers receive a three hour orientation and training provided by the RSVP Director who previously worked with other adult training and employment programs. The training curriculum follows a handbook prepared by members of the local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM), the professional organization for people in the human resource field. SHRM accepted an invitation from the RSVP Director to partner with RSVP of Brown County to assist military veterans with seeking employment by helping to train the program volunteers. In addition to development and updating of the training manual, SHRM members have offered their time and expertise to answer specific questions of Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers that arise and be available to do in-service trainings for the volunteers if needed. The lead veteran's service agency that RSVP of Brown County has partnered with is the Wisconsin Job Center Office in Green Bay. Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers also attend one of the bi-weekly informational workshops the Veteran Employment Specialists at the Job Center offer for all veterans using their services. In these group workshops for veteran, the volunteers get to better understand the services of the Job Center and meet the Veteran Employment Specialists who refer veterans.

Volunteers who will be involved in providing services to elderly and people with disabilities will receive screening and training appropriate to the services they will offer. Volunteers who provide services through other community stations (Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center, American Red Cross, Brown County Human Services, Veterans Clinic, etc.) will be trained by staff at those stations in accordance with each station's policies. Volunteers who provide services to elderly or people with disabilities through the Volunteer Center's Neighborhood Volunteer Connection Program will be screened by Volunteer Center staff, receive a background check if they will provide in-home services and receive specific guidelines they must follow. These guidelines include clarification of what service(s) they will provide, safety issues that must be followed, tips on providing the service(s), and

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what to do in case of an emergency. Volunteers must sign an agreement to these guidelines in order to be matched with elderly or people with disabilities needing their help.

Volunteer Recruitment - The mission of the Volunteer Center of Brown County, RSVP of Brown County's sponsor, is to mobilize the community resource of volunteers to meet community needs. This is done through community presentations, specific program publications, media coverage, special events, and a website. Annually, the Volunteer Center reaches over 10,000 people with information on volunteering. The Volunteer Center is recognized by the Brown County United Way as providing the resource of people through volunteerism for the community while United Way provides financial resources. The main recruitment efforts of RSVP of Brown County will be directed toward increasing volunteers serving in the priority service areas of education, youth health development, military veteran assistance, and support of elderly and people with disabilities. Throughout the year, at least 280 volunteers will serve.

Recruitment of new RSVP volunteers will be done through community presentations to senior service and senior support groups, media opportunities that provide information about current volunteer efforts in the community, the Volunteer Center's web page, encouraging current volunteers to recruit others, the VolunteerMatch system, and the on-line Volunteer Solutions system used by the sponsor agency. RSVP of Brown County is currently looking at developing a Facebook account specifically addressing the Reading Coaches for Kids Program as a means of making more people aware of the program and keeping current volunteers connected. Emphasis is being placed on attracting the growing number of Baby Boomers who are becoming eligible for RSVP. RSVP staff has begun communicating with stations and potential stations to develop more management/leadership volunteer positions that may appeal to Baby Boomers. RSVP of Brown County has already started developing these types of volunteer opportunities within its own project by including RSVP volunteers in project evaluation, marketing, program development, promotion of the project in the community, and leadership with volunteer recognition planning.

The diversity of volunteers who register with RSVP of Brown County reflects the diversity of the age group in the county as a whole. Female RSVP volunteers make up nearly three quarters of the volunteers, but male volunteers are making up nearly a half of new volunteers who are registering with RSVP of Brown County. The main racial background of RSVP of Brown County is white (non-

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Hispanic) at 96%. Although the Hispanic population is rapidly increasing in Brown County, these new immigrants are younger working families and therefore not eligible for RSVP. The Southeast Asian population is 3% of the county population but family obligations and language barriers of the elderly make them reluctant to become involved in community service. Even the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center has a difficult time including Southeast Asian elderly in their services. The Native American population makes up 2.9% of the county population and 3% of the members of RSVP of Brown County, but the RSVP Director is working with the human resource office of the Oneida Tribe of Indians located in Brown County to offer a workshop on volunteering to retirees from tribal offices and businesses starting in the fall of 2013. The Oneida Tribe of Indians also has a large percentage of members who are military veterans. RSVP of Brown County will look for ways to include this specific veteran population.

RSVP of Brown County will also encourage more military veterans and their families to become RSVP volunteers by promoting the opportunity for them to "continue to serve" as a community volunteer. A member of the RSVP Advisory Council developed a recruitment brochure specifically for veterans. RSVP staff and Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers will do presentations about the available veteran services through RSVP for community church, veteran, or senior citizen groups. Other community agencies that serve military veterans and use volunteers, such as the Veterans Outpatient Clinic and the Veterans Treatment Court, will be promoted in these presentations and other marketing opportunities

RSVP of Brown County's sponsor agency, the Volunteer Center of Brown County, has the Volunteers with Disability Program that helps people of all ages with disabilities remain connected to their community, develop work skills, or reduce social isolation. Any person with a disability age 55 or over who is recruited by the Volunteer Center is connected with RSVP staff for placement and follow-up assistance. RSVP of Brown County also receives referrals of people with disabilities from counselors in the community and from other agencies like the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center. Currently about 16% of RSVP volunteers have a disability based on special needs indicated on their volunteer registration forms.

Volunteer Retention and Recognition -- Customer service is an important aspect of RSVP of Brown County and retaining volunteers is a high priority. For all RSVP Volunteers, hours of service are

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collected twice a year through mileage reimbursement form or hour documentation forms based on station records. Both mileage reimbursement forms and hour report forms required a station supervisor's signature as verification. Reported volunteer hours are reviewed twice a year to look for volunteers not reporting hours or showing a dramatic drop in hours reported. These volunteers are then followed-up with a phone call to see if RSVP can provide additional services to help them remain active as volunteers. RSVP volunteers are trained to assist project staff with this process.

Recognition of RSVP volunteers will continue with an annual recognition event for all active volunteers. RSVP Advisory Council members take the lead in organizing this event and assist at the event. For the past three years, an informal gathering for the RSVP volunteers has been held at the Green Bay Botanical Garden, an RSVP station. RSVP has developed a collaboration with the Botanical Gardens that results in reduced costs for use of the facility and waiver of some fees that are charged other groups using the facility. The recognition event is used to thank the volunteers in person, allow the volunteers to socialize with one another, provide a motivational or entertaining speaker, and share information on the impact of the volunteers' services in the community. BABES volunteers, Reading Coaches for Kids volunteers, and Veteran Employment Coach Volunteers all receive annual reports on the impact measurements of their programs so they can see that they are making a difference in their community. Volunteers in these direct service programs of RSVP are also asked at least annually for feedback on operations of the individual programs and suggestions for improvements. RSVP office support volunteers along with other support volunteers at the sponsoring agency (Volunteer Center of Brown County) are treated to a luncheon once a year for their services to the agency.

The Volunteer Center of Brown County, in collaboration with local businesses, organizes an annual community event to recognize volunteers during National Volunteer Week. RSVP staff is involved in putting on this event and regularly nominates some RSVP volunteers for recognition at this event. Each of the six nomination categories has an award recipient and runner-up selected, but all nominees are recognized by having their names in the program for the event. RSVP volunteers also serve by helping with registration, welcoming attendees at the event, and escorting award recipients to the stage to receive their awards.

Program Management

Volunteer Stations - RSVP of Brown County is sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Brown County

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and therefore maintains connections with all the approximately 160 community agencies, government services, and schools that are registered with the Volunteer Center. RSVP stations (currently about 24) will be those sites at which RSVP volunteers serve. RSVP stations will primarily be those that offer volunteer opportunities in the selected Focus Areas of RSVP of Brown County, but will also be any RSVP eligible site at which RSVP registered volunteers choose to serve. The stations that are not in Focus Areas will be considered in Other Community Need Priorities. Since all community agencies can maintain an ongoing registration with the Volunteer Center, transforming agencies into RSVP stations or removing them as RSVP stations does not interrupt the relationship with agencies that rely on volunteer assistance. RSVP of Brown County will focus on impact in selected community needs, but will also continue to consider the needs of each older volunteer when providing personalized placement assistance and make it possible for older adults to remain active and connected in their community through volunteering.

The Volunteer Center of Brown County, sponsor of RSVP of Brown County, follows the same requirements for RSVP stations when determining eligibility to be registered with the Volunteer Center. This simplifies the adding or removing of RSVP stations. All agencies that register volunteer needs with the Volunteer Center are required to provide documentation of their status as a public agency, secular or faith-based private non-profit organization, or proprietary health care organization. Each registered agency must also sign a Memorandum of Understanding that indicates the person or persons responsible for daily supervision of any volunteers placed at the agency, requires job descriptions on file at the Volunteer Center for all volunteer positions, requires the keeping and sharing of records and reports necessary for requirements of programs at the Volunteer Center, verifies that requested volunteers will not engage in religious or political activity, and ensures compliance with all civil right laws and regulations including reasonable accommodations for volunteers with disabilities. The Memorandum of Understanding also requires appropriate orientation/ training of new volunteers, listing of what benefits/support are provided to volunteers, and assurance of adequate health and safety protection of volunteers. All new agencies or new volunteer positions must meet all the requirements in the Memorandum of Understanding and have required documentation turned in to the Volunteer Center before they are approved by the Volunteer Center Agency Relations Director for referral of volunteers.

In addition to the general requirements for all agencies registered with the Volunteer Center, all active

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RSVP stations must sign a new Memorandum of Understanding every three years and provide assurance of continued safety measures for volunteers annually. Memorandums of Understanding of active RSVP stations are reviewed quarterly to determine which stations need to be renewed in the upcoming months. The annual safety assurance is done through email communication that provides each station with a 10 question checklist to use as a guide when determining proper safety measures for volunteers. Station contacts are asked to verify through their response that they provide for the safety of volunteers assigned to their agency. These responses are kept in their agency files at the Volunteer Center. Semi-annually hours of RSVP volunteers are collected to determine which volunteers are still active, see if volunteers need any further assistance from RSVP staff, and verify that volunteers are still performing the same assigned service activities. Each station contact is sent a form by email requesting each assigned volunteer's hours as documented on their agency records, verification that each volunteer is in the assigned activity or activities, and any questions/clarification they may need from RSVP/Volunteer Center staff. These returned forms with signature of the station contact or from the documented email address of the station contact are kept in the RSVP office files for use to record individual hours in the volunteer data base, inactivate volunteers if needed, and to follow-up with individual volunteers that may need further assistance from RSVP staff. Any changes in volunteer assignments are noted and RSVP staff makes sure the appropriate job description is obtained or already on file.

Managing Volunteers and Performance Measurement -- RSVP of Brown County staff has been managing volunteers and measuring impact in all the Focus Areas designated in this grant application. For the past 12 years, volunteers have been recruited, trained, placed and managed through the Reading Coaches for Kids Program (Primary Focus Area - Education). What started with about 12 volunteers placed as reading tutors in two elementary schools has grown to nearly 90 RSVP volunteers assisting students at 20 elementary schools in three school districts. Measurement of program impact has been done through teachers' reports on reading development of tutored students and surveys of students to measure changes in attitude toward reading and school as a result of the assistance they received from the volunteers. At the end of the 2012/2013 school year, teacher reports indicated that 95% of tutored students improved their reading skills as a result of assistance from Reading Coaches for Kids Volunteers. The student surveys showed that 72% of the tutored students improved their attitudes toward reading after they worked with a Reading Coach Volunteer. During the 2012/2013 school year 411 students in kindergarten through fourth grade received help to improve

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their reading skills.

For 16 years RSVP volunteers have been helping youth avoid alcohol and other drug abuse later in life through the BABES (Beginning Alcohol & Addictions Basic Education Studies) Program. Impact of this program has been measured through pre and post testing of participating students. During the 2012/2013 school year the BABES program was presented to 340 second grade students. These students went from an average pretest score of 65.5% correct to an average post test score of 79.8% correct. The classroom teachers are also asked to evaluate the program. All participating teachers indicated that students are beginning to use the concepts learned from the program in the classroom. The number of students served during this past school was lower than previous years because classroom teachers are pressured to meet new state performance measures for students in academic subjects so additional "life skill" programs are discouraged by school management. Because classroom teachers recognize the value of the BABES Program, students react favorably to the program, and the program is nationally recognized as going beyond other alcohol/drug prevention programs for youth, RSVP staff has met with area school management to discuss continuing to include the BABES Program. For the 2013/2014 school year, the BABES Program will begin to be presented in after school programming. Although all youth face the dangers of alcohol and other drug abuse, after school programs may allow RSVP of Brown County to focus on helping those students who are most likely to become involved in risky behavior.

RSVP of Brown County just started to serve military veterans in 2013 with the receipt in late 2012 of a Program of National Significance grant for this purpose. The main focus of the grant is to help military veterans improve job seeking skills and increase chances of securing employment. A secondary focus is to help link more veterans and their families to volunteer opportunities in their community for increasing employability, reconnecting to the community after military service, or personal growth. The new program is called Veteran Employment Coach Program. The first few months of this new service to veterans included development of relationships with existing veteran support programs and organizations, development of a training program for volunteer to serve in this program, and recruitment of volunteers for the program. Collaborations have been developed with the Job Center Office for Northeastern Wisconsin located in Green Bay, the veteran advisor at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, the placement office at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Center for Military Affairs, Brown County Veterans Service Office, and the Veterans Outpatient

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Clinic. The Veteran Employment Specialists at the Wisconsin Job Center Office have been the main supporter of RSVP of Brown County's initiative to serve veterans and have helped open the door to bring RSVP staff and RSVP volunteers into the local veteran's network. RSVP of Brown County has also partnered with the local chapter of the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM), the national professional organization for people in human resource management. Members of SHRM worked with the RSVP Director to develop a training manual for the volunteers who will provide help to veterans with development of job seeking skills. Members of SHRM are also committed to providing additional training or support for program volunteers. Because the Veterans Employment Coach Program has not completed its initial year yet, there is no complete data to report but 9 RSVP volunteers and 2 non-RSVP volunteers have been trained as Veteran Employment Coaches, veterans have been placed in community volunteer opportunities, and veterans are beginning to use the job seeking skill assistance available to them. RSVP staff and volunteers are also scheduled to take part in a veteran employment workshop in the fall of 2013.

Since the beginning of the project 35 years ago, RSVP volunteers have always assisted elderly, people with disabilities, and low income individuals with supportive services through agencies like the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center, Brown County Human Services, American Red Cross, and Salvation Army. In recent years, RSVP volunteers have helped elderly individuals remain independent by delivering homebound meals and providing transportation. During the previous grant year, 32 RSVP volunteers provided these services. Impact was measured through station surveys of recipients and mainly measured ability to remain independent or remain healthier because of the assistance they received. RSVP volunteers will continue to be recruited and placed in supportive services to older adults and people with disabilities with the focus on measuring increased social ties/perceived social support.

Advisory Council -- RSVP of Brown County maintains an Advisory Council that meets quarterly to review project impacts, assist with management decisions, help determine focus areas based on review of community needs, and take a lead in project evaluation. Subcommittees of the Advisory Council also help with project promotion and volunteer recognition. The Advisory Council consists of a ten person committee that is comprised of older adults (at least 50%) and representatives that are from stations, are from other agencies that serve older adults, are knowledgeable about fiscal management, have marketing skills, and/or understand volunteer management. All new Advisory Council members

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receive a job description with expectations of their role, information on RSVP regulations, the current grant work plans, an orientation on RSVP of Brown County's direct service programs in the community, and information on the latest impact measurements of the project. General Advisory Council members may serve up to three 2 year terms, but representatives from key community and senior service agencies (Aging and Disability Resource Center, Foster Grandparent Program, University of Wisconsin County Extension Office) may serve unlimited terms or designate another person from their agency to serve on the RSVP Advisory Council.

Annually, a subcommittee of the Advisory Council takes the lead in planning and carrying out a recognition event for all RSVP volunteers. Each year the full Advisory Council determines an area of evaluation of an aspect of the project. In recent years the evaluations have included: focus groups of RSVP volunteers to evaluate recruitment and placement assistance of the project, a survey of stations to determine quality of service from the project, and collection of suggestions from volunteers in the direct service programs (Reading Coaches for Kids and BABES) to determine ways to improve their volunteer experiences. The Advisory Council is currently working with RSVP staff to further develop and expand policy and procedures manuals for the overall operation of the project to make any future transition of new staff easier.

Organizational Capability

Fiscal Management -- The RSVP Program Director and the Volunteer Center Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all RSVP financial requirements and managing project related records. As the sponsor agency for RSVP of Brown County, the Volunteer Center has maintained a financial management system with documented policies and procedures that meet federal requirements and general not-for-profit agency standards. These policies and procedures were developed and are maintained by ongoing certified public accountant (CPA) representation on the Volunteer Center Board of Directors.

The Volunteer Center uses Quick Books Pro for the accounting system and a volunteer with bookkeeping experience prepares the checks for the agency. The Volunteer Center contracts with an accounting firm to provide monthly review and reconciliation of financial records and provide monthly financial reports. The treasurer of the Board of Directors, a position required to be filled by a CPA, signs the agency checks and reviews all financial reports. The treasurer also presents the monthly financial reports to the full Board of Directors for approval. The Volunteer Center has not

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only managed the financial aspect of RSVP for over 35 years along with other local and state grants, but has in recent years administered funding from the Points of Light Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education.

The agency accounting system on Quick Books keeps separate line item accounts for each funding source of revenue and breakdowns of expenses by agency programs to easily generate information for required reports and identify non-federal cash resources for the RSVP project. All agency staff members are required to complete weekly timesheets that are signed by their supervisors. These timesheets require breakdown of hours into fundraising time and direct project time so excess non-federal funds can be documented through Quick Book payroll records. The time of current RSVP staff is dedicated 100% to the RSVP grant so no breakdown of time by multiple project cost is required. Any project staff reimbursements are recorded on the Agency Staff Reimbursement Form with attached documentation, approval of supervisor, and indication of program and expense line item. Currently, travel reimbursement is available to RSVP volunteers as a direct expense. Each RSVP volunteer who claims travel reimbursement is required to submit a RSVP Travel Reimbursement Forms with the signature of the station supervisor included. All project expenses require source documentation (vouchers, invoices, etc.) in order for a payment to be made. The RSVP Director periodically (at least quarterly) reviews agency financial reports to ensure RSVP income and expenses are correctly documented.

All in-kind donations for the agency are recorded on voucher forms that include name of donor, description of contribution, date given, value of contribution, signature of donor, signature of agency person accepting the contribution, statement that the donation is or is not from other federal sources, and clarification if the donation is designated for a specific program. The in-kind donations are maintained in accounting records. The in-kind values are allocated to agency programs at the end of the fiscal year and documented on the financial reports and 990 Form.

Programmatic Management -- The RSVP Program Director is responsible for maintaining all RSVP programmatic records. Information and data from RSVP Focus Area programs will be maintained on an ongoing basis at the RSVP office. RSVP staff currently uses Volunteer Works to keep track of information on all RSVP volunteers and is updating the data system to designate priority and secondary volunteer assignments to make it possible to count each volunteer in only one Focus Area.

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An end of the year report on the overall community impact of the RSVP volunteers will be prepared for the RSVP Advisory Council and Volunteer Center Board of Directors. The collected data is used by staff, RSVP Advisory Council, and sponsor Board of Directors to develop promotional materials, suggest program improvements, and in general share the impacts of RSVP with potential funding sources and contacts in the community. Case statements for RSVP, Reading Coaches for Kids and the BABES Program were prepared to provide RSVP Advisory Council and sponsor Board of Directors with a better knowledge of these services. A case statement for the Veterans Services of RSVP is currently being written.

Policies and Procedures -- The Volunteer Center maintains a Financial Policies and Procedures handbook that was last fully revised in 2011. This handbook includes general accounting policies which the agency follows and management process for assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses, and the annual budget. The handbook also includes directions for retention of records and fundraising policies. Since the RSVP project operates as a program of the Volunteer Center, these policies and procedures include compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and applicable OMB circulars.

RSVP of Brown County has written policies and procedures on programmatic management of the project but these policies and procedures were in different documents, such as the RSVP volunteer handbook, agency (station) guidelines, Volunteer Center Administrative Manual, and online records. In 2013, the RSVP Advisory Council decided to create one RSVP operational handbook that includes all programmatic policies and procedures, job duties related to RSVP activities, timelines for annual events, and step-by-step instructions for everything from registering a new volunteer to completing the annual Project Progress Report. The RSVP Advisory Council and RSVP staff is currently working on this handbook to ensure the sustainability of the project and ease in training new project staff.

Project Staff - The staff of RSVP of Brown County currently consists of a full-time director and a full time Reading Coaches for Kids Program Coordinator. The program director has 26 years experience in the position and is supervised by the Executive Director of the Volunteer Center. The RSVP Director has experience in placing volunteers in the community; managing the BABES program by training volunteers and working with school staff to schedule the program; training and managing volunteers to help military veterans with job seeking skills; maintaining or developing communication with stations or potential stations; managing project budget; working with the RSVP Advisory Council and

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Volunteer Center Board of Directors; providing information about RSVP to the community; representing RSVP at community events; arranging for volunteer recognition; researching community needs and preparing grant applications; managing an accurate project data base; devising project impact measurement methods; collecting project impact data; completing reports for funding sources; and helping with training of new volunteer managers locally and in the state. The RSVP Director is currently the treasurer and a past president of the Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators Association (WVCA), the state professional organization for managers of volunteer programs. Before working with RSVP, the RSVP director worked with management of federal job training programs and in secondary education.

The current Reading Coaches for Kids Coordinator started in 2001, served until 2006, and returned to the position in 2009 after managing a different school program at the Volunteer Center for the three years. The Reading Coaches for Kids Coordinator is supervised by the RSVP Director and has substantial experience with recruiting, screening, training, and supporting volunteer literacy tutors; developing communication with school personnel; promoting the Reading Coaches for Kids Program and RSVP in general in the community; working with the RSVP Advisory Council to provide guidance to the program; being a support to other volunteer managers through leadership in role in the local and state volunteer managers associations; and maintaining accurate records for the Reading Coaches Program. The Reading Coaches for Kids Coordinator is also the treasurer for the Bay Area Managers of Volunteer Services, the local professional organization for managers of volunteer programs and the vice president for the Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators Association. Before employment with RSVP, the Reading Coaches for Kids Coordinator worked in administration of a corporate training program and maintained the education library at the company.

The sponsor Executive Director provides backup assistance to RSVP if the program director is unavailable, researches grants and foundations for RSVP funding, writes additional grant applications, and works with the RSVP Director to develop an annual funding development plan for RSVP. The Executive Director also promotes RSVP at community presentations and through membership in community organizations and committees. The Volunteer Center Community Relations Director works with RSVP staff to help develop promotional materials, arranges media coverage, updates RSVP information on the agency website, and promotes RSVP through general agency marketing. All positions at the Volunteer Center are covered by the agency personnel policies and have an annual

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review which includes staff development goals. In addition to serving on the RSVP Advisory Council, RSVP volunteers help with entering project information in the data base, help prepare travel reimbursement checks for volunteers, work with the Advisory Council to prepare a recognition event, assist with follow up of volunteers, and assist staff with project promotion in the community.

Other

Not Applicable

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

Not Applicable