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Executive Summary

An estimated 250 RSVP volunteers will serve. Some of their activities will include volunteer drivers to medical appointments, meal delivery for MOW's, food bank request operators, exercise leaders, health education leaders, and friendly visitors for isolated at risk seniors. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant at least seventy five percent of those seniors who received these volunteer services will be able to age in place and will see themselves as having increased social supports. The CNCS federal investment of \$59,063 will be supplemented by \$182,389.

Strengthening Communities

Ocean County, located in the central eastern section of New Jersey, is the second largest county in New Jersey. In terms of physical size, Ocean County is six hundred and thirty-eight miles in area, and was the fastest growing county in New Jersey for the period of 1990-2000. Ocean County is unique with its 90 adult communities, 36 long term care facilities, 36 alternative living facilities, and 29 low income/subsidized senior and disabled housing complexes. A large number of older adults who currently reside in Ocean County migrated here for their retirement. Ocean County ranks number one in New Jersey with the highest percentage of population in the sixty plus age categories. This data was provided by the Ocean County Office of Senior Services 2013-2015 Area Plan Contract Summary. The 2010 census information shows Ocean County's 60+ population at 27.2% of the total with 157,064 individuals. The 65+ cohort accounts for 21% of the total population with 121,104 people. One of the fastest growing segments of the sixty plus population in Ocean County is the eighty-five and over cohort. This group which numbered 8,697 in 1990, increased to 14,914 in 2000 and 19,610 in 2010. The Census also tells us that Ocean County is number two in the state for persons 65+ experiencing isolation. According to the 2010 census updates, 5.3% of persons sixty and over have incomes below the poverty level. In today's economic downturn, many older residents, mostly women, cannot make ends meet to achieve economic security. Elders' fixed incomes can't cover the rising cost of housing, healthcare, fuel, and utility expenses. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) continuously reviews community needs. By reviewing assessments such as those produced by the United Way of Ocean County and other aid organizations, RSVP has developed an understanding of Ocean County's community needs. Healthy Futures, aiding seniors to age in place, and meeting the needs of the high percentage of seniors who reside here is the goal of our program. Since Ocean County has the highest senior population in the state our focus is to help maintain

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Healthy Futures for our vulnerable seniors. Our RSVP senior volunteers are a valuable resource to the community. We currently work with approximately twenty five local nonprofit or community groups. Fifteen groups are aligned with addressing the CNS focus area in the Healthy Futures category. According to Community Services of Ocean County MOW's (Meals on Wheels) provides home delivered meals to 1,365 clients weekly and an additional 200 clients are served on weekends and holidays. Nutrition support is a key ingredient to good health for older adults. A survey of current congregate nutrition site participants shows that 73% are at moderate/high nutritional risk and 93% of home delivered meals clients are at moderate/high nutritional risk. Our volunteers not only deliver meals to individuals but they often become the only person who sees these individuals who are homebound on a daily basis. A random survey is given out to MOW's recipients to gauge if they are satisfied with the service and if they believe this program helps them to remain in their homes. In addition to tracking the client satisfaction of the MOW's program the amount of meals delivered to homebound seniors is tracked and collected by the RSVP program staff. Ocean County Hunger Relief serves an average of 2,500 people each month. This outreach is possible in part due to the effort of our RSVP volunteers who take incoming phone calls from people looking for emergency food. After taking the initial application for emergency food the volunteer then works in conjunction with Hunger Relief to arrange for a food basket and lets the client know when and where the food will be available to them. A count of incoming calls and how many of them are seniors is kept and calculated monthly.

We work with three care rings which are community based volunteer efforts set up in individual retirement communities. These care rings arrange for homebound people to get door to door transportation, from an RSVP volunteer, in order to get to local doctor appointments. Transportation has consistently been the number one need identified by local seniors during public needs assessment hearings. Over six hundred trips were provided by RSVP volunteers last year. Approximately 20% of the county's senior population does not drive. They are identified to be the most vulnerable and at risk population within the senior community. The amount of trips is recorded each day by the station coordinator in addition to random surveys that are given to the seniors who are using the service. The volunteer hours, trips made, and surveys are sent to the RSVP office monthly.

Ocean County is ranked number two in the state of New Jersey with 137,762 individuals eligible for Medicare. SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) is designed to assist Medicare enrollees; SHIP counselors are able to assist enrollees in selecting coverage and answering questions about the Medicare coverage. Our local Office of Senior Services coordinates SHIP and our RSVP volunteers are

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part of the 45 certified SHIP counselors. The number of hours and the amount of people counseled is recorded by the Office of Senior Services in addition to a random survey that goes out to the people who received SHIP counseling asking if their questions and needs were met during their time with the SHIP volunteer.

Move Today and Chronic Disease Self-Management programs both address the rapidly aging population, together with long projections of life expectancy, underscores the critical need to assist individuals in practicing healthy behaviors. Move Today and Chronic Disease Self-Management are peer lead groups by RSVP volunteers that meet once or twice a week for a minimum of six weeks. Both courses are designed to increase well-being and to help participants make behavioral changes to help support a healthier lifestyle. The group leaders/RSVP volunteers are taking attendance for each class. Each participant is asked at the start of the program what they hope to accomplish and this is reevaluated at the completion of the course to see if their individual goals were met. The information is collected and shared with RSVP staff at the completion of each course.

The AARP money management program helps seniors to create budgets and write their checks monthly. The Bill Payer Program, as part of the AARP Foundation Money Management Program, recruits and trains RSVP volunteers to provide assistance to low income people who are able to make responsible decisions about their financial affairs but who may be physically or mentally impaired. These individuals need assistance with monthly bill paying and record keeping. The bill payer volunteer helps the client with: establishing a budget; opening, organizing and sending out mail; check writing (all checks are signed by the client); and balancing the checkbook. About 4.80% of families and 7.00% of the population are below the poverty line, including 10.00% of those under age 18 and 5.60% of those ages 65 or over. Without having someone to help with their monthly bills these seniors would be unable to remain in their homes and often the houses they own would be at risk for tax liens or foreclosure. This program collects participant information by a phone call survey since these seniors are having trouble with managing paperwork. They are asked if this program helps them to feel like they have the support needed to remain in their homes and to continue to live independently.

RSVP in collaboration with the healthy future service activities is able to help so many local area seniors remain in their homes. Without these programs/volunteers many seniors believe that they would not have a network that allows for them to remain in their homes and age in place. These volunteers/programs help our seniors feel that they have the supports needed to age in place. Our

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RSVP program has a proven track record over the last 30 years of managing this program successfully. Over fifty percent of our volunteers have been with us for ten years or longer. Our RSVP program is directed by a full time person and supported by a full time program assistant in addition to a supervisor who oversees the program. There is ongoing communication between the volunteer coordinators of each project and RSVP's program staff. The Advisory Council invites Station Coordinators to monthly meetings. This will provide an efficient way for the Advisory Council to have up to date information on the goals and needs of the stations. It also will provide a platform for bringing local area nonprofits together to better understand the goals of RSVP's involvement in strengthening our community. Our RSVP program has a long standing established relationship with our volunteers, stations, and station coordinators. We are able to visit volunteers and stations to ensure that the RSVP volunteers are assigned and the program regulations are being followed. RSVP uses the Volunteer Reporter program in order to manage most of its data for ongoing program use. RSVP of Ocean County also keeps paper files in order to remain updated on all of our volunteers and stations. We work with station coordinators on a monthly basis in order to collect data from individual stations. This year we were able to focus on gathering as many e-mail addresses as possible for our current volunteer base in order to make communication with volunteers easier and less expensive. We use a satisfaction survey that goes out to all of our volunteers in addition to sending out interest surveys to make sure we are addressing the needs and interests of our volunteers. These surveys are tools that let us know where our volunteers stand and they point out areas that may need to be addressed. These tools allow us to reach out to our volunteers yearly and help contribute to our long retention of volunteers.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP of Ocean County is able to engage RSVP volunteers as catalysts for volunteerism to promote and strengthen community connections in several ways. RSVP has a Speaker's Bureau, keeps a special events call list, and operates with an Advisory Council. Our Advisory Council continually promotes our program to individual groups. The Advisory Council consists of RSVP volunteers, corporate representatives, and station representatives from the local area non-profits that our program works with. The Speaker's Bureau addresses local area groups in order to promote the program. These volunteers help the Program Director by addressing community groups as requested and through assistance in arranging to have organizations welcome an RSVP speaker to share the program's mission. We have found that potential volunteers are very interested in hearing personal stories from other volunteers and enjoy learning about someones individual experience volunteering.

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Using volunteers to recruit volunteers has been successful for our program.

We keep a list of RSVP volunteers who will attend local health fairs and other one-time events to represent RSVP. Several times a month, especially during the spring and fall months, volunteers attend Senior Health Fairs and Senior Expos to promote RSVP by distributing literature which describes RSVP and the volunteer opportunities available. RSVP has participated in many expos and senior fairs throughout the year including: the Senior Care Expo, Toms River, NJ; Silver Ridge Park West Clubhouse, Toms River, NJ; Ocean Co. Customer/Community Forum, Lakewood, NJ; Greenbriar Safety Fair, Brick, NJ; Little Egg Harbor Senior Fair, Little Egg Harbor, NJ; Carnival of Information, Ocean Acres Community Center, Manahawkin, NJ; Older Adult Traffic & Safety Fair, Toms river, NJ; Original Leisure Village Health Fair, Lakewood, NJ; St. Francis Senior Services Health & Safety Fair, Brant Beach, NJ; Geriatric Health Fair at Ocean Medical Center, Brick, NJ; Ocean County Day, Toms River Branch Library, Toms River, NJ; Jackson Senior Center, Jackson, NJ; and the United Way of Ocean County, Toms River, NJ.

Throughout the year, RSVP information flyers are available at The County Connection, located in the Ocean County Mall in Toms River, NJ and at all 22 branches of the Ocean County Library system. The RSVP director also markets RSVP to Community groups, organizations, radio, and news programs as requested.

RSVP advertises on the Volunteer Match website making it easy to find a way to make a difference by location, expertise, or availability. As the #1 result for 'volunteer' on Google and Yahoo!, the Volunteer Match network regularly welcomes more than 850,000 monthly visitors and has become the preferred volunteer recruiting service for tens of thousands of participating nonprofits.

The ad journal used for our annual volunteer recognition luncheon, is our largest fundraising activity and will be distributed to approximately 250 RSVP volunteers at our Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, as well as to hundreds of seniors and other individuals who attend local health fairs, senior expos and other events throughout the year in Ocean County in which RSVP participates.

RSVP works with approximately 25 local non-profit agencies and a large network of volunteers in Ocean County. These volunteers let others know about the RSVP program and are willing to share

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their own personal volunteer experiences. Word of mouth, e-mail, RSVP hosted events, and mailings all help to deliver our message of engaging volunteers to better our community.

Once a person is interested in volunteering or learning more about RSVP in Ocean County they are invited into the RSVP office for a one on one meeting with the Program Director. This is a chance to educate each person individually about our program, talk about our focus area, Healthy Futures, and the needs that our program addresses within the county. This is also a chance for the Director to speak with each volunteer so they can be matched to the best volunteer assignment for them. Once a volunteer begins, each station requires individual training in addition to the RSVP Orientation the is provided to educate each new RSVP volunteer in their first year of service.

RSVP of Ocean County actively recognizes the contributions of its volunteers in an annual recognition luncheon event. We invite approximately 200 volunteers who served 50 or more hours during the year to the luncheon. RSVP publishes an Ad Journal each year to help defray the cost of the luncheon. The proceeds not only help defray this cost but also supplements transportation mileage reimbursement costs for RSVP volunteers throughout the year. We provide mileage reimbursement so that our senior volunteers, many of whom are on a limited income, may continue to provide service without straining their budgets.

Our RSVP program has a proven track record over the last 30 years of managing this program successfully. Over fifty percent of our volunteers have been with us for ten years or longer.

Program Management

The Ocean County Board of Social Services, which is the largest service provider in Ocean County, has supported the RSVP Program for the past 30 years. The Ocean County Board of Social Services has been serving residents of Ocean County since 1932. The Board currently administers over 60 programs providing a range of services including General Assistance, SNAP (formely known as food stamps), Medicaid, and Social Services. Last year the agency served approximately 113,000 area residents.

RSVP is run by a Program Director, a Program Assistant, and is overseen by a Supervisor of Social Work. The Director of RSVP attends the Office of Senior Services Project Directors meetings, Health Ease meetings for the county, and RSVP's Advisory Council which discusses the needs of local seniors as well as community needs at monthly, quarterly, or bi monthly meetings. The Director also provides monthly and quarterly reports as required. RSVP volunteer stations that address healthy futures are the programs focus.

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There is ongoing communication between the volunteer coordinators of each project and RSVP's program staff. The Advisory Council invites Station Coordinators to monthly meetings. This provides an efficient way for the Advisory Council to have up to date information on the goals and needs of the stations. It also will provide a platform for bringing local area nonprofits together to better understand the goals of RSVP involvement in strengthening our community.

Our RSVP program has a long standing established relationship with our volunteers, stations, and station coordinators. We are able to visit volunteers and stations to ensure that the RSVP volunteers are assigned and the program regulations are being followed. Our volunteers have all been given the Program Directors and Assistants direct phone numbers for any concerns that might arise at a volunteer location. Our Station coordinators' are all invited to attend our monthly advisory council meetings to share their needs with the Council and to talk about the current activities taking place at their stations. Each volunteer is made aware of program guidelines in an effort to minimize noncompliance.

RSVP uses the Volunteer Reporter program in order to manage most of its data for ongoing program use. RSVP of Ocean County also keeps paper files in order to remain updated on all of our volunteers and stations. We work with station coordinators on a monthly basis in order to collect data from individual stations. This year we were able to focus on gathering as many e-mail addresses as possible for our current volunteer base in order to make communication with volunteers easier and less expensive. We conduct a satisfaction survey that goes out to all of our volunteers in addition to sending out interest surveys to make sure we are addressing the needs and interests of our volunteers. These surveys are tools that let us know where our volunteers stand and they point out areas that may need to be addressed. These tools allow us to reach out to our volunteers yearly and help contribute to our long retention of volunteers. Each RSVP volunteer is welcomed to reach out to RSVP staff if the volunteer assignment is not meeting their expectations. We also conduct a self-assessment with our Advisory Council yearly. The assessment this year indicated that we had a need for an Advisory Council Manual, which is now available.

Our program has an established record of retaining long standing volunteers so we are trying to make program changes with as little disruption as possible. Our new volunteer orientation this year will include an invitation to any volunteers who are currently volunteering at a graduating station and would like to hear what opportunities are available from the stations that will be aligned with our focus area. This will give the volunteers a chance to hear what volunteer opportunities are available to those who are interested in continuing with RSVP. A letter is being sent to all current RSVP

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volunteers to let them know about our program focus and the changes the program is adopting in order to help local area seniors to remain in their homes.

While Ocean County's RSVP program hasn't had a sole focus in the past on Healthy Future, addressing the needs of our large senior population has always been a part of our program. RSVP has been a valuable contributor to seniors receiving transportation to medical appointments through three different grassroots efforts in local senior communities that utilize many RSVP volunteers who contribute to these efforts. We have been able to track the amount of trips that are provided to homebound seniors. Six hundred trips were provided to Ocean County seniors last year. In addition to tracking the amount of trips we have also been successfully getting feedback via surveys that ask the seniors if this service helps in part to age in place. We also have a history of volunteers who provide food delivery for the Meals on Wheels program. We are able to report the number of meals delivered in addition to receiving feedback from the recipients as to whether they feel, with the help of this program, they are able to remain living in their homes longer than they could if this service was not available.

Our Advisory Council meets monthly to discuss program goals and projects. Our Council helps make connections for our program, refers volunteers, assists in making decisions about the program, supports RSVP events, and publicizes the program. The Advisory Council works to identify the needs within the county while aligning the projects with the Corporation's areas of focus in order to help guide the program. RSVP of Ocean County is in the process of engaging new members for our Advisory Council in order to develop an even more effective Council for the future. We have recently added some additional members and we continue to look for additional members that represent our current focus areas.

Organizational Capability

The Ocean County Board of Social Services (OCBSS) has been the sponsor for RSVP of Ocean County since its inception in 1982, demonstrating its capacity to manage the contract and program components. The Board provides the program with administrative services including maintenance, record management, mail room, voice and computer support, legal, fiscal, space, central supply and supervision, all of which contribute to the program's success. The OCBSS works cooperatively with RSVP to identify opportunities for program evaluation and enhancement. In addition, the Board provides and contracts for an additional \$188,000(est.) to support the program. The RSVP contract provides a portion of the Director's salary and the Board provides a full time clerical associate. This financial program supports a 30-year history and demonstrates the Board's commitment to the

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program as well as a capacity to support the program.

The mission of the Ocean County Board of Social Services is to serve residents of Ocean County in the administration of approximately 60 programs. The agency has expanded its mission to include a more pronounced emphasis on client responsibility and eventual self-sufficiency. The Ocean County Board of Social Services has been serving residents of Ocean County since 1932 and continues to commit to an ongoing record of excellence. The Ocean County Board of Social Services provides eligible county residents with financial, medical, and social services assistance. Assistance can be granted for emergency circumstances, as well as to meet ongoing needs. The agency has members who sit on approximately 84 external associations and committees in order to remain aware of community concerns.

The Ocean County Board of Social Services has a worthy record of retaining employees. The Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Administrator of Social Work, and the Supervisor of Social Work who all work to oversee this program have a combined total of over 75 years of service in the county. The program staff of RSVP consists of a Supervisor of Social Work with 10 years experience at the Board and the RSVP Director has been with the Board for 8 years with prior work experience in managing RSVP programs in other counties. RSVP's program assistant has been with the program for 10 years. The Director who runs the day to day operation of the program and the Program Assistant who manages all the program records are evaluated and overseen by a Supervisor of Social Work. The Board of Social Services provides training for employees as needed. The Agency is experienced at handling federal grants and has an accounting department that handles annual budgeting and is audited annually. The Board has an annual budget of over 55 million dollars.

RSVP in Ocean County is proud to offer our volunteers mileage reimbursement. Our volunteers who are interested in this benefit are able to be reimbursed for mileage at a rate of .30 a mile up to \$40 each month they volunteer their time. In addition to mileage reimbursement we also invite our volunteers to an annual recognition luncheon each year. Our volunteer recognition event is a formal luncheon. It provides a chance for RSVP of Ocean County as well as other County leaders to acknowledge and thank the RSVP volunteers for all they do.

Other

N/A

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PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A