

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County (CSSW), a nonprofit human services agency in Ann Arbor, Michigan, will sponsor RSVP Washtenaw. CSSW has sponsored RSVP Washtenaw since 1989. An estimated 300 RSVP volunteers will serve through CSSW's program. Some of their activities will include delivering meals to homebound seniors and individuals with disabilities, medical transportation, access to healthy, nutritious food through food pantries and community gardens, companionship for veterans and respite for care givers. Service will also be provided through a Tax Assistance Program, Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program, and in areas of environmental stewardship.

The primary focus of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, RSVP Washtenaw volunteers will have contributed to meet the health needs within the community, including access to care, aging in place, and addressing obesity. The result of volunteers' activities will:

- \* Increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible;
- \* Improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs.
- \* (Measure H8) Homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will receive food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently.
- \* (Measure H9) Homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will report increased social ties/perceived social support.

Special emphasis will be placed on support of veterans and their family members.

The CNCS federal investment of \$88,325 will be supplemented by \$108,125 in non-federal resources.

## Strengthening Communities

Located in southeast Michigan, approximately 30 miles west of Detroit, Washtenaw continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The county has a combination of rural, urban and suburban communities. The population is diverse in its socio-economic make-up. According to the US Census Bureau Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, county population is

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approximately 345,000; 22% are adults 55 years and older. The county population consists of 25% minorities. Thirty one percent of all households in the county make less than \$35,000 a year; the poverty rate in Washtenaw County is 13%. The 2011 Analysis of Economic Return on Investment in Washtenaw County Non-Profits report states that "...comparing numbers served in 2010 against historically-based projections, Food Gatherers served 94,285 meals at the Community Kitchen; a 35% increase. Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County (CSSW) provided financial services assistance (tax preparation, public benefits assistance, etc.) to 1997 seniors; an increase of 158%. The health clinic at the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County reported 796 unique patient visits; a 74% increase."

According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, 13% of individuals in Washtenaw County were living in poverty; the county's unemployment rate ranges between 6.6% and 9.4%. Washtenaw County has the highest cost of living in the state ([www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com)). The United Way of Washtenaw County has identified alleviating hunger and increasing access to healthy foods as a strategic area of focus. Cost is overwhelmingly cited as the major obstacle to eating fresh, healthy foods on a limited income. Food Gatherers (of Washtenaw County), along with Feeding America, the largest hunger relief organization in the US, published a landmark study Hunger in America 2010. That report indicated that people accessing emergency food in Washtenaw County increased 138% between 2006 and 2010. Of those receiving food annually from food pantries, 6,500 were seniors.

Major resources for hunger relief are the numerous food pantries whose commitment is to increase food access for low-income Washtenaw County residents. A primary source for Washtenaw County pantries is Food Gatherers, which coordinates food drives, leverages donations to purchase foodstuffs in bulk at reduced cost and last year "rescued" almost 2 million pounds of good and safe food that would have otherwise gone to waste, from 120 local grocers, restaurants and food businesses. During 2012, 532,491 pounds of food were distributed through CSSW' food banks alone. 37% of the Food Gatherer's food distribution in 2012 was fresh produce and 18% was high quality protein. Nearly 70% of Food Gatherers' labor and almost 100% of the pantries' labor is provided by volunteers.

Meals on Wheels programs reduce hunger and food insecurity by delivering complete, nutritious meals six days a week to homebound older adults and/or individuals with disabilities who are unable to shop and cook for themselves. These meals are delivered by volunteers. The Michigan Office of Services to the Aging "2009 Michigan Aging Information System NAPIS Participant and Service

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Report" reported that there are nearly 50,000 participants in Michigan's home-delivered meal (HDM) programs. During 2012, in Washtenaw County, Meals on Wheels programs in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor delivered well over 100,000 meals to approximately 650 clients, 42% of whom are living below poverty level; 35% are over 81. Meals on Wheels programs are expanding in rural areas of the county, and as Meals on Wheels is reliant on the utilization of volunteers, CSSW-RSVP will be able to expand and have an integral role to help support this growth.

RSVP Washtenaw intends to support the existing Meals on Wheels programs in Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter and Ypsilanti; two new partnerships will be formed with the Manchester and Northfield Township Meals on Wheels programs. Approximately thirty volunteers will be assigned to the identified Meals on Wheels programs; the RSVP volunteers will serve approximately 2,880 hours annually. The RSVP volunteers will be trained by the staff within the Meals on Wheels programs to ensure adequate education and volunteer satisfaction. Meals on Wheels recipients will benefit from receiving healthy, nutritious meals and experience a daily visit from an RSVP volunteer who may, in some instances, be a source of reassurance and increase the recipients' perception of social connectedness.

"About 44 million Americans provide 37 billion hours of unpaid, "informal" care each year for adult family members and friends with chronic illnesses or conditions that prevent them from handling daily activities such as bathing, managing medications or preparing meals on their own. Family caregivers, particularly women, provide over 75% of caregiving support in the United States. In 2007, the economic value of family caregivers' unpaid contributions was estimated to be approximately 375 billion dollars, which is how much it would cost to replace that care with paid services" (National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP (2008).

In the city of Ann Arbor, located in Washtenaw County, the annual median rate for care in an assisted living facility is estimated to be \$39,000.00; the median cost for that care in a nursing home is estimated at \$87,000. With the median income of Ann Arbor residents estimated at \$53,000 the cost of care is more than 50% of what people are earning, which makes volunteer respite care services for caregivers a most affordable option. It is estimated that "16% of caregivers are 65 years of age and older; 21% are blacks; 20% are Hispanic" (Peter Cynkar and Elizabeth Mendes, Gallop.com,2011). Translated to Washtenaw County, there are approximately 880 caregivers within the African

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American population and 293 caregivers within the Hispanic/Latino population. Existing research states that caregivers show higher levels of depression, higher levels of stress, increased risk for substance abuse, increased risk for heart disease, caregivers report more health issues and have lower levels of self care (Family Caregiver Alliance Fact Sheet, [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org), updated 2012). All these factors, with the addition of potential wage loss that caregivers may experience, demonstrate a need to provide respite services for the caregiver. CSSW has experienced an increase in requests for respite services so the community need is there, and RSVP volunteers will be recruited to meet the need and reduce the waitlist that currently exists.

The CSSW Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver Program (IVCP) provides respite services that may include: companionship, meal preparation, light chores and light homemaking through the utilization of volunteers this will enable the caregiver time to rest or do things that they would not have the opportunity to complete due to their daily caregiving responsibilities. The CSSW IVCP also provides support to caregivers who may not reside in close proximity to their loved one by matching a volunteer with the care recipient to decrease social isolation and help with errands such as grocery shopping or picking up prescriptions. The caregiver may experience a sense of relief knowing that someone is helping their loved one stay connected to the community and remain independent and in their home for as long as possible. The CSSW IVCP builds relationships and helps provide connections to the community that the care recipient may not otherwise experience. Caregivers who are provided with respite services reported the following: Nearly 40 % of caregivers report they have been providing care for 2-5 years while approximately 29% of caregivers have been providing care for 5-10 years; 77 % of caregivers report that the respite services they receive definitely enabled them to provide care longer than would otherwise be possible; 89% of caregivers reported that services helped them to be a better caregiver; nearly half of the caregivers of nursing home eligible care recipients indicated that the care recipient would be unable to remain at home without the support services (Administration on Aging, 2010). The cost of lost wages, pension and social security benefits for caregivers is estimated to be 3 trillion dollars (caregiving.com, 2011). The lost wages of caregivers directly impacts the caregiver, the community and the taxpayers. People who have to leave their employment due to care giving responsibilities have less income to pay existing expenses (rent, mortgage), less money to retire with (lost pension benefits) and less contributions to the federal programs (social security).

Transportation to medical appointments is a challenge for many seniors throughout Washtenaw

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County. The CSSW Medical Transportation Program provides transportation to medical appointments to seniors whose income, cognitive abilities (memory loss, hearing or vision impairment, anxiety, or lack of proximity to public transportation, limits their access to medical care. RSVP volunteers serve this population by volunteering to transport individuals, using their own vehicles or vehicles available through the program.

The Veterans Administration (VA) provides medical access transportation service to the Ann Arbor VA Hospital, but the service has serious limitations. Drivers are not allowed to pick up patients at residences unless they are in a wheelchair, meet certain income requirements, and are at least 30% disabled. Pick-ups are not allowed in Washtenaw County, except for in the village of Chelsea, where veterans meet the van at a store; that service will be phased out soon. RSVP volunteers and the CSSW Medical Transportation Program will help to fill in the gap in services.

The Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP) is designed to assist seniors and disabled individuals with navigating the health care system, explain benefits available through the programs, and to help them understand the options available through supplemental insurance programs. Trained MMAP counselors/volunteers meet one-on-one with individuals to help them understand and explore their options, and to provide them with the tools needed to make educated decisions about the programs that they choose. Most often, individuals are able to realize cost savings through the supplemental insurance they choose.

RSVP Washtenaw anticipates engaging approximately 300 volunteers during the 2014/2017 grant cycle. At a minimum 25% of RSVP Washtenaw volunteers will serve under the CNCS Primary Focus Area: Healthy Futures. RSVP volunteers will be placed in nonprofit organizations throughout the county that serve seniors, support aging in place and assist seniors with their ability to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Service activities will include improving access to healthy and nutritious food through home delivered meals and food pantries. Recipients will experience improved food security, a perception of increased social ties, social connectedness and support. Recipients will benefit from information distributed by the volunteers regarding nutrition and healthy food choices. Nutritious food will be available through community gardens, where volunteers will help community members understand the health benefits of growing food. RSVP volunteers will provide respite services to caregivers, relieving the pressures of constant care giving, and increasing the social connectedness and perceived social support both for the caregivers and for

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their family members. RSVP volunteers will provide transportation to medical appointments for veterans. RSVP volunteers, through the CSSW-Medicare and Medicaid Assistance Program, will assist older adults with access to information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits, resulting in a better understanding of health care benefit options that are available to them and, in most instances, reduce the out-of-pocket expenses of their health care costs.

RSVP Washtenaw is working to enhance existing partnerships and develop new partnerships with organizations that meet the needs of seniors throughout the county, especially in the focus areas identified by CNCS. Stations/partners understand the importance of measuring program impact, and have agreed to include questions from RSVP Washtenaw in their assessments, surveys and evaluations. RSVP volunteers are issued time sheets every month. Information recorded on the time sheets includes location of service, hours served, mileage (when appropriate), and meals received by the volunteers (when applicable). Time sheets are collected every month, reviewed for accuracy and recorded and reported into the Volunteer Information System (VIS) that is managed by the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging. CSSW has existing quality assurance procedures and reports that are required of all CSSW program areas on a monthly and quarterly basis. RSVP Washtenaw conducts a satisfaction survey of volunteers at the annual recognition luncheon. Surveys of recipients accessing food through two food pantries are conducted annually, as is a survey of recipients who shop at two of the thrift stores served by RSVP Washtenaw volunteers. In addition, a new evaluation instrument will be developed for RSVP volunteers, in order to measure the impact of service on the well being of the RSVP volunteers, satisfaction with their volunteer assignment and provide an opportunity for the volunteers to offer suggestions in regards to RSVP programming. The CSSW Caregiver Respite Program, MMAP, Medical Transportation and Chore Services programs conduct annual surveys and document activities; the results are readily available to RSVP. The program Advisory Council will contribute to the development of a strategy to measure the effectiveness of the volunteers.

RSVP Washtenaw is committed to serving veterans, their families, and the organizations that serve them. The needs of veterans and their families are considered throughout all aspects of RSVP, including services provided to them and their service to the community as a volunteer. There are more than 17,300 veterans living in Washtenaw County; the majority of whom live in or near rural communities, and have limited access to resources. Homebound veterans will be served through home delivered meal programs, food pantries, companionship services at the Ann Arbor VA, respite services

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in their homes, access to health insurance and benefits information through MMAP; veterans will be prioritized for medical transportation through a program initiative being developed by CSSW in cooperation with the local VA.

A coalition of veterans and organizations that serve them has been convened through RSVP to discuss the needs of this population and to strategize plans to provide services to them. The needs of veterans and goals of the coalition have been identified by the group's members; among those needs: access to information, networking opportunities, and programs that will bring older and younger veterans together. An immediate need identified by the coalition is for a centralized website designed for information sharing, which include resources for veterans (jobs, trainings, access to care, emergency housing, food security, benefits etc.) RSVP volunteers will assist by serving in organizations that meet the needs of veterans, support the goals to help veterans and develop a web site that is designed and utilized by and for veterans.

### **Recruitment and Development**

RSVP Washtenaw is staffed with a project director, a volunteer coordinator and an outreach coordinator. Staff members work together to ensure high quality volunteer assignments. The outreach coordinator meets individually with each RSVP station to ensure that the station meets the standards for involvement with RSVP. RSVP standards include: a clear mission statement, well-defined goals, meaningful and significant volunteer responsibilities, and a reputation in the community for success. Stations are chosen based on their capacity to work with volunteers and a demonstrated commitment to volunteer orientation regarding the station. Orientation should include: the agency's mission and goals, applicable training, and the significance of participation in the volunteer position. Potential stations are sought that are able to provide learning opportunities, leadership opportunities, and opportunities for volunteers to apply their skills. The outreach coordinator assists the stations with the development of volunteer position descriptions that match the skills and abilities of potential RSVP volunteers. RSVP volunteers bring valuable experience to their service positions; organizations that understand and value this experience are desirable. Stations are expected to have an intake process and evaluation process for volunteers. The outreach coordinator is available to the stations to assist with the development of any of these areas, as appropriate.

Ongoing training at the stations is expected; some organizations require extensive initial training, while others provide on-the-job training. RSVP of Washtenaw maintains an awareness of stations'

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training requirements and schedules. RSVP also will provide training regarding topics such as: the role of volunteers in the work place; working with diverse populations; confidentiality; volunteer wellness; using social media; avoiding elder abuse.

The RSVP volunteer coordinator meets individually with each potential RSVP volunteer prior to accepting them into the program. At this initial interview, the volunteer coordinator discusses volunteer's strengths, challenges, interests and abilities. This information is passed on to the stations coordinator prior to placement of the volunteer, further assisting with the placement of the volunteer. Evaluations regarding the effectiveness of the placement and the volunteers' satisfaction with their placement are completed after three months. Evaluations are based on the volunteer's position description, actual position duties, satisfaction of the volunteer and the volunteer's supervisor. Once the evaluation is completed and the placement is confirmed as appropriate, subsequent evaluations are completed annually. If there are performance issues that are not deemed satisfactory, an alternate placement or release is arranged, based on the needs, interests and skills of the volunteer.

According to the 2010 US Census Data ([aaa1b.com/news-events/publications/census-data/](http://aaa1b.com/news-events/publications/census-data/)), Washtenaw County has a population of 52,658 persons in the 60+ age range. Of that group, 15.77% are minorities (9.35% African American; .23% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 3.99% Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; 1.29% Hispanic/Latino; .9% Multi-racial). RSVP Washtenaw plans to recruit a volunteer pool of 23% minorities, a number more than reflective of the community. Building this volunteer pool will happen through targeted recruitment efforts, at community health fairs and events, churches and through civic organizations. For example, there are organizations within Washtenaw County that are very active in the LGBTQ communities; recruitment efforts will be increased to serve and to engage this population. Also present in Washtenaw County is a large community of people who are not fluent in speaking English, particularly people of Asian and/or Latino heritage. Services are already provided to these populations; recruitment efforts will target them as potential volunteers. RSVP will increase outreach efforts to recruit more minority volunteers by holding events in areas with a concentration of minority population. Participants will be offered opportunities that relate directly to their own neighbors and neighborhoods, where language skills and specific cultural understanding is particularly valuable.

Washtenaw County is home to 17,362 veterans, and also home to the Ann Arbor Veterans

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Administration Hospital (VA). A large number of veterans are served through programs and organizations that are active stations with RSVP. At the present time, twenty two veterans are serving through RSVP at the VA Hospital, as companions and office volunteers. Veterans serve through Meals on Wheels programs, in food pantries and at congregate meals. Veterans serve through CSSW's MMAP and Tax programs, as well as at numerous other stations. RSVP Washtenaw will increase efforts to provide veterans and their family members with opportunities to serve. Currently, a coalition group of veterans, their families, and organizations that serve veterans have been meeting to discuss increased outreach and support to local veterans by veterans. A number of initiatives have been identified as possible routes to increase the number of engaged RSVP veteran volunteers and service opportunities.

Retention of RSVP volunteers is strongest when volunteers feel needed, valued, engaged with their chosen program, and when they are able to bring their strengths and skills to the work that they are doing. There is research to suggest that older adults who are engaged in social and community activities maintain mental and physical health longer than other older adults (Musick and Wilson 2008). Volunteers tend to have a higher sense of self-esteem and personal control, both of which are associated with the adoption of good health behaviors. For some elderly, volunteering provides a distraction from their own physical or personal problems, encouraging a more positive attitude about their health. All these factors contribute to volunteers being more likely than others to say that they are in good or better health (Luoh and Herzog 2002; Piliavin and Siegl 2007; Krause 2009; Haski-Leventhal 2009). "Volunteering increases psychological well-being in part because it leads people to feel that they have an important role in society and that their existence is important"--a factor referred to as "mat-tering" by some researchers (Piliavin and Siegl 2007). This helps prevent or reduce depression. A Japanese study of older people found that volunteers had lower rates of depression than nonvolunteers (Sato and Demura 2003, cited in Haski-Leventhal 2009); some studies have documented similar findings for Americans (Musick and Wilson 2008; Li and Ferraro 2006).

One task of the RSVP staff is to ensure that the appropriate factors are in place to provide the most successful experience possible to volunteers. This is accomplished through carefully selected stations, meaningful volunteer experiences, appropriate orientation and training, well designed matches (volunteer with opportunity) and outreach through newsletters, emails and social media. Simple actions such as sending birthday cards, Valentine's cards, and/or condolence cards (as appropriate) go

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a long way toward expressing gratitude and appreciation toward volunteers.

RSVP Washtenaw hosts an annual luncheon honoring all volunteers and stations. Recognition awards are given to honor volunteers nominated by their station supervisors; awardees are listed in the quarterly newsletter, along with a statement about their nomination. Other events are also held throughout the year in collaboration with station events. A significant number of community businesses and organizations contribute valuable donations for the events, indicating strong support for the volunteers and the impact they make in the community. Volunteers receive RSVP pins, ecototes and other program-specific items to help them identify with and stay connected to the program.

Volunteers are also nominated for external community recognition awards, from program to the state levels. Two RSVP volunteers have been recognized as the State of Michigan Governor's Senior Volunteer of the Year Award in the past five years! Future nominations for awards such as those provided through Points of Light will be considered.

Each quarter, one to four volunteers are highlighted in the RSVP newsletter. Articles include information about the volunteers, a brief biography, a photograph at their service site, and information about the impact of their service. Along with the article about the volunteer, their assigned station is also highlighted, with information about the station's mission and service.

### **Program Management**

RSVP Washtenaw builds and maintains relationships with stations that closely reflect the needs of the community, based on input from focus groups, volunteers, the United Way of Washtenaw County, the State of Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, Area Agencies on Aging, CNCS, and other program service areas within the Senior Services Department of Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County. Measures are taken to ensure that stations are aware of RSVP program regulations. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) clearly define policies, responsibilities and expectations of stations and the RSVP program. MOUs are signed by the station directors as well as the station's volunteer supervisors. The RSVP outreach coordinator and the RSVP program director communicate often with station supervisors, to provide program support.

Prior to placement of RSVP volunteers at stations, the Outreach Coordinator clarifies the roles and responsibilities of volunteer positions available at the stations. Position descriptions are developed that

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clearly state the expectations of the service that will be provided by volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinator places volunteers in the respective position, and then follows up to confirm that the service provided by the volunteer is in keeping with the expectations of the position that was presented to them. RSVP Washtenaw surveys volunteers annually to determine whether the work they are doing is satisfactory and meets their expectations. A new instrument for surveying volunteers will be developed; included in this will be questions regarding the efficacy of their assignments.

The majority of RSVP Washtenaw's volunteers will be placed in the CNCS defined Focus Areas, with up to 30% of placements fitting into Community Needs. An assessment of current stations and their volunteer opportunities will be completed in order to define which stations do and do not meet the focus area requirements. Over the three year period, RSVP will work closely with stations that currently have volunteers who are not serving in a focus area, to recognize and create new service opportunities that will fit the skills and interests of their volunteers, while meeting the needs of the organizations. Beginning immediately, new volunteers will not be placed with current stations that do not fit into the CNCS focus areas in order to reduce future disruption. Some stations will be graduated through attrition; as their volunteers resign or move on, the station will be graduated. All efforts will be made to minimize the impact on volunteers currently serving through RSVP. Since all station MOU's were recently signed and remain valid through December 2015, efforts will be made to continue relationships through that time; however, stations will be informed that as of the end of December 2015, RSVP will no longer be able to place volunteers with stations that do not fit into one of the focus areas. This will provide ample time for stations to seek volunteers through other means. RSVP will also consult with its Advisory Council for guidance in working through this process.

CSSW has an extensive track record, including performance measuring, in the Primary Focus Area: Healthy Futures, particularly in its service to seniors. The organization has been a key player in the community since 1959; it has hosted RSVP since 1989. The Senior Services Department of CSSW hosts eight programs designed to serve the needs of seniors, including Adult Day Services, Grandparents as Parents, Medicare/Medicaid Assistance, Neighborhood Senior Services (including chore services and home safety services), Resource Advocacy, Respite Services, Tax Assistance Program and RSVP. As is evident by their titles, these programs address the various aspects of Healthy Futures. The department is funded through federal, state and local grants, and is successful in meeting the requirements of all funders, from data collection, through meeting performance

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measures and providing sound program management. The department utilizes volunteers in all aspects of programming, from administrative assistance through direct service

RSVP Washtenaw intends to establish an Advisory Council in compliance with federal regulations. Council members will be reflective of the community demographics, and will include representatives from other nonprofits, volunteers, and people with expertise in marketing, media, business, etc. The Advisory Council will meet quarterly with RSVP staff to provide advice and guidance on timely issues such as program evaluation and access to resources.

All stations are required to complete and submit MOUs prior to volunteers being placed with the organization. All current RSVP stations have MOUs that are in effect until December 2015. In September of 2015, stations that will be invited to continue their partnership with RSVP will be asked to sign new MOUs.

In order to prove eligibility to serve with RSVP, potential volunteers are asked to show proof of their age, usually with a drivers license or state issued identification card. In accordance with CSSW policy, State of Michigan ICHAT background checks are completed prior to placement with a station.

Further background checks are required for some stations; the stations are responsible for following through with that process.

### **Organizational Capability**

CSSW has sponsored RSVP of Washtenaw since 1989. CSSW prioritizes services to older adults, with a special focus on supporting seniors' ability to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible. CSSW, RSVP's sponsor agency, provides countywide leadership in professional, programmatic and fiscal management. The organization's infrastructure includes business, technological, human resource, and development management services with oversight and leadership provided by the CSSW Board of Directors. CSSW has chosen to participate in the accreditation process through the Council on Accreditation and most recently, March 2013, had accreditation expedited due to the excellence of agency compliance. The National Council on Accreditation (COA) accredits the agency in all program and fiscal areas. Since 1959, CSSW has demonstrated success in fiduciary management of nonprofit programs. It has been awarded fiduciary responsibility for many state and federal programs based on the agency's history and reputation in the community. CSSW completes a fiscal audit yearly and completes an OMB A-133 audit required for administration of federal programs. Personnel responsibilities and roles, internal policies, and purchasing procedures meet the state and/or federal mandates and the standards set forth by the Council on Accreditation. All CSSW

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program/service areas participate in the Continuous Quality Improvement process defined and monitored by the CSSW Quality Improvement Coordinator. This involves systematic policy and procedure review, formal and informal participant evaluation, record review and annual external audit review. Evaluation outcomes and measures are monitored on a regular basis by the CSSW Quality Assurance Director. Data, evaluation results and program outcomes are reviewed quarterly by the agency's quality improvement staff, and reports are provided to the CSSW Board of Directors.

RSVP Washtenaw surveys volunteers annually to determine their satisfaction and comfort with their placements. Volunteers are encouraged to express concerns to the RSVP Project Director and/or the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator. In addition, the RSVP Outreach Coordinator visits and tours the stations, with consideration for safe working conditions. State of Michigan background checks are completed on volunteers when they begin their service; more extensive background checks are administered by stations, as appropriate.

Stations are asked to provide RSVP with information about the impact of their service, through annual reports, surveys and activity logs. Volunteers are also asked if they perceive their service to be valuable. RSVP Washtenaw will develop a new assessment instrument to assist in the measurement of volunteers' service. A task of the newly restructured Advisory Council will be to assist with program evaluation and assessment, including volunteer safety and impact. The Michigan Association of RSVP Directors tracks statewide impact of volunteer activities. The statewide association operates through conference calls, emails, and an annual meeting to discuss topics of interest and programming, to develop ongoing training opportunities and evaluation methods.

Each year, RSVP Washtenaw works together with local nonprofits and community leadership organizations to determine significant community needs and to develop strategies to address those needs. Using data collected from stations, United Way and local organizations that serve the community, work plans are developed that are responsive to the needs of the community, particularly seniors. Performance measures and anticipated outcomes are created that are then assessed annually for impact. Accomplishments are reported to CNCS, the State of Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and Area Agency on Aging 1-B. RSVP Washtenaw also reports quarterly to the CSSW Office of Quality Improvement, which collects information for Board of Director reports and for the Council on Accreditation (COA).

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RSVP and CSSW have proven track records in the area of risk management. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure quality programming and sound fiscal management. Volunteers are provided with supplemental liability insurance through CIMA, which covers them in the event of an accidental injury while going to and/or from their service location as well as during their service.

RSVP Washtenaw utilizes the volunteer Information System (VIS), an on-line database developed by the State of Michigan for Senior Corps programs. Data regarding volunteer service, including hours, meals and location of service, is collected and entered monthly. Data is available for the program locally, regionally and statewide.

CSSW has established policies that address civil rights and equal opportunity practices. The policies are presented to employees through the human resources orientation that all employees must attend and are available for review in the CSSW employee manual that is provided to all employees for reference.

Each staff member of RSVP is required to undergo a FBI background check prior to employment as mandated by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). RSVP volunteers are required to have an ICHAT State of Michigan background check completed before they are assigned to their volunteer service. Additional background clearances ( Department of Human Service, FBI , sex offender) may be required for some volunteer assignments if those clearances are required by the RSVP station the completion of those background clearances are the responsibility of the RSVP station.

CSSW, the RSVP program sponsoring agency adheres to the standard practices and policies regarding employment and termination of staff in accordance with all federal and state mandated practices. Each staff member is provided, at time of initial interview, a job description and upon employment that job description is reviewed and signatures are required to document review by the employee and the supervisor of the employee. In addition, review of job description and employee performance evaluation is completed on an annual basis. Appropriate levels of education and experience are considered in the hiring process. Assistance is available to project staff with fiscal reporting, budgeting requirements, human resources and development. CSSW has an established staff grievance procedure. RSVP Project staff are employees of CSSW and are required to adhere to the CSSW policies

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and procedures; CSSW Human Resource personnel are available at all times to help with any clarification of CSSW policy and/or procedure if needed. The RSVP project director is employed full-time and reports to the director of the Senior Services Department.

Lawrence Voight, LMSW, is the CSSW President. Kathy Bonds, CPA, is the CSSW Director of Business and Finance and is responsible for all fiscal reporting and oversight of budget management. Dorothy Keskitalo, Director of the Senior Services Department, has 12 years of experience working with volunteers and program management. Jim Russo is CSSW's IT staff member, and is responsible for providing the RSVP program with technical support.

RSVP Washtenaw is staffed with a Project Director, an Outreach Coordinator and a Volunteer Coordinator. These staff members work together to ensure the program objectives are in compliance with all mandated requirements (state, federal, local). Margaret (Peggy) Harless is the RSVP Project Director. Mrs. Harless has extensive experience in program management and development, which include seven years with AmeriCorps programs. Mrs. Harless, has worked with all aspects of volunteer management in excess of thirty years and is responsible for the overall management of RSVP activities to include but not limited to: volunteer selection, recruitment, training and recognition, public relations projects, quality assurance, reporting accuracy and supervision of RSVP project staff. The RSVP Project Director collaborates with CSSW staff, volunteer stations, CNCS, Michigan Office of Services to the Aging and the soon to be CSSW Senior Service Advisory Council. These collaborations help ensure that the RSVP project program goals are met. Jacey VarnHagen is the RSVP Outreach (Stations) Coordinator, and has a background in Gerontology and Masters Degree in Nonprofit Leadership. The RSVP Outreach Coordinator establishes and maintains relationships with Washtenaw County nonprofit agencies working with RSVP volunteers and station staff; has an active role representing RSVP in the community. The RSVP Outreach Coordinator works to create a high level of visibility for the program, identifying and recruiting organizations/stations that respond to community needs and funder priorities. The RSVP Outreach Coordinator supports the stations in the development of volunteer opportunities and definition of volunteer assignments. The RSVP Outreach Coordinator works with each station to complete a Memorandum of Understanding that defines the roles and responsibilities of the RSVP station and the RSVP project in relation to the volunteer assignment activity and supervision. The RSVP Outreach Coordinator assists with the quarterly RSVP newsletter, public relations materials and volunteer recognition activities. Alia

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Sanders, the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator, has a B.S. in Sociology, and is a member of the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator manages the RSVP volunteer experience: recruitment, orientation, training, placement and retention. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator maintains effective working relationships with volunteers and station staff to ensure appropriate assignments of volunteers, which is based on the ability and interests of the volunteer and the needs and volunteer opportunities within the community station. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for interviewing volunteers and contacting the station supervisor for volunteer placement. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator assists with reporting, database management, RSVP newsletter and volunteer and station recognition events.

CSSW has mandated federal and state policies in place regarding risk management, personnel policies and procedures, accounting, purchasing, case review and corrective action. Human Resource policies are posted in the Employee Handbook which is given to each employee when they are hired. The HR Policy and Procedure Manual is available in the CSSW Senior Services Department. Policies and Procedures include affirmative action, equal opportunity, diversity, etc. Accounting procedures and policies include mandated federal and state policies and standard accounting principles. The National Council on Accreditation (COA) accredits the agency in all program and fiscal areas. Each CSSW program participates in the Continuous Quality Improvement process which is evaluated by COA, involving systematic policy and procedure review, formal and informal customer input, and evaluation. Data, evaluation results and outcomes are reviewed quarterly by the agency's quality improvement staff, and CSSW board members. The agency has outcome measures for all programs that are evaluated quarterly.

RSVP is housed in the Towsley Health Building on St. Joseph Mercy Health System's campus in Ann Arbor, MI. The facility includes offices for staff, a large common area for recognition events and trainings and multiple meeting rooms. Necessary equipment is readily available.

Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County (CSSW) is a private, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. CSSW began service to the community in 1959 as an extension of the Archdiocese of Detroit. The core values of the organization focus on: Dignity, Compassion, Preferential Option-Poverty and Stewardship. The mission of the organization: We Change Lives, We Seek Justice. The CSSW organizational vision is to help people in Washtenaw County live safe, meaningful and

## **Narratives**

independent lives, in a more just community. CSSW works to encourage a greater understanding, acceptance, and respect among people in our community by: advocating for the poor, the powerless, and the oppressed; preventing deterioration of individual and family life; enhancing and improving the quality of life for individuals and families. From its beginning with a staff of seven, CSSW targeted prevention services to high risk families and youth. During the 1960's, the agency doubled in size; joined the local United Way; assisted with the creation of Ozone House, SOS Crisis Center and the Whitmore Lake Health Clinic. The 1970's brought an opportunity to increase support services to single parents; outreach services to the elderly began in 1978. In the 1980's CSSW implemented additional parent aide service, substance abuse treatment and prevention service, respite to caregivers of the elderly and sponsorship of the Retired and Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP); Grandparents as Parents (GAP) began in 1992. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Partnership for Older Adults program was initiated in 2006 and in 2007, CSSW forged a partnership with Intentional Communities Washtenaw, to serve as its administrative center; provide services in response to a set of concerns and innovative solutions presented by a group of community stakeholders regarding the housing and supports necessary for people with developmental disabilities. A longstanding community organization, HelpSource, decided to cease its operations; CSSW was asked to continue three of its programs, Behavioral Health, Adult Day, and Supervised Visitation/Parent Exchange. In 2008, CSSW began supporting the Migrant ministry in Washtenaw County and was co-host to a regional conference with the Diocese on Human Trafficking. CSSW, through the years, has clearly demonstrated the ability to address the needs of the community, which has included providing thirty-five years of service to older adults in Washtenaw County. In January 2010 Neighborhood Senior Services (NSS) an independent non-profit organization with a 35-year history of service to older adults in the community, became a program of CSSW through a formal asset transfer agreement. At that time the CSSW/Older Adult Services Department was comprised of: respite services for caregivers, support groups and resources for grandparents raising their grandchildren, medicare/medicaid assistance (MMAP), tax assistance and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program(RSVP). The consolidation of the NSS programs: chore, home safety, elder and substance abuse prevention, medical transportation and resource advocacy and the CSSW/OAS programs has created a comprehensive Senior Services Department within CSSW. The CSSW/Senior Services Department provides a wide and diverse base of practical services designed to aid older adults in achieving their desire: to remain living independently and in their home for as long as possible. . CSSW completes a fiscal audit yearly and completes OMB A-133 audit required for administration of federal programs

# Narratives

**Other**

N/A

**PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

N/A