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Executive Summary

The Friends of Coulee Region Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Inc. (Coulee Region RSVP) was established in 1994, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, with the primary goals of providing financial management and program guidance to Coulee Region RSVP staff. Coulee Region RSVP now in its fortieth year, is a leader in volunteer services and an integral part of our community; fulfilling our mission of providing individuals ages 55 and better with meaningful volunteer experiences, allowing them an opportunity to give back to the community through service and collaboration with nonprofit organizations. Coulee Region RSVP, active in La Crosse and Monroe counties, manages an estimated 555 volunteers, assisting in over 75 area nonprofit organizations, has established our organization as a "first call" resource for volunteers. Our primary focus area of Healthy Futures, with work plan objectives in Aging in Place and Obesity and Food, assists elderly and low-income individuals with aging independently and gaining access to nutritious food through transportation services, companionship, and food delivery. Clients served will gain increased social ties and social support as a result of RSVP volunteer assistance and program participation. The Friends of Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. requests a CNCS federal investment of \$75,618.00 to assist us in addressing community needs and volunteer activities in all six CNCS service categories. The requested funds will be augmented by \$243,218.00 in additional resources. At the end of our three-year grant cycle, we anticipate that outcomes will meet or exceed all of our work plan goals, meeting the established needs of our community through volunteer service, enhancing the missions, performance, and success of educational institutions, veterans' agencies, disaster programs, social services agencies, environmental stewardship programs, food pantries, and community gardens throughout the region.

Strengthening Communities

The Coulee Region, designated as a Metropolitan Statistical Area by the U.S. Census Bureau, spans 1,354 square miles, includes both La Crosse and Monroe counties, consists of 53% urban and 46% rural populations. The Friends of Coulee Region Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Inc. (Coulee Region RSVP), located in La Crosse, WI, has proven to be a leader in volunteer services and an integral part of our community for over forty years. Coulee Region RSVP provides individuals ages 55 and better with meaningful volunteer experiences, allowing them the opportunity to contribute back to the community through service and collaboration with nonprofit agencies and organizations. Over 75 area nonprofit organizations throughout the Coulee Region consistently view RSVP's leadership in volunteer services as essential to their organizations' mission, performance, and success.

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Information provided by the 2012 Great Rivers United Way Community COMPASS Assessment strongly supports the need for continuation of Coulee Region RSVP programs in La Crosse and Monroe counties, stating, "It is important to keep in mind that in 2018, the first wave of baby boomers will turn 75 years old. Low maintenance housing, public transportation, and efficient healthcare are just some of the needs that aging communities are facing and will continue to face as large segments of the population grow older. Despite these increasing challenges, the positive contribution of older adults on our communities should not be overlooked. Older populations can provide rich intergenerational learning opportunities and a source of community volunteers and community action." The duality of our organization's ability to meet identified community needs by assisting seniors in our community with aging in place as well as integrating seniors into areas of service, enabling them to stay active, healthy, and engaged continues to be a unique perspective on volunteerism and one that is not easily replicated throughout our service area. While Coulee Region RSVP addresses and serves both local and nationally identified needs in conjunction with the strategic areas of impact outlined by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the primary focus area of our project is Healthy Futures. Coulee Region RSVP's conglomerate of Healthy Future Programs enriches the quality of life for those on the margins of our community, offering services that assist with aging in place and access to nutritious food. This is achieved through assisting seniors, veterans, those with mental and physical disabilities, and low-income individuals with gaining access to basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter as well as housing repairs, transportation, companionship, and safety.

According to a 2013 Corporation for National and Community Service website report, "millions of Americans face health problems and economic issues that reduce their quality of life. Nearly half of U.S. adults do not get the necessary preventive health services; have unhealthy eating habits due to poor access to affordable healthy food, and many individuals over 65 years of age require assistance to allow them to live independently in their homes during their golden years." Coulee Region RSVP's service area has a population of 161,561 residents, 14.3% seniors, 8.7% veterans, and 14.2% live below the poverty line (U.S. Census Quickfacts, 2013). La Crosse and Monroe counties' populations for individuals living in poverty are in fact, each independently higher than the state of Wisconsin's average (U.S. Census Quickfacts, 2013). According to the federal definition of poverty, 1 in 8 people in the Coulee Region are defined as poor. However, the 2012 Great Rivers United Way Community COMPASS Assessment provides a more accurate portrayal of 1 in 3, a figure determined by adjusting the poverty line to include the population of those making an income less than \$35,000 for a family of

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four. 2012 Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction data that indicates over 43% of students in our service area qualify for free or reduced lunch validates this statement; families with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level qualify for free meals while those with incomes below 185% qualify for reduced-price meals.

The 2012 Great Rivers United Way Community COMPASS identified health care access, transportation, and food availability as key issues in our communities, while food insecurity and senior housing have been identified as emerging issues. 55% of Community COMPASS respondents reported a need for transportation that crosses county borders especially for the elderly and low-income and 34% of seniors responding to the assessment indicated that their ability to meet basic needs of food, housing, and clothing was well below average. 40% of respondents stated that their ability to afford healthy food was fair to poor, while 14.5% indicated access to healthy food was fair to poor. 64.8% of COMPASS survey respondents expressed concern for obesity in our community, in relation to access and affordability to healthy food choices and inactivity. The adult obesity rate in the Coulee Region has increased by 16% in the last five years alone, with nearly 30% of the adult population currently obese. In addition, Monroe County is identified as a "food desert," an area where at least one third of the population has limited access to healthy food and according to the most recent Wisconsin Department of Health Services (2010) information, 30% of La Crosse and Monroe county residents age 65 and older live alone, which creates an increased need for supportive services. Adding to this, 63% of homes in the city of La Crosse are valued under \$100,000, and approximately 67% of homes were built prior to 1970, creating a large number of homes in dire need of critical repairs to ensure safe and independent living situations for seniors. The Coulee Region RSVP Handyman Program has calculated that one-third of program recipients were unable or found it difficult to come up with resources for "required" materials necessary for home fix it projects, with some individuals resorting to using postdated checks or neglecting to do critical repairs.

As indicated, there are enormous and continually growing needs present in our community for many individuals. Coulee Region RSVP provides these much-needed services to underserved populations in our community via a three-pronged approach of assistance, prevention, and intervention. Coulee Region RSVP meets national performance measures by addressing these needs locally through programs that provide transportation for patients to doctor's appointments, deliver meals or food packages to elderly or homebound individuals, provide home repairs which allows individuals to return home after a hospital or long-term care stay, and offer daily safety and socialization communication to seniors in our area. Serving rural and urban residents, the Healthy Futures

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strategic area encompasses Coulee Region RSVP's keystone programs: RSVP Handyman Program, RSVP Volunteer Driver Program, RSVP Telephone Reassurance Program, and RSVP Nutrition Programs. These programs provide a benefit to an infinite number of individuals as well as families in our community, offering services that make daily tasks easier, and connect people with programs and services that are integral for them to remain engaged in social interaction, safe, healthy, and independent.

Coulee Region RSVP Volunteer Drivers annually provide approximately 5,000 rides for individuals to and from medical and personal appointments. The Volunteer Driver Program is another avenue for seniors to remain active in service in our community, while providing those in need of a safe, reliable, and personal alternative mode of transportation, a sense of pride and independence. RSVP volunteers deliver food to over 200 homebound individuals, who are physically unable to pick up their own food packages, through collaborations with local food pantries, Mobile Meals and Home Delivered Meals Programs. Our Telephone Reassurance Program provides a safety check and serves as a catalyst for socialization for older adults and those with disabilities who live alone. As the sole volunteer telephone companion service in our area, Coulee Region RSVP volunteers call participants daily with calls averaging over an hour a day in conversation with these participants annually. This program provides assurance to family members knowing that someone is in contact with their loved one regularly and that they will be notified in case of an emergency. Coulee Region RSVP Handyman Program volunteers have helped over 70 individuals keep their homes in safe, working condition, and fulfilled requests from long-term care facilities, to make it possible for loved ones to return home. RSVP's myriad of programming continues to serve, strengthen, and support of our community through volunteerism. RSVP's Healthy Futures programs are immensely far reaching, providing benefits for those needing safe, personal, and reliable services, knowing they can depend on services of RSVP.

Coulee Region RSVP's Healthy Futures programs' service activities are aligned with and directly lead to national performance outputs and outcomes measures, categorized under the work plan objectives of Aging in Place and Obesity and food. Work plans in our primary focus area of Healthy Futures track the output of number of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities who receive food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently. These output numbers will be used to examine the outcome numbers of individuals who have increased social ties or perceived social support due to receiving services from Coulee Region RSVP and our volunteers, with the goal of increasing these outcome targets over the next three years. Survey instruments have been

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developed by RSVP staff and in conjunction with station supervisors and volunteer assistance, will be administered, collected, and managed. Surveys will be administered to clients receiving services from of Coulee Region RSVP's Healthy Futures' programs on an annual basis. Furthermore, RSVP Volunteer Driver mileage, food packages deliveries, friendly calls, meal deliveries, and individuals served for all programs will be tracked and recorded regularly.

In addition to our Healthy Futures programs, reaching out to veterans both as volunteers and as recipients of service is a crucial focus of our project. Coulee Region RSVP's volunteer base consists of 14% veterans, with many more who are part of military families. Veterans volunteering through Coulee Region RSVP account for over 12% of our annual volunteer service hours, serving the community not only through our Healthy Futures programs but also through other focus areas and capacity building projects. Coulee Region RSVP supports veterans through our collaborative relationships with veterans' organizations and veteran service agencies. Coulee Region RSVP partners with our area VA Hospital and outreach facilities to assist more than 6,000 local veterans annually with healthcare access, social interaction, and companionship. Coulee Region RSVP also collaborates with our local chapter of Operation Homefront, which provides support to active military service members and their families, and Freedom Honor Flight, which provides veterans an opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. to visit national memorials. RSVP encourages military veterans and families to share their skills and talents, allowing them to assist others in our community, by engaging them in volunteerism. RSVP also collaborates with these organizations and many more in our local community to host a 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance event that honors not only veterans but also local firefighters, first responders, and law enforcement personnel.

Recruitment and Development

Coulee Region RSVP continues to expand the diversity of our volunteer pool to directly reflect the population in our community, including veterans, baby boomers, and individuals with disabilities. La Crosse and Monroe counties have a 6.2% racial diversity, along with 7% of the population who primarily speak a language other than English (U.S. Census Quickfacts, 2013). Although the overall diversity of our community is somewhat limited, our volunteers serve a much higher percentage of individuals with disabilities, various racial and economic backgrounds as well as veterans than are reflected in our volunteer base, due to these individuals needing extra assistance and services. Diverse populations are served through both our Healthy Futures programs and other focus area service activities, and are often recruited into our volunteer pool after receiving services and witnessing the impact that RSVP volunteers and projects make in the community firsthand.

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Coulee Region RSVP volunteers range in age from 55 to 95 and are representative of the much larger population encompassing a myriad of educational backgrounds, religious views, income levels, racial backgrounds, sexual orientations, degrees of English language proficiency, and disabilities. In addition to hosting a diverse corps of volunteers, 14% of our volunteers are veterans, with many more who are part of military families, which exceeds our community percentage of veterans per population by 5.3%. We offer service opportunities to fit each volunteer's own interest and abilities. Assisting and encouraging individuals with different backgrounds to participate, find satisfaction, meaning, and purpose through serving as an RSVP volunteer while addressing community needs, volunteers improve their overall quality of life and gain a personal sense of pride. Through community involvement, new forms of camaraderie, and increased feelings of being valued, RSVP volunteers identify themselves as leaders in our community, within area agencies and among other volunteers through their commitment to service. The increased sense of self-worth and dedication is derived from knowing that they are not only improving the quality of their own lives, but also are continually meeting the needs and improving the lives of their neighbors while creating lasting relationships and finding personal satisfaction through service. The quality of our volunteers' lives are not only improved through their volunteerism, but also through the sharing and reflecting of their volunteer service stories as well as through recognition from RSVP staff, board members and the many local organizations who are thankful for the services of area volunteers. Articles published in our newsletter highlighting issues of importance for seniors and expressing gratitude from the community, encouraging participation in annual health and wellness programs, and hosting a volunteer recognition banquet are just a sampling of how we strive to make our volunteers' lives more enriching.

Two critical and interdependent components for a successful RSVP program are the development and recruitment of volunteers and volunteer stations. The Friends of Coulee Region RSVP, Inc., with a membership network of civic and senior connections, continues to build collaborative partnerships with local media to promote RSVP, our volunteers, programs, service opportunities, and volunteer recruitment. Articles in regional magazines and newspapers, special interest stories on radio and television talk shows highlighting RSVP volunteers and stations, showcasing volunteer achievements in our newsletter, meeting with area community leaders, legislators, and local governments, are all among the many venues in which Coulee Region RSVP continuously promotes our services and programs as a way of expanding our corps of volunteers. RSVP actively recruits volunteers electronically through various methods, which include social media, email, our own website

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(www.rsvplax.org), Volunteer Match, and Facebook, which has helped us engage baby boomers, the largest growing population of social media and internet users. Establishing a strong web presence has increased the connectivity of RSVP to a myriad of individuals, including a previously untapped group of technologically savvy volunteers. Our wide variety of volunteer stations and programs assures that we can effectively match volunteers with an activity that will suit their needs, meet their desire for involvement, utilize their existing talents, allow them to hone previous skills and build new skills. More importantly, connecting volunteers with a cause they truly care about gives them a sense of purpose and leadership within our community, knowing they are making a difference through their commitment to volunteer service.

Additional avenues by which Coulee Region RSVP continues to expand program recruitment include referrals from board members, staff organizational memberships, RSVP volunteers recruiting other volunteers, community leaders, medical and educational professionals, marketing and promotional brochures, station supervisors, community fairs, social service and interfaith organizations, as well as collaborating with local businesses to encourage "pro-bono" services. "Pro-bono" services occur when organizations or individuals offer services to RSVP and our volunteers; including printing, graphic design, advertising, or individual services that act to enhance the lives of volunteers by offering seminars, trainings, housing information, aging services, disability resources, community involvement opportunities for seniors, meals, or other particulars of gratitude.

Emphasis continues to be placed on recruiting a diverse population of volunteers by offering volunteer opportunities, which are appealing to them, fulfill identified community needs that are aligned with the CNCS strategic goals, and are available on a more manageable time commitment for individuals who are still working or have limited time to serve. These opportunities include but are not limited to one-time maximum impact events such as MLK Jr. Day of Service, 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, and special projects during Senior Corps Week. The integration of senior volunteers with other seniors is essential as well. To achieve this, staff seeks out agencies and volunteer opportunities that support and encourage integration of seniors with other seniors in the community, including activities targeted for seniors such as Stepping On classes, Medicare presentations, and annual aging and wellness conferences.

RSVP continues to collaborate with volunteer stations and individual volunteers to work with individuals with disabilities, allowing them to participate in a wide variety of volunteer opportunities; from serving in programs targeting homebound volunteerism to leaving the home and actively volunteering at various handicap accessible stations where there are a variety of volunteer needs.

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Older individuals and those with disabilities are given many opportunities to serve their community without traveling to an off-site volunteer station, instead being offered service projects that give them the comfort of serving their community from their home environment. Additionally, Coulee Region RSVP fosters on-going relationships with area aging agencies and disability resource centers to aid in the recruitment and development of volunteers and services as well as collectively addresses issues of senior health and aging throughout the community.

Essential to maintaining a successful volunteer relationship is having a mutual understanding of what is expected of the volunteer, the volunteer station, and RSVP staff; this ensures the appropriate tools, training, technical assistance and interests are in place for a quality experience. The Executive Director is responsible for making certain staff and volunteer station supervisors are providing adequate orientation and training for volunteers. All volunteers are personally guided in selecting a volunteer assignment that best meets their needs and abilities. At the time that volunteers are enrolled in the RSVP program, staff will personally meet with each perspective volunteer. The interview includes discussing with volunteers their previous employment and/or volunteer experiences, reasons for volunteering, areas of interest and any special accommodations that may be needed. Volunteer assignments are prioritized based on meeting national performance measurements through activities in the focus areas, community needs, as well as the requests of the volunteer, to foster positive results for the volunteer, the organization and the community. The volunteer, based on interest, need and availability, along with the RSVP staff, determine the volunteer placement and a referral is made to the volunteer station for an interview and consideration prior to placement. Provided the selection is a positive mutual fit, volunteers begin their service at the site at an agreed upon time. After the initial placement, in which an RSVP staff member accompanies the volunteer to their new volunteer station, Coulee Region RSVP staff will also do a follow-up (within two weeks); with both the volunteer and the site supervisor to ensure that the placement is a good match and to make any necessary adjustments.

As part of volunteer and station orientation, staff members review the RSVP program handbook and volunteer checklist with each volunteer or station, as well as present an overview of RSVP programs, responsibilities, and benefits such as the supplemental insurance provided for each volunteer through CIMA. As a way to further volunteer development, Coulee Region RSVP has incorporated a volunteer "meet and greet" session into the orientation procedure, to increase staff and volunteer familiarity, encourage communications among volunteers enrolled in our program and display the accessibility of the RSVP staff which ensures volunteers are being provided with the tools and technical assistance

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necessary to succeed in their volunteer placements. Volunteers are also encouraged to attend educational in-services and additional training sessions to further their leadership potential and improve their skills relevant to their volunteer placements and the six strategic areas outlined CNCS. RSVP volunteers have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their volunteer experiences and training, which continues to improve our program development and volunteer assignments. Volunteers are encouraged to complete surveys, which allow staff a means to measure satisfaction with the program and volunteer assignments. Through this process, RSVP staff is able to make necessary changes, improvements, and provide adequate guidance and training for volunteers and to coordinate placements that meet the needs of the community, the volunteer, and the organizations we serve. RSVP staff coordinates with station supervisors and volunteer leaders to offer training for volunteers specific to our Healthy Futures programs, including one-on-one and group training for new volunteers entering the RSVP Handyman Program, RSVP Volunteer Driver Program, and RSVP Telephone Reassurance Program. RSVP staff encourages and supplements site-specific training for volunteers who are part of nutrition, environmental stewardship, economic opportunities, education, disaster services, and veterans' programs.

The retention and recognition of volunteers is vital to the success of the program. Coulee Region RSVP strives for a high level of volunteer retention, consistently, maintaining a 98% retention rate by implementing specific strategies including providing a new volunteer "meet and greet" where volunteers can meet with other volunteers, offer input on program assessments, learn about RSVP's six focus areas and aligning service activities, and gain personal contact with staff. Because of the stellar reputation and community impact Coulee Region RSVP has established throughout our service areas, we are able to consistently augment our 98% retention rate by adding an average of 60 new volunteers annually to our already highly committed group of existing volunteers. Coulee Region RSVP provides a variety of methods of recognition that encourage and support the retention of volunteers. Our annual recognition banquet showcases the achievements of our volunteers and is attended by volunteers, local and state government officials, community leaders, representatives from our partnering organizations, station supervisors, board members, and staff. As a show of appreciation for the volunteers and the RSVP program, local businesses, and volunteer agencies provide donations of prizes and in-kind services for volunteer recognition. RSVP volunteers are nominated and recognized annually through programs and awards including the National Impact Service Awards, the Governor's Service Award, Presidential Service Awards, the Coulee Region RSVP 10,000 Hour Award, the Coulee Region RSVP 25,000 Hour Award, CRVC Outstanding Senior

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Volunteer of the Year Award, Driver of the Month, and individually at stations where RSVP volunteers serve. Coulee Region RSVP also recognizes annually our key community partners for their support with the Friends of the Coulee Region Partnership Award. Significant events of volunteers such as birthdays, illnesses, or loss of loved ones are recognized with cards and special notes from the staff. In addition, volunteer stations are encouraged to show their appreciation of the volunteers by sending thank you letters/notes to the individual volunteer.

Program Management

A Memorandum of Understanding/Partnership Agreement (MOU) between the Coulee Region RSVP and each volunteer station is signed prior to RSVP volunteers being placed at an organization, agreeing to the terms and conditions outlined in the document, which has been reviewed and approved by the Wisconsin State CNCS office as meeting all RSVP program requirements. MOU's are maintained and updated at a minimum every three years with collaborating organizations or as circumstances change and dictate. The MOU includes a section outlining the responsibilities of Coulee Region RSVP and the station, as well as basic provisions of the RSVP program, and other provision including guidance on religious and political activities, displacement of employees, accessibility, and reasonable accommodation, prohibition of discrimination, letters of agreement for in home volunteer services, and the separation from volunteer services protocol. By entering into an MOU, each station agrees to provide Coulee Region RSVP with the program data necessary or assist in the collection of data, allowing RSVP to accurately report on our performance output and outcome measurements. All volunteer stations and requests for volunteers are evaluated prior to becoming a station, confirming their nonprofit status, and accessing how the volunteer opportunities align with national performance measures and community needs. Coulee Region RSVP staff makes station visits to monitor volunteer training, as well as station's adherence to program requirements, and volunteer and station satisfactions. In addition, RSVP staff accompanies new volunteers on their first day of placement at a volunteer site to encourage and support the volunteer to assure a successful introduction is achieved for both the station and the volunteer. Coulee Region RSVP utilizes annual surveys to ascertain feedback to assist in programmatic improvements, measure program satisfaction as well as collect data relevant to performance measurements outputs and outcomes. Monthly board and staff meetings are also key in determining appropriateness of programs and measuring future program direction and success. All of these methods are conduits for ensuring a continuum of variety and quality volunteer stations and opportunities to meet the needs of the community. RSVP volunteers have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their volunteer experiences and

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training, which assists us in improving our program development and volunteer assignments. Volunteers are encouraged to complete surveys, which allow staff a means to measure satisfaction with the program and volunteer assignments. Through this process, RSVP staff is able to provide adequate guidance and training for volunteers and to coordinate placements that meet the needs of the community, the volunteer, and the organizations we serve. Coulee Region RSVP staff receive on-going verbal and written feedback from our volunteers regarding one-time event involvement, volunteer stations, projects, and organizations allowing the staff to periodically reevaluate programs, site involvement or one-time event assistance in order to correspond with the views of volunteers serving at these locations. Volunteers are assured that staff is available to address any volunteer concerns they may have. Through our volunteers, staff members are able to learn of new opportunities and challenges facing RSVP volunteer stations, and are able to hear the success stories of events, site placements and those individuals who feel they have found their niche in the world of volunteerism. Through this open communication with volunteers and volunteer stations Coulee Region RSVP is able to adapt to changes, update records, and provide solutions for volunteers and stations; ultimately creating the best volunteer placements for both the individual and the station. The annual volunteer station surveys, updated Memorandums Of Understandings, and required grant reporting, provides the needed assessment tools to evaluate the overall effectiveness of our program and determine if the goals and objectives of the program are being met. In 2011, Coulee Region RSVP administered a volunteer satisfaction survey, which showed that 99% of RSVP volunteers were satisfied with their volunteer experiences, with 64% being extremely satisfied. In addition, 96% of Coulee Region RSVP volunteers felt that they were making a meaningful impact in the community through their volunteer service, while 81% viewed themselves as leaders in the community because of their affiliation with RSVP and their commitment to volunteerism.

RSVP strives to not only meet the crucial needs of our community through our primary focus area but also through activities that are part of the other focus areas. Coulee Region RSVP utilizes internal and external newsletters, senior papers, email blasts, Facebook, station assistance, and word of mouth to promote volunteer and station recruitment in programs outside of the primary focus area.

Examples of other focus area service activities that Coulee Region RSVP volunteers participate in include assisting students with math and literary skills in the classroom, assisting with tax preparation for low-income individuals and area seniors in collaboration with AARP, and promoting reengaging seniors back into the workforce by teaching new skills and serving as a site for experience works volunteers. RSVP volunteers serve at the Habitat Restore and assist with building projects through

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Habitat for Humanity, help reduce landfill waste by reimaging surgical material from local medical facilities into needed patient care items, and educate community member about the importance of eating and cooking with healthy local foods. Coulee Region RSVP has work plans in five out of the six focus areas: Healthy Futures, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Opportunities, and Veterans & Military Families; and is cultivating relationships with our County Health and Emergency Services Departments, working alongside other community agencies to establish a local VOAD. With VOAD in place, RSVP will be able to establish an MOU with this entity and increase our opportunities to engage RSVP volunteers in Disaster Services and Preparedness projects locally, allowing our programs to cover the entire scope of national performance measures. RSVP continues to expand their volunteer base in both the primary focus area and other focus areas, including strengthening existing programs as well as recruiting new stations that have programs aligning with the CNCS focus areas.

Coulee Region RSVP's programs and volunteer placements align well within the parameters of the new performance measurements, despite this there are some volunteers and station projects that no longer fall under the scope of the outlined focus areas, capacity building, or other community priorities. To continue to effectively manage volunteers and stations, and address both nationally outlined and local needs, Coulee Region RSVP will begin the process of rightsizing our partnering organizations. For stations and projects that are not meeting crucial community needs and fall outside of our community priorities section, we will no longer actively recruit volunteers to be placed in these projects and when their current MOU expires, they will become a graduated station.

Volunteers, who are currently assisting in projects outside the new performance measures, will be given information about new volunteer opportunities that are available within our strategic areas and be encouraged to volunteer for projects that are aligned with our focus areas. If these opportunities do not appeal to them, emphasis will be placed on transitioning volunteers into capacity building assignments at their current placements. Rightsizing both our volunteer stations and our corps of volunteers will allow Coulee Region RSVP staff the ability to properly assist our projects that are meeting national and community needs and work to recruit additional stations and volunteers to assist in these capacities.

The Friends of the Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. Board of Directors provides primary fiscal and operational oversight of the program to insure that the Coulee Region RSVP continually addresses community needs and establishes new programs as dictated by the changing needs of our community to enhance the lives of the individuals and the volunteers we serve. The staff and Board of Directors

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various involvements in local businesses, financial institutions, human service agencies, healthcare organizations, law and academic institutions, provides a direct connection to the community as well as an understanding of the service areas' many needs. The Board of Directors talents and engagement runs deep throughout the community, allowing for changing needs to easily be recognized and addressed programmatically by RSVP staff. Coulee Region RSVP's strategic plan is reviewed annually and revised as needed. The plan incorporates the needs of the community as well as the requirements of CNCS. In addition, the board reviews all programs and activities at regular intervals against the vision and mission of RSVP. Written policies and procedures offer the structure and guidance necessary for an effective and efficient organization. Utilizing Community COMPASS Assessment needs data provided by Great Rivers United Way, area human service agencies and educational professionals, RSVP is able to use the information gleaned from these reports to determine the greatest needs for volunteers in our community and develop work plans addressing the identified needs. Coupled with this, RSVP does an annual assessment of its programs through surveys administered by RSVP staff to our volunteer station supervisors, measuring the impact RSVP programs have on the identified community needs as well as collecting designated output and outcome measurements. That said, the capacity to measure and respond to the changing needs of the organization and the community are in place, allowing for the continuous improvement of all systems and the continuance of providing quality services and programs for our seniors and for the community. Coulee Region RSVP has a record of accomplishment for actively and effectively managing volunteers for over 40 years. Coulee Region RSVP has been facilitating Healthy Futures programming as well as other focus area activities for years prior to these classifications being designated by the Corporation's strategic goals. RSVP's Volunteer Driver Program, Home Delivered Meals Programs, and food pantry support programs, all of which are currently Healthy Futures aligned programs, have been an essential part of Coulee Region RSVP's programming for over 20 years, giving our project the strong capability to recognize and meet both local and nationally determined needs, for long-term and sustainable impact. The management success and longevity of these programs, includes our ability to track and report performance measurement output and outcomes, many of which were previously tracked as part of our programming for impact under previous grant cycles. Coulee Region RSVP currently holds MOU's with over 75 organizations, 40% of which have been part of our programming activities for more than 20 years and are still pertinent to meeting both local and nationally defined community needs.

Coulee Region RSVP utilizes Volunteer Reporter Software to manage volunteers, stations, and

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program data including output and outcome measurements. Other means of data collection is achieved through monthly logs, volunteer reports, and station surveys, and entered into excel spreadsheets. Project resources are managed closely by the following accepted office procedures, as dictated by the Board of Directors and the Executive Director. The Executive Director along with the Board of Directors, a contracted CPA firm and independent auditors manage the financial and in-kind resources. A separate set of income and expense accounts are set up for the RSVP program. Monthly statements of expenses and revenues are available at the end of each month. The Coulee Region RSVP's Finance Committee Chairperson, along with the Executive Director, reviews these statements monthly, and presents them to the Board of Directors. In-kind resources are tracked upon donation and verified to make sure no federal funds were used in the process. There is a written office procedure and standard form to complete, tracking the receipt of any in-kind resources. Office supply requests are approved by the Executive Director and purchases are made by the Program Specialist. Coulee Region RSVP has well established program and resource management procedures in place, insuring the effective operation and management of the organization as a whole.

Organizational Capability

Coulee Region RSVP is governed by a 12-member board that is responsible for providing programmatic and financial oversight for the Coulee Region RSVP. All members of the Board of Directors actively participate in Coulee Region RSVP programs on a regular basis through volunteering, attending board meetings, acting as a resource in volunteer recruitment, program management, and fundraising activities. The Friends of the Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. Board of Directors provides sound practices and leadership including prudent program management and support, provisions for assessment and training, technical assistance and staff oversight. The Friends of Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. Board of Directors has the following committee structure in place to provide guidance and management for the RSVP programs: Finance, Personnel, Program Evaluation, Public Relations, Recognition, Legislative, and the Executive Committee. Each board member with expertise in the corresponding areas demonstrates their leadership by serving as chair of that committee. Coulee Region RSVP staff is comprised of the following: Executive Director, Assistant Director, and Program Specialist.

The Executive Director provides direct oversight of the daily operations of the program. The Executive Director, reporting directly to the Board of Directors, is responsible for the overall management and growth of the program. The Board of Directors, with the assistance of a CPA and independent auditors, provide the fiscal oversight of the program. This includes a monthly accounting meeting

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with Executive Director, Finance Committee Chairperson, and a representative of the accounting firm to ensure complete and accurate accounting of all fiscal activities in compliance with CNCS and federal and state regulations. The CPA firm retained by Coulee Region RSVP utilizes QuickBooks, Easy Accounting, and Tax Wise e-software to monitor all grant funds, and other revenue and expenses. The Executive Director, in concert with members of the Finance Committee solicit supplemental funding sources, both in-kind and cash contributions, to meet the required matching dollars for sustaining the program. Coulee Region RSVP acquires its non-federal financial share of additional funding from avenues including but not limited to grants from Gundersen Health System Community Contributions, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Ministry Fund, Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation, Inc., local public foundations, as well as individual and business donors, in-kind donations and United Way Venture Grants. In addition, Coulee Region RSVP participates in fundraising activities including a quilt raffle, holiday solicitation mailing, hosting a Rotary Lights Christmas tree, and our signature event, "Who Will be Smarter than a 5th Grader?" This event has consistently engaged new partnerships from many local businesses and individuals, enhanced existing ones with area elementary schools, local celebrities, and various forms of media, created additional community awareness of our program, while promoting education and intergenerational interaction and ultimately raising over \$100,000 of monetary support for Coulee Region RSVP over the last five years. The Friends of Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. has established an extensive resource development network for the RSVP program, which consistently provides more than the necessary matching funds to sustain the program, as well as assist in future expansion capabilities for the program.

The Board of Directors, acting in an advisory capacity, comprised of volunteers, local experts in the fields of aging and volunteerism, representatives from volunteer sites, business, and industry, meet monthly to provide direction, make program suggestions, recommend new volunteer opportunities, assist in identifying local financial resources, recruit volunteers, assist in the planning of volunteer recognition events, and to serve as a voice for RSVP volunteers. The Board of Directors provides assistance on personnel decisions, including formation and analysis of basic policies and retains legal responsibility and fiscal administration for the Coulee Region RSVP program.

The Executive Director, with oversight from the Board of Directors, provides evaluations of staff, to insure program expectations are being met. The program staff includes an Assistant Director, and Program Specialist, whose primary responsibilities includes; volunteer recruitment, site visits, volunteer record management, and orientation of new volunteers. These individuals meet with the

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Executive Director on a regular basis to discuss programming direction, to ensure all goals are being met and to make any necessary adjustments. The Executive Director reports monthly to the Board of Directors on program activities and concerns.

The Executive Director holds both a Bachelor's and Master's Degree including training in Servant Leadership as well as a certification in Non Profit Leadership Development; and has 25 years of experience in the nonprofit community, nine of which includes serving as the Executive Director of Coulee Region RSVP. Her strong connections to local and state government officials and local media have proven to be an asset to the program. The Executive Director participates on many boards and committees including, La Crosse Area Professionals Senior Care Network, Wisconsin Association of RSVP Directors and the National Senior Corps Association (NSCA) Board of Directors serving on the executive board, to name a few. The Executive Director continues to show an extraordinary capacity to grasp all aspects of the program, developing new collaborations and resources, effectively managing the program, as well as marketing RSVP to increase the awareness of RSVP and Senior Corps programs throughout our service areas.

The Assistant Director also holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Business Administration and has five years of experience working in volunteer management and the nonprofit sector. She is a member of the Coulee Region Volunteer Coordinators (CRVC) and the Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators Association (WVCA). Together with the Executive Director, the responsibilities of the Assistant Director include recruitment, enrollment, orientation and placement of volunteers with nonprofit organizations; routine volunteer site visits to maintain communications with the sites to continually monitor and assess their needs; developing RSVP promotional information, and maintaining volunteer placement and hours, reports and Memorandums of Understanding and other data to ensure accuracy of volunteer activities. The Executive Director works closely with the Assistant Director, cultivating knowledge and training of the day-to-day operations of the program, making certain staff is readily available to continue and support the management of the program. The Program Specialist, having served in this capacity for seven years, brings social service and social media experience to the organization. She maintains all data for accurate monitoring, implementing, and reporting on the RSVP Volunteer Driver Program, schedules, tracks all transportation requests, and is in charge of the daily operational needs of the office. In addition to recruiting and supervising volunteers for additional impact based programs, the Program Specialist provides relevant in-service training for volunteers in our schools, to maximize the greatest impact in the classroom, achieving student academic success. With a combined 21 years of experience, the staff of Coulee Region RSVP

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more than adequately covers the duties and responsibilities to manage the program effectively. The Board of Directors are sensitive to the importance of adequate facilities that provide professional and supportive space for staff as well as a welcoming and accessible environment for seniors. Current office facilities provide a comfortable and inviting atmosphere for volunteers and staff. The Board of Directors provides for all major equipment needs and will continue to do so. The office has computer, internet and fax capabilities, as well as an easily accessible and continuously updated website. Staff also has the ability to provide technologically up-to-date community presentations with the assistance of a laptop, data projector, and television equipped with DVD player. Staff is trained and proficient in all office technology, web applications including social networking tools, and computer software including Volunteer Reporter and Microsoft Office, which is utilized in order to create a smooth and efficient work environment. Information regarding volunteers and stations is electronically managed using the Volunteer Reporter Software Program, and includes all pertinent volunteer data (i.e. placements, types of experience, birth date, emergency contact information, etc.) to allow staff a more personal interaction with volunteers. All information is kept confidential, updated, and maintained as needed, at a minimum, on a yearly basis.

All major expenditures require board approval with the exception of basic ongoing expenses (i.e. rent and utilities). Payroll is managed by our CPA firm, and the benefits package for all employees is purchased through private benefit providers. The Friends of the Coulee Region RSVP, Inc. has established a thorough set of policies and procedures concerning travel, paid time off (PTO), holidays, reimbursements, as well as other day to day employee needs as determined by the Board of Directors, all while adhering to CNCS guidelines.

The Board of Directors takes pride in providing qualified staff to meet the needs of the program. Each employee has a current, applicable job description outlining core duties and responsibilities, and is evaluated regularly by the Board of Director and the Executive Director. The employee performance evaluation comprises of these components: performance of job responsibilities; behaviors reflecting the core values of Coulee Region RSVP; achievement of goals and projects; and the development of a professional development and growth plan. The Board of Directors encourages staff to participate in professional development opportunities, including WVCA and other pertinent conferences, Senior Corps training sessions and educational workshops to expand personal knowledge of our programs and volunteerism, in order to increase innovation and better support our volunteers and strengthen our programs.

Coulee Region RSVP has been active in La Crosse and Monroe counties for over 40 years because of

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our ability to identify and adapt our programs and services to meet the ever-changing needs of our community and the guidelines administered by CNCS. In addition, RSVP's Healthy Futures programs have met high priority needs in our service areas for more than 20 years, demonstrating Coulee Region RSVP's ability to operate a program within the strategic guidelines of the Corporation as well as accurately assess and align program objectives with community needs. Coulee Region RSVP works hard to continue meeting the critical needs in our communities, while enriching the lives of individuals 55 years of age and older through engagement in volunteer service and programs that assist with aging independently and gaining access to nutritious food. Coulee Region RSVP volunteers save our community over \$2 million dollars in wages annually through their volunteer service, helping local organizations to function efficiently and cost effectively. Coulee Region RSVP continues to lead our community in opportunities for engaging individuals 55 and better and is a driving force behind local community sustainability and area volunteer services. RSVP is looked upon as a leader in the region; successfully mobilizing, utilizing, recruiting and placing volunteers, and being recognized as the go-to organization for a myriad of services, operating as a crucial resource for individuals in need throughout our service areas. We are seen as the catalyst for positive change led by dedicated and talented staff and volunteers. Overall, Coulee Region RSVP continues to prove that volunteer service is a solution to meeting community needs. Coulee Region RSVP continually monitors our programs to meet new challenges and needs indicated by our community and the Corporation for National and Community Service, creating new and innovative opportunities for our dedicated and talent corps of volunteers to engage in, and strengthening the many area organizations and individuals who continually rely on RSVP volunteers and services.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A