

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

An estimated 236 RSVP volunteers will serve in Salt Lake County. They will tutor children and adults in reading, reduce food insecurity, provide transportation to seniors, help older adults remain in their homes, assist with disasters, provide service to Veterans, improve open lands, provide information on health insurance to seniors and distribute information to hospital and museum patrons through a network of a National Service Program, the Area Agency on Aging and community organizations. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the grant year 50 students will be reading on grade level, 60 acres of public land will be preserved, 300 Veterans will receive information on benefits, 20,000 people will receive food assistance and 175 seniors will receive services to help them remain in their homes.

The CNCS federal investment of \$80,082 will be supplemented by \$103,557 (\$34,321 in required match and \$69,236 in excess) of nonfederal resources.

## Strengthening Communities

Salt Lake County is a metropolitan area comprised of 764 square miles and is situated between two mountain ranges and the Great Salt Lake. According to the 2010 census (Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget), the population of the county is 1,029,655, a 15% increase over the 2000 census. The county's ethnic and minority population is 19% (Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget) and as of 2012 there were 54,600 Veterans residing in the county (Utah State Office of Veterans Affairs). The over 65 population, as of the 2010 census, is 89,683 and is expected to increase by 24% by 2020; 7% of seniors live below the poverty level (Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget). According to Utahns Against Hunger, 16% of Salt Lake County residents face hunger hardships. The unemployment rate is 8% but the number of working poor has increased during the last 5 years (Utah Food Bank, 2012).

Our project's Primary Focus Area is Healthy Futures. Volunteers will provide home meal delivery, transportation and companionship to help seniors remain in their homes; provide respite to caregivers and increased social ties and linkages to other services for care receivers; staff food pantries, deliver food boxes to elderly and disabled individuals and serve meals to homeless individuals; and provide health insurance information to seniors. Due to the increases in the number of county residents over 65 and the increase in number of people requesting food program assistance, our community requires additional volunteer resources to meet the current and upcoming need. Medical research indicates that positive social ties and feeling that support is available can help individuals stay and continue to

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remain physically and mentally healthy (Holt-Lunstad J., Smith TB, Layton JB (2010) Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review). In a survey conducted by Salt Lake County Aging Services (2013), customers of the Meals on Wheels, Senior Transportation, and Community Care Transitions programs reported that the services they received helped them remain in their homes and provided social support. A 2012 survey of caregivers in Salt Lake County by the University of Utah and Salt Lake County Aging Services reported that 54% requested respite as the most needed service; respite is a significant social support for the caregiver allowing them a break to revive their physical and mental health. In a survey (2013) by the Kearns Food Pantry, one hundred percent of the participants surveyed reported increased food security due to the food received. Salt Lake County and Aging Services are actively developing long-term strategic plans to anticipate and accommodate the expected increase in service demand. The agency, facing limited financial resources and increased demand, plans to increase services through the use of volunteers, thus increasing community engagement to address the unmet needs. The Utah Food Bank, providing emergency food and food box delivery, and St. Vincent de Paul, providing meals to the homeless, also seek additional volunteer support due to increased service demand accompanying a decrease in donations due to the economic downturn.

From 2005 to 2012, Salt Lake County Aging Services was an AmeriCorps National Grantee subgrantee site for respite care program. When the National Grantee was not funded for a new 3 year cycle, RSVP staff collaborated with the AmeriCorps staff to retain the members as RSVP volunteers. The collaboration was successful in retaining 18 of the members as volunteers and staff has recruited additional volunteers for this station.

In order to collect outcome data, the project staff will educate station staff on the importance of the outcome measure the volunteers will be meeting, work with station staff to develop survey tools and timelines for completion, and establish deadlines for reporting the outcome data to the project. The current RSVP staff has been gathering outcome data from stations for the past 13 years. We have positive working relationships with station staff and continually receive accurate data for the timely submission of Project Progress Reports. We are confident these relationships will continue in the future.

The project's service to Veterans will include providing transportation for a Veteran and family members from the airport or home to the VA hospital; providing transportation to Veterans and their family members from the parking lot at the hospital to the building where they are going; providing information on services offered at the hospital to Veterans; and promoting Veterans programs at

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community events. The RSVP VA hospital volunteers will also assist yearly with a Stand Down event to provide medical care, food, clothing and information on community resources to homeless Veterans. The volunteers will recruit agencies to provide information at the event and ask for business donations of clothing and food. Volunteers will distribute food and clothing at the event, assist with set up and clean up, and provide transportation from the homeless shelter. This is a large event which requires extensive planning; in 2012, 346 homeless veterans attended.

Since the current RSVP project's sponsor is the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), project staff has a unique ability to help RSVP volunteers, their family and friends as they age and need referrals, information and services. The AAA houses the Caregiver Support, Community Care Transitions, Transportation, Meals on Wheels, Chore Services, Ombudsman, Senior Community Services Employment Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Respite Care, Information and Referral, Senior Corps and Senior Centers programs. The RSVP staff is knowledgeable about the services these programs offer and can refer volunteers or family to the right place the first time they request assistance. The working relationship between Aging Services' programs and staff is outstanding and provides for seamless transitions to needed services.

Beginning in 2013, the project will partner with two AmeriCorps projects - the Utah Literacy Project and a new project with the American Red Cross to increase community awareness of disaster prevention. We feel RSVP volunteers can really complement the efforts of these projects.

### **Recruitment and Development**

The project staff will work with our established community partners and Advisory Council members to develop high quality volunteer assignments. Community needs will be identified utilizing data and assessments from a variety of sources, including County and State agencies, area school districts, and area non-profits, aiding the project in targeting potential community partners. Station development is targeted toward meeting the community's unmet needs and the established CNCS focus areas. We will meet with potential stations to explain the goals of RSVP and the involvement of stations -- that stations must offer training and supervision to volunteers and report yearly on outcomes. RSVP interviews each potential volunteer and matches the volunteers' knowledge, abilities and skills with that of a station's unmet needs. An orientation to the RSVP program is provided to all new volunteers. Staff contacts new volunteers within three months of their assignment date to make sure that the placement is what they expected, is meeting their needs and that training and supervision are adequate. If the volunteer is not satisfied with their assignment the staff offers to reassign the volunteer. The staff will survey station representatives once during the grant period to ascertain their

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satisfaction with the RSVP program and volunteers. Project staff will also contact stations regularly to discuss volunteer involvement and duties, satisfaction with the volunteers' performance and opportunities to improve the volunteers' skills.

The RSVP program partners with those organizations possessing a proven track record at providing quality training and supervision to volunteers. The Education Focus Area partner, the Utah AmeriCorps Literacy Project, has been training volunteer tutors with the Star reading program for 7 years. Members receive specific 'train the trainer' training from the Utah State Office of Education on the Star program in order to effectively prepare the volunteer tutors. The Literacy Action Program, our adult tutoring partner, requires two days of training highlighting adult learning techniques and best practices. Our partners with Salt Lake County Aging Services (Healthy Futures), hospitals (Community Priorities), the American Red Cross (Disaster Services), and the Utah Food Bank (Healthy Futures) all provide quality training in the delivery of their service area. RSVP staff periodically attends these trainings and asks for volunteer feedback to ensure the training teaches them what they need to know and provides an orientation to the agency itself.

Salt Lake County is a metropolitan area where 40% of the state's population resides. The demographics below are from the 2010 Census and the Utah Governor's Office of Management and Budget.

	Utah	Salt Lake County
Population	2,763,855	1,029,655
Over 65 years	249,462	89,682
White	86%	80%
African American	1%	2%
Native American	1%	1%
Asian	1%	2%
Pacific Islander	1%	1%
Hispanic	10%	14%
People with disabilities	136,379	49,135

RSVP project staff will work with many established community partners and develop new partnerships to disseminate information on volunteer opportunities with RSVP stations. The staff will work with stations, community partners and other county programs to distribute RSVP information at their events, on their websites and in social media. Diversity in partnerships and volunteers is important to the RSVP program. Publications including volunteer information and materials reflect

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our diverse population and are translated into Spanish. Translation services are available for potential volunteers and stations are required to be physically accessible. The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Administration Medical Center will provide RSVP information to veterans and their family members about volunteer opportunities. The project staff will develop a marketing/recruitment plan every year of the grant and involve the Advisory Council in the development and execution of the plan. The plan for the first year will include:

Recruitment articles written and placed in two faith-based newsletters;

Six recruitment presentations to service organizations, faith based groups and community organizations;

Distribute recruitment information at four community events;

Two stories about volunteers will appear in print and/or television media;

Produce a 30 second Public Service Announcement and distribute to five radio stations;

Conduct one "Bring a Friend" recruitment event;

Place recruitment brochures and bookmarks in libraries, businesses, government offices and non-profit

organizations;

Submit two volunteer opportunities stories to multi-cultural publications;

Place information on volunteer recruitment websites -- 211, Volunteer Match, Salt Lake County Office of Volunteer Programs Services;

Partner with stations to place RSVP recruitment information on their websites and social media sites;

Place a call for volunteers on local city government cable stations;

Post monthly information on Aging Services' social media sites.

The staff will add to this first year list as exciting opportunities present themselves. The marketing plan will be revised at the end of the first and second years by project staff and the Advisory Council. Staff will continue with marketing strategies that were effective and continually look for additional means to recruit.

As part of its strategic plan developed in 2012, Aging Services initiated a Volunteer Capacity Building project to increase the awareness of volunteer opportunities; the RSVP Manager and Program Assistant are actively involved in the development of new marketing materials and website development.

Our experienced team will employ a varied approach to recognize and retain RSVP volunteers. The staff will submit award nominations for volunteers 4 -- 6 times a year including the Salt Lake County

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Vital Volunteer Award, AARP Andrus Award and Utah Silver Bowl Award. Program staff and family members accompany volunteers receiving awards. Additionally staff submits a story about the volunteer, their accomplishments and the RSVP program to local and state-wide newspapers and the television stations; and posts the information on the RSVP website and the station's website. The project staff will utilize contacts of the Aging Services Public Relations Coordinator and the Human Services Division Public Information Officers to promote stories about volunteers in the local media outlets. Personal recognition is also important for retention. The staff will send birthday, get well and condolences cards to volunteers and host an annual recognition event for volunteers, their guest and the station representatives. While these recognition events assist in the retention of volunteers, the staff will also contact volunteers three months after they begin volunteering to ascertain their satisfaction with the station and volunteer assignment - if the volunteer is not satisfied with the placement the staff will assess the situation and offer information on other possible placements. Volunteers not reporting hours during a three month period will be contacted to assess status and interest. In an effort to retain volunteers, those expressing dissatisfaction with the assigned station as the reason for service cessation will be offered alternative opportunities. All volunteers are surveyed every three years, in part to assess the volunteers' satisfaction with their assignment and station. Results of the 2013 survey indicated that 90% of the volunteers were satisfied with their station placement, 10% were moderately satisfied and no volunteers were dissatisfied.

### **Program Management**

Two of the RSVP staff will interview all potential stations to ensure they meet CNCS criteria for an RSVP station. As part of the discussion, staff will review the CNCS focus areas and outcomes, required data reporting, written job descriptions, time sheets, ADA requirements, communication, volunteer safety and prohibited activities. In 2013, RSVP staff attended a Train the Trainer workshop on volunteer management sponsored by the Utah Commission on Volunteers. The staff will distribute pertinent information from the training each year of the grant to all station representatives either via an email, conference call or in person training.

During new volunteer RSVP orientation, staff will discuss prohibited activities requesting that the volunteers to notify them if they are asked to volunteer in areas outside of their position description. During the grant period, stations will received an annual visit with more frequent contact provided if needed or requested. Site visits are meant to be supportive and educational; volunteer duties and assignments will be reviewed during these visits. Staff will also survey volunteers once during the grant period to ask if volunteer management is effective and if the building is accessible and safe.

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The RSVP staff and Advisory Council will periodically review critical community indicators, assessing gaps in unmet community needs. Particular attention will be paid to gaps falling within CNCS focus areas and whether CNCS approved organizations are addressing the need and possesses the infrastructure to train and manage volunteers. If the community need and organization are a good fit, staff will meet with them to explain RSVP policies, outcomes and requirements then begin to recruit volunteers both within our current pool and in the community to address the need. Should we need to graduate a station due to changing community needs, the staff would meet with the station staff to explain the reason and ask for their assistance in the transition for the volunteers. The staff would then meet with the volunteers to explain the reason for the transition and provide the option to transition to a new RSVP service opportunity or continue serving at the current station and no longer be an RSVP volunteer. During the recent grant year the project worked to 'right-size' the program by graduating volunteers to meet the new required performance measures. Project staff met with station representatives to explain the changes to RSVP and the need to graduate their station. While all station representatives understood, they regretted losing the partnership. Letters were then sent to graduating volunteers communicating the CNCS changes and providing information on remaining an RSVP volunteer. Volunteers were given the opportunity to remain an RSVP volunteer by relocating to another station covered by a CNCS performance measure or continue to volunteer at their current station as a non- RSVP volunteer.

For the past 40 years, Salt Lake County Aging Services, the designated Area Agency on Aging, has sponsored the RSVP grant. Aging Services provides a variety of services including in home meal delivery, transportation, in-home services, information & referral, medical information assistance, caregiver support, senior recreation centers, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions. The community partners with which the RSVP program will collaborate for food distribution have been the primary providers of food to pantries and individuals in Salt Lake County for over 40 years. Funders require measuring and reporting outcomes for both Aging Services and food distribution program; the programs' staff has demonstrated the ability to track outcomes through surveys and people served.

Because this project is the current RSVP project in Salt Lake County, we have the infrastructure in place to track Memorandums of Understanding's, including their renewal dates and staff information. We utilized a data base purchased specifically to collect and report CNCS statistics and possess a staffing structure which allows us to meet with new volunteers and stations in person to ascertain their eligibility. We currently have an active Advisory Council in place that assists the program with

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volunteer recruitment, publicity, outcome measurement, volunteer recognition and statistical analysis of surveys. The Advisory Council assisted staff and volunteers in the collection of Cell Phones for Soldiers, the projects MLK Day of Service Project for the past 3 years. We are confident the advisory Council will remain a viable part of our project.

In the past 12 years of the current RSVP project management, the project has consistently received positive compliance reviews from the state CNCS staff with no compliance deficiencies noted.

### **Organizational Capability**

Salt Lake County Aging Services has managed the RSVP, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions programs for over 40 years. The commitment and competency of Aging Services' administration has afforded these programs the ability to maintain the highest level of accountability. Aging Services has 258 full and part time employees working in twelve programs and providing services though out Salt Lake County. Aging Services is a division within the Human Services Department of Salt Lake County government. The Director, Sarah Brenna, has been with Aging Services for three years, holds a Master's of Public Administration degree and previously worked in policy development for the state of Utah for ten years. The Program Manager meets twice monthly with the Associate Director who has a Master's of Public Administration degree, is a registered nurse and has experience in public and community health. At these meetings the Program Manager discusses staff issues, progress towards outcomes, program successes and issues where help is needed. The Associate Director communicates the RSVP program information to the Executive Management Team (Director, Associate Directors, Fiscal Manager, Planner and Executive Secretary) and to the Mayor's Cabinet. The Fiscal Manager, Jessica Montgomery, and business office staff (Senior Accountant and Accounting Specialist) are involved in the preparation of all fiscal reports and review the budget and expenditures along with the Program Manager. The Salt Lake County Auditor's Office conducts regular fiscal audits of the programs.

Because Aging Services is the current RSVP project sponsor the present RSVP Manager has been through two compliance reviews by the state CNCS staff. Neither review revealed any programmatic, operational or fiscal noncompliance issues with the project. The manager is regularly asked to share best practices with the state's Senior Corps Directors and other state directors have contacted our staff for information and advice.

The current RSVP staff is comprised of the Program Manager, Program Assistant and Program Secretary, all of whom are half time in the program (20 hours a week). The Manager, Barbara Drake, has been managing volunteer programs for twenty-two years. Barbara has extensive

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experience developing new volunteer programs, developing and executing recruitment and marketing plans, developing marketing materials and writing program policies. Vicki Hansen, the Program Assistant, has recruited and placed volunteers for fifteen years and has a twenty year background in marketing and publicity. The Secretary, Charleen Lee, was the Administrative Assistant for a university medical school for 15 years and has policy and procedure development experience. The staff brings their collective and varied experience to the successful management of the RSVP program and to meeting the needs of community volunteers. Barbara is well versed with CNCS and Salt Lake County policies and has a proven success in effectively managing the current RSVP project. Vicki develops recruitment materials, interviews and places the volunteers and assesses the stations. Charleen manages the data base ensuring correct volunteer and station information, processes time sheets and mileage reimbursements, and extracts information from the data base to ensure that accurate data was and will continue to be reported to CNCS.

All Salt Lake County programs and employees must follow the County's Personnel and Countywide Policies and Procedures. County policies include, but are not limited to, policies on purchasing, payroll, hiring, volunteer program management, GRAMA, ethics and workplace safety. The County also requires staff to attend discrimination and harassment training every two years and provides training on the American's with Disabilities Act. All capital equipment is registered with the County and is assessed every other year to make sure it is still in good working order and compatible with the latest technology. The County has a replacement schedule for computers so new equipment is purchased every three years.

Aging Services has an extensive and successful track record in managing federal and state grant funding. Aging Services has been an annual recipient of federal funds through the Older Americans Act for over forty years and has received funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (and its predecessor ACTION), the Senior Community Services Employment Program , Medicaid Aging Waiver funds, the Federal Transportation Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Community Services Block Grants, Community Development Block Grants, and Social Services Block Grants. The agency has also received funds from several foundations. Federal, state and provider audits of these funding streams have revealed minimal, if any, problems regarding the proper management and utilization of these funds. The agency has never received an audit exception that required it to reimburse grant funds to the funding agency. The Fiscal Manager, fiscal staff and County Auditor's Office continually monitor grants ensuring fiscal compliance. Aging Services receives and manages funds from over 60 funding sources each year.

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### Other

Not applicable.

### PNS Amendment (if applicable)

Not applicable.