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Executive Summary

An estimated 400 RSVP volunteers will serve Nueces County communities. Some of our RSVP volunteer activities will include supporting the local Veteran Affairs (VA) Clinic and Homeless Veteran program, adult literacy, serving of meals to the homeless community through the Metro Ministries Program; a local agency whose mission is to help create a community that is free from hunger and homelessness, and working with numerous local agencies to educate the community about making healthy choices for their families.

The primary focus area of the City of Corpus Christi RSVP program is Healthy Futures for seniors and residents living in impoverished communities in Nueces County. At the end of the three-year grant period, RSVP anticipates that our program will see participants making healthier choices and helping to minimize the growing numbers of residents living with obesity and diabetes related issues.

The CNCS federal investment of \$ 45,434 and will be supplemented by \$183,002 of non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

Nueces County is located in the South Texas region of the United States. Cities that are located within Nueces County include Agua Dulce, Banquete, Bishop, Driscoll, Robstown, and Corpus Christi.

The 2010 census states that the population of Corpus Christi and surrounding area accounts for 340,223 residents; however, only 305,215 residents reside in Corpus Christi. The recorded estimated number for 2012 indicates a 2.3% increase in population in the city of Corpus Christi alone.

There are concerns that as the population grows so does the concern for residents in our community. The largest ethnic group in the Corpus Christi area is our Hispanic population, representing approximately 61% or 206,293 residents living in Nueces County.

One of the most prominent health concerns within the Hispanic community is the increasing obesity rate and the growing number of individuals diagnosed with diabetes and diabetes related illnesses.

In 2010 Corpus Christi was reported as the "Fattest City in America". A designation such as this brings to light the need to take action and build healthier futures for the residents of Nueces County.

The Primary Focus Area for the RSVP program is to bring the Healthy Futures Program to Nueces County residents. According to studies released by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Diabetes affects 25.8 million people in the United States and is the seventh leading cause of death. With Nueces County being the 14th largest county in Texas -- we have reported a diabetes rate at 9.4%, obesity rate at 30.9% and high blood pressure at 28.6%. These

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factors in conjunction with the 19.1% poverty rate in Nueces County make for a very bleak outcome.

Residents living in impoverished communities usually do not make healthy choices, due to socioeconomic conditions. We will work with local agencies to develop a Diabetes Prevention Program. Due to lack of proper nutrition education and household budgeting constraints, the at-risk population often selects foods which are high in fat content and starches instead of healthy alternatives like fruits and vegetables. The most treasured recipes that are passed down from generation to generation often consist of the same, high fat, high sodium, and sugars -- it's time to stop the cycle.

Our primary focus is to reach out and educate Nueces County residents on the importance of knowing the risk factors of obesity and diabetes in the hopes of increasing healthy choices for residents living in Nueces County.

Through collaborative efforts with the Area Agency on Aging for the Elderly Nutrition Program, RSVP volunteers have assisted with congregate meal services at 13 Senior Community Centers throughout Nueces County. The nutrition needs of the senior community is very important, but just as important is the value of educating the seniors on why and how nutrition needs to be a part of their everyday lives.

To meet the new National Performance Measures, we will reassign these volunteers to take an active role of educating seniors and helping them understand the advantage of healthy meal choices and how they can implement these choices in their lives. RSVP volunteers will host information classes where members of the community such as dieticians, physicians and chefs will provide education to attendees. Education is essential in managing Diabetes. Truly recognizing and understanding the signs of complications associated with diabetes make all the difference in the health of our community. Some of these complications include heart disease, stroke, hypertension, blindness, kidney disease, nervous system disease, and amputations.

According to The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion people with diabetes are twice as likely to have depression.

Many individuals with type 2 diabetes can control their blood glucose by following a healthy meal plan, implementing an exercise program, by losing weight, and/or taking oral medication.

RSVP Volunteers will conduct classes to promote physical activity through age appropriate exercise which could aid with weight loss.

RSVP will work with local agencies such as the Food Bank, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

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Diabetes Education program, and Christus Spohn Health System to develop healthy meal plans and snack options.

RSVP Volunteers, with staff assistance, will select 200 participants throughout Nueces County to track performance measure outcomes during the grant period. Through pre and post surveys, the RSVP Program will monitor their level of understanding about Diabetes and the complications related to the disease, the importance of weight management, implementing physical activity, and making healthy meal choices. We anticipate an increase level of knowledge with these participants regarding the importance of actively making these life changes that will result in "healthy futures", which will help improve their quality of life.

RSVP staff and volunteers will collaboratively gather survey data and complete the reporting process in accordance with the National Performance Measures. The survey includes information gathered to confirm their veteran and/or military family status.

The well-being of our veterans is very important to our community, as well as, the City of Corpus Christi (our sponsoring agency) and the RVSP program. We will work with local Veteran Affairs representatives to educate veterans about life changing skills that will improve their quality of life and result in "Healthy Futures". The RSVP program is working with the Veterans Affairs (VA) Clinic to be able to assist veterans in our community with the implementation of the "HealtheVet" program.

My "HealtheVet" is the VA's online personal health record. It was designed for Veterans, active duty service members, their dependents and caregivers. My "HealtheVet" helps veterans partner with their health care team. We will teach veterans how to use this online tool, which will allow them to track their treatment plans, office visits, test results, and gain helpful information and resources. The knowledge that the veterans gain with the use of this online tool allows them the ability to not only be informed but also take an active role in their health that will enhance their quality of life.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP recruitment strategies; include agency reviews that address critical community needs. RSVP staff work with Volunteer Station representatives throughout the year to coordinate volunteer assignments based on the volunteer's abilities, qualifications, past experience, education and interest. Each job assignment follows program goals and National Performance Measures.

Our volunteer application allows the volunteer to indicate their skills and experience as well as their interest. The RSVP staff is able to obtain from the applications information such as qualifications, veteran status, personal preferences which facilitates placements for assignments that will bring value to the volunteer, as well as, the station.

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Through the use of our newsletter, we feature volunteers by spotlighting their abilities and contributions to the community through their volunteerism.

Between the use of the newsletter, in-services and social activities, RSVP volunteers are awarded an opportunity to network with other volunteers and share experiences in an effort to create a better community.

RSVP staff will establish clear and concise job assignments with volunteer stations allowing us to work together to ensure that training is providing the appropriate tools and knowledge to meet the focus of the volunteer station and community need. Also, providing volunteers with ongoing coaching and support from the RSVP staff, as well as, the station coordinators ensures program compliance.

Historically RSVP Volunteers are our greatest assets for recruiting both new volunteers and volunteer stations. Volunteers take pride in being a part of a program that reaches out to others' making our community a better place to live.

Based on our current Volunteer Pool, the average age of our RSVP volunteers is 77 years old. 56% of our RSVP volunteers are Hispanic, which is in-line with Nueces County ethnicity statistics. With the high volume of Hispanic volunteers we are able to meet community needs without language barriers. RSVP volunteers can provide bilingual opportunities to effectively communicate the messages of our volunteer stations to meet community needs.

We currently have 18 veterans serving as RSVP volunteers, which provided 5% of the programs total volunteer hours that were reported for the 2012/2013 grant year.

Volunteer Stations provide diversity by offering different opportunities to our volunteers so that they truly feel they are helping our community. The Volunteer Stations display a sense of acceptance and inclusion for all volunteers with or without disabilities. Nonetheless, special accommodations are made for volunteers who request them.

Other recruitment opportunities include community information fairs, health fairs, attending speaking engagements at community events, and periodic appearances on local television stations. RSVP also utilizes social media, such as, Facebook and Tweeter to get the programs message out, market events and information. In addition, we maintain information shared through printed materials and the City of Corpus Christi Website as recruitment tools.

Recognition is our greatest foundation for retaining volunteers. The most rewarding aspect for the job our volunteers do is being recognized. We recognize volunteers during our Annual Recognition and Awards Banquet, through the Presidential Award, Volunteer of the Year Award, and the "90+ Emeritus Volunteers Guild". In addition, we recognize volunteers during the Mayor's Day of

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Recognition for National Service, National Senior Corp Week, and National Volunteers week.

We also have quarterly celebrations to reward our volunteers for their volunteer efforts. With community partners, RSVP staff hosts a Fall Festival, Holiday Dinner & Dance, and a Spring Picnic. These events are used to award and recognize our volunteers. We encourage our volunteers to bring guest to all of our recognition events in an effort to recruit new volunteers. Volunteers receive small tokens of appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

Other means of recruitment include several Casino Day-trips, which have been very well received and attended. We also plan an annual "Bingo-Palooza" which is one of the social and networking activities our seniors favor most.

We recognize volunteer birthdays in our Newsletters and send out personal birthday cards to each volunteer throughout the year. Our newsletter is also used to spotlight RSVP volunteer accomplishments and experiences.

RSVP staff surveys the volunteers to obtain feedback on recruitment activities and welcome suggestions for future events. This method allows our volunteers to take ownership in their program and develop future activities/events.

Program Management

RSVP staff works as a team to monitor the compliance of volunteer stations and job placements. Between the monthly timesheet reviews, quarterly monitoring of job assignments and placements; as well as, the annual grant compliance reviews we have been successful in identifying issues that need to be addressed.

With an ongoing process, the Program Director maintains communication with volunteer station coordinators to ensure that their questions and concerns regarding the program are addressed in an effort to prevent unauthorized activities.

The RSVP Community Service Officer performs surprise station visits on an ongoing basis to ensure that volunteers are performing assigned service activities and that volunteers are working in a safe and productive environment.

RSVP staff utilizes the "Volunteer Reporter", which is the system used to manage the program data. Volunteer Reporter allows the tracking and reporting of volunteer hours, placements, enrollment, volunteer status, and job descriptions.

On a quarterly basis the Community Service Officer performs a review of station assignments according to the information provided in the Volunteer Reporter program.

Job assignments in Volunteer Reporter that have not had hours reported in the last quarter are

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shared with the Program Director so that a determination can be made to either assign a new placement or to inactivate the assignment in the system. These decisions are made based on community need and whether or not the assignment is in-line with National Performance Measures.

During the quarterly review, RSVP staff meets with the Volunteer Station Coordinator to discuss any decrease in service hours and to determine the need for the volunteer placements. If it is determined that the Volunteer Station has had a change previously identified in their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Program Director will work with the Volunteer Station to modify job assignments to meet program goals and minimize disruption to the current volunteers placements.

Occasionally, it has been determined that under-utilized Volunteer Stations may need to be graduated possibly due to no longer requiring an RSVP volunteer to meet the community need or the Volunteer Station can no longer support or manage volunteers as stated in the MOU.

RSVP has been sponsored by The City of Corpus Christi for the last 38 years and has been successful in meeting the grant requirements of the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS).

The community needs of the Nueces County area have been met through a variety of volunteer stations, hundreds of volunteers and thousands of volunteer hours.

It is through commitment and dedication that our RSVP volunteers strive to meet the new performance measures.

In 2011 CNCS developed the 5-year strategic plan and the City of Corpus Christi RSVP program began implementing the new goal objectives in order to enhance performance measures to determine programs abilities to meet community needs.

The RSVP Advisory Committee is comprised of a seven (7) member committee appointed by the City Council. Each member serves a two-year term. They serve as a liaison between the City Council and the RSVP program. Committee members represent a cross section of the community. The criteria for serving on the committee is that candidates must have knowledge about the community and its needs, be willing to serve in a supportive advisory capacity, and willing to promote the RSVP program.

The Advisory committee includes one (1) RSVP Volunteer representative and one (1) volunteer station representative. All Advisory Committee members must express an interest in the issues of the senior community and have knowledge of the capabilities of older adults. The role of the Advisory Committee is to plan for future growth of the RSVP program through resource development, recruitment, and annual program evaluations received from volunteers and Volunteer Stations. This

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process ensures RSVP is meeting the needs of the program in the areas of diversity, innovation, involvement in the community and meeting the National Performance Measures criteria.

The Advisory Committee also supports program planning and fundraising, as well as, assists with mobilizing resources for special annual events such as the CNCS National Days of Service, National Senior Corps Week, and the Volunteers Recognition and Awards Banquet.

At community events, the Advisory Committee and RVSP volunteers assist in promoting special services, distributing RSVP program brochures, and recruitment.

It is through events such as these, that we are able to target people of diverse backgrounds in support of the success of our program. In past years, Mayors, Council Members, and other elected officials have shown solidarity in full support of numerous programs and services to improve our city's economy, health, communication and education.

Organizational Capability

The RSVP program runs under the direction of the City of Corpus Christi's Parks and Recreation Department Program Services Division.

The mission of the City of Corpus Christi is "to deliver municipal services which meet the vital health, safety, and general welfare needs of the residents and which sustain and improve their quality of life. As we work to achieve this mission we will employ fiscal discipline, continuous improvement, first-rate customer service, and straight forward communication. In this work, we will tolerate no mediocrity".

In addition to the City of Corpus Christi 's mission statement the Parks and Recreation department's mission statement is "To consistently meet the social, physical and cultural needs of the community by providing the amenities, innovative programs and exemplary use of natural resources that enhance Corpus Christi as a place to live and visit. This will be achieved through common goals and shared resources, both within the City organization and throughout the community."

Corpus Christi has a home-rule government with a mayor, eight council members and a city manager. The city's fiscal year begins August 1 and ends July 31, and the budget is made up of six major funds. The General Fund pays for the administration of city government and traditional public services such as police, fire, streets, parks and recreation and solid waste services.

The City of Corpus Christi is recognized throughout Nueces County as the leading volunteer management agency for older adults.

It is the policy of the city, consistent with sound budgetary management, to continuously manage the compensation and classification system to maintain internal equity between classes of jobs, and to

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provide competitive pay and benefits in order to attract and retain a high quality workforce.

Additional financial support services are provided by the Finance Services Department, Federal Grants Division; Payroll Services; Human Resources and others as needed. All guidelines, including job descriptions, personnel, travel, hiring, firing, and disciplinary actions, are clearly outlined in City Policies and followed accordingly.

Additional funding is generated through fundraising initiatives coordinated through the RSVP Advisory Committee.

The City of Corpus Christi embraces the opportunity for evaluation and improvement as evidenced by the City's Business Plan; web-based citizen survey process; and the "Let the Mayor Know" feedback system. The City's Business Plan and the Performance Measures Reporting System are the formal processes used for outlining goals and objectives; measuring achievements and program outcomes in all service areas.

All City employees are rated, annually, via an Appraisal Evaluation to measure levels of performance and improvement needs.

Becky Perrin, Superintendent of Program Services Division, oversees the operation of the RSVP program. Mrs. Perrin holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration. Mrs. Perrin has been employed by the City of Corpus Christi since 2009. Her responsibilities include: facility management; staff supervision, program development, budget development and over site. Other experiences include: Associate Director of the Corpus Christi YWCA for four (4 ½) years, Interim Executive Director for the Coastal Bend Youth City for two (2) years and as the Director of Human Resources for eight (8) years, Mrs. Perrin was also a school teacher for 12 years and owner operator of four (4) lady's exercise clubs.

The RSVP Program is a 3 person staff office which consists of the Program Director -Neomi R. Ramirez, Community Service Officer-Hilda "Terri" Santoya and Staff Assistant-Patrick Howard.

In October 2012, Mrs. Ramirez accepted the position as program director. Her duties include overall grant management, budgeting, supervision of staff, program planning and recruitment, interaction with internal and external customers, and community relations. Mrs. Ramirez also provides training to the Advisory Committee, Volunteers, and Volunteer Station Coordinators, to keep them abreast of the operation of the program and federal regulations governing the RSVP program. She also assist Volunteer Station Coordinators with enhancing capacity building, such as identifying community needs and creating volunteer job assignments to meet those needs. Mrs. Ramirez has been employed by the City Of Corpus Christi since 2004. Prior to accepting the position, Mrs.

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Ramirez held the position of Senior Management Assistant for the Office of the Director with the Parks and Recreation Department for five (5) years. Her responsibilities included facility management, staff supervision, budgeting, purchasing, and contract management. She holds a Certificate in the course study of General Office Management from Del Mar College. Her experience includes service in both the public and private sector. She has held positions such as Staff Trainer/Assistant Volunteer Coordinator with Nueces County Mental Health & Mental Retardation which allowed her to place and train volunteers. She also worked as the Management Assistant for the Muscular Dystrophy Association which has enhanced her collaborative ability to work with agencies and companies in our community with fundraising efforts. Mrs. Ramirez's diverse experiences have given her the ability to excel and advance in her career.

RSVP Community Service Officer--full time position: Hilda "Terri" Santoya has served as the Community Service Officer for RSVP since 2012. Terri is a 1972 graduate of Roy Miller High School in Corpus Christi and attended Del Mar College. She began her career at the Nueces County Tax Office and remained until 1979. At that time she became a "stay at home mother" and began volunteering with Corpus Christi Independent School District. During her tenure with CCISD, Terri worked as the Volunteer in Public Schools (VIPS) Coordinator until 1992. Terri began her employment with the City of Corpus Christi as a Community Service Officer with the Women-Infants-Children (W.I.C.) Program where she was responsible for eligibility intake and conducting nutrition classes and shared recipes with participants to implement at home. In 1994 she transferred to the City Secretary's Office where she worked until 2008 when budgetary constraints resulted in a reduction in force which impacted Terri. Terri returned as a temporary placement to the RSVP program from July 2010 until November 2011. In November of 2012, she accepted the full-time position of the Community Service Officer for the RSVP program. Terri is responsible for the development of cohesive volunteer placements. Her primary focus is to understand the needs of both the volunteer and volunteer stations in order to meet the community needs. Terri also assists the Program Director with marketing the program and the recruitment of new volunteers and stations. Terri is also responsible for monitoring Volunteer Stations for program compliance.

The RSVP Staff Assistant--a full time position: is held by Patrick Howard since November 2011. Patrick is a 2006 graduate from Philo High School in Zanesville, Ohio. Patrick went on to enlist in the United States Army 2006; he was stationed at Fort Gordon, GA. In 2008 Patrick relocated to the South Texas area where he began his career with the City of Corpus Christi Storm Water Department, Field Maintenance and Operations division as a field technician. Patrick was able to advance and

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serve at various levels based on skill levels. In November 2011 Patrick transferred to the RSVP program. Patrick's primary functions are as the administrative support for the program. Patrick is the first point of contact for our office as he handles walk-ins and incoming calls providing program information. Patrick also completes data entry for the monthly timesheet for our volunteers. It is Patrick's responsibilities to ensure proper documentation is submitted by our volunteer stations to meet program guidelines in accordance with timesheet requirements.

Policies and procedures are in place and governed by the Municipal Codes for the City of Corpus Christi in Accounting, Human Resources and Purchasing. Thresholds for purchases are in place to ensure cost effective purchasing practices are followed. Financial reporting is monitored by the Program Director along with the Grant Accountant, together they validate the allocations are spent in accordance with the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and program regulations.

The City provides in-kind support for office space for the RSVP Staff at City Hall located at 1201 Leopard Street. Equipment and supplies are purchased using resources from the state and federal grants and the city's general fund.

With 38 years of experience as the RSVP sponsoring agency, the City of Corpus Christi provides matching funds and excess funds as required by the grant contributing towards the total operating costs. Resources are generated through general fund support, and are coordinated through the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Financial Services.

The city also sponsors several other grant-funded programs in various departments. All grants are managed by the Federal Grants Division of the Financial Services Department.

On the last Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for fiscal year end July 31, 2012, 59 federal grants are supported by the City of Corpus Christi for a total award of \$65,934,357.

The CAFR findings noted no instances of noncompliance or significant deficiencies or material weaknesses relating to the audit of the major federal award programs.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

n/a