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Executive Summary

An estimated 240 unduplicated RSVP volunteers will serve. Some of their activities will include:

- Emergency Food supplies to address issues of food insecurity,
- Medical Transportation service for Seniors, Disabled and Veterans
- Health Programs, including Senior Exercise classes to address osteoporosis and to improve general health and well being within seniors by preventative interventions
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance to improve economic opportunity within the low and moderate income community
- Working with local schools to provide mentoring opportunities to economically disadvantaged students or those with exceptional needs
- or through a range of activities seen as local Community Priorities including supporting the wider work of Senior Centers, etc. which in turn have positive impact on seniors ability to Age In Place.

The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant , outcomes will include:

- supporting 675 homebound individuals per annum with delivered meals
- providing medical transportation to 100 seniors, disabled or veterans
- completing 350 tax returns p.a. for those with low and moderate incomes and providing them with potential savings and asset building strategies
- providing emergency food supplies to 575 individuals a year and providing further support to an additional 400 people with enduring food security issues.

The CNCS Federal investment of \$41,132 will be supplemented by \$36,301 of non-Federal funding.

Strengthening Communities

Cleveland County is an urban area of 536 square miles forming part of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area (U.S. Census Bureau). Population is 251,643, with 10% being over 65. Hispanic/ Latino residents account for 6.8% of the population. The racial breakdown is 79.9% White, 4% African American, 3.6% Asian and 4.7% Native American. Average household income is \$69,174. Some 12.1% have income below the Federal Poverty Index, including 5.8% of persons age 65 or over. McClain County is a rural area of 580 square miles and again is part of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area. Estimated population is 33,873, with 13.1% being over 65. Hispanic/ Latino residents make up 6.9% of the population. The racial breakdown is 85.4% White, 0.1% African American, 0.3% Asian and 6.9% Native American. Average household income is \$75,757. Some 11.6%

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have income below the Federal Poverty Index including 8% of persons aged 65 and older. All figures above: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2006-2011).

In Cleveland and McClain counties combined, there are 52,490 public schools students. Additionally, 34,980 are enrolled at either the University of Oklahoma (Cleveland County) or two vocational schools at Moore-Norman Technology Center (Cleveland County) and Mid America Technical College in Wayne (McClain County). Primary local employers include Moore, Norman, Newcastle, Noble, and Purcell public schools/ city governments, Norman Regional Health Care System, Purcell Municipal Hospital, Johnson Controls, University of Oklahoma, Hitachi Corporation, Chickasaw Nation Enterprises, and Wal-Mart.

Over the past 20 years there has been significant population growth in Cleveland County thanks to the relentless urbanization of the area adjacent to the I-35 corridor, to the south of Oklahoma City, taking in the city of Norman (population. approx. 111,000 -- and around 20miles south of downtown Oklahoma city), nearby Moore (population approx. 55,000) and a narrow slice of southern Oklahoma City. Southern Cleveland County is far more rural and includes the town of Noble (6,500), plus areas such as Little Axe and Lexington (2,150). McClain County is a rural area, the largest towns being Purcell (approx. 6,000), Blanchard (7,500) and Newcastle (7,700) but also including smaller remote rural concentrations of population at Dibble (900), Washington (520), Wayne (520), Byars (250), etc.

Cleveland County and especially the City of Norman, is known across Oklahoma for its' strong social service network and its' proliferation of supporting voluntary and non-profit organizations. The growth of this network mirrors the progressive increases in population mentioned above and the resultant growth of taxation income which has been reinvested in local services. Indeed, with support networks in surrounding rural areas being less well funded and developed, there has also been modest population drift into Cleveland County as people gravitate to where they can access better social service coverage. As McClain county suffers from a lack of significant population centers, it also has an underdeveloped rural economy and also suffers from a lack of infrastructure funding, with local governments unable to provide significant support to social and community services or local non-profit groups. As a result, much of McClain County's volunteer activity is concentrated around existing Senior Centers and Congregate Meal sites. Through community efforts and volunteer ingenuity and persistence, further projects have been 'piggybacked' on at these centers to meet perceived local need. While such 'add on' services often relate to new CNCS focus areas, they are only offered because of the existence of core community resources and a group of willing senior volunteers

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who provide critical mass. Without the existence of the Senior Centers/ Congregate Meal sites, it is unlikely these focus services would exist in isolation and the local population would be far more poorly served as a result.

This snapshot forms a background for the work of RSVP locally, and its' volunteers ongoing efforts to strengthen and support local communities across this part of south central Oklahoma, and also helps to explain how our work contributes toward supporting the CNCS National Performance Measures. Over 60 local non-profit and community organizations currently work with RSVP to help meet community needs. A number of our projects are RSVP led like Provide-A-Ride (Medical Transportation), 'Ugly Quilters' (Disaster Preparation and Homeless Support) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) where RSVP actively manages the programs itself. The majority of our projects are the responsibility of partners'/ stakeholders and our volunteers support their programs such as Meals on Wheels, Food Pantries, hospital and healthcare support, activities centering on congregate meal sites, respite care activities, etc.. Here program management and strategic development falls to those third party organizations although RSVP provides input and direction where practical. RSVP will continue to increase outreach to seniors in both the urban and rural areas, attempt to make more volunteering opportunities available and also to coach and help inform local activity wherever possible, to ensure that the new CNCS Focus activities are promoted.

In identifying areas of particular need within the community, as local RSVP sponsor Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency (COCAA) utilizes the findings of a biennial Community Needs Assessment (CNA) to determine the specific needs of each county in the agency's service area. The CNA is used together with wider Census Bureau demographic information and other regional or area based information, where available, to help refine and further develop our RSVP delivery plan. As part of the above Assessment process, almost 1,000 surveys were distributed to stakeholders across a cross section of low income residents, community organizations, faith based partners, public organizations (primarily social service based) and private sector companies. Some 800 responses were received and utilized to compile the final report. When reviewing the findings, particular areas of concern within the Cleveland and McClain county areas aligning with the National Performance measures included Access to Care, Obesity & Food, Economic Opportunity for Low Income residents and Transportation. This analysis confirmed that our primary focus area would be 'HEALTHY FUTURES', and to support the findings of our Community Needs Assessment, we have used specific local data where available and state and national information where no local research existed. Specifically, we have utilized data drawn from Oklahoma Department of Human Services data (by

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county) for 2011, the annual report for 2010 from Oklahoma City's Regional Food Bank and an overview of the outputs of our own existing Provide-A-Ride medical transportation program for 2012-13, (supplemented by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies report, 'Cost Benefit Analysis of Providing Non-Emergency Medical Transportation' 2005. {Hughes-Cromwick, Wallace, Mull & Bologna}).

Meal Delivery to Seniors and the Disabled is a major component of the Healthy Futures agenda across Cleveland and McClain counties. Oklahoma DHS data indicates that during 2011, a total of 26,177 individuals aged 65 years and over lived in Cleveland County. Homebound individuals in this area received a total of 85,120 meals. Aging Services Inc., OK DHS's contractor for the county supplied some 42,067 meals for consumption at Congregate Meal sites, with 43,053 meals (51%) being delivered for consumption at home between Monday and Friday, with ready made frozen meals being delivered on Fridays for preparation and consumption over the weekend. The majority of meals for the homebound are delivered by volunteers at prearranged times, utilizing regular routes, involving volunteers in visits to 7 to 10 beneficiaries. The visits generally involve a degree of social interaction as volunteers get to 'visit' with beneficiaries which also serves to enhance the agenda of Aging in Place. Over the same period, while McClain County's population of over 65 year olds numbered 4,566, they received 57,078 meals under the OK DHS contract with county contractor, Delta Community Action. Congregate Meals accounted for 36,586 (64%) of the meals consumed, while 20,942 meals (36%) were delivered to the homebound. Here the number of volunteers required to deliver meals was significantly less than in Cleveland County, as Delta utilize a bus service which also provides meal deliveries to established neighborhoods. However, other homebound living in more remote areas are served by deliveries from individual volunteers using their own vehicles who might only supply two or three beneficiaries in the time that their Cleveland County counterparts serve 10 or more clients. As such, in supporting the nutrition needs of the homebound by providing healthy meals on a regular basis, both Aging Services and Delta Community Action have decided on their preferred delivery method (intervention) to achieve the required outcomes. At present, we have no formal data on the number of veterans or military families served, but by adopting a revised monitoring sheet/ survey largely in the form proposed by the 'Senior Corps Independent Living Performance Measure Survey', we will ensure that all relevant data is captured to enable full and meaningful evaluation of Performance Measure outputs. After due consideration we feel that these local interventions are relevant and form a robust 'Theory of Change' analysis and we are comfortable with RSVP placing

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volunteer drivers with the respective volunteer stations. That said, we are aware that the McClain County program has suffered a series of funding cuts over the past five years and there is potential that more Volunteer drivers may be sought if Delta decide that staff economies are necessary (bus driver). Whatever the outcome, RSVP volunteers remain willing and are fully committed to supporting these efforts.

By delivering meals to Seniors and Disabled community members we are clearly supporting National Performance Measures by promoting individuals' ability to AGE IN PLACE, with between 650 and 675 individuals annually receiving meals delivered by our volunteers.

As identified in the CNA a significant local area of concern for seniors and the disabled is the issue of transport, particularly to non-emergency medical appointments. One of our long established RSVP led programs is our Provide-A-Ride (P-A-R) service which provides medical transportation to Seniors, Disabled and Veterans living in the Cleveland County area. However, rather than just assume that this meets a local need we have also reviewed external research including a report commissioned for the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, 'Cost Benefit Analysis of Providing Non-Emergency Medical Transportation' 2005. {Hughes-Cromwick, Wallace, Mull & Bologna}). The report finds that this target population (seniors, disabled, veterans) has relatively low income, is disproportionately female, has a higher minority representation and is made up of older persons. The report goes on to state in its' executive summary " Because they depend on others for transportation, ...this population have reduced access to healthcare services, and this places them at risk of poor health outcomes ...and they miss or postpone routine care or preventative services, which can lead to the need for emergency care and preventable hospitalizations."

Beneficiaries from our target group who need transport to such appointments (including hospital, doctors offices, physiotherapy, dental appointments and ophthalmologists, veterans clinic, etc.) call our administrative office to arrange a ride by providing all appropriate addresses, date and time of the appointment. We ask for up to a weeks' notice where possible but often will arrange rides at much shorter notice. Our volunteer coordinator then contacts a volunteer driver to arrange for the ride to be covered and the driver contacts the beneficiary to confirm pick up time, etc. In the majority of cases the volunteer driver will remain with the patient at the medical facility until any appointment/treatment has been completed, and then transports the patient home. There are other transport programs providing interventions locally (including an accessible bus service, the 'Kiwanis Kruiser') but those services do not provide such 'door to door' service and often leave patients to call for a pick

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up after treatment is over - often adding stress and anxiety as the patient waits for their ride to arrive. Additionally, the 'Kruiser' only operates in the Norman & Moore area. Over 50% of P-A-R trips currently take users to facilities in Oklahoma City. (e.g. OU Stephenson Cancer Center, and OKC Veterans Hospital/ Clinic). There IS a statewide service for Medicaid beneficiaries (Sooner Ride) but for longer journeys users often receive a prepaid bus ticket and are then expected to use the disjointed public transport network to get to their appointments, again with significant anxiety to the user. Provide-A-Ride drivers use their own vehicles (all drivers must have a current copy of their Drivers License and Auto Insurance lodged with the RSVP office and we also perform a search of the online Sex Offender Register at the time that the driver takes on their volunteering position to ensure passenger safety). Historically, the ride is provided free of charge to the user, with mileage costs being covered by a combination of core RSVP volunteer mileage funding and then local sponsorship/ grants. Timesheets are turned in on a monthly basis and are checked to the log of rides before being signed off by the RSVP Director prior to submission to our accounting function for payment. As evidence of local demand, over the last 12 months P-A-R has gone from between 10 and 12 rides p.m. to in excess of 30 rides p.m. At current levels we are supporting 100 different beneficiaries per annum. There is a need for us to review our data collection process to ensure that all users are properly categorized as Seniors, the Disabled or Veterans, but this revision to our records is currently being completed. By providing this intervention, our volunteers are addressing this community need and supporting the AGING IN PLACE agenda. (This service also addresses the medical transportation needs of Veterans, featuring again as one of the specific Focus Areas and one of our secondary Performance Measures).

The next four identified community needs falling within our primary focus area of HEALTHY FUTURES relate to Obesity & Food. The issue of Food Insecurity is a major issue for the state of Oklahoma and has become an ever greater problem since the onset of the economic depression following the financial crisis of 2008. As available reports and research for the state do not drill down to a county level, we have to rely on the most recent information available from the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma #3701. Their literature identifies that there are three distinct groups who suffer most from Food Insecurity and these are children, the working poor and seniors. Over 675,000 Oklahomans are at risk of hunger daily and the Food Bank of OKC supports over 350 local agencies by supplying food for distribution at a local level. {'Hunger in America Report 2010 -- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma (#3701)}. Over 71% of those supported by the Food Bank or its' partner Food Pantries and Food Kitchens are below the poverty level, and 37% are already receiving SNAP benefits.

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Of the 350+ pantries and food kitchens supported, 91% use volunteers, with 66% of food pantries having no paid staff whatsoever. For this reason alone, the input from RSVP volunteers can be crucial. We should make a distinction here as we have a number of volunteers at the Regional Food Bank and many working at our local Food Pantries.

However, support of the food insecure in the state of Oklahoma does not stop there. Many food pantries operate Food Gleaning operations, and thanks to the Oklahoma state 'Good Samaritan' laws, food nearing its 'sell by' date can be donated by supermarkets to supplement the food obtained from the Food Bank. Recipients then sign a 'hold harmless' indemnity when the food is distributed to them.

This multiplies the benefits available at such distribution outlets significantly. As an illustration, Dibble Senior Center in McClain County collects donations from Walmart in Purcell (17 miles away) three times a week and once a week from Spencers' supermarket in Blanchard (10 miles). By this method, this small rural volunteer station has been able to provide support to some 500 unduplicated recipients amounting to some 11,753 adult meals and 5,286 children's meals during 2012.

The activity at these various sites encompasses volunteers under the following Performance Measures H10 (Food Distribution, Food Collection and Food Pantry Support) and under H11 (Providing Services).

Our Volunteers at the Regional Food Bank are engaged in Food Distribution, involving the warehousing, preparation and delivery of supplies to meet the individual needs of the respective food pantries or food kitchens, in order that the emergency needs of those needing food can be met.

At the three local food Food Pantries supported by RSVP, we have a number of volunteers and support staff directly associated with Food Collection who visit food suppliers or food gleaning sites to pick up donated food and returning it to the volunteer station. Here additional volunteers will sort and bag both food bank supplies and food donations gleaned to prepare food baskets, etc. suitable for the immediate needs of individuals or families needing emergency assistance.

At those three Food Pantries, we also then have staff who act as reception, taking information from those needing assistance, collating personal information and identification, etc. before providing supplies under the heading of Food Pantry Support.

Those needing food outside of the scope of 'Emergency Support' to meet a regular and recurring Food Security need are dealt with under the heading of 'Providing Services', where recipients also receive advice and education on nutrition and healthy eating issues over a 10 or 12 week period based on the individual outlet. The education element of the program is currently only at the early stages, but with RSVP support this will take on greater importance as time progresses. Wherever possible,

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performance measurement tools as identified in the CNCS Resource Center will be utilized to track recipient numbers, subject to the current data collection tools and the needs of the centers -- which may already be driven by information needed for the Regional Food Bank. Additionally, we will utilize annual participant surveys that comply with the USDA definition and classification of Food Security.

Finally, when considering the Healthy Future agenda, we need to consider a specific type of activity often being delivered at Senior Centers and/ or Congregate Meal sites. At five of our volunteer sites, structured exercise sessions take place on a regular basis that help to support the Access to Care agenda forming part of the HEALTHY FUTURES focus area. At each of these sites our volunteers deliver routine exercise classes, many following the structure of the nationally recognized 'Bone Builders' program over a 9 to 12 week period. Such activities are acknowledged as supporting general health for seniors which can in turn improve Flexibility, Strength, Agility and Balance and physical Endurance. While Bone Builders and similar programs are often aimed at reducing the incidence and effects of osteoporosis, particularly in women, by utilizing load or weight bearing exercises (or utilizing resistance bands to put muscles under controlled stress), these exercise sessions can also have cardiovascular benefits for all regular participants. Research also shows that the positive benefits on Agility and Balance reduces the incidence of slip/ fall accidents and the resultant hospitalization of seniors. The report 'Promoting and Prescribing Exercise for the Elderly' (Nied & Franklin, 2002) published in the 'American Family Physician' states that even if such exercise programs are not adopted until after the age of 75, they can still be very beneficial to participants.

Exercise sessions (generally between 35-45 minutes duration) are delivered by trained RSVP volunteers and these programs are delivered at five volunteer stations, with 125+ individuals completing the entire program annually. As a focus area activity, we will monitor attendance at individual centers through the maintenance of attendance logs. We will also acknowledge successful completion of an entire program by the presentation of RSVP sponsored Certificates of Achievement to supplement any presented by the program itself. This will enable RSVP to monitor outputs accurately.

Recruitment and Development

Since Senior Corps first came into existence our older generations have provided some of the nations' most dedicated, skilled and committed volunteers, but over recent years we have seen a reduction of volunteer numbers as many become unable to commit to continued activity - due to the health of self

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or family, competing demands or just volunteer burnout. RSVP locally has seen volunteer numbers fall from over 350 in 2009 to approximately 240 in 2012. We also have to consider whether some volunteers have experienced a lack of fulfillment in the activity they have been placed. In order to better understand the reasons for changes to our volunteer pool, we intend to conduct a formal review of recent 'drop outs' including the completion of a detailed survey. We expect this to take place in early 2014. What remains clear is that there is still an overwhelming need for us to continue to find suitable volunteers to support both RSVP managed programs and those of our partners. We need to ensure that we have actually arrested the reduction in volunteer numbers and also to take steps to expand the impact our volunteers can have on our local communities. On this basis, recruiting and developing volunteers remains essential to the success of our RSVP program. While the adverse economic trends seen over the past 5-6 years suggests that many of the Baby Boomer Generation will continue in the workforce well into their 60's, our area is still a prime location for volunteer growth. With higher levels of educational attainment and a high proportion of people retiring from professional, managerial and supervisory positions, RSVP of Cleveland and McClain Counties will continue seek and identify high quality volunteers who have the ability and desire to volunteer. However, in our opinion, we need to consider the manner in which we identify and relate to potential new volunteers. Historically RSVP locally has been able to attract a regular stream of volunteers through Senior Centers and Congregate Meal sites. However, what is becoming abundantly clear is that 50 and 60 year old retired Baby Boomers do not currently see themselves as Senior Center clients. On this basis, we will need to review and develop more appropriate recruitment methods to make the volunteering option more desirable.

What is obvious is that many 'Boomers' now see the Internet as a significant source of information and so we intend to make more use of websites such as Volunteer Match to attract new recruits. After reviewing the activities involved in RSVP projects and by consulting with our partners, we will expand our use of the website using interesting and descriptive job adverts to attract new volunteers and to ensure that we match skills to the needs of the position.

In securing new volunteers we have already taken the step of redesigning registration forms so that new applicants will identify how their experience, interests or skills relate to the new CNCS focus areas. This should help us place future new recruits in volunteer activities that will support National Performance Measures.

As we attempt to reach these new RSVP Volunteers, there is potential for us to approach the HR departments of large scale employers to arrange presentations highlighting the benefits of

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volunteering both to the community (in meeting unmet community needs) and to volunteers -- who gain fulfillment and gratification from their service. With the recent revisions to CNCS focus areas there are potential opportunities to create new specialist skilled volunteering roles in the medium to long term. While we have not incorporated any associated outputs and outcomes into our work plans, we feel that there is scope to create new Capacity Building positions. New volunteers from white collar or supervisory backgrounds may be tasked with utilizing their considerable managerial skills in responding to community needs. As we migrate volunteers into positions in the new focus area positions, there will probably be a need for RSVP (where appropriate in partnership with other stakeholder organizations) to deliver high quality training to new placements or existing volunteers who we decide to 'migrate'. In some cases, we may be left with no alternative but to graduate some stations out of direct RSVP membership entirely -- but even in such cases there will be scope to utilize RSVP volunteers in capacity building roles within these organizations. By paying close attention to Volunteer Assignment Descriptions and by working closely with our partner stations, we should be able to ensure that volunteers are equipped to deliver high quality support to the community and are also able to maximize the impact of their volunteering opportunities.

With the issue of training in mind, the current RSVP Director has over 10 years experience preparing and delivering training in both commercial and public sector arenas, either one-to-one, in a classroom format or to large groups. The Director will work with RSVP projects and also new and existing partners programs to identify any volunteer training shortfalls and then, in consultation with those partners, will ensure that appropriate responses are prepared to address any future training need. All training delivered will involve formal feedback from participants to ensure that training is subject to a continual improvement process.

While we have already quoted census figures in our 'Strengthening Communities' narrative which indicates that both counties are largely White Caucasian in composition, over the past 12 months we have started to see the recruitment of a much more diverse and inclusive pool of volunteers. In support of this, as part of our annual Site Evaluation Report, we will pay particular attention to the accessibility of premises and their compliance with ADA regulations. Additionally, we also ensure that all our volunteer sites carry RSVP brochures specifically for Spanish speakers and we now have a fluent Spanish speaking volunteer based in our main administration office in Norman. Through links with the University of Oklahoma we have access to translators fluent in Chinese. Finally, as a geographic area with a notable proportion of Native Americans, through our sponsor organization we can also ensure that volunteer opportunities, promotional materials or paperwork of any kind are pre-

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screened to ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

On top of the issue of strategic planning and management of new volunteers, our communications policy will take on a far greater importance. There will be a need to network with community leaders at all levels in order to raise awareness of the new priority areas of service. Other key individuals with our stakeholders will need to be subject to an education process as part of a rolling communication strategy, detailing the changes to volunteer activity. Volunteers' personal growth (through training, coaching and benefiting from new experiences) will also be highlighted and acknowledged in our volunteer newsletters and by regular media releases to press, radio and TV.

Finally, in securing, retaining and valuing our volunteers, we need to mention the long standing benefits of RSVP membership. This includes our Annual Volunteer Banquet, with presentation of service certificates and 'loyalty' pins, the production and distribution of regular newsletters, the payment of mileage and also the provision of free liability insurance and volunteer life cover. These are important elements that promote the value of the Volunteer Support package and underline the importance of community service. All volunteer support costs are arrived at based on the number of volunteers involved and following completion of a 'comparison shop' to ensure that we are receiving value for money when purchasing.

Program Management

The RSVP Director provides substantial oversight of the program. As a member of the Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency Leadership Team, the Director helps plan and conduct COCAA's biennial Community Needs Assessment that has been used to identify and address specific needs of the community in the past. While COCAA's Community Needs Assessment is an extremely useful tool, there is also potentially some benefit in RSVP networking with local service delivery organizations like United Way and perhaps the University of Oklahoma to consider if there is any value in performing a wider CNA for Cleveland & McClain counties to attempt to obtain even more specific information. This could also be used by other local organizations for Strategic Planning purposes and help drive appropriate local service delivery.

Historically, the Director is responsible for identifying, securing and managing volunteer stations that help fulfill the need identified by the community. At the time that organizations are confirmed as RSVP sites, a three year Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by the two parties (RSVP and the station) which confirms their respective responsibilities. The MOU also includes an area for the station to outline the desirable skills and talents they are looking for in prospective volunteers and also allows for a Volunteer Assignment Description to be provided. The MOU also clarifies whether the

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nature of the volunteer position requires the station to carry out a Background Check on volunteers and if so, also requires the station to provide RSVP with confirmation of a satisfactory outcome. CNCS regulations state that RSVP itself is not required to carry out a check on new volunteers unless the station requires it and then RSVP needs to agree with the station who will carry the cost and the responsibility of completing these formalities.

Volunteers approaching RSVP wishing to volunteer will be expected to discuss their expectations and outline their skills, interests etc. with the Director. They will then go on to complete a detailed volunteer registration form, a confidentiality agreement and - if mileage claims are likely to be a factor - will be asked to provide a copy of their Drivers License and Auto Insurance for retention in their files and subsequent update. Then, based on volunteers' interests and abilities, volunteer assignments can be made that benefit both the community and the volunteers. Each volunteer receives an RSVP Volunteer Policy Handbook. If it is felt by the Director, the Station or the Volunteer that there is a training need or if an site orientation is needed, this will be undertaken either by RSVP or the station based on the nature of the need. After assignments have been made the Director is able to assess program activities, performance, and accomplishments with input from the station and the volunteer. RSVP in Cleveland and McClain Counties also potentially benefits from having a wealth of volunteer opportunities available. Volunteers living in the area can provide community support in more than 180 churches, 140 non-profit organizations, and over 200 clubs and organizations. If a volunteer wishes to support one of these organizations which currently does not enjoy a relationship with RSVP, the Director will arrange a meeting to consider if the organization wishes to become a volunteer station and can meet CNCS requirements and if so, to complete the required MOU, etc. In the last 12 months, RSVP volunteers donated service to the communities of Cleveland and McClain Counties totaling in excess of 41,500 hours. These hours were donated to non-profit organizations, businesses, medical facilities, and social service agencies. RSVP currently has 240 active volunteers working at over 60 volunteer stations. By supporting the unmet needs of other nonprofits, RSVP helps them maintain current levels of service against a backdrop of financial hardship and Federal and State budget cuts. The RSVP Director visits each station at least annually to carry out a review meeting with the station management team to ensure that volunteer activity meets their designated service activities. This is accomplished by carrying out a brief informal interview with a selection of volunteers to compare their actual activity to the job description maintained on file either at the station itself, or in the volunteers' file at the RSVP Office. At the same time, the Director ensures that no prohibited activities are being practiced. A full Site Evaluation is also carried out including

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obtaining certification from the station management team that the site complies with Safety and Health regulations.

RSVP currently has a full time Director who was appointed in October 2012. In addition, the administration team is likely to be expanded by securing an experienced part-time Office Assistant through a work experience program who will provide general clerical support of 20 hours each week. It is also anticipated that two to three RSVP volunteers will start supporting the office function by each donating 10-20 hours service per month. At present, no allowance has been made in budget for the part-time Office Assistant (whose salary costs are paid by the Work experience contractor -- rather than by RSVP. Once an appointment is confirmed, we will confirm the budget changes with our state office.

The RSVP office maintains detailed information on each of the volunteer stations and tracks volunteer assignments through use of Volunteer Reporter 6.1d software. All volunteer hours, mileage traveled (whether claimed and reimbursed -- or not claimed) and number of meals delivered under the meals on wheels program can be recorded. Additionally, associated information such as Drivers License details, Auto Insurance expiry and RSVP Volunteer Insurance beneficiaries, etc. can be recorded and stored. This system not only helps with service tracking, but enhances mass communication through mail merge and mailing label functions. As mentioned previously, with the new Director now established and in post, volunteer stations are being visited regularly and evaluations of both volunteers and programs that being produced. These evaluations help monitor the outcomes and progress toward the outputs required and Work Plan goals. Finally, RSVP also provides regular reports to all program funding sources as requested and required by contracts.

Our RSVP Advisory Council also supports the program in a number of ways, including advocacy and promotion, volunteer recruitment, and planning activities. The Advisory Council meets quarterly, monitoring, challenging and supporting the Director in his efforts to support and improve the program in Cleveland and McClain counties. At present the Council has only four members following decline over a number of years, but both volunteer stations, other community partners and private sector companies are being approached with a view to bringing numbers up to more acceptable levels.

Organizational Capability

The sponsor of the RSVP Program for Cleveland and McClain counties, Oklahoma is Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency (COCAA), a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. COCAA has been helping low-income individuals and families overcome poverty and lead more stable, self sufficient lives since 1968. COCAA has long experience of managing multiple grant funding streams

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from private foundations, local, state and federal funders.

Our mission statement, modeled on the National Community Action Partnership mission, is "Helping People. Changing Lives. Building Communities." COCAA provides services in six counties in Central Oklahoma: Cleveland, Lincoln, Logan, Payne, Pottawatomie, and Seminole and also is responsible for RSVP activity in McClain County. In 2012, COCAA staff members provided various services to more than 4,100 low-income residents across its' operational area in addition to services through its' two RSVP programs. (COCAA is also sponsor to RSVP Pottawatomie County) COCAA program services included emergency food, rent and utility assistance, transitional housing, homeless services, transportation, prescription assistance and healthcare services, family development through case management, and referrals to other provider partners. These services were provided in addition to the volunteer services and hours contributed by RSVP volunteers. COCAA programs are supported by 65 local, state, and federal funding sources, as well as private and corporate donations. COCAA, as the sponsoring agency, supports RSVP by way of administrative services, accounting and finance, HR support, (including policies and procedures), and by providing support with Strategic Planning. COCAA is a member of the Alliance on Aging, Community Action Program Legal Services, Inc. (CAPLAW), and the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies.

COCAA has a 12 member Board of Directors, made up of representatives from its' core six counties in the COCAA service area. According to Community Action guidelines, the Board follows a tripartite structure: 1/3 of its members represent low-income people, 1/3 represent elected officials, and the remaining 1/3 represent the private sector. The board meets 11 times a year, and active committees also meet monthly to discuss finance, personnel, property, programs, and development for COCAA. Volunteer members serve three year terms. The Board has a separate Finance Sub-Committee of 4 members that works with the Finance Director to oversee the fiscal aspects of COCAA's work and ensures that all COCAA's projects operate within the financial requirements required by project funders at a local, state and federal level. Accounting and book keeping records are recorded using the SAGE MIP software package. Following a number of years where there has been staff turnover in the accounting function, a new Finance Director with experience working in larger organizations and administering Federal funds was appointed in July 2013.

In monitoring the fiscal element of the program and actively controlling budget, the RSVP Director for Cleveland and McClain county operates a parallel excel spreadsheet recording expenditure and reconciles figures against monthly reports provided by the finance department. All expenditures are

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made by getting pre-approval of amounts, etc. through the finance office, and a suitable Payment Order is then raised by the Director. While there is a mechanism where some expenditure requires pre-approval by COCAA's Executive Director, in practice this rarely features, as the Program Director is authorized to sign for amounts of up to \$2,500. The only exception to this is where the RSVP Director needs to travel out of state for training, etc. where COCAA's Board must first confirm any such expenditure..

Both of COCAA's RSVP projects utilize the Volunteer Reporter database (current version 6.1d) to track and record all volunteer and station activity. Activity by other COCAA projects is recorded and impacts are measured using the CAPTAIN database system which COCAA is required to operate by Oklahoma Department of Commerce. COCAA has several structures in place and procedures for sustainable practices, self-assessment, and strategic planning.

The RSVP Director for Cleveland and McClain county reports directly to COCAA's Executive Director, who provides day-to-day line management and support. The management process provides the RSVP Director with regular performance evaluations and a full annual performance review. Additional support is also received from the Director of Operations, particularly with regard to fundraising and grant writing but also with compliance and implementation issues. RSVP program goals are incorporated into COCAA's Strategic Plan and regular agency planning processes, which in turn are linked to the biennial Community Needs Assessments.

At an operational level, the Cleveland and McClain county program has only one paid member of staff at present - the Project Director. As any additional staff support has to be funded from outside of the existing project budget, a part time Office Assistant is being sought through a local Work Experience program and it is hoped that an appointment will be made within the next few weeks. This position will be funded from the Work Experience contractors' funds with no additional financial burden on the RSVP project - but we have not included the likely financial impact in our budget figures and do not intend to do so until the appointment is confirmed. Additionally, now the Director has become better acquainted with the volunteer 'pool', it is expected that one or two volunteers with good computer skills and clerical experience (particularly database and spreadsheets) will commit to supporting the office during Quarter3 2013 - particularly when monthly activity peaks in the early part of each month when Volunteer time sheets are submitted. Suitable volunteers have been identified for the positions and will be contacted during September to confirm their availability. The appointment of these staff will allow the Director time to leave the office to take on a proper development role which should support ongoing recruitment of new stations and volunteers and the

Narratives

expansion of the program over the short to medium term.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A