

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The Golden Triangle RSVP has been locally sponsored by and resides within the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) serving the South East Texas Region since its inception in 1973. The region consists of three counties measuring 2,207 square miles. Included are 897 square miles of Hardin County (population 54,635, including 14.2% over the age of 65 and last recorded 4,519 Veterans), Jefferson County 1,111 square miles (population 252,273, with 12.9% over the age of 65 and 17,865 veterans) and 380 square miles in Orange County (population 81,837, counting 14.5% over the age of 65 and veterans totaling 7,126). Current unemployment rate in these areas range from 7.7% - 10.3%. According to the 2010 Census, an average of 23.89% of SE Texans live below the poverty level. The demographic status of our region indicates increases in the number of seniors while the economic status is declining. We see this as a common concern throughout the nation due to Baby Boomers entering their sixties.

The Golden Triangle RSVP is requesting \$212,148.00 to provide significant opportunities to an estimated 620 volunteers in our 3 county area. The volunteers will contribute services in areas such as Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Opportunity, and Disaster Services. The primary focus area for the Golden Triangle RSVP project is "Healthy Futures". At the end of the three-year grant we expect our outcome to be a boost in the number of older adults with social connections and support, plus an accessible knowledge of and in food security for children and adults. The CNCS federal investment will be augmented by \$41,078.00 of non-federal resources.

## Strengthening Communities

The 2013 Homeless Count comprised by the Southeast Texas Homeless Coalition states there are over 1,000 sheltered and unsheltered individuals and families living in Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties. Some of these homeless individuals and families are due to our area's 8.8% unemployment rate. Soup kitchens like "Some Other Place" and "Hospitality Center" provide a daily nutritious meal to the homeless population who otherwise might go hungry. Ecumenical missions such as Orange Christian Services, Some Other Place, United Board of Missions, and United Christian Care Center serve individuals that are at or below the Federal poverty level, with an estimated 95% of those served below that level. Many of those served are unemployed or underemployed. In Orange County, records indicate over 45 new families are served each month in addition to the returning families who

## Narratives

can receive services once every 30 days. Records are maintained on all those assisted, especially those with financial assistance. Due to the nature of the work of these agencies, i.e., crisis intervention/emergency services, it is considered that 100% of those requesting assistance/services provided are served. Their assistance/services address the current problem individuals and families are faced with, and hopefully, "buys them time" to provide for long-term stability.

In 2007, Texas Department of State Health Services, report the Texas immunization rate was 77.3%, up from 65% in 2002, which indicates an increase of 12%. According to Dr. David Lakey, Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services, the progress Texas has made is the result of aggressive and sustained efforts of state and local partners along with families. Many parents today believe that childhood diseases such as mumps and measles no longer exist. Due primarily to lack of information and education, many parents do not get lifesaving immunizations for their infants. In 2012, RSVP volunteers personally visited 1,626 new moms in local hospitals and educated them about the importance of early childhood immunizations. Each mom received a packet of education material to take home. Each baby was registered in the reminder card system and was mailed 4 (four) reminder cards for immunizations due at two, four, six and twelve months. A database was maintained specifically for this purpose.

According to the Department of Health and Senior Services, approximately 80% of all persons aged 65 and older have at least one chronic condition, and 50% have at least two (Public Health and Aging: Trends in Aging -- United States and Worldwide, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, February 14, 2003, 101-106). In the U.S., the leading causes of death are heart disease, cancer and stroke. Diabetes, influenza/pneumonia and unintentional injuries rank next among the leading causes of death for people age 55 and older. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability, affecting over 2.5 million people. Incidence of arthritis increases with age, and by age 65 nearly 60% have some type of arthritis (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2001). Despite the statistics, most chronic conditions are not a natural part of the aging process and can be prevented. Research has shown that providing people with information on health practices leading to positive changes in behavior has powerful effects on health and quality of life. Expanding access to healthy educational materials and health promotion opportunities for older adults is one of the few avenues available to address the impact of chronic disease and disabling injuries. People who are physically active, eat a healthy diet, and practice other health behaviors, including appropriate health screenings, reduce their risk for chronic

## Narratives

disease (A New Vision of Aging: Helping Older Adults Make Healthier Choices, Center for the Advancement of Health, Washington, D.C. 2006). A local senior center is collaborating with the Lamar University Nursing Department to create monthly healthy education lessons. Nursing students visit the senior center and ask questions about topics of health concerns/interests, like nutrition, exercise and basic healthy living. They then prepare a healthy educational lesson. As part of our priority focus, these educational lessons are to be distributed by RSVP volunteers to senior center participants and to other places the volunteers visit during the month, i.e., local health fairs, nursing homes and assisted living centers in the area.

The Priority focus area for Golden Triangle RSVP is Healthy Futures. We will create and sustain services through the volunteers providing optimal opportunities for increased knowledge of living healthy now and in the future. Serving 8 sites: Beaumont Police Department (currently 5 Sub-station calling home bound), Bridge City Food Program (26), Hospitality Center (25), Nutrition and Services for Seniors (13 MOW), Orange Christian Services (46), Orange County Sheriff Dept. Senior Watch (6), Some Other Place (55), United Board of Missions (19), and United Christian Care Center (36). Service at these facilities will guarantee a minimum of 25 % total of the 620 active RSVP Volunteers.

Activity: Home delivered meals are provided by way of Nutrition and Services for Seniors through a program known as "Meals on Wheels". This entity was established in 1983 and organized by a group of citizens concerned for the welfare of seniors in the community. Meals on Wheels (MOW) provides hot wholesome meals to the frail and or the elderly resulting in nourishment and friendship to a population that is often overlooked, neglected and simply forgotten. According to Nutrition and Services for Senior, Inc., they will provide 346,180 home bound meals to seniors in the year 2014. Volunteers play a vital role in this service in that they deliver to 75% of the homes on the MOW routes.

The City of Beaumont Summer Food Program coordinated through the Best Years Senior Center, participates in the Summer Food Service Program. The program was established to ensure that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. This program uses flow through funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, the Texas Department of Agriculture, and the City of Beaumont. Nutritious meals are provided to all children ages 1-18 without charge. Meals are the same for all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or

## **Narratives**

disability, and there is no discrimination in the course of the meal service. Lunches are provided daily Monday-Friday at the 10 sites located throughout the city in areas with significant concentrations of low income children. RSVP volunteers are a major part of the summer program and its success. To ensure that we maximize our opportunities for input and feedback into the program design and evaluation we consult a twenty member Advisory Council. Members of the board may include RSVP members, local business leaders, elected officials, senior advocacy representatives, members of local non-profit organizations, etc. the board is sub-divided into smaller sub-committees for advice on issues such as fund-raising, new board member nominations and program evaluation. We recognize that our volunteers are an important link to the community and a wealth of information and wisdom on the effectiveness of our program; therefore we frequently survey our volunteers to gain valuable feedback and ideas about improving the program. After reviewing the survey the board makes recommendations to the RSVP Director on areas we can enhance and advance RSVP locally. The overall management and effectiveness is evaluated by the Executive Director of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission on an on-going basis. This assessment is done yearly by way of staff evaluations, volunteer interviews and fiscal reviews.

The staff and members of the Golden Triangle RSVP actively seek partnerships with business and community cohorts that seek to meet the needs of South East Texas. To select the most appropriate partnerships the staff of RSVP participates in numerous boards throughout the community. Because of various community organization involvement we are better fit to address community wide needs. Through our involvement in planning and development process we have the opportunity to assess community issues and the stakeholders that are attempting to solve those issues. These community partnerships have opened numerous doors to diversify the types of volunteer opportunities offered.

The Volunteer Coordinators main responsibility is to maintain management of volunteers once they have been placed at specified stations. This includes frequent visits with volunteers and individual station coordinators or liaison, which are identified on MOU or at the placements of new volunteers. However, one new goal recently implemented by the new RSVP Director which has proven effective, (therefore shall be an ongoing activity), is for the entire RSVP staff to "Meet, Greet and Visit" each volunteer and or station periodically to maintain the personal contact and deliver the heartfelt appreciation throughout the year to the volunteers and the stations that collaborate with us. In addition to program staff, one responsibility of an advisory council member is to visit stations,

## **Narratives**

volunteers, and those they serve as well as meet with community supporters.

Each of the indicated areas will have documented measurable outcomes through community partner surveys, volunteer time sheets and volunteer feedback forms.

Veterans and Military services has 33 volunteers providing service to two volunteer stations (SETX Veterans Service Group and Veterans Administration (VA) Outpatient Clinic). The RSVP volunteers assist this group of individuals by serving at veterans funerals providing a sense of comfort to the families to see their love ones honored. They also serve as pharmacy aides and as van drivers providing transportation to and from health facilities in Houston.

Disaster Services has 3 sites: American Red Cross - Beaumont, America Red Cross - Orange, and Orange County Emergency Management (CERT). With a total of 10 volunteers combined, these volunteers provide assistance to individuals and groups after a disaster. In recent years South East Texas has recorded 3 hurricanes that have destroyed major parts of the community.

To further integrate senior services into the activities within the community, it is our mission to aggressively seek out and become actively involved in programs and agencies that actively address our Healthy Futures focus. As a result of our intensive community affiliations, the Golden Triangle RSVP has been nominated for and received numerous local awards and recognition. To further raise public awareness about our program we compile and mail quarterly newsletters with over a thousand recipients. We have also in the past (and plan to again) launch aggressive advertisement campaigns through local radio, outdoor billboards and television media.

Our staff and volunteers enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions within the community in several ways. First our volunteers will bring many valuable years of experience to local agencies. Secondly, RSVP volunteers greatly increase the ability of local agencies to recruit and coordinate additional volunteers. This is a wonderful benefit to the agencies that we work with because there are a limited number of staff members at the non-profits agencies we serve. Finally, Golden Triangle RSVP volunteers are the best recruits in that they are given training and encouragement for the service they provide as well as for them to recruit others to serve.

# Narratives

## Recruitment and Development

The purpose of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission is to solve area wide problems by promoting intergovernmental cooperation and coordination, conduct comprehensive regional planning and provide a forum for the discussion and study of area issues. The county, city, and special purpose district members of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission believe that older persons are a valuable and growing resource for the communities of Southeast Texas and desire to provide, on a region wide basis, an outlet for the time and talent of older persons as community volunteers. The member governments of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission support the mission of RSVP in providing, through regular volunteer service, a vehicle for older persons to impact ever changing community needs and provide significant volunteer service to social service agencies, governmental entities and publicly supported services in its jurisdictions as part of the Planning Commission's comprehensive regional planning responsibility. Members further believe that older persons will personally benefit from community involvement and will continue to be supportive of community endeavors that will make Southeast Texas "a good place to grow up and grow old".

The Golden Triangle RSVP has a long track record of providing high quality volunteer assignments to meet the changing needs of Southeast Texas. Volunteers have continued to share experiences, abilities and skills to improve their communities. To ensure this high quality experience for our volunteers, the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator interviews each volunteer during the volunteer's initial intake. From the interview conversation the Volunteer Coordinator is able to more clearly understand the type of job opportunity that the volunteer is interested in. Next a meeting is arranged with the new volunteer at the actual volunteer site. The Volunteer Coordinator then conducts a follow-up visit either in person or on the phone with each new volunteer to be sure they are satisfied with their volunteer assignment and experience.

A key aspect in our success of volunteer retention is ensuring that each assignment is personally satisfying and engaging to the individual volunteer. We make certain of this in several ways; first, each assignment is regularly evaluated by RSVP Director and Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that the task / duty is one that is providing maximum benefit to the volunteer and to our community. Secondly, the staff routinely consults with volunteers and volunteer stations to make necessary changes in assurance that all assignments are meaningful to the RSVP volunteer, the volunteer station and other stakeholders. Due to the fact that our volunteers possess limitless amounts of life and

## **Narratives**

career experiences, all opportunities are designed with some level of leadership within them. Many which require and allow for the volunteers to recruit train and lead other volunteers. As an organization we conscientiously adjust our volunteer model to embrace more levels of leadership or leadership potential in all opportunities of service. By doing this we are offering more attractive volunteer opportunities which are essential in recruiting and retaining the Baby Boomers Generation.

Recruitment is developed through resources ranging from in-kind donations to financial contributions for newspaper, radio and television targeted marketing techniques. Tools such as power point presentations, graphic design software, the SETRPC web-site and print advertisement will be used to target seniors especially Baby Boomers. All of the above methods have proven effective throughout the history of Golden Triangle RSVP, however, the most effective recruitment tool is the volunteers themselves. Because of the satisfaction and fulfillment they receive with their assignments they frequently share their experience and invite family members, friends and even strangers to take part.

The RSVP Director regularly evaluates training needs and develops a needed plan of action to address any deficiencies. We routinely host one-on-one training for new volunteers. Volunteer stations are trained on an as needed basis to keep them updated on new reporting requirements, which includes data collection used to measure outcome and output.

The Beaumont - Port Arthur Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) encompasses 2,207 square miles and three urban counties on the Texas Gulf Coast. The service area abuts the Louisiana state line and shares much of its cultural flavor with this neighboring state. According to the 2010 Census, the three major cities are Beaumont, Port Arthur and Orange, surrounded by 18 smaller cities and unincorporated areas. Although the entire area is considered urban by Texas state standards, parts of Jefferson County and all of Hardin County are eligible for federal rural transportation funds. In 2010, the total population for Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties was 388,745. The population for Hardin and Orange Counties was projected to increase at an average of 1.2% through 2012, and Jefferson County to decrease 0.2%. The population for 2012 was projected to be 389,980. The 65+ population in the three counties was 13.86% of the total population. Females comprised 49.96% of the population in the three counties, males comprised 50.4%.

Ethnic/racial minorities comprised 29.96% of the total population. African Americans are the largest

## **Narratives**

minority group in the region at 62,977 persons or 16.2% of the population. Hispanics, Asians, American Indians and Others make up the remainder of the minority population at 53,258 persons and 13.7% of total population. The language most often spoken in Southeast Texas homes by persons 5 years or older was English (90.76%). Languages other than English were spoken in 35,765 homes (9.2%). These Southeast Texas demographics provide a good volunteer pool for the Golden Triangle RSVP to draw upon.

The Golden Triangle RSVP Memorandum of Understanding prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, or handicap. It states that the Volunteer Station and the Golden Triangle RSVP will actively comply with provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination against disabled persons in all programs, services, and activities.

In the past, the Golden Triangle RSVP Volunteer Registration Form did not track veterans or military family members. The Volunteer Registration Form has been revised in order to track this information in the future. In an RSVP Newsletter, we will ask our volunteers to help us identify current members who are veterans or military family members, which will allow us to track this data.

The Golden Triangle RSVP has had a Memorandum of Understanding with the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic since December 1992 and with the Southeast Texas Veteran's Service Group since March 2005. At the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic, volunteers (most are veterans themselves) serve veterans in the canteen, in the pharmacy and van drivers take veterans to the Houston Clinic for medical services not available locally. In order to volunteer for the Southeast Texas Veteran's Service Group you must be an honorably discharged veteran. These volunteers provide the honor detail at military funerals, visit terminally ill veterans, and assist at civic military events.

The Volunteer Coordinator has developed strong relationships with several veteran RSVP members holding leadership positions in veteran's organizations, i.e., American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Volunteer Coordinator has requested their assistance in recruiting additional veterans.

## **Narratives**

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding process, the Volunteer Coordinator ascertains whether or not the volunteer station building is handicap accessible and if handicap parking is available. The Golden Triangle RSVP Volunteer Registration Form asks if there are any physical conditions that will limit the volunteer's service, and if so, a please explain section. During the new volunteer interview process, the Volunteer Coordinator will take into consideration these physical limitations (if any) and place the volunteer at a suitable volunteer station. Age related and physical disabilities are always factors when developing volunteer assignments.

The Volunteer Coordinator interviews each new volunteer during the volunteer's initial intake. Whenever possible, the meeting is scheduled at the office of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission, the Golden Triangle RSVP'S sponsor. By holding the interview at our office, this process helps to form an immediate relationship with RSVP and our sponsor. From the interview, our Volunteer Coordinator gains insight into the type of job opportunity that the volunteer is interested in. The Volunteer Coordinator will arrange a meeting with the new volunteer at the actual volunteer station. The Volunteer Coordinator follows up with each new volunteer to ensure that they are satisfied with their volunteer experience. A key aspect in of our success in retaining volunteers is ensuring that each assignment is personally satisfying and engaging to each volunteer. We ensure this in several ways. First, each assignment is regularly evaluated by the Director and Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that the assignment is one that is providing maximum benefit to the volunteer and community at large. Secondly, RSVP staff routinely consults with volunteers and volunteer stations to make necessary changes to ensure that all assignments are meaningful to the volunteer, the volunteer station and other stakeholders. Next, due to the fact that our volunteers possess vast amounts of life and career experiences, most volunteer opportunities are designed with some level of leadership in them. Many volunteer opportunities require volunteers to recruit, train and lead other volunteers. We feel that these types of assignments are essential to recruit and retain our volunteers. Finally, the Director and Volunteer Coordinator encourage feedback from volunteers with frequent interaction and an open door policy.

Golden Triangle RSVP recognizes volunteers throughout the year in several ways. First, we include feature articles about the dedication and accomplishments of our volunteers in the quarterly RSVP Newsletter. This newsletter is distributed to our volunteers, volunteer stations, RSVP advisory council members, interested persons, local, county and state elected officials, Texas RSVP Directors and other

## **Narratives**

stakeholders. Secondly, we have social events for our volunteers during National Volunteer Month. We hold these events area-wide in four locations. Thirdly, we recognize our volunteers during our Annual Recognition Luncheon. This event has developed into the premiere event for seniors in our area. Awards are given for 20, 25 and 30 years of service, recognition of volunteers 90+ years of age, and volunteers with 500-999 hours, and volunteers with 1,000+ hours, and to the volunteer who recruits the most new RSVP volunteers during a one year period. All Recognition events are completely funded by donations from local businesses. Fourthly, on a monthly basis, we send our CNCS state office "impact stories" on our volunteers.

The new RSVP Director has also implemented as co-host, a celebration for Senior Corps Week. Joining with the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) and AARP Experience Corps, we successfully provided a Health Fair open to the community providing information and access to several health services while local Mayors honored the 3 groups of volunteers with proclamations.

### **Program Management**

It is our goal to place RSVP volunteers at stations that address the Performance Measure Requirements with our focus on Healthy Futures. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for the development of a volunteer station. She meets with the volunteer station director explaining what services we can provide and how we can work with them to satisfy their need and our opportunities. With input from the volunteer station, a Memorandum of Understanding is developed for each volunteer station and reflects the program activities. Each volunteer station must sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Golden Triangle RSVP. Memorandums of Understanding list the responsibilities of the volunteer stations in detail. Memorandums of Understanding were updated to include stronger wording about data collection in order to report outcome and output. It also lists the type of activities that the Golden Triangle RSVP volunteers can engage in. Memorandums of Understanding are renewed every three years by the Volunteer Coordinator. The Golden Triangle RSVP Memorandum of Understanding with volunteer stations states needed training, and how and when that training is to occur. Because of the numerous volunteer assignments that are offered at some volunteer stations, training is specific to the assignment and volunteer station. Each volunteer station is assigned a volunteer supervisor. Those supervisors are usually the volunteer or station staff with the most experience at the site. In most cases, training is provided by that person.

After the MOU is signed with the volunteer station, we give training to the staff at the station so that

## **Narratives**

they will understand what the RSVP Program can provide and the importance of having a meaningful volunteer experience which will address the designated needs. To ensure that RSVP volunteers are performing tasks that are designed to address the Performance Measure, the staff will conduct periodic site visits to the volunteer stations to meet with station personnel to ensure that the stations are informed about and comply with applicable regulations and RSVP policies. The Golden Triangle RSVP Volunteer Coordinator has over 14 years of experience working closely with our volunteer stations and volunteers. During site monitoring visits, we will visit with and or interview the station coordinator and management personnel to identify any area they feel needs attention. These visits provide the staff opportunity to assess volunteers in action and ensure they are working towards addressing specific community needs and keeping with the RSVP mission. Any information and data collected during the station visits are managed through the reporting process. This information may also be used in reports generated through various organizations to show the impact that the RSVP program is making in the Tri-county area in which we serve. This also helps the stations show the impact of the RSVP volunteers to their reporting agencies. For the past 41 years, the Golden Triangle RSVP recruited volunteer stations and volunteers based on the overall needs of the community and available resources. The goal of the Golden Triangle RSVP was to diversify the types of volunteer stations and opportunities that we were able to offer our volunteers. We believe that our volunteer station recruiting efforts should be directed at locating and securing volunteer stations that will provide volunteer opportunities in the six key Performance Measure Requirements as designated for RSVP by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Area Agency on Aging of Southeast Texas is located within the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission. They have offered their collaboration using the 2-1-1 database to search for non-profit agencies with specific activities that might support one or more of RSVP's focus areas. For the past 41 years, the Golden Triangle RSVP recruited volunteer stations and volunteers based on the overall needs of the community and available resources. The goal of RSVP was to diversify the types of volunteer stations and opportunities that we were able to offer our volunteers. We believed that our ability to appeal to local non-profits and the ability to participate in special events would continue to provide us with the capability to attract potential volunteers.

The new recommendation is to streamline the number of service categories RSVP projects are managing. Six key social impact areas have been identified: Disaster Services, Economic

## Narratives

Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures and Veterans and Military Families. In an effort to adhere to this recommendation and manage volunteer stations with volunteer opportunities that fall within the new impact areas and remain attractive to potential volunteers, it is necessary to graduate or allow the expiration of some Memorandums of Understanding with current volunteer stations.

Step 1: graduated volunteer stations that did not currently have volunteers. Letters were mailed to volunteer stations who met this decisive factor.

Step 2: will be to evaluate all volunteer stations that fall into the "Communities Priority" category for the 3-year Grant effective April 1, 2014 -- March 31, 2017. Several of our volunteer stations that fall into this category provide us with a large portion of our in-kind donations. These volunteer stations go under the Communities Priority category because the volunteer opportunity they provide fills an important local community need.

Step 3: will be to determine which volunteer stations (if any) can be kept after completion of Step 2. Criteria to help determine which volunteer stations to keep and which volunteer stations to graduate include:

- Look at the individual volunteers serving at a volunteer station and determine if the volunteer(s) has been counted as an unduplicated person in one of the focus areas. If so, these volunteers can count as an unduplicated volunteer(s). Some volunteer stations have some job opportunities that can be counted in one of the impact areas and other job opportunities that can't, and therefore, would be a part of the Community Priority category.
- Look at the community need served at the remaining volunteer stations and prioritize which volunteer stations to keep until the maximum number of volunteers for the category has been reached. Graduate the volunteer stations remaining on the list.

The Golden Triangle RSVP is proud to have very active members on our Advisory Council. One of their functions is to help assess the effectiveness of the program by assuring National Performance Measures outcomes and outputs are carefully considered in each activity. Our Advisory Council performs yearly assessments of program areas and submits recommendations on how to provide a better volunteer experience for our members and the community. Semi-annual program

## **Narratives**

performance reviews have helped monitor progress towards achieving stated goals.

Golden Triangle RSVP uses the Volunteer Reporter Software to track statistics of stations and volunteers. All pertinent information is collected, input and maintained in this database by the RSVP Program Coordinator.

One advantage of our sponsorship is the assistance of SETRPC's Financial Department consisting of an accountant, a finance analyst and an accountant technician. The Finance Department is of great benefit in helping track expenditures and in-kind donations. The RSVP program receives annual funds of in-kind donations from meals provided to our volunteers from the Veterans Administration (VA) and 4 participating hospitals, (Baptist Hospital of SET -- Beaumont, Baptist Hospital of SET -- Orange, Christus Hospital --St. Mary, Christus Hospital -- St. Elizabeth.)

Fund-raising occurs on an on-going basis. The advisory council oversees our annual recognition luncheon events in which we receive indirect funds through various donated door prizes. Other in-kind is secured through RSVP staff, from local businesses and citizens.

Support for RSVP is provided through resources of special assessments contributed by local cities and counties and applying for local grants from agencies in the area to increase the funds needed in addition to what is received as federal, state and local match.

### **Organizational Capability**

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is a voluntary association of local governments that serves an area composed of Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties. Solving area wide community problems and promoting intergovernmental cooperation and coordination has been the main purpose of SETRPC. Established under authority provided by the 1965 Texas Legislature, SETRPC opened its doors in June, 1970. And is one of 24 Regional Planning Councils that serves all of Texas and the only council of government in the nation to successfully sustain sponsorship of two National Senior Service Corps programs, and in 1995 be awarded funding for what began as a demonstration grant, now known as AARP Experience Corps. The governing board for the SETRPC is the Executive Committee and is responsible for the general policies and programs of the Commission, and for the control of funds. The SETRPC Executive Committee meets monthly, and is composed of 50 eligible governmental units which include counties and incorporated cities, independent school districts, and water, sewer, hospital and other special districts.

## Narratives

The ability to track and monitor the fiscal performance of the program is critical to providing the highest level of service while conducting realistic service delivery methods and making the most effective business decisions. An initial budget is submitted to the SETRPC Executive Committee in August for approval. After the approval of the budget, the administrative assistant begins monthly collections of all invoices and bills, reviews them with program coordinator for validity, completes payment authorizations, presents them to RSVP program Director for final approval and signature then submits them to the SETRPC Administrative/Financial department to make payments.

Staff -- The Golden Triangle RSVP is composed of four employees. RSVP Director, Stephanie Lartigue-Pearson, serves under the direction of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission Executive Director. Although she has only been RSVP Director since March 2013, she has 14 years of service to SETRPC Senior Volunteer Department. Her first four years serving as AARP Experience Corps Program Coordinator before being promoted to serve as Director of that program. Prior to her service at SETRPC, Ms. Lartigue-Pearson served four years as Executive Director of a local non-profit organization providing services and daily supervision of senior volunteers. Her current duties include managing the overall operations and administering the policies of the program, ensuring compliance with the program standards, preparing and administering annual program budget; establishing priorities; setting performance objectives; interviews, hires and ensures proper training of employees; counsels and disciplines; evaluates and monitors staff; recommends salary adjustments; promotions and terminations; develops the long-range plans and implements/coordinates all aspects of the program essentially providing direct supervision of program staff. She develops grant proposals, secures resources from outside sources, prepares monthly and annual reports, prepare budgets and supervise expenditures for volunteer programs. Ms. Lartigue-Pearson serves on the FGP Advisory Council, is a 2006 graduate of Leadership Beaumont and an active member of her Antioch Missionary Baptist Church.

Gayle Hollar, Program Coordinator for RSVP, has been employed with SETRPC for 32 years, with 25 of those years with the RSVP program. Her duties include maintaining an active involvement with social agencies/resources and other aging programs. She works closely with Advisory Council members and volunteer station staff to obtain resources for the project; provides information to community; assist with developing special projects, materials and/or programs to provide needed

## **Narratives**

services; develops public relations program through media and print, prepares educational and training materials, provide program advocacy, and assist with developing program procedures, assists the Director in public outreach efforts, fundraising events, and recognition events and records statistics for volunteer assignment. Mrs. Hollar serves as secretary on the Beaumont Police Department's Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, and is a member of Beaumont Police Department's Citizens in Action. She is an active member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church.

Penny Pearson has served as the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator for 14 years. The Volunteer Coordinator assists in the recruiting, interviewing and training of new volunteers; develops monthly volunteer training; monitors the volunteer stations in Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties on a regular basis; serves as liaison between program and volunteer stations; assists Director in conflict resolution or any situations between volunteers and volunteers/station staff or others. Reviews volunteer assignment sheets to ensure compliance; assists the Director in public outreach efforts, fundraising events, and recognition events. Ms. Pearson serves on the Bo Alfred Health Fair Committee, the Best Years Mardi Gras Health Fair Committee and the Orange County Rally Day Health Fair Committee. She is a 2001 graduate of Leadership Beaumont and an active member of Calder Baptist Church.

Charlotte Williams serves as part-time Administrative Assistant under the direction of the RSVP Director. Her duties include working together with the Program Coordinator preparing payment authorizations and reports. Ms. Williams types and edits newsletters; inputs monthly statistical data reports in a timely manner; participates in recognition; fundraisers, etc., and other duties as assigned.

Together the staff brings a wide range of knowledge and experience in overseeing and working with senior citizens and the services and opportunities provided to them. For a minimum of 6 years to a longevity of 32 years, our staff has managed volunteers, collected and input data, recruited, interviewed, trained and placed senior volunteers in community needed roles. Knowledge and sustainability of the employees provides our community with familiar faces and known contacts for easier transitions into our Primary Focus of "Healthy Futures".

### **Other**

## Narratives

N/A

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

N/A