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Executive Summary

Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc. (CSSC) is one of the largest providers of programs and services for seniors in the Capital Region. We help seniors remain healthy, active and independent; preserving and enhancing their quality of life as they grow older. As the sponsoring agency of the Capital Region RSVP program, CSSC brings a reputation as a leader in quality programs and services that provide positive outcomes for seniors and their families. Additionally, as an active member of the New York Council of Non-profits (NYCON) The Non-profit Business Council, the Capital District Senior Issues Forum and other regional coalitions of non-profit service providers, we have built the relationships with potential Volunteer Stations that will provide meaningful service activities to the RSVP volunteers.

CSSC currently manages the recruitment, assignment, training and recognition of more than 250 volunteers. As a past RSVP Volunteer Station, CSSC is familiar with the value the program provides to the community. An estimated 334 RSVP volunteers will provide service, primarily to support the goals of the Healthy Futures Focus Area. Some of their service activities include leading health and wellness classes, delivering meals and providing transportation and companionship to the homebound and elderly. Through the work of RSVP Volunteers in the Healthy Futures focus area, at the end of the three year grant, hundreds of seniors will have received services to help maintain their independence. The CNCS federal investment of \$117,020 will be supplemented by \$13,002.

Strengthening Communities

The foundation of CSSC's mission is to help older adults stay active, healthy and independent, enabling them to "age-in-place" in an aging-friendly community. This mission lines up neatly with the goals of the Healthy Futures Focus Area, that seek to keep seniors in their homes and improve access to preventative health care.

As is happening all over the country, the Capital Region is a rapidly aging community. It is projected that the population aged 65 and older will increase by more than 30% between 2010 and 2020, while the total amount of population growth for the region will be only 5%. The majority of this population currently lives independently in their own homes, and according to several studies, including one done by AARP, they express a desire to continue to do so. Unfortunately, with an Alzheimer's epidemic, a shortage of caregivers who experience high rates of burnout, and a host of other physical and cognitive impacts that correlate with age, getting older can be a dangerous and costly proposition. However, it doesn't have to be.

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Studies show that time and time again, low-cost social services and non-medical health interventions -- such as senior exercise class, social model adult day care, senior transportation and home delivered meals -- pay off in dividends when it comes to keeping older adults at home, in their community, and preventing moves into costly higher levels of care. The fact that these services are often operated by non-profit organizations with the assistance of volunteers helps keep the costs of these programs quite affordable.

The service activities we propose in the Healthy Futures Primary Focus Area are: distributing information about wellness and nutrition, training of health and wellness leaders, leading our Healthy Bones for Life class along with other great healthy aging programs, transporting seniors to doctors and other appointments, providing companionship to homebound and disabled seniors in our adult day program and through telephone assurance, and the delivery of hot and nutritious meals to the homebound.

These essential services activities performed by the RSVP volunteers provide the community with an alternative to placement into a costly higher level of care that may not yet be needed. Additionally, they are critical services that help keep seniors active, independent and comfortable in their homes, provide relief to caregivers as well as provide the seniors with a feeling of comfort and support. Currently, CSSC does extensive surveying of the people who receive our services, and in order to capture the appropriate data to ensure National Performance Measure outcomes and outputs are accurately measured, our current surveys will be modified to include the data points that are important to documenting the impact of the RSVP program. Many of the non-profits with whom we propose to collaborate with as Volunteer Stations are also familiar with surveying -- such as Seniors Services of Albany, Cohoes Senior Center and Community Caregivers.

In order to ensure compliance with RSVP regulations surrounding data collection and ensuring National Performance Measure outcomes and outputs are measured, collected and managed appropriately, we plan to schedule regular progress meetings with the Volunteer Stations. These meetings will follow an agenda that covers a breadth of relevant topics, and includes updates on data collection.

The Capital Region is fortunate to have a network of aging service providers that communicate well and regularly. The RSVP grant has the ability to unite these organizations in an even stronger network of collaboration that, through providing programmatic support in the form of dedicated volunteers, can increase the quality and quantity of available services.

Recruitment and Development

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CSSC has a long history of collaboration with a wide array of public, private and governmental partners in the Capital Region. Until the RSVP grant was not renewed in the Capital Region, CSSC served as a successful RSVP Volunteer Station. Currently, we manage over 250 volunteers who are dedicated to serving their communities, helping seniors and the disabled live independently and comfortably in their own communities. The key to creating high quality volunteer assignments is to provide opportunities that are meaningful for the volunteer, and speak to their talents and experiences.

Our plan is to partner with high quality organizations as Volunteer Stations, to provide meaningful and attractive volunteering opportunities. Some of the organizations that have expressed interest in such a partnership, supporting our proposed Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures are the Senior Services of Albany, The Schenectady County Office for Aging, The Rensselaer County Department for Aging, The Jewish Community Center of Albany, The Town of Guilderland, Community Caregivers and the Cohoes Senior Center. To support the objectives of the Education Focus Area, the South Colonie School District -- one of the largest districts in the tri-county region, and the Colonie Youth Center, the largest provider of Wrap Around Care, have both expressed interest. We are currently in the process of creating a new wellness program with the Centers for Disability Services that integrates developmentally disabled seniors with the participants of our senior wellness classes, the volunteers for which would also be RSVP eligible. Additionally, we are working with the Colonie School Districts to create a pilot program to provide volunteers both in the classroom and out to support the success of our community's students.

Training is a critical component in not only ensuring the efficacy and safety of volunteers, but also their engagement. CSSC is familiar with the need to provide regular and engaging training to our volunteers. Should we win the RSVP grant, our plan is to scale up our existing volunteering training procedures which involve an orientation to both the community and organization, a discussion of expected job duties, and adherence to a training plan that is clearly outlined and based upon the volunteer station and a discussion of emergency procedures and precautions. A dedicated RSVP Volunteer Management Database, based on our current program that tracks contact information and service hours, will be created and also modified to also keep track of such items as training and annual assignment review.

Despite the fact that the Capital Region is a diverse community by many standards of measure, including ethnically and economically, it is also a rather segregated region. Municipalities in the suburbs and outlying communities tend to have an overwhelming majority of Caucasian population.

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More urban locations within the region have more racial diversity. In order to ensure that volunteers are reflective of the communities in which they will serve, CSSC plans to work with the organizations that are currently providing services within an array of communities across the region. Additionally, we have a track record of being able to provide service opportunities to the disabled community, utilizing volunteers from the Centers for Disability Services, Living Resources and Wildwood - organizations that provide services and day hab for the disabled and developmentally disabled. We plan to work with organizations that are able to provide universally accessible volunteer stations -- for the sake of both the consumer and the RSVP volunteer.

Volunteer retention is a critical component of any volunteering program. At CSSC, we experience a remarkable level of volunteer loyalty. Recognition is an important part -- CSSC already provides our volunteers with a large Volunteer Recognition Dinner, honoring the contributions of all volunteers, but singling several outstanding volunteers out for special recognition as well. Our plan, should we receive the RSVP grant, is to have a separate RSVP volunteer recognition luncheon -- celebrating the impact the volunteers have made in making the region a better place. Another part of our plan for recognition is to provide the RSVP Volunteers with a uniform shirt -- an embroidered polo shirt that signifies their participation in RSVP and their service to the community. Lastly, it has been our company practice to give our volunteers a small gift at the December holidays -- usually a pocket date book. Our plan is to extend this recognition program to all RSVP volunteers.

Program Management

CSSC's Track Record

CSSC has a long history of collaborating with other organizations and managing volunteers at off-site locations. All of our volunteers currently receive training in regards to the duties they will be performing. Additionally, as with the RSVP program, we are currently required to thoroughly document the training of our volunteers in many of our programs.

We have a particularly good track record in the Primary Focus Area of Healthy. Our organization was founded more than 30 years ago to provide services to seniors and their caregivers in the Capital Region Community. Currently we operate several programs that utilize volunteers whose service activities support the Access to Care objective of the Healthy Futures focus area. We operate an award winning social model adult day program in three locations that provide excellent care to more than 90 seniors who are functionally impaired, giving their caregivers much needed respite, with the help of a large cadre of dedicated volunteers. This year alone, volunteers have driven and accompanied homebound or disabled seniors on more than 100 trips to their doctor and other errands.

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For many years, CSSC participated as a volunteer station for the Capital Region RSVP through the Bone Builder program, with more than two dozen volunteers leading Healthy Bones classes. We also have many volunteers who lead other preventative health and wellness programs, such as A Matter of Balance Falls Prevention Program, Arthritis Exercise and Wellness, Yoga, T'ai Chi and others -- leading participants through movement that strengthens their body, and providing education that illuminates their minds.

In all of our programs that support the goals of the Healthy Futures programs, we do surveying of participants, and in some programs we survey their caregivers, to measure performance, and to ensure that the services we provide are meeting their needs.

RSVP Advisory Committee

CSSC is very familiar at working with advisory groups. We participate in several aging services groups, and convene our own Programs and Services committee to advise our Board of Directors on issues and needs that arise in the community. As a longstanding member of the non-profit community in the Capital Region, our RSVP Advisory Committee would invite participants from organizations such as Senior Services of Albany, The State University at Albany Geriatrics Department, Center for Disability Services, the Center for Excellence in Aging and Community Wellness, The Schenectady and Rensselaer County Offices for Aging, representatives from local school districts as well as several senior citizens.

Recruitment of Volunteer Stations

CSSC is very active in the Capital Region non-profit service provider network. We already have preliminary commitments from several organizations that are willing to participate as Volunteer Stations, including: Schenectady County Department for Aging, Rensselaer County Office for Aging, The Colonie Youth Center, Senior Services of Albany, the Cohoes Senior Center, The South Colonie School District, and The Shaker Heritage Society and Centers for Disability Services, among others. Our relationships extend deep into the senior services community, but also into other organizations that provide valuable services to the community that also meet the goals of the RSVP grant. We are confident that in addition to the organizations that have already preliminarily committed, in light of our excellent track record, we will easily recruit other Volunteer Stations.

Management of Volunteer Stations

The first step for managing volunteer stations will be extensive training and expectation setting. When a new volunteer station is set up, the point person at the Volunteer Station will receive an orientation manual, which will provide a thorough orientation to RSVP, our organization and their

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responsibilities as an RSVP Volunteer Station, including securing an MOU and LOA.

For the first quarter of the program year, we plan to meet monthly with each site. After the finish of the first quarter, we will schedule meetings for every other month. Attending these meetings will be the RSVP Program Manager and the Volunteer Station point person. At these meetings, the following will occur:

- An audit of the site for compliance with RSVP Program Regulations
- A review of the Volunteer Station's volunteers, trainings and records
- A discussion about the Volunteer Station's perspective on community needs, and if any programmatic changes need to be met
- Sharing of training and management resources

It is important to recognize the Volunteer Stations as partners in the RSVP program, as such, each Volunteer Station will be honored and recognized at each RSVP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

Compliance with Regulations

Currently CSSC operates several programs that receive federal Administration on Aging funding that have extensive responsibilities for compliance.

Many of our programs require that volunteers have an extensive background check and screening. As a part of our volunteer management plan, a Volunteer Orientation checklist will be created that will detail a list of items that must be completed before a Volunteer begins their service activity. All volunteers stations will be required to utilize this checklist, which will be reviewed at the quarterly site visits to ensure regulatory compliance. Additionally, we will provide each Volunteer Station with a Volunteer Evaluation form, to review with the RSVP volunteer for engagement with the volunteer duty, and to provide a jumping off point for a discussion about other opportunities the volunteer may be interested in.

Organizational Capability

Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight

CSSC has a team with extensive program management experience that will be invaluable to executing a successful RSVP program. We currently administer programs with the assistance of federal money, such as our Congregate Meals program, Adult Day Service program and Transportation program. Our staff is familiar with the reporting and management requirements that comes with federal grants.

The Executive Director of CSSC is Edward Neary, who has over 40 years of leadership experience with a background that includes P & L accountability over a regional financial services branch network

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supported by extensive sales, management, business, staff development, and planning experience. He is responsible for implementation of policy, development of annual budget, hiring of prospective employees and general supervision of employees, volunteers and other representatives of the organization; fosters and develops corporation relationships with governmental, business and not for profit organizations within the community, responsible for strategic planning for the corporation. The RSVP Project Coordinator position will be assumed by Kelly Brown Mateja, who is currently the Director of Programs and Services. Kelly has over 15 years of experience in the areas of strategic planning, program and project management, with nearly 5 years in her current capacity at CSSC. Kelly also has extensive experience in managing committees and advisory groups, which will be invaluable in managing the RSVP Advisory Committee.

While RSVP recommends having one full time RSVP Program Manager, you can see by our program budget that we are proposing a team approach utilizing as many as 9 staff members, as outlined below, to use their individual talents and experiences on managing the program and achieving the RSVP goals.

Assisting with Volunteer Station Management will be Victoria Jones, the Director of Programs and Services Development. Victoria has 15 years' experience managing CSSC's volunteer program which currently has over 250 volunteers across all of our programs and services. Victoria also has over 20 years' experience in the areas of marketing and public relations as well as program development, implementation and management. Victoria has experience in building relationships with governmental, private, non-profit and other community partners in addition to building and implementing education and community awareness programs.

CSSC's Finance and Human Resources Department is lead by Finance Director Nancy Jones, who has over 23 years experience in the area of accounting and finance, and has been at CSSC for 8 years, managing fiscal oversight of the organization, including the financial administration of numerous federal, state, local and private grants and contracts. On her team is Human Resources Coordinator Kristen Skpowski who has six years of experience in the areas of general business and clerical work, human resources, event planning, and budgeting. Kristen is responsible for employee orientation, development and training, compliance to company personnel policy, as well as reconciliation of fixed assets and depreciation, month end bank reconciliations and closing procedures, and assistance of preparation of year end audit.

Additionally, much of the day to day/monthly financial responsibilities for the RSVP program will fall to Carol Ripley, who has over 30 years of experience in the areas of Accounting and Administrative

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Support. She is experienced in A/P, A/R, Billing and Payroll and has exceptional record keeping, organizational abilities and follow-up skills.

In terms of management of data collection and data entry, CSSC's administrative assistants have a great deal of experience in this realm. The department is headed up by Office Manager Susan Whitfield, who has been a CSSC staff member for three years. She has over 20 years experience in the insurance industry, customer service, supervising employees, and managing office activities and purchases.

CSSC staff meets weekly for interdepartmental coordination and collaboration, updating the meeting participants with critical information to ensure the efficient operation of programs. At these meetings and on an ongoing basis, the CSSC staff will work collaboratively to ensure the success of the RSVP program.

In terms of organizational capacity, CSSC excels at developing and implementing internal policies and operating procedures. Each staff's current tasks and duties are detailed in Program and Procedure Manuals maintained by each department. In the event that CSSC wins the RSVP grant, each staff with any responsibility for a portion of administering the grant would have their work flows updated. Additionally, CSSC's financial practices are audited annually by certified CPAs with more than a 10 year record of clean audits.

Regarding the management of capital assets such as facilities, equipment and supplies -- CSSC operates 2 residential facilities, a fleet of 9 transportation vehicles, 3 adult day program sites, and 8 congregate meal sites. In order to ensure that our vehicles are in good working order, we work with the New York State Department of Transportation's 5310 program to replace vehicles in a timely manner. With our vehicles, as with our buildings, we adhere to strict routine maintenance schedules to avoid the pitfalls of accruing deferred maintenance. Our two housing facilities are run incredibly efficiently -- so much that the excess revenue is reinvested into our programs and services to fund shortfalls. We maintain reserves on all our capital assets, so when the time comes to replace them, we have the funding already set aside. Additionally, we monitor all equipment and assets annually for misuse and proper maintenance.

Other

N/a

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A