

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The mission of St. Charles Parish is to provide high quality, efficient services to sustain and enhance the quality of life for all residents of St. Charles Parish. In keeping with this mission, the purpose of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is to enable older Americans, age 55 and over, to strengthen their communities through volunteer service, enhance the lives of the volunteers and those whom they serve, and provide communities valuable services.

This year an estimated 340 RSVP volunteers at 61 stations will provide a variety of invaluable services throughout the River Parishes (St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James Parishes). The primary focus area of the River Parishes RSVP program is Healthy Futures. Some of the volunteer activities in this area include companionship and food delivery services for seniors and a food security program targeted towards children of low-income families. Other focus areas the RSVP contributes to include Education, Environmental Stewardship, Disaster Services, Veterans & Military Families, and Community Priorities. These areas will be addressed through service activities that include food distribution, companionship programs, comforting children, tree planting, and mock emergency evacuation trainings. These activities along with numerous others will touch the lives of 12,934 tri-parish citizens every year.

St. Charles Parish is requesting \$54,900 in annual federal funding. This amount will be supplemented by \$220,000 dedicated from St. Charles Parish and annual donations of \$20,000 from St. John the Baptist Parish and \$12,000 from the United Way of St. Charles, as well as other in-kind donations. In 2012, volunteers logged a total of 118,396 hours of service and the RSVP Administrators anticipate meeting or exceeding that level of service in 2013. New capacity building efforts are likely to create new stations and garner new partnerships with agencies in the River Parishes. The RSVP also plans to provide the same fulfilling opportunities to volunteers. The various activities the volunteers participate in enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions and the partnerships offer meaningful opportunities to serve and improve quality of life for all citizens throughout the River Parishes.

## Strengthening Communities

The River Parishes Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provides volunteer opportunities for persons age 55 and older at various service organizations throughout St. Charles Parish, St. James Parish and St. John the Baptist Parish (River Parishes). The River Parishes are rural communities located in southeastern Louisiana, approximately 25 miles west of New Orleans. These unique parishes offer residents and visitors big-city convenience while still maintaining small town charm.

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The U.S. Census Bureau 2012 population estimate for St. Charles Parish is 52,681 residents with 10.7% of this total being 65 years of age or older and 12.9% of the entire population living below the poverty level. St. James Parish's population estimate is 21,722 with 14.1% of those residents being 65 years of age or older and 14.7% of the entire population living below the poverty level. St. John the Baptist Parish's population estimate is 44,758 with 11.4% of this total being 65 years of age or older and 15.2% of the entire population living below the poverty level. As of April 2013, The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the unemployment rate as 5.7% in St. Charles Parish, 8.7% in St. James Parish, and 7.4% in St. John the Baptist Parish. In 2012, RSVP volunteers provided approximately 118,396 volunteer hours within the tri-parish area. Independent Sector's latest calculated value of volunteer time is \$22.14 an hour. This means the value of the RSVP's benefits to the communities is \$2,621,287.44. Through RSVP initiatives, communities are provided valuable services while volunteers remain active and feel appreciated within the community.

The RSVP has strong partnerships with community leaders, agencies, and stakeholders of the River Parishes including: Parish Presidents, Council Members, Sheriffs, Directors of the Council on Aging, Directors of the American Red Cross, Directors of Emergency Preparedness, Triad and SALT Council Members, Volunteer Coordinators from local hospitals, Superintendents of local School Boards, and other community members. The administrators of RSVP collaborate with these individuals and agencies to strategically plan service activities that will meet the needs of the communities through the service of the volunteers. Throughout the years, service activities created and implemented benefit the following CNCS Focus Areas: Education, Healthy Futures, Environmental Stewardship, Disaster Services and Veterans and Military Families, with Healthy Futures being the primary focus area. Within the River Parishes, it has been determined that health care is a high priority community need. The RSVP works to meet this need by providing various services to individuals through food distribution and companionship service activities.

It is a proven fact, that without a nutritious diet, children suffer impairment in physical and emotional development and have trouble concentrating in school. Within the tri-parish area, 14.1% of the population is below the poverty level and 52.9% of the students within the St. Charles Parish School System qualify for free and reduced lunches. This community need is a priority and in response, the Lagniappe Backpack Program was established in 2009. The program is funded by the United Way of St. Charles, and operated in conjunction with the RSVP, St. Charles Parish School Board, and Second Harvest Food Program to address the low-income families not having the means to buy food and have nutritional meals for their families. Through the efforts of the RSVP volunteers,

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these students have increased interaction at school and are more receptive in their learning environment by demonstrating a more positive behavior pattern, better interaction with their peers, and cause less disciplinary problems. Additionally, a separate monthly food distribution program is carried out to alleviate hunger for low-income families, dubbed the Lagniappe Family Food Distribution Program. Thirty (30) RSVP volunteers assist the Second Harvest Food Program in implementing two food distribution programs. The Lagniappe Backpack Program provides backpacks stocked with nutritious, nonperishable food to children before the start of a weekend or school vacations when the students do not have access to school meal programs. Three local schools participate in the program: Luling Elementary, Des Allemands Elementary, and St. Rose Elementary. The backpacks are given out discreetly to the students on Friday and picked up on Monday to be refilled. At the present time the Lagniappe Backpack Program serves approximately 470 students which has expanded from previous years as the need and benefit was recognized. RSVP volunteers also assist Second Harvest Food Program in preparing approximately 300 food boxes provided to low-income families on a monthly basis. Approximately 300 low-income families are provided 50 pound boxes of nutritious food on the first Saturday of each month. According to the 2010 Census, there are 2.81 persons per household in St. Charles Parish meaning that approximately 2,163 individuals receive food through the efforts of the RSVP volunteers.

According to the 2012 Census estimates, there are approximately 13,802 persons over the age of 65 living in St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James Parishes. Many of these individuals live alone and are on a fixed income with limited transportation which creates a need for companionship and/or assistance. The Adopt-A-Senior Program addresses this community need by providing companionship to homebound older adults and other indirect services to help seniors thrive independently. There are 55 RSVP volunteers that contact seniors and other volunteers throughout the tri-parish area on a regular basis to check in on them. Interested seniors or family members sign up with the RSVP to participate in the program. Should a senior be in need of anything, such as food, transportation, housing, and/or energy assistance, the RSVP volunteer refers the senior to the appropriate program in the region for assistance. For example, seniors are referred to the River Parishes Transit Authority for transportation, their local Council on Aging for meals, and their local Department of Community Service for housing and energy assistance. This program helps the seniors to live independently and also provides a way for seniors to have companionship and comfort in knowing someone cares. Frequent contact proves to be very meaningful, especially when seniors are in need of basic necessities.

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RSVP Administrators utilize different measurement tools to ensure the program's outputs and outcomes are measured, collected and managed. Timesheets are used to track and account the volunteers' hours and activities at all stations, as well as the trainings attended. Activity logs are used to count the amount of food distributed for the food distribution programs, seniors contacted through the Adopt-A-Senior program, and trees planted at the Wetland Watchers Park. Registration logs keep count of the amount of people attending the events that RSVP volunteers assist such as the Christmas Toy and Gift Program, mock evacuation exercises and the Veterans Day Luncheon. Surveys assessing the awareness level of the RSVP are distributed on a quarterly basis to community agencies. For the Lagniappe Backpack Program, semi-annual surveys are given to the teachers of the students receiving backpacks to evaluate the students who benefit from the program. The measurement tools outlined in the RSVP's work plans help to identify the success of the program and areas needing improvement. In addition, annual evaluations conducted by the RSVP Administrators assess the overall accomplishments and to evaluate the positive impact on the community or client population of each station. Additional review procedures are implemented to ensure continuous improvements and that annual goals are met. The RSVP Reporter data file is updated weekly and when new volunteers are recruited. The RSVP Director reviews files monthly to see which stations volunteers are predominantly working, if other stations need volunteers, etc.

The RSVP also has two stations that provide volunteer services to veterans. The Southeast Louisiana War Veterans Home is located on 20 acres of land in St. John the Baptist Parish in Reserve. The facility offers a variety of amenities including a fishing lake, chapel, complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/Dementia care, and transportation services. The Veterans Homes utilizes RSVP volunteers in assisting with day-to-day activities. These activities include visiting and providing blankets, toiletries, and other items for the veterans of foreign war. Additionally, St. Charles Parish hosts a Veterans Day Luncheon annually to honor men and women who served in the armed forces. The RSVP volunteers assist with the event and preparations.

### **Recruitment and Development**

Volunteering with the RSVP promotes longer, healthier, and more meaningful lives for persons age 55 and older. Through the established partnerships, community needs have been identified leading to the creation of high quality assignments that offer volunteers opportunities to remain active in their communities. Volunteer stations are created based upon the assessment of the needs of the community as determined by leaders of local organizations interested in partnering with RSVP.

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Organization leaders complete assessment forms indicating whether or not they use volunteers currently, would want to utilize volunteers, job descriptions for potential volunteers, hours needed, etc.

The RSVP Administrators assess the need to determine if the proposed station meets the RSVP criteria. If so, the RSVP Administrators visit the site to discuss all policies and procedures, volunteer safety, and ensure the site is handicapped accessible. Once the work plan is developed, the volunteer station supervisor then signs a Memorandum of Understanding and RSVP Administrators begin to recruit volunteers for the positions needed. This process has proved successful in forming work stations that serve to improve the communities.

Another way stations are developed is when volunteers express interest in serving at non-profit agencies that are not currently partnered with the RSVP. The RSVP Administrators then contact and visit the non-profit agency to assess the need and willingness for volunteers. If all criteria are met, a new volunteer station is created. Non-profits welcome assistance from the RSVP as they are aware of the benefits the RSVP provides not only to their agencies, but to the people they assist.

As a part of a new approach on gaining stations and potential Baby Boomer volunteers, the RSVP Administrators actively recruit new stations by giving presentations at business/civic group meetings. This opens doors for the RSVP Administrators to discover innovative volunteer opportunities to include in providing recruitment programs.

The RSVP offers flexible volunteer opportunities and scheduling so that the station's objectives match each person's interests, past experience, abilities, and skills. Volunteer Assignments are discussed with station supervisors and the RSVP Director and/or Parish Coordinator to determine the number of volunteers and type of training that will be required. The corps of volunteers is examined for potential placements at a given station. Placement of volunteers is based upon each person's ability to fill the needs of each respective station. The RSVP Administrators are careful when selecting volunteers to make sure that the needs of each station can be addressed through the service and knowledge of the volunteers being considered for placement. The Director/Coordinator then contacts the volunteers to ascertain desire to work at that station. Once the volunteers are established, volunteer orientations are provided on an individual basis by the volunteer station supervisor(s) to ensure proper training for the work plan assignment, the station's job description, and according to the RSVP guidelines. Upon placement, RSVP volunteers are made aware that they may contact the RSVP Administrators for concerns or issues relating to his/her current placement. Volunteers have the options to change stations and/or to volunteer at more than one station. Approximately one-third of the RSVP volunteers serve at more than one station.

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The RSVP Administrators meet with all newly placed volunteers approximately 30 days after placing them at a new station in order to ensure satisfaction of the volunteer. Many current RSVP volunteers maintain regular contact with the RSVP Director and all volunteers have equal opportunity access to the RSVP Administrators.

Through this process of station formation, volunteer recruitment, training, and satisfaction surveying, the RSVP provides volunteers with the opportunity to share their experiences, abilities, and skills to improve their communities and themselves. The RSVP volunteers have expressed that they achieve satisfaction from volunteering due to the new opportunities the program offers and by seeing firsthand the benefits of the services provided through their efforts.

Each year, RSVP Administrators attend various training and technical workshops to stay knowledgeable on the latest information regarding education, medical training (Certified First Aid and CPR Training), hurricane and disaster training, interpersonal skills, technology, public safety, veterans affairs, etc. The information learned at these workshops is then shared with the volunteers and Advisory Council. This continuous training aids the RSVP in successfully addressing the identified needs in both the Primary Focus Areas and other Community Priorities established within the tri-parish area.

The community served by the RSVP is comprised of individuals from diverse demographics including race and ethnicities. RSVP Administrators work to achieve a volunteer pool reflective of these demographics. RSVP volunteers are active in many one time and annual functions in the River Parishes, such as: hosting informational booths at health fairs, the annual Trash Bash event, and Wetland Watchers Park events; previously helping individuals affected by the Gulf Oil Spill Disaster; and assisting the American Red Cross after natural disasters, such as Hurricanes Katrina, Gustav, and Isaac. The presence of the RSVP at events such as these, as well as at the existing work stations, helps the program to recruit diverse groups of volunteers, including veterans and military families and individuals with disabilities. Other ways the RSVP attracts a diverse group of volunteers is by conducting special recruiting activities at churches, senior centers, retirement planning seminars, and other agencies where the importance of the RSVP can be promoted. The RSVP also has volunteers who speak languages other than English and can serve as translators as needed.

The RSVP is continuously recruiting volunteers to ensure a minimum of 340 unduplicated volunteers is retained to serve the River Parishes. The RSVP increasingly relies upon internet technology for the recruiting of potential volunteers. The Corporation for National and Community Service has helped expand the RSVP through the Senior Corp website and more recently through the "Join Senior Service

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Now" function. At least once a year, local industries leaders invite RSVP Administrators and volunteers to their organizations to speak about the program. The RSVP Administrators explain the importance of the program to the community and how it impacts the lives of the people served and those serving. Volunteers are eager to speak about the importance of volunteering and how the program has enhanced and added value to their lives, thereby encouraging others to join the program. Also, this is a way of recruiting Baby Boomers who are not ready for retirement, but want to get involved with their communities through volunteer service. The Baby Boomers represent a significant portion of the growing older adult population and are a highly talented and motivated group that help in solving difficult challenges faced on a daily basis. Baby Boomers differ from prior generations in educational level, vocal/political power, and economic circumstances making them valuable to the program's success. Through the RSVP, Baby Boomers and other volunteers remain active and connected to their community, thereby improving both their quality of life as well as that of the people they serve.

RSVP volunteers are recognized in a variety of ways. The importance of the RSVP, the volunteers and how they serve the community is broadcasted on television via the local government television channel. Activities involving the RSVP are also featured in St. Charles Parish employee newsletters. In addition, outstanding volunteers are highlighted weekly in a segment of the local paper hailed "Volunteer Salute," where the volunteer reflects on the importance of service in his/her community. The publicity helps inform the community on the value of service and encourages other seniors to join the RSVP. Volunteers are also recognized on an annual basis at the Volunteer Recognition Luncheon for their years of service and number of hours served. Various activities are conducted throughout the year to show the volunteers appreciation for their service and dedication to the program. To honor RSVP volunteers during National Volunteer Week, St. Charles Parish and its Administrative leaders host a crawfish boil with music and fun for the volunteers. Partnering hospitals also host an annual recognition ceremony to show appreciation to the volunteers for their hard work at the hospitals and to show gratitude for their work in the communities. Personalized birthday cards are sent out to every volunteer to show appreciation and to remind each individual that he/she are thought of on his/her special day. Public awareness and support for the RSVP highlight the importance of the volunteers and how they serve the communities.

### **Program Management**

The RSVP Administrators are active in monitoring the stations to ensure compliance with RSVP program regulations, that volunteers are performing their assigned service activities and that the

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community needs are being met. This monitoring is completed through site visits, meetings with station supervisors, data collection via volunteer timesheets and participant surveys, and regular program assessments.

Site visits are conducted by the RSVP Director and Program Coordinator on a semiannual basis to ensure compliance with RSVP program regulations. This monitoring helps to identify and prevent prohibited activities. Frequent meetings are held between RSVP Administrators and station supervisors regarding existing programs and stations to ensure that concerns are being addressed and to discuss how to solve potential problems. If necessary, additional meetings are held with the volunteers so that they are informed of the most current information needed to be successful at their station. For example, monthly meetings are held for hospital volunteers to keep them abreast on changes made in the hospital.

The RSVP Administrators work with volunteer stations to collect data to measure the impact of the RSVP on the community. This is done through participant surveys and/or a rating system which is set in place for each station. There is also a system established to evaluate the accomplishments of the RSVP volunteers every six months. A numeric format is used to assess each volunteer's work throughout the past months. These evaluation systems will assist the RSVP Administrators in continuously assessing and improving the program. Volunteer timesheets serve to ensure the volunteers are performing their assigned service activities.

In order to effectively meet the changing needs of the communities, regular program assessments are conducted to identify enhancements that can be made to the stations or to gauge whether a new station should be created. A needs assessment survey is used when introducing potential new stations and evaluating community needs. Goals are set for each station and measured through activity logs, the number of hours volunteered, satisfaction surveys completed by service beneficiaries, evaluations, etc. Evaluations are conducted at six and twelve month intervals and suggest areas for improvement and/or expansion. By constant monitoring of feedback via the evaluations, modifications to programming as suggested may be implemented and greater quality is assured. Station supervisors also help to identify changing community needs. When a change is identified, the work plan is revised and revisions are communicated to volunteers, the appropriate training for volunteers is facilitated, and volunteer staffing levels and scheduling are adjusted in phases to implement the appropriate changes. This process helps to minimize any disruption to volunteers. The RSVP recognizes the importance of keeping it's finger on the pulse of and flexibility needed to adjust to the communities' ever changing needs, which has enabled the program to successfully meet stable and long-standing

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community partners' needs.

For many years, the RSVP's primary focus has been Healthy Futures. The food distribution programs provide non-perishable groceries to low-income families to abate hunger. Food has been provided to approximately 770 families, or 2,163 individuals, on a regular basis. The Lagniappe Backpack Program began in 2009 and originally distributed food to 100 students at two schools in St. Charles Parish. RSVP Administrators and the program's partnering agencies recognized the positive impact on the community and worked together to expand the reach of the program to now serve 470 students at three schools. The RSVP's companionship program, or Adopt-A-Senior program, has been established for many years. The seniors who participate in the program enjoy the camaraderie the program offers and many friendships have been forged between seniors and volunteers. The seniors have also expressed gratitude for the assistance provided when they are experiencing difficult times. Families of the seniors feel comfort in knowing that the RSVP also attends to their loved ones. The RSVP Director is responsible for ensuring the program is in compliance with the RSVP federal regulations. This requires familiarization with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45 Public Welfare, Part 2553 'The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program', and planning, executing, and monitoring the service activities of the RSVP according to the regulations. Specifically, a 14 member Advisory Council has been established that is comprised of: five senior citizens, two administrators, two representatives from the St. Charles Parish Council, one representative from the local media, two representatives from local industry, and two staff personnel. The RSVP Director also ensures RSVP volunteers are placed in stations that have signed the required MOU and that volunteers are eligible to serve in RSVP.

### **Organizational Capability**

The RSVP has been in existence for over 35 years and is very successful with approximately 340 current volunteers. The St. Charles Parish Council, the sponsoring agency, began administering the program in 1989. The RSVP operates through the support of each of the three River Parish's local governments. The three Parish Presidents serve as the Executive Branch and the three Parish Councils serve as the legislative branch of the respective parish's government. Every branch fully supports the RSVP, its volunteers, and the impact that it has as on the communities it serves. RSVP operates under the annual budget of St. Charles Parish government. The Council has supported the RSVP for over 20 years by providing office space, utilities, insurance, technical and media resources, and by purchasing a 14 passenger van for exclusive program use. In 2013, the St. Charles Parish Council dedicated approximately \$220,000 to fund the RSVP's operations. The RSVP receives

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funding from other sources, such as, \$20,000 annually from St. John the Baptist Parish and \$12,000 annually from the United Way of St. Charles, and other in-kind donations.

St. Charles Parish has constructed a new community center located at 274 Judge Edward Dufresne Parkway in Luling, a centralized location in the parish near Interstate 310. The new community center provides permanent space to house the RSVP's main office. The center includes valuable amenities available for use by the RSVP Administrators and volunteers, such as a commercial kitchen to use when cooking for large events and fundraisers, spacious areas for periodic meetings with partners, and a gymnasium with a walking track for the volunteers to enjoy with plenty of space to host various functions. The new facility will also be utilized for disaster related activities, such as serving as the designated registration point for evacuees and a temporary shelter, as well as for recovery purposes such as commodities distribution, a location for residents to file for disaster assistance, etc. RSVP volunteers will be instrumental in assisting with these activities.

The St. Charles Parish President appoints the RSVP Director to manage the program. The Director selects, trains, and supervises the RSVP staff, composed of two other employees, a full-time and part-time coordinator. The full-time coordinator's duties include: processing timesheets, data collection, new volunteer orientation and monthly reporting. The coordinator also attends annual trainings and workshops with the Director. The part-time coordinator works approximately 20 hours per week coordinating and monitoring RSVP volunteer assignments, supervising in-service training for volunteers, making periodic visits to volunteer stations to monitor stations, and participating in other activities in cooperation and coordination with appropriate volunteer station staff. The part-time coordinator is also instrumental in providing information and support to the RSVP volunteers with their assignments, their progress toward achieving expected outcomes, and the benefits provided through their assignments.

The RSVP Director is responsible for day-to-day program management. The RSVP Administrators and Advisory Council members evaluate all existing programs for oversight and program changes. Both the Director and Staff conduct station evaluations to ensure that all stations have a current Memorandum of Understanding, a volunteer job description on file and are handicap accessible. Volunteer records are maintained at the main RSVP office using a RSVP Reporter software. This software program helps the RSVP Administrators manage information and data collected for each volunteer and station, such as volunteer hours served at each station and contact information for volunteers, station supervisors, stations, and partners. Volunteer hours are tracked using timesheets and are checked and verified for accuracy upon receipt. The full-time coordinator handles data

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collection and monthly reporting, which assesses the benefits of the program to the community. Michelle Higgins, the RSVP Director, is a graduate of Ursuline Academy in New Orleans and received her Bachelors of Science degree from Louisiana State University. She previously worked as Director of Social Services for local long term care facilities. For the last 11 years, she worked with children from birth to five years of age with and without disabilities and their families. The last five of these years, she has served as the Director of Children's Services. Mrs. Higgins has worked closely with local and state agencies in terms of programming, licensing, and funding. She has maintained United Way partnership with her departments. She has also been instrumental in securing Council of Accreditation for Rehabilitative Facilities accreditation for community based programs. She has received leadership awards as well as received a certificate for completion of coursework in Nonprofit Leadership and Management. For the RSVP, Ms. Higgins works in conjunction with the Advisory Council members, RSVP employees and volunteer stations, as well as other state officials in program planning and implementation to provide sound programmatic oversight.

Kim Boudreaux, the full-time coordinator, is fairly new to RSVP, but has previously worked for St. Charles Parish as a payroll clerk in the Finance Department. Her knowledge of the Parish Finance Department's policies and procedures will aid in further strengthening the fiscal oversight of the program. The position for the part-time coordinator is currently open due to the recent retirement of the employee and will be filled soon.

The Advisory Council represents the communities through assisting in assessing community needs, supporting and developing a service ethic in the community, linking the program with community service resources, evaluating program accomplishments and benefits, etc. In addition, the Advisory Council recommends ways to increase visibility and recognition in the community and advises on how trends in the community are affecting seniors. The Advisory Council evaluates the program annually through an evaluation system provided by the RSVP Administrators. The RSVP Advisory Council has asked site sponsors, volunteers, and community partners to address the quality of the program and effectiveness in servicing the needs of the community. This system is retained for in-depth surveying of 10% of randomly chosen volunteers, station supervisors, and community partners on a quarterly basis. The RSVP Administrators prepare the information received and present it to the Advisory Council at the quarterly meetings. Any issues needing to be addressed are discussed and corrective actions are taken. To recognize the RSVP volunteers for their accomplishments and service to their communities, the Advisory Council holds an annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon where all volunteers receive a small token of appreciation and a certificate for participation. At the

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ceremony, the volunteers are recognized for their hours and years of service.

Since the program is sponsored by St. Charles Parish, the RSVP follows the Parish's policies and operating procedures to provide governance and manage risk, such as the purchasing, financial management, and personnel policies, travel regulations, and the annual budget approval by the Council. All project resources are managed by the RSVP Director. This includes federal, state and local monies, donations, and any other resources dedicated to the program. All program expenditures are approved by the RSVP Director and then purchases are handled by the St. Charles Parish Purchasing Department in order to ensure fiscal integrity. Once the order is received by the RSVP Administrators, the invoice is approved by the RSVP Director and then forwarded to the Finance Department for payment processing.

All capital assets are managed by St. Charles Parish. The financial accounting is maintained through the St. Charles Parish Finance Department according to "Generally Accepted Accounting Principles." Each year, the Finance Department also collaborates with the RSVP Administrators on the preparation and execution of the program's annual budget. The Finance Department is responsible for the collection and disbursement of all funds, the preparation of financial reports, and the maintenance of financial records. Appropriate internal controls have been established to safeguard assets. The Finance Department utilizes an accounting system which allows for the program's revenues and expenditures to be accounted for separately from other Parish revenues and expenditures. Reports can be generated from the accounting system for any period of each calendar year.

St. Charles Parish also has an experienced Grants Office that successfully manages over 60 federal, state and corporate grants annually valued in excess of \$65 million dollars. A Single Audit according to OMB Circular A-133 of major federal programs is performed on an annual basis in conjunction with the financial audit of the parish government. For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2012, the auditors reported no instances of noncompliance or other matters required to be disclosed.

### **Other**

Not Applicable

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

Not Applicable