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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An estimated 175 RSVP volunteers will serve. Some of their activities will include:

- Healthy Futures for homebound seniors and obese children
- Serving Veterans and Military Families
- Economic Opportunities through financial literacy and housing
- Succeeding in Kindergarten through 12th Grade
- Other Community Priorities

The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the three-year grant, we estimate 35 volunteers will participate in the activities of the primary focus area and generate lasting positive outcomes by reaching the goals identified by the project.

The CNCS federal investment over the 3-year grant period is \$46,716 (\$15,572 per year X 3) will be supplemented by non-federal \$66,222 (or \$22,074 per year) resources.

Strengthening Communities

HEALTHY FUTURES OBESITY AND FOOD

Community Need:

According to the 2010 US Census, 13% (about 2.5 million) of the population of New Mexico live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level, including 861,000 children. Reports in Curry County reveal that 11.3 percent of households experience food insecurity.

According to the Family Readiness Center of Cannon Air Force Base, more than 50% of the military families have such limited resources, they must make hard choices about which bills to pay and what necessities to go without.

These same resources note that despite increased enrollment in social service programs, the lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times is due to the lack of financial resources.

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Addressing the Community Need:

To meet the needs of the low-income family, RSVP volunteers will work in existing food pantries, meal sites, and nonprofit agencies. A community safety net is the collaborative effort of food pantries, area agencies and the Curry County RSVP. The project will address the issues of hunger and food insecurity in Curry County through direct service, education, and advocacy.

End Outcome:

Food distribution programs help to alleviate the problem of food insecurity by helping low income people access free or low-cost food on a regular basis.

Service Activity:

RSVP volunteers will serve at food distribution sites for low income individuals at risk of hunger. RSVP volunteers will perform the necessary duties to sustain the daily operations of their emergency feeding programs, including some or all of the following: unloading deliveries, stocking shelves, registering and servicing clients, packaging and serving food orders, preparing and serving meals, serving as coordinators, placing orders, scheduling and supervising other volunteers, gleaning at area retail stores and restaurants, coordinating food drives, collecting and reporting data, coordinating holiday food basket distributions, and overseeing the monthly food co-op programs where applicable. RSVP volunteers may also mobilize civic organizations to recruit volunteers, raise public awareness, and solicit funds for food distribution efforts.

Scope of Service:

RSVP volunteers will each serve approximately 10 hours per /month for twelve months at one or more of the following work stations: CRSMA, La Casa Senior Center, Baxter Senior Center, Melrose Senior Center, Bread of Life, Friendship Center, the Lighthouse and Texico Senior Center.

Anticipated Input:

Individual RSVP volunteers will contribute 520 total hours per year of service.

Training/supervision:

A minimum of eight hours of training will be provided by the RSVP and the work stations in topics such as RSVP policies, safe driving for food delivery, health department requirements --handling food

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and required temperatures, etc. Supervision will be provided by the RSVP of Curry County.

Resources:

Most work stations own their own vehicle or have access to one.

Anticipated Accomplishments/Outputs:

The shut-ins due to age and/or disability and low-income individuals will receive emergency food assistance through one or more of the food distribution efforts: delivered meals to homes, food pantry, soup kitchen, food co-op, and other miscellaneous efforts (e.g. holiday food baskets).

Indicator: Number of individuals who will receive food in first year:

Meals on Wheels -- 25

Food Pantry -- 500 families (average four members)

Congregate Meals -- 2500 individual servings

Target: At least 500 individuals will receive emergency food assistance through one of the food distribution efforts each month.

How Measured: Site records -- sign in sheets, and Food Distribution Output Summary Table

Anticipated Intermediate Impact/Outcome:

Because they received low/no-cost food assistance, low-income people will be able to stretch their resources to pay other bills (rent, utilities).

Indicator:

Percent of individuals who report that they were able to use the money saved to pay other bills (rent, utilities).

Target: 60% of those responding to the survey will report that they were able to use money saved to pay other bills (rent, utilities) at least once since they began receiving emergency food assistance.

How Measured:

Client Evaluation Form, administered once a year over a two month period at food pantry.

Anticipated End Impact/Outcome:

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Because they received low/no-cost food assistance, low-income people will be better able to feed themselves and their families, reducing the risk of "food insecurity."

Indicator: Percent of individuals who report that the service helped them get enough to eat and prevented them from going hungry.

Target:

65% of those individuals who responded to the survey agree that the service helped them get enough to eat and prevented them from going hungry.

How Measured: Client Evaluation Form, administered once a year over a two month period at food pantry.

* Number may include repeat clients.

Strategic Plan Healthy Futures Objective 2: Reducing Childhood Obesity and Increasing Access to Nutritious Food

USDA Fruit and Vegetable Program

Reliable national and state surveillance data have clearly indicated that the populations at highest risk for obesity in New Mexico are Native Americans, Hispanics and people with very low incomes. The NM Department of Health reported that the Southeast region -- which Curry County is included -- has obesity rates statistically higher than the rates for the Southwest region of the state.

The prevalence of obesity among youth in Curry County has increased dramatically in recent years. According to data collected by the US Department of Health, childhood obesity in the State of New Mexico has more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the past 30 years.

Obese children are at-risk for poor health and are likely to become obese adults, facing health challenges ranging from cancer to diabetes. And, equally as devastating is the effect that obesity has on the mental health of children due to low self esteem.

Research conducted by the Division of Adolescent and School Health of the CDC revealed that schools

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play a critical role supporting healthy eating. Students are often times provided their most nutritious meal of the day in the school cafeteria. The CNCS supported program will reduce childhood obesity and increase access to nutritious food through school lunch programs.

The RSVP of Curry County will address the quality of children's diets, which according to national data, indicate that dietary intakes of U.S. children are less than optimal because they eat more calories than they need while fruits and vegetables are below recommended levels.

The RSVP of Curry County will recruit volunteers called "taste testers" to encourage children to eat more fruits and vegetables. In the first year of the program, RSVP will focus on pre-school and elementary school age children in the County seat, Clovis, New Mexico. In years two and three, the program will expand and include the villages within Curry County; Texico, Melrose and Grady.

In collaboration with the Clovis Municipal Schools and the USDA Nutrition Programs Title of the 2002 Farm Act Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, the RSVP Taste Testers will encourage consumption of fruits and vegetables during snack time and at the salad bars in the school cafeteria.

The desired result of the RSVP Taste Testers is to develop positive attitudes and perceptions surrounding healthful eating.

Currently there is no system in place in New Mexico (or most states) to collect weight related data on children from kindergarten through the eighth grade. However, recent national surveys using direct measurements indicate that 19% of children aged 6-11 are overweight.

Measure H11 Number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger. #195;

Recruitment and Development

Recruiting boomers and retired veterans is carried out by the Curry County RSVP through the implementation of a strategic plan to attract, cultivate, develop, recognize, and retain volunteers.

According to a report released by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) in 2005, there were some 77 million boomers in the U.S. and that figure will only grow since the youngest boomers will not reach age 65 until 2029.

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The NM Aging and Long-Term Department (ALTD) estimates that by 2016, New Mexico will be in the top five states with the most senior citizen residents. The figures from the CNCS and ALTD support the data that boomers will increase volunteering by older adults some 50 percent by 2020 -- and double the number of older adult volunteers by the year 2036.

Previous studies have found boomers want and remain engaged by higher-skill assignments. Boomers' relatively high volunteer rate today is tied to their education level -- that they are three times as likely to have a four-year college degree -- the propensity to have children later in life, and work longer due to better health and lifestyle. These factors account in part for the fact that the volunteer rate for baby boomers is peaking later in life than past generations.

The RSVP project area is Curry County, New Mexico, encompasses the communities of Clovis, Melrose, Texico and Grady. Seven miles west of Clovis is Cannon Air Force Base, which was established in 1943 as an Army air base. This military installation has a large impact on the community and receives a great deal of support from local civic and business leaders. Its growth has increased the population throughout Curry County and has had a positive economic effect on the community.

Another contributing factor to the population growth in Curry County is the number of retiring military personnel, choosing to make this area their home. Veteran retirees have supplemented the increasing percentage of senior citizens residing within Curry County. The Curry County RSVP recognizes the opportunity to utilize their military experience to plan and implement community projects (e.g., Disaster Preparation and Response) and makes recruitment of military volunteers a priority.

The Curry County RSVP publishes its own house organ; a monthly newsletter that is distributed to work stations, senior citizen centers, senior residential complexes, faith-based organizations and various civic organizations. With a circulation of 200 copies per month, current and prospective volunteers read about new projects and the job descriptions of volunteers needed to be filled. Our newsletter is augmented by PSAs on local radio, announcements in the newspaper, and on the County website.

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The RSVP Staff continues to create publications that are easy to read, informative, and visually appealing. Curry County also provides a Facebook page that promotes our projects, recognizes our senior volunteers with photos and success stories; attracting more volunteers and work stations. An additional way we keep the RSVP relevant and visible in the community is by having a kiosk in the mall.

When a large number of volunteers are needed for a short period time, and the qualifications of the task are minimal, we disseminate information to the community at large by distributing posters and brochures; speaking to groups, notices in appropriate media and word-of-mouth.

When volunteers with specific skills are required, we ask ourselves

- * What do we need?
- * Who could provide this?
- * How can we communicate with them?
- * What would motivate them?

When the source of such volunteers is located, we take our recruitment message directly to them.

RSVP volunteers that reflect the race and ethnicities of Curry County are recruited to help plan and implement new projects or replace volunteers lost through normal attrition. They are screened and placed according to their interest and ability; matching their skills with the job available; in an assignment with opportunities to share experience and skill.

Their training is provided by the work station, under the supervision of the Curry County RSVP. Upon completion of the training, micromanagement is unnecessary. Time and resources are invested in the training process to give the volunteers a sense of confidence in their tasks.

Volunteers are encouraged and shown appreciation for the work they do. A few samples are

- * Cards celebrating birthdays and holiday greetings
- * Photo with article about individuals and projects in the monthly newsletter, website and Facebook
- * Published article in the local newspaper
- * Guest on radio talk show

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- * Certificates of Appreciation
- * Years of Service lapel pins
- * Recognition at annual banquet

Some seniors bring with them executive skills, making them a natural leader. Our goal is to develop more volunteers to progress into a leadership role. We work with work stations and non-profits to conduct workshops with information to help the seniors develop their career as an RSVP volunteer.

Program Management

The management of the RSVP of Curry County encompasses the supervision of volunteer stations to ensure that they remain in compliance with RSVP program regulations, oversee the volunteers and that they are performing their assigned service activities, and evaluate whether the community needs are being met.

In addition, program management includes the coordinating and prioritizing of resources across projects, managing links between the projects, and administrating the overall costs and risks of the program.

The Program Director has oversight of the purpose and status of the RSVP projects; reporting to the County Manager and the Board of Commissioners; the sponsoring agency of the RSVP. Curry County provides multi-level oversight of the finance department, payroll, accounts payable, risk management, human resources, etc. to verify that program regulations are maintained.

Occasionally, there is a need to identify, collaborate and manage cross-projects. The sponsor (Curry County) may not have sufficient insight of the risk, issues, requirements, design or solution to be able to usefully manage these. The Program manager may be well placed to provide this insight by actively seeking out such information from the Project Managers of other grant-funded projects in order to collaborate in reaching the overall program goals.

Building partnerships with nonprofits and civic organizations is realized as the director of the Curry County RSVP maintains community outreach. Making presentations before senior citizen centers, civic and non-profit groups, the members are invited to join the RSVP advisory group. The advisors identify the needs of the community; investigates the possibilities, and helps the RSVP staff to plan

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and implement projects.

The advisory group also assists in matters including policies and procedures. Their recommendation is brought before the County Commission for approval.

The director establishes work stations to fulfill the identified needs and meet the program's present and future goals. During orientation, the director and work station manager creates a job description that will stipulate working schedules, duties, and responsibilities of the volunteers.

As volunteers are recruited and placed at the work station, discussion about their expectations is conducted to ensure a mutually rewarding and productive experience.

The supervisor conducts day-to-day management of the work station. Should the occasion arise when mediation is necessary, the RSVP director is available to provide intervention or discuss problems.

Exit interviews or closing surveys are conducted by the director at the conclusion of each project or activity to evaluate its quality, relevance, and success.

The data is recorded and made available to the next year's advisory board for their review and consideration. The data may reveal the exclusion or the need to strengthen a project.

Records that maintain a total of individual volunteer hours are entered in a computerized data base. These records are used to facilitate required reports and also in recognizing volunteers for the contribution they made to their community.

Organizational Capability

Since 1980, the Board of County Commissioners has sponsored the Curry County RSVP. Over the years, the program has remained fresh and continued to grow because management is motivated, enthused, and committed to the RSVP project.

The Board is a careful steward of the RSVP grant and oversees the method to deposit and track funds. All original invoices are maintained at the sponsoring agency with copies at the program office. The expenditures are handed with an authorized purchase order, or by a purchasing credit card, and

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payment is issued by way of a warrant from the county versus any cash. Any expenditure over \$2,500 is accompanied by three quotes and the final decision must have written justification. All equipment is inventoried and accounted for under county guidelines.

The Curry County RSVP director follows the purchasing procedures outlined in the County Purchasing Manual to ensure all procurement codes are met. This is also overseen by the finance department. The infrastructure of the County provides oversight and ensures compliance of the statutes, regulations, and OMB circulars of the RSVP program.

The day-to-day operation is performed in the RSVP office under the direction of the Program Director. She/He has a strong management background to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources. background working with volunteers, managing and motivating people, and possesses strong organization and communication skills.

She/He successfully works with multiple, conflicting priorities, creating a project plan, communications, and interacting with people at all levels of the sponsor's organization, volunteers and work stations. She/He represents the RSVP of Curry County at national, regional, state, and local meetings, participates in professional development activities and conferences, attends all pertinent training workshops sponsored by CNCS, and training sessions provided by the sponsor.

The Program Director is responsible for developing and writing successful grant proposals, negotiating the resulting contracts with the Senior Corps of the Corporation for National and Community Service, administering the program in compliance with federal regulations, according to the goals and objectives stated in the approved grant proposal, designing and implementing program evaluations, and assessing and reporting the program outcomes to the sponsor and to the CNCS. This position directly trains and supervises all staff as well as it develops and authorizes budget expenditures.

The Program Coordinator has a solid history in administrative work; possessing intermediate to advanced computer skills with an emphasis in computerized database information software, excellent written and oral communication aptitude and ensures that the program is delivered properly. The program coordinator does not have a management role, but supports the program director to deliver the program.

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Office support staff is an unpaid RSVP volunteer who performs a variety of duties and is prepared to handle many tasks at the same time. For example, they help with newsletter output, answering the phones, decorate displays and the venues of events (e.g., annual banquet, fair booth, holiday open house), assemble printed material such as policy hand booklets for the RSVP volunteers, and etc.

The Program Director proposes a Memorandum of Understanding to the Station Manager that outlines the goals of the community project, the role of the work station as it supports RSVP volunteers

- (1) Orientation to station and appropriate in-service training to enhance performance of assignments
- (2) Resources required for performance of assignments including reasonable accommodation
- (3) Supervision of volunteers while on assignment
- (4) Appropriate recognition
- (5) Provide for the safety of RSVP volunteers assigned to it
- (6) Undertake additional responsibilities such as record keeping and report making that may be required to the successful performance of RSVP volunteers in their assignments.

In addition to the above, the Program Director discusses with the Station Manager what is and is not program-relation-approved activities. The method to prevent or identify prohibited activities may be included in the M.O.U. The Program Director conducts monthly (minimum) site visits to ensure that the volunteers are performing their assigned duties.

Because of the proposed three-year project, an incumbent work station may not align with the new program's focus. The obsolete or non-effective station will no longer be in active service; They will Graduate. To minimize the disruption to current volunteers, displaced volunteers from the graduating work station will be reassigned to a different work station and/or depending or placed in a new job of their preference.

Our goal is to place as many displaced volunteers in the new Primary Focus Area. However, this is also an opportunity to invite them to serve on the Advisory Council. This seasoned volunteer may have a different perspective than the RSVP staff. They might be to the community and knowledgeable about the needs, desires, and expectations of our aging citizens.

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The method the Curry County RSVP has created, implemented and maintained to track volunteers is outlined below:

- (1) Applications are completed by new volunteers and updated annually
- (2) An interview is conducted to identify interest and past work history
- (3) RSVP training includes the policy handbook, the procedure to turn in time cards, information about volunteer liability insurance, reporting an injury or accident, the expense reimbursement policies, etc.
- (4) Work station training includes orientation, job description, and supervision
- (5) RSVP is available for mediation according to "Grievance Procedures" in handbook

A State and Federal back ground check is conducted if the volunteer is placed in a work station that deals with at-risk population; youth or homebound senior citizens. Should auto expense be requested, a copy of their current driver's license, car registration and proof of insurance is kept in their file. Confidential files are kept in a locked cabinet in the Program Director's office. Critical information such as social security numbers have been blacked out to avoid identity theft.

The RSVP office and County-owned vehicles --a 14-passenger van and a 7-seater Blazer-- are provided by the sponsor as an in-kind contribution. The office space is also donated; maintained by our maintenance department to ensure its safety and that any needed repairs are made.

The Board of County Commissioners sponsors several additional grant programs, demonstrating it's management capacity and systems ensuring past management of federal grant funds.. The members of the Commission are committed to researching every avenue to not only sustain, but aid in the growth of the RSVP projects. The support of the Commission has encouraged the continued success of the Curry County RSVP.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A