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Executive Summary

Revised AmeriCorps Executive Summary

The Seneca Nation of Indians' AmeriCorps project entails a budget request of \$66,795. The grant period will begin on September 15, 2014. The Education Department will be the lead department for this planning year. Partnering departments will be Emergency Management, Employment and Training, Environmental Protection, Planning, and Veterans. These departments will also partner on a full AmeriCorps grant, if awarded.

The overarching goal of Seneca Nation AmeriCorps-related activities is twofold:

- To learn as much as possible about the AmeriCorps program: its history, mission, and programs; and
- To make AmeriCorps relevant to the people of the Seneca Nation, with special emphasis on attracting Seneca and other Native youth as AmeriCorps members.

These goals will be accomplished through:

- Communication and leadership skills training for the new AmeriCorps Program Coordinator and key staff from partner Seneca Nation departments;
- Site visits to current AmeriCorps programs, with emphasis on a tribal AmeriCorps program;
- Facilitation of informational sessions on AmeriCorps for Seneca Nation citizens;
- Community outreach targeting Seneca and other Native youth through the use of billboards at the Seneca Nation's two residential territories and in the City of Buffalo, NY.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

The Seneca Nation's AmeriCorps program will be called To See Far. This name is in keeping with the Seneca Nation's history, and philosophy, of working not only for the present, but also for the future. Indigenous philosophy urges Native peoples to work so that decisions made today will impact favorably on the seventh generation to come. As both a title and a goal for AmeriCorps, this is an especially apt designation. AmeriCorps programming will provide Seneca members, and potentially members of other Native communities in the region, with services that will benefit the current generation and set the foundation for the future.

Poverty, Education, and Unemployment: The people of the Seneca Nation face numerous challenges

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to their physical and economic well-being. AmeriCorps volunteers will help immeasurably to address these challenges and improve the quality of life for Seneca members. Poverty continues to be a pressing issue for Seneca members. The poverty rate for the Allegany Territory is 28.8% and 28.1% for the Cattaraugus Territory, as compared with 14.2% for Erie County, 17.2% for Cattaraugus County, 19.1% for Chautauqua County (the Counties surrounding the Seneca Nation), and 15.9% for New York State (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012, Table S1701). Poverty rates for Seneca Elders over the age of 65 are equally distressing. For Elders at the Allegany Territory, the poverty rate is 13.1%, while at the Cattaraugus Territory, the rate is 22.1%, as compared with 8.0% for Erie County, 9.1% for Cattaraugus County, 8.2% for Chautauqua County, and 11.4% for New York State (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012, Table S1701).

Although the territories compare well with surrounding counties for high school completion (including equivalency attainment), the poverty rate for high school graduates at the territories is alarming: 24.6% for the Allegany Territory and 29.9% for the Cattaraugus Territory, as compared with 12.2% for Erie County, 13.5% for Cattaraugus County, 14.6% for Chautauqua County, and 13.7% for New York State (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012, Table S1501). The unemployment rate provides further insight into this challenging situation. Unemployment rates for the three surrounding counties and New York State range from 8.2% to 8.9%, while unemployment at the Allegany Territory is 12.9% and an astounding 21.6% at the Cattaraugus Territory. Clearly, there is a need for job-related interventions to reverse the trend of high unemployment and poverty even among those with a basic level of education.

Service Provision: Currently there is no community service group at either residential territory of the Seneca Nation. Although the Nation provides a number of services to its citizens, there is no centralized source of information on service provision. In addition, Native peoples, including Seneca citizens, are wary of providing personal information to outside agencies. This lack of trust was perhaps most clearly demonstrated during the aftermath of the flooding that occurred at the Seneca Nation in August of 2009. Many Seneca homeowners suffered considerable damage to their homes and property as a result of the flood event. These homeowners exhibited great hesitancy in requesting assistance from FEMA and other governmental agencies tasked with provision of disaster relief services. As a result, many residents did not receive the level of subsidy to which they were entitled. A centralized referral and information service at the Seneca Nation will be able to put citizens in touch with Native and non-Native sources of assistance in a supportive atmosphere that acknowledges and values Seneca history, culture, and traditions, thus effectively increasing the level of service to which Seneca

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citizens have access.

Financial Literacy: The need for an expanded system of financial literacy education for Native Americans has been documented on both the national and local levels. The Native Financial Education Coalition has stated: "To continue and sustain their growth over time, tribes need an educated citizenry who make well-informed financial decisions and who are role-models for Native youth" (<http://www.ncai.org/initiatives/nativefinancial-ed/nfec>). The need to begin financial education early is especially critical for Native youth, who lag behind their counterparts in their understanding of key financial concepts and their ability to make sound financial decisions (The Financial Literacy of Native American Youth, April 2007, Miriam Jorgensen and Lewis Mandell, sponsored by NFEC, Jump\$tart!, Oweesta, and Merrill Lynch).

The need for financial literacy education extends to members of the Seneca Nation. In a survey conducted for the Seneca Nation by First Nations Oweesta Corporation in October 2011, respondents were asked about the level of knowledge regarding financial services among Seneca members. According to the survey, "A majority of respondents feel that community members in general are not aware of financial services available to them beyond a basic checking account" (CDFI Market Analysis, 2011). A sampling of the survey responses reveals a significant level of concern regarding financial awareness at the Seneca Nation: "There is a real disconnect between what is available and what our members understand...Youth treat money as if it does grow on trees...They [Seneca members] are not as familiar as they could be...Especially the youth, they are not informed at all...There has been very little opportunity for financial education...The community members don't understand financing, budgeting" (CDFI Market Analysis, 2011). Clearly, there is an acknowledged need for an increased level of financial literacy education for Seneca Nation citizens.

Disaster Preparation: Naturally occurring disasters pose a threat to the Western New York Region in which the Seneca Nation is located. On October 16, 2008, Alexander B. Grannis, then-Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, convened a Flood Summit in Kingston, New York. His words at the conference spoke to the heightened danger of flooding in the State: "From the Hudson Valley to the Southern Tier to the Mohawk Valley, '100 year storms' seem to be occurring every other year. The resulting floods are taking a devastating human and economic toll. Throughout New York State, storms keep getting stronger -- and the resulting floods continue to devastate communities. According to the latest climate change models, the future will feature more frequent, more violent and more damaging storms" (www.dec.ny.gov/lands/51372.html).

It did not take long for this prediction to be borne out for the Seneca Nation. In August of 2009, the

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Nation's Cattaraugus Territory was impacted by a flash flood event, later declared a federal disaster (FEMA-1837 DR-NY, August 8-10, 2009). On August 9, 2009, two storm systems intersected over Western New York and produced torrential rain that caused severe flash flooding during the early morning hours of August 10th in parts of Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Erie Counties. Damage from the flooding was widespread. Many road culverts were washed out, and more than one quarter of the roads in Cattaraugus County were compromised. Numerous contaminators filled the water systems and soil. The water supplies of communities were compromised by damage to village reservoirs and water-transmission infrastructures. Water and mud damage to residential and commercial properties was extensive. The Tri-County Region -- Erie, Chautauqua, and Cattaraugus Counties in Western New York -- was declared a federal disaster area and more than \$45 million in federal disaster assistance was distributed.

High water events and other naturally occurring disasters, including major ice jamming, pose a significant level of risk for results other than flood damage. These events comprise a constant threat of radioactive waste being leaked from the West Valley Nuclear Demonstration Site, the only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing facility ever to operate in the United States, located 21 miles upriver from the Seneca Nation's Cattaraugus Territory. Similar concerns exist for the Peter Cooper Superfund Site in Gowanda, New York, located along the 16-mile span of Cattaraugus Creek running through the Cattaraugus Territory. Contaminants have seeped into Cattaraugus Creek; in addition, dangerous levels of arsenic, chromium, and zinc have been found in the Site's soil and groundwater. Considerable negative impact to groundwater, surface runoff, migration of contaminants to nearby properties, biological/physical/chemical risk associated with existing contaminated sites -- including heavy metals, PCBs, chlorinated volatile organic compounds (VOCs), arsenic, and petroleum -- pose a dangerous and continuous threat.

Moreover, since Cattaraugus Creek empties into Lake Erie, the potential exists for the integrity of the Great Lakes to be compromised by inland pollutants. For the Seneca Nation's Allegany Territory, significant levels of contaminants arising from sites in Salamanca, New York threaten the Allegheny River, which runs through the city and, therefore, through the Allegany Territory. Three major waterways -- the Allegheny River, Cattaraugus Creek, and Lake Erie -- are all impacted by a variety of contamination sources within the Seneca Nation.

The New York State Thruway (the portion of Interstate 90 that traverses New York State) extends three miles through the Seneca Nation's Cattaraugus Territory, while the Southern Tier Expressway (the portion of Interstate 86 that traverses New York State) extends 23 miles through the Allegany

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Territory. Because of the significant amount of traffic on both of these transportation routes, air, water, and land pollution of surrounding areas is a constant concern.

Veterans' Issues: The Tribal Leaders Briefing Book (November 2013), prepared by the National Congress of American Indians has stated that "Native people serve in the military at higher rates than any other group;" they also comprise "...the single most underserved group of veterans of the American armed forces" (<http://files.ncai.org/broadcasts/2013/November/bb%20-%20Veterans.pdf>).

This document has identified several national issues facing Native veterans, including health care, homelessness, housing, unemployment, and the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder.

One of the challenges for Native veterans is accessibility to services and programs. The Seneca Nation is located in an area where communities are primarily rural and at considerable distances from services and amenities in urban settings. The availability of VA medical centers, educational facilities, Department of Labor offices, and other governmental entities is, to a great extent, nullified if those who are eligible for services are not able to access them.

The vast majority of the tribes of Indian Country have always maintained a closed door policy when it comes to matters of personal and family issues. The working relationship with outside authority agencies is inconsistent, sporadic and at times very ineffective. A similar level of mistrust can be seen among Seneca Nation veterans, who are often extremely private and untrusting of outside service and program agencies. To compound the problem with outside agencies, Seneca veterans often fear speaking to non-Native authority providers. Outcomes are not as effective as they would be if the issues were resolved within the tribe and tribal community. The fear of outside involvement in their life keeps many Seneca veterans from reaching out to a non-Native enforcing agency to help with needs or problems.

If an outside authority or agency is contacted for assistance, that outside agency, unfamiliar with Seneca culture and values, tries to engage the veteran in an attempt to ascertain the details of the situation. Because of the fear and cultural barrier to discussing this private matter, the veteran will often not disclose to the authority, therefore resulting in no intervention or in an inappropriate or incomplete plan of remediation.

To See Far will bring together the expertise of a number of Seneca Nation departments: the Education, Emergency Management, Employment and Training, Environmental Protection, Planning, and Veterans Departments. Although the Education Department will take the lead and coordinate all program training, activities, and events, each contributing department will lend its perspective, enthusiasm, time, and talents to ensure the program's success.

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The Emergency Management Department will provide training for AmeriCorps members in disaster preparedness, so the members will have the knowledge and interpersonal skills to reach out to Seneca citizens in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Activities including, but not limited to, staffing an emergency call center and provision of meals will allow members to provide comfort, vital information, and assistance in times of duress. Following training, five members will staff the Nation's emergency call center in for eight hours per day two weeks per month. Success of this initiative will be measured by the number of calls received and the number of referrals made or services provided to the caller. In addition, members will prepare emergency preparedness "tip sheets," which will include emergency contact information, along with procedures to follow in the event of various emergency situations. After designing and printing the tip sheets, members will distribute them to individual Seneca households. They will also, through strategic questioning, ascertain whether Seneca citizens have questions or concerns about disaster preparedness and will either immediately field these questions or research the appropriate answer and re-contact the householder. Ten members, working two hours per week for one week per month, will design these materials and disseminate them to a minimum of 500 Seneca households.

The Seneca Nation will implement an outreach and recruitment effort to establish a Tribal Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) for its territories. A Tribal CERT will be able to respond to natural or man-made events that impact the territories. The importance of being ready to respond to natural or man-made events was realized by the tribe in August 2009. A flash flood event, later declared a federal disaster (FEMA-1837 DR-NY, August 8-10, 2009), significantly impacted roads, homes, and buildings on the Cattaraugus Territory. The Seneca Community not only relied on the capability of the local volunteer fire department, but was also forced to rely on outside assistance to help with response and recovery. When outside agencies unfamiliar with the Seneca community engage Seneca citizens, the response can be inconsistent and/or ineffective due to cultural differences. The Seneca Nation of Indians Emergency Management Department (SNIEMD) wants to assure that all Seneca citizens are cared for and assisted during times of emergency with the most effective programs possible. Developing and training a Tribal Teen CERT team and an adult CERT team is unique: there are few within Indian Country. The provision of basic CERT skills, combined with a multi-skill technically advanced responder, will strengthen the volunteers' response to community disasters. SNIEMD has established relationships with surrounding community partners (other Emergency Management agencies, neighboring fire/EMS departments, neighboring communities, local HAM Radio Clubs).

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The project has identified two County CERT groups and four Volunteer Fire Departments to assist in providing basic CERT training. This funding will allow the department to purchase items needed by CERT volunteers, as well as obtain outreach and training materials for the basic CERT course.

SNIEMD will purchase the technical electronic emergency response equipment for use by the Tribal CERT team during training, drills and actual events. SNIEMD will have the capacity to support the CERT teams through their general budget for replacement of equipment or additional training classes (for new volunteers) in future years. Members who have completed CERT training will provide emergency response activities during any disasters that may occur during the project periods. In addition, they will design and disseminate informational materials to recruit new CERT volunteers; they will also conduct informational sessions at Cattaraugus Territory meetings to recruit new volunteers. Five members will each conduct ten informational sessions and will each recruit two new trainees.

Currently, the recycling of paper from the public buildings at the Cattaraugus and Allegany Territories is the only recycling effort taking place at the Seneca Nation. For millennia, the Seneca people lived in harmony with the land, taking only what was needed to sustain life and venerating Mother Earth and the bounty she provided. In recent centuries, this bond has been fractured and many Native people no longer maintain the close kinship with nature that had been the lifeblood of the ancestors. Expanding the Seneca Nation's recycling efforts will help to restore this connection to the land and to the legacy of those who came before. Members will take the lead on the Nation's recycling initiative. In conjunction with Environmental Protection staff, members will work collaboratively to determine the best recycling methodology for the Cattaraugus Territory. Members will also design informational posters to be displayed in Seneca public spaces, and they will staff the recycling center(s) that will be set up at the residential Territories. Five members will work for four hours every week to provide recycling services. Success of this initiative will be determined through the administration of a brief member-designed survey to be requested of each Seneca citizen who participates in recycling.

The Employment and Training Department will provide preparatory sessions prior to administration of the high school equivalency examination. In addition, this department will make available OSHA training. The OSHA 10 Hour Training Program for the Construction Industry provides training for workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces in the construction industry. The program also provides information regarding workers' rights, employer responsibilities, and how to file a complaint.

The Seneca Nation's Basic Construction Program offers Seneca citizens over the age of 18 the

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opportunity to learn construction skills that can lead to a well-paying job. Participants must have a high school diploma or equivalency, be physically fit, and pass a pre-employment drug test. Trainees receive a stipend and learn entry-level building skills through classwork, field trips, and hands-on experience. Those who successfully complete the Basic Construction Program receive OSHA 10 Certification for hazard recognition and workplace safety. Members who have successfully completed OSHA and/or construction training will utilize their new skills to provide minor repairs to the properties of Seneca citizens. Five members will provide 20 hours of repair services to Seneca householders per month for each of the project periods. All repairs will be inspected by Employment and Training staff to ascertain safe, workmanlike activity.

Members will participate in a Dale Carnegie Training course that will include public speaking, communications, self-improvement, sales, customer service, and leadership (www.dcarnegietraining.com). Employment and Training's Life Skills Course includes: soft skills, aggressive vs. assertive behavior, working with difficult people, handling criticism, conflict resolution, barriers to employment, customer service, and appearance/timeliness/ interview attire. Together, these courses will provide interpersonal skills that will allow members to interact effectively with Seneca citizens in a wide variety of circumstances. Members will use their newly heightened public speaking skills to address groups of Native youth from Iroquois League Nations to recruit them for an AmeriCorps waiting list. It is likely that there will be a certain degree of attrition among AmeriCorps members, and this list will serve as a source of potential replacement members. Five members will each make three recruitment speeches and will each recruit four recruits.

The Employment and Training Department's Vocational Rehab Program serves approximately 175 individuals with disabilities. Citizens of the Seneca Nation, along with citizens of other Iroquois League citizens, are eligible for services provided by the Program. These services are designed to prepare participants to prepare for and engage in gainful employment, including self-employment, telecommuting, and business ownership.

The Planning Department will provide financial literacy training for members. The Acting Deputy Director of the Seneca Nation's Planning Department, an Economic Development Specialist and Certified Financial Trainer, will oversee the training. This training will enable members to develop a spending plan, manage checking and savings accounts, know how to access credit, and understand a credit report. Thus, members will be better equipped to make sound financial decisions, not only in the present, but also for a lifetime. Members who have successfully completed financial literacy training will become financial mentors for other Seneca youth. Ten members will work on an

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individual basis with Seneca youth of high school age to discuss financial matters, formulate a "financial futures plan," and assist with opening a savings and/or checking account. Each of the ten members will provide four hours of mentoring two days a week for each week of the project. Success of this initiative will be determined by the number of mentees who formulate a financial plan and/or open a bank account.

The Education Department will provide AmeriCorps members with opportunities to assist: with "Activity Days" during school breaks, with the annual Summer Enrichment Program for K-8th grade students, and with community cultural classes. The cultural classes will involve Seneca language instruction, history, and customs, as well as activities such as cooking demonstrations and crafts. Members will also serve as mentors for youth in the Community by providing opportunities for educational and cultural development. Six members will design and facilitate cultural presentations to groups of students for four hours per week during all extended school breaks (Christmas, midwinter, spring, and summer). Success of this initiative will be determined by the number of students who have participated in the presentations: a minimum of 100 student participants will be considered acceptable.

The Education Department will partner with Food Is Our Medicine (FIOM), a collaboration of the Seneca Nation and the Seneca Diabetes Foundation. FIOM is a grassroots pilot project whose goal is to empower Seneca families with the skills and knowledge to grow and harvest their own food, reconnect with Mother Earth, and lead a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. AmeriCorps members will learn how to identify and label indigenous plants traditionally used for food and medicine. Members will help to preserve these plants, currently being grown in the area around the Seneca Nation's administrative complex, for educational use. Four members will work each week for two hours per week from April through October on plant identification and preservation. Success will be indicated by the number of individual species catalogued: 100 individual plants will be considered successful.

The Veterans Department will, perhaps, be the most open-ended provider of services. Those Seneca veterans who reside on-territory at either Cattaraugus or Allegany bring with them a unique set of needs. Veterans who live on-territory do have access to services and events taking place at the Seneca Nation. For these veterans, there is a sense of place and of home that may be missing from the worldview of those veterans who do not reside at the Seneca Nation. These veterans, however, are likely to have more difficulty accessing services at the Regional Benefit Office or the VA Medical Center, both of which are located in Buffalo, New York, approximately 40 miles from the Seneca

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Nation's Cattaraugus Territory and 75 miles from the Allegany Territory. For Seneca veterans, services may range from accessing medical assistance or veterans' benefits from the Buffalo facilities to an impromptu home visit to check on the well-being of a veteran and his/her family. Four members will each work three hours per week every week of the project periods to provide well-being visits to a minimum of six Seneca veterans.

Many of the challenges facing older Seneca veterans are also experienced by Seneca Elders. Ability to access services is a concern for both groups, and weather plays a significant role in this equation. Inclement weather, with cold temperatures and substantial amounts of snow, is the norm in most winters. According to Cornell University, "...monthly snowfall...accumulations of more than 50 inches within 2 consecutive months are not uncommon...Heavy snow squalls frequently occur, generating from 1 to 2 feet of snow and occasionally 4 feet or more"

(http://nysc.eas.cornell.edu/climate_of_ny.html). Such conditions, often beginning in November and lasting until March or April, make travel hazardous at best, especially for those with issues of mobility. Moreover, many Seneca Elders live in poor housing conditions. For both Seneca veterans and Seneca Elders, assistance with small household repairs, minor landscaping and gardening services, and provision of firewood in season will make a substantial difference in quality of life. Five members will each work for two hours per week for the duration of the project and will provide home-related services specifically for an average of four Seneca veterans and Elders per week.

To See Far will begin with a planning period of six months. During this time, the contributing departments, led by the Education Department, will meet to determine the exact services to be provided under the auspices of the project. During this time, the Project Coordinator position will be advertised and interviews will be conducted, so that the Coordinator will be able to assume his/her position at the conclusion of the planning period. At this time, the first five (5) AmeriCorps members will be recruited and will immediately begin their training through the Emergency Management, Employment and Training, or Planning Departments. During the second half of the second year, five (5) additional members will be recruited. Any additional members needed to comprise a full complement of ten (10) will be recruited as well. Members who have been in the program the longest and who have completed their initial training will serve as mentors for the newest recruits. All AmeriCorps members will be assigned a case manager from one of the contributing departments. The case manager will meet approximately twice each month, or as needed, with their assigned member(s) in order to keep tabs on members' progress and to deal with any problems or issues that may arise.

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The Program Coordinator will supervise AmeriCorps members and will provide general oversight for the project. A job description is included in this application.

To See Far will be open not only to Seneca youth, but also to young members of the Six Nations of the Iroquois League, a historic confederation of Native Nations in Central and Western New York State including the Seneca, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Tuscarora. In addition to extending the benefits of AmeriCorps participation to other regional Native peoples, opportunities for collaborative programming will be created. These opportunities will add immeasurably to the richness of the Seneca Nation's AmeriCorps project.

Travel for Seneca Nation staff to attend CNCS-sponsored meetings has been included in the budget. Travel for AmeriCorps members to other Native Nations to provide disaster relief or to share ideas for community service learning has also been included in the budget. This is a unique aspect of this grant proposal, since Seneca youth will have the opportunity to communicate with their counterparts in other Native Nations that are part of the Iroquois League and to work cooperatively with them to design programming relevant to the needs of other Native peoples. Seneca AmeriCorps members will participate in joint community service projects with Iroquois League citizens, including (but not limited to) provision of services to Elders, veterans, and youth. The exact nature of the service provision will be determined when the first meetings are held: small home repairs, neighborhood clean-up, well-being visits to Elders and veterans are some of the possible activities.

Currently there are no AmeriCorps programs for Native Nations in New York State. To See Far will not only provide the Seneca Nation with the funding to provide much-needed services to Seneca citizens, but it will also provide invaluable training and direction for Seneca youth as AmeriCorps members. This program can serve as a model for other Native Nations in New York State and other parts of the country in planning their own AmeriCorps programming.

Organizational Capability

The Seneca Nation of Indians has extensive experience in writing and managing grant-funded projects and currently administers several million dollars in federal grants annually through its Fiscal Affairs Department. The mission of the Seneca Nation Fiscal Affairs Department is to provide accurate, timely, and comprehensive financial and information services. Key department operations and responsibilities include accounting, budget management, grants and contracts management, fixed asset inventory control, invoice and payroll services, and procurement. Five offices comprise the Fiscal Affairs Department: the Comptroller's Accounting Office, Accounts Payable Office, Purchasing Office, Grants Office, and Payroll Office.

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As a result of the volume and amount of federal funding, the Nation is also required by law to be audited by an external firm on an annual basis. The nation's external audit conforms to the requirements and standards of OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations." The annual audit assesses the Nation's fiscal health, presents the Nation's financial position, and certifies if the Nation's financial statements are free of material misstatement. Each year, the Nation closely analyzes its annual audits, using the audits as an opportunity to better manage its finances. If findings are identified, the Nation works quickly and efficiently to address and resolve identified findings through Corrective Action Plans (CAP).

The Purchasing Office assists Nation departments in obtaining bids on essential goods and services. This Office is also responsible for preparing purchase orders and confirming that the Nation's procurement policies and procedures are followed. The Purchasing Office, including the Director and Purchasing Officers, closely adhere to the Seneca Nation of Indians Procurement Policy Statement. The Director, with the support of Purchasing Officers, is responsible for purchase orders for procurement of materials/services and purchase requisitions. The Purchasing Office also obtains and manages prices, materials specifications, delivery dates, and invitations to bid. The Office follows strict bidding requirements based on the cost of materials and services and also compiles and closely monitors files, reports, price lists, and progress reports. Communication and documentation with contractors and subcontractors, however, are handled by the Community Planning and Development Department.

The Grants Office, which includes the Grants Compliance Officer and Grants Budget Officer, is charged with the financial reporting for over 75 grants and contracts with local, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as private foundations. The Grants Office monitors budgets and compliance with grant awards and contract requirements. The office is tasked with supervising drawdowns and issue reimbursements. The Grants Budget Officer and Compliance Officer compile and disseminate monthly reports, financial statements, and account details for external funds. The Grants Office also contributes to the preparation of narrative reporting requirements, financial forms (SF 269 A), and contract closeouts.

Quarterly reviews are conducted by the Nation's Officers to ensure that progress toward grant goals and objectives is being made in a timely manner and that funds are adequately, properly, and effectively being expended. The Grants and Contract Department coordinates and facilitates all aspects of outside funding coming into the Nation. Grant application and reporting procedures are performed in accordance with the Seneca Nation Grant Application and Award Policy, adopted by the Tribal

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Council on March 12, 2007.

Expenditure of grant funding is carried out subject to the Seneca Nation Procurement Policy Statement, adopted by the Tribal Council on June 2, 1999, and amended on four subsequent occasions. The policy details methods of procurement, bidding requirements, contract forms, invoicing procedures, payment procedures, ethics guidelines, inventory, real property and equipment recording to assure continuing control over grant funded assets, disposition procedures, and other requirements.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The proposed Seneca Nation AmeriCorps budget is both cost effective and adequate to provide for the range of training and services to be delivered by the project. Included in the budget are provisions for: AmeriCorps member living allowance; AmeriCorps member training: financial literacy, CERT, OSHA, Construction, Dale Carnegie, soft skills; personnel expenses and fringe benefits for the Program Coordinator; staff travel to CNCS-sponsored meetings; member travel to other Native Nations; supplies; staff training and AmeriCorps member training; program operating costs

The costs charged for Personnel (i.e., Program Coordinator) directly relate to the operation of the project, since this staff person will supervise the AmeriCorps members and oversee the program's functioning. Fringe benefits for this position have been accurately calculated.

Funds have been budgeted for travel to CNCS-sponsored meetings. No equipment will be purchased as part of the project. Funds for supplies will be for small-ticket items. This will primarily include office supplies (paper, pens, ink, etc.) and will involve no supply items costing over \$1,000 each.

All items in the budget have been itemized and their presence in the budget is justified.

Living allowances are correct for the number of members and the time for which they will serve.

There are no indirect costs associated with this budget.

The match has been calculated correctly, based on the years of the project.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

The Seneca Nation's AmeriCorps project will utilize formative and summative evaluation to assess the project's efficiency, its progress toward meeting stated objectives, and the effects that the project is having on AmeriCorps members and Seneca Nation citizens. Formative evaluation will enable the Education Department, as lead department on the project, along with the contributing departments, to determine if changes or adjustments should be made to project activities to increase its efficacy. Summative evaluation will enable project personnel to gauge the project's overall success, as well as begin planning for its continuation into the future. Every aspect of the project will entail some

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evaluative activity. Evaluation will be conducted with two main focus areas: evaluation of AmeriCorps members and evaluation of the benefits to ensue to citizens of the Seneca Nation as a result of AmeriCorps members' activities.

The first, and most easily assessed, evaluation criterion is AmeriCorps members' attendance at each training opportunity in which the members take part. Sign-in sheets will be provided at each training, including emergency preparedness and emergency exercise demonstrations, financial literacy training, job training and career readiness, GED classes (as applicable), 10-hour OSHA training, interpersonal skills training, Dale Carnegie training, and tribal community service learning.

Members will also complete brief surveys at four predetermined times during each project period. These surveys will assess student attitudes on trainings attended, as well as on follow-up events and activities. Students will have the opportunity to express their opinion on effectiveness of the trainings, topics covered, and anticipated usefulness later in life, as well as on the activities and events to which they have been assigned and in which they have provided services to Seneca Nation citizens.

Members will meet with their partner department supervisor every two months during the project period. At these times, the supervisors will use questioning techniques to ascertain the member's level of satisfaction with the project. The frequency of these meetings, as well as the one-on-one interaction between supervisor and member, will provide enhanced opportunities to determine if any problems or challenges exist and to be proactive in dealing with them.

The opinions of Seneca Nation citizens will also be elicited, by means of a brief questionnaire, at the conclusion of each activity or event at which AmeriCorps members have provided services. These questionnaires will seek to ascertain the appropriateness and effectiveness of the activity/event/service provided, as well as their opinion on the ability of the member(s) to interact with Seneca citizens and deliver an acceptable level of service.

These formative evaluation measures will be used to provide ongoing AmeriCorps project assessment. In this way, adjustments can be made when they are deemed necessary or advisable. Activities and events provided for the benefit of Seneca citizens can be assessed for appropriateness and effectiveness; training and service opportunities for AmeriCorps members can also be evaluated for the benefit(s) ensuing directly to members and indirectly to Seneca citizens.

At the conclusion of the project, summative evaluation will consist of all of the previously administered and collected evaluation measures, along with the rates of completion of the trainings in which members have participated (as shown by the certificates of completion to be presented at the conclusion of each training opportunity). The cumulative perspective provided by these evaluations

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will offer an accurate picture of the overall success of the project's first three years, which will be utilized to make any adjustments, changes, or deletions for the AmeriCorps project's ensuing years at the Seneca Nation.

Clarification Summary

B. Programmatic clarification items:

1) During the planning period, a multidepartment interdisciplinary team approach will be adopted in order to take full advantage of the experience and expertise of the partnering departments. The Seneca Nation's Education Department will take the lead and will coordinate the activities of five other Nation Departments: Emergency Management, Employment and Training, Environmental Protection, Planning, and Veterans.

The planning period will incorporate three main phases. Phase One, Outreach and Information Gathering, will encompass months 1 through 5 of the planning period. This phase will include hiring of an experienced Consultant to provide information on AmeriCorps rules and regulations, as well as insight on the process of designing and implementing a successful program. Also during this time, data will be gathered from the partner departments, the SNI Government Summit on AmeriCorps will be held, as will the SNI Community Call to Action. By convening these two meetings, all Seneca Nation departments, as well as all Seneca Nation citizens, will be given the opportunity to learn about AmeriCorps and to play an active role in determining the needs to be addressed during the lifetime of the AmeriCorps Project.

Phase Two of the planning period, Program Design, will encompass months 6 through 10. During this time, linkages with appropriate agencies and individuals outside of the Seneca Nation will be established. This could include -- but is not limited to -- local law enforcement agencies and emergency preparedness entities, local school districts, etc. The central activity during this phase will take all of the data gathered from the needs assessments and governmental/ community meetings to formulate the actual AmeriCorps activities and events. Program emphasis will be on the CNCS focus areas of disaster preparation and economic opportunity. Program design will include training opportunities (e.g., Dale Carnegie, OSHA, CERT Training, Financial Literacy), as well as community events. During this time, staff of partner departments will have numerous opportunities to avail themselves of check-in calls and trainings with CNCS staff, along with the vast array of materials found on the CNCS National Service Knowledge Network and the Online Learning Center. An important component will be establishment of programmatic goals and design of evaluation

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measures. Evaluation measures will both formative and summative. Formative evaluation will take place periodically throughout the project period and will provide feedback on the achievements of AmeriCorps members, as well as on the success of interventions for the Seneca Nation and its citizens. Formative evaluation will provide the information needed to make programmatic changes as warranted. At the Project's conclusion, summative evaluation will assess the overall success of the Project; this data will provide the framework for a subsequent AmeriCorps application.

Phase Three, Prelude to Project, will encompass the last two months of the planning year. During this time, background checks will be conducted on new and current Seneca Nation personnel who will come in contact with AmeriCorps members. To solicit applications, a variety of advertising mediums will be utilized, including the Seneca Nation Newsletter and local newspapers, as well as advertisements on the Seneca Nation radio station, WGWE-FM, and on the Seneca Nation website. The Seneca Nation's Buffalo Outreach Center, which provides services to Seneca citizens living off-territory in Erie and Niagara Counties of Western New York, will be enlisted to solicit applications. The Nation will also utilize the assistance of Native American Community Services, a family services agency in Buffalo, New York serving off-reservation Native Americans. In addition, word-of-mouth nominations from Seneca Nation citizens will be encouraged.

B. Programmatic clarification items:

2) The extensive data gathering opportunities built into the planning period will provide the Seneca Nation with the information required to structure a culturally sensitive, tribally specific program of activities and events to benefit both AmeriCorps members and the Seneca Nation. Collection of data from partner and non-partner Seneca departments, along with input from Seneca citizens gathered at the Community Call to Action, will be incorporated into the design of AmeriCorps member activities.

The Seneca Nation's AmeriCorps program will benefit immeasurably from participation of a wide variety of staff members who will bring years of experience, a high level of motivation, and sound planning skills to the design process. Staff members from five diverse participating departments, under the leadership of Seneca Education Department personnel, will help to ensure that planning decisions are culturally appropriate, tribally specific, and in line with AmeriCorps best practices. Evaluation measures will point out programming components that may not be meeting their goals; moreover, the timeliness of the evaluations will allow for changes to be made that will improve on service delivery to both AmeriCorps members and the Seneca Community. For the Seneca Nation AmeriCorps, programmatic excellence will always be the benchmark.

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The Seneca Nation has extensive experience in writing and managing grant-funded projects and currently administers several million dollars in federal grants annually through its Fiscal Affairs Department. The Fiscal Affairs Department provides accurate, timely, and comprehensive financial and information services through its five component offices: Comptroller's Accounting, Accounts Payable, Purchasing, Grants, and Payroll Offices. Key department operations and responsibilities include accounting, budget management, grants and contracts management, fixed asset inventory control, invoice and payroll services, and procurement.

Expenditure of grant funding is carried out subject to the Seneca Nation Procurement Policy Statement, adopted by the Tribal Council on June 2, 1999 and amended on four subsequent occasions. This policy details methods of procurement, bidding requirements, contract forms, invoicing and payment procedures, ethics guidelines, inventory, real property and equipment recording to assure continuing control over grant-funded assets, disposition procedures, and other requirements.

The Consultant to be hired during the planning period will play a pivotal role in planning orientation and training for AmeriCorps members, supervisors, and other program staff. This individual, with many years of experience in administering AmeriCorps programs, will bring a high level of insight and expertise to the initial aspects of programmatic design. As a result, the Program Coordinator will be given a clear understanding of programming requirements and will, in conjunction with Seneca Nation personnel, be able to design and, ultimately, facilitate successful orientation and training sessions for AmeriCorps members. For program staff and supervisors, CNCS personnel, along with the vast array of online materials found at the National Service Knowledge Network and the Online Learning Center, will provide the guidance and information needed to make sound programming decisions. Even when the consultancy period has come to an end, it would be highly unlikely that the Consultant would not be amenable to answering a question or providing an additional measure of guidance as program decisions are being made.

3) Primary contact for the grant application is Trudy Jackson, Director of the Education Department. Secondary contact is Amy White, Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning in the Education Department.

The Seneca Nation has extensive experience in writing and managing grant-funded projects and currently administers several million dollars in federal grants annually through its Fiscal Affairs Department. The mission of the Fiscal Affairs Department is to provide accurate, timely, and comprehensive financial and information services. Key department operations and include

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accounting, budget management, grants and contracts management, fixed asset inventory control, invoice and payroll services, and procurement. Five offices comprise the Fiscal Affairs Department: the Comptroller's Accounting Office, Accounts Payable Office, Purchasing Office, Grants Office, and Payroll Office.

The Purchasing Office assists Nation departments in obtaining bids on essential goods and services. This Office is also responsible for preparing purchase orders and confirming that the Nation's Procurement Policy Statement is followed. The Nation's Procurement Policy Statement, adopted by Tribal Council on June 2, 1999 and amended on four subsequent occasions, details methods of procurement, ethics guidelines, inventory, real property and equipment recording to assure continuing control over grant-funded assets, disposition procedures, and other requirements.

The Grants Office, which includes the Grants Compliance Officer and Grants Budget Officer, is charged with financial reporting for over 75 grants and contracts with local, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as private foundations. . The Grants Office coordinates and facilitates all aspects of outside funding coming into the Nation The Grants Office monitors budgets and compliance with grant awards and contract requirements. The Office is also tasked with supervising drawdowns and issuing reimbursements. Quarterly reviews are conducted by the Nation's Officers to ensure that progress toward grant goals and objectives is being made in a timely manner and that funds are adequately, properly, and effectively being expended. Grant application and reporting procedures are performed in accordance with the Seneca Nation Grant Application and Award Policy, adopted by the Tribal Council on March 12, 2007.

As a result of the volume and amount of federal funding, the Nation is required by law to be audited by an external firm on an annual basis. The Nation's external audit conforms to the requirements and standards of OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations." The annual audit assesses the Nation's fiscal health, presents the Nation's financial position, and certifies if the Nation's financial statements are free of material misstatement. Each year, the Nation closely analyzes its annual audits, using the audits as an opportunity to better manage its finances. If findings are identified, the Nation works quickly and efficiently to address and resolve identified findings through Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).

The Seneca Nation Education Department, the lead department for the AmeriCorps Planning Grant application, has experience in designing and implementing programs for students from school-age through adult. In addition to programming throughout the academic year, the Education Department plans and facilitates an annual Summer Enrichment Program for approximately 150 students from

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pre-K through 8th Grade. The Seneca Nation Education Department has been awarded, and is currently administering, state and federal grants totaling over \$4.3 million.

The Education Department will oversee the proposed AmeriCorps program. Partner departments are: Emergency Management, Employment and Training, Environmental Protection, Planning, and Veterans. Program supervision will be provided by the Education Department Director, Trudy Jackson, and by the Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning, Amy White, and the Assistant Director for K-12 Education, Joel Blasdel. The Program Coordinator to be hired for AmeriCorps grant planning and implementation, will report to the Education Director. AmeriCorps members will report to the Program Coordinator.

The proposed program has the full support of the Tribal Council and the President of the Seneca Nation. Accompanying this application are copies of the AmeriCorps Tribal Council Resolution, along with a letter of support from the President of the Seneca Nation.

4) The Program Coordinator will work to establish linkages with local and regional agencies and individuals who can contribute their time and expertise toward the success of the AmeriCorps program. This may involve donation of materials, opportunities for speaking engagements, or any other contributions that advance the mission of AmeriCorps and provide benefit for AmeriCorps members and the Seneca Nation.

The Seneca Nation is in full support of the AmeriCorps program, as evidenced by the Tribal Council Resolution and letter of support from the President of the Seneca Nation that follow this document. If funds for unanticipated expenses should become necessary, the likelihood exists that the Nation could provide what is needed to make up any shortfall.

The budget being submitted for this Planning Grant application has been well thought out and includes all necessary components to allow Seneca Nation/AmeriCorps staff to design a cost-effective, efficiently administered program that will benefit both AmeriCorps members and the Seneca Nation.

The Coordinator will be tasked with researching grant opportunities on the federal, state, and local levels. The Coordinator will consult with the Education Director to determine the most viable funding opportunities for which to apply and will work with the Seneca Nation's grants writers to produce and submit highly competitive grant applications. The Seneca Nation Education Department, in conjunction with its partner departments (Emergency Management, Employment and Training, Environmental Protection, Planning, and Veterans), will work together to develop diverse resources that will support program implementation and sustainability. Each of the six partnering departments

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will monitor department-specific funding announcements and will apprise the Coordinator of opportunities to assist in the implementation of particular programmatic elements.

Budget Clarification and Response

Staff Training: Dale Carnegie

Seneca Nation staff will benefit from completion of a Dale Carnegie course, in which topics such as communication, interpersonal relationships, stress management, problem solving, goal setting, conflict resolution, and time management will be discussed. In addition, select Seneca staff that successfully complete Dale Carnegie Training and show promise as a potential trainer will have the opportunity to earn trainer certification. Since Native Americans are often wary of outsiders, having Seneca staff able to provide training on these vital personal skills will allow AmeriCorps youth to learn from those who will impart an understanding of the importance of these skills, along with methods to develop them, from a culturally sensitive perspective. These skills will be of great benefit to AmeriCorps members during their time with the program and in later life.

Staff Training: Site Visits to AmeriCorps Programs

It is important that Seneca Nation staff who will be working with AmeriCorps members approach this task with as much relevant background as possible. For this to occur, staff must have the opportunity to experience an AmeriCorps program being conducted from a Native perspective. There is a non-Native AmeriCorps program in the vicinity of the Seneca Nation; this would be a good program to visit because of its proximity. However, visiting this program to the exclusion of all others would not provide the Seneca Nation with insight into the unique challenges and opportunities of a tribal program. There are, unfortunately, no Native AmeriCorps programs operating in New York State. Currently there is a tribal AmeriCorps program in Iowa. Visiting this program would provide Seneca Nation staff with information on program start-up, successful strategies, and potential difficulties from a Native perspective.

Site Visit Budget:

-- 4 staff members from partnering departments to visit local AmeriCorps program:

Mileage: 2 cars x 54 miles round trip x \$0.56 per mile = \$60

Lunch: 4 persons x \$16 per person x 2 days = \$128

Total: \$60 + \$128 = \$188

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-- 4 staff members from partnering departments to visit tribal AmeriCorps program:

Airfare: $\$500 \times 4 \text{ passengers} = \$2,000$

Hotel: $\$83 \text{ per day} \times 4 \text{ persons} \times 3 \text{ nights} = \996

Per Diem: $\$143 \times 4 \text{ persons} = \572

Mileage: Airport to Site/Site to Airport: $2 \text{ cars} \times 200 \text{ miles round trip} \times \$0.56 \text{ per mile} = \224

Total: $\$2,000 + \$996 + \$572 + \$224 = \$3,792$

Total Travel Budget: $\$188 + \$3,792 = \$3,980$

Supplies:

In order to provide knowledge about and generate interest among Seneca citizens in AmeriCorps, the partnering departments will sponsor sessions to provide Nation residents with information on AmeriCorps, how the planning grant will increase the likelihood of being awarded a full AmeriCorps grant in 2015, and how a fully operational grant will benefit both AmeriCorps members and the Seneca Nation as a whole. AmeriCorps clothing (shirts and jackets) worn by Nation staff will heighten program visibility, while small promotional items are a useful, inexpensive, portable way for Seneca citizens to take AmeriCorps home with them. Billboards at the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories, and in nearby Buffalo, NY, where many Native Americans live, will provide a high level of visibility for the program.

Supply Budget:

-- Staff Clothing:

Staff Shirts: $\$24 \text{ per shirt} \times 12 \text{ staff} = \288

Staff Jackets: $\$55 \text{ per jacket} \times 12 \text{ staff} = \660

Total: $\$288 + \$660 = \$948$

-- Promotional Items (shirts, bags, pens, journals, bumper stickers, tote bags, key rings, first aid kits): $\$7,890$

-- Three Billboards (one each at Allegany Territory, Cattaraugus Territory, City of Buffalo, NY):

Design: $\$2,600$

Production: $\$3,200$

Space Reservation: $\$3,200$

Total: $\$2,600 + \$3,200 + \$3,200 = \$9,000$

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Other Program Operating Costs:

The majority of enrolled members of the Seneca Nation of Indians (SNI) reside in Western New York State, either at the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories, or off-territory in the Buffalo-Niagara Region. There are, however, a significant number of Seneca members who live throughout the United States. Because of the distances involved, these members may have less awareness of, and access to, programs and services offered through the Nation. All Seneca youth should have the opportunity to become AmeriCorps members regardless of their place of residence. Moreover, there are citizens of other Native Nations who reside within New York State, whose youth may also be interested in becoming AmeriCorps members. To assure that as many eligible youth as possible are afforded the opportunity to participate in AmeriCorps, the Seneca Nation will send out a mailing to enrolled Seneca youth and to youth of other Native Nations in New York State. The mailing will contain information about AmeriCorps, as well as SNI contact information, including dates, times, and places for AmeriCorps informational sessions to be held at the Seneca Nation. A follow-up postcard, with eye-catching design and text, will help to keep interest in AmeriCorps at a high level. This budget item - in the amount of \$5,652 - will include funds for design and printing, as well as mailing, of the letter and postcard.

Grantee Share Amount (See Revised AmeriCorps Budget):

\$23,753 = 24.7% Match (24% Required)

Match will be provided by Seneca Nation

Continuation Changes

NA

Grant Characteristics