

Narratives

Executive Summary

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) will undertake a comprehensive approach that will enhance and build upon past Volunteer Generation Fund efforts to build the capacity of organizations in the Commonwealth to more effectively engage volunteers. We will have a particular focus on organizations that engage volunteers to support youth development programming. MSA will employ a three-part strategy, over three years, which will support organizations at different levels of need and capacity to build their volunteer infrastructure. This strategy includes: (1) deep and intensive capacity-building with 45 organizations through delivery of the Service Enterprise model; (2) focused trainings culminating in a statewide conference on service and volunteerism in order to provide best practices to at least 1,000 staff and community volunteers; and (3) grants to organizations to support volunteer engagement activities for National Days of Service and capacity-building to Volunteer Connector Organizations to replicate or expand promising models, with priority given to engaging volunteers to support youth development programming. With support of this grant we anticipate 24,000 community volunteers will be managed and will serve 144,000 hours of service over the course of the grant cycle.

Program Design

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) will undertake an extensive approach to building the capacity of organizations in the Commonwealth to more effectively engage volunteers. While we will continue to support a broad spectrum of organizations, we will have a particular focus on organizations that engage volunteers to support youth development programming. Through the support of the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) over the past 3 ½ years, MSA has successfully leveraged thousands of volunteers by supporting volunteer opportunities during National Days of Service, undertaking capacity building efforts to Volunteer Connector Organizations, launching YOU Generate -- a statewide awareness campaign, and piloting the Service Enterprise model in Massachusetts. With a new VGF grant cycle, MSA will enhance and build on these past efforts by undertaking a three-part comprehensive strategy that will support organizations at different levels of need and capacity to build their volunteer infrastructure. The three-part strategy includes: (1) deep and intensive capacity-building with 15 organizations in each year of the grant through delivery of the Service Enterprise model; (2) focused trainings throughout the year in order to provide best practices to a wider audience culminating in a bi-annual statewide conference on service and volunteerism; and (3) grants to organizations to support volunteer engagement activities for National Days of Service

Narratives

and capacity-building to Volunteer Connector Organizations (VCO's) to replicate or expand promising models, with priority given to engaging volunteers to support youth development programming. With our prior VGF grants we supported the recruitment of 34,680 volunteers, serving 101,722 hours. In this new grant cycle our VGF efforts will have a strong emphasis on capacity-building so we will focus on two national performance measures throughout the 3 year grant cycle: (1) at least 45 organizations will implement three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations through the delivery of the Service Enterprise model; and (2) 24,000 community volunteers will be managed by CNCS-supported organizations and will serve 144,000 hours of service. Given the capacity-building focus of this grant, we anticipate organizations will engage volunteers in longer-term service opportunities and so we project a 100% increase in the average number of hours served per volunteer from prior VGF years. In addition, we expect that cumulatively, over 1,000 unique staff and community volunteers will receive training as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations through our trainings and statewide conference.

COMMUNITY NEED

With the support of the VGF since 2010, MSA has established ourselves as the "umbrella" for the Volunteer Connector Organizations across the state. We work closely with connectors in 9 regions of the state. We believe that supporting VCO's is the best way for MSA, as a statewide entity located in Boston, to meet the diverse needs of organizations throughout the state. We convene the VCO's several times a year in order for them to share best practices and to help us direct our technical assistance in the areas that most address their needs. We will continue to support the statewide website, massvolunteers.org and our YOU Generate campaign developed in 2011 in conjunction with our connector partners, which acts as the "all things volunteer" web-based gateway. We have learned from our volunteer connector partners and our 2012 State of the Volunteer Sector Survey (which was distributed to over 6,000 nonprofits across Massachusetts in order to gauge the needs of the sector) that there continues to be a strong need to further build the capacity of nonprofit organizations in the state to better engage volunteers as well as an identified need to increase volunteers serving with youth development organizations.

We have identified youth development programs as a focus area because 5 out of our 9 volunteer connector partners have identified a need to increase volunteers for youth development in their

Narratives

regions. In addition, 75% of respondents to our survey indicated that more volunteers were needed to support out-of-school time enrichment, 86% indicated that more volunteers were needed to support increased reading and math skills, and 89% indicated that more volunteers were needed to decrease the high school drop-out rate. There are currently 204 youth serving organizations on our statewide volunteer matching website, Connect & Serve, seeking volunteers.

In 2013-2014, we supported the development of a Service Enterprise Hub (or "certifying agent") in North Central MA (see below for more information) with our Volunteer Connector partner in that region. With this new grant we will pursue developing an additional Service Enterprise Hub in partnership with Cape Cod Volunteers. MSA has supported the growth and expansion of Cape Cod Volunteers through prior VGF supported capacity-building grants. After several years of building their infrastructure they are now ready to increase the level of support they can provide to organizations on Cape Cod. Cape Cod suffers from the challenges of a remote location: it is difficult to access the Cape because it is separated from the rest of the state by bridges; resources and funding are mostly far away and don't generally make their way to Cape Cod; and, although there are incredibly talented leaders on Cape Cod, it is not generally thought of as a place where leaders come to further their careers or make their mark, so leadership is often "grown from within." Capacity building resources are scarce, and traveling off-Cape for such services entails not only the cost and time of the training or service, but long travel times and costs. And yet, their organizations often are the ones that need the training and capacity building the most; the leaders are often great experts in their field who find themselves being promoted to management positions without any experience of leading people or an organization.

While many view Cape Cod as a vacation destination, the harsh reality for the year-round population is that the region faces many challenges particularly for their youth. Youth experience high rates of automobile accidents/deaths involving alcohol and drugs, bullying, family violence, fights, and suicides. The most recent household survey by the Barnstable County Department of Human Services provides a number of underlying problems that are factors contributing to the problem: 24% of respondents reported children/teenagers (0-17) in the household with behavior or emotional problems; and 27% report being unable to afford recreational activities. Much of Cape Cod employment is service-based, minimum wage, and seasonal, which creates a need to patch together as many as four separate jobs in order to earn a living. These employment factors play a role in high

Narratives

rates of substance abuse and domestic violence on Cape Cod. Latch key children with few positive activities available have great potential for risky behaviors with serious results. School administrators, employers and youth service providers all agree that one of the most pressing problems is their youth's lack of life skills, "soft skills," and the inspiration to achieve a "career" (i.e., not simply to have an hourly job). The sense of hopelessness for the future that some young people report may play a role the fact that the Cape's suicide rate for young people ages 15 to 24 is more than twice the State average.

Cape Cod is fortunate to attract talented retirees who have a life time of experience, and time and energy to use. Cape Cod Volunteers believes engaging these residents as volunteers would help build the capacity of organizations on the Cape to serve the very critical needs of their young people. However, the potential volunteers do not always know how to get connected, which is where Cape Cod Volunteers spends much of its time and effort, and once they get connected, it is important that they have a good experience. Many organizations do not have the resources to develop volunteer management programs, so they are building and managing as best they can without a lot of training or knowledge. Often, the organizations are not looking at the volunteer's full potential and how the volunteer could support the organization in more meaningful ways.

The comprehensive Service Enterprise model would provide a greater level of training and capacity building than has ever been available on Cape Cod. With the training, the organizations selected would be able to better understand how they can use this volunteer-rich environment to further their missions and work at all levels, and to use other resources more effectively.

In addition to building out Cape Cod as a Service Enterprise Hub, we will also seek to bring the Service Enterprise model to cohorts of like-missioned, youth development organizations in years 2 and 3 of the grant. For example, we are in conversations with several Boys and Girls Clubs in Eastern Massachusetts that have expresses a strong interest in maximizing their engagement of volunteers. Volunteers play a critical role boosting academic success for kids who need additional help to succeed through their "Power Hour" after-school tutoring programs at the 41 Boys and Girls Clubs across Massachusetts. A large percentage of the Boys and Girls Clubs' volunteers for "Power Hour" are college students whose schedules are not consistent, making long-term retention difficult. The clubs are interested in transitioning to young professional volunteer tutors rather than college students, but

Narratives

they do not know how to access that population. They also know that engaging young professionals as volunteers could provide them with potential committee and board members as well as donors over time.

Through Service Enterprise, trainings, and grants we will meet the needs of organizations across the state to more effectively engage volunteers.

SERVICE ENTERPRISE

The Massachusetts Service Alliance will utilize the Volunteer Generation Fund to support, enhance, and expand the Service Enterprise Initiative (SEI), which was successfully piloted in 2013-2014 of the VGF grant. MSA partnered with United Way of North Central Massachusetts (UWNCM) to be a Service Enterprise Hub, referred to as the "Hub" for the SEI program, and together served as one of 14 national pilot sites, working closely with 5 agencies in the North Central MA region to implement this program. In the next grant cycle of VGF, MSA and UWNCM will expand the program into Cape Cod, a region with a high priority in utilizing volunteers to serve at-risk youth.

The Service Enterprise Initiative is an intensive multi-step program developed by CaliforniaVolunteers, Reimagining Service, and Points of Light that enables nonprofit organizations to leverage volunteers and their skills throughout every level of their agency to successfully deliver on the social mission of the organization. This process requires agencies to undergo a research-based assessment of their organization, attend 4 in-depth trainings to learn best practices, receive at least 10 individual coaching and consulting hours to help guide them through organizational change, and be held accountable for implementing a Service Enterprise Certification plan throughout their agency within a one year timeframe. This model requires significant investment by both the participating agency and the "Hub" delivering the program in order to achieve the highest level of results, thereby moving the participating agency into Service Enterprise status.

Research conducted by the TCC Group and Deloitte LLP proved that organizations functioning as a Service Enterprise are more adaptable, sustainable, and capable of scaling their impact within the community in comparison with their peers. This means that through the integration of skilled volunteers within their agency, they are better positioned to deliver crucial services due to stronger organizational capacity. Research also showed that Service Enterprise organizations who engage at

Narratives

least 10 volunteers function as effectively as their peers who do not engage volunteers, but are able to operate on half of the median budget. Through an assessment of 1,500 nonprofits nationwide, TCC Group and Deloitte were able to identify eight key characteristics of an organization operating as a Service Enterprise: Leadership Support, Resource Allocation, Tracking and Evaluation, Outreach and Funding, Effective Partnering, Technology and Communication, Onboarding and Supervision, and Training. CaliforniaVolunteers heavily integrated these eight core competencies into the curriculum for the SEI and the final certification approval is dependent on each agency effectively implementing these practices within their organization.

Due to the research and a successful pilot year in North Central Massachusetts, MSA intends to expand the Service Enterprise initiative in Massachusetts. We seek to maintain our partnership with United Way of North Central MA and work as a "joint-hub" to continue our work in the current North Central MA region, as well as expand and develop a Hub in Cape Cod in the first year and expand into other areas in years 2 and 3. This model has served as an ideal way for MSA to help build internal capacity for agencies of all sizes across Massachusetts. Through the SEI evidence-based programming, trainings, and consulting elements, MSA has the ability to measure best practices and tools adopted by each participating agency.

In 2013-2014 of the VGF grant, MSA and United Way of North Central Massachusetts (UWNCM) guided and trained 5 participating pilot agencies in the Service Enterprise Initiative. Through UWNCM's close relationship with local nonprofits, we were able to strategically target a diverse cohort of agencies, ranging in staffing, number of volunteers utilized, and operating budget. As a pilot year, gauging how the program worked for varied agencies was a crucial element in determining if this program would be replicable across the state. The cohort selected included: Boys and Girls Club of Leominster and Fitchburg, a national nonprofit affiliate; Loaves and Fishes, a local food pantry utilizing hundreds of volunteers monthly; Leominster Office of Emergency Management, a municipality; Our Father's House, a multi-site temporary shelter facility; and Twin Cities CDC, a community development agency. MSA and UWNCM attended a national "Train the Trainer" provided by CaliforniaVolunteers and Points of Light to become familiar with the curriculum and the SEI process. Each agency completed the Service Enterprise Diagnostic (SED) assessment, a rigorous, research-based tool, which provided baseline data for MSA and UWNCM prior to the training modules. We hosted a pre-training meeting with each of the participating agencies to review the

Narratives

results of their assessments and to begin a dialogue to determine organizational needs, especially in regard to their volunteer program efforts. MSA and UWNCM created a series of "best practice recommendations" based on the eight Service Enterprise characteristics for these agencies to consider while undergoing the SEI program. Agencies attended 4 training modules scheduled approximately 3 weeks apart to allow time for take-home work, and to provide time for individual coaching to help agencies develop areas in which they received training. Topics of the training included calculating return on volunteer investment, effectively engaging skills-based volunteers, and methods to apply Service Enterprise characteristics to their own agency. To date, each agency has completed each of the training modules and presented their Service Enterprise Certification Plan to MSA and UWNCM. Points of Light has determined that agencies will take approximately 6-12 months to implement the necessary best practices. MSA and UWNCM are currently in regular communication with the agencies and are committed to working closely with them throughout the following year to ensure Service Enterprise success.

MSA has selected Cape Cod as our SEI expansion region for the first year in part because of our strong partnership with Cape Cod Volunteers (CCV), and also in part because of the region's priority focus area on youth development. MSA played a strong role in Cape Cod Volunteers inception and growth through the early years of the Volunteer Generation Fund. They received a Volunteer Connector Expansion Grant to establish their first Volunteer Opportunity Center in early 2011 shortly after they transitioned into an independent nonprofit. Following initial support from MSA, CCV has been successful in staffing 2 full-time Volunteer Opportunity Centers through a dedicated team of volunteer consultants, launching a web-based volunteer connector portal with 300 registered agencies, and providing localized training and consulting. Cape Cod Volunteers is a unique and qualified partner for MSA, since they have built out and sustained their core functions from our initial seed funding in 2010-2011. The SEI will allow Cape Cod Volunteers to expand the breadth and depth of services offered to struggling nonprofits on the Cape. Cape Cod Volunteers anticipates there will 18-25 organizations interested in the initial information session, from which we will select 5 organizations to participate in the first year. In addition UWNCM will select a new cohort of 5-7 organizations that will participate in the initiative and continue to support the original 5. We expect these organizations will manage approximately 880 volunteers who will serve 5,280 hours in the first year. We expect a similar number of organizations and community volunteers in years 2 and 3.

Narratives

Timeline: July 2014, MSA re-applies for Service Enterprise Hub selection. September-October 2014, outreach will be conducted in North Central MA and Cape Cod by Volunteer Connector partners; MSA presents Service Enterprise 101 information session on Cape Cod. November 2014, SEI application released for interested agencies. December-January 2014, agencies complete the Service Enterprise Diagnostic tool. February- June 2015, pre-training meetings and 4 training modules delivered in both North Central Massachusetts and on Cape Cod. July-September 2015 UWNCM and Cape Cod Volunteers will offer coaching, consulting, and specialized trainings; follow-up survey administered to cohort to measure best practices. In year 2, work will continue with Cape Cod and pursue a youth development focused cohort such as the Boys and Girls Clubs. Year 3 we will seek an additional "Hub" as well as continue to focus on youth development organizations.

TRAININGS AND STATEWIDE CONFERENCE ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

Not all organizations are able to commit to the deep level of engagement required to participate in the Service Enterprise effort, but they still can benefit from best practices. In our 2012 State of the Volunteer Sector Survey, over one-third of respondents identified training as their preferred way that MSA could assist them in their volunteer support needs. According to the Community Service Coordinator at YouthBuild Boston, "Trainings on building a volunteer program including creating volunteer position descriptions and fitting these positions into a program model would be beneficial for the sector." The Director of Volunteers at the Greater Boston Food Bank agrees that "Trainings for volunteer staff is always helpful." Organizations will have the opportunity to improve their capacity to attract and support volunteers by attending 3 trainings that align with the core competencies from the Service Enterprise model without requiring participation in the full model. Types of workshops include: Relative Impact Return On Volunteer Investment Training, Managing-Up Leadership Training, Obtaining Staff Acceptance and Support for Your Volunteer Program and Volunteer Recognition Strategies. Trainings will be offered in the fall in different parts of the state with at least 30 attendees for each session. We will follow up with attendees after the trainings to determine how they are utilizing the knowledge gained from the training.

MSA will maintain our successful model of partnering with Volunteer Connector Organizations in targeted regions to ensure trainings are available and easily accessible for isolated communities. The majority of cutting-edge trainings in Massachusetts occur in the Greater Boston region due to the high volume of large nonprofits within the city. As noted with Cape Cod Volunteers, the persistent

Narratives

issue of geography and transportation challenges also affects our partners in Western Massachusetts and Berkshire County both of which are located 2+ hours away from the Boston Metro area. If a nonprofit decides to partake in a training offered in Boston, they often lose an entire day of work to attend training and are expensing large amounts to an already overextended budget. We rely on our connector partners to help promote the trainings within their networks to help generate interest on the local level. By co-branding the trainings we continue to reinforce our partnership and gain more exposure for both the local Volunteer Connector Organization and MSA in diverse regions.

MSA will convene the volunteer sector for a bi-annual Statewide Conference on Service and Volunteerism in June 2015. We expect over 350 volunteer sector professionals will attend the conference. We will convene a planning committee including Volunteer Connector Organizations (Boston Cares, the ACT Volunteer Center, Community Builders/United Way of North Central MA, United Way of Central MA Volunteer Center, RSVP of Hampshire and Franklin Counties, United Way of Pioneer Valley, and Cape Cod Volunteers), the CNCS State Office representing Senior Corps and VISTA programs, and Massachusetts Campus Compact. The conference will feature workshops, an awards ceremony, speakers, and networking opportunities. MSA utilizes our 7,000 member database to connect with the volunteer sector and market the conference to a corporate, nonprofit, and higher education audience.

In this conference we will feature a Service Enterprise Track. We will highlight case studies from the 2013-2014 pilot year as well as the sites that are participating in the current year, and opportunities for Service Enterprise sites to share best practices. The Service Enterprise track will also help us queue up the next round of Service Enterprise sites for future years. We will also include sessions at the conference on how to engage volunteers in youth development programs. During the conference planning months, MSA will begin direct conversations with new and past youth-serving partners to best implement this track. Currently MSA has relationships with multiple Boys and Girls Clubs across Massachusetts, Boston After School and Beyond, South Coast Serves, and numerous AmeriCorps Programs such as Playworks and Jumpstart For Young Children that all specialize in youth development programs.

In year 2, we will work with Volunteer Connector Organizations to develop curriculum and trainings for volunteers serving with youth and anticipate holding 6 regional trainings. In year 3 the focus of

Narratives

the trainings and the conference will be determined based on the needs identified from the Volunteer Connector Organizations in years 1 and 2.

Over the course of the 3 year grant cycle we expect at least 1,000 staff and community volunteers will receive training of at least 3 hours.

Timeline: Provide three trainings to support VCO's in October and November 2014. Convene the conference planning committee in November through the bi-annual Statewide Conference in May or June 2015.

NATIONAL DAYS OF SERVICE AND VOLUNTEER CONNECTOR CAPACITY-BUILDING GRANTS

Massachusetts nonprofits have come to depend on receiving funds to complete service projects on National Days of Service as an opportunity to introduce new volunteers to their agency and foster long-term volunteer engagement. The number of volunteers for days of service more than tripled from 2011-2014 of the VGF with 9,593 serving in 2013, and an anticipated 11,000 in 2014. Between 2011 and 2013, MSA supported 64 grantees through the National Days of Service, who in turn benefitted 1,394 local community agencies or service sites during their projects. From 2011-2013 VGF years, MSA sponsored 268 unique environmental clean-up projects, including debris and invasive species removal; the creation of 14 multi-bed community gardens; 33,240 meals packaged or served for the hungry; 79 beautification and renovation projects at homeless shelters or in low-income school buildings; 2,069 winter accessories and 826 blankets collected or created for low-income families; and 2,158 educational activity kits for children in hospitals or temporary shelter.

MSA will continue to support Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a "Day On" and will enhance the impact of the day by giving priority to service projects that engage volunteers in youth development programs to create a substantial impact within our focus area, and provide technical assistance to grantees to create more meaningful and effective service projects. We have heard from our Volunteer Connector Organizations that they would prefer to focus National Volunteer Week (NVW) grants on activities that highlight volunteer opportunities and celebrate volunteers rather than one-day service projects. We will support approximately 8 agencies a year interested in growing opportunities during NVW. All grantees will be expected to track and report to MSA the number of volunteers managed for their MLK

Narratives

Day project or as a result of their NVW outreach, including new and returning volunteers, hours served, and activities carried out. Grantees will register their agency on MSA's statewide volunteer recruitment portal, Connect & Serve, and they will be expected to promote their service project in conjunction with MSA's statewide YOU Generate campaign (created in 2011 of VGF) through collateral materials and marketing initiatives.

In addition, MSA established the Massachusetts Day of Service and Volunteerism which was signed into law on April 23, 2014 by Governor Deval L. Patrick. This day was created to coincide with National Volunteer Week in April in order to provide more visibility and exposure for the efforts of our grantees.

Volunteer Connector Organizations expressed an interest in expanding programming to engage more volunteers in youth-serving programs and increase the population served. MSA will provide capacity-building grants to nonprofits to better engage volunteers in youth development programming by expanding and replicating promising models. For example, the United Way of Central Massachusetts currently runs a "Dollars for Scholars" program that engages female volunteers from the community to teach financial literacy to middle-school girls. They are interested in expanding this program to include boys which would position the program to align with "My Brother's Keeper." This would require outreach to new skills-based volunteers to deliver this program to boys in their community. Boston Cares, our largest connector partner in Eastern Massachusetts, has recently initiated a new program which harnesses their corporate volunteer talent to engage elementary school students in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Volunteer Fairs. Through established relationships with skills-based volunteers primarily in the Biotech field, Boston Cares has created this day-long program to provide the opportunity for students to rotate through a variety of different STEM focused experiments to help spark interest in these topics at a fundamental point in their education. Boston Cares would benefit from additional support for this program, especially by continuing outreach to a broader range of skills-based volunteers in order to replicate this program on a grander scale and in a larger number of schools. They have also expressed interest in increasing their capacity with this project to incorporate follow-up data and evaluations with the students at different points throughout the year.

With support of Days of Service and capacity-building grants we anticipate approximately 21,000

Narratives

community volunteers will be managed and they will serve 128,000 hours over the 3 year grant period. Within the first year, we expect approximately 7,120 volunteers managed, serving a total of 42,720 hours.

Timeline: RFP for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service released in August 2014; up to 10 grantees selected for the grant period between October and January 2015. Capacity Building Grants RFP released in October 2014 and grantees selected by December 2014 for a 6 month grant period encompassing National Volunteer Week. RFP for NVW released in November 2014 and grantees selected by January 2015.

Organizational Capability

Founded in 1991, the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) is a nonprofit organization that acts as the state commission on volunteerism and service. With a staff of 10 and an operating budget of \$2.18 million, MSA grants over \$11 million to 60 organizations, provides training and technical assistance (T/T&A) to organizations that rely upon corps members and volunteers to meet their mission, and advocates for and convenes the volunteer and service sector. MSA has been the proud recipient of a Volunteer Generation Fund grant for the past four years. We have consistently managed the grant as per our application, met all our performance measures, provided the necessary matching funds, and met all reporting deadlines. We used our extensive background in managing our AmeriCorps grants process to establish and run very successful mini-grant application processes for National Days of Service which we propose to continue to do with this VGF grant. In addition we will provide grants for capacity-building to Volunteer Connector Organizations which we have done and managed successfully under the VGF in 2010-2014. MSA attracts and retains highly-qualified staff. Emily Haber, CEO, has been with MSA for 6 ½ years and has over 24 years of experience in community development. She is responsible for convening and advocating for the volunteer and service field and will maintain and grow partnerships to further the efforts of this grant. Lindsay Snyder, Director of External Relations & Development, has been with MSA for 6 years and has over 13 years of experience in advocacy, community and government relations, and development with volunteer-based organizations. She is responsible for the statewide conference on service and volunteerism and oversees the Shana Lothrop, Program Officer for Volunteer Initiatives (formerly known as the MassVolunteers Coordinator). Shana Lothrop joined the MSA team in 2010 with a strong background in volunteerism and has been our MassVolunteers Coordinator for the past two years. She is responsible for MassVolunteers.org, Connect and Serve, administering our grants process for National

Narratives

Days of Service, supporting the Service Enterprise Pilot Initiative, and providing support to our Volunteer Connector Organizations. She will take the lead on managing this grant as she has done with the prior two VGF grants. MSA's long-time Director of Programs, Beth McGuinness will offer her extensive knowledge and experience managing a large portfolio of AmeriCorps programs to aid in the success of our VGF grant. Beth has provided consistent leadership for the past 13 years at MSA to ensure that program monitoring and T/TA further the broader goals of our organization and help maintain Massachusetts' reputation for high quality National Service programs. Julio Afable, Manager of Accounting and Finance, has been with MSA for 6 years and has over 24 years of accounting experience managing multi-source grant funding and will be responsible for fiscal management.

MSA undertakes initiatives each year to broaden our reach and support of volunteerism and service. We convene the Volunteer Connector Organizations several times a year for joint planning and skill-building, including helping us plan our bi-annual conference on service and volunteerism. We have sponsored highly successful conferences since 2001 with the 2013 conference attended by over 400 professionals. Our 2015 bi-annual Statewide Conference will build on our prior knowledge and success running conferences and will rely heavily on the influence and experience of our volunteer connector partners. MSA's CEO is on the board of the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network which provides opportunities to partner with other organizations around the state as well as the board of America's Service Commissions. Finally, as a 501(c)3, MSA has been successful in raising support for our statewide conference and advocacy. The staff and board are working on a multi-year fundraising strategy and outreach to foundations and corporations to be able to broaden our efforts in support of the volunteer sector.

MSA has an exemplary record in federal grants management. MSA has overseen CNCS funding in the state since 1993 and currently manages over \$11 million in federal and state grants. MSA's total FY15 budget is approximately \$11,978,276. The CNCS portion of the VGF grant would represent approximately 1.6% of our total budget. As part of routine monitoring, MSA underwent an audit by the IG's Office in 2006 and an Administrative Standards Review by CNCS in 2007. We successfully passed a CNCS Grants Officer fiscal site visit and Program site visit in May 2014. During these visits, auditors and CNCS staff reviewed MSA's internal policies and procedures, systems for overseeing federal funds, and technical assistance and compliance with federal regulations. In both cases, MSA

Narratives

successfully passed. MSA undergoes a yearly A-133 audit and has consistently clean reports. MSA uses QuickBooks for its accounting system to allow the use of a detailed chart of accounts and project structure for all financial transactions. This structure facilitates tracking of all transactions by funding sources. Monthly reports show expenditures by grant and compare budgets, expenditures and variances. These reports are reviewed by fiscal staff, department directors and the CEO. MSA is consistently on time with its required grant reporting. The Manager of Accounting prepares financial reports from data in the financial accounting system and obtains the CEO's signature before submitting them to CNCS. These reports reconcile back to the QuickBooks system. MSA has consistently met or exceeded any and all performance measures for the Volunteer Generation Fund since 2010. For example, we are currently on target to meet our expected 11,000 recruited volunteers for the 2013-2014 grant year.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

The budget for this grant is structured to leverage the capacity of the Massachusetts Service Alliance and our key partners. By continuing to support a strong collaboration between MSA and the Volunteer Connector Organizations in our state, we have not created a new umbrella organization (that would need its own resources to succeed), but rather have capitalized on the core competencies and relationships of MSA and the Volunteer Connector Organizations. As an early adopter of the Service Enterprise model, we were able to benefit from the training and technical assistance provided by Points of Light (and California Volunteers) to build the infrastructure to implement this model in Massachusetts. Our staff and our Volunteer Connector partner, The Volunteer Center at United Way of North Central Massachusetts, have already been trained in the model and are well poised to deliver it to organizations. Ultimately we expect we will be able to charge for the Service Enterprise training, but at this point we need to develop a stronger track record for the effort. MSA can easily meet and exceed the required match through match from all sub-grantees and funding we receive from the state. Approximately \$90,884 of MSA's state awarded money to will be used to match the VGF grant. And MSA will require that all National Day of Service sub-grantees match VGF supported projects with a 50% match of in-kind, private, or non-federal funding. By providing mini-grants to the Volunteer Connector Organizations to support National Days of Service events and for capacity-building to support the replication or expansion of proven models, MSA is distributing resources at the local level where they can best be used to engage volunteers. It is the VCO's that are best suited to develop service opportunities, connect volunteers with those opportunities, and track their volunteers. Volunteer Connector Organizations will be able to request funds for what they most need in order to

Narratives

implement quality events and initiatives.

2014-2015 VGF CLARIFICATION ITEMS

Please see email to PO for further details, unable to submit full response due to character limit.

Grant Characteristics