

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, Inc **Application ID:** 15AC167454

Program Name: Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, Inc.

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing summary feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one Reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments

Strengths:

The Applicant clearly cites specific, relevant, and reasonable current data to substantiate the statistical information and cited studies identifying the need for housing rehabilitation within the stated target service area.

The Applicant clearly outlines a collaborative project between the Applicant, AmeriCorps members, clients served, and additional community and post-secondary education entities to comprehensively address the identified community housing problem.

The Applicant strongly describes the opportunity for AmeriCorps Members to receive post-secondary education, as an additional career building incentive, offered at successful completion of the Members' project commitment.

The Applicant strongly presents a comprehensive procedural outline administered to ensure AmeriCorps members experience employment and life skill related activities that may be retained and reflected upon throughout their future career development years.

The applicant succinctly and comprehensively presents the need of the two counties, demonstrating the severe income and housing situation of the Hattiesburg area/ Pine Belt region of Mississippi.

Member training is clearly described by the applicant and is comprehensive, offering Members not only specific trade skills instruction but also educational skills development, learning of soft work skills, and job search skills development.

Member training described by the applicant is robust, well planned and thoughtful in its approach in helping Members succeed during and after the AmeriCorps experience.

The applicant convincingly describes in detail the intent to build esprit de corps by recruiting Members from the MS National Guard Youth Challenge Academy, which has already begun to provide a foundation of national service. Not only does the applicant seek to provide services through the AmeriCorps members to families/homeowners to help address a significant housing need, but also will help the targeted 27 AmeriCorps Members by offering them the ability to continue their national service and remain on a path of self-sufficiency.

The applicant successfully describes the intent to not only engage AmeriCorps members in a service that will give them a trade and learn more about civic duty and responsibility, but also to link these Members to secondary education opportunities after their AmeriCorps service has been completed, helping to ensure continuity in these Members' future employment paths.

Team work, sharing and reflecting experiences, and member leadership development are well described by the applicant as activities that AmeriCorps members will be participating in, supporting the goal of ensuring that the member experience is meaningful and will build esprit de corps,

Weaknesses:

The Applicant does not clearly define the procedures and protocol between multi-agency supervisors and managers related to the supervision of the 27 AmeriCorps member force regarding scheduling, training, and every day monitoring of work while on the job.