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Executive Summary

The Harlem Children's Zone proposes to have 127 MSY AmeriCorps members who will help improve educational outcomes for children in Central Harlem. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will have helped young children get ready for school, improved literacy skills of K -- 5th graders, and helped high school seniors graduate on time. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 600 volunteers, who will be engaged in community beautification projects, and program support efforts such as career exposure opportunities.

This program will focus on the Corporation focus area of Education. The Corporation investment of \$1,601,407 will be matched with \$173,364 in public funding and \$2,603,105 in private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

B. Program Design: Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) has provided social and educational services in NYC's Central Harlem since 1970. To break the cycle of poverty, HCZ developed a groundbreaking approach to fighting poverty: the HCZ Project, a geographically defined, holistic approach to improve the lives of children and families and rebuild community through a pipeline of connected programs to guide a child's development from birth through college. Since 2001, the Project has grown to include 40 program sites, covering a 97-block zone and serving over 12,000 children each year. Since 1994, HCZ has invested heavily in the AmeriCorps HCZ Peacemakers Program. It has been an integral component to improve educational outcomes in Harlem. HCZ is applying as a 2015-2018 re-competing AmeriCorps program to identify, recruit and train 127 MSY.

1. Community Need: Central Harlem struggles with high rates of poverty and unemployment, poor performing public schools, and other corresponding social ills. The population is African American (63%) and Hispanic (22%) (NYC Dept. of Planning, 2013). Poverty: 27.5% of all residents live in poverty (US Census, 2012); nearly double the national rate of 15% (US Census, 2010). 36.7% of children are living in poverty (American Community Survey, 2012), compared to 22% nationally (National Center for Child Poverty). The community's median household income of \$35,350 (Am. C.S., 2011) is well below the country's median household income of \$50,054 (US Census, 2011). Unemployment: The unemployment rate is 15.4%, compared to the NYC rate of 11% (Am. C.S., 2011). Education: Public schools in Central Harlem's Community School District 5 (CSD5) continue to perform poorly. On the 2013 NYS ELA exams, only 15.4% of students in grades 3-8 passed at grade

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level, compared to 28.4% city-wide. In math, only 14.8% passed the exams at grade level, compared to 34.2% city-wide (NYC DOE). In CSD5, only 54% of high school students graduated within four years (Citizen's Committee for Children, 2013). 17.9% of young adults ages 16-19 are not in school and not in the labor force, a rate that is more than twice of NYC's 8.2% (Am. C.S., 2011). Family Risk Factors: The highest rate in Manhattan of families entering Department of Homeless Services' shelters, at 6.2 out of every 1000 families (NYC Dept. of Homeless Services, 2011). Target Population: HCZ Peacemaker Program will target services to children in schools where students are African American (60%) and Hispanic (33%); 90% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch; and students perform poorly on State ELA exams with only 11.6% testing at grade level (NYC DOE). AmeriCorps Member Impact: Through the Peacemakers program, members will play a critical role helping to improve educational outcomes for children. Members serve as role models and mentors, and help to build children's social-emotional skills and perseverance. Theory of Change: 127 MSY will support 3 key HCZ programs, serving 2,400 HCZ youth. 107 MSY will support the priority focus area of K-12 Success, serving 2,000 children in grades K -- 5 at 7 under-performing NYC public schools helping to improve literacy skills. 15 MSY will support the priority focus area of School Readiness preparing 237 three- and four-year-olds for kindergarten. 5 MSY will support our complementary focus area of K - 12 Success to help 200 high school youth graduate on time.

Improving Literacy Rates for K-5 Students: 107 MSY AmeriCorps members will support 2,000 children in 7 low achieving NYC elementary schools through a two-tiered program designed to meet the needs of the schools and the students. School Day Support: Members will work in the schools during the school day, 8 am-3 pm, Monday-Friday. Members will provide small group and 1-on-1 instruction, and assist with classroom management. Members will also help create a safe learning environment by providing an increased adult presence during typically chaotic transition periods such as arrival, dismissal, recess and lunch. Members will provide conflict resolution and mediation for all students to create a safe school environment and decrease violence. This has been the traditional role of AmeriCorps members since the inception of the program in 1994. We are committed to maintaining this much needed support for our school partners to help ensure that all students have a safe and supportive school day. After School: Members will support after school programs in the 7 public schools for 1,000 youth, from 3 pm-6 pm, Monday-Friday with a well-rounded menu of academic, recreational and social opportunities. Academic Focus: The program will provide literacy support by a team of 3 Literacy Coordinators for K - 5th graders. At the core of the literacy program is iReady Diagnostic & Instruction, a proven curriculum and assessment tool aligned with the NYS

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Common Core. The iReady assessment evaluates 5 key ELA domains (Phonological Awareness, Phonics, High Frequency Words, Vocabulary and Comprehension), and creates individual student learning plans. Students can work independently to complete online lessons and activities assigned by their learning plan. Literacy services will be provided at 2 different levels: Literacy Enrichment will be offered after school for 30 minutes per day. These activities will include 1 hour per week minimum on the iReady ELA component, small group and shared reading sessions, and lending library. Intensive Literacy Intervention will be provided for a target group of struggling readers identified by the iReady pre-assessment (scoring below grade level). The team of Literacy Coordinators has created a curriculum with modules to specifically address each iReady domain. Each student will receive 30 minutes per week of additional support directly connected to the domain(s) in which they are struggling. If a student tested below grade level in 3 domains, he/she will receive 30 minutes of curriculum specific support for each of the 3 domains. These intensive intervention services will be provided by 26 members serving as Intervention Specialists in 1-on-1 and small group sessions during the school day through push-in and pull-out sessions coordinated with the day school teachers as well as during the after school program. The 3 Literacy Coordinators will work closely with Intervention Specialists, providing training, regular case review sessions, group strategy sessions and ongoing training. Students will receive a minimum of 30 minutes per day including assigned literacy curriculum modules, time on iReady, lending library, and small group reading sessions. To measure student progress an iReady pre- and post-assessment will be conducted. Outcomes: We estimate 40% (400/1000) of after school participants will test below grade level on the iReady pre-assessment. Of the 400, we expect 80% (320) to complete the program due to the high attrition rates at the schools. Of the completers, 70% (224) will improve one grade level. Member Responsibilities: AmeriCorps members will serve in 2 different capacities: (1.) 26 members will work as Intervention Specialists doing the following:

- * Manage individualized literacy plans for students
- * Manage a caseload of 15-20 students monitoring their overall progress in literacy gains
- * Provide small group and one-on-one instruction and intervention activities for their caseload
- * Work with school day teachers to coordinate services with school day learning
- * Coordinate pull-out and push-in literacy sessions during the school day as permitted
- * Assist with completing iReady assessments under the supervision of a Literacy Coordinator
- * Supervise and assign literacy enrichment activities for their caseload
- * Provide parents with regular bi-weekly updates on their child's progress in the program.

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(2.) 81 members will work as Program Aides supporting all K -- 5th graders during the school day:

- * Provide conflict resolution and mediation services for all students in grades K -- 5
- * Support critical transition periods such as school arrival, dismissal, lunch and recess
- * Work in assigned classrooms (primarily in grades K -- 3) providing teachers with support of overall classroom management, and providing small group and one-on-one instruction

In the afterschool program, members will work as group leaders directly with children:

- * Supervising children in the daily schedule: snack, individual/small group literacy activities, sports and recreation, arts & crafts, lending library, drama club, dance, and health and nutrition.
- * Coordinating recreation, arts/crafts, and overseeing lending library, small group and shared reading

Value Added: Members will have a direct impact on the academic development of students, as well as their safety and overall experience. Members ensure the critical continuity of learning for students between day and after school, and develop strong role model relationships with them.

School Readiness: 15 AmeriCorps will support 237 3- and 4-year-old children at 4 Harlem Gems Pre-Kindergarten program sites. Harlem Gems provides a high-quality, year-round, extended day program from 8 am-6 pm to meet each child's needs and improve their school readiness. Each class has a 4:1 teacher to student ratio with 1 Master's level certified lead teacher, a bachelor's level assistant teacher, teachers aides and AmeriCorps members. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate and focused on preparing 3- and 4-year-olds to enter kindergarten. Harlem Gems uses several proven curricula: the Creative Curriculum, Life Skills Learning Approach, High/Scope, and the Letter People.

Outcomes: Each year we expect 85% of our 4-year-old Harlem Gems will test school ready by program's end. Yearly progress will be measured on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale -- Receptive via a pre- and post-test conducted by a third party.

Member Responsibilities: Members will work in the classrooms with children providing one-on-one and small group support; help with daily implementation of activities; and provide overall classroom support. Value Added: Members at the Harlem Gems sites are high school graduates with some college credits. They add a critical caring adult presence to support a 4:1 child to adult ratio, which is necessary to provide the individualized attention our children need to be ready for kindergarten, particularly because we serve a disproportionate number of special needs children. Members bring a diverse wealth of talents, and an adult presence in our classrooms that is reflective of the community. Members share personal talents such as art, dance, and languages to enrich the school experience for our children.

Helping Central Harlem High School Students Earn a Diploma: 5 AmeriCorps members will support TRUCE, an award-winning year-round youth development arts program serving 200 high school

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youth, including a target of 30 12th graders. TRUCE uses HCZ's unique Academic Case Management (ACM) model to ensure youth are on-track for high school graduation and college acceptance. ACM provides individual case management to support students' academic, social and emotional progress. Outcomes: Each year, 80% of our TRUCE high school seniors will graduate from high school. Progress will be measured by the attainment of a high school diploma. Responsibilities: Members will support and coordinate youth development activities in the arts, media literacy, college readiness, health and nutrition, and community service. Members will work with youth from concept to implementation to identify and develop community service projects. Value Added: Members serve as role models to our youth. They bring an arts-focused background and share their talents through creative projects. Members provide a unique connection to service learning, involving students in projects from conception to implementation, giving them a greater understanding of what it means to give back to their community and fostering another generation committed to service.

3. Evidence-Base: At the core of all of HCZ principles, we use evidence-based research to guide our efforts. We rate our evidence base as Strong Evidence as outlined in the following. Succeeding in K -- 5th Grade: HCZ has focused on improving the reading skills of students given the low grade proficiency in ELA. We have combined iReady (computer-based instruction), individualized instruction by AmeriCorps members trained and supervised by certified reading experts, small-group reading, and the use of data. Last year, 2 independent research groups analyzed our iReady assessments and found support for the approach. The 1st analysis revealed that our K-2 students made more growth than the typical student who engages in iReady, showing 116%, 122%, and 108% of growth for each grade respectively (validation of our multi-component strategy). Improvement in the iReady scores is meaningful, given the alignment with the Common Core and NYS Standards (in 2013, correlations between the assessment and NYS tests ranged between .77-.85). Philliber Research Associates, our external evaluator, reviewed the iReady data and were consistent in finding a significant improvement in K-5 students' scale scores in reading from pre- to post-test (428.7 to 481.6). The scale score change was matched by an impressive increase in the proportion of students who were at or above grade level, with the percentages moving from 46% to 81%.

School Readiness: The Harlem Gems curriculum includes 2 highly-successful evidence-based programs: High Scope and The Creative Curriculum. Evidence of High Scope's efficacy was established in the Perry Preschool Study, which randomly assigned poor 3- and 4-year old African American children to the program. Children in the program -- a group that is similar to our Gems -- completed nearly a year more education, received fewer special education services, graduated from

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high school at higher rates, and had fewer teen pregnancies and incarcerations than the control group. The Creative Curriculum produced gains in language, literacy, cognition, math, and spelling for those in several RCT studies. We have accumulated a wealth of evidence that our Harlem Gems students are developing strong school readiness skills. Administration of the Bracken Basic Concept Scale (a normed and validated exam) by independent psychologists has confirmed the strength of our model. For the past 3 years, 100% of students have been school ready at program's end, testing average or above (84% of the norm sample performed similarly).

Helping Central Harlem High School Youth Earn a Diploma: When afterschool programs incorporate Positive Youth Development, they can produce powerful outcomes. Frequent participation in high-quality afterschool programs have been shown to correlate with academic outcomes, work habits and task persistence, improvements in school attendance and reduction in suspensions, emotional, and reduction in at-risk behaviors. TRUCE was designed to include youth development, such as a safe/stable place, caring relationships with adults, relevant/challenging experiences, voice, choice and contribution, and high-quality instruction. Students receive individualized, academically-focused case management that provides the right mix of strategies (tutoring, internships, advocacy, college visits and application support). A similar approach has been found to be effective in improving the grade point averages and school attendance of middle and high school girls who were randomly assigned to participate in an after-school program. As a result of our work, 97% of TRUCE seniors graduated within the 4-year span last year.

4. Notice Priority: Central Harlem is long overrun by generational poverty and the corresponding social ills of poor educational institutions, high rates of crime and limited community resources, which make it difficult for a child to achieve academically. HCZ has devised a unique model which provides holistic support to help children overcome their environment and succeed. AmeriCorps members support 3 HCZ programs that address key stages of child and youth development: School Readiness, Success in Elementary School, and High School Graduation. To make direct contributions to improve academic outcomes, members will help 3- and 4-year-olds get ready for kindergarten; improve literacy rates in grades K -- 5; and help high school students earn a diploma and prepare for college.

5. Member Training: HCZ has a strong history of providing training and professional development for its staff. We extend this philosophy to our AmeriCorps members to ensure that they have the skills to confidently fulfill their year-long commitment of service. All members will receive eight days of orientation training to provide them with the specific skills necessary to fulfill their roles as AmeriCorps members and meet the expectations of their assigned HCZ program sites. Training will

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include a three-day on-board training, and a week of site-specific training. More on-going trainings will be offered monthly thereafter. On-board Training: All members will participate in a three-day on-board training to orient them to the AmeriCorps program and the Central Harlem community. The training will cover: History and Culture of HCZ, What It Means to be an AmeriCorps Member, Program Policy, AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities, Program Goals, Team Building, Sexual Harassment/Social Networking and Professionalism. The AmeriCorps on-board training will be conducted by our AmeriCorps program directors who themselves served as members.

Succeeding in K -- 5th Grade: Members working at seven public elementary schools will receive one additional week of training on the topics of: Child Development, Classroom Management, Conflict Resolution and Mediation, Program Goals, iReady implementation, SPARK implementation, Lending Library, Shared Reading and Small-Group Reading. Members serving as Intervention Specialists will receive more extensive training on iReady and the coordinating literacy curriculum conducted by the Literacy Coordinators. Intervention Specialists will receive on-going literacy-focused trainings by the Literacy Coordinators. On-going monthly trainings and workshops will be held throughout the year. Additionally, to reinforce program practices and provide professional development, trainings will be offered during school breaks in December, February, and April. The AmeriCorps Program Directors, along with the Literacy Coordinators will lead the week-long intensive training.

School Readiness: Members at our Harlem Gems program sites receive one week of training directly related to the program and curricula. Training is conducted by the Harlem Gems Program Directors and Educational Director. Topics include: Building Language and Literacy, Classroom Management, Emotionally Responsive Practice, Letter People, Engaging Parents, Lesson Planning, Leading Small Groups, Cultural Competency, Appropriate Contact with Children, and Child Abuse and Maltreatment. Members also participate in the program's monthly staff development.

High School Graduation: Members assigned to our TRUCE program site will receive one week of orientation training at the TRUCE program site to include: Introduction to TRUCE, Academic Case Management training, How to Implement Academic Case Management at TRUCE, and Curriculum Development Training. Members at TRUCE also benefit from ongoing training throughout the year, both in-house and external to promote member development and professional growth. The TRUCE Program Director, Assistant Director and HCZ's Director of Education conduct the training.

6. Member Supervision: Members serving in all three program areas will have a supportive on-site supervisory system and infrastructure. Members serving at the 7 Peacemaker schools are directly supervised by the Assistant Director who reports to the Program Director. The Program Directors at

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the Harlem Gems sites directly supervise the members assigned to their sites. At TRUCE, the Assistant Program Director supervises all members. Members at each site participate in weekly supervision sessions, at which member activities are reviewed and supervisors can provide individual guidance to the members. The Supervisors, in turn, have bi-weekly supervisions with their Senior Manager or Program Director. All supervisors are thoroughly trained on AmeriCorps rules and regulations at a training session conducted by the AmeriCorps Program Directors. The Host Site Program Directors sign an MOU each contract year that outlines all rules and regulations and requirements for compliance.

7. Member Experience: As an AmeriCorps grantee over the past 20 years, HCZ has offered thousands of individuals powerful service experiences. Members' experiences have been so rewarding that many have remained committed to the community -- many of our full-time staff, including our AmeriCorps Program Directors, once served as members. HCZ's dedication to service has created a supportive environment and a strong structure to provide members with a powerful service experience, a sense of camaraderie, a support network, a sense of civic responsibility, and valuable professional skills. HCZ is intentional in its structured opportunities for members to participate in service learning projects to benefit the Harlem community. We will empower members to identify community needs, develop and engage in service learning projects with community residents, parents, clergy, and other community volunteers, such as community clean-up and beautification projects and much needed school improvement projects. Seeing projects from start to finish gives members a sense of accomplishment, helping to inspire them to continue to be productive citizens once their term of services has expired. To help members connect to each other and better identify themselves as AmeriCorps members, they will have weekly meetings at their assigned programs led by site supervisors. The meetings will reinforce the ethic of service, regular interaction, a sense of teamwork, reflection on service learning experiences, and as planning sessions for upcoming AmeriCorps projects. To ensure members understand that AmeriCorps is an important movement across the country and feel connected, HCZ works with the NYS Office of National and Community Service to share learning with other programs in the State and keep members connected to statewide and national AmeriCorps programs. Members participate in the annual service kick-off held each fall in Albany. In fact, Geoffrey Canada spoke at the kick-off in 2013. Throughout their service, members will gain valuable skills to help strengthen job prospects and professional/personal development. Members learn from HCZ leaders through seminars in which leaders share their career experiences. Members are mentored by HCZ management that serve in a variety of capacities. Member Recruitment: Since the inception of the

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AmeriCorps HCZ Peacemakers Program, the overarching goal of the program has been to provide young, college-age Harlem residents an opportunity to obtain an education award to assist them in their pursuit of a college degree, and provide them with professional skills building that will help them in their future careers. The majority of AmeriCorps recruits are young adults from Central Harlem who have started or planning to start college. HCZ will recruit members using our network of program sites for referrals interested applicants, at local college and career fairs, and via the national recruitment and referral system.

8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: All recruitment efforts will make clear the distinct opportunity and role of an AmeriCorps member, and clearly distinguish it from a regular employment opportunity. During the application process, role and requirements will be clearly explained to all applicants. Members will be selected based on their passion and interest to further the mission of AmeriCorps and HCZ. Once hired, members will sign a member position description that specifically outlines their commitment to meet all AmeriCorps requirements. To identify members to students, parents and community members, they will wear t-shirts and sweaters with the AmeriCorps logo while on-duty. HCZ will include our AmeriCorps program description and the logo on our website.

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing: Founded in 1970, Harlem Children's Zone's mission is to break the cycle of poverty and provide our children and youth with the most effective support and services at no cost so they grow to become productive adults. HCZ has been providing social and educational services in Central Harlem for over 40 years. In 1972, we placed our first social worker at PS 207/149, beginning HCZ's pioneering effort to use NYC Public Schools as the logical site for providing services to the most at-risk children and families. In 1991, we opened the Countee Cullen Community Center, one of the first Beacon Community Centers in NYC. Our work in these public schools paved the way for HCZ's innovative Peacemakers Program. In 1994, HCZ was awarded its first AmeriCorps contract to use members to provide school day support and afterschool programs at 5 NYC Public Schools. This became the foundation for our comprehensive approach to improving the lives of children and families in Central Harlem. In 1997, a strategic plan was developed to create the HCZ Project, spanning 97 blocks, from 116th to 143rd Streets and between Madison and 8th Avenues, with the overarching goal to provide comprehensive, quality programs designed to improve the social, health and educational development of children and strengthen families and rebuild the community. In FY 2001, the HCZ Project was launched. Since then, we have made unprecedented progress, revitalizing the Harlem community and achieving positive outcomes for thousands of children. HCZ

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has become a national model and the inspiration for President Obama's Promise Neighborhoods and Promise Zones initiatives. At each phase of the HCZ Project, Peacemakers have played a significant role in engaging and rebuilding the community, providing services for children, recruiting volunteers and coordinating community clean-ups. Today, the AmeriCorps members work in 7 NYC Public Schools, one high school afterschool program and our Harlem Gems Pre-kindergarten program. They continue to be a core element of our strategy to effect long-lasting change.

Management Structure: HCZ has developed a strong infrastructure to ensure effective programmatic and operational management. HCZ's Board of Trustees takes an active role in strategy development, capacity building and securing donations. The Board consists of 7 subcommittees. The Executive Committee oversees program development and outcomes. The Finance Committee oversees the budget, reviews agency revenues and expenses. The Fundraising Committee reviews the fundraising strategy and identifies and cultivates funding sources. The Audit Committee ensures that HCZ audits are clean. The Investment Committee reviews investment strategies and monitors the endowment. The Head Start Committee provides program updates for Head Start and closely monitors and reviews all contractual obligations. The Governance and Nominations Committee reviews governance policies, Board composition and Board candidates. Geoffrey Canada, President, recently transitioned the day-to-day management of HCZ to Anne Williams-Isom, HCZ's new CEO, who was the COO for the past 5 years. Mr. Canada remains President of the Board and provides guidance to Ms. Williams-Isom and the leadership team, regularly spending time in the office and weighing in on crucial issues. He will continue this advising role going forward. Ms. Williams-Isom has a strong background of working with vulnerable populations as she previously served as the Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Community and Government Affairs at the NYC Administration for Children's Services. She is a graduate of Fordham University and the Columbia Law School and resides in Harlem. She oversees a strong senior management team that includes the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, Vice President for Development, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Evaluation, Director of Strategic Planning, and 5 Senior Managers. **Program Management:** HCZ Senior Managers, Jazmine Lewis and Latasha Morgan oversee the AmeriCorps Program. Both originally joined HCZ as AmeriCorps members. Jazmine Lewis, Senior Manager for Westside Afterschool and Community Programs, joined HCZ as an AmeriCorps member in 1996, became a Peacemakers Supervisor in 1998, and became the Director of Peacemakers in 2005. In July 2014 she was promoted to Senior Manager. She holds a BA in Child Psychology from Medgar Evers College. Latasha Morgan, Senior Manager for Eastside Afterschool and Community Programs, began as an

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AmeriCorps member in 2002 and was promoted to Director of the Countee Cullen Beacon in 2004. Ms. Morgan was promoted to Senior Manager in July 2014. She holds an MA in Social Work from Alameda University. Two AmeriCorps Program Directors, will jointly manage the operations of the program and ensure AmeriCorps compliance requirements. Serina Moya joined HCZ in 2004 as an AmeriCorps member, was the Assistant Director of Peacemakers from 2008-2011 and was named Director in July 2011. She holds a BA in Sociology from Lehman College. Lekeisha Eubanks joined HCZ in 2003 as an AmeriCorps member, was the Assistant Director of Peacemakers from 2005-2011 and was named Director in July 2011. She holds a BS in Business from Pennsylvania State University. Their long history with HCZ and previous service as AmeriCorps members, give them a unique insight and deep understanding of the program.

Experience Managing Federal Funds: HCZ was awarded its first AmeriCorps grant in 1994. For the past 20 years, HCZ has successfully managed the AmeriCorps grant, meeting all programmatic and fiscal reporting requirements and complying with all audit requirements. HCZ has also successfully managed a Federal Early Head Start Grant since 2009. All audits have been clean for both grants.

Community Engagement: Throughout its 45 year history in the community, HCZ has worked to develop strong partnerships with community stakeholders. In 1997, we created the HCZ Community Advisory Board (CAB) to provide a voice for the community. HCZ recruited 38 residents and stakeholders (ie parents, clergy, schools, CBOs, block/tenant associations, and local businesses).

Today, HCZ's Community Pride program leads our community engagement efforts and works with CAB, which now has 100 members. In addition, HCZ has 2 community centers and 2 Beacon programs that actively engage community residents through regular events and community meetings. HCZ has strong partnerships with the 7 public schools in which our members serve. The program directors meet regularly with school officials to ensure our program is meeting their needs.

2. Compliance and Accountability: The 2 Program Directors will ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations. They have served as the Peacemaker Directors for the past 3 years. They have an in-depth understanding of the AmeriCorps requirements, and will monitor compliance to ensure members are not engaged in prohibited activities. We have a successful record of maintaining compliance with all AmeriCorps Rules and Regulations. We will put in place several procedures and processes to ensure compliance: create a file document checklist for each member file with a date of receipt noted; conduct monthly file reviews to ensure all files are complete and Directors will be in constant communication with staff about all compliance issues. Host site supervisors will sign an MOU agreeing to AmeriCorps regulations. The Directors will hold monthly meetings and site visits to

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ensure compliance. Host sites will also provide bi-monthly reports of member hours, activities, successes and challenges. The site visit tool will be used during file reviews and site visits to identify areas of noncompliance. If there is noncompliance, a corrective action plan is created and signed off on by all involved parties. All members will be trained on prohibited activities and consequences during training. If a member is found participating in prohibited activities, an investigation will take place and a corrective action will be implemented. Members found to be engaged in prohibited activities are disallowed time served while engaging in the prohibited activity.

3. Past Performance: HCZ has successfully met or exceeded all of our performance measures for the past 3 years. All 3 of HCZ's performance measures are aligned with the priority service area of education. Members support School Readiness in our Harlem Gems Pre-k programs where they are an integral part of our team working towards performance measures ED 21 and ED 24. For ED 21, our goal has been to have 80% of the Harlem Gems participants complete a pre-k program. For the past three years, we have exceeded our goal with results of 95% (2011), 98% (2012) and 97% (2013). For ED 24, our goal has been to have 85% of graduating four-year-olds school ready. For the past three years, we have exceeded our goal with 100% of our four-year-olds testing school ready on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale -- Receptive. Members support K -- 12 Success (ED 2, ED 5), by working in seven public schools during the school day, running afterschool programs and providing literacy intervention services to students. We have had this performance measure for the past 2 years and have met our targets of 80% completing the program (ED 2) and 70% of students who test below grade level improving literacy skills by one grade level (ED 5). In 2012, 90% completed the program and 76% increased in literacy. In 2013, 88% completed the program and 71% increased in literacy. Members support Ed 9, timely high school graduation at our TRUCE high school youth development program where they serve as Teaching Artists and Student Advocates. We have exceeded our goal of 80% of high school seniors graduating on time, with 91% (2011), 92% (2012), and 97% (2013). Member Enrollment: In 2014, HCZ's enrollment was 100% for full-time members and 81.3% for half-time members. We were unable to fill 3 half-time positions, which we use to support our summer program. Many of the applicants had college schedules that conflicted with our program schedule. We also experienced delays in receiving State clearances within a timeframe to fulfill service hours. As a corrective action, we began the hiring process for half-time positions in August and will complete hiring by 12/31/14. This will allow members to set their schedules well ahead of the summer program. Retention: For 2013, HCZ's retention rate for members was 69.6%. This is an improvement from the 2012 retention rate of 65.5%. The greatest challenge for keeping our members has been the high cost

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of living in New York City. Although the volunteer opportunity and its limited stipend are clearly explained to our members upon recruitment, many underestimate how difficult it can be to live in New York City on such small means. Consequently, many of our members chose to leave the program to secure full-time employment before completing their hours and earning an education award. Over the past two years, this issue has become an even greater struggle for our members. To address our low retention rate in 2012, we enhanced the program experience for members, focusing on opportunities for personal growth. We increased our efforts to help members make the most of their year of service and understand the intangible and future value gained from service while they forego a year of a full-time salary. In 2013, we piloted a mentor program for members; created opportunities for members to learn from and connect with senior leadership; developed programs to acknowledge member efforts; and expanded college and career exposure opportunities for members.

Mentor Program: We paired members with HCZ senior staff, many of whom themselves served as AmeriCorps members. A total of 43 members (28 1st year and 15 2nd year) were paired with 15 mentors. Mentors introduced mentees to the organization, to leaders, helped them explore career/educational aspirations, and offered advice on managing their service with personal demands. The pilot year of the program was an overwhelming success and we will continue it.

Peacemaker of the Year Award: The award was given to one Peacemaker at all 7 after school program sites, to acknowledge the their hard work. The winner was determined via voting by fellow members, program site staff, program participants and parents. The winners were thrilled to be acknowledged.

College and Career Readiness: Many of our members are either in college or plan to go to college. To support this, we connected members to experts at our College Success Office who provided workshops on selecting a school, navigating Federal Financial Aid, and the college application process. In addition, members completed an assessment on Career Cruiser, a web-based career aptitude program that helps identify career fields that best fit their interests and skills. Our staff provided follow-up career and college counseling.

Senior Leadership Series: We implemented a speaker series to allow members to learn more about HCZ and connect with senior leadership. Speakers included the CEO, COO, CAO; and Founding Director of Peacemakers. Speakers spoke about HCZ history and why the work at HCZ is important, and helped members understand the role they play in the larger work of HCZ. Speakers also shared personal stories of career progression and addressed work-life balance. This series provided members an opportunity to learn from senior leadership and feel more connected to the organization. We intend to continue to build on this strategy. Future activities include, a Peacemakers Pipeline to deepen the personal development of our members. In partnership with their mentors, members will

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identify a professional or educational goal and create a year-long plan to work towards this goal. We will acknowledge member accomplishments and contributions more frequently by holding quarterly events. These events will also offer more opportunities for members to socialize and connect with one another, and discuss their challenges and share coping strategies. Retention Beyond 1st Year: HCZ has an excellent record of retaining members into a 2nd year of service. Over the past 2 years, 34 members have excelled in their 1st year of service and returned for a 2nd year. Also within the past 2 years, 21 members have become HCZ employees after completing service. HCZ was intentional in naming Jazmine Lewis and Latasha Morgan as the Senior Managers of the program, having served as members themselves, along with their dedication to the AmeriCorps program and members. We believe they are the right team to improve HCZ's retention. Education Awards: To date in our current contract, 45.6% of members have earned an award and an additional 35 members are still actively working towards their awards; we expect a slight increase from last year. In 2012, 66.6% of members earned awards and 80.4% in 2011. The percent earning an education award is aligned with our retention rates. The strategies outlined above to improve retention will also help to increase earned member awards. Findings: HCZ has had clean program audits for the past 3 years with only 1 finding: HCZ was not using the National Sex Offender Website (NSOW) to complete all sex offender background screenings for members. This was immediately addressed, with all current members screened via NSOW. The use of NSOW is incorporated into HCZ's screening process for all applicants.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. Cost Effectiveness: In line with our current AmeriCorps contract, HCZ requests renewed funding at our current rate of \$13,000 per MSY for 127 MSY. We are requesting CNCS to pay 38% of our total program budget of \$4,379,939. We will provide the remaining 62% of the budget from local public sources, including \$175,364 from NYC Department of Youth and Community Development. HCZ has committed, long-time private funders who provide general operating support for all HCZ programs, the remaining \$2,553,575 will be provided by this pool of general operating funds from The Robin Hood Foundation, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and The Starr Foundation.

We propose to increase the number of struggling readers receiving targeted intensive literacy support services to 400 K -- 5th graders from the 170 K -- 2nd graders included in our current contract. We will reallocate members to do the intervention work and convert 16 half-time members in our current contract to eight full-time members to provide the resources to do this work.

2. Budget Adequacy: HCZ proposes to provide a 62% match in funds to the 38% provided in federal support to meet our full budget needs. We believe that the budget is adequate to implement the scale

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and the comprehensiveness of the model we are proposing. Specifically, the budget will allow us recruit 127 MSY and support additional management staff who will ensure our capacity to: 1) Implement the program in Harlem, an economically impoverished community; 2) Provide members with daily, on site supervision for programs located in 7 public elementary schools, 4 pre-k program sites and 1 HCZ high school youth development sites; and 3) Increase the number of elementary students receiving intensive literacy intervention services.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

HCZ will seek out an external evaluation to oversee the Americorps/Peacemaker evaluation in 2015-2016. The evaluation will center on a multi-component reading intervention that is designed to increase the literacy skills of children in the seven traditional public schools served by HCZ's Peacemakers. The intervention will include: time on task on i-Ready (a computer-based literacy program), individualized instruction provided by AmeriCorps staffers trained and supervised by certified reading experts, small-group reading sessions with real books, and assessment and use of data.

Curriculum Associates has undertaken a series of analyses that have determined that students who spend 45-minutes a week on i-Ready show substantially higher growth than the average student. Indeed, across the nation and when looking at our own Peacemaker schools, high-dosage students increased their literacy skills at far greater rates than low-dosage participants as well as i-Ready's typical participant.

Last year, Philliber Research Associates' analysis of HCZ's 2013-2014 school year data saw strong improvements in reading over time. The final report revealed a significant improvement in K-5 students' scale scores from pre- to post-testing (428.7 to 481.6). The scale score change was also matched by an impressive increase in the proportion of students who were at or above grade level, with the percentages moving from 46% to 81%, an improvement of 76%. HCZ anticipates that including additional AmeriCorps staffers, more reading professionals who can provide expert analysis and guidance, and a larger number of students who can benefit from the program's strategies will only strengthen the program.

The program is scheduled to serve 400 K through 5th graders in seven NYC public schools. Our chosen evaluator will review data and report on reading/literacy data collected by HCZ staff during the 2015-2016 school year. HCZ will share electronic student data relating to time on task on i-Ready and performance on the program's assessments (the assessments have been found to be aligned with performance on the New York State tests with correlations ranging from .77 to .85). We also

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anticipate that the evaluator will disseminate teacher and Peacemaker surveys to improve our understanding of program implementation.

HCZ is seeking an evaluator with experience in evaluation school-based programs. Ideally, the organization would have specific experience with AmeriCorps and with literacy interventions. The organization in question will have to be able to provide sufficient resources to the work so as to develop a useful report.

Scope of Work

The evaluator will perform the following evaluation tasks:

- * Work with program staff to finalize the evaluation design and data collection strategies.
- * Review all data sent by HCZ.
- * Analysis of data to determine changes in literacy scores among young people enrolled in the program. The analysis will be done overall and by school and should take into account program participation.
- * Create, disseminate, and analyze Peacemaker and teacher surveys.
- * Produce a cumulative report encompassing all test score, demographic, participation, and survey data.

The anticipated budget for this work is \$20,000.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

A. Programmatic Clarification Items: Executive Summary Clarification

The Harlem Children's Zone proposes to have 127 MSY AmeriCorps members who will help improve the educational attainment of children and youth in Central Harlem, New York City. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for helping to prepare young children for kindergarten, improving the literacy rates of K -- 5th grade students, and support high school students to an on-time high school graduation. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 600 volunteers who will be engaged in community and school beautification projects,

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enrichment and career exposure activities, and other community improvement work.

This program will focus on the Corporation focus area(s) of Education. The Corporation investment of \$1,651,000 will be matched with \$2,728,939, \$175,364 in public funding and \$2,553,575 in private funding.

B. Budget Clarification

1. HCZ does not plan to incur any additional cost for training. At this time, the plan is for all training to be conducted in-house by the Program Directors, Senior Managers, Literacy Coordinators and HCZ's senior management team. HCZ is fortunate to have a vast wealth of knowledge and experience within our agency to draw from internally.

2. HCZ respectfully requests to maintain our current cost per MSY. We have proposed to expand our literacy intervention services for K -- 5th graders from 170 to 400 students, while maintaining the numbers served in our early childhood and high school programs. HCZ provides 60% of the program operating cost, well above our required 50% match.

Importantly, HCZ's AmeriCorps members impact goes far beyond the children they directly serve every day -- our members are a critical component of our larger mission to end the cycle of poverty in Central Harlem. Members regularly support large-scale community outreach and improvement events, spreading the word about all of HCZ programs and services available, and making the community a better place to live.

C. Performance Measure Clarification

1. We do not have an O12 or O14 included in our proposal. We believe this clarification item is a mistake.

2. Typo for ED5 has been corrected in Performance Measures.

3. i-Ready Assessment has been corrected in Performance Measures. Please Note: The i-Ready Assessment is not a standardized assessment, but an individualized adaptive assessment. We received permission to move to this assessment under our current three-year contract award from 2012-2015.

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4. For ED2 under Improving Literacy Rates for K-5 students, completion is defined as a student who participates in the program for the entire academic year and is both pre-tested and post-tested. For ED2 under Helping Central Harlem Youth Graduate High School, completion is defined as a student who participates in the program for the entire academic year spanning from October through May.

5. For ED21 under Preparing Young Children for School, completion is defined as a student who participates in the program for the entire academic year and completes a pre- test and a post-test.

6. Bracken Assessment information has been corrected in Performance Measures

7. HCZ established our target of 85% of our four-year-olds in the Harlem Gems program testing school-ready upon program completion, based on a nationally normed sample of 84 % of four-year-olds testing school ready on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale. This is an ambitious target because the children we serve primarily come from low-income homes, many are English Language Learners, and most of our parents lack the education and resources to get their children school-ready on their own. Our extended-day, comprehensive approach is designed to make a huge lift in the preparedness of every child we serve to begin kindergarten. We have been able to exceed this goal for the past several years in large part due to the rich environment our AmeriCorps members help us to create for our children. The members assigned to the Harlem Gems program regularly bring an excitement and true joy of teaching to the classrooms every year. They lend their individual talents to support foreign language instruction, provide creative and innovative art projects, and lead parent engagement efforts.

D. Strategic Engagement Slots

At this time, the Harlem Children's Zone does not propose to add any member slots for individuals with disabilities. However, we do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and would make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities who would like to serve as AmeriCorps members.

E. No-cost MSYs

We do not request any additional No-Cost MSYs.

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Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics