

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Rocky Mountain Youth Corps

Application ID: 15AC169004

Program Name: Rocky Mountain Youth Corps AmeriCorps

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 satisfactorily defines the needs of youth economic development and environmental stewardship in the target community.

The applicant cites specific and relevant data no older than four (4) years, from reputable sources that document the communities need to maintain safe and sustainable recreation sites on public land and youth decline in economic well-being making a compelling case that these problems are widespread and severe in the target community.

The application provides a clear and comprehensive description of the proposed activities of the AmeriCorps members, who are local unemployed and disconnected youth, who will build and restore trails and public lands while receiving job training experiences, stackable work place credentials, post-secondary education preparation, and soft skills training. The activities are logically connected to the identified needs and to the desired outcomes of youth economic development.

The applicant's Member training plan contains high quality content that Members will need to perform their designated activities, tailored specifically to each work crew and program, and includes required AmeriCorps-specific requirements.

The applicant also has a co-enrollment program with the University of New Mexico-Taos in which Members may earn college credit towards an Associate's Degree while serving as an AmeriCorps member.

The applicant clearly states the nature of the specific skills and experiences Members will gain as a result of participating in the AmeriCorps program including technical skills in environmental stewardship and one-on-one academic guidance to improve their long term employment and educational opportunities.

Data collected by the applicant indicates that the skills and experiences gained by Members enhanced their educational opportunities after they finished their term.

The applicant clearly describes the need to increase self-sufficiency, employment, and educational support amongst New Mexico youth. The data that is provided indicates a sufficient and reasonable level of need in the communities to be served.

The proposed member activities of building and restoring trails and public lands while receiving job training and technical skills related to environmental stewardship are logically connected to the needs identified by the applicant and to the outcomes of youth development and improving youth employment success.

The Member training plan is solid and provides ongoing workforce skill development training in environmental conservation projects and guidance for transitioning to further education and employment that will assist them after the service term.

The applicant demonstrates that Members will receive distinct skills and experiences that will be valued by future employers that is well-supported by results of a study that was conducted by the National Evaluation of Youth Corps that assessed the proposed program.

The applicant provides clear reputable data to support the need for environment stewardship and improving long term economic opportunities of the AmeriCorps members.

The needs are well supported by solid evidence on the number youth in the target communities who lack employment and/or success in school and the lack of current land management resources.

The applicant has a reasonable theory of change that addresses the identified needs by providing participating Members, who are the beneficiaries of the proposed intervention, with a comprehensive combination of work skills, academic training, career building and career guidance. The proposed activities and interventions for the AmeriCorps members logically address the identified need and proposed outcomes.

The Member training program is an extensive plan that provides ongoing position specific and skill training throughout the AmeriCorps program and includes multiple levels of programming and participation for the Members.

The applicant provides an adequate descriptions of the supervision that will be provided to the AmeriCorps members which includes and a satisfactory level of support and guidance.

Weaknesses:

The applicant presented a limited description of the community volunteers and how they will be engaged in addressing the identified needs.