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Executive Summary

Executive Summary: The Ingham County Health Department/Power of We Consortium proposes to have 22 AmeriCorps members who will focus on two project goals: 1. teach youth the importance of eating healthy foods and strategies to adopt better diets to reduce obesity and chronic diseases; 2. increase access to healthy foods through gardening, food distributions, referrals, and adult nutrition education to increase food security in Ingham County. AmeriCorps members will be placed at an estimated 15 nonprofits, public agencies, faith-based and community organizations throughout Ingham County. AmeriCorps members will be responsible for engaging 1000 children in nutrition education and increasing access to healthy foods to 2500 Ingham county residents each year. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 1000 volunteers yearly who will be engaged in assisting and teaching nutrition classes, planting and maintaining gardens, delivering food and providing referrals.

This Ingham County Health Department/Power of We Consortium program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Healthy Futures. The CNCS investment of \$168,134 will be matched with \$114,793 in additional funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

Problem/Need: Michigan is facing a health crisis that has devastating effects on our residents' lives and adds enormous costs to an already struggling economy. The Power of We Consortium's AmeriCorps program has chosen the need to reduce obesity and related chronic disease because 66% of Michigan adults are overweight or obese (2013 Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey), increasing their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis-related disability, and cancer (Healthy Communities 2011, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). In 2012, 10.5% (9.7-11.2) of Michigan adults reported ever being diagnosed with diabetes, while an additional 7.3% (6.4-8.3) reported ever being diagnosed with prediabetes. Michigan adults with diabetes (78.6%) or prediabetes (74.7%) were more likely than the general population (64.9%) to have tried to control their weight or lose weight within the past 12 months (2013 Michigan BRFSS).

We chose this need because the dangers of obesity can be prevented by eating healthy foods, staying active, and having secured access to healthy foods. We chose this need because over 37.7% of Michigan adults eat less than one serving of fruit and 24.8% eat less than one serving of vegetables a

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day (2013 Michigan BRFSS). Ingham County is no exception to alarming obesity rates, with over 58.4% of residents overweight or obese (Capital Area Behavioral Risk Factor and Social Capital Survey 2011-2013). 26.1% of surveyed high school students and 37.6% of middle school students are overweight or obese (Ingham County Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth 2010), with higher rates concentrated in low-opportunity neighborhoods.

The high risk of chronic disease is concentrated in urban areas of Ingham County, and higher for minorities and lower-status socioeconomic groups (BRFSS, *ibid*). To address this need, we chose the target population of low to very low food secured households who reside in low-opportunity neighborhoods because unhealthy environmental factors present barriers to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, causing people with fewer resources, especially the 21.9% living below the poverty line, to disproportionately suffer from a larger burden of health risks (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). 45.8% of Ingham County residents have low food access, defined by living at least a mile away from a supermarket, grocery store, or supercenter (USDA Economic Research Service, 2010).

Ingham County is simultaneously experiencing high obesity rates and food insecurity. Food insecurity is declining but slightly, with 16.9% of families seeking food assistance in 2013, compared to 20.2% in 2012 (American Community Service 2012-13). In 2013 Lansing had 47.7% of students eligible for free or reduced lunch (Fall Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2013). Research links growing up in low-income, food insecure households with an increased prevalence of overweight children, less fruit consumption, and more time watching television, when compared to children in food secure households with higher income (Children in Food-Insufficient, Low-Income Families 2001).

Olga Dazzo, director of the Michigan Department of Community Health stated during the Governor's platform for improving health and wellness, "We must find ways to reduce obesity. If we don't our health will deteriorate and health care costs will continue to climb, creating a major obstacle for the reinvention of our state." Families must have the resources needed to maintain healthy diets and frequent physical activity to reverse the disturbing obesity trend, and the Power of We Consortium AmeriCorps program is essential to bringing these improvements to Ingham County.

Theory of Change/Logic Model: The Power of We Consortium requests 8 full time, 4 half-time, and 10 quarter time AmeriCorps members to serve in an estimated 15 sites in Ingham County. Based on

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feedback gathered from program host sites, the variety in member slot types will allow us to best meet community needs. Since many of the service activities require warm weather, the members are most active from April through September. Full-time and half-time members serve October - September, with half-time members' hours concentrated in the warmer months. Quarter-time members serve May - August. Full-time members generally serve at community gardens, which require heavy winter planning and summer implementation, and with food banks which rescue and deliver food to the community year round. Half-time members usually serve with less time-intensive programs, such as after-school nutrition programs, or programs that cannot support a full-time member in the winter. Service sites commonly request quarter-time members to augment the initiatives of an existing member, such as adding a youth programming component to a standing gardening program.

The Michigan Good Food Charter, a roadmap for Michigan's food system that envisions a thriving economy, equity, and sustainability for all Michiganders that is rooted in local community and centered on good, whole, healthy foods outlines six goals to advance the vision by 2020. The Charter recommends that, in order to create a healthy, green, fair, and affordable food system, we must "expand and increase innovative methods to bring healthy foods to underserved areas as well as strategies to encourage their consumption". The Charter specifically lists our projects as effective ways to attain this goal. A growing number of influential organizations are adopting the Charter as their own, such as the Michigan Food Policy Council and Michigan Health and Hospital Association (Michigan Good Food monthly updates October 2011), and we will use this respected document to guide AmeriCorps member activities.

Members will organize classes that will give youth the skills and knowledge to make healthy food choices. Members will make healthy food more available to low and very low food secured individuals by implementing and expanding programming that offers adult nutrition education, food distribution, community gardening and referrals. Members will educate youth and adults about reducing their risk for chronic disease with a balanced diet. Members will teach the health benefits of eating certain foods, supply strategies to adopt desired behaviors, and demonstrate how tasty healthy foods can be. Food assistance will come in the form of food rescue/distribution systems, with an emphasis on offering the types of foods that prevent chronic disease. Members will inspire families to grow their own food by providing free tools, seeds/plants, space, classes, expertise and guide by the side training to community gardeners. Referrals will come in the form of members providing residents with

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additional healthy food program and distribution information. Members will increase low-very food secured families' access to healthy food by expanding food rescue/delivery services while providing resources needed to grow, preserve, and prepare healthy food. Rescue/delivery programs ensure quality food that would have otherwise gone to waste is utilized to feed hungry families when they need immediate assistance, while food production programs foster self-reliant strategies for obtaining healthy and affordable food, improving food security over the long term (Growing What You Eat, *ibid*). Additionally, members will support host site programs by coordinating volunteers and role modeling healthy lifestyles

The duration of youth nutrition education intervention will be 11 months; the length of our program. The dosage of the intervention will be 3 hours spent in nutrition focused classes. The target population will be youth living in low-very low food secured neighborhoods and/or are at-risk. The duration of access to food intervention will be 11 months. The dosage for adult nutrition education and gardening skills workshops, which will be required for community gardeners, will be 3 hours spent in topic related classes. The dosage for food distribution and referrals will be 1 unique individual. The target population will be individuals living with low-very low food security. Based on feedback gathered from program host sites, requiring at-risk, low-opportunity individuals to commit to a series of classes creates the very barriers our program is striving to reduce. Many residents utilizing members programming have limited access to transportation, childcare, and time away from family/work obligations making it difficult to commit to multiple classes. This feedback was taken into consideration when creating the dosage for classes.

The effects of our intervention will lower both obesity levels and food insecurity with a dual-pronged approach to improve individual habits and the environment (Growing What You Eat, *ibid*).

The effects of our intervention will be successful because of success in our programs history, scientific research, Michigan Good Food Charter, and policy councils suggest that education and access are key to lowering chronic disease and increasing access to food. Our program remove barriers to increase access to food and healthy eating so populations that are disproportionately affected by chronic disease and low food security are empowered to make positive lifestyle changes. Our service sites who are already implementing these programs have found that a culture of healthy living is emerging in Ingham County and strongly believe continued efforts are needed to continue this trend. Food insecurity is shrinking as we bring healthy food sources to low-income neighborhoods. Children are

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developing the taste for and knowledge of fruits and vegetables that set the stage for a lifetime of healthy eating. Residents of all ages are learning where their food comes from and how it affects their health. Our program will continue to build upon the fountain made so that future AmeriCorps members can build on this culture of healthy lifestyles by addressing both environmental and behavioral barriers to preventive habits.

Evidence-Based: The Consortiums AmeriCorps program will use moderate evidence to create a program model utilizing strategies from Growing Healthy Kids, Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it (MEND), past performance, and the Michigan Good Food Charter. Urban gardens "provide communities with long-term food security in an environmentally, socially, and economically sound manner" (Growing What You Eat, 2011). Growing Healthy Kids (GHK), a pilot nutrition education/community garden program, based out of Carrboro, NC found that over three garden seasons, the availability to fruits and vegetables in the home went from 1.75 to 4.3. Furthermore, the youth involved in GHK ate 33% more vegetables a day and 28% more fruits over three years because of their involvement with the program (Growing Healthy Kids, 2013). Involvement in gardening increases consumptions of fruits and vegetables among adults as well. Households who had one or more gardeners consumed 40% more fruits and vegetables a day compared to households that had none. Additionally households with new gardeners consumed 4.5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day over 12 months and 4.9 servings after 36 months (The Benefits of Gardening and Food Growing, 2014). Gardening is an effective way for low-food secured families to put more quality food on the table, providing fresh produce near harvest and canned/frozen food in colder months.

Our program invites community members to have an integral role in every stage of these projects, beginning with deciding what they want to grow each season. Outside research and our service sites have both found this to be the most effective approach as community members become invested in the success of gardens and similar projects (Growing What You Eat, *ibid*).

Involvement in and access to community gardens increases access and consumption of fruits and vegetables and is linked to a decrease in chronic disease and obesity. Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it (MEND), a multi-component intervention program in the UK focuses on nutrition education to increase a youths mental state (self-esteem, body image), physical state (BMI, chronic diseases, obesity), and behavior changes towards a healthy lifestyle. At 12 months into the intervention the 60 youth participating saw a drastic decrease in waist circumference, from an average of 81.8 cm to 78.7

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cm. (Randomized Controlled Trial of the MEND Program, 2010).

In accordance with these findings, we will focus our members on projects that will increase the availability of healthy food through gardening, food distribution programs, and referrals, while providing strategies to maintain a healthy diet, teaching children and adults the importance of eating right, and encouraging them to develop a taste for healthy foods through nutrition education. Just as children influence their parents, eating behaviors in youth are strongly influenced by home availability of healthy foods, family meal patterns, and parental modeling of healthy habits (School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity 2011). This research again supports our dual approach of providing both knowledge and access. Reducing childhood obesity includes educating and increasing access for all members of the family, leading to a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

The program will empower Lansing area residents to make lifestyle changes that lower the risk of chronic disease caused by unhealthy behaviors, with a focus on families who have low-very low food security. We will assure targeted low-opportunity neighborhoods have knowledge of and access to environments that promote health, as well as the resources needed for sustaining healthy behaviors. At the end of the 3 year cycle, we will have developed the environmental and cultural conditions that are conducive to a food secure community and residents of all ages eating well often in Ingham County. As a result, we will see an increase in food security and healthy diet habits of families who identified as having low-very low food security, and a decrease in obesity in youth.

Notice Priority: The proposed program lies within the focus of Healthy Futures. The program works to teach youth the importance of a having and maintaining a healthy lifestyle to reduce obesity and will help Ingham County residents who have food insecurity. Through partner organizations this will include at-risk youth and low-very low food secured individuals, who will be accounted for in the reporting. Members will help contribute to the well-being of at-risk youth with nutrition education and increase access to food by facilitating and supporting adult nutrition education, food distributions, community gardens, and providing referrals to other access to food programs. Our program will meet the requirements for volunteer generation and member participation in National Days of Service.

Member Training: The term of service will begin with a 4 day AmeriCorps Orientation. Day one will include a detailed review of AmeriCorps policies and procedures, the Member Agreement, prohibited

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activities, and the structure and purpose of key organizations such as the Power of We Consortium, Michigan Community Service Commission, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. This training will include the structure of our program and the role the Program Director will play in members year of service, as well as their site supervisors' role. Members will learn that they are not simply managing programs for service sites; they are part of a national service movement and should expect strong connections within our team, the Lansing community, and other national service programs. On day two, members will attend a half day customized orientation at their service sites so that they are able to visualize the projects they will coordinate before day three's activities. The remainder of the day two will be spent with the team discussing health equity, food justice and food systems in Ingham County. On day three members will learn activities that explicitly define service term goals and expectations. They will receive tutorials on submitting mandatory reports online, including reflection logs, great stories, time sheets, and monthly direct service activities. Day four will end with members attending a Power of We Consortium meeting, where they will be introduced to the 250 entities that make up the collaborative.

Host sites will be encouraged to give members professional development and training opportunities specific to position descriptions through member involvement on committees and boards and attendance to workshops and conferences. Additionally, Consortium AmeriCorps members will gather 4 hours per month to participate in ongoing training that will ensure they are well-equipped to meet community needs while serving and to make the next professional/educational step when service ends. The Program Director will assess professional development needs/interests of members during orientation to create a yearly training schedule. Service-related training topics will include Health Equity, Food Justice, Boundaries, and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention. Near the end of service, professional development training will include Resume and Cover Letter Writing and Life After AmeriCorps. Orientation and monthly trainings will be facilitated by the Program Director, Health Department staff, and professionals within the community.

Consortium members will be required to join the Food System Workgroup; a coalition comprised of community members and professionals pursuing access to safe, healthy and affordable food to all residents in Ingham County, and be active participants of The Power of We Consortium by attending a minimum of 4 meetings a year. Members will be strongly encouraged to attend monthly Power of We Consortium capacity building workshops on various training topics.

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Member Supervision: The Consortium AmeriCorps program has an effective strategy for supervising members to ensure they have ample support and will continue utilizing these strategies for the 2015-2018 grant cycle. The Program Director will require a site supervisor orientation meeting before members service begins. This meeting will discuss the Power of We Consortium AmeriCorps program model, the Consortium, MCSC, and CNCS policies and procedures, prohibited activities, reporting plans, timesheets, supervisor best practices, and how to enhance member experience. To ensure transparency between all parties, site supervisors are required to attend 4 meetings a year with the Program Director and Consortium staff to receive support, discuss reporting, compliance, policies, procedures, and prohibited activities.

The Program Director will create a reporting plan for each member. This written plan will be distributed during orientation to members and site supervisors and kept by all parties and reviewed later in the service term to measure progress. Each site supervisor will share his or her organization's services with the member on the host site orientation day. The member will bring this information back to the group and share the services available through their host site so Consortium members are aware of the extensive networks and local resources they might draw upon to reach their goals.

The Program Director will conduct an official site visit with the member and supervisor when members have completed 25%, 50% and 75% of their hours. An exit interview will be conducted when a member is close to completing 100% of their hours. While detecting compliance and ensuring a positive member experience is the Program Director's goal at every visit, the first and second visit questionnaire will focus more on members' daily activities and understanding of policies, procedures, and prohibited activities, the third and fourth visit questionnaire will focus more on identifying points of improvement for the program and/or member and assessing how well members are meeting community needs.

Supervisors have typically been the coordinators and upper-level management designee of programs. The program has found that this management level works best with member supervision and will encourage host sites to follow suit. If a site is new or has had difficulties with retention, compliance, and/or prohibited activities, the Program Director will meet with all staff members who will lead the member in order to clarify the program model. Topic will then be reviewed with the whole team at site supervisor orientation, quarterly site supervisor meetings, and 4 site visits.

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Member Experience: As a team, members will engage in monthly service projects, allowing them to establish and develop the ethic and skills needed for active and productive citizenship after their term of service. The Program Director will dedicate a monthly training to civic engagement and Sargent Shriver's story, allowing members a time to reflect on their service. Members will also be required to submit 3 written reflections a year to the Program Director and the most compelling reflection will be included in the Power of We Consortium's monthly eBulletin.

Members will be encouraged and given opportunities to collaborate with other national service programs/members through the Power of We Consortium VISTA program, Lansing Mayors Day of National Service Recognition, and MCSC supported regional and statewide service projects. Other avenues to connect with national service members; becoming a member of the Greater Lansing AmeriCorps Network, an AmeriCorps Alum chapter for the Greater Lansing Area, attending monthly brown bag lunches with area members, and participating in volunteer opportunities with local members will be encouraged by the Program Director and supported by site supervisors. Involvement with other national service members/programs strengthens Consortium's members commitment to national service, volunteerism, and generates esprit de corps that will continue well after a member's term.

The Power of We Consortium is dedicated to recruiting a team representative of the diversity reflected in Ingham County. It is important to the Consortium that the members working alongside residents are part of the neighborhood /community. The Program Director will recruit members in a variety of places; Consortiums listserv and website, social media, career and job fairs, local schools (Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School, trade/vocational schools, and High School/GED programs), newsletters, classroom presentations, host site networks, Food Systems Workgroup, community centers, libraries, community events, and local media. This recruitment plan makes position postings visible to all communities of Greater Lansing.

Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: AmeriCorps identification starts in the recruitment phase. The Consortium AmeriCorps program has the Program Director present during all interviews to provide eligibility/contractual information to interviewees and to answer all AmeriCorps questions to ensure prospective candidates understand the position. Once members have been selected, the

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Program Director begins frequent contact with members to start the enrollment process and create a standard to AmeriCorps expectations. During member orientation the Program Director includes a two hour training about AmeriCorps which includes the infrastructure, how to identify yourself to the community, and the importance of wearing the AmeriCorps logo, and a one hour training on how to properly produce a great story. In addition, members are required to wear the AmeriCorps logo daily and receive an AmeriCorps t-shirt, hoodie, pin, and name tag to fulfill this requirement. Each month at member trainings the Program Director provides a refresher on how a member should be identifying, communicating and documenting their experiences. The Program Director provides all host sites with AmeriCorps signs. Host sites are required to hang them in their entrances to guarantee community visibility.

Organizational Capability

Organizational Background and Staffing: The Power of We Consortium is a State of Michigan-endorsed inclusive planning and implementation multi-purpose collaborative body composed of over 250 human services, non-profit, governmental, faith-based, and business sector stakeholders that promote systems reform in Ingham County. The PWC is often referred to as a "community collaborative" or a "network of networks" and capitalizes on the power of social capital (such as trust, civic involvement, and connection) and diversity to achieve positive results for the community. Over the last 15 years, the Consortium has grown to include a diverse membership of learning institutions, municipalities, community and faith-based organizations, and public/private foundations. The Ingham County Health Department provides the majority of support for staff salary and fringe, supplies, technology, and space. Member organizations -- Ingham County DHS, 30th Judicial Court, Prosecutor's Office, Capital Area Michigan Works!, Capital Area United Way, MSU Extension, Capital Region Community Foundation, Ingham Intermediate School District, Tri County Office on Aging, City of Lansing, various community organizations, etc. -- all provide additional annual financial support. The proposed AmeriCorps project represents 36% of the total budget of the Consortium. Over the past 5 years, the Consortium has received \$390,439 in CNCS funding: \$104,250 over 5 years, for Project Coordinator support, for the Consortium's VISTA Program and \$286,189 over 3 years for AmeriCorps State. This represents 22.9% of total Consortium funding.

The Power of We Consortium is housed within, and under the financial oversight of, the Ingham County Health Department. The Consortium's Coordinator, Isaias Solis, who is a county employee, reports to the Health Department's Health Officer, Linda Vail, MPA, who is a permanent member of

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the Community Assets Alignment Committee, the body that leverages internal and external resources for Consortium initiatives. The committee provides fiduciary oversight of the AmeriCorps State and VISTA programs, and the Leadership and Practice Committee provides programmatic oversight. The Ingham County Board of Commissioners is responsible for acceptance of all grant funds, approval of staffing positions, and contracts with service sites, which are written and approved by the County attorney.

The current Program Director for the AmeriCorps Program is Andrea Villanueva, who would continue her position with a new grant commencing 2015. Andrea has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Michigan State University and served two years as a full-time AmeriCorps member in the 4H Mentor Michigan Initiative/Mentor Michigan College Coaching AmeriCorps Programs. She replaced the outgoing coordinator Katie Ellero in July 2014 and has successfully managed and is currently expanding the program. Isaias Solis, Coordinator of the Power of We Consortium, is the Program Manager of the AmeriCorps Programs. Isaias has an MSW from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and has over 10 years of experience in program management, many of that with CNCS programs including AmeriCorps State, AmeriCorps VISTA, and other federal grants including Workforce Investment Act funds from the US Department of Labor. David Holiday, accountant with the Ingham County Health Department, commits 5% of his time to assure that financial management of the grant meets all federal regulations and accounting standards. David has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a major in accounting and 28 years of accounting experience. No staffing changes will be needed, as we are able to adequately support the program, members, and service sites. Joel Murr, Assistant Deputy Health Officer with the Ingham County Health Department, also provides administrative and financial oversight and supervision for the Power of We Consortium.

Compliance and Accountability: The Consortium's AmeriCorps program has always utilized Michigan's AmeriCorps Policies and Procedures manual, along with ongoing guidance from the program officers, to prevent and detect noncompliance of federal program and financial requirements and regulations, and will continue to do so. Michigan's AmeriCorps Program Standards (MAPS) is another tool utilized that assures the program maintains a standard of success based upon best practice. Additionally, the Consortium Program Director will attend all Michigan's AmeriCorps Program Director Meetings, where new and old policies and procedures are discussed and best

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practices shared.

The Program Director, with guidance from the Consortium Coordinator, is responsible for overseeing program compliance. Upon detection of non-compliance with members, the Program Director will notify the Consortium Coordinator. She will then contact the member and site supervisor to issue a verbal warning to the member for the first offense, a written warning, meeting and a plan of action for the second offense and a second written warning, meeting and further disciplinary action- such as suspension of member, for the third offense. Upon detection of non-compliance with a program host site or site supervisor, the Program Director will initiate the same process, excluding the member, with the site supervisor and their direct superior when applicable. Upon a service sites third offense, and with approval from the MCSC Program Officer, the Program Director will pull the member from the site and find a suitable service site replacement. Detection of risk or noncompliance within the program by the Program Director will be dealt with promptly for intervention. The Consortium Coordinator will be contacted immediately and debriefed on the risk/noncompliance issue to create a corrective action plan. The Program Director will follow the steps outlined in the corrective action plan until the risk/noncompliance situation has been resolved. When necessary, Consortium staff will gain guidance from the MCSC program officer. Additionally, the Program Director and Consortium Coordinator will meet weekly until an issue has been resolved to ensure the program is adhering to Michigan's AmeriCorps policies and procedures.

All program staff, site supervisors, and members will be presented with the Michigan's AmeriCorps Policies and Procedures manual and oriented to it standards during orientation. All participants are required to keep a copy of this manual on site. Key policies and prohibited activities will be repeated verbally and in writing at monthly trainings to prevent noncompliance with members and at quarterly meetings with site supervisors. Quarterly site visits, which will include observation of member activities by the Program Director, will be useful for detecting and preventing non-compliance. On-site conversations with supervisors, staff, and members may also lead to regulations, policies, and procedures not being followed and enable immediate intervention by Consortium staff.

Past Performance: The program is currently in year 3 of the 2012-2015 grant cycle. Each year, we will provide food assistance to 1000 residents and give 1200 neighbors the support/resources needed to grow their own food. We will engage 1000 children in nutrition education and 300 adults in

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nutrition/cooking education. We will engage 1500 residents in exercise promotion programs that increase the frequency of their physical activity. We will leverage an additional 1,300 volunteers to empower families from low-opportunity neighborhoods in Ingham County. To date for our current grant cycle we have provided food assistance to 7726 residents and have supported and given resources so 5621 residents so they can grow their own food. We have engaged 4736 youth in nutrition education and 4561 adults in nutrition/cooking education. We have engaged 1375 residents in exercise programs and have leveraged 2310 volunteers. We have fallen short of our exercise goal thus far by 1075 residents. Our exercise promotion goal has not been met due to difficulty recruiting service sites whose mission correlates with the Consortiums exercise promotion program model, resulting in a low number of full year members providing exercise promotion services. Consortium staff has addressed the continued difficulty of recruiting exercise focused service sites for the 2012-2015 grant cycle and has implemented a specialized recruitment plan, with hopes of meeting our 1500 residents served for the 2014-2015 program year. However, due to low outcome in exercise promotion, the program has decided to omit this performance measure for the 2015-2018 grant cycle. Based on the data gathered from 2012-13 and 2013-14 program years, we project 2014-15 performance measures will be met with the exception of exercise promotion, the program projects an increase of 1000 residents served with this performance measure.

We have enrolled 100% of slots received. During the 2013-2014 program year, 3 of 28 members enrolled did not successfully complete their service. Two of those members chose to take a job elsewhere. Unexpected service site staffing changes, minimal support from site, and minimal site supervisor feedback were cited as reasons for the third member leaving. The Program Director has since given more attention to staff turnover, focused on setting project goals that fulfill the needs of sites and members, and insisted that site supervisors give members abundant feedback. We have had no areas of risk or noncompliance were identified by MCSC staff or by the internal monitoring performed by Consortium staff for the 2012-2015 grant cycle.

The Power of We Consortium has also been the Michigan's AmeriCorps Inclusion Video Contest winner for three straight years, was one of four finalists for the 2014 Michigan Governor's Service Awards and helped coordinate Michigan's statewide 20th Anniversary AmeriCorps celebration and service project in September. Additionally, during the 20th Anniversary AmeriCorps celebration, the Corporation for National and Community Service recognized twenty outstanding AmeriCorps alumni

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nationwide. Alex Bryan was selected as one of only twenty recipients for the AmeriCorps National Leadership Award. Alex served as an AmeriCorps State member with the Greater Lansing Food Bank via the Power of We Consortium in 2010. Alex is currently the Garden Manager for the same site where he completed his service. The Power of We Consortium AmeriCorps members continue to have a profound impact in our community post-service.

Continuous Improvement: The Consortium relies on internal and external stakeholders, members, alumni, and service sites for performance improvement. During quarterly site visits members are asked for programmatic feedback. Members are then surveyed 6 & 12 months after service about their satisfaction and overall gain because of the program. Site supervisors are asked for programmatic feedback at quarterly site visits and at the 4 mandatory site supervisor meetings. The data collected from the formal site visits, surveys, and exit interviews is aggregated and a final report is presented to the Power of We Consortium Coordinator and Deputy Health Officer for review and feedback. Feedback is then used to help guide the Program Director in revising the program model, policies, procedures, trainings, reporting, etc.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Cost Effectiveness: Nonprofit Finance Fund revealed that 85% of the human service organizations surveyed predicted an increase in demand of services, however only 40% would be able to meet the needs due to lack of person power and resources. For every federal dollar invested in CNCS programs, low-opportunity neighborhoods and communities receive as much as \$4.00 worth of social benefits (Voices of Service, 2012). Additionally, national service programs give taxpayers a considerable return on investment. For every taxpayer's dollar invested in CNCS programs, \$2.20 is returned in savings (The Economic Value of National Service, 2013).

Community partners have stated that our members are valuable assets in large-scale community projects that otherwise would not be as successful. A large number of the organizations Consortium members are placed at do not have the capacity or funding to sustain an additional full-time staff member(s). Consortium AmeriCorps members help facilitate and sustain programming that otherwise would not be available in low-opportunity neighborhoods. Budget savings start with recruitment of members. The Consortium implements a recruitment plan that involves outreach at career and job fairs, college/high school classroom presentations, outreach at community events, and newsletter and social media postings with the Consortium, partners and stakeholders. Service sites are

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encouraged to recruit from their network in addition to the Consortiums efforts. Scheduling interviews is coordinated by the Consortium as well, allowing site supervisors time to be spent on programmatic tasks.

Once members are selected service sites pay a match fee of \$7,916 for FT members, \$3,960 for HT members and \$2,094 for QT members. The Consortium covers health insurance fees, allowing service sites to distribute that funding to programming. Additionally the Consortium spends 4 days with members at the beginning of service to orientate them to AmeriCorps, the Consortium, and how their position at their service site aligns with the Consortiums mission. Monthly trainings and professional development are organized and facilitated by the Consortium, eliminating most orientation/trainings fees associated with new hires. Power of We Consortium AmeriCorps members are allotted \$150.00 per program year for supplementary site and professional development training topics that are not covered by the program.

During 2013-2014 members mobilized 1318 volunteers who gave 13227 hours that supported gardening programs, adult and youth nutrition education program, exercise opportunities and education programs and food distributions. Volunteers' value in Michigan during this time was \$22.13 per hour given (Independent Sector, 2013). Members saved host sites \$292,713.15 for 2013-14 by recruiting, training, orientating, coordinating, and directing volunteers with healthy foods programs.

Budget saved from initial new hire costs, ongoing training, health coverage, and volunteers allow host sites to stretch funding for resources and programming in Ingham County. Cost Effectiveness Resources in support of the Consortium's program are generated from diverse non-CNCS organizations. In total, \$109,238 is needed from these non-CNCS sources to support the project. To date, the Ingham County Health Department has committed \$4,795 cash for 5% of the Consortium Coordinator's time (wage/fringe), and in-kind contributions of \$7,286 for indirect administrative costs. Additional funds totaling \$97,157 will be secured for member support from each service site determined by FT, HT, or QT status. As in years past, service sites sign a contract committing to these funds. The Consortium proposes to create a deeper impact on the community without an increase in federal funds through increased efficiency. Experienced site supervisors with improved supervisor training are demonstrating more effective use of member time with increasing individuals served. Our more experienced Coordinator is more effectively training members earlier in the process, which has improved measurable outcomes. Community partners have stated that our members are valuable assets in large-scale community projects that otherwise would not be as successful.

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Evaluation Summary or Plan

Evaluation Plan: Since the Power of We Consortium's AmeriCorps State grant is less than \$500,000, the Ingham County Health Department has agreed to allocate funding to conduct an external program evaluation with Public Policy Associates, Inc. Public Policy Associates has over 20 years of experience delivering high-quality research to its clients, which include federal, state, and local government agencies, nonprofits, businesses, foundations, and educational institutions. Public Policy Associate's services include expert facilitation, strategic consultation, program evaluation, and policy research. The firm offers extensive experience with a variety of social research methods and data collection tools.

The program desires to comprehend the performance results from the direct service of AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and the impact that such service and interventions has on AmeriCorps members and the populations served. The goal is to use the results of the evaluation to adapt future program improvements and optimally enhance long-term community outcomes and impact.

The consultation aims to help the Program Director to envision the evidence for how its actions will lead to intended outcomes. This will involve extracting and refining the implied research questions within the grant proposal. Research questions will then drive the choice of appropriate internal indicators to assess program performance. Measurement tools and methods for collecting information will be determined by the Program Director and consultant based on the intended uses of the findings, existing data resources, target audiences, cultural context, and the level of detail required for reporting.

The proposed consultation work with Public Policy Associates will begin with a thorough examination of the program goals, action plans, and any existing assessment tools and processes. The consultant will glean information from existing documents, and through in-person and telephone meetings with PWC and representatives of the Ingham County Health Department. As a next step, the PPA consultant will develop a guidance to frame the grantee's intended intervention in terms of its relationship to outcomes. The Program Director will be encouraged to develop or utilize the existing logic model as a framework. This would be useful for specifying the expected inputs, programmatic process, outcomes, and the connection between the process and outcomes. The estimated cost of the evaluation is \$1,500.

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Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Programmatic Clarification:

1. Executive Summary: The Ingham County Health Department/Power of We Consortium proposes to have 22 AmeriCorps members who will focus on two project goals: 1. teach youth the importance of eating healthy foods and strategies to adopt better diets to reduce obesity and chronic diseases; 2. increase access to healthy foods through gardening, food distributions, referrals, and adult nutrition education to increase food security at an estimated 15 nonprofits, public agencies, faith-based and community organizations throughout Ingham County, Michigan. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for engaging 1000 children in nutrition education and increasing access to healthy foods to 2500 Ingham county residents. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 1000 volunteers yearly who will be engaged in assisting members with teaching/supervising nutrition classes, planting and maintaining gardens, and assisting in food distribution.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Healthy Futures. The CNCS investment of \$164,762 will be matched with \$117,989 in additional funding.

2. Member roles and responsibilities will not supplant, duplicate, or displace volunteers or paid staff. Consortium members are placed in low capacity organizations that cannot allocate staff or volunteer resources to provide the aforementioned activities without the support of a member. Members are placed in organizations that are part of low-opportunity neighborhoods; the Consortium classifies a low-opportunity neighborhood as low-income, low-education, and low-access to resources (food, transportation, healthcare, work opportunities). Historically, many of the organizations hosting AmeriCorps members try to provide services in a number of focus areas increasing the need for supplemental help.

3. The Ingham County Health Department/Power of We Consortium supports both an AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps State program however both programs have an extremely different focus. The Consortiums AmeriCorps State program places members in the community to provide direct service to

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residents to help reduce rates of chronic disease and increase food security through the aforementioned activities. The Consortiums VISTA program places members in the community to provide indirect service to Ingham County residents through increasing low-income residents' financial literacy skills, improving low-income residents' financial stability so they can procure safe and affordable housing, increasing the number of low-income students who move onto secondary education, enhancing youths academic performance in STEAM(science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), and by assuring economically disadvantaged and minority children (0-8) are ready to succeed in school through implementation of school readiness programs.

Performance Measure Clarification:

1. The target of 2500 unique individuals served for H11 with 1000 of those individuals indicating they are more food secure for H12, was conservatively determined by adding together past performance measures goals, program years 2012-2015, of food distribution, gardening, and adult nutrition education, which ranged from 3000-8000 individuals. The 3000-8000 goal does not remove duplicates across sites and involves different collection and reporting requirements. Additionally, feedback from past members and current service site staff, many Ingham County residents utilize multiple food services throughout the county, allowing a high possibility of duplication across service sites. The selected targets for H11 and H12 were selected using 2012/13 and 2013/14 performance measure data with the projected program changes kept in mind. Data collection and reporting for the 2012-2015 performance measures is done internally within each service site. Since the Consortium AmeriCorps State program has been in the community for 6 years, the program felt it was time to make a shift in reporting to food security, which allows the program to perform many of the same activities moving forward; nutrition education, community gardening, and food distribution, while documenting food program referrals. Additionally, the program wanted to more accurately represent the impact on the greater Lansing community. With the shift to food security, the program will create a program wide reporting system allowing program staff and members to remove duplicates across sites, resulting in the conservative target of 2500 unique individuals served with 1000 of them indicating an increase in food security.

2. For H11 the program will calculate the number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger. The program will count the number of unduplicated individuals receiving the support, services, education or referrals as a result of the member activities.

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An individual will be counted once if involved with more than one method of delivery. The selected interventions for support, services, education and/or referrals will come in the forms of nutrition education, community gardens, referrals, and food distribution.

For H12 the program will determine the number of individuals that reported an increase in food security of themselves and their children as a result of member supported services. This will be done through the H12 data collection method of a pre/post survey. The same survey will be administered to the adult family member at the beginning of the education/training program. The survey will ask about food security of the adults and children in the household. The same survey will be administered three months after completion of the education/training.

3. The program will take H12's how to calculate and collect data instructions when determining the level of change a beneficiary needs to achieve to be counted in the measure. To evaluate if a household has increased food security due to member activities, the level of change will be measured by one or more questions being improved to "never true" when comparing pre and post surveys. The program will look at any increase of self-assessed answers to food security of healthy foods since many beneficiaries reside in neighborhoods with multiple barriers (limited access to healthy food, transportation, low-income) prohibiting many from 100% food security. The questions asked in the pre and post survey will come from the Household Food Security in the United States (2007) report. Per the report on Household Food Security in the United States (2007) referenced in the H12 measure, a household is classified as food secure if they report no food insecure conditions or if they report only one or two food-insecure conditions to the survey questions provided in the H12 measure. A household is classified as food insecure if they report three or more food-insecure conditions.

4. Members that are placed within schools or with after school programs will work in conjunction with school and after school programming staff to assure that the nutrition education being provided by members is outside of the regularly taught curriculum. Members placed in schools or with after school programs will fill in the healthy food and nutrition education gaps. Examples of member activities will include farm to school curriculum, the importance of consuming seasonal healthy foods, how to prepare seasonal produce, preservation, and basic gardening techniques and maintenance.

5. The target of 1000 youth reached with 600 indicating they are eating healthier because of member activities was determined on previous program years Youth Nutrition Education goals and

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performance; goals ranging from 600-1000 youth being served. Past program performance has indicated a lower response rate among youth. Program year 2012/13 served 647 youth with 322 responding to surveys while program year 2013/14 served 3899 youth with 642 responding to surveys. Program staff kept this information in mind when setting the 2015/16 Youth Nutrition Education targets.

6. Members will distribute a post program survey to all youth in attendance. Youth will self assess the curriculum and indicate if they learned something new. Additionally, the youth will self assess and answer yes or no to the following question "I will eat healthier because of what I learned today". Members and program staff will only report unique individuals and will identify the number of youth who indicated they will eat healthier because of what they learned. The level of change for Youth Nutrition Education will be a youth answering yes to the question "I will eat healthier because of what I learned today."

7. Since the program will be asking youth to self assess if they will eat healthier because of a member supported program, it will be easy to adapt this survey across the different forms of youth education happening within the program. The use of the aforementioned question has been successfully implemented and adapted for program years 2012-2015. Past and current members and service site staff have given feedback to the program, indicating youth have little to no concerns when comprehending the asked question. The aforementioned question allows members the creativity needed when engaging youth and has received positive feedback.

8. Member activities will lead to a change in behavior, knowledge and/or attitude by increasing youth's knowledge of healthy eating habits. These eating habits will reduce childhood obesity in Ingham County. Youth will gain healthy eating habits and ways to maintain those habits through member activities. The Power of We Consortium, which is housed within the Ingham County Health Department, will survey Ingham County youth 5 years after programming to evaluate an increase and maintained healthy lifestyle. Ingham County Health Department has access to state and local surveys and reviews and collects data for health issues in Ingham County adults and youth. The Ingham County Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth is one such survey distributed to local residents. The Consortium AmeriCorps program will utilize this survey and data to evaluate if youth are maintaining a healthy lifestyle and how that has impacted the youth obesity rate in Ingham County.

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75%, or 450, of the 600 youth indicating they will eat healthier because of what they learned will maintain healthy eating habits 5 years later.

Strategic Engagement Slots: The Consortium program strives to have a corps that is representative of the diversity of the greater Lansing community. The program has adapted and implemented a member recruitment plan to target a diverse set of individuals residing in Ingham County addressing all aspects of diversity, including disability. The programs recruitment plan specifically addresses outreach and recruitment to organizations, groups, and departments for people who are differently abled. The recruitment plan was created with the assistance of Ingham County Health Department, The Power of We Consortium, Michigan Community Service Commission, and member and service site staff feedback and resources. The program revamped the interview process and requires a Consortium staff member to be present for all interviews in addition to a standard set of culturally competent behavioral questions. Since the program attempts to have a diverse corps representative of the community, the Consortium program will strive to have differently abled individuals in 19% of its open slots-the national percentage of the population with disabilities. The Consortium does not wish to increase its proposed MSY's for 2015-16 to allow for differently abled bodies to serve with the program, the program instead will continue to work with community partners to fill 19% of its proposed 22 slots with differently abled bodies.

MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification: The program does not wish to add any No-Cost MSY's for grant years 2016-2019.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics