

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness

**Application ID:** 15AC169884

**Program Name:** Michigan Campaign To End Homelessness AmeriCorps Program

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 demonstrates an understanding of the link between homelessness, benefits and resources, income, employment, and self-sufficiency specific to housing and life skills and proposes interventions to reduce long-term homelessness. The applicant cites 2013 local homelessness population data from the targeted communities (33% in Detroit Metro and 16% in West Michigan).

The proposed member activities of providing housing information and access to services to those on the street, making appropriate referrals, conducting intakes, providing information to mainstream services and benefits, addressing housing barriers for the client, and updating housing listings will address the community need to reduce long-term homelessness.

The training plan details the training topics and at what point in the service term the training will occur. The training topics include AmeriCorps information, team building, preparation for direct service provision, and a day long role playing training on prohibited activities. Monthly webinars and monthly conference calls are also included. The completion of the training topics will improve member skills for working to secure resources for homeless individuals while gaining knowledge and skills for the member's future employment.

The applicant describes a clear plan for member reflection on service experiences. For example, there is one training per region with another AmeriCorps Program, statewide conferences, and regional service day projects.

The applicant describes a well-organized and structured plan for member activities that exceed the criterion by delineating each member position (outreach specialist, housing search and information specialist, income generation and management specialist, etc.), member responsibilities, and overall program fit in a clear, detailed manner.

The applicant proposed a persuasive plan to ensure that Members emerge from the program with superior skills and experiences that are relevant and valuable to future employment. Orientation activities support this experience by walking Members through a basic goal setting and career exploration activity for the human services sector.

Additionally, Members receive worthy information regarding relatable skills and careers.

It is clear how the proposed service experience which includes participation in at least three National Days of

Service, planning a service project related to homelessness, overlapping foreclosure and homelessness collaborative training among AmeriCorps programs, and Michigan Community Service Commission statewide conference/regional service day projects will be meaningful for Members. These activities will build an ethic of service in the member that will last beyond their service term.

The applicant presents a persuasive plan for intentional reflection throughout the term of service by requiring Members to be civically engaged in their communities, to engage their communities in service, to reach out to schools/local clubs - Kiwanis, Boys and Girls, - to meet local AmeriCorps alumni and to join the local alumni chapter.

The applicant cites specific, relevant, and reasonably current (within 6 years) data about homelessness in two regions (Detroit Metro and West Michigan) and subsidized lunches, indicating a significant level of economic disadvantage in the target regions.

The application clearly describes the proposed activities of the AmeriCorps members (educate the community about need for affordable housing and connect with landlords) and how they fit into the overall program design and goals. The proposed member activities are logically connected to the need defined by the applicant as well as to the desired outcomes of decreasing homelessness.

The training plan also includes appropriate AmeriCorps-specific requirements and member development topics including team building.

Supervisors will have frequent (at least weekly) interactions with AmeriCorps members and will provide a significant and meaningful level of support.

The application describes a clear and thoughtful plan to provide meaningful service activities for Members including 3 national days of service.

The application clearly states the nature of the specific skills and experience that Members will gain, which are directly connected to their service experience and training including the webinar career skill training.

The applicant also cites a certificate of completion, career skills and experience gained by Members to enhance their post-service employment and education prospects.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not clearly describe how the program will encourage Members to continue to engage in public and community service beyond their current service term.

The applicant failed to demonstrate how the member's ability to provide one-on-one and small group instruction substantiates distinct service activities from those of existing staff and/or volunteers.