

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Northeastern University

Application ID: 15AC169928

Program Name: Massachusetts Promise Fellowship 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 cited relevant and specific data in the chosen service area supporting the need for a drop-out prevention program. The data cited was referenced by credible national, state, and local sources.

The applicant clearly described the proposed activities of the AmeriCorps members, which included using specific curricula to enhance the academic performance of high school students. The AmeriCorps members and volunteers will serve as mentors.

The applicant clearly demonstrated an understanding of the chosen intervention and described how it will lead to the desired outcomes highlighted in the application.

Member training will be provided by applicant represented an intense and ongoing dosage of training and technical assistance comprehensive enough to ensure compliance with program policies and procedures.

The applicant provided compelling survey data from Members reported that a vast majority of them felt that the skills gained during the program prepared them for future employment of educational opportunities.

The applicant described how it will implement a training program for Members and supervisors that ensures Members will adhere to program regulations and become aware of prohibited service activities.

The applicant provides a thorough training plan for members that includes a 3-day orientation and on-going monthly training.

It is clear that members will have a solid opportunity to reflect on their service and to experience meaningful participation.

The applicant describes a comprehensive and extensive training plan including addressing prohibited activities included in a written agreement and opportunities for skill and personal development.

The applicant describes a robust plan as well as success stories on getting and keeping Members actively engaged in service.

The applicant describes multiple avenues for Members to engage with each other including teams for reflection.

The applicant describes a strong plan for member supervision including weekly meetings with their supervisor and a small supervisor-member ratio.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not cite data to support some of the assumptions regarding the trends of the needs data as presented in the application (e.g., there was no supporting data related to the trauma, abuse, or other risk factors experienced by families living in the proposed service area).

The applicant fails to provide much detail on the role, training or management of 700 volunteers.

The applicant fails to provide a detailed recruitment plan for members or for volunteers that will ensure local participation in the program.

The applicant discusses monitoring of the subgrantee supervisors but not member supervision.

While the applicant described the need in the general area, the applicant did not identify specifically where Members will serve stating only that there will be a competitive process for selecting sites/communities with only a general reference stating criteria for the site reflecting prevalent and severe need.

The applicant did not clearly explain whether each member would be providing all of the services/interventions referenced or if some Members would, for example, be doing the mentoring while others would focus on curriculum development or implementation.

The applicant did not clearly explain which interventions each youth would get or if each youth would get all the interventions.

The applicant did not clearly explain if each youth would get 200 hours of service or if the 15-20 youth in each cohort would collectively receive the 200 hours.

The applicant did not describe the training specific for the volunteers in the program.