

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: City Year, Inc

Application ID: 15AC170230

Program Name: City Year San Antonio

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 application describes a Member training plan that includes a comprehensive initial training and ongoing enrichment throughout the year. Specific details include time of year, hours for training and topics.

The Gallops Strengths Finder is an example of individual Member development that will lead to successful outcomes for the target population of the project.

The applicant conveys specific skills the Members will gain from their activities and how that can positively impact future employment as evidenced by City Year corps Members being accepted by Teach for America (TFA) at a rate three times higher than other applicants.

Supervisors will have frequent and meaningful interactions with their supervisors as evidenced by the plan for onsite supervision of the Members for 4 days a week by the City Year San Antonio (CYSA) IM who will interact with the Members and other professionals in the school in regard to the member services.

The applicant's member experience was significant in preparing the member for employment after AmeriCorps experience, e.g. Members were accepted into Teach for America at a rate of 3 times the regular applicants and a TFA recruiter helped Members craft their service experience for their resumes. There was also built in career planning and opportunity for reflection through journaling.

Weaknesses:

The application present no evidence to document the proposed tutoring intervention "Response to Intervention" approach will result in the stated outcome of more students graduating from high school.

The application does not detail the role of volunteers in the project. There is no description of volunteer recruitment, training or duties that supports their overall value to the project outcomes.

The application does not describe any supervisory training for the on-site AmeriCorps supervisors or school staff.

The application lists many recruitment sites without any details for activities, why these were chosen, and what value the sites offer to recruit high quality "near-peer" Members. The list may be a list of sites for volunteer recruitment

instead, it is unclear in the limited statement.

The data presented do not make a compelling case about the severity of the problem/need. For instance, NEISD performed above the state averages in reading and math on the STAAR assessments. The graduate rates of three high schools to be served by the program are related as being low graduation rates, yet no comparative data is offered, such as the state and national averages that would show the severity of the problem.

The causes of the related problem/need are unclear.

The outputs as related in the Logic Model are incoherent in that they do not convey numbers or percentages making it difficult to determine the impact of the stated activities.

The problem as articulated in the Logic Model does not specifically address the community which will be receiving the services.

The role of the leveraged volunteers is unclear in the theory of change and the logic model.

The applicant did not clearly demonstrate that the proposed tutoring program will lead to the stated outcomes. For example, how the 4 early warning indicators were impacted or could impact the improvement of 497 risk indicators.

The design objectives and program approach were unclear to meet the goal of increased graduation rates at low performing schools.