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Executive Summary

Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) proposes to have 25 full time AmeriCorps members placed at mentoring program host sites across the state. Each AmeriCorps member will build the capacity of its mentoring program host site by implementing evidence-based practices as defined by the Elements of Effective Practice (MENTOR, 2009). At the end of the program year, AmeriCorps members will have effectively recruited and retained mentors, improved programmatic processes and systems and ultimately expanded the number of high quality mentoring relationships for at-risk youth and youth of color across the state. In addition, AmeriCorps members will have leveraged an additional 350 volunteers to engage in high quality mentoring relationships with youth. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of capacity building. The CNCS investment of \$307,370 will be matched with \$335,981 of private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

Many young people in Massachusetts are living in communities where they face social challenges and barriers, preventing them from reaching their full potential and achieving academic and personal success. These include: under/unemployment, poor academic attainment, poverty and violence. The aggregate of these community problems are the need that this AmeriCorps program seeks to address. The community need is prevalent and severe across Massachusetts, particularly in gateway cities, municipalities with populations greater than 35,000 / less than 250,000 with median household incomes below the state average and attainment of a bachelor's degree or above below the state average. The AmeriCorps Ambassadors of Mentoring program works in these targeted geographical areas where the need is the highest.

The unemployment rates in Massachusetts' gateway cities, like Lawrence (8.2%) and Fitchburg (6.7%), continue to be higher than the state average (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014) and 30% of all Massachusetts children live in households without secure employment (Kids Count 2012). Within Lawrence, Fitchburg, and the state's other gateway cities (Brockton, Fall River, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lowell, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Springfield and Worcester), youth are not only under/unemployed but dropout rates and graduation delays are also higher than the state average. For example, Holyoke had only a 52% graduation rate in 2012, (MA Dept of Early and Secondary Education) and 17% of high school students statewide do not graduate on time (Kids Count 2012).

Across Massachusetts, 16% of youth live below the poverty line which has increased by 10,000 youth since 2012. Within Massachusetts' gateway cities and surrounding areas, the rates of youth living in

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poverty are even greater with 30% in Hampden County and 26.2% in Suffolk County. Within the city of Boston alone, 42% of children are living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

The rate of Massachusetts youth engaged in violent activities across the state is also linked to high school dropout rates, unemployment, and lack of academic resources and support. In 2013, the cities of Brockton, New Bedford, Springfield, Fall River, Holyoke and Lawrence reported a higher than average percentage of youth committing violence crimes versus cities of similar size across the country (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013 crime statistics). In the Boston neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan, 1 in 4 young people have been either a victim of or perpetrator of violence (Boston Public Health Commission 2014).

Research tells us that mentoring has significant positive effects on high school dropouts, high levels of absenteeism (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007), recurring behavior problems, career readiness and under/unemployment, and violence prevention. Increasing the number of mentoring programs implementing effective practices and the number of mentors creating strong relationships with youth will work to alleviate these factors that put young people at risk. The presence of an effectively trained, supported mentor within a structured and goal-oriented program gives youth the opportunity to overcome challenges and develop the resiliency and skills needed to succeed. A recent study through the Center for Addiction and Mental Health and Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) confirms that children with a mentor were significantly more confident in their academic abilities and considerably less likely to develop behavioral problems (DeWit & Lipman, 2013). Further, from our past work, we know that an AmeriCorps program focusing on increasing the quantity and quality of mentoring improves the ability of the field to better implement evidence based programming and assure that more youth are connected to mentors.

Understanding that our communities and youth are facing multiple risk factors and understanding that mentoring programs have proven effective in limiting the negative effects of these risk factors, it is important to assess the availability and effectiveness of mentoring in Massachusetts. Through the Mass Mentoring Count census, we know that there is a great need for mentors in order to adequately address the high rate of risk facing young people. In Massachusetts, in the cities with the highest number of youth from single-parent families in poverty, an average of only 9.2% of those youth in need of a mentor are being matched with a caring adult (Mass Mentoring Counts 2014). In our largest city, Boston, only 33.5% of the identified need is being met with Worcester (15.7%) and Holyoke (12.9%) following closely behind. In the ten gateway cities only 7% of the need is being met; additionally, there are no identified mentoring programs in 25% of these cities. In order to more

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efficiently address the needs of youth in Massachusetts the quality and reach of mentoring programs must be expanded. Our AmeriCorps program is striving to meet the needs of youth and communities by adding capacity to mentoring programs across Massachusetts.

THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL: MMP's AmeriCorps program seeks to increase the number and quality of mentoring relationships for at-risk youth in Massachusetts. By building the capacity of youth mentoring programs across the state and in targeted communities involved with My Brother's Keeper initiatives, MMP will increase programs' ability to implement evidence-based practices that lead to more young people being served in mentoring relationships. Research has shown that the presence of a caring adult mentor in the lives of young people helps them be more prepared academically, learn important work readiness skills and leads them to make healthier decisions. Mentoring ultimately leads to healthier and more resilient communities by creating important protective factors for young people. AmeriCorps members are the central instrument of this intervention by implementing and completing key capacity building projects at mentoring programs that will ultimately meet the intended goal of creating more and better mentoring across the state. MMP offers existing members the opportunity to return and serve as Senior Corps Members. In this role they receive a slightly higher living allowance and carry additional responsibilities as leaders within Corps meetings, trainings and in the implementation of Corps wide projects.

In order to implement this intervention, MMP recruits, trains and places 25 AmeriCorps members in service at youth mentoring host sites across the state and at MMP. Each member serves for eleven months on a dedicated scope of service aligned with the Elements of Effective Practice (EEP). This intervention is intended to build the capacity of the mentoring program and is based on the evidence-based practices researched, outlined and benchmarked in the EEP. The EEP are nationally defined and studied best practices produced by MENTOR, the National Mentoring Partnership by leading academic researchers, Dr. Jean Rhodes and Dr. Janice Kupersmidt. The EEP forms the foundation for this intervention and provides a clear roadmap for creating high-quality and sustained mentoring programs and mentoring relationships that lead to positive outcomes for young people. MMP has used the EEP to frame the scope, model and process of this intervention to ensure that it will lead to more sustainable programs providing more effective service and ultimately increased ability to serve more youth.

The implemented service scopes will include activities that build the capacity of mentoring programs to increase their ability to effectively serve more youth in high quality mentoring relationships by addressing their most pressing needs. AmeriCorps members implement evidence -based practices in

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one of four capacity building areas benchmarked in the EEP: program development and/or program start-up; mentor and mentee training; match support; and recruitment and marketing. All members will focus on recruitment and marketing as part of their service scope while implementing additional proven effective program practices at their host sites. Overall, the proposed intervention relies on these members as the primary input and their completed scopes of service as the activity that is implemented to create more capacity and increase ability to serve more youth in high quality mentoring relationships. The scopes of service include activities in each of these EEP practice areas:

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT and/or START UP: This area includes leading the development of practices or systems in program planning, management, operations and/or evaluation, and strengthening current program systems, or developing new mentoring initiatives at host sites.

MENTOR/MENTEE TRAINING: This area involves creating or strengthening systems to provide initial orientation, training and/or ongoing skill-building for mentors and mentees to improve the quality of matches. Projects focus on curriculum development, training delivery, material creation, and program evaluation to support the development of these skills among program staff.

MATCH SUPPORT: This area includes expanding an organization's ability to support and develop mentors and mentees throughout their match to increase the duration and retention of matches. Projects focus on evaluating and improving current match support systems and developing new strategies and processes for match support.

RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING: All AmeriCorps members' service scopes will include work in this area and some may focus solely on this area. This work includes recruiting and retaining qualified mentors and will require members to develop relationships with businesses and create outreach and recruitment strategies to secure mentors. It will also include designing and implementing educational and social events to bring potential volunteers together.

AmeriCorps members will focus their efforts on improving and strengthening the operational and direct service components of each host site as defined by their service scope. While members are completing their 1700 hours of service in one of the above dedicated service areas, they are also working to recruit caring adult volunteers. These volunteers are leveraged as mentors in programs by meeting on a consistent basis with young people to provide support, guidance and resources to help that young person achieve their potential and experience the critically important protective factors to help them overcome the challenges that exist in their community. The improved and strengthened practices employed by the members will lead to 350 new volunteers providing 20,000 hours of mentoring across the state. While conducting these recruitment activities, members will also increase the number of host sites implementing three or more effective management practices and the number

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of host sites reporting that capacity building activities have helped make their organization more effective. These intermediate outcomes will be a direct result from completion of members' project scopes and will meet the desired need that the organization has outlined. The completion of these project scopes along with the recruitment of volunteers will allow the AmeriCorps program to reach its long term outcome of increasing the number of youth being served by volunteer mentors in the state including those in underserved populations and in targeted communities. This long term outcome allows MMP and our AmeriCorps program to strengthen academic achievement, life skill building and social supports for youth to decrease violence and other social challenges that impact young people. The outcomes of our past efforts, over the past several years, have proven that AmeriCorps members are uniquely positioned to increase the capacity of these programs and create opportunities for more young people to be served than ever before.

EVIDENCE BASE: The basis for this AmeriCorps programs rests on the EEP. The research that supports the EEP is widespread and includes information on the key program operations that lead to effectively run programs, increase capacity and ability to serve more young people. The research that lead to the development of the EEP includes both quasi-experimental and non-experimental design studies and places our evidence into the Moderate Evidence category as defined by the NOFO. Specifically, by implementing recruitment practices in accordance with the EEP, AmeriCorps members will be effective in meeting their recruitment goals focused on securing more caring adults to develop relationships with youth across the state. The EEP benchmark in this area states that programs must employ strategies that "realistically portray the benefits, practices and challenges of mentoring in the program." This benchmark is based on three qualitative studies. In one of these studies, researchers employed focus groups with 73 volunteers at four BBBS sites. It was found that a failure of advertising campaigns to provide information about program requirements or expectations inhibited some prospective and qualified volunteers from applying to the program while practices more likely to provide such information yielded better outcomes (Roaf, Tierney & Hunte, 1994). In 1993 researchers gathered data from eight BBBS programs through site visits, observations and phone interviews (Furano, Roaf, Styles & Branch, 1993) and found that "word of mouth" strategies, personal outreach from one person to another person that they know (i.e. family, friends or co-workers), was identified as the most effective recruitment strategy. Word of mouth allows accurate and detailed information about the program expectations to be relayed in a manner that could be heard and digested. It allows the "recruiter" to frame the outreach in the vernacular that is most meaningful to the potential volunteer. Finally, a study conducted in 2007 using five focus groups of African

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American males who were either involved with mentoring, waiting to be matched, contemplating the idea of becoming a mentor or randomly without a connection to mentoring, found the biggest obstacle to engaging African American men was a lack of information during the recruitment process (Keenan & O'Brien). These studies support the area of the EEP focused on recruitment and prove that the best practices outlined by this AmeriCorps program will lead to the desired outcome of increased mentors working with youth.

Managing volunteers goes beyond recruitment, many AmeriCorps members will also be involved with training and supporting the mentors once they decide to become mentors. The EEP notes two key benchmarks in this area: 1) the program provides a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in person training and 2) specific topics, provided by the EEP, need to be addressed to adequately train and support mentors to ensure their continuity in the program. Twelve studies were used to determine these benchmarks; eleven of them were quasi-experimental and one was an experimental design using a randomized control group. In 2013, a study involving 1,310 youth involved in one-to-one mentoring relationships with BBBS mentoring programs (Herrera, DuBois & Grossman 2013) found that pre-match training (based on records maintained by the program) was a predictor that the match lasted at least 12 months, that the match met more often and achieved better outcomes as reported in their follow-up interviews at 13 months. In another study conducted in 2000, data from 1,101 mentors was used to examine the associations of hours of pre-match training received with hours of face to face mentoring sessions, mentoring activities and perceived mentoring relationship quality (Herrera, Sipe, McClanahan, Arbretton & Pepper, 2000). The amount of time spent in pre-match training predicted greater reports of feelings of closeness toward mentees, spending time with mentees and engaging in social activities with mentees, all of which are associated with greater likelihood of mentors staying connected and meeting with their mentees. In a study of school-based mentoring that included 575 youth matched with 554 mentors from ten different agencies, (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fledman, McMaken & Jucov 2007) separate measures of mentor reports of pre-match training received in an individual or group format, each were positively correlated with mentor report of match continuation into a second school year. It was also predictive of mentors reporting higher levels of efficacy or confidence for mentoring before being matched and with mentor-reported closeness with the mentee. These practices are directly related to mentors staying in consistent and long term relationships ensuring that more youth are being served in high quality mentoring relationships.

The EEP has been tested over time and is overwhelmingly supported by the mentoring field and its

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fundamentals. It has gone through three revisions over the past 8 years ensuring that the science behind the elements is still valid and reliable. Currently a team of researchers and practitioners are in the process of reviewing the data and creating a fourth edition of the EEP. In addition to our confidence in the science behind the EEP, our own outcome data over the past seven years has informed the development of the MMP Ambassador of Mentoring AmeriCorps program. Since its inception, this program has produced positive results. During the last seven years, using the EEP-based intervention, MMP's AmeriCorps members have recruited more than 2,200 volunteer mentors, accomplishing 167% of the program target goal and has contributed to matching more than 10,000 youth with caring adults. One hundred and five, 90% of host sites have reported that their AmeriCorps member improved the capacity of their program to implement more effective practices. These three outcomes combined indicate the positive effect this AmeriCorps programs has had on the field of mentoring.

NOTICE PRIORITY: This program is designed to promote the priorities of My Brother's Keeper (MBK), a 2015 Funding Priority of CNCS. MMP's training, technical assistance and field resources continue to focus on areas that are aligned with three of the five MBK milestones, including 1) reading at grade level by third grade; 2) graduating from high school ready for college and career; and 3) successfully entering the workforce. Seventy-five percent of youth involved in mentoring in MA are youth of color and MMP has always put much emphasis on recruitment, match support and longevity of these relationships. MMP serves on the advisory committee of the City of Boston Mayor's MBK Mentoring Challenge. This challenge aims to increase volunteerism within the city and recruit 1,000 new mentors to serve youth of color. MMP will leverage its AmeriCorps program to further support mentoring programs in communities that are dedicated to meeting the milestones of the MBK. The AmeriCorps program will do this by: 1) giving funding priority to programs engaged with the MBK initiatives around the state; 2) requiring service scopes that address the MBK milestones; and 3) developing a scope of service for one AmeriCorps member serving at MMP that is solely focused on meeting the capacity building needs of the City of Boston's MBK Mentoring Challenge.

MEMBER TRAINING: MMP and host sites will provide members with high quality training to prepare them to effectively complete their service scope. MMP has developed an engaging and proven training program over the past seven years. MMP is committed to providing members the opportunity to accomplish three major learning goals: to enhance their understanding of the ethic of service and commitment to productive citizenship; to develop professional and personal skills to be better prepared for non-profit work; and to become fully prepared to develop high-quality, effective mentoring programs through understanding of the Elements of Effective Practice. At each stage of the training

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process, members are made aware of the roles, responsibilities, policies and the benefits of being an AmeriCorps member as well as prohibited activities. A written agreement confirms that AmeriCorps members understand this information. The training plan includes nine major components: 1) Regional Welcome Meetings: discussions on the history, context, terms and conditions of the AmeriCorps program and prohibited activities; 2) Host Site Orientation: orientation to the mission, structure, culture, expectations, and the community it serves; 3) Member Orientation: week-long training to develop group culture and AmeriCorps identity; review of AmeriCorps rules, regulations and prohibited activities and research-based mentoring practices; 4) Monthly Corps Meeting: three hour meetings each month to develop a sense of community and a connection to National Service; professional skill-building and networking opportunities; facilitated discussion and reflection activities on topics of social justice and the importance of voting as well as review of program guidelines including prohibitive activities; 5) Certificate of Non-Profit Leadership -- graduate level course work provided by Wheelock College professors; 6) Individualized Technical Assistance: bi-monthly sessions to ensure fidelity to the EEP; 7) Member Retreat: three-day retreat focusing on cultural competency; and 8) MMP Trainings: a requirement to attend at least two trainings offered by MMP to the mentoring field. To meet the needs of our diverse Corps, MMP staff adapts all learning opportunities to allow for inclusive engagement.

MEMBER SUPERVISION: AmeriCorps members will receive high quality guidance and support from the MMP AmeriCorps Program Manager and their host site supervisors to ensure that they are prepared and supported to serve effectively. Each host site is required to submit and get approval of a designated, qualified supervisor and supervision plan for their AmeriCorps member that includes at least bi-weekly supervision. MMP requires that supervisors have past supervisory, programmatic and EEP experience, and agree to all terms of the AmeriCorps Program. MMP offers a number of trainings to ensure that all supervisors are adequately prepared to follow AmeriCorps program regulations, priorities and expectations. These trainings occur during orientation and through quarterly sessions throughout the service year. MMP conducts host site visits twice a year unless it is identified that more are needed. In order to ensure that quality support services are always in place, supervisors will be required to inform MMP as soon as possible if they face any challenges supporting their AmeriCorps member or if the AmeriCorps member fails to perform their duties. MMP has developed policies and procedures to be able mediate any difficulties stemming from host sites or AmeriCorps members. Members will receive ongoing guidance and supervision from MMP's AmeriCorps Program Manager. Member activities are monitored through monthly reports, timesheets and informal check-ins.

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MEMBER EXPERIENCE: MMP is committed to providing members a meaningful experience that promotes personal and professional growth as well as offer the opportunity to serve the communities where they are placed. From the moment MMP staff meet a potential AmeriCorps member, the conversation and activities are all implemented with the intention of developing a solid AmeriCorps community culture and commitment to lifelong civic engagement. We have found that many of our members routinely volunteer during and even after their AmeriCorps service has ended within the community in which they live or work. MMP has developed and implemented a survey to assess the post-service experiences of our members to receive feedback from past AmeriCorps members on the longer terms effects and perceptions of their service term and the effect it may have on their current civic engagement. This data will allow MMP to reflect on the effectiveness of the program and assures us that we are providing a meaningful and valuable experience and are successful in promoting long term civic engagement. Through our extensive training program, members will have ample opportunity to learn and build skills and competencies that will create highly-trained professionals in a competitive job market. They will have the opportunity to practice these skills at their host sites and while implementing statewide capacity building projects. MMP recognizes that AmeriCorps members thrive when provided with unique and meaningful projects therefore we devote extensive time to reviewing their service scopes to ensure that each AmeriCorps member is in a position to exhibit their leadership potential. Within our training sessions there is always time allocated to reflect on service through large or small group sessions or written individual reflection activities. As part of the program, the members engage in National Service opportunities in local communities and are able to solidify their identities as part of the national movement and connect their actions with broader social change. Finally we recognize the importance of developing a strong Corps spirit; therefore throughout the year we have built in activities that promote a sense of pride, fellowship and communal loyalty such as celebrating, serving, connecting and reflecting as a group. We have developed a strong and effective recruiting plan that allows us to reach into the communities we serve to recruit members that reflect the diversity of the youth our host sites serve. MMP employs multiple strategies to accomplish this goal have excelled at recruiting a diverse corps. MSA has called on us to share these strategies and efforts with other programs in Program Director meetings in order to support diverse recruitment across AmeriCorps programs in MA.

COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION: AmeriCorps identity development is key to the success of our program and ultimately to the national program. MMP recruits members with the AmeriCorps mission and values in mind and includes this information on all recruitment and public

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awareness products. In order to help AmeriCorps members internalize what it means to be a member of this national movement, MMP dedicates significant time to learning about and discussing the history of AmeriCorps and its role in addressing critical community needs and opportunities in the field of mentoring. Annually, the members participate in the statewide AmeriCorps Opening Day. Early on in their service, members are introduced and encouraged to attend AmeriCorps Alums Boston Chapter events and to subscribe to the National AmeriCorps Alums newsletter. AmeriCorps members are required to maintain a service portfolio documenting their accomplishments and personal reflections on national service and high-quality program development. MMP AmeriCorps members wear shirts, sweatshirts, name badges and carry branded business cards, all of which are adorned with the AmeriCorps logo. MMP requires host sites to promote their identity as an AmeriCorps sponsored site in a number of ways including portraying their AmeriCorps partnership with AmeriCorps window decals at their offices, including the AmeriCorps logo on all written documents and showcasing their AmeriCorps partnership on their website.

Organizational Capability

Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is fueling the movement to expand empowering youth-adult relationships to meet the needs of communities across Massachusetts. We work with mentoring programs to assess programmatic needs and organizational capacity to provide customized strategies that strengthen youth, families, and communities. MMP enhances programs by providing training, consultation, and quality assurance; advocating for public and private support; and building public awareness about the impact of mentoring on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. MMP began in 1992 in response to an identified need for a more comprehensive approach to providing training and technical assistance to mentoring programs. MMP has operated its AmeriCorps program for the past seven years, allowing us to train, inspire and support 135 AmeriCorps members to focus solely on instituting evidence-based practices in mentoring programs. MMP has also been successful in leveraging private dollars to support the effort through a strong commitment from the Highland Street Foundation that has provided \$900,000 over the past seven years to specifically support the AmeriCorps program and expand mentoring across the state. This merging of public and private dollars exemplifies the mission and vision of the AmeriCorps program. As an organization, MMP has diverse sources of organizational funding, which in the current fiscal year includes over \$750,000 from corporate and private foundations, over \$100,000 from individual donors, and \$600,000 from fundraising events. On average, MMP has a 90% annual renewal rate of its corporate and foundation funding and has significant, multi-year grants from foundations and

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corporations such as the Yawkey Foundations and State Street Corporation. Since 2003, MMP's annual operating budget has grown from \$400,000 to \$2.3 million, reflecting the increased level of services the organization provides and its capacity to attract and manage resources to build the youth mentoring field. Since this program's initial planning stages, MMP's staff have been fully engaged in implementing the AmeriCorps program. Together the Director of Program Services and the AmeriCorps Program Manager develop and implement all training, on-going support and monitoring processes. The MMP Manager of Training and Technical Assistance engages with each AmeriCorps member bi-monthly to provide individualized support and training on the EEP. The MMP Manager of Finance Administration plays an active role not only in managing the AmeriCorps funding stream but also in executing required processes during enrollment. MMP's AmeriCorps Program Manager, Krystal Hope, is responsible for the implementation of the program and provides support, guidance and supervision of the AmeriCorps members. She acts as a liaison with host sites and provides direct supervision to members serving at MMP. A former AmeriCorps member with a three-year tenure in this position, Ms. Hope brings true commitment to service and a deep understanding of the MMP theory of change. Ms. Hope has a BA in Organizational Communications from Juniata College and a Certificate of Non-Profit Management and Leadership from Boston University. MMP's Director of Program Services, Beth Fraster, provides programmatic management and operational support for the program and provides supervision to the Program Manager. Ms. Fraster has more than 20 years of experience in developing, managing and implementing youth development programs. Ms. Fraster has worked extensively with federal agencies both implementing grant programs and providing technical assistance to grantees. A graduate of the University of Massachusetts with a BS in Psychology, Ms. Fraster received her Masters in Social Work from Boston University.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: MMP is committed to adhering to the regulations of the Corporation for National and Community Service. To be in the best position to prevent and detect compliance issues, MMP will ensure that we fully understand and institute compliance standards as well as employ effective monitoring activities to hold host sites, members and ourselves accountable. The Program Manager and the Director of Program Services will attend the annual Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) Kickoff training and quarterly program director meetings to receive updates on program requirements and information on policy and procedure implementation. Along with those mentioned above, the Manager of Finance and Administration and/or the COO will attend all trainings that include information on enrollment processes, distribution of benefits and financial reporting. The Manager of Training and Technical Assistance will receive training to support his

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ability to monitor monthly reports and provide support services with fidelity and in compliance with CNCS guidelines. MMP will maintain consistent contact with the MSA Program Officer(s) to support ongoing conversation and receive feedback and guidance. MMP will also maintain and employ an updated program systems binder that defines all programmatic policies and procedures. This tool will not only serve as guidance but will also contain the road map to implementing a sustainable and compliant AmeriCorps program. Within these systems, MMP has developed a measure of checks and balances by giving more than one MMP staff person responsibility for each component of the program. This will ensure that procedures are conducted with the highest standards and eliminate any oversight. MMP puts tremendous emphasis on training host sites and AmeriCorps members on the implementation of appropriate process/regulations with which to participate in the AmeriCorps program. This training begins the moment a mentoring organization considers applying to be an AmeriCorps host site or a candidate applies for a service position. MMP scrutinizes each proposed service scope to ensure that the proposed programs and projects are designed within the CNCS guidelines. To ensure accepted mentoring programs and candidates understand the guidelines set forth by CNCS, a signed, written agreement by each party is required prior to the start of the service term. All information reviewed and agreed upon in the signed affidavit prior to the beginning of service will also be reinforced during the orientation process, the monthly Corps meetings and the quarterly host site supervisor meetings. MMP will encourage and require that host sites and AmeriCorps members stay in close contact with MMP staff in order to receive ongoing guidance and feedback in real time. A monthly monitoring process will be in place to hold host sites and members accountable for deliverables and ensure that there are no infractions of policies. This process will include a review of both activity logs and time sheets by both the Program Manager and the Manager of Training and Technical Assistance. Mid-year evaluations and host site visits will be implemented to encourage dialogue around AmeriCorps members' progress on their project scope and to ensure compliance. If, at any time, instances are identified in which activities are deemed noncompliant or at risk for noncompliance, the Program Manager will immediately assess the situation with the host site supervisor and AmeriCorps member to determine the details of the noncompliant activities. MMP will consult with MSA as needed. With guidance from the Program Manager, the host site and/or the AmeriCorps member will be required to develop a corrective action plan that eliminates any risk of noncompliance or eliminates noncompliant activities/behaviors. MMP makes every effort to reach a positive resolution in correcting noncompliant behaviors or eliminating risk within the confines of safety and ethical regulations. We are prepared however to remove a host site or member from

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service to uphold the high standards of the AmeriCorps program.

PAST PERFORMANCE: As an organization we are committed to continually assessing our ability to meet and exceed our target outputs and outcomes. Over the past three years our AmeriCorps members were able to collectively exceed our performance measure goals. AmeriCorps members generated 5,191 community volunteer inquiries that led to 1,052 volunteer mentors (30% over-goal) and generated 56,808 hours of service to youth in MA. Eighty percent of host sites improved their capacity to improve practice standards by implementing three or more new volunteer management practices. All host sites reported that members supported their site to be more efficient and effective. We have been able to meet our goals by providing timely, ongoing support to our members and host sites. We work to develop a collaborative relationship with all host sites that promotes a strong sense of accountability from each perspective to make the program successful. We strive for 100% recruitment and retention of our members. Over the past full year our recruitment rate was 100% and our retention rate was 80%. Over the past three years our retention rate average is 92%. As this is a scattered site model, meaning MMP does not manage the members on a daily basis, we need to be creative with our tactics to reach 100% retention. We have identified qualities and life situations that make it more probable to become and remain an AmeriCorps member; however we are challenged in creating a diverse Corps by limiting ourselves. For example, we have found that it is not always financially feasible for parents with young children to serve; therefore we need to employ additional support systems to be culturally competent and encourage service by a diverse group of people. We work in collaboration with the host site to make reasonable changes in project scopes, improve communication and create realistic expectations of members and host sites in order to create realistic expectations in order to retain members. All accommodations must meet our high standards and be amenable to both the AmeriCorps member and the host site. This past fall, we found that we did not meet the full CNCS requirements in terms of background checks, but we were able to use the amnesty period as an opportunity to refine our enrollment processes that defines the crucial steps of background checks. To improve our procedure we have employed the following corrective action steps: 1) candidates now need to identify their current state of residency when applying for an AmeriCorps position so can ensure that we run the Criminal Record Offender Information for each member in Massachusetts and their prior state of residency; 2) only MMP can offer a candidate a service position with the MMP AmeriCorps program and therefore we control when the service term begins. Although this has been our process for the past seven years, we will be emphasizing this fact with host sites so that there is no confusion when all background checks have been completed,

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approved and the member has been officially approved to begin service. All of this will be monitored by MMP and communicated to host sites; and 3) finally, MMP will engage in more frequent and additional methods of communication amongst our internal team to ensure that all steps in the background check are completed and reported on time. We have taken a great number of steps to improve our practices to ensure that every AmeriCorps member candidate will have full clearance before the start of service and feel confident that our new system prevents any compliance issues.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

In this proposed budget CNCS's cost per MSY has been reduced from \$12,817 to \$12,295. MMP has consistently exceeded the minimum match requirement for each year of funding in past awards. This proposal represents a 51% match rate which is well above the 42% required of programs funded for 8 years. MMP has developed a strong strategy to adequately raise funds to implement all aspects of the program. MMP's grantee match is funded through matching fees from the host sites and a multi-year grant from a private foundation. Over the past seven years, the Highland Street Foundation has provided grants totaling \$650,000. For fiscal year 2015, the Highland Street Foundation has provided \$225,000 over three years. Although the economy continues to challenge the financial capacity of mentoring programs, MMP is committed to requiring host sites to contribute a portion of the grantee match, ranging from \$8,000 to \$12,500. The contributed amount is based on a sliding scale aligned with their budget size. This requirement serves as a tangible reminder to the host sites of their commitment to maximize the AmeriCorps member's experience by providing strong supervision, training and integration. This financial model for the match has proved to be achievable and a sustaining element of our program model. We are cognizant of how much we increase the match fees in order to continue to keep the AmeriCorps program accessible to small mentoring programs. We are currently in our seventh year of managing and administering an AmeriCorps program with a consistent programmatic and financial structure; MMP is confident that the budget adequately supports the range of program activities which will produce the desired outputs and outcomes described throughout this grant application. The core budget elements and per member expenses have proven to be well aligned with providing the elements that we believe are fundamental to our program's successes, such as our training program for members, which enables them to apply new learning to their service scopes and build their marketable skills to compete in the workforce.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

This program is based on the following theory of change: if MMP places 25 highly motivated and

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skilled members at mentoring programs across the state, trains these members and supports them to implement the Elements of Effective Practice, then, within our state, more mentors will be recruited, more hours of mentoring service will be provided and host sites will be implementing more effective program practices. Ultimately our long term goal will be reached that more young people will be served and supported by high quality mentoring relationships. Outputs and outcomes to be measured within this theory of change will include the following National Performance Measures: G3-3.2 - the number of community volunteers managed by CNCS supported organizations or national service participants; G3-3.8 - the number of hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants; G3-3.3 - the number of organizations implementing three or more effective services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants; G3-3.10 - the number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more effective; G3-3.11 - the number of new systems and business process or enhancements to existing systems and business process put in place as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS -- supported organizations or national service participants; and G3-3.19 - the number of new beneficiaries from one or more of the targeted or underserved populations that will be served by mentoring programs in the state. In the upcoming funding cycle MMP will answer the following three research questions: 1) are MMP AmeriCorps members empowered with the skills, knowledge and resources to actively engage in the community to create positive change in the mentoring field?; 2) is there an increase in the number of volunteers recruited to serve as mentors?; 3) and has the capacity of mentoring programs been enhanced in order to serve more youth in high quality mentoring relationships? These research questions will be carried out through a quasi-experimental design using pre and post test surveys to measure outcomes. We will be able to gather data for each of our three-year funding cycles and use the data to strengthen our logic model, improve our program design and most importantly communicate the effects and worth of the MMP AmeriCorps program. The evaluator that will work on this project will be a person who has a great amount of experience and skills working with nonprofits and will understand the challenges and opportunities of the volunteer generation. S/he will be experienced in obtaining both organizational and youth development metrics and have experience with culturally competent practices. The estimated budget for this project is \$2,500.

Amendment Justification

n/a

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Clarification Summary

May 18,2015

As requested by CNCS, Mass Mentoring partnership has reduced our CNCS grant request by \$9,506.00 less than initially proposed, to an award of \$307,370. We have made adjustments to our budget in the following areas:

Personnel Expenses

Shifted \$5,000 of the Director of Program Services salary from CNCS to New Grantee Share

Personnel Fringe Benefits

Shifted costs between CNCS to New Grantee Share

Travel

Deleted travel to CNCS sponsored national conference.

Training

Deleted the cost of professional development for the program manager from this grant to another funding source. This new funding source pays for professional development of all staff at Mass Mentoring Partnership

Member Training

Deleted professional development stipends for senior corps members.

Deleted professional development speaker for members.

Mass Mentoring will create opportunities for senior corps members to be trained with alternative methods.

Living Allowance

Shifted funds from CNCS cost to New Grantee share.

Corporation Fixed Percentage

Shifted funds between Commission fixed amount and CNCS share.

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MSY was reduced to \$12,295 as required

Additional funding for grantee share will come from unrestricted funds raised through special events.

Additional Clarifications for 4/17/2015

AmeriCorps members placed at Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) are not responsible for MMP AmeriCorps program development and do not engage in program administration to support the implementation of the AmeriCorps program. The roles of these AmeriCorps members do not supplant, displace or duplicate MMP employees.

MMP places 22 members in mentoring programs across the State (host sites). These host sites develop service plans that include activities to build the capacity of their specific mentoring program. The three AmeriCorps members placed at MMP have impact on all member host sites, therefore increasing the resources we bring to all of the sites. The service of these three members also impact the practices of 250 mentoring programs that are a part of the MMP network, therefore supporting and building the capacity of hosts site mentoring programs, the other AmeriCorps members placed across the State and the 250 mentoring program in the MMP network.

The service plans focus on leadership of new initiatives and promoting best practices in the area of: 1) mentor program development, including improved implementation of Elements of Effective Practice; 2) mentor recruitment and/or 3) match support of mentor relationships. The outputs and outcomes of these service plans -- and those guiding all 25 members' activities - directly add to the overall capacity building performance measure targets of this AmeriCorps program.

As an example of leadership on new initiatives, a member may perform extensive outreach and relationship building activities with the Boston Public School district, promoting the availability of AmeriCorps-supported mentoring programs. If schools are interested, the member can connect the district to programs that could provide mentors to students identified by the school, allowing the mentoring programs reach new students and more matches to be made. In addition the mentoring program will be in a position to foster a sustainable relationship with the school. These efforts will be especially helpful in growing newer mentoring programs that meet the goals of My Brother's Keeper. Although Mass Mentoring Partnerships feels very confident that these members are partaking in services allowable under the terms of the AmeriCorps provisions and regulations, if the review panel

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deems their role questionable or unallowable, MMP will revise the proposed project and distribute these members to mentoring programs across the State.

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As we stated in our original proposal, within the budget developed the CNCS cost per MSY has been reduced from \$12,817 from our last CNCS award to \$12,675. MMP has consistently exceeded the minimum match requirement for each year of funding in past awards. This proposal represents a 51% match rate which is well above the 42% required of programs funded for eight years. We believe that we are submitting this proposal with a low and competitive cost per MSY.

A. Programmatic Clarification Items

1. Mass Mentoring Senior Corps Members - Senior AmeriCorps Ambassadors of Mentoring do not supervise members, do not duplicate or supplant existing staff roles, and continue to provide direct service at their assigned host site as their primary role, while taking on new leadership roles within the Corps.

We are proud that each year we have a small, but highly energized and dedicated cadre of AmeriCorps members reapply and are accepted to return to either the same or a different host site to serve for an additional year of service in the field of mentoring.

MMP strives to create a positive experience for returning AmeriCorps members by offering new challenges, opportunities for leadership roles and professional development, and to be able to expand and share the wisdom gained from their past service experience. To this end we create a senior AmeriCorps Ambassador of Mentoring service project scope that clearly defines their role, responsibilities and benefits of this position. These include: * Serving as a Peer Mentor to incoming AmeriCorps members AmeriCorps members acting in the role of Peer Mentor are in no way responsible for providing supervision or management of their fellow Corps members. Supervision and management are the responsibility of the Program Manager. Responsibilities may include planning and facilitating reflection activities and discussion groups, supporting and leading reflective blog postings on the MMP website or offering support and problem solving when needed. Peer Mentors allow conversations and reflections to unfold naturally and our Senior AmeriCorps members have been able to serve as role models and promote and support our connection to the service movement. *

Serving in Leadership Roles

Senior Corps members participate in the development and implementation of Corps meetings, professional development activities and retreats. Responsibilities may include developing and leading energizer activities, supporting logistical planning, identifying Corps needs and programming that

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meets these needs, developing and nurturing relationships with MMP AmeriCorps Alumni, identifying volunteer or low cost trainers, speakers and panelists, supporting the development of the Corps as a group by promoting and leading social activities. One of the most important outcomes of having Senior Corps members take on leadership roles, is that they bring the voice of the Corps members to all planning and implementation activities. We have found that having Corps members in leadership roles builds the group buy in for service projects since they feel confident that their interests, skills and needs were considered in the planning process.

Benefits:

* Additional professional development opportunities -

Senior AmeriCorps members receive additional professional development outside of the programs and opportunities provided to the Corps as a whole. These opportunities are identified and designed for each member. Senior Corps members are offered a budgeted amount to seek training outside of MMP that supports their particular host site service scope or their own professional development. *

Additional living expenses

Understanding that additional leadership projects take additional time we offer a modest, additional living allowance to show the importance we place on the role.

2. The Role of Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) AmeriCorps Ambassadors of Mentoring - The MMP AmeriCorps program requires that all 25 Corps members work to build capacity of their host sites and collectively improve the field of mentoring. MMP hosts three Corps members whose service plans are developed to provide leadership opportunities for the individual members and to build the capacity of our organization to better impact the mentoring field as a whole. The positions at MMP and do not supplant, duplicate or displace existing staff. The efforts of the Corps members allow MMP to have a greater impact and move projects to more advanced stages. The projects allow members to leave behind their footprint in completed processes, systems or products that add to the MMP work flow by increasing our capacity, improving our service delivery and improving our ability to sustain the work they have accomplished. In addition, the MMP Corps members serve the collective AmeriCorps program project goal of recruiting mentors. This is a task that is not a part of any workplan of MMP employees but is seen as part of the collective success of the Corps. This activity links all 25 Corps members together and allows them to strategize, implement and celebrate their collective success.

Over the years that MMP has been implementing the AmeriCorps program, AmeriCorps members serving at MMP developed, implemented and/or supported direct service projects in the areas of

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program development, match support, and mentor recruitment and marketing. These are three of the four capacity building areas required of all host sites. Projects have included but are not limited to:

Program development * Lead ongoing efforts to develop stronger collaborations and programmatic opportunities to expand mentoring programs with the Boston Public School System * Provide support to disseminate Mass Mentoring Counts survey and conduct extensive outreach to mentoring programs to ensure participation * Support the analysis of Mass Mentoring Counts data and develop reports and presentation materials in conjunction with MMP staff and outside research team * Conduct research and identify potential partnerships with schools and school districts around the State.

Match support - * Support the identification and distribution of match activities, including coordinating ticket distribution * Coordinate communication with mentoring programs around match activity opportunities * Create training and advance training opportunities for programs on supporting matches and targeting specific areas of support.

Mentor Recruitment and marketing - * Manage My Brother's Keeper, Mayor's Mentoring Movement program partners and develop and support innovative mentor recruitment strategies * Evaluate current strategies of social media usage * Develop and implement innovative social media campaigns and identify new tools to promote mentoring statewide * Further develop and tie in communications and marketing efforts within the context of social media and knowledge sharing. * Create dedicated support for programs to recruit mentors of color * Develop mentor recruitment strategies for the Corps to use to better meet their collective goals

3. Evaluation Plan - Required evaluation plan has been submitted via email to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov.

B. Budget Clarification -

1. Section: C. Staff Travel - As part of the professional development of our Corps members, MMP develops and implements a three day/two night Social Justice Retreat. This retreat is designed to be a thorough and intense experience in which members are asked to examine power and privilege from an individual, ideological and an institutional basis. This retreat takes place at a remote retreat center to better create an atmosphere that is safe and focused. It is necessary for the two MMP staff that develops and implements this retreat to be in attendance on site. The budget includes a line item of \$250 to cover the lodging and meals of the two MMP staff attending and facilitating the retreat.

C. Performance Measure Clarification: -

1. The Problem Statement: Thousands of young people in Massachusetts are living in communities

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where they face social challenges and barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential. Research has shown that the presence of a caring adult mentors in the lives of young people helps them to be more prepared academically, learn important work-readiness skills, and leads them to make healthier decisions in all aspects of their lives. Mentoring ultimately leads to healthier and more resilient communities by creating important protective factors for young people by creating a web of support. Research has also determined that programs that implement the Elements of Effective Practice with fidelity are more likely to reach their outcomes. Programs in Massachusetts have identified capacity challenges that limit their ability to implement the Elements of Effective Practice with fidelity. Mass Mentoring Partnerships will deploy 25 AmeriCorps members across the state to implement evidence based, mentoring practices to build capacity of mentoring organizations so that they can increase the quantity and quality of mentoring relationships.

2. Performance Measure G3-3.11: MMP chose to accomplish AmeriCorps State and National Capacity Building Performance Measure Outcome G3-3.11. As stated in the Performance Measure Directions this outcome is defined by CNCS as: "Number of new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancements to existing systems and business processes put in place as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS- supported organizations or national participants".

MMP will report the number of new systems and businesses processes developed and the number of existing systems and business processes that have been enhanced as a result of the capacity building services provided to MMP/and our host sites by CNCS. Each new system or system enhancement that supports the program delivery model will only be counted one time.

Output: Each service category (program start up, mentor recruitment and marketing, match support and mentor/mentee training) have a sub set of business processes that contribute to the success and outcomes of the service category. Each AmeriCorps member's service plan is created to develop or enhance systems in at least one service category. MMP will require that host sites report on the subset of business processes of the primary service category. This data will determine the number of business processes that are newly developed or enhanced through the service of the AmeriCorps Member. The target number for this Performance Measure will be 35. We would like to clarify that we have updated this outcome in the logic model and performance measure section.

D. Strategic Engagement Slots - In order to recruit and accept a diverse group of AmeriCorps members we conduct extensive outreach and develop strong ties with diverse communities. Last year in an anonymous survey posed to our Corps, 64% of our members reported that they had a disability

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either physical, cognitive or emotional . We are committed to continuing to reach out and attract and engage such a diverse group. To continue to do this, MMP will make a concerted effort to work with organizations serving individuals with disabilities, such as Partners for Youth with Disabilities and Best Buddies (both part of MMP's network), to identify opportunities to recruit from their networks. At this time we do not target a specific number of slots for people with disabilities.

2 - MMP is not seeking any additional MSY's at this time.

E. MSY with no Program Funds Attached Clarification- MP is not seeking any additional MSYs with no program funds attached.

Continuation Changes

n/a

Grant Characteristics