

# APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

## 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** The Mass Mentoring Partnership Inc.

**Application ID:** 15AC170799

**Program Name:** Ambassadors of Mentoring

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 recent data from qualified sources to describe the need for mentoring programs in target communities to counter low graduation rates, high dropout rates, and under/unemployment rates in comparison to the state average, as well as high violent activities amongst youth.

The application clearly describes the proposed activities to include the Elements of Effective Practice model to build capacity in mentoring programs, which is well-connected to other capacity building outcomes.

The applicant provides a thorough explanation of the planned orientation and ongoing training for Members and asks them to sign a contract to ensure understanding. Training includes opportunities for personal and professional growth as well as opportunities to build relationships with other Members.

The applicant has developed a survey to assess the civic engagement of Members post-service.

The applicant has a recruitment plan that reaches out to diverse applicants in their communities and has been recognized as a model for other AmeriCorps programs in the state.

The applicant clearly proposes the use of 25 full-time AmeriCorps members to be placed at mentoring host sites across the state of Massachusetts in order to build capacity through the implementation of evidenced-based practices for the purpose of recruiting and retaining mentors, improving programmatic processes and systems and expanding the number of high quality mentoring relationships for at-risk youth and youth of color across the state.

AmeriCorps members will leverage 350 volunteers to engage in high quality mentoring relationships with youth providing 20,000 hours of mentoring across the state.

The applicant documents a strong need for Mentoring programs as the state of Massachusetts has above the nations average unemployment rates, 52% graduation rate, and 16% of youth living in poverty.

The applicant clearly cites research on mentoring and it's significant positive effect on high school dropouts, high levels of absenteeism, recurring behavior problems, career readiness and under/unemployment, and violence prevention, all of which are prevalent across the state of Massachusetts.

The applicant proposes the presence of an effectively trained, supported mentor within a structured and goal-oriented program in order to give youths the opportunity to overcome challenges and develop the resiliency and skills needed to succeed.

The applicant clearly states the need of Mentors needed for at risk youth, as indicated by the data showing high unemployment, poverty levels and dropout rates. The applicant make a direct connection of these statistics as placing youth in high risk status.

The applicant clearly outlines the extent of the need within the counties it will be serving, and the need is well supported by extensive data references from US census reports (2013)

The applicant has a strong intention of developing the Members' lifelong commitment to service, through a variety of mechanisms, including reflection, post service assessments, the opportunity to build new skills and become part of the whole culture of service.

Members will be required to not only hear the required prohibited activities training, but in addition must sign a contract of understanding.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant states it has a strong recruitment plan which allows it to reach into the communities where they will be serving, but it does not fully describe that plan, which makes it difficult to assess if the strategy will be successful.