

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

City of Orlando will support seventy-five (75) AmeriCorps members who will create an academic advocacy and counseling program targeted at high school juniors and seniors residing in Orlando's five lowest income neighborhoods. This program will focus on Priority 1 to propose a transformational project that uses a national service solution to ensure that every high school senior has a career or educational opportunity upon high school graduation. The CNCS investment of approximately \$892,301 will be matched with approximately \$306,579.

Members will primarily serve at five local high schools (Jones H.S., Edgewater H.S., Boone H.S., Colonial H.S. or Lake Nona H.S.) and also serve at City of Orlando recreation centers located throughout the targeted neighborhoods (Engelwood, Smith, Northwest, Downtown, Jackson or Rosemont). At the end of project period, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for assisting over 2,000 students to successfully complete the program.

The overall goal of the City of Orlando's Operation AmeriCorps initiative is to ensure every student enrolled in the program graduates high school successfully and has a designated future track (post-secondary school, technical school, military enlistment, AmeriCorps or employment). The initiative will include three phases of programming to assist each older youth throughout the two years. These phases include academic tutoring, education and career counseling, and college immersion / workforce development training. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 200 volunteers that will be engaged in the services provided to the students.

Specifically, sixty-five (65) AmeriCorps State and National members will provide school day and out of school tutoring, academic counseling and advocacy services, and youth leadership and workforce training. These services will ideally be provided the first year from October 1, 2015 to July 31, 2016. The late start is due to the length of time it will require to recruit this large number of qualified members for the project. Five (5) AmeriCorps VISTA members will assist in overall program design and coordinate partner and citizen volunteer outreach and engagement activities. The members will serve from August 1, 2015 to July 31, 2016. One team of ten (10) AmeriCorps NCCC members will serve from June 6, 2016 to June 24, 2016 and will provide training and education to students during the summer college immersion and post-secondary pathways portion of the program located at the University of Central Florida. In addition, Senior Corps members will be engaged to participate in the tutoring and mentoring portions of the program.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

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Rationale / Approach / Program Design:

Community Need: The City of Orlando serves over 4,000 children daily, year-round, at 34 sites, including recreation centers, schools, and non-profit partner locations. Since 2006, we have systematically enhanced our children's programs with the goals of reducing juvenile crime and improving academic performance citywide. The largest limitations the City faces is lack of staff and programs to 1) engage older youth in high crime/low-income neighborhoods; and 2) provide intensive academic support/counseling and workforce development training to the large number of academically-struggling youth who attend our programs or reside in these neighborhoods.

Over 56,000 youth residing in the City of Orlando live in poverty. Older youth ages 16-19 that are currently in the 11th or 12th grade make up over 20% of the total population living at or below the poverty line. These students attend Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), the 10th largest district in the nation and classified as a high need local education agency by the U.S. Department of Education. The neighborhoods and schools targeted in this initiative contain a substantial number of Orlando's most impoverished and low performing students. These neighborhoods are Parramore, Washington Shores / Carver Shores, Rosemont, Engelwood and Lee Vista.

The initiative will serve high school juniors and seniors residing in the identified neighborhoods. These students attend Jones H.S., Edgewater H.S., Boone H.S., Colonial H.S., or Lake Nona H.S. and are considered economically disadvantaged, low-performing, and/or not on track for graduation. The schools were chosen not for their overall performance levels, but rather because they serve the populations of the five targeted neighborhoods the students currently reside in. Orange County Public Schools will identify each of the students and City of Orlando will ensure home residence.

The Florida Department of Education reported the OCPS drop-out rate at 1.3% and the graduation rate at 75.9% for the 2013-2014 school year. However, in the specific communities targeted for this initiative the drop-out rate rises to 8.7% and the graduation rate drops to 61.2%. The Florida Literacy Coalition reports 74% of Orange County adults have received a high school diploma and/or higher education. Conversely, 20% of Orange County adults are considered "functionally illiterate". In the communities targeted in this application, only 55% of adults have received a high school diploma and the number of "functionally illiterate" adults increases to 38%.

Orange County had nearly 5,700 juvenile arrests in 2013-2014. The juvenile crime rates in these targeted neighborhoods are four to six times higher than the rest of the county. Furthermore, the percentage of arrests for violent crimes, domestic violence and drug related offenses are three times to four times higher in these communities than in the rest of Orange County. These statistics represent a

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climate of low performance and environmental dangers that surround disadvantaged students from early learning through adulthood. If intervention is not provided these students are likely to continue the cycle of low performance.

According to a national study by the Brookings Institution, the current unemployment rate for teens and young adults in the United States is worse than during the Great Depression and recommends subsidized job programs that include education and internships as a solution. The Plummeting Labor Market Fortunes of Teens and Young Adults, released March 14, 2014 by the Brookings Institution points out that in 2000, 45 percent of teens (aged 16 to 19) were employed. By 2011, the last year covered by the study, that ratio had plummeted to 26 percent. The study's lead author, Andrew Sum, the head of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University in Boston, claimed the numbers would be considered a national emergency if it affected people older than 19.

Though the national unemployment rate has fallen steadily, youth unemployment remains stubbornly high, and the jobless rate is even higher among young minorities. For young people between the ages of 16 - 24, unemployment is more than twice the national rate, at 14.7 percent. That equates to almost 6 million young people that are neither in school or working. Unemployment is most severe among low-income teens, those who need the jobs the most, according to the report. The report states that low-income youth are missing key education and employment experiences, which places them at increased risk of negative outcomes including long spells of unemployment, poverty, criminal behavior, substance abuse and incarceration.

The 2012 unemployment rate for Florida youth ages 16-19 is 23.5 percent and 14.3 percent for those ages 20-24, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The overall rate for Florida youth ages 16-24 is 16.4 percent. Of the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the country, Orlando ranks 82nd in the employment rate of youth ages 16-19 (22.1%) and 51st of young adults ages 20-24 (64.8%). Over the past 12 years the employment rate has declined 24% for those ages 16-19 and 8.9% for those ages 20-24. Overall, Orlando ranks 64th in youth employment and opportunity. Ultimately, this places thousands of under-served youth at increased risk for subsequent poverty and unemployment throughout their lifetimes.

AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve

Program Focus and Design - The overall goal of the City of Orlando's Operation AmeriCorps initiative is to ensure every student enrolled in the program graduates high school successfully and has a designated future track (post-secondary school, technical school, military enlistment, AmeriCorps or

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employment). The initiative will operate both a school year and summer program that includes three phases of programming to assist each older youth throughout the two-year program. These phases include academic tutoring, education and career counseling, college immersion / workforce development training.

The school year portion of the program will follow the OCPS school calendar and typically operate Monday - Friday from August 4, 2015 - June 8, 2016. The program will include the identification and recruitment of students, in-school and out-of-school tutoring, and academic advising / advocacy. The summer portion will follow the City of Orlando summer program schedule and typically operate Monday - Friday from June 13 to July 31, 2016. The summer will include specialized out of school tutoring, youth development training and college immersion / post-secondary pathway program. The immersion program will consist of three one week camps located at the University of Central Florida. The program will be modeled after the fundamentals and curriculum of the highly successful UCF SOAR Summer Bridge program for first generation college students. Members and targeted students will live in campus dorms and take part in trainings and classes at the various colleges within the university. AmeriCorps members will serve in a variety of roles to achieve the anticipated outcome.

AmeriCorps State - 65 Full-time Members

Members will be divided into five teams of thirteen and assigned to one of the five targeted high schools and adjacent community centers. Members will provide interventions during the school day, after school and throughout the summer. During a typical 10 hour day, corps members spend 4 hours providing tutoring and in-class academic support; 1 hour for lunch/break; 1 hour of planning and documentation time with teammates and/or teachers/specialists; 2 hours of afterschool enrichment activities and academic counseling. Members will utilize Orange County Public Schools academic assessment planning toolkit and intensive tutoring curriculum to implement activities for their students. Each member will be assigned up to thirty students as part of their core focus group and be expected to provide the following to each student:

Academic Tutoring -

1. Provide both school day and out of school tutoring and mentoring for students.
2. Individual and small group tutoring provided in both settings.
3. Focus on core subject areas (language arts, math and science).
4. Provide content specific tutoring or test preparation based on student input and a review of homework assignments, progress reports and report cards.
5. Specialized areas that include SAT / ACT, study skills and state standardized testing.

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### Education and Career Counseling -

1. Ensure each student has a dedicated post-high school track for education/career.
2. Develop Academic Success Plans for each youth in the fall and spring school semester that align with the academic and social goals set during one-on-one meetings.
3. Schedule low-interference classroom observations where necessary, schedule and/or participate in team or individual teacher meetings concerning student progress.
4. Identify, prepare and register students for SAT / ACT testing and other post-secondary required testing.
5. Facilitate students' completion of college / post-secondary career portfolio assignments.

### AmeriCorps Vista - 5 Full-time Members

Members will serve in the administrative office and be assigned to one of the five targeted neighborhoods. Members will provide services throughout the school year and summer portions of the program. The members will focus on assisting in program design and coordination, student and citizen volunteer recruitment, citizen volunteer training, partner and volunteer outreach/engagement, and assisting in data collection and reporting. The members' main role will be to create a support network of community based volunteers, corporate stakeholders and additional national service providers to advance the school year education program and summer college immersion / post-secondary pathway program. Members will create neighborhood specific assessments that address the targeted population's overall needs and then identify, coordinate, and engage local community partners and existing national service programs (AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, Volunteer Generation Fund) to increase the intensity and scope of the initiatives impact to meet these needs. In addition, each member will be required to provide the following:

1. Facilitate students' access to wrap-around resources and enrichment activities offered within the initiative and by partnering organizations, including field trips, athletics, community service projects, youth-focused events, STEM and arts activities; college/career exploration; and youth employment opportunities.
2. Learn mission and perform needs assessment of organization to identify challenges and opportunities for expanding the use of community volunteers to maximize organizational impact.
3. Develop detailed volunteer engagement plans that define steps needed to implement High Impact Volunteer Programs for initiative.
4. Develop sustainable tools to support implementation of volunteer engagement plans for partner

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organizations, including creation or update of volunteer databases and program manuals documenting database, recruitment strategy and communications templates.

5. Recruit and train community volunteers for projects in accordance with volunteer engagement plan and lead community volunteers in execution of projects in accordance with volunteer engagement plan.
6. Observe and gather outcome data on proficiency and competence to ensure the initiative meets/exceeds stated service delivery goals and performance measures.
7. Provide program outreach into the targeted communities where project activities are taking place and make presentations to community groups that may serve as potential partners or volunteers.
8. Disseminate information about the initiative and its volunteer opportunities. Typical activities would include: hosting an information table at various site and attending volunteer recruitment events including volunteer fairs at corporations, universities and off-site orientations, as needed.
9. Coordinate events related to the initiative, including program launch, recognition, closing or wrap-up celebrations.
10. Collect, track, report and analyze data on youth outcomes as specified in the service plan.

AmeriCorps NCCC - 10 members (1 team)

Members will lead the summer college immersion / post-secondary pathways education program. This program will be the final phase for targeted students and allow them to live and learn in an intensive academic setting. The program is designed to foster career exploration, build on the skills learned during the school year, and promote civic engagement and national service. Members will serve as both instructors and content facilitators to the students throughout the one week camps. Daily activities include facilitation of college transition concepts in a classroom setting, team building with groups of students and monitoring student dorm life. Members will utilize Orange County Public Schools Career Pathways curriculum and resource toolkit to implement daily activities and stress the three areas of rigor, relevance and relationships. Members will be expected to provide the following:

1. Educate students on the multiple post-secondary options available to high school graduates including college, military placement, trade or technical school, national service or employment.
2. Prepare students to understand career options and what tools and skills are needed to make positive work-related decisions and build successful careers.
3. Offer participants a chance to understand workplace and job market realities, and to develop concrete skills required of most, if not all, workers (e.g., communications, prioritization, professionalism, financial basics).

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4. Student Training focus areas: Post-secondary options, work readiness and employability skills, academic competency and skills based learning, communication and teamwork, life-long learning, financial literacy, leadership and management, and civic and community responsibility.

Evidence-Based / Evidence Informed and Measurable Community Impact: City of Orlando's Operation AmeriCorps initiative employs evidence-based, evidence-informed, and promising practices. City of Orlando currently uses all cited interventions in its youth development programs and will use and/or expand these interventions in the proposed initiative. Use of these multiple interventions has proved highly successful and garnered recognition for several City programs. In 2012, the City's Parramore Kidz Zone program was cited by the White House Council for Community Solutions as one of 12 "Needle-Moving Collaboratives" in its 2012 report Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth, with evaluators documenting an 82.3% decline in juvenile arrests for Parramore youth. As well as increases in the percentage of students proficient in reading and math in elementary (+15% / +18%), middle (+4% / +15%) and high school (+8% / +21%).

Similarly, the City's After-School All-Stars program experienced noteworthy success since the launch of its 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and as such was recognized as a model 21st CCLC program site for the past four years by the Florida Department of Education. During this time the program increased student academic achievement and school attendance while dramatically reducing student behavior problems and juvenile crime for the middle school sites in which it operates. ASAS / FL-DOE 21st CCLC cumulative report shows increases in: average GPA (+.7), percentage of students with a 2.0 GPA or higher (+23%), percentage of students with a 3.0 GPA or higher (+17%), percentage of students with a 4.0 GPA (+13%), FCAT reading scores of 3 or higher (+21%), FCAT math scores of 3 or higher (+23%), FCAT science scores of 3 or higher (+22%), percentage of students missing 3 school day or less (+15%), percentage of students with perfect school attendance (+19%) and 8th grade graduation rate (+23%). The report also illustrates decreases in: school suspensions (-95%), school expulsions (-93%) and juvenile arrests (-100%). This past year, the City's OPASS AmeriCorps program served over 1,200 at-risk students which resulted in over 80% of those students successfully increasing their performance in math, reading and attendance. The program met all performance measures throughout the year and is currently in its second year of operation.

Strategy: Enhance out-of school programs so they reinforce school day content, including use of the 21st CCLC model at Operation AmeriCorps sites. Extending the school day via OST programming that is both recreational and tightly intertwined with school curricula produces a one-half letter grade improvement in reading and math (Chicago Community Schools Initiative). Also, an experimental

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evaluation of 21st Century programs found the program effective in increasing parental involvement, frequency of being tutored and fewer afternoons spent watching TV. Dynarski, M., et al (2003); Zief, S.G. (2005).

Strategy: Expand access to tutoring programs. A rich base of evidence supports the efficacy of tutoring programs to extend the learning day or school year and promote/sustain academic achievement. Multiple program options are listed in the What Works Clearinghouse and other evidence-based practice portals. Strong evidence also exists on the positive effect of tutoring on academic achievement for low-performing and high-risk students (e.g. Baker et. al., 2000; Landberg et. al. 2006; Morris et al., 1990; Vadasy & Sanders, 2008).

Strategy: Programs targeting older youth that include education and career programs, mentoring, case management, and providing child care for young parents. Experimental evaluations such as those summarized in What Works for Older Youth During the Transition to Adulthood, (Hadley, Mbwana and Hair, Child Trends Fact Sheet, Publication 2010-05, March 2010) synthesize findings from 31 studies that implemented random assignment experimental evaluations to examine the impact of various intervention strategies on youth outcomes during the transition to adulthood. The review found that education and career programs can be effective especially for low income youth and those targeted starting at middle school. Specific intervention strategies, such as mentoring, case management, and providing child care for young parents are associated with program success across outcomes.

Strategy: Operation AmeriCorps post-secondary access strategy is informed by evidence-based practice articulated in a 2009 American Youth Policy Forum publication entitled *Success at Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond*. Components are embedded in every step of the City's youth programming, including initiatives that: increase learning opportunities during out-of-school time; ensure that youth who drop out have opportunities to reconnect to education; build the capacity of the adults within the various systems so they have a commitment to high expectations for all youth and the skills to provide high-quality services to young people; and ensure that the full range of education and youth service providers are involved as partners in college and career readiness.

Strategy: Response to Intervention: The program utilizes the evidence-based Response to Intervention (RtI) approach (American Institute for Research and the National Center on Response to Intervention) to provide the right intervention to the right student at the right time. RtI is a data-driven approach to student screening and selection, progress monitoring, and prevention. Through

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RtI, members deliver preventative interventions to students identified as tier one (low to moderate risk) and targeted interventions to students identified as tier two (moderate to high risk). Operation AmeriCorps focus on providing targeted interventions in attendance, behavior and academic low performance is based on the research conducted by Johns Hopkins University that concluded that student performance in these areas is a means to identify students who are at high risk of dropping out of high school (Neild, Balfanz, and Herzog, 2007). Preventive interventions, such as classroom support and extended learning, address increasing student engagement. When a student fails to participate across multiple school-relevant activities, such as in class participation, the student has a higher chance of not completing high school (¿Withdrawing from School¿, Finn, Review of Educational Research, Summer 1989). This theory of change links student needs to core strategies to activities and subsequently to outcomes for school success.

Overall Change: At the end of the two years, members will have provided over 100,000 hours of interventions in education and academic/career counseling to economically disadvantaged / low-performing / at-risk students to help them excel in school, graduate and successfully move on to an identified career track.

Demonstrable Impact: Depending upon funding, City of Orlando anticipates providing services to over 2,000 youth in the partnership program over the course of the two years. Of those enrolled, 90% will successfully complete all phases of the Operation AmeriCorps program, graduate high school successfully and proceed on their planned education/career path. Post-secondary pathway engagement will be tracked through the completion of the student¿s Academic Success Plans by members. Student graduation and academic progress will be certified by Orange County Public Schools.

Measurement Tools: Impact will be measured through analyzing student level data and surveys administered to corps members, teachers, and school principals and liaisons. Student level data includes baseline data provided by the district at the start of the school year; formative data collected by the member or provided by the teacher throughout the year; and summative data (assessment data, overall attendance and academic data) provided at the end of the grading or assessment cycle.

Reporting Capacity: City of Orlando staff will provide reports on member activities and student results per the designated schedule. Operation AmeriCorps will collect data on student enrollment, intervention time, baseline performance, and formative assessments three times a year. Summative reports are produced at mid-year (January) and year-end (July). Reports will be submitted to Volunteer Florida following the quarterly reporting schedule. The City of Orlando partners closely

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with Orange County Public Schools to access student data for its PKZ, ASAS and OPASS programs. Through a formalized data sharing agreement, the school district allows access to all student data including attendance, academics and behavior. Information is gathered on the school site level by school administration and delivered to program administration on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis. This allows the programs to utilize the data to make day-to-day program decisions on academic content and ever changing individual student needs. In addition, the data sharing agreement allows access to student records from previous years. This allows the program to create a true picture of student academic achievement level. Performance Measure Selection: Operation AmeriCorps will opt into Priority 1 to propose a transformational project that uses a national service solution to ensure that every high school senior has a career or educational opportunity upon high school graduation. AmeriCorps national standardized performance measures include: Academic Improvement - ED1 with ED2, ED9 and ED10.

### Organizational Capability

Organizational Capability:

Organizational Strength - Orlando's history dates back to 1838 when the U.S. Army built nearby Fort Gatlin to protect settlers from Indian attacks. By 1875, the Town of Orlando was incorporated with 85 inhabitants and by 2014 the City's population had grown to over 255,000 residents. Today, Orlando's mission is to enhance the quality of life in Orlando by delivering public services in a knowledgeable, responsive and financially responsible manner.

In 2004, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer launched an unprecedented effort to build community consensus around goals for youth, education, crime prevention, neighborhood revitalization and citizen engagement. During the past decade the City began the systematic transformation of its youth programming to incorporate evidence-based and evidence-informed practices with the goals of reducing juvenile crime, improving academic performance, increasing post secondary education and growing our City's future workforce.

A vital part of this new framework has been the incorporation of national service programs that include AmeriCorps State and AmeriCorps VISTA members into the City's youth development programs. As well as the City's participation as a Leadership City in the national Cities of Service Coalition that was launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Rockefeller Foundation in 2009, and has increased the impact and expanded the City's highly successful citizen-volunteer engagement program. In 2013, Mayor Dyer partnered with Governor Rick Scott and received the Corporation for National and Community Service's Governor and Mayor's Initiative Grant to implement the

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Orlando Partnership for School Success (OPASS). In 2013, Voices for National Service recognized Mayor Dyer as the nation's Local Leader in National Service, because of his commitment to engaging national service as a key partner in addressing local challenges. If funded, the Mayor's office will play an essential role in the execution and sustainability of the project. Mayor Dyer has committed the City's vast resources to recruit the large pool of candidates to serve in the initiative, engage corporate and community stakeholders to partner with the City and act as the public voice and advocate for national service Central Florida. The Operation AmeriCorps initiative would continue Mayor Dyer's goal of making the City of Orlando a hub for national service and a leader among municipalities in solving real world problems with innovative and collaborative programs.

The Operation AmeriCorps initiative will be implemented by the City's Families, Parks & Recreation Department (FPR). With an annual budget of approximately \$30,000,000, FPR operates 111 parks, 50 playgrounds, 53 ball fields, 19 recreation centers, 2 senior centers, 11 pools, and a wide range of programs serving citizens throughout Orlando. Currently, FPR's programs primarily focus on educating youth ages K-10th grade in the areas of academics, enrichment, literacy, healthy lifestyles, workforce development and service learning. Operation AmeriCorps represents an opportunity for Orlando to expand existing youth education programs and acquire essential resources for assisting older youth, which would be a crucial piece in creating a true continuum of care from cradle to career for Orlando's most vulnerable youth.

FPR focuses heavily upon evaluation of its children's programs, regularly tracking and reporting metrics and utilizing logic models to guide planning and ensure accountability. FPR is in a strong position to complete an evaluation of O-PASS and/or provide support to an external evaluator should that be desired by the Corporation for National and Community Service and/or Volunteer Florida. FPR has the experience, staffing and management structure to plan, implement, administer, evaluate and sustain Operation AmeriCorps, which will operate out of the FPR Director's Office. The FPR Director, Lisa Early, brings 32 years of experience developing and managing government and grant-funded non-profit youth-serving organizations, working for organizations as diverse as Save the Children Federation, UNICEF, the U.S. Department of State - Agency for International Development, and Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children & Women. During her career, Ms. Early founded, directed and raised and managed grant funds (including federal funds) for numerous innovative children's programs.

The initiative will be overseen by Ms. Early's designee, City of Orlando After-School All-Stars Director Executive Director Tyler Chandler. Mr. Chandler currently manages the ASAS non-profit organization

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and the OPASS program for FPR. Mr. Chandler has over 13 years of experience managing youth development and juvenile justice programs in the state of Florida. In addition, he designs, implements and oversees the majority of FPR's state and federal grants from the DOE, DJJ and DOH.

The project budget includes funding for a full-time Operation AmeriCorps Program Manager who will report to Mr. Chandler and oversee all recruitment, training and on-going support for the 75 AmeriCorps members. This position will be filled by current OPASS Program Guillermo Escobar. Mr. Escobar has managed youth development programs for the past 6 years through FPR. He also assists in the management of City's FL-DOE 21st CCLC grants and several other foundation and corporate grants. Mr. Escobar will be responsible for administrative and reporting functions required under the grant, with support provided by the FPR Fiscal Manager, FPR Grants Manager and FPR Grants Accountant who are collectively responsible for managing the Department's 28 million annual budget, as well as approximately \$1.5 million in grant funds that come to FPR each year. Examples of grants managed by this team include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, federal summer feeding and after school feeding grants, and an AmeriCorps VISTA program, to name a few. In addition, the project budget includes funding for a full-time Academic Coordinator. Since this position is vacant; a comprehensive recruitment and selection process will be conducted once funding has been awarded. Desired qualifications include a minimum 4-year college degree (Masters degree preferred) in youth development, education, social services, public administration or a related field; at least 5 years of progressively responsible relevant experience including, preferably, experience managing grant-funded programs and working in an AmeriCorps (or similar) program; and aptitude for working with opportunity youth. Once hired, the Academic Coordinator will undergo a comprehensive new employee orientation and training program tailored to his/her role, including on-going participation in the City's robust series of training programs; one-on-one meetings with key project players including thorough visits to all sites where corps members will be stationed; and on-going participation in Volunteer Florida conferences and training opportunities.

Member Experience: Supervision

Plan for Adequate Support: The 65-member team will have individual supervisors at each specified location and be overseen by the Program Manager and Academic Coordinator. The supervisor will conduct daily team check-ins, hold weekly team meetings, and conduct monthly one-on-ones with each member of their team to track progress toward goals and service quality, and address school, service or personal issues. The City of Orlando will utilize existing managerial staff to supervise corps members. The current managerial staff possess a wide range of experiences and skill sets relevant to

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the project. In addition, they will take part in trainings on corps member management and prohibited activities.

**School Site Supervision:** Orange County Public Schools administrators and staff will provide additional supervision to corps members who are tutoring at schools sites. The school principal, assistant principal or other qualified designated school staff will provide direct oversight of the tutoring program for the school. School staff will meet regularly with program supervisor and individual staff to review student progress, corps member performance and overall effectiveness of the program.

**Supervisor Oversight:** ASAS Executive Director, City of Orlando Families, Parks and Recreation Director, and Recreation Department Director and will provide direct oversight of the Program Manager.

**Member Qualifications:** All O-PASS members must meet AmeriCorps eligibility requirements, have a high school diploma, receive requisite AmeriCorps and OCPS criminal history checks, and successfully complete City of Orlando's orientation program.

**Member Experience:** Training and Branding

**Orientation:** Members will receive a pre-service reading outlining the service model, mandatory trainings for AmeriCorps and an on-site orientation to their assigned service location (i.e. school, community center or non-profit site) led by City of Orlando staff and school administrators.

**Skills Acquired:** Members will develop skills in working with children and youth, tutoring strategies and techniques, teamwork, communication, public speaking, project management, conflict resolution and negotiation, and data management and analysis.

**Training Topics:** The City of Orlando trainings focus on operations, curriculum knowledge, classroom instruction, behavior management and modification, and technology and data entry. Additional topics include: operations, disaster preparedness and response (CPR/First Aid), a guided leadership development curriculum (called the Idealist's Journey), community asset mapping, state of education in America, in Orlando and in the target schools, diversity and disability awareness, team building, school observations, conflict resolution, classroom management, lesson design and planning, documentation of service, and individual, team, and site AmeriCorps goals.

**Partner Training:** Orange County Public Schools staff will provide direct instruction and training to all corps members. All pre-service and in-service trainings will be district approved and include topics such as school operations, curriculum, tutoring methods and classroom management. They will also provide continuous observation throughout the year to assure corps members are maintaining standards in content and academic achievement. Operation AmeriCorps will utilize ASAS's academic

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training model that was created in partnership with OCPS. The pre-school year and monthly trainings are taught by each participating school's administrators and academic coaches. The trainings focus on the general topics mentioned previously but are also specifically geared toward each individual school's needs and academic philosophies according to their School Improvement Plans. In addition to training received through the district on specific interventions, members receive regular observation and coaching on tutoring delivery. This program includes multiple training opportunities (conferences, virtual sessions, and on-site sessions), accessible training materials/tools (online resources, videos), and site based support (needs assessment, action plan development, literacy coaching).

**Uniform and Logo:** Members will receive training during orientation and checks throughout the year on proper attire during service activities. This includes wearing approved uniforms with CNCS, VF and City of Orlando logos on a daily basis. The City of Orlando will include the AmeriCorps logo on all member uniforms, recruitment material, and other collateral information. In addition, the City is uniquely equipped to promote the AmeriCorps program in the media and community through the Office of the Mayor, City Commissioners and Office of Communications.

**Components to Support Civic Participation & National Service:** Members will participate in the City's leadership development program. Through this structured program, members will develop the knowledge and skills to be effective and active citizens. By the end of the year, they will understand their own civic identity and roles they can play, develop civic capacity through competency based learning, training and coaching, and self-directed learning, and demonstrate civic action through implementation of direct service. Staff and members are able to assess individual development through performance evaluations and analysis of service data. Part of the foundation of this program will be the existing Mayor's City Academy. This 10 week program utilizes the City's unique capabilities to teach and empower individuals to discover their own civic identity. Lessons focus on the role of local government, team-based community problem solving, and personal and social development.

**Reflection:** Within the City of Orlando's civic leadership program, there exists several tools for reflection. These include a personal performance chart, activity debriefings, monthly group discussions with fellow corps members, and a graduation ceremony.

**AmeriCorps Connection:** The City of Orlando will create a corps member committee in order to connect the members working within the multiple agencies involved in the grant. This committee will also schedule volunteer events and activities that all corps members and agencies will participate in.

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These activities will be designed to promote the AmeriCorps brand and include invitations for participation from other local or state corps members. By regularly connecting a wide array of corps members in engaging and meaningful volunteer activities, Operation AmeriCorps will foster the AmeriCorps identity and strengthen each corps member's connection to the national organization.

Compliance and Accountability:

Prohibited Activities: Members will receive training during orientation, receive a handbook, and sign a Member Service Agreement with the prohibited activities included. Sign-in sheets used during registration and basic training document member participation in required trainings. City of Orlando will implement a comprehensive quality assurance program to assess all areas of programming including program objectives, data analysis, operations, curriculum, service delivery, and staffing. Staff will take part in weekly meetings, site monitoring visits and audits conducted internally and by Volunteer Florida. Program Manager will meet weekly with supervisors to discuss issues and program effectiveness. A monthly report will be made to the City's FPR Director, Recreation Department Director and ASAS Director. City of Orlando utilizes standardized rubrics, desk audits, automated systems (e.g. payroll) and site visits to ensure the program is being implemented as designed. The program supervisors are on campuses or at community centers daily and meet weekly with corps members to ensure high quality service is being provided and no members have engaged in prohibited activities. Within schools, the daily presence of the Program Manager allows for immediate detection and prevention of potential prohibited activities. Issues of non-compliance are reported to the direct supervisor of the individual responsible. Violation of City of Orlando policy is documented on performance plans and can lead to dismissal or termination.

Demonstrated Compliance: City of Orlando is a current or grantee of an AmeriCorps grant program and has a strong track record of completing and submitting required AmeriCorps documents within the specified timeframe.

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy:

The City of Orlando respectfully requests a grant award of \$892,301 at a cost/MSY of \$13,728. In our first year of operation we will provide a 26% match commitment. Our 2015-16 diversified revenue plan supports 75 corps members and we have identified 100% of our match sources for the required \$306,579 will come from City of Orlando. The budget submitted in this application is contingent upon our receipt of additional public and/or private funding for the City's cash match. Percent of Budget: The proposed project accounts for less than 1% of the City's 2015-16 FPR Department total

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operating budget of \$30,000,000. Percentage of Operating Budget: In the 2013-14 fiscal year, the CNCS grant will account for 76% of the costs to run the project. Fundraising Experience: During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the City of Orlando FPR Department raised \$4.7M in additional funding to support its community based programs. These funding sources included; local, state and federal grants, corporate grants, foundation grants, large scale fundraisers, in-kind donations and individual donations. The department partners with dozens of non-profits, faith based organizations, local corporations and/or community members in all fundraising and program initiatives.

Match Secured to Date: As noted, we have identified and/or secured 100% of match sources. To date, the City of Orlando has committed \$104,631 in cash and up to \$201,948 of in-kind resources, specifically usage of facilities, standard and web based curriculum software, and student enrichment supplies and/or materials. Return on AmeriCorps Investment: In all phases of the initiative there is substantial return on investment. Typical high level intensive tutoring programs in the Central Florida area cost on average \$40/hour per staff and when using this figure to calculate services for the population it would cost over \$2M annually to operate. Proposed rate is less than \$7.50 per tutor and will be provided at a fourth of the annual cost of a private sector program. In Orange County, the average cost for a student to attend both a high quality after-school and summer program is between \$2,800 and \$3,200 a year. Operation AmeriCorps will allow students to enroll in these programs at no cost and provide enhanced academic and support services to all participants.

Finally, according to the Alliance for Education's brief on "The High Cost of High-School Dropouts", "the impact on the country's economy is less visible, but cumulatively its effect is staggering. If the students who dropped out of the Class of 2011 had graduated, the nation's economy would likely benefit from nearly \$154 billion in additional income over the course of their lifetimes." The state of Florida produced 83,516 dropouts in the class of 2011 which would amount to around 9.5 billion dollars of income and economic impact lost. The proposed budget includes costs necessary to run the program as described. Each partner prepared and submitted cost estimates to the lead agency. All costs were reviewed by the City of Orlando as necessary and appropriate to the services provided. The budget includes two full-time staff positions (one to manage the overall project and one to coordinate the academic service model) and requisite benefits, corps member living allowances (set at \$12,530 for full-time members), member benefits (FICA/health insurance), corps member background checks (staff checks will be conducted by the hiring agency), training, supplies and uniforms, student expendables, general office and program supplies, use of City community centers and administrative offices, administrative support and management, data management services, transportation services

## Narratives

for volunteer projects and/or training, and standard and web based curriculum software. No equipment will be purchased using grant funds or match. Member training costs will be spread across partners.

Operation AmeriCorps counts on our community's leaders, including the Mayor, to ensure the program's financial sustainability through a combination of City general revenues, fund-raising and grant writing. The intent is that the City will provide leadership and funding to found and sustain the initiative, while at the same time engaging partners in jointly funding the effort, including private charitable foundations, corporate and individual donors, and local, state and federal governments. The overriding public policy strategy has been that, in order to effectively tackle the most pressing problems facing Orlando's children, including educational achievement and juvenile crime, all sectors must join in a common strategy with all oars rowing the boat in the same direction. An important part of the framework for funding, sustaining and scaling up the City's children's efforts is our ability to administer City funding while at the same time leveraging grants and private donations.

As an example of how we do it, in the case of PKZ, the Orlando City Council created a vehicle for engaging donors by establishing a special fund at the Community Foundation of Central Florida. Since then, a wide range of public and private donors and grant makers have contributed approximately \$1,900,000 to the fund to help support the program including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, AT&T, Bank of America, Darden Restaurants, Dr. P. Phillips Foundation, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, Kiwanis of Orlando, the Orlando Magic, PBS&J, Staples, Track Shack Foundation, Universal Orlando, Florida Hospital, Walt Disney World, Wayne Densch Charities, Orlando Utilities Commission, the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, and others. Most notably, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer has personally raised over \$1 million for PKZ via his signature fundraising event, CityKidz! Buddy's Benefit for Children. This will facilitate the long term sustainability of Operation AmeriCorps.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

EVALUATION PLAN: Under this application, the Operation AmeriCorps project will participate in the state-wide evaluation of AmeriCorps partnerships organized through Volunteer Florida. The evaluation plan includes annual surveys of service and community partners who will interact with the Operation AmeriCorps project to inform on the strength of the partnerships and integration of the AmeriCorps program into the community.

### **Amendment Justification**