

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The Public Allies AmeriCorps Apprenticeship program proposes to have 495 AmeriCorps members, 40% of whom will be Opportunity Youth and other economically disadvantaged adults disconnected from education or employment, who will increase the effectiveness of programs in at least 371 unique organizations addressing economic disparity in Phoenix, AZ, Orlando and Miami, FL, Cincinnati, OH, Wilmington, DE, Estes Park, CO, Los Angeles, Silicon Valley and San Francisco, CA, Baltimore, MD, Albuquerque and Santa Fe, NM, New York, NY, Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro and Winston-Salem, NC, Pittsburgh, PA, San Antonio, TX, St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN, Washington, DC, Detroit, MI, Chicago, IL, and Indianapolis, IN. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for helping organizations deliver services to 100,450 new beneficiaries, the result of successfully increasing program effectiveness in 90% of Member service sites. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 33,320 volunteers who will provide direct services at the Member host sites. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity. The CNCS investment of \$6,241,950.00 will be matched with \$7,144,125.00 in private funding.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

### 1. PROBLEM/NEED

Despite the optimistic outlook projected for the country's financial institutions, the economic recovery from the Great Recession of 2008 remains tenuous for many Americans. Across the United States the poverty rate has only slightly decreased, from 15% in 2012 to 14.5% in 2013, the first reduction in poverty since 2007 (DeNavas-Walt, C. & B.D. Proctor, 2014, "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2013. U.S. Census Bureau"). During this same period, median household incomes remained stagnant against a backdrop of increasing food and gas prices. According to the Department of Agriculture almost 1 in 6 (15.9%) Americans live in food insecure households where there is difficulty providing enough food for all their members during the year due to a lack of resources (Coleman-Jensen, A., Gregory, C., & Singh, A., 2014, "Household Food Security in the United States in 2013", USDA ERS). Homelessness, yet another indicator of poverty's impact on household stability, has only recently begun to see slight national decreases. According to the "2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress" by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, some 610,042 people were among the country's sheltered and unsheltered homeless, a decrease of only 3.7% over the same count conducted in 2012 (Henry, M., Cortes, A., & Morris, S., 2014, "2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress", USDHUD). Moreover, the brunt of the burden for

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stagnating poverty is carried by our country's most vulnerable citizens, children. One in 5 (22%) children in the United States are living at or below the poverty level and nearly one-fourth (23%) of all 610,000 homeless people in 2013 were children.

A growing number of those living in poverty are "Opportunity Youth," the 5.8 million young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from the societal institutions that can help them successfully transition into adulthood--particularly education and employment. In 2013, 16% of young adults between the age of 18 and 24 were not attending school, not working, and did not have a degree beyond high school (Kids Count Data Center, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>, 2015). Rates of disconnection from education and employment are considerably higher among young people of color -- 22.5% of African Americans and 18.5% of Latino Americans are Opportunity Youth.

Also growing in the ranks of those living in poverty are working poor, the 10.6 million employed adults not earning enough to meet their family's basic needs or cost of living (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "A Profile of the Working Poor, 2012", 2014). According to the BLS report, rates of working poor for African Americans and Latino Americans were more than twice that of Whites and Asian Americans. And while generally achieving higher levels of education reduces the incidence of living in poverty, the attainment of a degree does not hold the same guarantees for economic security for recent Black college graduates as it holds for other college graduates. According to a report from the Center for Economic and Policy Research, the 2013 unemployment rate for recent African American College graduates ages 22 to 27 was 12.4%, more than double that of the unemployment rate for all recent college graduates, and 7.8 percentage points higher than pre-recession levels. Simultaneously underemployment has also increased significantly for recent African American college graduates while the rates have remained level for all others.

If left unchecked, disconnection from education and employment for the non-degreed and lack of pathways to sustainable employment for minority college graduates will undermine the country's ability to make a strong economic recovery. "Disconnected youth are more likely than other youth to engage in criminal activities, become incarcerated, and rely on public systems of support," and the disengagement of these young adults has financial consequences (Government Accountability Office, "Disconnected Youth: Federal action could address some of the challenges faced by local programs that reconnect youth to education and employment", February 2008). The lost earnings, lower economic growth, lower tax revenues, and higher government spending on social programming for a single youth remaining disconnected over a lifetime can have an estimated fiscal cost of at least \$258,240 and a social cost of at least \$755,900 (Belfield, Leven & Rosen, "The Economic Value of

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Opportunity Youth", January 2012).

Because of these conditions, the demand for nonprofit support is on a long-term trend upward as citizens struggle to regain their economic footing. Of the respondents to the Nonprofit Finance Fund's "2014 State of the Nonprofit Sector" survey that work primarily or exclusively with low-income communities, 85% indicated their demand for services increased in 2013 while only 65% were able to meet this growing demand. Moreover, 90% projected that the demand for service would further increase in 2014. Organizations must be prepared to deliver services to more people, and national service efforts that build the capacity of nonprofits and government agencies can address this expanding need for services. To meet our country's urgent needs, 55% of the Nonprofit Finance Fund's respondents planned to expand programs and services, 54% wanted to increase the number of people served, and 58% intended to collaborate with other organizations to increase or improve services. Such complex social conditions require systemic solutions with layered impact. Public Allies proposes to address the capacity needs of our communities' nonprofits by leveraging the untapped human resources found in Opportunity Youth and other disconnected adults, and applying this potential to the urgent needs facing nonprofit organizations. In doing so, we will increase the poverty-reducing services being provided and multiply the support for the nation's economic recovery by putting those in danger of an economically unstable future on a pathway to sustainable education and career.

### 2. THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL

Public Allies' social change theory focuses on leveraging and building upon a community's existing assets as the key to long-term economic health and prosperity. We do this by providing opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds and community organizations to build their capacity through a values-led, results-driven leadership practice. Our model uses evidence-based practices to trigger transformational growth in two areas: 1) engaging young adults, particularly those currently disconnected from school or work, in national service; and 2) engaging poverty-alleviating organizations as host sites for Members, so they can improve their ability to achieve better outcomes. By placing these young adults in positions of leadership within the community, we seek to transform communities from the inside out, changing the way young people who are disconnected and economically disadvantaged are viewed, and changing the life trajectory of the individuals who serve. Through intentionally engaging a cohort of Members that is over-representative of racial and ethnic minorities, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and other social minorities, Public Allies is helping diversify the talent pipeline for the nonprofit sector, ensuring that future sector leadership is reflective of the faces and interests of those being served.

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During the 10-month apprenticeship, 730 Members will participate in individual project-based service, group-based service projects, training, coaching, mentoring, feedback and reflection to support their evolving self-efficacy, leadership, and ability to start or advance their careers, all while increasing the capacity of organizations to meet the demand for services associated with the effects of poverty. At the end of the apprenticeship period, individuals are prepared for the workforce or higher education, and the community's ability to serve those in need is sustainably increased. This rigorous approach focuses on the optimism and potential of Opportunity Youth and other economically disadvantaged adults, and sees their resilience as a key catalyst for their communities' economic prosperity. Key components of the apprenticeship are:

(a) Community Placements. We partner with an array of community and faith-based organizations working to address factors associated with poverty, housing, hunger, health, educational and other disparities. Each agency completes a self-assessment modeled after the McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid to determine where the greatest need for program improvement lies.

In the course of service, Members will be responsible for recruiting and engaging at least 50,000 volunteers and establish partnerships or collaborations with over 4,500 different organizations. By the end of the term, 90% of graduating Members' service objectives will be met and at least 85% of organizations hosting graduates will report an increase in program effectiveness. As a result of Members' activities, the collaborations developed, and the additional volunteers engaged, some 150,000 new beneficiaries will receive services that address their poverty-related needs.

Of the 730 Members enrolled, 292 will be young adults from an economically disadvantaged background that are disconnected from school and employment. For these Members the service placement serves as a practicum in an entry-level, professional position in the nonprofit or public sector. Our economically disconnected Members will be placed in positions that invite them to draw upon their strengths in order to create a stronger community--strengths such as familiarity with the services being delivered, or the communities targeted for service. With the support of their host site supervisor, program manager, and other mentors or coaches, Members learn project management and interpersonal skills required to succeed in professional positions, and begin to identify their own strengths as leaders. Members will also develop the collaboration and networking skills and key relationships that can open doors of opportunity beyond their term of service with Public Allies.

(b) Training and Learning. The training and learning curriculum, delivered regularly to the Member cohort, reinforces the experiential learning taking place at host sites, and provides opportunities for Members to share and learn from one another. This equips Members with the content knowledge

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necessary to be successful in the nonprofit sector, the soft skills required to succeed in the 21st century workforce, and the opportunity to reflect on how social issues such as poverty, poor education, hunger and homelessness impact their identities, their communities and their service placements.

(c) Team Service Projects. For one-half day each week, teams of seven to ten Members come together to plan, implement and evaluate a service project that leads to a measurable community impact.

Team Service Projects reinforce the training curriculum by requiring Members to work in a team, collaborate with other organizations, cultivate community assets, and give and receive critical feedback. The Team Service Project deepens the relationships within the cohort, and supports learning in key workplace skills such as personal/team accountability and conflict management.

(d) Personal Development and Critical Reflection. During the apprenticeship, Members set goals for their personal and professional growth during the program and beyond, and receive ongoing coaching to assess their progress towards meeting those goals. The program staff, site supervisor, alumni, and mentors all provide critical support, and these relationships are key to helping Members maximize the program experience so it is a catalyst to long-term change.

### 3. EVIDENCE BASE

Public Allies has a highly unique service model focused on enhancing the ability of organizations to deliver effective programming through the service of community members, not the consultancy of experts. Our approach invites those traditionally in the "service recipient" role to become a "service deliverer;" therefore, we focus on recruiting less educated and professionally experienced Members from diverse backgrounds to help programs improve their services and reach more people. To build its evidence base, Public Allies is currently conducting a quasi-experimental study which will provide empirical, quantitative evidence of the program's impact on host sites and individual Members, in order to demonstrate that the program is a valid intervention to effect community problems.

Evaluation results will be reported to CNCS in January 2016.

Until then, Public Allies uses evidence from research on comparable interventions that shows engaging disconnected youth as volunteers results in greater economic opportunity for the young persons involved. Research demonstrates a strong correlation between volunteering and lower rates of disconnection and higher rates of employment. According to the report "Connecting Youth and Strengthening Communities: The data behind civic engagement and economic opportunity," there is strong evidence suggesting that volunteerism is a key pathway to civic participation and economic well-being for young adults (Opportunity Nation and Measure of America, 2014). Their research indicates that the chance that a young adult is disconnected from school or work drops in half if they

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volunteer, particularly for African American and Latino youth. Further, research conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service indicates that volunteers have a 27% greater chance of finding employment than non-volunteers, particularly those with the lowest levels of education (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, DiTommaso, "Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment," 2013).

Results from Public Allies' pre- and post-test research and tracking of program beneficiaries demonstrate the impact of the apprenticeship's holistic approach. A survey of the program's young adult participants who were disconnected at the time of enrollment (unemployed and not in school) shows that 89% of 2012-13 graduates and 96% of 2011-12 graduates were working or in school one year after completing the program.

Both participatory organizational assessments and project-based technical assistance, such as delivered by Public Allies Members, are best practices noted for improving the capacity of organizations in the report "Promising Practices for Improving the Capacity of Faith- and Community-Based Organizations" (Fink & Branch for the Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services, 2005). Research also indicates that when applied intentionally and correctly, capacity-building investments yield results. In a study on the impact of its Organizational Effectiveness grant program, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation found that the investment in an organization's capacity has significant measurable impact on programs and services: program quality and reach improve, organizations become more strategic with programs, and visibility and community support for their programs are increased. (TCC Group, "The David and Lucile Packard Foundation OE Goldmine Research Project Final Report", October 2011) Our own program results bear this out. Of the organizations hosting Public Allies AmeriCorps Members in 2012 and 2013, pre- and post-service capacity assessments indicate 95.4% experienced a growth in capacity as a result of the Member's efforts with the greatest gains in the organizations' use of technology, volunteer generation, and community outreach. Our Members have multiple impacts at the organizations at which they serve; for example: 61% of host sites increased number of people served at their organization; 71% improved their level and/or quality of services; and 54% were able to start a new project or program. Furthermore, our internal program data suggest our Members without degrees are enhancing organizational capacity at levels equal to their degreed counterparts. 91% of the organizations hosting our 2013-14 non-degreed graduates indicated their capacity increased as a result of Members' service and 60% indicated their Members demonstrated above average professional growth and development in comparison to other entry-level workers.

#### 4. NOTICE PRIORITY

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The Public Allies AmeriCorps Apprenticeship addresses the priority of increasing Economic Opportunity, both in the service being delivered by our Members, and by engaging Opportunity Youth and other economically disadvantaged adults as AmeriCorps Members. Each Member will deliver service activities at organizations that are addressing one or more of the factors contributing to poverty or the presenting symptoms of living in poverty. Two-hundred ninety two (292) of our 730 Member cohort (40%) will be made up of young people meeting the CNCS definition of economically disadvantaged Members disconnected from school or sustainable employment. Most of these Members will meet the definition of Opportunity Youth. Our program also addresses the intention of the My Brother's Keeper Initiative milestone of ensuring that every American child has the option to attend post-secondary education and receive the education and training needed for quality jobs of today and tomorrow.

### 5. MEMBER TRAINING

Orientation. Orientation of Members to national service begins prior to enrollment by introducing applicants to the requirements for AmeriCorps eligibility, for a successful service term, and the rigorous expectations during the program. Member orientation continues on the first day of service when Members are guided through member contracts, policies and procedures, performance measures, and standards for excellence. Members are then introduced to Public Allies, learn the history of National Service, and begin team-building and targeted skill-building workshops. Host site supervisors are also required to attend an orientation at the launch of the term to reinforce the responsibilities of hosting an AmeriCorps member and the goals and expectations for the program year. Lastly, Members receive an orientation to their individual placement sites.

Ensuring understanding and acknowledgement of prohibited activities at the onset of service is central to the orientation process. Each Member is thoroughly oriented to prohibited activities during initial Member intake processes and when the Member contract is reviewed. A review of Member position descriptions prior to service ensures in advance that Member service objectives are free of prohibited activities, and the monthly review of member service activities by Public Allies Program Managers ensures compliance with regulations during the term. Staff emphasizes the types of situations that should be avoided and that Members should consult with Public Allies staff in instances where their proposed activities appear questionable. We focus on Members awareness of indirect prohibited activities so that volunteers they recruit and manage will not engage in prohibited activities.

Training. Members come together as a cohort regularly throughout the term for Member development training. Our training program is designed to develop both the civic leadership of our

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Members and the skills required to successfully move into a career or post-secondary education following the AmeriCorps term of service. Our leadership training is rooted in our core values: diversity/inclusion, focus on assets, collaboration, integrity, accountability and continuous learning. Training focuses on leading through these values such that they can be effective community builders, with an ability to co-create or emerge community solutions from whatever position they hold--be it CEO, project manager, or line staff.

To help them achieve the objectives of their service projects, Members receive skills-based training on asset-based community development, servant leadership, building inclusive neighborhoods, community outreach, collaboration, volunteer engagement, community asset mapping, and project management. To enhance civic participation, Members participate in dialogues and critical reflections to connect their service to larger social issues. To enhance Members self-esteem and self-efficacy, they receive trainings such as conflict resolution, time management, networking, and giving and receiving feedback--key areas of learning for Opportunity Youth and other adults who lack experience in the workforce. Public Allies sites will be supported by a national training and learning structure offered by Public Allies national office.

### **6. MEMBER SUPERVISION**

Each Public Allies Member is placed at an individual host site, selected through a competitive process in which they are vetted by Public Allies staff to determine if the organization is eligible to host an AmeriCorps Member and has the demonstrated need to build programmatic capacity. To host our Members, host sites must identify an experienced direct supervisor who can commit to 1) providing daily supervision, coaching, and support to the Member, ensuring that the Member has the proper resources available to him/her and is on target to achieve service goals, and 2) maintaining a close partnership with a Public Allies Program Manager to ensure the Member's experience is compliant, relevant and meaningful. Expectations of our host sites are clearly defined in the host agency contract and policies and procedures, which each organization agrees to uphold. These documents are thoroughly reviewed during a mandatory pre-service orientation for host site supervisors, which particularly emphasizes understanding prohibited activities and ensuring they do not take place. Public Allies Program Managers regularly coordinate with the host site supervisor to enhance or troubleshoot the partnership, reflect on the partnership's success, and when necessary, create plans to ensure Members can successfully complete their term. Program Managers ensure Members receive coaching on personal and career goals. Supervision of the Member is a collaboration between the host site and Public Allies, and this is reflected in the mid-term and end-of-term evaluations, which

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consider the feedback of both the host site supervisor and the Public Allies Program Manager to ensure that the evaluation reflects the Member's performance at the host site, at trainings and in Team Service Projects. In the instance that a Member must begin service prior to the findings of their statewide or FBI criminal history checks being returned, the Member will be physically accompanied by someone approved to have access to vulnerable populations.

### 7. MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Public Allies is grounded in the conviction that "Everyone Leads" --the belief that all a community's assets, especially the voices and talents from within our most challenged communities, are required to create sustainable, lasting solutions to today's complex social problems. This premise is the undercurrent for how we prepare our Members to achieve impact during their service terms and beyond. Well-respected as a top community service and leadership development organization, Public Allies is known for its excellence in providing a strong Member experience that prepares members for careers and produces a lifelong commitment to social change. More than 85% of our employed national alumni continue to advance long-term careers in the public and nonprofit sectors.

There are two key focuses for Public Allies Member development: Leadership Training and Continuous Learning. The Public Allies Leadership Training program focuses on cultivating a leadership style grounded in three key beliefs: (1) leadership is an action that many can take, not a position that only a few can hold; (2) leadership is about taking personal and social responsibility to work with others for common goals; and (3) leadership is about the practice of values that engage diverse community members and groups working together effectively. The training program also focuses on teaching members how to effectively achieve results in the workplace.

Along with the formal training program, Members are coached through a structured Continuous Learning process that includes guided personal and professional development coaching and 360-degree feedback assessments, where key stakeholders provide feedback and assess Member performance and leadership. These Continuous Learning processes, delivered by Public Allies Program Managers and volunteers, are often seen as a key added value to our host sites that traditionally do not have the support of an external entity in curating the talent of entry-level staff. At the end of the term, Members participate in presentations of learning, where they share with an audience of community stakeholders their learning and transformation and the difference they made at their host sites and on the greater community.

The intentional cultivation of our Members' leadership skills allows them to have even greater impact on their host sites than that of other entry-level volunteers or employees. "Are They Really Ready to

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Work?", a report of employers' perspectives on the skills required to succeed in the 21st century workforce, found that professionalism, communication, teamwork and collaboration, and critical thinking and problem solving skills were the most important skills cited among 400 employers. When Public Allies host sites were asked how our Members compare to average entry-level employees, 70% indicated our Members had above average or well-above average skills working in a team and collaborating, 59% indicated our Members displayed above average creativity and innovation, and 54% indicated our Members demonstrated above average critical thinking and problem solving skills. And despite their relative inexperience in the workforce and their lack of experience in the nonprofit sector, our Members met or exceeded 93% of their service objectives.

Public Allies approaches civic education experientially and uses dialogues and critical reflection processes to help Allies connect their service to larger social issues and to ideas such as democracy and volunteerism. Public Allies helps Members change their way of thinking from that of a passive "student" to participant and facilitator who is in charge of her or his own experience. This leads to creative ways of responding to community problems and initiating solutions that encourage collective action and uncovering both individual and community skills, capacities and resources.

The program is also designed to promote members learning from one another. Public Allies recruits an intentionally diverse cohort of Members from a variety of races, ethnicities, socio-economic and educational backgrounds to reflect the diverse tapestry of our local communities. Our recruitment efforts are grassroots and community-based. We engage in a year-round recruitment process by conducting informational sessions at local high schools, colleges and universities, human service and youth serving organizations, employment agencies, and word of mouth from staff, advisory board members, alumni, host sites, and other collaborative partners. Our goal in these efforts is to attract a highly competitive and diverse pool of candidates that reflects the community in which we work. As a result, over 75% of our Members are persons of color, over 65% women, and over 40% are disconnected young adults without degrees or extensive work experience. Across the country the overwhelming majority of our Members come from the cities and communities where we are serving. Each Member, despite their background, is selected for their talent and potential, and a key transaction during the program cycle is the exchange between Members. Meeting weekly, Members enrich each other and help team Members broaden their understanding of people and communities by sharing personal experiences, perspectives, and lessons from placement and team service projects.

### 8. COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION

Public Allies is deeply committed to ensuring that all AmeriCorps activity is branded appropriately and

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effectively. We see ourselves as partners in raising the visibility of AmeriCorps, CNCS, and the impact of national service on communities. As such, our commitment to effective co-branding is codified in our national branding guidelines and is enforced through a Memorandum of Understanding between Public Allies National Office and the organizations that operate our Public Allies sites in each community. Our websites, Member recruitment portals, and printed materials all prominently display the AmeriCorps logo, and our Members, after being thoroughly oriented to their roles as AmeriCorps Members, are issued AmeriCorps co-branded gear, including t-shirts, to wear throughout the term. Within each contract executed with our host sites, our Members are identified as a resource provided as a result of an AmeriCorps grant and we encourage all service sites to proudly display the AmeriCorps logo. We also require that Member business cards identify the participant as a "Public Allies AmeriCorps Apprentice." Each Member takes the AmeriCorps oath to "Get things done" and sees themselves not only as Public Allies AmeriCorps Members but also as part of the greater national service movement. The Member's identification with the national service movement is enhanced through the Member's participation in national days of service such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of service and AmeriCorps awareness-building events during AmeriCorps Week.

### **Organizational Capability**

#### **1. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING**

Public Allies was founded in 1992 to serve as a pipeline for a new generation of diverse young leaders to begin careers working for community and social change and has since evolved into a comprehensive program model that exists in 23 communities across the United States with over 5,500 AmeriCorps members having served to date. This request for funding includes a request to support the launch of a Public Allies Mississippi and a request for funding for Public Allies Chicago. A separate competitive application for Public Allies Chicago was submitted through Serve Illinois, however, our preference is to manage the program through our fixed amount National Direct grant. As the prime grantee, Public Allies National Office designs the core program, supports delivery and monitors for the compliance of our AmeriCorps program. The National Office currently manages multiple AmeriCorps competitive grants from multiple state commissions and has managed a growing national direct grant since 1993.

Internal operations are managed by Cris Ros-Dukler, Chief Operating Officer, who oversees the management of a national Program Team that works collaboratively to provide support to local sites. Fiscal management of the grants is overseen by the Vice President of Finance and Administration.. The Program Team provides programmatic management of the AmeriCorps grant and regulatory

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implementation, monitors site compliance and quality, provides technical assistance in program delivery, staff learning interventions, a central program guidance repository, and a web-based Member management system.

Public Allies operates an affiliate structure, in which we contract with a local university or nonprofit to manage local site operations. These "Operating Partners" take the lead in identifying our local impact and leveraging other assets and programs to enhance our program's relevance and sustainability.

Public Allies ensures each of these organizations has both the administrative and financial capacity to manage the AmeriCorps grant and are aligned with Public Allies mission. Each Public Allies site is led by a Site Director who supervises one or more full-time Program Managers. The Site Director is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the site, including building the relevant external relations required to support the program. Our Program Managers each manage a caseload of Members, the corresponding relationships with host sites, and an additional area of program delivery, including Member and host site recruitment, training, and evaluation. Many sites have expanded partnerships with schools of social work and other entities to provide wrap-around services that can help Members manage the complex life circumstances that without support could derail completion of the program.

Public Allies seeks out the feedback, advice and consultancy of community members and partners to help inform our continuous program improvement. Annually, both Members and host site supervisors complete an anonymous satisfaction survey that seeks to learn about the quality of their experiences, their observations of program impact and feedback for improvement. Public Allies also engages community leaders as volunteer trainers, mentors or Advisory Board members. Volunteer advisory board members help local staff clarify the program's intended impact and make recommendations to broaden community support and strengthen program outcomes. Most training delivered to Members is facilitated by volunteer experts.

### **2. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Public Allies ensures program compliance and accountability through a holistic approach in which staff, site supervisors and Members are all accountable to the rules and regulations associated with public funds. The foundation of our approach consists of national tools such as our Minimum Standards and Local Site Guide, which outline the compliance expectations for every site and Member; and our organizational Scorecard, a rigorous annual assessment that measures holistic site health in compliance, quality, and impact. These tools form the basis for our commitment to integrity and continuous improvement in program delivery. The National Program Team continuously reviews

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and updates the Minimum Standards and its "Core Concepts" training series which covers all AmeriCorps regulations and Public Allies program requirements. As the implementing agency, each Operating Partner signs an agreement with Public Allies to uphold the Minimum Standards, avoid prohibited activities, and participate in all evaluation activities.

During the program year, our commitment to compliance begins with the recruitment of host sites. Local program staff works with each host site to create a meaningful position description that is free of direct or indirect prohibited activities. Our focus on prevention involves orienting partners to AmeriCorps regulations, particularly prohibited activities, during pre-service orientation, and monitoring for prohibited activities in a national file audit review which takes place 30 days after program start. During the service term, Public Allies staff regularly review Member service activity logs (filed online monthly) for prohibited activities, monitor Member stipend payments, and meet with Members and host site supervisors to ensure Member activities are compliant. In addition, a national staff person may make an official site visit to conduct file reviews, interview Members and host site supervisors, and attend trainings and team service project meetings. These activities provide further information about the holistic health of the site.

If and when possible prohibited activities are detected, focus shifts to intervention (clarifying whether or not prohibited activities occurred) and if necessary, corrective actions (up to, and including, disallowing Member hours). If a site, Operating Partner and/or host site demonstrates an inability to comply, they are subject to actions from Public Allies National Office such as increased monitoring with fines, placing the partnership on probation, or terminating the relationship.

### **3. PAST PERFORMANCE**

In 2012, Public Allies transitioned from self-nominated capacity-building measures to reporting on CNCS standard performance measures. In year one of the grant, the output projections for the number of organizations receiving capacity building efforts did not take into consideration the possibility of multiple Members serving at the same host site. As a result, we fell short of our target. In year two, we adjusted our measures, and since have met the targets. Since adjusting our measures to take trend results into consideration, we feel confident in setting meeting our targets.

Further, as CNCS has clarified the definitions of the parameters for disconnected youth, we have recalibrated our systems for data collection to ensure we can accurately report out on the number of economically disadvantaged Members benefitting from being placed on pathways to college and careers.

Public Allies filled all slots awarded in 2012-13 and 2013-14. During this same period, 85% of Members

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were retained. While we strive to retain 100% of Members to the greatest extent possible, we consider a retention rate of 85% a strong demonstration for a program of Public Allies' rigor, particularly given our Member demographic. However, to ensure improvement in our retention rate, we are enhancing our ability to effectively retain Members by collaborating with organizations that can provide the resources and wrap-around support services necessary to help Members address the external factors that become barriers for their success. We've also leveraged the support of foundations to pilot innovative practices to help us increase our enrollment and retention of disconnected youth.

### **Budget/Cost Effectiveness**

1. COST EFFECTIVENESS. Public Allies is requesting the maximum cost per Member Service Year of \$13,430 to ensure we can deliver the rigor of program required to intervene in the lives of our members, particularly those that are disengaged from college and career pathways, and prepare them to succeed in positions with significant responsibilities at host sites. The work of re-engaging young people after they have already disconnected from pathways to school and career is challenging. In many ways, identifying, recruiting and retaining these young people require more intensive intervention than programs designed to prevent disconnection (Hair, Moore, Ling, McPhee-Baker, and Brown, "Youth who are 'Disconnected' and those who then Reconnect: Assessing the influence of family, programs, peers and communities," 2009). Public Allies' success requires a lower staff-to-member ratio to ensure the adequate touch points necessary for retention of Member and host agencies. It is also necessary to address all of the complicating life forces affecting our disconnected participants. This includes issues with transportation, unstable family lives, mental health concerns, homelessness, and other factors.

The total program budget is \$19,743,900, a total budgeted cost of \$27,046.44 per Member. The balance of funds needed to operate the program will come from cash and in-kind resources. Host sites will contribute a cost share of up to \$9,490,000 towards Member stipends and FICA. Private local and national donors such as the Graustein Memorial Fund, American Express, the California Endowment, various United Way agencies and others will contribute an estimated \$400,000 to cover non-living allowance expenses such as staffing, Member health insurance, criminal history checks, and other program related expenses. In-kind training delivered by volunteers and the in-kind service of the social work interns will lend an additional \$50,000 in resources necessary to carry out the program.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

Public Allies has been granted permission to conduct an alternate evaluation that 1) would encompass

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and evaluate the performance across all its AmeriCorps National Direct and state competitive grants, and 2) would fit its unique model and simultaneously meet the rigor of a quasi-experimental evaluation. Per the approved alternative evaluation plan, results will be available for reporting by January 2016, per the evaluation plan. A summary of the approved, revised evaluation plan is below.

### Research Questions to be Addressed

The evaluation will explore the short and intermediate-term impacts that the Public Allies apprenticeship program has on its current Allies, alumni Allies and current partner organizations. It will also compare the differences in impact between Allies and alumni based on their levels of education and economic backgrounds. "Level of education" is defined as whether Allies have an advanced degree, including bachelor, associate and technical degrees. Whether an Ally is "economically disadvantaged" as defined according to the guidelines set forth by CNCS.

More specifically, the evaluation will examine the differences in the outcomes of self-confidence, 21st Century skills (including leadership), civic engagement, and education and career goals between four groups: 1) non-degreed, economically disadvantaged Allies; 2) non-degreed, non-economically disadvantaged Allies; 3) degreed, economically disadvantaged Allies; and 4) degreed, non-economically disadvantaged Allies. Changes will be measured for current Allies at two points, first when they enter the program and second, when they graduate from the program. In addition, changes in outcomes will be measured among alumni Allies one year after completing the program. Data will be collected from current and alumni Allies, partner agencies and Public Allies site directors. The evaluation will address the following key questions. Whether the question addresses "impact" or "process" measures is indicated for each.

What changes are evident in partner organizations' technical capacity at the end of the program and one year after participating in the program? (impact)

What are the types of projects chosen for agencies and their Allies that hold the most promise for sustainability? (process)

What are the perceptions of Public Allies Site Directors on quality of placements that affect Allies' outcome achievement? (process)

What impact does serving as a Public Ally have on current program participants' education and career intentions and choices? (impact)

What impact does serving as a Public Ally have on current program participants' self-confidence and 21st Century skills? (impact)

Is there a change in alumni's self-confidence and 21st Century skills one year after the program?

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(impact)

What impact does serving as a Public Ally have on alumni's civic engagement, and education and career intentions and choices one year after program completion? (impact)

Evaluation Design The ideal design for any evaluation is a randomized control trial or even quasi-experimental study with a treatment and comparison group. However, it is rare that these designs are achieved in community-based, applied research settings, particularly program evaluation. This evaluation also poses these challenges, especially for constructing a comparison group for Public Allies' partnership organizations. For example, even if it was possible to identify comparison agencies across the 23 sites, there is no benefit to non-partnership organizations in providing sufficient process and outcome data to support the evaluation. Indeed, participation would impose costs to the agencies, such as staff time. Therefore, given the scarce resources of nonprofits, it is not likely that non-partner agencies would agree to participate in the evaluation or follow through with data collection. It is also highly unlikely that a matched comparison group could be found for the individual Allies' evaluation. One approach that is commonly used in community-based evaluations is to ask those who are on waiting lists to participate in studies as part of a comparison group. In the case of Public Allies, it would initially seem that a comparison group could include those applicants that were not accepted into the program. However, since the program does not use a waiting list, but instead includes a fairly intense application process, it is likely that the applicants who were not accepted would be very different than those who were accepted. Despite these challenges, it is essential that the evaluation design is rigorous enough to provide evidence that program participation is associated with desired outcomes. The design outlined below is intended provide this empirical evidence despite the absence of a control or comparison group.

The following is a summary of the evaluation components, followed by a description of each.

Partner Agencies: Post-only supervisor survey on increased agency capacity; independent assessment of Ally projects for agency impact level and likelihood for sustainability

Current Public Allies: Pre-post-test survey measuring short-term and intermediate outcomes

Alumni Public Allies: Retrospective pre-test survey with post-test survey measuring short-term and intermediate outcomes

Public Allies Site Directors: Assessment survey of the quality of Ally placements and inventory of site-specific support provided to Allies to support their development

The following describes the evaluation design for both the partner organizations and individual Allies. And since activities and the quality of the placements will differ widely across partner program

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agencies, some process measures that could impact achievement of outcomes are included. Including these types of measures are essential to helping Public Allies staff understand factors that influence successful placements and plan for the future.

### Partner Organization Evaluation

Changes in technical capacity of partner organizations will be measured by surveying Allies' supervisors and by independently assessing the types of projects assigned to Allies for each partner site in terms of their likelihood of being sustained into the future.

Evaluators will work with Public Allies staff to adjust the current online supervisor survey instrument to increase reliability and decrease the number of missing responses. This will include, but is not limited to: 1) creating a series of technical capacity items that can be combined to create constructs or scales for measuring the different areas of technical capacity; 2) change current open-end to closed-end items to increase precision in measurement and minimize missing responses. Because the items can only be measured through the supervisors' reflections, this survey will be administered as a post-test only. However, items that ask about increases in client numbers, service hours or locations, etc. will also be included.

Differences across agencies in technical capacity-building will be compared in analysis to the four groups of Allies described earlier: 1) non-degreed, economically disadvantaged Allies; 2) non-degreed, non-economically disadvantaged Allies; 3) degreed, economically disadvantaged Allies; and 4) degreed, non-economically disadvantaged Allies.

In addition, evaluators will work with Public Allies staff to create a matrix that will categorize high and low quality Ally projects in terms of their ability to be sustained in the future. This information would be valuable for helping Public Allies gain a deeper understanding of the types of projects that could make the most impact and, consequently, setting additional criteria for projects going into the future.

### Ally Evaluation

The individual Ally part of the evaluation will consist of three components using within-group, pre-post-tests and retrospective pre-test with post-test survey methods for measuring changes in targeted outcomes.

Current Allies: Changes in short and intermediate outcomes will be measured using a pre-test/post-test design with Allies from the upcoming 2014-2015 cohort. The Allies from the 2014-2015 cohort will complete a pre-test in September 2014, at the start of their program year, and a post-test in June 2015, at the end of their program year. The pre-test and post-test will ask participants about their

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intentions to pursue higher education and a family-sustaining career. The post-test will additionally ask participants about any actions taken toward pursuing a higher education and a civically oriented career. Process data will be added to survey data to identify factors that may influence outcome achievement.

Alumni Allies: Outcome achievement for alumni Allies will be measured using a retrospective pre-test with post-test survey approach. The Allies from the 2013-2014 cohort will complete a retrospective pre-test[1] in September 2014, a few months after the end of their program year and a "true" post-test in June 2015, one year after the end of their program year. The true post-test and retrospective pre-test will ask participants about their intentions and actions taken toward pursuing a higher education and a civically oriented career immediately upon graduating from the Public Allies program. The true post-test will ask participants about their intentions and actions taken toward pursuing a higher education and a civically oriented career in their first year out of the Public Allies program.

### Amendment Justification

N/A

### Clarification Summary

#### 2015-16 ROUND 1 CLARIFICATIONS

##### A. Programmatic Clarification Items

1. Given the funding levels under consideration, please outline the number of MSY which would be dedicated as Opportunity Youth MSY.

Of the 505 MSY requested by Public Allies, 30 % (152) will be dedicated for Opportunity Youth. These 151 young adults are a subset of the 202 MSYs that will be economically disadvantaged and disconnect from employment or school.

2. Please provide more detail on the training members will receive on capacity building interventions; be specific with the aspects of the training, the timeline for the components, and what evidence has informed the training.

Public Allies' program design is based on integrated continuous learning tools -- classroom training,

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individual mentoring and coaching, team service projects, and opportunities for critical reflection and feedback -- to ensure that Members are equipped to deliver capacity building projects that will be sustained after the term of service ends. Members participate in weekly training, and receive an average of 200 hours of training over a full-time term of service.

Members are placed in positions that maximize their life experiences, personal assets and future aspirations. More experienced Members are placed in positions in which the capacity building role requires the ability to access prior work or education-based skills; less experienced members are placed in positions that will draw upon knowledge of community being served, understanding of constituencies, and/or familiarity with the types of services being offered by the organization. Given the variability in skill level, our training program provides Members with training they each will benefit from and utilize during their terms.

During pre-service training, all Members are oriented to Public Allies' five core values, which we see as the adaptive leadership skills required for successful capacity building (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, "The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World," Harvard Business Review Press, 2009). The extent to which our Members adopt and practice these values significantly influences their success in building capacity at their primary service location:

- Collaboration: The ability to facilitate, negotiate, build consensus, build strong teams, and empower others
- Continuous Learning: The ability to question one's own and others' assumptions and beliefs, understand strengths and shortcomings, and commit to continued, transformative growth for self and community
- Diversity & Inclusion: The ability to work effectively and inclusively with different people and understand how to adapt to different cultures and environments
- Focus on Assets: The ability to catalyze the natural leadership of the self and others, be truly accountable to those served, and approach opportunities for change with awareness of community assets
- Integrity: The ability to meet commitments, act responsibly with public and personal trust, and be accountable for words and actions

These adaptive leadership skills are reinforced in all Member development activities, and become the foundation for how our Members engage with community to deliver service. As a result, the solutions are more community-driven and sustainable (Kretzman, McNight, "Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets," 1993).

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In addition, many of these qualities are critical 21st Century Learning skills most desired by today's employers ("Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century US Workforce"). For example, the 21st Century Learning Life and Career Skills framework includes flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility. The Learning and Innovation Skills framework includes creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration.

Equally important is our focus on technical capacity building skills. All Members receive ongoing training on topics generally related to capacity building. These include: Asset Based Community Development, Community Mapping, Volunteer Management and Recruitment, Youth Development, Project Management, Networking and Partnership Development, Power and Privilege, and Time Management. Public Allies also orients Members to the nonprofit sector's structure, careers, and traditional functions.

As an intermediary, it is critical that Member training is responsive to the needs of our individual host sites. In addition to the training delivered by Public Allies, each host site provides Members with technical training specific to their position descriptions. Public Allies also solicits the input of host sites and Members about what training topics they see as critical to the Members' success. This training informs the curriculum's unfolding and topics are customized to respond to the specific needs of the community being served.

The training timeline is designed to support Member development and respond to our partners' needs. Sites deliver weekly training that allows for frequent interaction with the program staff and other Members, enhancing Member esprit de corps. In addition, Member development activities such as coaching, mentoring, and 360-degree feedback assessments reinforce training by asking Members to reflect about what they've learned and discuss how training has influenced their performance in their service placements and team service projects.

3. The need and program design is based on engaging disconnected young adults and opportunity youth in service, but only roughly 1/3 of the requested slots are designated as Opportunity Youth. Please explain how the members with degrees fit into the program design.

The balance in diversity of our Member cohort ensures that the program offers a safe but challenging space where Members are invited to work with and learn from peers that are all equally talented, but

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from vastly different walks of life. We foster an environment where the life experience of a Member from the most impoverished community in Queens, NY is equal in value to that of the NYU graduate, and the two have an opportunity to work together, leveraging their varied skills to deliver service. Without this diversity, the program environment would reinforce the disconnection and segmentation most of our economically disadvantaged Members have already experienced in their lives.

Our cohort will mirror the makeup of the communities we serve. We seek to engage a class that is diverse in race and ethnicity, level of education, and socio-economic background. To this end, 40% (202) of our Members will be economically disadvantaged adults not in school or not employed. In addition, 30% of our cohort (152) will be more significantly disconnected from school or work, meeting CNCS's definition of Opportunity Youth. In addition, 25% (126) of Public Allies cohort will be Men of Color, who are often marginalized, regardless of socioeconomic background.

The model is built upon the premise that a fundamental skill required to be successful in service and the workforce is the ability to work effectively and inclusively with different people, learn from others, and understand how to adapt to different cultures and environments. This premise is reinforced by research indicating cultural competency and the ability to work in diverse settings is a critical 21st century workforce skill sought after by employers.

Ultimately, we seek to build a stronger leadership pipeline for diverse individuals into the social sector. Currently, only 18% of all nonprofit workers are diverse, and only 18% of all top leaders in the sector are diverse (Community Wealth Ventures/Annie E. Casey Foundation "Talent Leadership and Development: Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement of People of Color in the Nonprofit Sector," November 10, 2014). Each of our sites aims to strengthen the pipeline in their local community, and nationally, we are participating in sector-level initiatives with other service organizations and foundations to address talent disparities within the social sector.

### B. Budget Clarification Items

1. Funding is extremely competitive and limited this year. Having a low Cost Per Member Service year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. Applicants submitting with a low cost per MSY will receive higher priority for funding. Please consider decreasing the application's proposed cost per MSY by revising the CNCS share of the program budget, or provide a compelling explanation for why the cost/MSY cannot be decreased. CNCS will review both the individual program cost per MSY and the aggregate

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cost per MSY after the clarification period and may elect to make further decreases in cost per MSY and/or may be only able to partially fund applicants.

As indicated in our application, our cost is reflective of the rigor and intensity of the apprenticeship, training and learning , and coaching aspects of the program. We are very intentional about increasing participation of young adults who come from marginalized communities and disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly those who are disconnected from college and career pathways. The work of re-engaging and preparing young people to succeed in positions with significant responsibilities is challenging and requires wraparound support to address the many complicating life forces affecting the Members such as transportation, mental health issues, unstable family lives, homelessness, etc. In many ways, identifying, recruiting and retaining these young adults requires more intensive intervention than programs designed to prevent disconnection (Hair, Moore, Ling, McPhee-Baker and Brown, "Youth who are 'Disconnected' and those who then Reconnect: Assessing the influence of family, programs, peers and communities," 2009). Our success requires a lower staff-to-member ratio to ensure the adequate touch points necessary for retention of Member and host agencies.

Because of our deep belief that developing homegrown leaders is an effective strategy in strengthening communities, we double our efforts to raise funds to supplement CNCS funds. Our total cost per Member is \$27,046.44 -- for every dollar we receive from CNCS we raise at least one dollar to augment program needs.

About 20% of our graduates are hired by host sites immediately after graduation. One year after graduation, 70% are employed and 25% have completed a college course. Overall, 87% of our Alumni continue to work in the nonprofit and public sectors. These achievements would not have been possible without the CNCS funding and \$6.9M we raise to ensure the quality of the Members' experience.

### C. Performance Measure Clarification Items

1. Please justify the targets of roughly 20% of opportunity youth members registered for college courses and 1/3 of opportunity youth employed 90 days after service. Given the compelling data provided by the applicant on previous Public Allies members in the program design narrative, please explain why these targets aren't more rigorous.

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As stated above, Opportunity Youth represent the most significantly disconnected Members of our program. Our performance measures, however, not only address the outcomes for Opportunity Youth, but all economically disadvantaged Members that are disconnected from school or employment.

The formulas used to derive our performance measure targets are a direct reflection of our program's experience and past results, and we believe do indeed represent rigorous targets. These targets have been derived taking into consideration factors such as retention and national trends in Members' post-service plans, as reflected below.

Of the 505 AmeriCorps Members enrolled, 40% will be economically disadvantaged and either without degrees or unemployed = 202 Members

- Of the 202 economically disadvantaged Members, at least 80% will graduate = 162 Members

- Of the 162 economically disadvantaged Members that graduate, at least 75% will go directly into employment or enroll in college = 122 Members

- Of the 122, 65% (79) will gain employment and 35% (43) will enroll in school

- Based upon past data, we know that an average of 25% of graduates will go into 2nd terms of service (with Public Allies or other organizations) immediately after service or take longer to get on a career or educational pathway.

- Eventually, 80% of our economically disadvantaged GRADUATES (130) will be employed or in school within one year of graduation from the program.

2. Please remove these applicant-determined performance measures. You may choose not to have a member development performance measure, or you may choose to opt into national performance measures and determine targets for O14 and O17 that reflect what is realistic for your program to accomplish within thirty days. If you choose to O14/O17, ensure that you adhere to the 2015 Performance Measures Instructions for these measures.

We understand the importance of programs being able to report performance measurement data within a timeframe that allows the data to be included in the Grantee Progress report. At the same time, we recognize the significance of reporting measures that are meaningful and reflect the true impact of the program. The performance measures proposed in our application have been carefully considered, and rather than not have Member development measures or opt into measures O15 and O17, Public Allies prefers to maintain its proposed measures with modifications that will capture the

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number of Members employed or in school within 60 days of the end of term. This revised timeline will ensure the data can be captured and reported within the Grantee Progress report.

5. In the application narrative and logic model, the goal of the capacity building activities is identified as organizations being able to serve more people. Please consider adding the relevant National Performance Measure, G3-3.18. Or, in the clarification section please explain why you have chosen not to report this information to CNCS.

Our intention was to opt into Performance Measure G3-3.18; however, eGrants will not allow us to do so.

Regardless of whether we can opt in, we are planning to gather information about the impact of our capacity building work on the beneficiaries our partners serve. We plan to survey our returning partners one year after the term of service is complete. Survey questions will ask whether capacity gains have been sustained; whether new beneficiaries have been served; and whether existing beneficiaries received deepened or expanded services.

6. In addition, MSYs should be allocated to beneficiary outcomes only, not to member outcomes. Please revise MSY allocations for the program.

The MSY allocations have been updated. There are no longer MSYs allocated to the "Find Opportunity" objective. All MSYs have been allocated to our Capacity Building objectives. The instructions were not clear as to whether or not the corresponding number of Members should also have 0's entered. The number of Members allocated to Economic Opportunity have been maintained to reflect the actual number of Members anticipated to be benefitting from our proposed Member development measures.

7. By definition, CNCS expects that capacity building consists of indirect services delivered by AmeriCorps members that allows organizations to provide more, better and sustained direct services. While direct services may be a companion to effectively delivering the capacity building indirect services, direct service may not be counted toward the capacity building performance measures. Please confirm that you plan to report on capacity building outputs and outcomes in this manner.

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Public Allies does not count direct service outcomes/outputs towards capacity building measures. Any direct service activities performed by Members are designed to result in the sustainable enhancement of the organization's pre-determined capacity need, and when undertaken, are a component of Member service activities, existing alongside indirect service activities. The direct services are a mechanism to give Members experience in the current program delivery so they have a platform upon which to understand the impact of the improvements they're being asked to make. For example, Members engaged to enhance a program's ability to connect the unemployed to jobs must be familiar with the current vocational rehabilitation procedures.

At term end, host sites take a post-service capacity assessment and report out whether or not the activities delivered by the Member (both direct and indirect) have contributed to a sustained capacity increase. The data resulting from this assessment makes up what is captured and reported to CNCS -- the capacity enhancing results that the delivery of service (direct and indirect) has on the host site. The outputs from direct service activities will not be reported.

### Strategic Engagement Slots

1. What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

Over the past three years, Public Allies has steadily increased our enrollment of Members with disabilities. In 2012 and 2013, 3% of our cohort were Members that disclosed disabilities. In 2014, that percentage increased to 5%. For 2015, Public Allies will try to maintain engaging Members with disabilities in 3% of our slots.

Public Allies sites leverage relationships with organizations such as local affiliates Industries for the Blind, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and independent living centers that serve people with disabilities to act as hubs for recruiting and recommending applicants.

2. If you would like to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities, please describe your intent as requested above. Also indicate how many MSYs your program would like to request, the number of slots by slot type, and where the additional members will serve. Add these additional MSYs to your budget. Also adjust your performance measure targets, MSY allocations, and executive summary to reflect these additional members

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Public Allies requests 15 MSYs to be targeted towards enrolling 15 full-time Members with disabilities. strategic engagement slots to target towards the enrollment of people with disabilities in our full-time apprenticeship program. These additional Members will be placed at various Public Allies sites -- in 2014, 13 of 14 Public Allies sites hosted Members with disabilities. The Members will perform their service at varying host sites, which they will be partnered with through an intentional matching process in which our sites assess the skills and abilities of our Members, the positions available to fill, and the Partner Organizations' will and ability to accommodate the Members' disclosed disabilities.

### E. MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification Items

At this time, Public Allies is not requesting additional no-cost MSYs.

### 2015-16 ROUND 2 CLARIFICATIONS

Question 2. The capacity building performance measures--both outputs and outcomes--require that the results of only indirect services are counted toward the measures. Explain how your assessment seeks to measure efficiency/effectiveness occurring as a result of indirect services, not direct services.

Public Allies measures the sustainable capacity gains of the organization as a result of the Member's service. Each Public Allies Member, both those solely delivering indirect services and those delivering indirect and direct service, measures the indirect outputs for each of their service objectives. These indirect outputs can include the number of collaborations developed, the number of volunteers engaged, cash and in-kind resources leveraged, systems developed, new services implemented and new beneficiaries receiving service. At the end of the term, we measure the "sustained changes in effectiveness within the organization" as required by Measure G3-3.10.

In measuring whether or not sustainable changes in effectiveness have occurred, we take into consideration (1) whether Members' service objectives have been achieved, (2) results of the post-service capacity assessment, and (3) the host organization's descriptions of the sustainable increase that has taken place. Scores from the the pre- and post assessment are entered into our internal performance management system and used to report the capacity change in each organization served.

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Question 3. Please remove your applicant-determined member development measure as previously directed. You may choose not to have a member development performance measure, or you may choose to adjust your targets for O15 and O17 to reflect what is realistic for your program to accomplish within thirty days. Please note that if you find it valuable to measure outcomes at 60 or 90 days, you may report results in narrative portions of the Grantee Progress Report, and this data may also inform outcome evaluation activities associated with your grant.

The member development measures have been removed.

Question 4. Please provide more information on how and when members are trained on the "technical capacity building skills" that you list (i.e., Asset Based Community Development, Community Mapping, Volunteer Management and Recruitment, Youth Development, Project Management, Networking and Partnership Development, Power and Privilege, Self Care and Time Management). In addition, please explain what members are oriented on related to the "nonprofit sector's structure, careers, and traditional functions."

Training begins the first day of the program when Members attend a 2 - 3 day core retreat and continues throughout the course of the term on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Members are brought together as a cohort and the training sessions are facilitated by staff or community members with expertise in that area. Examples of topics included in the "nonprofit sector's structure, careers and traditional functions" include:

- Being a Millennial in the Workplace
- Social Services Overview
- Trends in Afterschool Programming
- The Role of Nonprofit Boards
- Volunteer Recruitment, Management and Appreciation
- Understanding the State Budget and its' Impact on Nonprofits
- Nonprofit Ethics

Sites do not train Members in nonprofit functions that are associated with prohibited activities; rather, sites focus on skills that are allowable for Members during their term of service. More detailed training calendars are developed by each Public Allies site.

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Question 5. Please explain how the program selects returning partners in alignment with the CNCS expectations around capacity building. What determines the length of the partnership with a given organization? Of the 22 organizations that the program proposes to serve in one year, how many of those have previously received Public Allies AmeriCorps members? In total, how many discreet organizations does the program expect to service over the course of three years.

The CNCS description for measure G3-3.10 requires that "Organizations must use a pre-post organizational assessment tool to measure sustained changes in effectiveness within the organization." The measure further requires that we capture this sustained change in effectiveness at the END of the Member's term. We are confused about the difference between the explicitly stated requirements which are outlined in the performance measure instructions and what this question implies as a requirement to track results beyond the term of service. However, as outlined in the previous clarification, we understand the value of going above and beyond what the performance measure requires, and are designing a method of measuring how our returning partners' capacity gains have been sustained one year after service ends.

Public Allies places great importance on building relationships with partner organizations that are invested in community transformation over the long term. We recognize that true capacity building takes place over time, as a result of intentional and well-defined small steps that lead to significant change. In addition, our returning partners tend to provide better support for Members, as they are familiar with Public Allies' values, structures and the rhythms of the program year, thus increasing retention.

At the same time, we recognize that a capacity building position description is, by definition, not replicable for subsequent years. We require that positions within organizations returning to host additional Members must aim toward new capacity gains that are not dependent on the Member (or subsequent Members) for sustainability. For Public Allies, using the same position description more than one year would be non-compliant. All sites are fully oriented to the capacity building guidelines of our grant and carefully monitor returning partners to ensure that position descriptions are not the same as prior years, but rather address new areas of capacity need.

Whether or not a returning organization will serve as a host site is determined in the months prior to program launch. Their ability to return as a host site is based upon our review of the position description and capacity assessment, which together indicate if the host site has real expanded

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capacity needs. For this reason, the number of host sites that return annually fluctuates, and it is impossible to predetermine how many of the 364 organizations we plan to serve will be comprised of returning organizations. Based on historic trends, we expect to serve at least 630 discreet organizations over a three-year period.

### **Continuation Changes**

N/A

### **Grant Characteristics**