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Executive Summary

Green City Force proposes to have 50 AmeriCorps members who will build their own workforce skills and knowledge of the green economy through training and by performing service projects to improve community environmental health and reduce energy consumption in New York City public housing communities. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for conducting 2,000 in-unit service projects and 25% of graduates will secure employment during their term of service or within 30 days after finishing the program.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of Economic Opportunity and Environmental Stewardship. The CNCS investment of \$143,250 in Segal Education Awards (50 awards for 900-hour slots) will be leveraged with an investment by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) of \$500,000. Additional funds totaling \$425,000 will come from public and private sources including Barclays, New York State Energy Research and Development Agency (NYSERDA) and private foundations.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

1. Problem/Need:

Opportunity Youth who have achieved a GED/HS diploma lack a viable next step towards family-supporting careers. Opportunity Youth who are not working or enrolled in college, or employed in low-wage jobs with limited paths toward advancement, comprise 35% of NYC's 18- to 24-year-olds ("Unleashing the Economic Power of the 35 Percent," JobsFirstNYC, 2014). A high school diploma or GED, an accomplishment in the context of lagging graduation rates, holds no guarantee of obtaining either work or entrance to college. Today, persistent high unemployment among young people costs about \$25 billion a year, mostly in forgone tax revenue ("Youth Unemployment," Opportunity Nation, 2015). However, there are millions of U.S. jobs available right now that employers need to fill, but young adults from low-income communities lack the necessary certificates, skills and networks to get them. In short, there is a tremendous latent talent pool to be engaged with proper training and service geared towards building in-demand skills. President Obama: "We've got to provide more pathways [for young men] to apply to college or find a job. We can keep them from falling through the cracks, and help them lay a foundation for a career and a family and a better life."

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Youth unemployment is particularly acute in public housing. As Mayor Bill de Blasio noted as part of his Mayor's Action Plan (MAP), driven by MOCJ, violent crime in NYCHA developments is due in large part to high unemployment and low educational achievements ("Fact Sheet," Mayor's Action Plan (July 8, 2014)). Today, 20% of violent crime in all NYC public housing occurs in 15 public housing developments (same). In Brownsville, one of the MAP sites, unemployment was cited by 81% of residents as one of the most pressing problems facing youth in their community ("Community Perceptions of Brownsville: A Survey of Neighborhood Quality of Life, Safety, and Services," Center for Court Innovation, 2011). Young adults in public housing need a bridge to careers and out of cycles of poverty, incarceration and violence.

At the same time, the same neighborhoods most affected by youth unemployment and crime are also those most burdened by environmental degradation and injustice, in need of upgrades to infrastructure to improve environmental health. The Mayor's One City: Built to Last plan emphasizes the importance of improving the energy efficiency and quality of New York City's public housing first and foremost. In NYC, almost 80% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are created by the electricity, heat and hot water consumed in buildings (NYC Greener, Greater Buildings Plan). NYCHA is the country's largest landlord; with over 400K residents, NYCHA is bigger than the next 11 largest public housing authorities combined (NextGeneration NYCHA, May 2015). NYC Mayor de Blasio has cited improving the energy efficiency of buildings, particularly our public housing stock, as the biggest untapped opportunity to reduce GHG emissions (City of New York, "One City Built to Last," 2014). NYCHA, chronically under-resourced, spent \$570 million on utilities and water last year. Along with investments in retrofits and capital improvements, in order to achieve reductions in energy consumption in public and affordable housing, residents- who do not pay utilities and have no feedback on their usage - need access to information on how they can make changes in their behaviors and choices in their homes to be part of the solution. Engaging NYCHA residents in practices to reduce energy consumption is a key to achieving ambitious NYC energy reduction goals.

Solution: Engage unemployed or underemployed young public housing residents as AmeriCorps members, providing them with service that builds skills and experience in growing fields with career potential. Through national service, GCF connects the dots between youth unemployment among Opportunity Youth and engaging low-income residents towards climate action goals in cities. By

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recruiting unemployed young residents of the communities in which service takes place, GCF employs AmeriCorps as a strategy for dual impact on opportunity youth and environment. GCF's CMs are "credible messengers," young leaders and problem-solvers uniquely positioned to engage fellow residents of public housing in making changes that reduce energy consumption and achieve other sustainability goals in public housing.

National service is an ideal means by which to engage young adults with few marketable skills and little or no concrete work experience, mobilize them to address critical environmental needs and provide them with a platform for advancement in the process towards careers. However, barriers exist to engaging and retaining Opportunity Youth in service, from a lack of role models with whom young adults and their families can identify to the need for supportive services to help resolve family, health and personal issues that can affect full and regular participation in the workforce. GCF's model demonstrates the "package" needed to engage, mobilize and support Opportunity Youth in full-time service while preparing them for careers and college post-graduation.

This proposal is informed by GCF's 5 years of experience recruiting, training and supporting AmeriCorps members as community members serving fellow residents in public housing, and transitioning post-corps. Since 2009, we have engaged 335 Opportunity Youth as AmeriCorps members, graduated 80% and placed 79% in work or college at six months post-graduation. Employed graduates from our four most recent cohorts make an average annual prorated salary of \$25,460 (compared to average income of \$2,000 prior to the program). Employers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sector in NYC cite GCF graduates as stand-outs among their recruits. When Mayor de Blasio and Secretary Castro announced the NYCHA retrofit, Shaneé Lucas, a graduate of Green City Force and current employee of the Association for Energy Affordability, was selected to speak at their side. We are proud to have been nominated by an employer partner and received the Youth Jobs + Champion of Change award. We helped PowerCorps PHL apply the learnings from our model in designing their program in Philadelphia and aim to continue to help support the growth of corps targeting Opportunity Youth and environment around the country.

Through the Partnership Challenge, CNCS strives to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation by helping nonprofits like GCF address community needs along with their funding partners. GCF aims to further this mission by partnering with MOCJ and NYCHA to equip unemployed and underemployed young residents with the training and skills necessary for success. In

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alignment with President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative, GCF, MOCJ, and NYCHA will work together to engage 50 unemployed young adults from NYCHA's highest-crime, highest-need neighborhoods in transformative service and training. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that CMs are receive training for quality jobs that will allow them to support themselves and their families.

2. Theory of Change:

Through national service, GCF provides unemployed or under-employed young adults who reside in public housing with training for in-demand jobs, real-world experience, transferable 21st century skills and a platform to build a powerful ethic of service. CMs exit our program prepared to achieve economic self-sufficiency through employment in living-wage jobs or post-secondary education. Their service and the personal transformation they experience as CMs help to promote safety, opportunity, and sustainability in public housing communities across NYC.

With support from AmeriCorps, CMs will prepare to obtain and retain employment or enter college after graduation, building towards careers and economic self-sufficiency. CMs, all residents of public housing, will be recruited in partnership with NYCHA and we will target recruitment affirmatively in the MAP sites. Our partnership with MOCJ includes specific targets for service. Corps Members will conduct outreach to engage NYCHA residents, through flyering, meetings, service projects promoting land stewardship and healthy foods, education about conservation, with a goal of 8,000 residents engaged in FY 2016. These activities, geared towards GCF teams creating a positive presence in communities and visibility for our initiatives, are followed by in-unit service to improve energy efficiency in buildings to benefit low-income communities, while gaining transferable skills and technical training around energy auditing. CMs will engage residents of public housing in making changes in energy and water use in their homes through GCF's door-to-door environmental initiative that pairs resident-to-resident education towards behavior change with the installation of low-cost energy-saving measures, like CFLs, with the goal of serving at least 2,000 units in FY 2016. While our service design is focused on environmental outcomes, corollary benefits include improved public safety in housing developments where teams are serving and introducing positive role models that inspire CMs' peers to become CMs themselves and take positive action in their lives and communities.

GCF is unique in its engagement of public housing youth in service, and it is unique in its mobilization

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of these youth in public housing communities to engage their fellow residents.

We have deliberately engineered our training and service projects to foster 21st century skills that apply to a range of jobs in-demand fields, from energy efficiency to operations and maintenance to customer service, with employers providing input into our curriculum. By graduation, 100% of CMs will have received job readiness, eco-literacy, transferable skills training and intensive service-learning; and 70% of program participants will secure employment or enroll in a college course within 6 months of finishing the program.

We have chosen to include our service goals in the logic model but not in the Performance Measures. As explained above, we have specific goals for service through this partnership, but our understanding was that it was not mandatory to include performance measures in this proposal. We opted to include a measure focused on our engagement of Opportunity Youth. If we have misunderstood we would be happy to work with CNCS to design an appropriate measure.

3. Evidence Base:

Overall program design of our rigorous service and training program draws best practice, research and documentation regarding conservation corps and training programs targeting low-income young adults (See The Corps Network's "The Clean Energy Service Corps" (2009); "A Green Career Pathways Framework" (2011)). GCF's work aligns with best practices identified by the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity, particularly our place-based focus on public housing residents, service projects that strengthen community ties and build on existing assets, emphasis on skills-building and long-term engagement of youth ("Connections: Best Practices in Serving Young Adults," 2013). Andrew Sum ("Confronting the Youth Demographic Challenge: The Labor Market Prospects for Out-of-School Young Adults," Johns Hopkins University, 2000) states that other than a college education, the key indicator of lifetime earnings is a successful work experience by age 25. The importance of experience-based, transitional work models is supported by the City of New York's workforce development strategy focusing on quality of training rather than quantity of placements, using a sectoral employer-driven approach, goals that align strongly with GCF's program ("Career Pathways, One City Working Together," November 2014). We remain committed to training for multi-family energy efficiency work (field and back office).

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Over the past year, GCF participated in a Labor Market Information Service technical assistance program sponsored by the Robin Hood Foundation, through which we identified in-demand sectors that align with our program outcomes. Mayor de Blasio's commitment to reducing GHG emissions by 80% by 2050, announced this fall, suggests that green job opportunities related to energy will continue to grow for the foreseeable future ("One City, Built to Last: Transforming New York City's Buildings for a Low Carbon Future," 2014). However, we have also broadened our partnerships to encompass other types of jobs that build on skills developed through our service initiatives such as outreach and resident engagement and data collection, based on feedback from employers and alumni.

Our environmental initiatives are informed by behavioral science and designed in partnership with NYCHA, using input from CMs as young residents. We are happy to provide additional information about the evidence base underpinning our service initiatives.

4. Member Training:

Members receive high-quality training to provide effective service. GCF employs a holistic approach to training CMs that prepares them for service, while instilling a strong work ethic, culture of excellence and marketable hard and soft skills. GCF prepares CMs for high-quality service through a 2-week Orientation. Orientation includes a comprehensive introduction to AC and GCF regulations, values and prohibited activities; eco-literacy; and capacity trainings for service. Service partners, including NYCHA representatives, provide valuable training for service, from the big picture of energy consumption in public housing, to insight on how to handle safety and other specific situations that may arise while engaging with residents during door-to-door outreach efforts.

Members receive training that clearly describes prohibited activities. Before beginning service, CMs receive a CM Manual that clearly outlines expectations and policies, including prohibited activities, which are reviewed in detail. Orientation facilitators use a variety of tactics (i.e. interactive games, role playing, quizzes, etc.) to reinforce the importance of these guidelines and to further contextualize understanding so that CMs are best prepared for their service experience. The CM Manual serves as a point of reference throughout the term of service, and the Senior Director of Programs regularly

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communicates reminders of prohibited activities and expectations.

Orientation acts as a baseline for many topic areas that are further addressed and reinforced through our ongoing Green City Academy (GCA) professional development curriculum, held one day a week. Following Orientation, Corps Members spend 4 days a week in the field on service projects, through which their job readiness skills are constantly reinforced by their Team Leaders. CMs are coached on improving their abilities in: punctuality, initiative, teamwork, conflict resolution, and problem-solving. GCA is held in a classroom environment with a curriculum centered around professional development; eco-literacy instruction; civic engagement; and financial literacy. Eco-literacy training through the ROOTS curriculum prepares CMs to be effective and persuasive in their environmental education, as most CMs have no prior knowledge of ecological concepts. A passion for living sustainably, coupled with the training received through orientation and GCA, allows CMs to deliver conservation tips and environmental education to NYCHA residents through their service experience.

5. Member Supervision:

Following Orientation, our members engage in service in the field. AmeriCorps members serve in teams supervised in the field by a Team Leader (TL). This staff member provides constant guidance and support to drive towards meeting quality service outcomes and managing the CMs in the field. TLs and all staff are trained in AmeriCorps program guidelines, prohibited, and unallowable activities. The Sr. Director of Programs (with support from the program staff outlined below) is responsible for all member outcomes including recruitment, enrollment, orientation, service activities & outcomes, training, and overseeing subcontractors and delivering job readiness, compliance & program evaluation, and career/college preparation training. The Program Manager of Service & Recruitment is responsible for service outcomes, content and quality assurance, and monitors service activities for compliance within our AC performance measurements. S/he tracks service outcomes, member service hours and provides update reports during weekly meetings with program staff. S/he is in regular communication with our TLs in the field and service partners. Service goals and parameters are set before the program starts and formalized through written agreements with our partners. The Program Manager of Compliance & Operations ensures that GCF staff & members are in compliance with AC Regulations/Provisions. S/he is responsible for file management, background check regulations, internal audits of unallowable and prohibited activities, and overall program operation

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needs. A Program Assistant supports recruitment and field activities. Team Leaders supervise on average 10 CMs each and monitor member performance and service outcomes. They lead service-learning, reinforce job readiness skill sets daily, and ensure quality service is taking place in the field. The Support Services Manager (a Certified Social Worker) provides individual case management, leads group sessions to address intra-corps issues that may impact service outcomes and member retention, and coordinates responses to CM needs. CM training and job and college placement are led by the Director of Career & Alumni Services. GCF takes great care in recruiting and selecting staff. New staff go through multiple interviews and must provide three referrals. Training includes orientation by GCF senior staff and close supervision for the first three months on the job. Program staff are supervised and evaluated by the Sr. Director of Programs and undergo on-going feedback, annual performance reviews, and professional development training as necessary.

6. Member Experience:

Our CMs are recruited from NYCHA developments across all five boroughs and also perform service activities primarily in NYCHA communities. Recruitment occurs through ongoing, targeted communication efforts in partnership with NYCHA's Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability Office as well as word of mouth. Our program offers a unique blend of workplace and hard skills training, community-based field experience through our service activities, and career exposure in growth sectors within the fields of sustainability. The basic structure of the program consists of an Orientation, followed by Corps Members serving in teams 4 days a week, with 1 day a week in Green City Academy (GCA). In addition to a general Orientation and the ongoing professional development curriculum covered during GCA, we also offer advanced technical training that aligns with identified sectors of in-demand sustainability jobs. All CMs receive training to achieve their GPRO Certification in Building Operations and Maintenance which provides them with a solid understanding of basic building science and green maintenance standards. GPRO aligns well with entry-level jobs in building maintenance, a sector that employed over 40% of recent graduates in jobs with decent wages and employer benefits. In addition, CMs go on to advanced technical training in either energy efficiency or solar installations. We partner with the Association for Energy Affordability to offer a course called Energy Efficiency Technician where CMs receive a national credential in Building Science Principles along with an advanced training course in Retrofit Installer Technician. We also partner with Grid Alternatives for a solar installation training, providing CMs with an

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understanding of how to manage and perform a solar install on different rooftop environments. These credentials expand employment opportunities for in-demand jobs for the at-risk population we serve. GCF creates an environment that challenges CMs to grow and learn, and supports them in achieving their goals during the program and beyond. GCF's training model is employer-driven, designed to prepare CMs for in-demand jobs in expanding fields like energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainability and related fields. CMs gain 21st century skills, including problem-solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, leadership and environmental and civic literacy. While learning concrete skills that will prepare them for careers after GCF, our CMs are engaged in meaningful service. CMs are able to give back to the communities in which they live through service in public housing developments; they are actively committed to making NYC public housing safer, healthier, and more sustainable. Our program also gives CMs ample opportunity to reflect on the importance of this work. Team Leaders lead CMs in daily reflections on the impact of their service. Once a week all CMs and staff gather for a Community Meeting, where we take time for reflections on service accomplishments, hopes for the future, and support a culture of continuous improvement by practicing workplace feedback in an open forum. For CMs, their time with GCF is only the beginning of a lifetime commitment to service. Our professional development curriculum includes discussions of how CMs can continue to serve after their AmeriCorps term comes to an end; many CMs express a desire to make a career out of public and community service.

Finally, a big part of the CM experience is building connections with other CMs & both at GCF and within the broader national service network. Team-building exercises are a big focus of the GCF orientation, helping to build a strong GCF culture from day one. As the term of service continues, the esprit de corps is strengthened by the bonds of shared experience. Similarly, events like The Corps Network National Day of Service and the New York City Mayor's Day of Service remind our CMs that they are part of a much larger network of young people serving their communities. This esprit de corps is continued and reinforced by utilizing social media hashtags to connect GCF to national service movements including: #21CSC (21st Century Conservation Service Corps), #AmeriCorps, #service, #GettingThingsDone, and many more. When their time with GCF comes to an end, most CMs leave with lifelong friendships and the sense of having been part of a nation-wide service movement. When members complete their service commitment, we celebrate their accomplishments during our graduation ceremony where a CM is selected to be a speaker to represent the corps along with CMs to receiving special recognition awards including: most service hours earned and the Force award which goes to a CM that embodies the ethic of service by providing an exemplary and spirited

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model for fellow Corps Members. GCF makes a lifetime commitment to graduates who in turn actively help recruit new members, participate in orientation and events with the current corps, and stay connected to each other and to GCF via social media. GCF provides alumni with career and college counseling on an individual level as well as through group sessions and special events.

7. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification:

Service is one of the pillars of our program (along with Sustainability, Training, and Justice), and CMs' strongly identity as part of AmeriCorps, representing not just themselves, but a national service movement. This is emphasized at all stages of our program. During Orientation, we discuss the history of national service and current CMs' responsibility to serve with excellence to advance the goals of AmeriCorps. An AmeriCorps alumni panel features staff, alumni, and partners who talk about the impact AmeriCorps had on their lives, and prominent members of the service community address the group. Following Orientation, all CMs are issued an AmeriCorps uniform, which includes shirts and name badges branded with the GCF and AmeriCorps logos. CMs are required to wear their issued uniforms at all times when in service. In the field, Team Leaders lead CMs in daily reflection on the impact of service. CMs share their experiences as AmeriCorps members with our frequent outside visitors and meet other AmeriCorps members through visits and events. Overall, we strive for excellence and seek visibility to share our AmeriCorps impact. Our service is highly visible to the community, with CMs in contact with thousands of community members each year. CMs meet prominent figures in the national service movement as well as other corps through site visits and special events, such as General Stanley McChrystal, who visited with the corps as part of his national tour of national service programs in 2013, and called GCF "a model for engaging opportunity youth in national service."

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing:

We have the expertise, staffing, and management structure to carry out this proposal. We have adequate experience administering AC grants. GCF has managed an AmeriCorps program for the past 5 years, as a sub-grantee of The Corps Network (TCN) and as recipient of a grant through New Yorkers Volunteer. TCN has worked with us over the years to provide trainings and guidance. As a first-time grantee with NY State, we had a growth curve and learned a great deal about compliance

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and specific constraints and requirements. We addressed issues as we have become aware of them, working closely with our program officer. We added a Compliance Officer and recruited a more experienced Finance Director. We instituted additional staff trainings and messaging around prohibited and unallowable activities and needs related to our grant. From leadership to front-line staff, there is a deep awareness of the goals and requirements of AmeriCorps. GCF has a clearly defined organization chart, with individual leadership team members overseeing staff in three functional areas: Program, Finance, and Development. The organization has 17 staff (program staff roles are outlined in section B.6). In the past year, we invested in our financial and operating infrastructure, adding staff, processes and procedures essential to effectively managing our financial resources and ensuring compliance with our AmeriCorps grants.

GCF's leadership team has extensive experience managing high performing programs in the non-profit and for-profit sectors, expertise in relevant functional areas, and importantly, experience operating as an AmeriCorps grantee. Lisbeth Shepherd, Founder and Executive Director, has over 20 years of experience in developing national service programs. Lisbeth chaired the national Clean Energy Corps Working Group at Green for All, and co-founded Unis-Cité, the leading national youth service program in France, as an Echoing Green Fellow. She is a Yale graduate. Dennis Acevedo, Senior Director of Programs, has a proven track record in effectively managing programs focused on youth and workforce development. Dennis ensures excellence for our AC programs and manages all program staff. Dennis was one of the founding staff members of YearUp NYC, worked on city-wide initiatives at the NYC Department of Ed., and was Executive Director of the Latino Student Fund in Washington, DC. Dennis holds a MS in Nonprofit Management from the New School and a BA from Stony Brook University. He received the 2014 Bonnie Potter Award from the NYC Employment and Training Coalition. Ann Short, Director of Finance, brings 30 years of broad-based finance experience to GCF. She is responsible for the financial, human resource and operations infrastructure, ensuring compliance with all accounting, tax and legal requirements. Previously, Ann was COO of Unitus Capital (India and Caymans), an Encore Fellow at Grameen America, COO of investment banking at Bank of America Securities and Desdner Kleinwort Wasserstein (US), and an investment banker at Morgan Stanley, where she worked for 18 years. Ann has an MS from the MIT Sloan School of Management and a B.A. from Wellesley College. Tonya Gayle, Director of Development, has extensive experience in community and youth development and fundraising to support such programs. At GCF, she oversees fundraising, partnerships, grant management and reporting, and contributes to

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organizational strategy. Prior to GCF, Tonya held roles in the NYCHA's Office of Public Private Partnerships and Office of the EVP for Community Programs and Development, where she managed partnerships with private and government stakeholders to effectively leverage grants and resources. She is a graduate of Wesleyan University. Program staff are highly qualified to carry out the goals of the grant, possessing relevant skills and experience and a passion for the work we do. Many are AmeriCorps alums, grads of GCF, past or present residents of NYCHA, and experienced with youth, workforce development and sustainability. Our GCF team has a strong track record of working effectively with the target population and achieving environmental results through the proposed intervention, building high-performing partnerships, and problem-solving around issues as they arise. As discussed in the compliance and accountability section below, we bring expanded staff expertise and capacity in these areas to this proposal. Staff bios are on GCF's web-site.

GCF has an engaged board of directors. In an effort to increase knowledge of AmeriCorps at the board level, we recently added Alyson Augustin, VP for Government Relations at City Year.

GCF has exemplary partnerships and community engagement that we will build on to carry out this proposal. Our close partners were involved in the program design and objectives of this current proposal. We have an extensive, multi-faceted partnership with NYCHA through which we engage with relevant departments and are in close contact with staff to plan and implement our program, multiple agreements and support at the leadership level of NYCHA. GCF recruits in partnership with NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability; implements energy efficiency initiatives with Energy, Finance and Sustainability, Garden & Greening and Resident Engagement. GCF brings partnership with city agencies and the City Council, notably the Mayor's Office for Criminal Justice (referral partnerships for recruitment; network of intervening city agencies). Finally, GCF also works closely with employers to understand their needs and address them through our training program and enlist them as Employers of Service; and with training partners to provide high-quality technical training.

Staff and corps have contributed experience in fora such as the Task Force for Expanding National Service; the National Service Summit in Gettysburg; and NYC Service's Task Force on service years in NYC.

2. Compliance and Accountability:

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GCF is committed to excellence. In the last year, we have worked through several challenges managing our AC compliance and we are now organizationally much stronger. Our current financial controls, operating procedures and reporting practices have been improved to ensure we are in compliance with AC grants and to anticipate potential issues. Program and financial leadership are better coordinated and support each other in meeting AC program and related compliance requirements. AC compliance matters have become a routine agenda item at weekly leadership team meetings.

The Finance Director is responsible for financial record-keeping, invoicing and reporting on AC grants. She manages GCF cash flow and ensures the Board Audit and Finance Committee is kept apprised of GCF's financial performance. Under her direction, GCF has added two staff to assist in managing major grants and contracts and ensuring compliance with all AC regulations. The Finance Associate assists with all financial aspects of compliance with AC regulations, including preparing budgets, financial reports and grant invoices, processing payroll (for staff and Corps members) and managing the collection of timesheets for staff. Efforts are coordinated as appropriate with GCF's external accountants and auditors. The Operations and Compliance Manager focuses on organization and program operating policies, processes and procedures, systems and reporting. The Finance and Operations team revised staff and Corps Member time-sheet policies in the last year to track hours within specified categories corresponding to the provisions of our AC grants.

GCF has a two-fold approach to compliance matters. The first is to educate all staff and corps members regarding AC requirements and our culture of compliance. GCF staff and corps members receive an orientation packet with the AC Member Contract and Manual, which is reviewed in detail during CM orientation, including education about AC prohibited and unallowable activities.

The second focus of our compliance program is ongoing program monitoring, detection and correction of any identified compliance issues. We create materials outlining the AC program design, including adherence to AC guidelines. CMs report hours weekly on the electronic time-keeping system, America Learns. CM Timesheets are then reviewed for approval by the supervising staff Team Leader to check for accuracy and detect any potential compliance issues. The Program Manager and Operations & Compliance Manager review electronic reports generated on America Learns monthly to

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check accuracy and track CM progress on service hours. Weekly staff planning meetings create a forum for discussion and problem-solving around meeting program goals and detecting and avoiding potential issues. Staff Team Leaders are trained to identify prohibited and unallowable activities, and report to the Sr. Director of Programs and Program Manager on CM progress and service outcomes on a daily basis.

When specific compliance or potential compliance issues are identified, management, and others as appropriate, discuss the issue and determine how best to address it. We consult with our AC program manager if we have questions regarding the best course of action to take. We also have created relationships with personnel of other AC programs, so that we have additional resources to access to understand various compliance best practices. If an issue is identified, the Sr. Director of Programs, or other designated manager, creates a corrective action plan with specific benchmarks that are included in future reports to our AC program officer, and works with other managers to implement staff and member training, as needed.

In summary, GCF has over five years of experience managing AC programs, with support from TCN since 2010. We understand the current AC regulations well, have the right protocols to provide program and grant oversight and accountability.

3. Past Performance for Current Grantees and Former Grantees:

We had challenges meeting some of our energy efficiency performance measures in the first year of our NY State AmeriCorps grant. Last year, we addressed challenges related to the volume and flow of units for energy efficiency service and ended the year having exceeded our goal on our main performance measure related to Love Where You Live.

We have always reached 100% enrollment. In fact we have to turn away potential candidates since we have not had enough AmeriCorps slots to fill.

Our retention rate of AmeriCorps Members in both grants has been above 80% in both of our grants. In our NY State grant in 2014 it was 91%. We do serve a high risk population with many obstacles towards success. Considering this, we believe our retention rate is strong and highly comparable to

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not only Opportunity Youth programs but many other workforce development programs nationwide and here in New York City - where young people have so many program options to choose from. We strive to be a model AC program. In 2014, GCF received a Corrective Action Plan from the NY State Commission. We moved swiftly to address each item in the plan. We submitted monthly corrective actions reports to NY State and participated in monthly calls with our program officer at TCN. During this time period, we successfully met all corrective action goals outlined. As a result, we have truly grown stronger and we have taken into account our areas of strength, growth and lessons learned in program design for this proposal. We are happy to provide additional information about our response to the corrective action.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

The submitted budget aligns with our program model as described in section B. (Program Design). The submitted budget reflects adequate costs for: staff with the skills and experience needed to manage the AC program successfully; CM training and stipends; program supplies; program evaluation; consultant and partner services; other required operating expenses (e.g., criminal history checks) . These costs in our budget will allow 50 CMs to carry out our in-depth, localized approach to energy efficiency service and resident outreach in low-income communities, per our partnership with MOCJ and NYCHA.

Of the \$915,000 total budget for this program, \$750,000 will come from state and local government grants, including \$500,000 from MOCJ and \$250,000 from NYSERDA. An additional \$100,000 will come from private foundations (including The Pinkerton Foundation and an anonymous donor) and \$65,000 from corporate contributions (including Barclays).

We have confirmed that the included budget is in compliance with the budget instructions, has adequate information to calculate specific line items, and is free of mathematical errors.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

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1. Please revise your Executive Summary to conform to the template in the Notice of Funding Availability.

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2. Please provide a more detailed description of the activities proposed for AmeriCorps members in the areas of land stewardship, resource conservation, access to green space and healthy food, and recycling.

Land Stewardship, access to green space and healthy food:

Green City Force (GCF) will utilize greening projects as a means to enhance visibility in communities where we are implementing energy service projects and to supplement the experiences of our AmeriCorps members (CMs) to expand their skill sets. CMs will work within NYCHA facilities related to land-based environmental service projects through which they promote land stewardship and resource conservation, and increase access to green space and healthy foods for low-income New Yorkers. Examples of GCF existing place-based projects include NYCHA Farm at Red Hook West Houses, and Planters Grove, a sustainable park built and maintained by GCF participants located at NYCHA's Lillian Wald Houses on the Lower East Side. Using these sites as a training and community

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engagement platform, AmeriCorps members also support community composting and gardening initiatives, tree maintenance projects and the NYCHA Garden & Greening program. In 2013, GCF built the first large-scale urban farm in NYC located on public housing property, known as the NYCHA Farm at Red Hook West Houses, in partnership with NYCHA and Added Value. The farm provides many benefits to an underserved low-income community home to 7,000 public housing residents.

Recycling & resource conservation:

On a limited basis, and in partnership with NYCHA, CMs will conduct outreach and education to residents of public and affordable housing neighborhoods about recycling through partnership with NYCHA and the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY). This is a natural extension of the core service priority of energy education. Green City Force has received support through a private foundation to adapt our signature model of Love Where You Live resident-to-resident engagement to recycling. Through this initiative, CMs gain knowledge of the green economy and contribute to the goal of bringing NYCHA into operational compliance with NYC recycling mandates while building skills toward employability as potential recycling apprentices with DSNY.

3. Please provide a more detailed description of how program staff will ensure and verify that all member service activities stay within the scope of the activities described in the grant application, and that member training hours stay at or below 20% of the cumulative service hours earned by the member cohort. Please also describe how the program will enforce compliance in the area of prohibited and unallowable member activities.

Green City Force uses America Learns for CM time-sheet submission, approval and oversight online. CMs allot all hours of their service day to specific activities, including service, training and fundraising. CMs also provide written descriptions for each activity indicating the location and specifics of the activity they engaged in. The supervising Team Leader reviews and approves (or sends back for corrections) the CM's time-sheet weekly. As per GCF's Time Sheet Policy, the Program Manager and Operations and Compliance Manager review the CMs' time-sheets on a monthly basis. During these monthly checks, the Program Manager checks for errors and monitors CM percentages to make sure

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the member training hours are at or within 20%, and that CMs are on track to meet their total hours by the program end date. The Operations and Compliance Manager also checks for errors and monitors service activities to verify they stay within the scope of the activities described in the grant application and do not infringe on prohibited or unallowable activities. The Operations and Compliance Manager follows up with the Team Leaders, Program Manager and Senior Director of Programs for any potential red flags in the CM activity descriptions and also works closely with the program team to monitor activities in the planning phases.

All program staff and CMs are trained on prohibited and unallowable activities point-by-point during Orientation. The list of prohibited and unallowable activities is included in our Member Manual, of which a print copy is handed out to each CM, and on the CM's home page on America Learns. Team Leaders are trained to identify and report any potential prohibited and unallowable activities to the Senior Director of Programs.

In addition to regular monitoring of time sheets for potential prohibited and unallowable activities, the GCF staff meet weekly to discuss upcoming training/service plans and to resolve any concerns or issues with AmeriCorps compliance. When questions arise as to whether certain acts would fall under the prohibited and unallowable activities purview, GCF staff consult with our Program Officer to seek clarification and guidance.

4. Please provide specific details about how the program has addressed, or plans to address, each of the compliance issues encountered in your New York State grant.

GCF has ceased all activities that led to compliance issues as identified on the New York State Commission's corrective action plan. As required by the corrective action plan, CMs are no longer engaged in activities not consistent with our NY State AmeriCorps application and performance measures: recruitment, supervision of members or office work that potentially displace employees or supplant the hiring of an employee. GCF leadership has heightened its review of service activities in the planning phases to ensure activities fall squarely within the permissible scope. In the last year, GCF has focused its member activities to fewer and larger projects, which enables GCF to better monitor service activities for grant compliance. CMs no longer engage in service activities that provide a benefit to a business organized for profit. The only CMs allowed to travel outside of New York are

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funded through The Corps Network.

GCF met the requirements listed in the New York State Commission's corrective action plan and revamped our compliance framework (staffing and practice) to prevent future issues.

Specifically, in response to the corrective action plan, GCF provided training to all GCF Team Leaders on AmeriCorps regulations and provisions, and training to all GCF staff on prohibited and unallowable activities. GCF Senior Director of Programs and Operations and Compliance Manager met with each CM individually from November-December 2014 to review the Member Position Description and ask if activity in the field matched the description. CMs were also quizzed on the prohibited and unallowable activities. GCF submitted monthly reports to our Program Officer summarizing member activities along with member timesheet records.

GCF has made improvements to our internal policies and procedures. GCF has engaged in proactive communication with other AmeriCorps programs, notably NYC Service and City Year, as well as our current AmeriCorps grantor, The Corps Network, to replicate best practices in our policies, procedures and training practices. GCF implemented revised staff and CM time-sheet policies and procedures to track hours with specified categories corresponding to the provisions of our AmeriCorps grants. GCF revised our Employee Handbook and included sections on our AmeriCorps partnership and applicable regulations. GCF also hired a full-time Operations and Compliance Manager to increase resources dedicated to AmeriCorps compliance.

5. Please provide the names and job titles of all staff members who will be engaged in or contribute to the proposed program.

Lisbeth Shepherd, Executive Director

Dennis Acevedo, Senior Director of Programs

Ann Short, Director of Finance

Tonya Gayle, Director of Development

Mara Cerezo, Director of Career and Alumni Services

Christine Bang, Operations and Compliance Manager

Jennifer Tirado, Program Manager

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Lawrence Harris, Senior Team Leader

Wesley Booker, Team Leader

Andrew Lewis, Team Leader

TBD, Farm Operations Specialist

TBD, Support Services Manager

John Malfetano, Finance Associate

Melissa Ruiz, Operations Associate

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics