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Executive Summary

Church World Service (CWS) proposes to have 11 AmeriCorps members who will support long-term integration of refugees via delivery of greater quality and quantity of adult education known as Cultural Orientation (CO) in Delray Beach, FL, Grand Rapids, MI, Minneapolis, MN, Jersey City, NJ, Durham, NC, Greensboro, NC, Columbus, OH, Lancaster, PA, Houston, TX, Harrisonburg, VA and Richmond, VA. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members teaching in each of these locations will be responsible for increasing refugees' understanding of housing, health and employment topics which are necessary for successful integration in the United States. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 100 volunteers who will be engaged in classroom and individualized training interventions.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity. The CNCS investment of \$63,030 in Segal Education Awards will be leveraged with an investment by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in the amount of \$275,000 and CWS will leverage a minimum of \$66,789 from the ORR funded Preferred Communities (PC) Program.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

1. Problem: CWS identified 11 offices challenged with Cultural Orientation (CO) delivery and expanding instruction in the areas of housing, health and/or employment. These offices are diverse in size and geographical spread and are located in Delray Beach, FL; Grand Rapids, MI; Minneapolis, MN; Jersey City, NJ; Durham, NC; Greensboro, NC; Columbus, OH; Lancaster, PA; Houston, TX; Harrisonburg, VA; and Richmond, VA. The 11 sites are expected to resettle 2,422 refugees in the next year, of which 1,600 are expected to participate in CO (all those 17 years or older). The annual arrivals for the proposed offices range from 60 in Jersey City to 446 in Columbus with 220 average arrivals for the proposed offices. Minneapolis, Harrisonburg and Richmond are all impacted by higher than expected arrivals in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015. In FFY 2015 refugee case loads are diverse: countries of origin include Burma, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). CWS expects to continue resettling a diverse case load of 72 nationalities in the next federal fiscal year, the top five being Burma, Somalia, Iraq, DRC and Bhutan.

Each year, CWS assists over 7,000 refugees to resettle and integrate into 33 communities across the U.S. Newly arrived refugees must quickly develop knowledge and skills to navigate their communities

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especially in the areas of employment, housing and health which have an immediate link to refugees safety and stability. These areas also have significant long-term impact on integration, according to Ager's conceptual framework of integration, which identifies four markers and means, central to successful integration: employment, housing, education, and health (Ager and Strang, 2008). Upon arrival, refugees have no employment, permanent housing or healthcare and possess limited knowledge of American systems and cultural norms in these areas. To develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes refugees need to adjust, CWS provides each adult refugee with cultural orientation (CO) within 90 days of arrival, in accordance with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) guidelines. These guidelines describe 15 essential training topics, objectives and indicators; however PRM provides \$1,975 for each refugee resettled which is designated to cover the refugee's basic needs (e.g. security deposit, rent, furniture, food, emergency medical needs) and the affiliate office administrative costs for the first 90 days within the U.S. With no additional funds to cover CO activities, the cost of high quality instruction can be prohibitive. As a result, the duration of CO remains limited to as little as one hour of training per client. Moreover, integration is a two-way process in which both the refugee and the receiving community must make accommodations for one another. The key, then, to the successful integration of refugees is also the capacity of the receiving community to understand and facilitate resettlement. Currently, CO only addresses refugee learning but does not train partners or build capacity within the receiving community.

Across the CWS network of 33 offices, refugees receive between one and 30 hours of CO instruction ending within 90 days of refugees' arrival. The proposed 11 AmeriCorps communities operate on the lower end of this spectrum, providing 6 to 9 hours of CO on average. Ten offices do not have a full-time, permanent staff member dedicated to CO. While the CWS affiliate in Columbus does have a dedicated full-time staff member working on CO, this office still struggles with quality CO provision due to having the highest arrivals of any CWS office, surpassing the next office by more than 50 refugee arrivals per year. In many cases, CO is conducted by a caseworker as one of many job responsibilities (e.g. Delray Beach, Durham). In other offices, CO is led by an intern or volunteer (e.g. Grand Rapids, Jersey City). In these instances, the quality and quantity of instruction is diminished as noted by CWS and PRM monitors who assess refugees' understanding of key topics. In FFY 2015, PRM monitored three of the proposed offices for program compliance (Columbus, Greensboro and Minneapolis). In all three cases, monitors noted lack of refugee understanding in one or more of the

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key CO subject areas of housing, health or employment. In Columbus and Minneapolis, these findings resulted in a recommendation for program improvement. While PRM has identified 15 CO training topics, CWS has made a strategic selection of three key topics – housing, health, and employment – which it considers to be the pillars of successful resettlement because of their immediate link to refugees, self-sufficiency and significant impact on long-term integration. The below paragraphs outline the challenges for refugees as they relate to housing, health and employment in the 11 proposed AmeriCorps placement sites.

First, refugee understanding of U.S. housing rights, responsibilities and access to safe and affordable housing are continued challenges for refugees in all 11 resettlement communities. Routine monitoring visits conducted by CWS and PRM (at minimum every 3 and 5 years respectively) frequently reveal housing maintenance and safety concerns in refugee home visits. In 50 percent of communities visited in FFY 2014, PRM observations included nonworking smoke detectors or pest infestations during home visits, indicating that refugees had been unable to maintain safe and sanitary housing conditions. The Center for People in Need, a nonprofit organization in Lincoln, NE, found that less than 15 percent of Burmese Karen refugees surveyed knew how to use household cleaning supplies and materials; less than 40 percent understood rules about children and safety in the home. All eleven sites affirm that refugee understanding about tenant rights and responsibilities, including home maintenance, continue to be a barrier to housing security for refugees and can strain current landlord partnerships. One-hundred percent of the 11 proposed sites identified limited landlord partnerships willing to work with newly arrived refugees as an ongoing challenge. Upon arrival to the U.S., refugees do not have required documentation including social security card number, U.S. bank accounts, proof of employment or credit history. Many landlords are unfamiliar with refugee resettlement and are therefore unwilling to house individuals without this documents. Landlords need greater understanding of refugee resettlement to ensure stable housing for recently arrived refugees and safeguard this essential marker of integration.

Secondly, understanding and accessing the U.S. healthcare system and practicing healthy behaviors are a challenge for many refugees during the early stages of resettlement. In FFY 2014, 40 percent of individuals resettled by CWS had a history of medical concerns. A study surveying 7,000 adult refugees found that 9 percent suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and 5 percent from major depression with evidence of psychiatric comorbidity; refugees could be about ten times more

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likely to have PTSD than their counterparts in the general population of western countries (Fazel et. al. 2015). This suggests that up to 339 individuals could suffer from PTSD and/or major depression in the 11 selected sites in the coming year. All 11 selected sites work with especially vulnerable refugee cases that include those with medical or mental health conditions, physical disabilities, single-parent households, the elderly and unattached minors. Ten of the 11 sites identified refugee understanding of the U.S. healthcare system as a barrier to access (e.g. when to call '911' vs. visiting a primary care provider). Five sites identified limited service provider capacity as an additional barrier (e.g. interpretation, familiarity with refugee populations), illustrating the need for community partner training.

Finally, the average unemployment rate within the 11 communities is 4.77 percent, below the national average (March 2015 Bureau of Labor Statistics). While, economic opportunities are available within the resettlement communities, most newly arrived refugees struggle to gain early employment. In FY 2014, only 28 percent of employable refugee adults were employed within 90 days of arrival at the 11 proposed sites while 72 percent remained unemployed. Nine of the 11 sites identified refugee understanding about U.S. work culture and the importance of achieving self-sufficiency through work as barriers to securing and maintaining employment even in strong job markets. Seven offices affirmed that limited partnerships with employers or limited partner capacity (e.g. cultural competence) to work with refugees further restrict refugee access to economic opportunities through employment.

2. Theory of Change: To address these needs, 11 AmeriCorps members will design, coordinate and deliver enhanced cultural orientation (CO) for 1,600 refugees, develop 130 new community partnerships and train 100 community partners (individuals) on working with refugee populations. Members will complement educational activities by modeling behaviors and strategies that improve quality of housing, employment and health in the short-term and build refugees' capacity to independently manage these areas in the future. Availability of pre-existing cultural orientation and education opportunities varies in each placement community. AmeriCorps members will leverage pre-existing resources and programs in each community and tailor their efforts to address gaps and increase quality and quantity of education in employment, housing and health education accordingly. In total, 6.5 of the 11 AmeriCorps' FTE will be dedicated to Economic Opportunity activities (housing and employment), 2.5 FTE will work on Healthy Futures activities and the remaining 2.0 FTE will

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work on Capacity Building activities. The design and focus of AmeriCorps member activities will be responsive to the local needs and, as such, the focal areas of each AmeriCorps member's activities will vary. AmeriCorps members in all sites will work on community capacity building embedded within housing, health and employment related activities. The 11 sites will employ one of two program designs:

Housing-focused approach (Columbus, OH): The AmeriCorps member in Columbus will work 100 percent on housing training for refugees and community capacity building. Member activities will include: designing, coordinating and delivering comprehensive, experiential CO instruction related to housing rights, responsibilities and maintenance; assessing client understanding of CO housing topics; working one-on-one with clients identified as needing additional training; communicating assessment outcomes and participant needs to case workers; researching potential landlord and housing organization partners; providing advocacy, outreach and education to potential partners; developing and maintaining new landlord partnerships; recruiting and scheduling community members to speak at CO class about housing; recruiting and scheduling interpreters to meet language needs; tracking participant attendance. CO class will be conducted 12 hours per week which includes up to four hours dedicated to enhanced housing training offered both in the office and an experiential component in the client's home.

Mixed-focus approach (remaining 10 offices) example Greensboro, NC: The AmeriCorps member in Greensboro will focus .3 FTE on housing, .25 FTE on health and .25FTE on employment related CO activities and .2 FTE on capacity building in these areas. Member activities will include: designing, coordinating and delivering comprehensive, experiential CO instruction related to housing (e.g. rights, responsibilities and maintenance), the U.S. healthcare system (e.g. when to call '911' vs. visiting a primary care provider, health insurance, school immunization requirements), and employment in the United States (e.g. work culture, expectations of types of jobs available to newly arrived refugees and the importance of achieving self-sufficiency through work); assessing client understanding of CO topics; working one-on-one with clients identified as needing additional training; notifying case workers of additional refugee needs or concerns; researching potential community partners in housing, health and employment organizations; providing advocacy, outreach and education to potential partners; developing and maintaining new partnerships; recruiting and scheduling community members to speak at CO class about housing, health and employment; recruiting and

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scheduling interpreters to meet language needs; tracking student attendance and following-up with refugees as necessary. CO class will be conducted two hours/day, three days/week. The AmeriCorps member will also conduct CO instruction in small groups, one-on-one sessions (for home-bound clients) and workshops that provide more in-depth/experiential information outside of the six classroom hours per week.

The 11 AmeriCorps members each generate 10 volunteers during the service year, with 100 volunteers generated in total. Leveraged volunteers will work in a support capacity to the AmeriCorps members to improve access to and attendance in CO activities. Specific and distinct activities of volunteers will include interpretation during class and one-on-one training activities, transportation assistance and in-office child supervision while parents are in CO training. All 11 sites affirmed that the AmeriCorps members will improve access to CO for 1,600 newly arrived refugees. On average these refugees will receive 5 additional hours of CO training as a direct result of the AmeriCorps member activities. For those individuals who are home bound or otherwise have limited access to in-office training (approximately 10 percent of individuals), seven offices will offer in-home CO for the first time as a direct result of the AmeriCorps member activities. The remaining four AmeriCorps members will expand or improve the in-home training currently available. All 11 sites will improve the experiential component of training provided through CO. Experiential activities include demonstration and practice of proper home and food sanitation, writing a check, using the bus, etc.

The AmeriCorps members will increase capacity of community partners to meet the unique needs of refugees in the areas of housing, health and employment. The 4 AmeriCorps members focusing on housing related activities will generate, on average, 15 new landlord partnerships, improving access to safe and sanitary housing for new refugee arrivals (Columbus, Grand Rapids, Jersey City, Lancaster). Because of its focus on housing related issues, the AmeriCorps member in Columbus will develop 20 new landlord partnerships. The remaining 7 AmeriCorps members will generate 2 to 3 new landlord partnerships each. On average, the 10 AmeriCorps members will generate two new health provider partnerships and will train eight health providers on working with refugee populations, thereby improving refugee access to healthcare and health providers capacity to serve refugees. Further, they will generate three new employer partnerships and train 20 employers on working with refugee populations, on average. In all, the 11 AmeriCorps member will generate 80 landlord, 20 health provider and 30 employer partnerships, and 100 community partners (individuals) will be trained.

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The long-term outcome of these interventions will be that clients and communities alike possess the knowledge and resources to engage effectively with one another, thus furthering the two-way integration process.

All education programs will seek to improve refugees' understanding of key integration areas. Outputs will be measured using the following CNCS national performance measures O2 and H4. CWS has further identified the number of individuals receiving housing maintenance training and skills development services and the number of community partners (individuals) trained on working with and meeting needs of refugees as additional performance measures. In all, 1,600 refugees will complete targeted training courses. CWS will gauge the effectiveness of education programs through assessment tests conducted at the completion of each course. As a result of education programs implemented by AmeriCorps members, 1,280 clients (80 percent) will demonstrate knowledge and skills to navigate their community housing, health and employment systems within six months of arrival and 90 community partners trained will possess an improved understanding of refugees' unique needs. This increased understanding will enable refugees to independently navigate their communities, maintain a stable and safe environment in the areas of housing, health and employment and ultimately facilitate long term integration.

3. Evidence Base: In the U.S, there is no national evaluation of the effectiveness of the Refugee Reception and Placement Program, and its accompanying community orientation programs. Therefore, CWS is presenting moderate evidence from two similar resettlement countries: Canada and Australia. In 2011 Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) report entitled Evaluation of the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) discusses an adult-learning program for newcomers, similar to the CO program described in this proposal. The evaluation was completed through a series of key informant interviews (CIC staff), surveys with ISAP service delivery staff and 814 ISAP clients, focus groups, a literature review and CIC data analysis. The evaluation was strong in its use of both qualitative and quantitative data, its engagement with multiple stakeholders, its regional representation, and representation by nearly one-third of resettlement service providers. All clients of the program are newcomers of whom 27 percent were refugees. Of these, 66 percent participated in the ISAP program within their first year in Canada. The service delivery model consists of four elements: needs assessments; information and orientation; para-counselling; and pre-employment services. The program seeks to increase newcomers' knowledge and skills at navigating

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their new community, (service bridging). ISAP activities provide clients with information on topics related to settlement such as culture, housing, employment, government, transportation, benefits and food.

The CWS program proposes to focus on equivalent focus areas of orientation, specifically housing, health (included under the benefits topic of the ISAP), and employment services. As mentioned previously, CWS CO will also work to build partnership, thereby bridging services for refugee newcomers. The Canadian program evaluation reports increased self-reliance and ability to navigate local systems. Indeed, sixty-nine percent of ISAP clients surveyed identified a positive impact of the program in terms of helping them understand their settlement needs (ISAP p. 30). Fifty-six percent reported learning about other existing services in the community (ISAP p. 30). ISAP clients frequently responded that having information in the abovementioned areas increased their confidence and ability to settle (p. 31). While the frequency and mode of orientation are not clear the evaluation notes, ISAP clients express a desire to attend additional orientation sessions. CWS assert that the proposed CO program will bring about a similar positive shift in clients' knowledge, skills and attitudes: they will feel more confident in their new environment and know how to navigate relevant systems.

The 2009 Australia's Cultural Orientation Program for Humanitarian entrants completed the study Evaluation of Australia's Cultural Orientation Program for Humanitarian Entrants (AUSCO). As relevant to the CWS AmeriCorps Program, AUSCO provides refugees with an overview of key facts about Australia including the system of government, cultural adjustment, health care, education, finding a job, money management, housing, transport, Australian values and laws (AUSCO p.5). AmeriCorps members will provide similar activities with outcomes similar to those of AUSCO: Encouragement in self-sufficiency and basic skills and the training necessary to achieve it and the necessary tools to deal with initial settlement concerns and with the different stages of cultural, social and economic adaptation (p.8). While the AUSCO program has a different timeframe, the similar program activities and outcomes make it a reliable study to inform CWS' logic model. The evaluation's recommendation number nine instructs that cultural orientation also include communication with relevant stakeholders to facilitate their role in assisting the target population (p.13). This overall recommendation is reflected in the CWS AmeriCorps' emphasis on service bridging. Study methodology includes literature review, participant focus groups, consultations, and

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surveys in accordance with the Australia Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship Handbook.

4. Member Training: AmeriCorps members will receive high quality, on-going training from the placement office and from CWS Corporate Center (CWS CC) in New York. AmeriCorps members will learn techniques and best practices in adult education, working with refugee populations and engaging with community partners. Training activities will include a thorough on-boarding provided at the local level by the direct supervisor, a one-on-one introductory webinar with CWS CC in month one, monthly AmeriCorps Community of Practice (CoP) webinars with all 11 members, quarterly one-on-one check-ins with CWS CC, at minimum bi-weekly check-ins with the direct supervisor and at minimum two career development activities at the local level. These training activities are in addition to 32 annual webinars or e-learning modules provided by CWS CC in which AmeriCorps members will be encouraged to participate. The first CoP, in month one, will consist of introductions among the 11 members, a review of AmeriCorps responsibilities, rules, prohibited activities and benefits and a review of the Refugee AmeriCorps Initiative. Monthly CoPs will be facilitated by CWS CC with one AmeriCorps member lead on each. The CoP will act as a forum for ongoing training, sharing best practices and brainstorming solutions among the 11 members. The training topics will be identified by CWS CC based upon feedback collected from AmeriCorps members and supervisors during one-on-one check-ins, previous CoPs and monitoring visits. In collaboration with the placement sites, CWS CC will develop an on-boarding package for the 11 members which includes a training schedule, a hard copy of all training information in the Refugee AmeriCorps Member Toolkit and "Refugee AmeriCorps 101" e-learning module. Supervisors will supplement the on-boarding package with local Human Resources (HR) materials (including a hard copy of the job description), and one-on-one training that includes an introduction to in-house programs, local public assistance benefits, resources and partnerships. CWS CC will review supplemental material to the CWS CC on-boarding package, to ensure quality and consistency, and will conduct a one-on-one introductory call with each AmeriCorps member to ensure that all training topics have been covered. AmeriCorps member training (topics listed below by week) will be provided by the direct supervisor (and local HR as appropriate) supplemented by e-learning modules developed by Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange, which is the State Department-funded refugee CO technical assistance provider.

Week 1: CWS history and mission; the local organization; HR policies, codes of conduct and

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procedures; job responsibilities and expectations; AmeriCorps benefits and responsibilities (e.g. Education Award Program, prohibited activities, tracking intervention outputs and outcomes, etc.); the Refugee AmeriCorps Initiative; in-house service programs (employment, health and housing as appropriate); shadowing of current CO activities. Week 2: top five local resettlement populations (history of migration, general demographic information, and resettlement challenges); current and potential community partnerships (employment, health and housing as appropriate); in-house service programs (ongoing); CO shadowing (ongoing). Week 3: classroom and one-on-one education practices; working with interpreters; inter-cultural and mixed language classroom communication strategies; in-depth review of housing, health and employment realities for newly arrived refugees in the local community; desired CO learning objectives and measures; CO shadowing (ongoing); AmeriCorps leads first CO under supervision. Week 4: Member Service Plan (MSP) development (with direct supervisor); identification of at least two external career development opportunities (to build knowledge, skills and professional network). The AmeriCorps member and direct supervisor will review and update the MSP on a monthly basis.

5. Member Supervision: CWS CC will organize one-on-one training for each placement office, prior to member recruitment and on-boarding, which includes mandatory participation by both the executive director and direct supervisor. Training activities for direct supervisors and directors will be developed, administered and monitored by the CWS CC and will include AmeriCorps member identification, prohibited AmeriCorps activities, expectation of training and career development activities for AmeriCorps members, program responsibilities and requirements for tracking outcomes resulting from program interventions. Within one month of hire, each AmeriCorps member will develop a MSP with their direct supervisor that identifies training needs, opportunities for career development and long term professional goals. The MSP will outline action steps to address each of these areas, including a timeline for activity completion, and will identify at least two external career development opportunities in which the member will participate within the service year. Supervisors will submit completed MSPs to CWS CC for approval. The direct supervisor will meet quarterly with the AmeriCorps member to review and update the MSP and to conduct performance evaluation. CWS CC staff will hold a one-on-one introductory training followed by quarterly check-ins with each AmeriCorps member. Regular check-ins between the direct supervisor and the AmeriCorps member will occur, at minimum, bi-weekly to discuss accomplishments, on-going projects, challenges and needs. An exit interview and evaluation will be conducted by the direct supervisor upon completion of

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the service year and by CWS CC in the final quarterly check-in.

6. Member Experience: Local agency directors will be responsible for recruitment of AmeriCorps members through targeted outreach to service partners and ethnic and community based organization whose members include the target population, in order to encourage qualified applicants from within the refugee community to apply for this opportunity. AmeriCorps members will gain specialized experience working with a unique group within the low-income, immigrant population who range from pre-literate to proficient English speakers. Members will develop both hard and soft skills throughout their service year and will work in a multi-cultural environment, where they will be responsible for maintaining client confidentiality and developing a high degree of professionalism in their work. AmeriCorps members will design, deliver and coordinate curriculum focusing on housing safety and maintenance, health and employment readiness. These skills will be particularly applicable to those seeking a career in education (youth or adult), public administration or program management and are transferable to the non-profit, public and private sectors. CWS CC and local office staff will help members develop these skills through training and regular supervision. The monthly CoP for ongoing peer exchange will allow members to share best practices, identify challenges and reflect upon their work. The direct supervisor will be responsible to help the AmeriCorps member establish a connection with the AmeriCorps network at the city and/or state level. Upon completion of the AmeriCorps service year, local offices will encourage members to continue their civic engagement with the local resettlement agency and in the community at large. The office will provide AmeriCorps Alumni with community updates through email blasts and will include information on further engagement opportunities within the organization such as volunteering, advocacy and participation in community events. The associated Education Award Program will also increase opportunities for the AmeriCorps Alumni to improve their educational and economic opportunities.

7. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: AmeriCorps identity will be present at every stage of the AmeriCorps participation year, from recruitment through program completion, to ensure that members, staff and the community understand the contributions of AmeriCorps members. During recruitment, the job title for all 11 members will include AmeriCorps. The job description will include background information on the AmeriCorps Program, the Education Award Program and the new Refugee AmeriCorps Initiative between CNCS and ORR. Upon hire, CWS CC in New York will mail

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each office an "AmeriCorps Certificate of Appointment" to be presented to the member by his or her direct supervisor. CWS CC will coordinate the purchase and distribution of AmeriCorps branded items to members such as t-shirts, lanyards and pins. During community events, members will wear AmeriCorps branded items to clearly identify their service through this program. On a daily basis, members will wear at minimum their lanyard and/or pin. Each local site will display an "AmeriCorps Site" sign in the office lobby. CWS will also incorporate information about the AmeriCorps program on its website. Upon completion of the program, CWS CC will send each office an "AmeriCorps Certificate of National Service" to be presented to the member by his or her direct supervisor.

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing: Founded in 1946, CWS is a non-profit and faith-based global humanitarian organization. CWS works in more than 30 countries worldwide to eradicate hunger and poverty, to secure a sustainable future for the displaced and to promote peace and justice. Over the course of its near 70-year history, CWS has assisted 800,000 refugees and parolees to start new lives and integrate into communities across the United States. Through its Immigration and Refugee Program (IRP), CWS assists refugees, asylees, asylum seekers, immigrants throughout the U.S. CWS manages more than \$52 million in federally funded activities. Based at CWS CC in New York, NY, IRP is led by a senior management team comprised of the IRP director, IRP deputy director for operations, and IRP deputy director for programs. Combined, these staff has over 60 years' experience with the US Refugee Admissions Program, both domestically and overseas. Erol Kekic, IRP director, oversees the four main divisions of the program which include operations, programs, external relations and advocacy. Within the programs division, Sandra Vines, the associate director for resettlement and integration (ADRI) oversees compliance U.S. Government resettlement grants. The ADRI supervises six site liaisons who will provide monitoring, technical assistance and training to the 11 local placement sites. CWS will engage an additional program specialist dedicated to AmeriCorps who will lead the implementation of this new program. This project will also receive support from CWS' global human resources department as well as the Regional Director who supervises the CWS-administered offices located in Palm Beach, Greensboro, Durham, Jersey City, and Lancaster, Richmond and Harrisonburg. On July 20, 2015, ORR provided a consultative notice via email to the Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia State Commissions. In this email, ORR notified the state commissions of the proposed AmeriCorps member service sites, the number of members per site, the program activities and CWS CC contact information. In addition, ORR provided background information about the new

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Refugee AmeriCorps Initiative initiated by CNCS and ORR.

2. Compliance and Accountability: With \$52 million awarded in federal grants, CWS is well organized to manage compliance and accountability for U.S. Government grants. Programmatic compliance for three U.S. Government refugee self-sufficiency grants – Reception and Placement, Matching Grant and Preferred Communities – is the responsibility of the ADRI and her team of six post-arrival site liaisons. During the federal fiscal year, site liaisons visit one-third of the 33 network offices for on-site monitoring of refugee case file review as well as interviews with agency staff, partners and refugees. Four AmeriCorps programs (36 percent) will be monitored in the first year of the program: Minneapolis; Greensboro; Jersey City; and Lancaster. The site liaisons also conduct desktop audits of refugee case files from 10 additional network offices during the fiscal year. This serves to ensure adequate documentation and service provision for clients. Throughout the program year, site liaisons maintain on-going contact by phone and email with CWS network office staff. Site liaisons also create and disseminate technical assistance tools and training to ensure compliance and positive outcomes. For the purpose of the AmeriCorps grant, CWS has budgeted two unplanned monitoring visits to address any challenges that arise with program implementation. In addition, CWS has included two additional site visits to AmeriCorps sites in order to identify leaders in program implementation and innovation so as to foster a peer learning environment. Fiscal compliance is overseen by the deputy director for operations who liaises with the finance officer for U.S. Government grants. Monthly financial reports are generated and shared with the ADRI who monitors expenditures and checks for any miscoded expenses. The agency has well-established protocols to ensure the proper oversight of program expenditures. These include spending authorization requests from the program staff, sign-offs on those requests for the operations staff and a final review by the finance staff. The FFY 2014 A-133 audit of CWS found no material weaknesses or noncompliance materials. Additionally, the agency continued to qualify as a low-risk auditee. CWS audits also cover activities for the seven local offices included in this grant. The other four separate 501(c)(3) entities are connected to CWS through memoranda of agreement which stipulate that agencies must submit yearly audit reports to CWS. The deputy director for operations reviews the audit reports and monitors the overall financial health of affiliated offices. In the rare instance when there has been a financial or programmatic compliance issue, it has been reported to the federal grant program officer for both transparency and guidance on follow-up. With regard to AmeriCorps rules and prohibited activities, the ADRI will organize internal training for her team using CNCS's online resources. Once the CWS CC team understands the

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expectations, they will hold a webinar for the 11 AmeriCorps members and their supervisors. When conducting on-site monitoring visits site liaisons will interview AmeriCorps members and their supervisors to ensure on-going compliance with rules as well as to gauge project progress and identify successful practices. For those sites not scheduled for an on-site visit, monitors will schedule additional one-on-one calls with AmeriCorps members and their supervisors in order to assess implementation and detect compliance issues. CWS CC staff will also hold monthly CoPs with all 11 AmeriCorps members in order to share experiences and best practices as well as to identify any instances of risk or non-compliance.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

ORR will fund the CWS Refugee AmeriCorps Program in the amount of \$275,000, supporting 11 AmeriCorps members in 11 operating sites. CWS will provide proof of program funding from ORR upon receipt. There is no match requirement for this grant. CWS will allocate \$25,000 to each of the 11 sites, \$5,000 of which will cover training, operational and administrative cost at the local level. This includes \$3,480 for each of the four offices that will be subcontracting with CWS (Columbus, Grand Rapids, Houston and Minneapolis) to cover the Federally Approved Indirect Cost provisional rate of 13.92% which reflects the costs to CWS of administering the funds. The remaining \$20,000 will cover the annual stipend and benefits for each AmeriCorps member. In addition to the \$275,000, CWS will leverage ORR Preferred Communities (PC) funding. The FFY 2016 PC grant is \$1,155,268 of which CWS has budgeted \$66,789 to cover an additional full-time program specialist position at the headquarters level. The program specialist will be responsible for the administration, monitoring and provision of technical assistance to the 11 sites and 11 AmeriCorps members. All additional costs associated with operating the AmeriCorps program will be charged to PC.

As a potential new grantee, CWS headquarters staff responsible for AmeriCorps Program administration will participate in the 'Key Concepts of Financial Management for Federal Grantees' and 'National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Course.' Participants will include, at minimum, the associate director for resettlement and integration, the deputy for operations and five program specialists who act as site liaisons to the 11 selected operating sites. CWS will submit the Financial Management Survey Form (FMS) and certification from the above-mentioned on-line courses immediately upon completion.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

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N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

A. Programmatic clarification items:

1. CWS has revised the Executive Summary accordingly: "The CNCS investment of \$63,030 in Segal Education Awards will be leveraged with an investment by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in the amount of \$275,000 and CWS will leverage a minimum of \$66,789 from the ORR funded Preferred Communities (PC) Program."

2. Through leveraged PC Program funding, CWS affirms that the budget will cover all required operating expenses including but not limited to the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), state repository and FBI criminal history checks for the 11 AmeriCorps members and required CWS staff. This is in addition to the leveraged \$66,789* PC funds to cover an additional full-time program specialist position at the headquarters level responsible for the administration, monitoring and provision of technical assistance to the 11 sites and 11 AmeriCorps members. From the \$275,000 leveraged from ORR, each of the 11 AmeriCorps Program operating sites will receive \$5,000 for administrative and operating expenses at the local level.

*Following submission of the Refugee AmeriCorps application, CWS revised the PC budget to increase funds available for the national level FTE to \$66,789 (\$46,935 for annual salary and \$19,854 for fringe benefits). This revision has also been made in the budget narrative section.

B. Budget Clarification

Also addressed in the 'Budget Narrative' section.

1. Church World Service (CWS) affirms that, upon receipt of communication from the Office of Grants Management, all headquarters staff responsible for AmeriCorps Program administration will participate in the 'Key Concepts of Financial Management for Federal Grantees' and 'National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) Course.' Participants will include, at minimum, the associate

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director for resettlement and integration, the deputy for operations and five program specialists who act as site liaisons to the 11 selected operating sites. CWS will submit the Financial Management Survey Form (FMS) and certification from the abovementioned on-line courses immediately upon completion.

2. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) will fund the CWS Refugee AmeriCorps Program in the amount of \$275,000, supporting 11 AmeriCorps members in 11 operating sites. CWS will provide proof of program funding from ORR upon receipt. There is no match requirement for this grant.

C. Performance Measure Clarification

Also addressed in the 'Performance Measures' section where appropriate.

1. Interventions coordinated or provided by AmeriCorps members may include targeted education regarding housing availability, safety, maintenance, rights, responsibilities and domestic life skills in one-on-one or group settings based on the needs individuals and availability of services in each community. AmeriCorps members will also conduct outreach activities with current and potential landlords. Outreach activities will include researching potential partners and providing information about refugees and resettlement to these individuals through phone calls, one-on-one meetings and invitations to attend training activities described in OUTPT26847. The AmeriCorps member will assist refugees to secure new or repaired housing by connecting them to new landlord partners. AmeriCorps members will deliver an average of three hours of housing training through to each refugee (in one-on-one and group settings) through the CO Program.

2. Individuals receiving housing maintenance training and skills development services will include unduplicated refugees who participate in and complete the housing training component of the CO Program, measured by attendance records and completion of the post-course assessment. While children will also be encouraged to participate in housing training, especially experiential components, only those participants who are age 16 and over will be counted toward Output 26803.

3. AmeriCorps members will administer a pre-course assessment of all cultural orientation program participants to measure change in knowledge about housing in the United States.

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4. The number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job training and other skills development services will include refugees who participate in and complete the employment readiness training component of the CO Program, which will include at minimum one hour of training with an average dosage of 2.5 hours across the operating sites. Participation will be measured by attendance records and completion of the post-course assessment. Only those participants who are age 16 and over will be counted toward Output 26803.
5. Employment readiness education activities will focus on orientation and basic skills development for entry-level employment in the United States conducted in a one-on-one and/or classroom setting. Orientation will focus on U.S. employment culture, workplace behavior, employee rights and responsibilities and financial literacy training. Basic skills development will include, at minimum, training to write a resume, mock job interview practice and instruction how to search for employment (e.g. using online job search engines). In some cases, training may be expanded to include specific introduction to housekeeping, food service and sewing skills, typical entry level positions for refugees.
6. AmeriCorps members will administer a pre-course assessment of all cultural orientation program participants to measure change in knowledge and employment readiness. In addition, the post-course survey will ask participants to identify if they perceive an improved readiness to work. This will enable CWS to measure if participants are both demonstrating an improved knowledge of the U.S. workplace and reporting improved confidence in employment readiness.
7. The ¿health education program¿ is a component of the overall cultural orientation program covering health topics including general health and nutrition, exercise, cultural adjustment and coping skills in the context of U.S. culture and the U.S. healthcare system. Health lessons will contain classroom based, individualized and experiential components. The health education program is not a separate or distinct program from cultural orientation and may also be called ¿health education activities through the cultural orientation program.¿
8. AmeriCorps members will administer a pre-course assessment of all cultural orientation program participants to measure change in knowledge of U.S. health topics.
9. In the post-training survey, community partners will be asked to self-identify if they have increased

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knowledge about backgrounds of the refugee populations resettling to the local area, the unique needs of newly arrived refugees as a result of the training activities.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics