

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, Inc

**Application ID:** 15ES168690

**Program Name:** MN Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps Program

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing summary feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one Reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly describes the problem/need for affordable and decent shelter through increasing more units with relevant data for the targeted area.

The applicant clearly states the nature of the training Members will gain along with prohibited activities.

The applicant cites a clear and thoughtful plan to provide meaningful and logical steps to the logic model.

Interventions and outcomes were described as it relates to the responsibility of the Members.

The applicant has designed reflection experiences for Members throughout the program year to produce engaged citizens.

The applicant clearly defines the evidence based intervention methods from past experiences.

Supervisors will have direct supervision throughout the program year; quality supervisor training is also listed.

The applicant presents an adequate plan to provide member experiences that are meaningful along with establishing connections with other Members.

Member recruitment is described by the applicant as a likely successful process that will be conducted through marketing with other organizations as well as online to capture diverse groups.

The applicant clearly describes, in an easy-to-understand fashion, the problem of lack of affordable housing and the need for it in the Twin Cities area.

The applicant provides detailed and compelling data on the lack of affordable housing and how incomes are not sufficient to buy or rent in many locations in the service area.

The applicant clearly describes the intervention and the roles of AmeriCorps members in the proposed project.

The applicant demonstrates clearly that the intervention described will lead to the outcomes identified in the Theory of Change model presented in the narrative.

The applicant demonstrates clearly the AmeriCorps members provide significant assistance and unique contributions to the proposed efforts, and this in turn will help make the proposed program successful.

The applicant presents a detailed and thorough logic model that is logically aligned.

The applicant provides a thorough discussion on how Members will be trained concerning prohibited activities, to include providing rule books for all Members and volunteers.

The applicant demonstrates fully that AmeriCorps Members will receive much training related to homebuilding, even for those who have no experience.

The applicant demonstrates that Members and volunteers will receive excellent guidance and support for supervisory staff, allowing for an effective service experience.

The applicant demonstrates fully that supervisors will receive thorough and proper training on all aspects of their position and AmeriCorps standards.

The applicant fully demonstrates that AmeriCorps Members will gain useful and meaningful skills and experiences that will be useful in obtaining future employment, either in home construction or other areas of the work force.

The applicant demonstrates that a solid program is in place that will allow for meaningful experiences and reflection for all participants, including AmeriCorps Members.

The applicant demonstrates clearly that the proposed provides numerous opportunities for AmeriCorps members to connect with each other on both a personal and professional level, as well as meet and get to know other AmeriCorps member serving in other areas.

The applicant demonstrates fully that the proposed program will foster an ethic of and skills for an active and productive citizenship that will allow Members to commit to and enjoy community services throughout their lives.

The applicant demonstrates clearly that the program has successfully and will continue to recruit and retain AmeriCorps members and others interested in community service.

The applicant provides compelling data and rationale to justify the need for affordable, energy-efficient, and durable housing for low-income individuals in the targeted area of the seven selected counties, demonstrating the severity and prevalence of the problem to be addressed.

The applicant makes logical and convincing connections between having sub-standard housing and adverse health, income and crime rate effects to the local community, indicating the impact that the program design can have over a community condition that has far-reaching effects.

The applicant's program design incorporates reasonable evidence-based models to draw the appropriate conclusion that increased housing security leads to a community's better health and youth development.

The program design adequately takes advantage of the applicant's existing veteran's initiative to improve access for

disabled veterans to improved housing and access to home repairs and upgrades to prevent low-income individuals from residing in unsafe sub-standard housing.

The applicant sufficiently details the types of skills Members will learn that promote their professional development in their service term and would be marketable skills for employers after their term has expired.

The applicant appropriately notes the repeat Members that are motivated by community service and return to continue the program with the applicant in the next year.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant presents limited information regarding outcomes in the theory of change which is not sufficiently detailed. The applicant does not include any veteran-specific housing or low-income data to support the severity or prevalence of the need for that particular targeted group to be served.

The applicant, in describing the difficulty that veterans face in meeting the debt and credit criteria to be selected for the program, does not sufficiently indicate what the selection criteria will be for veterans in the new program year, or how it will ensure it enrolls veterans that meet the criteria beyond using the same low-income criteria it uses for other families served.

The applicant does not precisely explain how the program manager will work with supervisors to ensure reinforcement of training for Members and volunteers.

The applicant does not adequately describe the duration, length or intensity of supervisory training to ensure that there is sufficient time allotted to cover all needed topics and reinforce them throughout the program year.

The applicant does not sufficiently describe what measures its new veteran liaison member will undertake while developing more relationships with the veteran community to ensure that they remedy the issues that cause veterans to not meet the credit or debit criteria established for the program, so it is unclear to what extent the applicant could meet its goal to enroll veterans in the new program year, or whether it has an adequate response in place.

The applicant does not describe in the program design narrative or the logic model whether the 12 affordable housing units for veterans are part of the total number of 144 housing units or separate from the total built for low-income families, or how the housing services are part of the program design, particularly for veterans who do not qualify for the program, so some connections within the program design are not explicit.