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Executive Summary

St Bernard Project proposes to have 140 AmeriCorps members who will provide post-disaster residential reconstruction services in Greater New Orleans, New York City, and Sandy-impacted communities in New Jersey. At the end of the first program year, AmeriCorps members will be responsible for delivering response and recovery services to 1550 disaster survivors. Through the result of these services, 315 disaster survivors will have transitioned into safe, stable housing. AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 10,000 short term volunteers in completing construction tasks at SBP construction sites. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Disaster Services. The CNCS investment of \$1,785,576 will be matched with \$1,181,107 from the grantee; \$933,000 in funding from Toyota and \$248,107 from other smaller private sources.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

1. Problem/Need: St Bernard Project is a national non-profit that ensures communities at risk of, or impacted by, disaster have the resources to prepare for and recover from disasters in the most prompt, efficient and predictable way possible. Specifically, St. Bernard Project rebuilds homes for disaster survivors who cannot afford to rebuild their homes on their own that reside in Greater New Orleans, New York City, and Sandy-impacted New Jersey.

All of the communities in which SBP operates were hard hit by natural disasters. As a result, tens of thousands of families and citizens suffered significant damage - if not total destruction - to their homes. A sizable portion of their respective citizenries continue to lack the resources to afford market rate contractors. In late summer and early fall of 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita ravaged the New Orleans Metropolitan Region. According to the Louisiana Recovery Authority, in St Bernard Parish, 100% of the 27,000 homes were flooded and rendered uninhabitable, and in Orleans Parish, flood waters covered 80% of the city. The New Orleans Homeownership Data Survey, published by HUD in 2009, found that 73.9% of all homeowner occupied units in the area were damaged by Katrina - a total of 214,700 units. Of these, 95,600 experienced extreme damage of \$15,000 or more. While much progress has been achieved over the 9 years since Katrina, much is left to be done.

The needs in New Orleans are still prevalent and severe: On average, SBP still receives 15 calls per week from individuals seeking services, which is up from an average of 10 calls per week this time last year. As a result, SBP is receiving 25% more applications for service than it was this time last year. SBP currently has a waitlist of over 100 families or individuals that meet its client criteria. Approximately 60% of clients on the waitlist have suffered some form of contractor fraud, and all

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have incomes below 120% of the Area Median Income. The average age of clients on the waitlist is 63. This data clearly indicates that the impacts of Katrina continue to persist in Greater New Orleans, particularly for the community's most vulnerable residents: low to moderate income families and the elderly. As media attention and funding directed towards Katrina recovery have waned, SBP remains one of the few resources able to meet these needs and ensure all residents are able to return home.

Hurricane Sandy, which made landfall in October 2012, had a tremendous impact on New York and New Jersey. The second costliest hurricane in US history - only surpassed in damage costs by Katrina - Sandy decimated much of the local housing stock in low lying and/or coastal communities, which struggle to recover to this day. SBP's East Coast service sites have most recently generated a queue of 100+ families in need of assistance. SBP's ability to meet the needs of these residents - who in many cases have exhausted all other options - relies upon continued AmeriCorps support.

A study published by the Furman Center indicated that in New York City, 75,919 buildings were damaged during the storm, which comprises 302,303 housing units or 9% of the total housing stock. Of the buildings damaged, approximately 30,000 had their living area flooded and nearly 25,000 of these structures received over 1 foot of water - indicating that substantial repair work will be required to make these homes safe and habitable. Build It Back, New York's federally-funded program to assist in rebuilding Sandy-impacted homes, has yet to produce sizable results. As of January 2015, Build It Back had 20,192 active applications for the rebuilding of single family units. Despite the high volume of applications, only 2,045 reimbursement checks had been dispersed to homeowners and 878 rebuilding projects had been started, of which 309 had been completed. This data indicates that there is a huge portion of Sandy survivors in New York City whose needs have not been met and who have not started the process of rebuilding. As Build It Back continues to disperse funds to homeowners, SBP serves as the only non-profit contractor option that can ensure these funds are adequately leveraged to meet gaps and address financial shortfalls. For those individuals left out by Build It Back - which only allowed registration from June - October 2013 - or who were un- or underinsured, SBP is one of the only options for securing the private funding and volunteer labor needed to return home.

Similarly, in New Jersey, Sandy damaged over 350,000 homes, of which 22,000 have been deemed uninhabitable. As communities have started on the pathway to recovery, 275,000 households have faced the roadblock of having been uninsured. Even homeowners with flood insurance have experienced difficulty recovering, finding themselves mired in a process that pays slowly, underpays, or does not pay at all. Of the homeowners in New Jersey who have filed flood insurance claims, 22.6% had their claims denied or otherwise are still unsettled. New Jersey's RREM Program, which is

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designed to close the gap in homeowners' repair costs, has brought only 328 families home to date. More than 9,700 other applicants are still not home. The slow roll out of this assistance program has forced homeowners to use their already limited insurance funds to pay for rent while displaced, widening the gap between assets on hand and the total cost of recovery for these households. While thousands of families are currently waiting for RREM assistance to begin the rebuilding process, countless others either missed the deadline or do not qualify for RREM. These families will only be able to return home through the support of non-profit rebuilding programs like SBP.

The staggering needs and slow pace of recovery in the communities in which SBP operates are particularly concerning when one considers the proven consequences of housing instability and disaster related-trauma. Following disasters, studies have found an increased rate of PTSD, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse among survivors. Disaster-related home damage, in particular, is known to be a cause of emotional distress. Merdjanoff's 2013 study, "There's No Place Like Home," demonstrated that "home damage and homeownership status are significant predictors of displaced residents' emotional distress." Notably, the study found that residents whose homes were badly damaged but still standing experienced greater levels of emotional distress than those whose homes had been completely destroyed. This finding demonstrates the toll that uncertainty and delay in housing recovery has on disaster survivors. This link was further explored in the Health & Human Rights Journal through the concept of root shock, the psychological response to the trauma of losing one's community. This shock results in "an ensuing disorientation . . . [that] may undermine the sense of belonging, in particular, and mental health, in general... Root shock can compromise health 1) directly, via psychological trauma and stress; 2) indirectly, by forcing displaced people into increasingly unhealthy living conditions; and 3) at a 'fundamental' or structural level, by further diminishing people's socioeconomic status."

These human consequences, which by no means are inclusive of all the negative impacts experienced by disaster survivors, underscore the need to ensure that comprehensive and responsive resources exist to provide support to survivors. The existence of SBP, and other similarly situated programs, is vital not just to the health and stability of communities currently struggling to recover from disaster, but also to ensure that communities impacted in the future have access to well developed solutions so that disaster recovery efforts continue to become more effective.

3. Evidence Base: St Bernard Project provides a Strong Evidence Base to support its theory of change and intervention. The output of AmeriCorps member's service on the immediate living condition of the individuals and families served is clear and quantifiable. Since SBP began operating its National

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AmeriCorps Program in the fall of 2012, a total of 3271 individuals received disaster recovery services from members. As a result of having received these services, 802 survivors are back in safe, stable homes that they own. This impact, based on Program Year 1 and Year 2 data, shows a quantifiable connection between the service activities that members perform and a long term client outcome of owning and residing in a newly built or rehabilitated home once again.

Studies have repeatedly demonstrated the positive impact of affordable housing and homeownership on the well being and overall health of individuals, families and communities. A 2007 Center for Housing Policy study, "Framing the Issue - The Positive Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health," conducted a literature review that found the following conclusions about the relationship between affordable housing and health: (1) Affordable housing promotes health "by freeing up family resources for nutritious food and health care expenditures." Disaster survivors are put in the tenuous financial situation of making mortgage payments on a house that is no longer inhabitable while also paying rent for temporary housing. Thus, the service that SBP provides to rebuild storm damaged homes alleviates this financial hardship; promoting health by providing safe, affordable housing for disaster survivor once again. (2) Affordable housing provides "families with greater residential stability...[that] can reduce stress and other adverse health conditions." As detailed in earlier sections of the grant narrative, disaster is a traumatic event that can contribute to higher rates of stress and mental illness. In particular, housing damage and lingering housing instability can be a central trigger for emotional distress among survivors. To be certain, SBP's members rebuild safe, secure homes for clients, which is a tremendous milestone for survivors and reduces their emotional distress. But furthermore, members deliver a range of wrap around services to clients throughout the rebuilding process and before the final output of a newly rebuilt home is achieved. This ongoing support and receipt of services allows clients to develop a sense of certainty and comfort that they will be able to properly navigate the process of rebuilding, which can reduce emotional distress even before construction is complete. (3) "Homeownership may contribute to health improvements by fostering greater self esteem, increased residential stability, and an increased sense of security and control over one's physical environment." While SBP's clients may have been homeowners prior to the disaster, this status was jeopardized by the damage inflicted upon their most valuable financial asset. By rebuilding homes, SBP is a vehicle through which survivors are able to restore and guarantee their status as homeowners so as to enjoy the health and emotional benefits associated with this condition.

The security, stability and positive impacts that affordable housing and homeownership bring to individuals and communities has been well documented. SBP, and other similarly structured non-

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profit and community programs, are an effective and crucial component towards facilitating this outcome; particularly in disaster impacted communities. The existence of volunteer-driven, residential reconstruction programs fosters a more robust recovery both in the short and long term. As reported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, "within the first two months following a disaster, more than two-thirds of private giving is complete, and by five or six months almost all giving subsides." This financial reality indicates that a framework of organizations with a core competency in disaster relief and recovery services must exist to ensure donations are properly administered and leveraged. Non-profit and community groups that engage high numbers of short term volunteers are able to pair volunteer labor with donated resources to bring about the highest possible impact on the community. Furthermore, the engagement of volunteers from across the country by non-profit agencies results in an ever expanding network of advocates for the community's recovery, which facilitates an ongoing pool of donations towards recovery efforts beyond those generated immediately following the disaster. Volunteer-driven organizations, like SBP, serve as a valuable resource to the clients served, as well as the community as a whole which benefits from the injection of private donations and voluntourism.

The economic impact of volunteer-driven non-profits in disaster recovery efforts was documented in a study commissioned by New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity. As this study indicates, the organization's post-Katrina operations (2006-2011) had a "significant effect on the Greater New Orleans Area's economy. Not only [were] millions of dollars injected into the system directly but also the ripple effect of these dollars has been extensive...hundreds of jobs have been created both directly through the construction activities...and general operations of the organization and also through the increased expenditures that have occurred as a result of these activities." The ripple impact explored in the study includes items, such as: direct fees and costs paid by Habitat for construction materials, permits, and subcontractors; salaries paid to local employees; and most notably local purchases, and the associated sales taxes, incurred by non-local volunteers that entered Greater New Orleans to rebuild with the agency. The study, which acknowledges a conservative estimate of local volunteer spending, estimated an output of over \$51 million into the local economy by the 118,000 volunteers engaged in Katrina response efforts over the 5 years evaluated by the study. These are dollars that helped to support job creation, increased tax revenue for community investment, and fostered economic growth, which fueled the overall recovery and vibrancy of the community. SBP engages 10,000+ volunteers annually across SBP's affiliates; most of whom travel to the community to perform service and many of whom are associated with corporations or conventions, which the Habitat study acknowledges are likely to spend more than other volunteers during their service trip. It

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is reasonable to draw parallels between SBP's work and impact and the conclusions found in Habitat's study and to find that SBP also serves as a conduit through which millions of dollars are channeled in the local economies where SBP operates.

4. Notice Priority: SBP's AmeriCorps Program falls within the scope of CNCS's Disaster Services funding priority. SBP's AmeriCorps members are engaged in providing recovery services to disaster survivors in two ways: by serving at an SBP service site - rebuilding or directly facilitating the rebuilding of houses - and by serving on disaster deployments.

Disaster recovery is at the core of SBP's program design. Whether it be by recruiting and supervising volunteers in completing construction tasks, guiding clients through the steps involved in the rebuilding process, maintaining and delivering the tools needed to rebuild, or directly completing the necessary trade and construction work on a home; SBP's AmeriCorps members are all directly engaged in performing service activities that assist communities in rebuilding after disaster.

SBP partners with CNCS's Disaster Services Unit to deploy members on short-term FEMA Mission Assignments to assist communities impacted by disaster during the program year. SBP members have participated in deployments to New York and New Jersey following Hurricane Sandy, as well as Detroit following heavy rain and flooding in the fall of 2014. During these deployments, members delivered the following services: mucking, gutting and mold treatment; damage assessments of residential housing; Volunteer Reception Center management; and volunteer coordination.

5. Member Training: During the week long orientation, members do the following: enrollment and first day paperwork; handbook distribution; review of all policies and procedures; review of AmeriCorps regulations and protocols (time tracking, prohibited activities, grievance procedures, etc); review of position descriptions and allowable service activities; introduction to SBP's mission, history and team members; trainings in conflict resolution, diversity, safety, and disability sensitivity; and activities to learn about the impact of the disaster and the culture of the community they will serve.

Following orientation, members enter position-specific training. Volunteer Coordinators, Client Services Coordinators, Supply & Logistics Coordinators, and Skilled Trades Specialists receive the majority of their training through hands on activities while performing their service under the guidance of their supervisor. Site Supervisors enter a 5 week training program wherein they are provided with a manual detailing how to complete the phases of construction they will be responsible for executing and are led in performing these tasks at a construction site. During the training, Site Supervisors not only complete the construction tasks they will need to understand; but furthermore, they are trained in proper techniques for supervising volunteers, ensuring safety at the worksite,

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facilitating service learning and reflection exercises, and discussing the importance of national service in disaster recovery efforts. Through SBP's orientation and training curriculum, members develop the skills they will need to be effective in performing their roles at SBP and as AmeriCorps members.

Throughout the training period and during service, progress is monitored and feedback is provided via meetings with their direct supervisor and AmeriCorps Program staff so supplemental training can be provided, and corrective action taken if members fail to adhere to regulations / policies.

6. Member Supervision: Members receive daily guidance from their supervisor, as well as participate in weekly department meetings. Members receive direct feedback from their supervisor - and are able to provide feedback about their performance and the functioning of their department - through SBP's mid term evaluation process. Members are also given the opportunity to provide feedback about their manager's performance via SBP's Manager Feedback Survey. The results of this survey allow AmeriCorps Program staff, as well as Senior Management at SBP, to identify areas of strength and growth among member supervisors to foster the strongest program possible. Throughout their term, members have regular check ins with the AmeriCorps Program Manager for their service site to discuss the supervision and support they are receiving. These meetings serve as an opportunity to counsel members in how to bring the best out of their relationship with their supervisor, as well as to troubleshoot any issues that may occur.

Supervisors are trained to understand and follow AmeriCorps and SBP regulations and protocols during their new hire orientation, and continuously via in-service training throughout their employment at SBP. During this orientation, staff are briefed in protocols for time off, time tracking, allowable / prohibited activities, setting performance expectations, corrective action, the function and purpose of AmeriCorps, and strategies for fostering a positive member experience. After orientation, supervisors meet regularly with AmeriCorps Program staff to discuss the relationship they have developed with their members and identify ways in which departmental operations can continue to improve. Through this ongoing dialogue, any potential issues are identified early, and AmeriCorps Program staff can serve as a mediator and support system in resolution. As each cohort of AmeriCorps members completes their terms, AmeriCorps Program staff work with supervisors to identify best practices and areas for growth in AmeriCorps member management and development so that corrective action can be implemented where needed.

7. Member Experience: St Bernard Project is committed to developing AmeriCorps members to be active citizens in their community that will leave their terms with a set of marketable skills. Members in SBP's AmeriCorps Program receive training in a wealth of different areas depending upon their

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position - construction knowledge, leadership, delegation, project coordination, and public speaking, to name a few. To ensure that members are properly able to recognize and market the skills that they have developed through their service, AmeriCorps Program staff hold "Transitioning out of AmeriCorps" trainings. In these trainings, staff review topics such as resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, professionalism, and job searching. Particular attention is paid to helping members to identify the skills that they have developed in their position that will be applicable to their career goals. In addition, AmeriCorps Program staff invite members approaching the end of terms to participate in one-on-one sessions to discuss job search strategies, edit resumes and practice interviewing.

SBP creates myriad opportunities that deepen AmeriCorps members' understanding of the importance of service, facilitate the development of meaningful bonds with each other, and foster a high level of esprit de corps. During orientation, members participate in activities to engage with members of the community and learn about the local recovery efforts. Examples include: a free guided tour of the Katrina exhibit at the Louisiana State Museum, neighborhood tours, and facilitated dialogues with current and former clients. Throughout the term, SBP hosts Welcome Home Parties to celebrate and recognize the efforts that AmeriCorps members have made in returning a family home. On a monthly basis, SBP hosts All AmeriCorps Meetings, which are facilitated by members, to provide a space for members to discuss and reflect upon their service, as well as receive pertinent information about AmeriCorps Alums and other national service programs. In addition to these activities, SBP hosts All Team Meetings on a regular basis to bring all AmeriCorps members and staff at an affiliate together to reflect on progress, as well as periodic cook outs or other social events to facilitate connection between the team. Each time AmeriCorps members complete their terms, SBP hosts an End of Term Celebration that recognizes and thanks each member completing service. Through all of these efforts, SBP breeds an organizational culture that fosters teamwork, appreciation and recognition for national service.

While SBP engages individuals from across the country in service, SBP is mindful of the value of recruiting community members to rebuild their own neighborhoods. To achieve this goal, AmeriCorps Program staff post recruitment materials on local job and volunteer sites, communicate with agencies in the region with networks that may be well suited for national service about upcoming AmeriCorps start dates, and partner with colleges and community colleges in the region to recruit graduates.

8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: SBP sees AmeriCorps as an essential partner in allowing it to achieve maximum community impact - something that SBP shares with all members, staff, volunteers and partners. As such, SBP is committed to promoting and furthering a positive

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image of the AmeriCorps brand. Throughout the application process, individuals are made aware of the AmeriCorps Program. The application is accessed from a page on the SBP website that provides detailed information on AmeriCorps, and this information is reviewed during the interview process. During orientation, members discuss the purpose and vision of AmeriCorps, as well as the rules, regulations and expectations for their participation within the program. Members are also provided with SBP t-shirts that include an AmeriCorps logo on the sleeve to identify them as national service participants when serving. To promote AmeriCorps within the communities in which SBP operates, as well as within its international network of stakeholders and volunteers, SBP includes updates and information about the AmeriCorps Program on its homepage, in its newsletter, and on social media. One example of this would be the weekly AmeriCorps Spotlight that is put on the SBP facebook page with a picture and information on what compelled the member to serve.

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing: Founded in Greater New Orleans in 2006, St Bernard Project has scaled operations to include affiliates in Joplin, Missouri (2012), New York City, New York (2013), and Sandy-impacted New Jersey (2014). In executing this expansion, SBP is mindful of and intentional in engaging community stakeholders in designing programs that will be responsive to the needs of the community. In the case of each community where SBP operates, it has partnered with a local community group to deliver services. In Joplin, this was Rebuild Joplin; in New York City, Friends of Rockaway; and in New Jersey, Sea Bright Rising. In all of these instances, the community group had been founded by residents of the community following the disaster in order to assist in recovery efforts. The partnership, and ultimate incorporation under SBP's 501(c)3, was undertaken in order to more fully provide the best practices and technical expertise needed for the community group to transition from low-skilled relief efforts to the higher-skilled tasks of long-term recovery and rebuilding services. Additionally, the partnership with SBP enhanced the volunteer, monetary and AmeriCorps resources available to the community. Following the incorporation of these affiliates within SBP's national network, local affiliate boards were established in each community to ensure that local stakeholders continued to drive the vision and programming at that affiliate. In creating local affiliate boards, SBP ensures client representation and facilitates client listening sessions periodically. SBP also is intentional in activating donors, volunteers, government agencies, and other organizations in the community in its work to ensure locals have a stake in their recovery.

AmeriCorps support has been fundamental to SBP's model and operations since its inception. SBP began sponsoring AmeriCorps NCCC teams in 2006 and has since hosted over 50 teams coming from

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every campus. In 2008, SBP received its first AmeriCorps State grant of 32 MSY from Louisiana Serve Commission. In addition, SBP was granted 3 years of AmeriCorps VISTA support beginning in 2009 to provide vital assistance in organizational capacity building. SBP continued to successfully operate an AmeriCorps State Program through 2012. SBP's competency in program and grant management, as well as strong community impact, resulted in an expansion of the AmeriCorps State Program from 32 MSY to 64 MSY by the program's end.

Following the 2011 tornado that devastated Joplin, Missouri; SBP expanded into this community to assist in its recovery. In fall 2012, SBP received its first AmeriCorps National Program of 130 MSY to enhance its impact in both Greater New Orleans and Joplin, Missouri. In addition to launching operations as a National AmeriCorps Program, SBP also was accepted into the CNCS Disaster Services Unit's network of A-DRTs. This partnership was a recognition of SBP's strength in training members to provide disaster relief and recovery services, as well as its ability to provide the technical support and oversight needed to manage FEMA Mission Assignment funds.

In Year 2 of program operations, SBP again expanded the reach of AmeriCorps operations by opening new sites in New York and New Jersey to rebuild for Hurricane Sandy survivors. To facilitate SBP's expansion into New Jersey, SBP received funds from CNCS's Disaster Services Unit for an additional 3 MSY for a total of 133 MSY for the program year. SBP is currently in Year 3 of program operations and continues to place members to serve in Greater New Orleans, Joplin, New York, and New Jersey. Thanks to the impressive impact and success of SBP's operations in Year 1 and Year 2, SBP was granted an expansion request for Year 3 of 10 MSY to allow for a total of 140 MSY.

SBP has developed and continually refined the structure of its program to allow for optimal fiscal and programmatic management. SBP's National AmeriCorps Program is managed by Sarah Sievert, AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director. Sarah is a VISTA alumna who has been with SBP since 2010; first supervising the operations of SBP's AmeriCorps State Program and then managing the process of scaling program operations to function in multiple states. In her current role, Sarah oversees the recruitment and selection process for members nationally, as well as provides training, monitoring and technical support for AmeriCorps Program Managers and member supervisors at each affiliate site. SBP currently employs two AmeriCorps Program Managers, both AmeriCorps alumni, that provide training and support to members and managers at the affiliate site they are based in, as well as oversee overall compliance of local program operations. To ensure proper fiscal management and compliance, SBP's AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director collaborates with SBP's CFO and Grant Accountant to manage all CNCS and match funds expended nationally. The

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Grants Accountant is fully responsible for the management of the AmeriCorps budget and works directly with affiliate Directors to ensure proper reporting and accounting of local costs. Each member serving is supervised by a staff member that has the technical expertise in their subject area, as well as an understanding of best practices for supervising and supporting AmeriCorps members.

In addition to SBP's high degree of competence in overseeing national service grants and programs; SBP has extensive experience in managing government grants. Between 2012 and end of 2014, SBP administered the following: City of New Orleans Community Block Grant Development Program - \$1.3 million; City of New Orleans HOME Program: \$1.5 million; Non-Profit Rebuilding Pilot Program (NRPP) - Round 1: \$400,000, Round 2: \$1.1 million, Round 3: \$300,000; Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2: \$800,000; and Homeowner Repair Program: \$1 million.

2. Compliance and Accountability: SBP holds itself and its affiliates responsible for preventing, detecting and resolving risk and non-compliance. To prevent compliance issues, SBP provides training to AmeriCorps Program Managers, supervisors and members in areas that have been identified as high risk over the course of operations. These areas include: hours tracking, timesheet submission and approval, allowable/unallowable activities, discrimination and harassment policies, corrective action, and grievance protocols. Training in these areas occur during new member orientation and are outlined in the Member Contract and Member Manual. Staff members that are supervising AmeriCorps members also are trained in these items at the beginning of their employment. AmeriCorps Program Managers provide ongoing support and mentoring in these areas to supervisors throughout the course of their employment.

In addition to receiving training to understand and monitor the items listed above, AmeriCorps Program Managers are responsible for the maintenance of compliant member files, criminal history checks, digital accounts (eGrants, OnCorps), and impact data for their affiliate site. SBP has established audit checklists for member files and criminal history checks, as well as guidelines / operating protocols for the maintenance of digital accounts and submission of complete impact reports. AmeriCorps Program Managers utilize these tools in order to ensure the accuracy, compliance and mitigate risk. To detect risk and noncompliance, SBP has established a national monitoring and reporting structure. Affiliates are expected to report all program impact data on a monthly basis for review by national program management staff. Additionally, program management staff complete a regular monitoring exercise that includes an audit of a random sample of member files, criminal history checks, and timesheets, as well as one-on-one interviews with members to identify areas of non-compliance. SBP's AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director also performs periodic site visits to

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affiliate sites to further review program files and operating protocols, as well as to solicit feedback from members and supervisors in person.

Fiscal compliance is ensured, and risk is detected, via a multi level review process of all items coded towards the AmeriCorps grant. This process includes review and approval by the staff member and his/her supervisor at the affiliate where the cost was incurred, as well as review and approval by SBP's Grant Accountant. If concerns are raised by any of these parties, SBP's CFO and AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director are involved in reaching resolution. Additionally, SBP executes a multi level review of all grant billings / drawdowns by both the Grant Account and CFO to ensure accuracy. Periodic tracking of budget to actuals for both CNCS and match funds occurs throughout the program year on a line by line basis to identify possible irregularities.

If areas of noncompliance are identified, SBP's AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director, with consultation from SBP's CFO and/or CEO, is directly responsible for resolution. Resolution is appropriate to the incident and includes AmeriCorps Program Managers, affiliate staff or members as needed. In many cases, resolution involves the revision or development of operating protocols to eliminate instances of noncompliance in the future. SBP's AmeriCorps & Human Resources Director has developed a transparent relationship with SBP's CNCS Program Officer and Grants Officer who have been, and will continue to be, activated as resources in the resolution of all incidents.

3. Past Performance: St Bernard Project is currently in Year 3 of its first National AmeriCorps grant. In previous program years SBP has had two Performance Measures within the Disaster Services and Veterans & Military Family focus areas. In each program year, SBP exceeded its Disaster Services Performance Measure. Specifically, SBP achieved the following impact: Year 1: Output: SBP anticipated delivering disaster recovery services to 300 disaster survivors. By the close of the program year, SBP's AmeriCorps members had provided services to 1494 survivors. Outcome: SBP anticipated enabling 250 disaster survivors to transition into safe, stable housing. By the close of the program year, SBP had transitioned 394 survivors into stable housing. Year 2: Output - SBP anticipated delivering disaster recovery services to 1518 disaster survivors. As of the GPR due at the end of October 2014, SBP's AmeriCorps members had delivered services to 1777 disaster survivors. Outcome: SBP anticipated enabling 300 disaster survivors to transition into safe, stable housing thanks to the services delivered by AmeriCorps members. As of the GPR due at the end of October 2014, SBP had transitioned 408 disaster survivors into stable housing.

In previous grant years, SBP has also included a Performance Measure aiming to increase the engagement of veterans as AmeriCorps members or short term volunteers. While SBP has seen some

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progress towards meeting these targets, there have been barriers to engaging veterans in service work that have caused this Performance Measure to go unmet in spite of corrective action. Due to these barriers, SBP has eliminated its Veterans & Military Family Performance Measure for this grant application in favor of focusing efforts towards its core competency of delivering disaster recovery services. While the engagement of veterans as volunteers will no longer be a Performance Measure, SBP will continue to prioritize veterans for service as AmeriCorps members and volunteers. This impact will be reflected on SBP's demographics reports, as well as in GPR narratives.

In Year 2 of program operations, SBP achieved a high level of success in member selection; enrolling 100% of slots granted. However, SBP saw some member attrition, which resulted in 10 full time refill slots. SBP filled 7 of the 10 refill slots. To address this concern and ensure that all traditional slots and all refill slots are filled, SBP has refined its interviewing process to ensure that members fully understand the rigorous nature of participation in SBP's AmeriCorps Program and the realities of living on the AmeriCorps stipend. Program staff have found these items to be driving factors that lead new members to exit the program at the beginning of their terms, which results in refill slots becoming available. By ensuring that members have thought through and prepared for these challenges, SBP will avoid the creation of refill slots.

St Bernard Project failed to meet 100% member retention in previous program years. SBP is a very challenging AmeriCorps Program. Members are asked to quickly develop complicated skills, as well as function with clients in crisis in the inherent chaos of a post-disaster environment. Rates of retention were lowest at the newest operating sites as it is particularly challenging to serve with a developing organization. Selection of high quality members that embody the characteristics SBP has found to make members successful is crucial to a high retention rate throughout the term. Thus, correction action has been taken to provide additional support in member recruitment, selection and management for SBP's newest sites. SBP also executed member feedback and morale surveys at all affiliates and developed a specific plan of action for each affiliate based upon the data received in order to foster a member experience that would allow for improved rates of retention.

Like all CNCS funded program, SBP participated in the National Criminal History Check Assessment in the fall of 2014. Participation in this process identified areas of noncompliance and weakness in SBP's criminal history check procedures. Specifically, SBP found the following issues: inconsistent initiation and/or documentation of initiation for NSOPW, state and FBI criminal history checks prior to the start of service; ambiguity in the instructions on SBP's Criminal History Check Consent Form that resulted in incorrect state of application criminal history checks; and inconsistent

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documentation of accompaniment. To address these concerns, SBP developed, implemented and trained all AmeriCorps Program Managers on new operating protocols that included corrective action to ensure full compliance with criminal history check regulations moving forward. Most notably, SBP centralized member pre-arrival onboarding - which includes the initiation / management of the criminal history check process - with national staff operating at the SBP headquarters in New Orleans. By centralizing this process, SBP ensures that operating protocols are fully followed by staff that have a deep understanding of both SBP and CNCS's expectations for criminal history checks. Furthermore, SBP revised its criminal history check forms to make them more explicit to incoming members and program staff, as well as established a system of weekly reporting and review of documentation of accompaniment from the affiliate to national staff in order to ensure that operating protocols and proper documentation is occurring.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The budget proposed by SBP is adequate to fully meet the operational needs of SBP's AmeriCorps Program. As SBP is a highly skilled construction program, much of the costs allocated in the budget account for staff salaries, fringe benefits and workers compensation fees - to provide the training and supervision members need to perform their duties in a high quality, safe manner. Member stipends, fringe benefits and worker compensation fees also account for a sizable portion of the budget. To ensure SBP has additional funding to carry out daily operations, funds have been allocated to support travel between construction sites. The budget also includes adequate allocations for staff training, monitoring trips, background checks, and member training to foster a healthy, compliant program. Funds have also been allocated to ensure proper AmeriCorps identification of members, as well as adequate recruiting efforts.

SBP has already secured a large portion of the non-CNCS match for FY 2015-2016 program operations. Toyota, who has supported SBP's AmeriCorps Program and overall operations for many years through in kind, monetary, and consulting services, has agreed to provide \$933,000 to fund SBP's 2015-2016 AmeriCorps Program, and is currently considering a request to continue this level of support for up to 5 years. The additional \$265,707 of grantee funds will be comprised of small private (individual, corporate, school / church group) donors. Given that the funds committed by Toyota account for the majority of SBP's match, SBP feels confident it will have adequate funding to support its portion of the AmeriCorps Program.

SBP has maintained a grantee match of 39% that is above the required rate for a Year 4 program. SBP has also reduced the cost per MSY from \$13,150 to \$13,149.

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Evaluation Summary or Plan

St Bernard Project is currently in Year 3 of its first AmeriCorps National Direct grant and is re-competing for CNCS funding. As such, it is submitting a program evaluation plan and is poised to execute a robust study of program operations and service delivery. This evaluation will provide a clear understanding of the impact of SBP's AmeriCorps Program, and the role it plays in fostering resilience and positive outcomes for the individuals and communities it serves.

SBP's AmeriCorps Program exists to meet the residential reconstruction needs of disaster survivors nationwide. The theory of change underlying SBP's program design and intervention is that the delivery of holistic, all-under-one roof recovery services is required to enable disaster survivors to return to stable housing. This intervention, when supplemented with short term volunteer labor and private funding from inside and outside of the community, allows survivors to achieve this milestone as quickly and efficiently as possible. AmeriCorps member service is vital to the functioning of this intervention and achievement of the desired outcomes.

Over the past 3 years of program operations, SBP has demonstrated a high degree of competence in achieving clear, measurable program outcomes. As indicated in SBP's Performance Measures, SBP's program has a quantifiable impact in terms of number of disaster survivors receiving relief and recovery services, as well as the number of these survivors that are transitioned into safe, stable housing each program year. While the transition into stable housing is a quantifiable program output and drastically changes a disaster survivor's life condition, it does not exist in isolation. This output has a ripple effect that achieves demonstrable outcomes within the survivor's life and community.

SBP's evaluation plan seeks to build upon the existing understanding of SBP's program impact - which describes receipt of services and change in immediate life condition - to generate a clearer, quantifiable understanding of the ripple effects of the change in life condition over the long term. Specifically, SBP's evaluation plan will test the following research questions: Does receipt of services from SBP's AmeriCorps Program impact a client's overall well being, health and future resilience? Is this impact statistically significant? In what ways does this impact manifest itself? Does this impact evolve over the course of receiving the intervention (at point of application, throughout the rebuilding process, upon transitioning home, after a set period of residing in the home, etc.)?

SBP proposes to conduct this evaluation via surveys and interviews with clients over the next 3 years of program operations. The survey would be conducted with a random sample of SBP clients from across its operating sites and allow clients to describe their current life condition (emotional wellness, health, financial wellness, connectedness to community, etc) along a prescribed set of

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indicators. The survey would be administered to the same group of clients along a set timeline as they move through the rebuilding process. By evaluating the same group of clients according to a consistent set of indicators, SBP would seek to understand the impact of its intervention in fostering positive client impacts over the long term.

As SBP receives greater than \$500,000 in CNCS funding, SBP will be soliciting an external evaluator to carry out its evaluation plan. In selecting an external evaluator, SBP will look for the following qualifications: (1) Has experience with conducting evaluations of a similar size / scope. (2) Has the organizational capacity to complete the evaluation along a mutually agreeable, reasonable timeline. (3) Has a track record of reliable, verifiable program evaluations. (4) Is conducted by staff with an academic and/or professional background necessary to understand program evaluation. (5) Has a basic understanding of disaster recovery, if possible.

SBP has allocated \$2500 in 2015-2016 budget for program evaluation. Before expending these funds, SBP will generate an RFP and execute a process for solicitation of bids from external evaluators. These funds will then be used to refine the evaluation plan with the external evaluator, develop clear timelines for the project, and conduct the first round of client surveys.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

N/A

Continuation Changes

April 2015 Clarification Items

A. Programmatic

An adjustment has been made to change the wording of "work" sites to construction sites in the Executive Summary.

B. Budget

1. St Bernard Project has opted not to reduce the cost per MSY at this time due to the high cost of residential rebuilding, which requires us to allocate as much organizational resources as possible towards project materials, tools and supplies.
2. FICA costs have been correctly calculated on the budget based upon a current tax rate of 6.2% for Social Security and 1.45% for Medicare for a total of 7.65%. This rate was multiplied against staff

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salaries and adjustments were made for the % of time the staff person bills to the grant to get the total reached on the budget.

3. Healthcare costs for personnel were calculated by taking the actual monthly premium for each staff member currently occupying the roles listed in the grant. We then reconciled this amount against the % of each staff member's time billed towards the AmeriCorps grant and then annualized the total amount of healthcare costs billable to the grant. St Bernard Project provides 100% employer paid health coverage for staff -- with monthly premiums ranging from \$300 - \$950 depending upon a staff member's age. The calculation for personnel Worker's Compensation was generated by multiplying each staff member's salary by the Worker's Compensation rate for their position and location and then reconciling for the % of the staff person's time allocated to the AmeriCorps grant. State unemployment tax was calculated along the formula below:

LA -- 11 staff times \$84 ($\$7,000 \times 0.012$) per member. Current wage base \$7,700.

NY -- 7 staff times \$422 ($\$10,300 \times 0.041$) per member. Current wage base \$10,500.

NJ -- 5 staff times \$1,191 ($\$31,500 \times 0.037825$) per member. Current wage base \$32,000.

4. FICA costs have been correctly calculated on the budget based upon a current tax rate of 6.2% for Social Security and 1.45% for Medicare for a total of 7.65%. This rate was multiplied against the total amount of stipends to be distributed to members during the grant year.

5. The calculation for member unemployment insurance has been corrected on the budget. The narrative explanation was incorrect; however, the total calculation was accurate. Below is the revised formula:

LA -- 65 members times \$84 ($\$7,000 \times 0.012$) per member. Current wage base \$7,700.

NY -- 50 members times \$422 ($\$10,300 \times 0.041$) per member. Current wage base \$10,500.

NJ -- 25 members times \$1,191 ($\$31,500 \times 0.037825$) per member. Current wage base \$32,000.

6. The calculation for member Worker's Compensation was based on multiplying the total stipend amount for each member by the Worker's Compensation rate for their position and location. Below is a deeper explanation.

New Orleans

Site Supervisor: Stipend of \$12,100 * 33 members * .029 WC rate = \$11,579.7

Volunteer Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 6 members * .005 WC rate = \$363

Client Services Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 6 members * .005 WC rate = \$363

Supply & Logistics Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 8 members * .005 WC rate = \$484

Skilled Specialist -- Framing: Stipend of \$12,100 * 12 members * .2388 WC rate = \$34,673.76

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Total = \$47,463.46

New Jersey

Site Supervisor: Stipend of \$12,100 * 15 members * .0275 WC rate = \$4991.25

Volunteer Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 2 members * .0025 WC rate = \$60.50

Client Services Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 3 members * .0025 WC rate = \$90.75

Supply & Logistics Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 5 members * .0025 WC rate = \$151.25

Total = \$5293.75

New York

Site Supervisor: Stipend of \$12,100 * 29 members * .1836 WC rate = \$64,425.24

Volunteer Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 3 members * .0031 WC rate = \$112.53

Client Services Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 3 members * .0031 WC rate = \$112.53

Supply & Logistics Coordinator: Stipend of \$12,100 * 7 members * .0031 WC rate = \$262.57

Skilled Specialist -- Framing: Stipend of \$12,100 * 8 members * .1738 WC rate = \$16,823.84

Total = \$81,736.71

Total national AmeriCorps Worker Compensation Cost = \$134,493.92

C. Performance Measure

1. In our previous years of program operation, SBP has developed the necessary information management systems to ensure that data collection and reporting meets CNCS requirements for an unduplicated count of clients served. Specifically, SBP utilizes Salesforce to track all client data from point of application to completion of construction. Salesforce allows members of the SBP staff to share a common electronic record for a client -- and search for clients based off of unique identifying data -- to avoid the duplication of client information within the database. As an additional safeguard against the duplication of data, all affiliates are required to report the number of clients served and transitioned home to SBP National Program staff on a monthly basis. As a part of this process, affiliates must produce sufficient back up documentation -- including client name and address -- to ensure that the impact data is valid and the client has not been previously counted. SBP has also established clear benchmarks to determine when a client can be counted within the performance measure output and outcome. A client is counted as receiving services when an initial intake

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appointment has been conducted to assess a client's needs and make internal and external referrals for support. Regardless of the level of service delivery -- which can range from a focus on external referrals, waitlist status for proper funding, to a fully rehabilitated home -- the client is not counted as having received services again since they were included in this count upon intake. It is not until the scope of work has been completed, and requisite building inspections have been passed to allow the client to safely occupy the home, that the client is then counted towards the performance measure outcome. During the monthly review of affiliate client impact, National staff ensure that data meets the benchmarks indicated above and that clients are only counted once.

2. St Bernard Project has added an additional Performance Measure to fully capture the scope of our program's impact. In addition to our standard program operations, which fall under the scope of the D3 Performance Measure, SBP has added D2 as a way to capture the impact members have when serving on short term disaster deployments via participation in the A-DRT network. Previously, clients served during disaster deployments were counted as receiving services under the D3 target. Thus, the target number of individuals served under D3 has been revised to adjust for the creation of the D2 Performance Measure, which better indicates the nature of the services provided to these individuals. The adjustment of targets has also been made to the Executive Summary, which previously indicated that 1550 disaster survivors would receive recovery services during the program year, and now states that 300 survivors will receive response services and 1250 will receive recovery services. SBP has continued to have our D3 performance measure as an aligned set; indicating the positive change in an individual's life through receipt of services and transition into stable housing. However, we have opted not to make an aligned set for D2 as the services delivered are short term in duration, focus on meeting immediate needs, and occur in communities where SBP does not have a long term presence. Thus these individuals receive services that will move them towards stability post-disaster; however, SBP does not track longer term change or impact that results from the receipt of these services.

3. The Veterans & Military Family Focus Area was selected in error and has now been removed from the PM module. 100% of MSY / member activity will be directed towards the Disaster Services Focus Area.

D. Strategic Engagement Slots

1. St Bernard Project does not allocate any percentage of slots towards recruitment of members with disabilities. Currently, SBP does have members that have self-identified as disabled; however, this has not been a targeted initiative that we have undertaken. The central mechanisms through which SBP has recruited, and will continue to recruit, members of the disability community are through outreach

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and partnerships with the regional VA offices and other civic and supportive groups for veterans. SBP has a commitment to engaging veterans in service as AmeriCorps members and short term volunteers, and many of these individuals have disabilities as a result of their military service.

2. SBP is not requesting additional MSY for to recruit individuals with disabilities.

E. MSY with No Program Funds

1. SBP is not requesting additional No-Cost MSY at this time.

Grant Characteristics