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Executive Summary

Sponsor Name: North Dakota State University (NDSU)

Program Name: RSVP+ North Dakota

An estimated 2612 RSVP volunteers will serve.

Some of their activities will include food delivery, transportation, companionship, food distribution, food pantry support, and health education.

The primary focus of this project is Healthy Futures.

At the end of the three-year grant, at least 1125 individuals who are homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation or other services that allow them to live independently will report increased social ties/perceived social support.

The CNCS federal investment of \$313,158 will be supplemented by \$239,770 in non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

SUMMARIZE REQUIREMENTS 1-4 (A-D)

- A. Requirement 1 - minimum 10% of unduplicated volunteers must be in work plans that result in outcomes. Of our total 2612 unduplicated volunteers, 750 (28.7%) will be assigned to the Healthy Futures H8/H9 work plan that include Food Delivery, Transportation, and Companionship.
- B. Requirement 2 - at least 25% of unduplicated volunteers must be assigned to a primary focus area. Of our total 2612 unduplicated volunteers, 1200 (46%) will be assigned to the following work plans within our primary focus area of Healthy Futures--H8 [Food Delivery, Transportation, Companionship], H10 [Food Distribution, Food Pantry Support], and H4 [Health Education (Bone Builders)].
- C. Requirement 3 -- no more than 30% of unduplicated volunteers can be placed in the community priorities work plan. Of our total 2612 unduplicated volunteers, 700 (26.8%) will be assigned to the community priorities work plan.
- D. Requirement 4 -- the remainder of unduplicated volunteers are placed in volunteer activities that align with Agency-wide outputs and/or Complementary program capacity-building outputs. Of our total 2612 unduplicated volunteers, 712 (27.2%) will be assigned to the following focus areas (other than Healthy Futures)--Education, Veterans and Military Families, Disaster Services, and Capacity Building.

DESCRIBE THE REGIONS/STATE AND DEMONSTRATE THAT THE NEED(S) IDENTIFIED IN

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HEALTHY FUTURES EXIST IN THE GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA.

AGING IN PLACE--Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently. The bulk of our activity in this subset of Healthy Futures will be in Food Delivery, Transportation, and Companionship.

From 2000 - 2010, the number of North Dakotans over the age of 85 grew 13.3%, but an even bigger impact is the 23.4% increase in the number of North Dakotans age 90 and over during that same time period. (State Data Center, NDSU, May 2012) 2012 data from North Dakota Compass reports that 37.6% of adults ages 75 - 84 have one or more disabilities, and as age increases rates of disabilities generally tend to also. 64.8% of adults ages 85 and older have one or more disabilities. Home-delivered meals, transportation, and companionship are crucial for ensuring the independence and well-being of these individuals, and for helping them remain in their homes for as long as possible.

For older adults ages 65 - 74 in North Dakota, median household income for one person was \$25,500 in 2011. This figure decreases to \$15,600 for older adults who are 85 or older. Home-delivered meals are affordable options for older adults living on fixed incomes.

A July 2012 report by the Grand Forks Senior Center on the state of senior meals and nutrition highlights the feelings of several older adults and how they benefit not only nutritionally but also from the opportunity for social connections and companionship. For example, Eileen from Rugby says '[g]oing to the meal site gives me a reason to get up every day and get dressed.' The independence factor is as important as the companionship opportunities: says Eileen, 'I know I will receive a hot, well-balanced meal which I can no longer prepare myself.' Gerry from Ellendale, ND explains, 'I am now a widow and am going to be 82 in two months. When I go [to the Senior Center meal site], I know I'll get a good nutritional meal. Just as important, I get to eat with other people and visit.'

According to 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance data through the Administration on Aging, 12% of ND adults age 65 and older report that they rarely or never receive social or emotional support, clearly indicating that the need for companionship is great. From this same survey, 11.4% of adults in North Dakota age 65 and older report a lifetime diagnosis of depression; the number is even higher for adults ages 50 - 64, comprising 19.2% of this population.

As noted in the North Dakota State Plan on Aging (October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2014), because the "older-old" are living longer and will continue to access services that help them live safely and independently in their homes, volunteer support in Food Delivery, Transportation, and

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Companionship will need to be sustained. As Baby Boomers continue to retire and start to access these same services, both increased volunteer support (to serve both the older-old and Baby Boomers) and restructuring of systems will be necessary. The report predicts that the expectations of Boomers for how these systems and services should operate will be very different from the generation before them, which may result in higher levels or higher-order volunteer support.

At the national level, according to a 2011 report of the US Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging, the more successful communities are at providing nutritious food to older adults in their homes, where they prefer to be, the less money we will spend overall.

Transportation help is essential for older adults to remain in their homes. According to data from the Home and Community-Based Supportive Services program, established under the Older Americans Act, 25 million rides nationally were provided for seniors to doctor's offices, grocery stores, pharmacies, senior centers, meal sites, and other critical daily activities in 2012.

OBESITY AND FOOD--Number of individuals receiving emergency food from food banks, food pantries, or other nonprofit organizations. In this subset of Healthy Futures, we will address Food Distribution and Food Pantry Support.

In 2012 a total of 22,345 women, infants, and children who were nutritionally or medically at risk for malnutrition in North Dakota were enrolled in the WIC program, according to the USDA. Of that number, 6,875 infants received WIC benefits, which is almost 70% of the infants born in the state in 2012. 59% of the women receiving WIC assistance also received Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and 80% participated in Medicaid. In 2010, only 56% of WIC beneficiaries also received SNAP benefits, representing an increase of 3% participation and increased need by 2012.

In a July 2013 report, the Department of Agriculture states that of the 22,708 North Dakota households receiving SNAP benefits, 23% of them are households with one or more people who are 60 years or older. 51.6% of households receiving SNAP benefits have children under 18 years old.

The SNAP program only served 76% of ND individuals eligible for program benefits in 2010, according to this same 2013 USDA report. This shows that not all North Dakotans and their families are accessing the SNAP benefits they qualify for, and more strain may be placed on food pantries and food banks as a result. To compare, the USDA served 83% of all eligible individuals nationally during 2012. 76% SNAP participation among North Dakota residents represents an increase from previous years; according to Kids Count data, 76% of North Dakotans participated in the SNAP program in 2009, 67% in 2008, and 62% in 2007.

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As of March 2014, the ND Office of Family Assistance reports that 1,280 families were currently in the Department of Social Service's TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) caseload; this figure includes 638 adults and 2,551 children.

According to the Point in Time Count from January 22, 2014, 502 individuals in the state were living in emergency shelters (up from 439 individuals according to the 2012 Point in Time Count), 122 in transitional housing (down from 294 individuals in 2012), 271 were unsheltered (up from 53 individuals in 2012), and 424 were "doubled up" with family or friends (up from 149 individuals in 2012), totaling 1,319 individuals total. The need for food assistance for these individuals, regardless of their eligibility for and use of the SNAP program, is great and sheltering needs have increased since 2012 in almost all areas across the board.

People living in poverty are more likely to access emergency food services through food pantries and food banks. The number of individuals 65 and older living in poverty rose from 9,710 to 10,046 between 2011 and 2012. From 2011 to 2012, there was a 1.8% increase of people 75 and older living in poverty (from 5,841 people to 6,620 people). Children between the ages of 0 and 4 had the highest poverty figures in the state for 2012, 16.4% or 7,272 children living below the poverty level. This is well above the 11.2% average for all North Dakotans living in poverty in 2012. Children between the ages of 0 and 17 were living below the poverty level in high numbers in 2012 in certain counties: Benson (41.9% of children ages 0 - 17 living below the poverty level), Sioux (41.5%), and Rolette (38%). Sioux (35.4%), Benson (32.5%), and Rolette Counties (30.1%) also had the highest number of North Dakotans living below the poverty level, regardless of age. All data in this section is from the North Dakota Compass website.

According to a study by the Economic Resources Service of the USDA published in 2010, 7.1% of the 1,927 ND households interviewed for the study had low food security; 2.7% of these households had very low food security. (Data is from 2008-2010.) According to Kids Count data from 2010 to 2012, 14% of North Dakota youth were living in households that were food insecure at some point during the year, an increase from 11% in 2009.

ACCESS TO CARE--Number of clients participating in health education programs. In this subset of Healthy Futures, we will address Leading or Assisting Bone Builders.

According to the Centers for Disease Control's State of Aging and Health in America 2013 report, 27.4% of North Dakotans had falls accompanied by injury within the past year, based on data from 2008-2009.

The Administration on Aging reports that strength and balance programs (like Bone Builders) are

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successful in engaging older adults through the creation of peer groups that make learning a shared activity, provide support and socialization, and introduce positive health behavior changes in a friendly and relaxed environment.

The North Dakota State Plan on Aging (2010-2014) projects that a significant portion of adults aged 60 and older living in rural areas will move to more urban spaces by 2030; this means there will most likely be a gap in direct services for older adults in rural areas. Bone Builders currently has many classes in the rural areas of the state that are thriving, and the trickle-down effect of having a Bone Builders program in a small town has become a trend. The trend we have noticed is that, after learning about the program, neighboring towns typically want to participate and build their own programs with RSVP+ ND support. Bone Builders also has programs in Bismarck, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, and Minot, and will continue to be of advantage to older adults living in the more urban areas of the state.

According to a North Dakota State Behavioral Health Profile of 2008 data, adults 75 and older are more likely to commit suicide than the national average for this age group (17.8% for ND, versus 15.9% for the US). The physical and emotional benefits of belonging to, leading, or assisting with Bone Builders could provide a social outlet and benefit for older adults who are isolated, and this could be a factor in overcoming depression.

2006 data from the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion indicates that 9,300 Medicare-eligible North Dakotans age 65 and older were hospitalized for hip fractures, compared to the US figure of 8,300.

According to North Dakota Compass data from 2009 to 2010, the percentage of North Dakotans ages 75 and older reporting 14+ mentally unhealthy days per month increased from 4.1% to 6.2%; for adults ages 65 to 74, the increase was from 4.3% to 5.0%. With the exception of North Dakotans in the age group 55 to 64, all other age groups decreased the amount of mentally unhealthy days per month from 2009 to 2010. The benefits of Bone Builders for older adults go beyond physical improvements. Improved physical health can have a marked difference for mental health and well-being, and the important social component Bone Builder classes provide can boost mood and spirits.

At the national level, 58% of older adults reporting frequent mental distress in a 2011 study by the Administration on Aging reported that they also had poor or fair physical health, as opposed to good, very good, or excellent physical health. Older adults suffering from frequent mental distress were also more likely to self-report serious health issues they had experienced, suffered strokes at twice the rate of individuals with some or no mental distress, and had coronary disease, heart attacks, and

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diabetes/pre-diabetes at more than 1.5 times the rate of the group reporting some or no mental distress.

DESCRIBE HOW THE SERVICE ACTIVITIES IN HEALTHY FUTURES LEAD TO NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURE OUTPUTS OR OUTCOMES.

The areas we have chosen to address speak to a larger narrative of helping older adults age in place. By tracking activity according to the prescribed outputs/outcomes, we can contribute to the larger narrative as our numbers are aggregated with other programs addressing the same concerns. Our network of partners providing direct service in support of Healthy Futures will help us track activity statewide and ensure that our volunteers are engaged in this vital and meaningful service. Whatever the number of statewide RSVP programs in the country, we hope providing statewide data will be helpful in telling a national story that compares and contrasts the challenges of aging in place within rural states like ours and others that are much more urban.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT DATA COLLECTION AND ENSURE NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURE OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS ARE MEASURED, COLLECTED, AND MANAGED.

We have developed tracking mechanisms for recording outputs (in all the activity noted above) that will be updated monthly across the state as volunteers engage in their Healthy Futures activity. Outcome data will be survey based, and administered quarterly so we can compare notes with our partner agencies to identify trends or potential concerns. With staffed offices across the state, our RSVP staff and partner agency staff will be able to deploy data collection in their regions and converse regularly with partners about results.

DESCRIBE ANY ACTIVITY IN SERVICE TO VETERANS AND/OR MILITARY FAMILIES AS PART OF SERVICE IN THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA, OTHER FOCUS AREAS, OR CAPACITY BUILDING.

As part of our tracking mechanisms for outputs and outcomes in all activity for which we have work plans, we will identify what services are being provided to veterans/military and their families. Anecdotally, we believe the largest number of individuals currently served are veterans, but we will collect tracking data to confirm or refute it. We know we have a few hundred veterans among our volunteers, but we do not yet know how many are receiving services. This will be critical information

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for us going forward as we interact with this major subset of our population.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP+ North Dakota is sponsored by North Dakota State University as a major outreach initiative for the state. As a land grant, doctoral level research institution, we take seriously our statewide mission and comprehensive responsibility to the citizens throughout our state. Our host unit is the Division of Distance and Continuing Education, where we receive support in the form of marketing, technology, curriculum, and administration.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO CREATE HIGH QUALITY VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS WITH OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES, ABILITIES, AND SKILLS TO IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNITIES AND THEMSELVES THROUGH SERVICE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Recruitment starts with good partnerships, and we have over 400 active MOUs with agencies large and small across the state. Many years ago we consolidated our partnering process among the six service regions. Rather than signing multiple MOUs with local chapters or county-level agencies, we looked for the largest jurisdictional unit with authority to enter into a partnership with us. For example, we have a single MOU with a school district, rather than multiple separate MOUs for each school building in the district. One of our staff members becomes the contact point for each MOU renewal and relationship management. This allows us to have more meaningful conversations with our partners about utilization of volunteers and how their organizational culture contributes to successful recruitment, development, and retention.

As our staff members interact with agencies about their volunteer needs, we help them think through the many ways in which volunteers can assist their organizations beyond the obvious or in addition to those they have been utilizing for many years. We help agencies understand generational differences that affect the ways in which volunteers approach their service, helping agency staff imagine new roles for volunteers. We work every day to assist agency staff in exploring new models for volunteering such as "job" sharing, interesting roles/titles, project-based service, off-site roles, and technology-enabled expertise. The re-imagining of volunteerism has yielded some very interesting volunteer assignments that challenge our volunteers in new and unique ways. For example, a retired clergy member is our Puppet Troupe Leader; he recruits and trains puppeteers to bring anti-bullying and children's mental health presentations to area Head Start and Elementary School classrooms. We have a Head Buffalo Burger Chef at a community arts festival in Grand Forks. We also have many

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Presidential Library Archive Team members working all across the state on electronically archiving historical documents for the Teddy Roosevelt Presidential Library at Dickinson State University. Innovative, interesting, and challenging volunteer assignments are essential to serving well the communities in which our volunteers live and serve. They are encouraged to share their experiences via our Facebook page and comment on the novel things they find there. We also encourage our partner agencies to interact with us through Facebook and continue to grow the conversation about volunteering and unique volunteer assignments. Some of the more interesting service assignments get picked up by local media, which we then also share to our social media outlets to help us highlight how the volunteers are making a difference in their communities.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE RSVP VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE TRAINING NEEDED TO BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO ADDRESSING IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY NEED(S) IN BOTH HEALTHY FUTURES, OTHER FOCUS AREAS, AND CAPACITY BUILDING.

RSVP+ ND developed online training in 2010 that addresses this item. First, we developed a volunteer management module that helps our partner agency staff become better at volunteer utilization. In it, we encourage them to be thoughtful about the kinds of orientation and training they offer the volunteers we place with them. Several activities within the module address this concern. We also developed a volunteer leader module for those volunteers who find themselves in leadership roles within organizations and/or are serving as board members. This module was designed to deepen their understanding of the organizations they serve and explore ways in which their leadership can affect the sustainability and forward momentum of the organization's infrastructure. This training is not specific to focus areas, but surely could be. The templates would easily allow expanded subsections related to particular kinds of volunteering, and we will begin such development over the next few years.

Also, our partners facilitate training specific to the services they provide, something we talk about when we sign the initial MOU, are renewing it, or just updating information on it. This is a topic of conversation when our staff statewide meet locally and regionally with our partner agencies at Round Table events and/or coalition meetings.

DESCRIBE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE REGIONS/STATE SERVED AND PLANS TO RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER POOL REFLECTIVE OF THE COMMUNITY SERVED INCLUDING 1)

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INDIVIDUALS FROM DIVERSE RACES, ETHNICITIES, SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS, OR DEGREES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY; 2) VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILY MEMBERS AS RSVP VOLUNTEERS; AND 3) RSVP VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES.

We use statewide 2013 Census Bureau estimates for general demographics because our program is nearly statewide. Our regional staffed offices use county data, however, when analyzing regional demographics to understand the nature of the specific counties they serve. Although not all counties are currently active, we have subdivided the state into regions for marketing/public awareness purposes and to aggregate and analyze regional data.

The ND Department of Commerce generally describes North Dakota as growing younger, reversing a decades-long trend of outmigration of young people and the ensuing "graying" of the state. North Dakota became younger than the national average starting in 2009 with the oil boom; however, that may not be the sole factor for the trend. And the median age of ND women has dropped by two full years since the 2010 census without any specific attribution of cause.

The state is 90% white/Caucasian, a drop of 4.6% since the 1990 census. Of the state's 723,393 residents, 193,000 are 55 and older, or 27% of the total population. Specifically (statewide) ages 55 and older, there are 185,300 white/Caucasians, 819 African Americans, 5,062 Native Americans, 871 Asian Americans, 36 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders, and 913 of unspecified mixed race. Our proposed volunteer pool of 2612 is 1.353% of the 193,000 eligible population 55 and older. To be reflective of the state in racial/ethnic terms, we should then have 1.353% of the total number of each racial/ethnic group's population 55 and older in our volunteer pool. Our target racial/ethnic diversity should be

- 2,507 white/Caucasians
- 11 African Americans
- 69 Native Americans
- 12 Asian Americans
- 1 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 12 mixed race

Our volunteer pool currently includes 14 Native Americans, 6 Asian Americans, 2 African Americans, and 1 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

The state's total population of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity is 2%, therefore our volunteer pool should include 52 Hispanic/Latinos of all races. Currently, we have 10 Hispanic/Latinos. Clearly, we can do

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better with racial/ethnic diversity even in a state that has very little diversity, and we are using social media, mass media, and person to person contacts to recruit a more racially/ethnically diverse volunteer base.

In terms of gender, the state's 55 and older population is 47.6% male and 52.4% female. Our current volunteer pool is 75% female and 25% male, so clearly not reflective of the state's population 55 and older. We are making some inroads into recruitment of more male older adult volunteers through specific asks for specific tasks, which the research suggests is a strategy that works to attract male volunteers. Having seen some improvement in recent years with this methodology, we will work toward a more focused effort in this arena to close the gender gap.

We don't have sexual orientation data, but we do make it clear to our host stations and the public that we support diversity in all its forms, including sexual orientation. Our sponsor, a public university, is clear in its diversity policies, and we include the policy on our website and major documents. Our administrative offices in Fargo are next door to an LGBT Safe Zone. We have posted welcoming notices on our website and Facebook page for all under-represented groups, including sexual orientation.

We have multiple partners providing services to those with limited English proficiency, and we are working on ways to involve them in service that values their heritage and culture as we also strive to increase their ability to communicate in English.

The state has 56,000 veterans, although we do not know how many of those are 55 and older. We do have 308 among our volunteer pool. We have recently forged relationships with the Veterans Affairs Commissioner's Office and the two major Military Support Centers for active armed forces personnel and their families. We haven't historically counted the number of family members served, but we have designed tools to help us do that going forward.

Among our partner agencies are those serving the disabled; one in particular where we placed a VISTA who is herself disabled. She and her organization will work with us to identify strategies for fostering appropriate service opportunities for those who have various kinds of disabilities.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO RETAIN AND RECOGNIZE THE RSVP VOLUNTEERS.

We believe that recruiting, retention, and recognition are inseparable and inter-dependent. Improving one is to improve them all. Improving all is to exponentially improve each one.

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Recruiting takes place via staff, VISTAs, and advisory/visioning council members speaking at volunteer station meetings, public events, senior functions, service clubs and other organizations, senior apartments, living centers, and other residential areas. Newsletters are disseminated to churches, volunteer stations, public officials, and other organizations. Volunteer stations are asked to include RSVP articles in their newsletters. Information Booths are set up to distribute information to participants at various events such as health fairs, home shows, social awareness activities, and other major gatherings. National/state/local level media releases are utilized in these recruiting efforts.

Volunteers, advisory council members, and station coordinators are encouraged to refer seniors to volunteer with the program.

We reach out to potential volunteers through Volunteer Match, AARP's Create the Good, Facebook, and LinkedIn in addition to our own web presence, www.rsvpnd.org. The marketing team that branded our program won a national graphic art award last year for the scope of the marketing campaign (letterhead, business cards, posters, brochures, t-shirts, banners, table runners, and glassware--cups, mugs, water bottles).

Because the best volunteer recruiter is a happy volunteer, we run referral contests among our volunteer pool. We have worked with our partners to create job titles for volunteers, in keeping with the tendencies and preferences of Baby Boomers to bring their professional skills to volunteering and their desire for a working title. We promote inter-generational volunteering, which appeals to the grandparents.

Activities featuring volunteerism are organized around national days of service (MLK Day and 9/11 Day of Remembrance), other service days/week such as National Volunteer Week and Make a Difference Day, as well as AmeriCorps Week and Senior Corps Week.

When we call our volunteers on their birthdays, they are offered opportunities to expand their service with additional agencies or in new ways, and we anticipate this phenomenon will continue to grow as younger volunteers join our ranks with their access to web-based systems and information sources.

Local project staff members and VISTAs promote retention of volunteers by offering challenging volunteer opportunities and a supportive relationship with staff.

We also facilitate volunteer mobility around the state, which is helpful for retention. Those who spend their vacations in other parts of the state can be facilitated by our team approach to staffing. And we'll work with staff in other states for those who travel south for the winter or have summer recreational homes elsewhere.

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Local projects recognize volunteers for their contribution by acknowledging their personal achievements and holding an annual recognition event which may include CNCS staff, ND State Commission members, local public leaders, elected state officials, US Congress delegation or their staff, and other notable individuals. If dignitaries cannot attend, they generally send a letter of thanks and commendation; letters are placed on tables for the volunteers to read and take with them if they wish.

Local advisory council members attend annual volunteer recognition events and hand out packets as volunteers arrive. VISTA members in the service area generally attend such functions as well. It should be noted that our RSVP volunteers tend to volunteer at multiple sites in multiple roles, which supports North Dakota's #5 ranking in senior volunteerism in the latest National Volunteering in America Survey compiled by CNCS. Some are active at as many as 5-6 different kinds of non-profit agencies; working with 2 or 3 is typical and routine. Only rarely do our volunteers serve one agency. Variety, therefore, seems a favorable outcome for our volunteers and we work hard to promote service variability to satisfy the need.

We're sensing a bit of boredom with the traditional luncheon or banquet as a recognition strategy, so we're exploring new things like picnics, movie nights at a local theatre, and sporting events designed specifically to honor the volunteers to freshen up the recognition component and make it a more meaningful celebration of service.

Program Management

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEER STATIONS IN COMPLIANCE WITH RSVP PROGRAM REGULATIONS SUCH AS PREVENTING OR IDENTIFYING PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES.

Expectations for our role and the role of partner agencies in support of volunteers are spelled out in detail in our MOU. All our staff members visit host stations and review MOUs with agency staff. Also included in the MOU and in our routine conversations are the prohibited activities. Occasionally, a volunteer or host station staff member will call with a question about the appropriateness of an activity, and we thank them for checking with us ahead of time.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO DEVELOP AND/OR OVERSEE VOLUNTEER STATIONS TO ENSURE THAT VOLUNTEERS ARE PERFORMING THEIR ASSIGNED SERVICE ACTIVITIES.

Our relationships with volunteer host stations are time and labor intensive to both initiate and

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maintain. The relationship begins with discussion, questions and answers, exploration, and then moves to the MOU when the site is ready to manage volunteers. RSVP+ staff members review each aspect of the MOU with our station counterparts for clarity and understanding. We do offer an online course on volunteer management if the host station staff need to sharpen those skills. We try to visit host stations yearly on average, more often if we hear from volunteers or others that there may be concerns. When physical visits are impractical, we have several electronic means of communicating. In some cases, local Visioning Council [see below] members may visit host stations to help us monitor compliance issues. Experienced volunteers are also helpful for ensuring that stations are appropriately utilizing volunteers.

Volunteers receive birthday calls from our nearest regional office to update their contact information and to visit about their volunteering experience. We ask about how the host station is treating them on site, whether they like the service they are asked to provide, what comments they might have about their experience. This is a useful practice for learning more about what the volunteers are actually doing. We have this kind of conversation at other times as well if something comes in on a time sheet that needs clarification or if a volunteer calls us with questions or concerns. We also find out more details about their volunteer service when we feature them for various publications or in our reports.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET CHANGING COMMUNITY NEEDS TO INCLUDE MINIMIZING DISRUPTION TO CURRENT VOLUNTEERS AS APPLICABLE AND/OR GRADUATING STATIONS AS NECESSARY.

Because we emphasize the relational nature of our work, we are well patched into the service sector networks. As community needs change, we generally know what is occurring based on regular communication with coalition members, host station partners, funders, and other community at-large entities. The United Ways have laid out a transition process during recent years that has significant impact on our approach to seeking funding from them. The themes they are now focusing on are similar to the CNCS redesign, and our programming has adapted to this change in emphasis. We are a full-scale volunteer center, so shifting priorities can be absorbed by the depth and breadth of our volunteer base. At present, we have no plans to graduate volunteers or stations out of service entirely; we'll shift them to the other side of our organizational house with non-federal funds supporting that activity. Having an array of funders with various approaches to service is a serious challenge, but it affords us options and opportunities that programs with a single funder or a small

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number of funders cannot manage.

DESCRIBE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S TRACK RECORD IN THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA, TO INCLUDE (IF APPLICABLE) MEASURING PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIMARY FOCUS AREA.

In the 11 years we have been a sponsor of RSVP, we have worked with volunteers and host stations in all the areas identified under Healthy Futures in this grant application. While it is often difficult to garner cooperation related to information gathering, our partners do know we work under a federal mandate to measure performance.

Last year, our volunteers distributed over a million meals, provided companionship to 282 individuals, and facilitated over 1,000 participants at 58 Bone Builders sites twice each week at no cost to them. Transportation wasn't an impact area in the past, so we don't have historical data in that area, but we look forward to building this important service category. As we shift away from 14 impact work plans to the new focus areas, we bring the same network of stakeholders to the table and the same commitment to provide the best possible service for clients. There is only one other all-purpose volunteer center in the state, and it is local to one region. No other organization covers the state with integrated and strategic volunteer programming.

RSVP+ North Dakota is completing our eleventh year of operating RSVP and VISTA grant-funded programs, and our fourth year of managing FGP. During that time, two nationally competitive PNS grants were awarded in 2005 and 2006, another PNS in 2011, local/regional funding has increased even in a tight economy, volunteerism has increased, efficiency of program operations has increased, service areas have expanded, new performance measures have been developed, new initiatives have been undertaken, networks have been broadened, partnerships have been strengthened, and sustainability is a working objective in all endeavors. Outreach continues to be an important institutional principle, evidenced by a significant body of supporting programs such as 4-H, service-learning, and workforce development. "Public service" and "mission values" are both implicit in the stated institutional mission and vision. As the land-grant campus in the state, NDSU has a long history of managing programs that have a significant impact on the state and region, particularly in areas of youth/family, leadership/community building, and interpersonal relations programming. RSVP/VISTA/FGP are cornerstones for developing and enhancing that outreach mission as well as a way of addressing the needs of an element in our society that is often ignored by many institutions of higher education, namely older adults. Advisory Council members, Visioning Council members, local focus group members, host station staff, volunteers, and other partners have been built into a

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powerful, cohesive alliance in support of service to communities.

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE THE PROJECT IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE RSVP FEDERAL REGULATIONS TO INCLUDE ESTABLISHING AN RSVP ADVISORY COUNCIL, ENSURING RSVP VOLUNTEERS ARE PLACED IN STATIONS THAT HAVE SIGNED THE REQUIRED MOU, AND ENSURING ALL VOLUNTEERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO SERVE IN RSVP.

We have established multiple advisory councils during our 11 years of sponsorship. Occasionally, councils and/or community groups become ineffective or lose interest; when that happens, we re-organize them in an effort to re-energize and re-engage. We have "re-booted" successfully, but at times we have had to try more than once to do so. Some groups are able to gel and rally around the mission, and some struggle. In 2011, we organized a statewide visioning council using videoconferencing technology to meet monthly about big picture issues. Because we sponsor more than one CNCS program, a statewide group allows us to think more broadly about the relationships among the volunteer programs and talk strategically from a "forest" perspective rather than focusing on just a variety of "trees." We've been pleased with the quality of the thinking from the visioning council, and we have many good ideas in our queue to implement. As often happens, however, several of the individuals involved have moved on to other things, so this group is on hiatus at the moment. Our plan is to re-construct this group in the fall from a small core of holdover members and recruit other advisory council members from around the state to expand membership. In addition to local staff, the statewide program manager tries to attend as many advisory council meetings as time and travel conditions will allow. We also have an online forum space available where advisory council members and visioning council members can visit among themselves, with each other, with staff, or any configuration they find helpful. In this online space, we make our documents and reports available to them so they can browse at their leisure and raise questions whenever it fits their schedule. Such transparency helps us earn trust and accountability, and allows fresh eyes and timely input regarding difficult situations or changing priorities.

Our process regarding MOUs (new, renewals, and updating with new station staff) begins with a conversation where RSVP+ staff and host station staff review the MOU line by line to ensure clarity of expectations and understanding of prohibited activities. RSVP+ staff check the Secretary of State's website to ensure the host station is legitimate, print the page referencing the host station's status, and send the signed MOU and Secretary of State's page to our central administrative offices in Fargo.

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Then we scan the documents and upload them to an online repository so any of our staff statewide can check to see if an agency is covered by an MOU in force.

Organizational Capability

DESCRIBE YOUR PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO PROVIDE SOUND PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL OVERSIGHT (BOTH FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND) AND DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH RSVP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND APPLICABLE OMB CIRCULARS) AND TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

NDSU is a doctoral-level research institution with hundreds of grants operating at any given time, many of them federal. The university handles more than \$175 million in grants/contract funds annually. Oversight occurs in several ways. Our office of Sponsored Programs Administration reviews grant proposals and budgets before we are able to submit any grant application. If they allow the proposal to go forward and it is funded, an account is created in our financial management system that will then be monitored by the Grant and Contract Accounting office. Each grant is assigned to a specific staff person, who then works with the individual(s) managing a grant or program. All grants reside in separate accounts; grants with match requirements are tracked together. The Controller's Office is ultimately responsible for ensuring that OMB principles are met through verifiable processes.

Financial management is based on best practices of accounting, including multiple layers of oversight and separation of functions. The Offices of Human Resources, Payroll, Purchasing, Business, and Accounting handle specifically defined components of grant-related financial operations. At the unit level, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll are all separate functions handled by different support staff. Financial process documents are also prepared by staff other than those authorized to approve such transactions. Once approved at the unit level, Grant and Contract Accounting approval is secured before Accounting processes the transaction. We have an internal auditor, and institutional financial transactions are audited every other year by the State Auditor's office and posted to that website. The 11 campuses in the North Dakota University System all participate in a single PeopleSoft database for financial, academic, and personnel records. Indirect rates are federally negotiated by activity type, with 42% returned to the generating unit.

Program oversight is also provided by Human Resources, Payroll, Purchasing, Sponsored Programs, and General Counsel. Day to day program operations are handled by the Program

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Manager, who reports to the Director of Distance and Continuing Education, who reports to the Provost, and then on to the President.

DESCRIBE CLEARLY DEFINED STAFF POSITIONS, IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT STAFF ASSIGNED TO THE PROJECT, AND HOW THESE POSITIONS WILL ENSURE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.

Our team consists of a statewide Program Manager, now in her 30th year at NDSU, 11th year with RSVP and other CNCS programming. Nancy Olson has a Bachelor's Degree in English Education and has held a variety of administrative roles at the university. She is responsible for overseeing day to day operations, developing budgets and financial resources, reporting back to CNCS, and working with the various layers of sponsor oversight as well as networking with the entire spectrum of stakeholders. She directly supervises the two Program Directors and the Accounts Technician.

Barbara Schaan is our Accounts Technician, currently in her fourth year at NDSU. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and ensures that unit-level financial activity is routed appropriately to all of the related offices on campus. She is responsible for records management and facilitates questions from the field with answers from the various offices responsible for supporting our activity.

Program Directors are responsible for managing the local RSVP offices, staffing and volunteer development, stakeholder needs including grantee/grantor and advisory groups as well as volunteer stations, plus various public relations and volunteer recognition activities. Specific major tasks include performing all aspects of volunteer management, developing financial and asset-related resources, supervising paid and volunteer staff, providing formal recognition of volunteer efforts, and networking with grantee/grantor and advisory groups. Given the geographic size of our state, we have subdivided into oversight regions.

Our Western ND Director is Mary Siverson (with 14 years of RSVP experience), who is based in our Bismarck office and oversees a Coordinator in Bismarck, a Specialist in Dickinson, and a Specialist in Minot.

Our Eastern ND Director is Linda Nelson (with 23 years of RSVP experience), who is based in Fargo, will soon be retiring, and we have a search underway for her replacement. She oversees a Coordinator in Fargo, a Specialist in Jamestown, a Specialist in Grand Forks, and a Specialist in Devils Lake (on a separate CNCS grant).

Program Directors work together across service areas for continuity and work closely with the Program Manager on strategic issues. Coordinators support volunteer activity in our two largest

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regions where there is a Director physically present. Specialists are semi-autonomous, operating in regions where a Director is not present but has operational oversight. Integration of Directors, Specialists, and Coordinators has helped us operate more efficiently and cost effectively. And we've seen a higher level of consistency since the change.

While we have concerns about staff being alone in a region, we do encourage the utilization of volunteers in our own offices, and the tradeoff of being closer to our working partners is a significant one. We believe our program is far more integrated than it would otherwise be if we clustered only in the population centers. Obviously, we spend significant time traveling across large rural spaces, but doing so is also a good way to understand the unique challenges faced by rural America.

Succession planning and management with a staff as small as ours in a space as geographically large as ours is quite a stretch. Our layered approach to staffing is a step that will have some positive impact on succession management but with limited applicability given the nearly 70,000 square miles of geography we cover.

DESCRIBE CAPACITY TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT INTERNAL POLICIES AND OPERATING PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGE RISKS, SUCH AS ACCOUNTING, PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, AND PURCHASING.

Program staff in the service regions (Directors, Specialists, and Coordinators) do not have regional budgets, nor do they handle finances. The Program Manager writes all the grants and aggregates all regional data for reporting. The Accounts Technician initiates all payments and works with all the oversight levels at the university to ensure procedures are handled correctly. Contracts external to the university generated by our program are approved by the Director of Purchasing. Documents are reviewed either by General Counsel or contracted counsel. All staff use the state fleet for travel, which is significantly cheaper than reimbursing for personal vehicle use. State employees also receive discounted lodging at hotels around the state. We benefit from a number of university-based discounts on supplies and equipment. NDSU has an in-house print shop and document publishing unit. We also have access to site licenses for software and web portals. The purchasing power of the university has saved us significant amounts of money each year. We do not have unidentified funds or cash on hand; every type of financial transaction runs through some appropriate unit of the institution. We have policies and procedures that govern use of computers, safety, equity and diversity, access to those with disabilities, non-discrimination, grievance procedures, staff responsibility reviews annually, and so on. At any given time, RSVP+ North Dakota has 25-35 open

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grant lines (federal, federal match, excess, and funds unrelated to CNCS programming). Our fiscal activity is vigorous, under constant scrutiny, managed with multiple levels of oversight, segmented appropriately, audited regularly, and conforms to every standard of accounting required by a wide array of funders.

Operating processes for the items listed above are governed by policies and procedures at the campus level in concert with the North Dakota University System and the North Dakota Century Code. The adequacy of facilities, equipment, and supplies will in large measure depend upon the success of the grantee representative and program directors to elicit appropriate levels of funding. In most cases, facilities on the various campuses across the state are not appropriate spaces for programs such as RSVP; in fact, off campus space is more desirable because parking shortages create access difficulties for the senior population. Networking infrastructure for communications and connectivity to the internet can be provided at a variety of locations off campus, and working models are in place. The university has central systems for risk management and property insurance, inventory control and purchasing procedures including service contracts, human resources management for hiring practices and staff development. A Staff Senate exists to provide advice and consent on matters concerning staff recruitment, retention, development, and review. An annual responsibility review process is in place for supervisors and staff to analyze together past performance, appropriateness of work expectations, and goals for the future. The availability of video conferencing as a communication tool will allow remote interactive discussion on a regular basis to share successes and concerns among RSVP staff, volunteers, Advisory Council members, Visioning Council members, or other ad hoc groups as needed. Video conferencing currently exists at over 200 sites across the state, no further than 45 minutes from any point in the state, by legislative order.

DESCRIBE CAPACITY TO MANAGE CAPITAL ASSETS SUCH AS FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES.

The Office of Purchasing manages acquisitions via contracts, leases, or items purchased on credit (Pay.gov, for example). Facilities are managed by the Office of Facilities Management. Equipment is defined as a single item costing \$5,000 or more, and the program has no equipment that meets this threshold. The purchasing power of the university often means reduced rates on various kinds of supplies and services (including printing, document publishing, motor pool).

DESCRIBE ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE AREAS OF ROBUST FINANCIAL

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MANAGEMENT CAPACITY AND SYSTEMS AND PAST EXPERIENCE MANAGING FEDERAL GRANTS.

NDSU (Sponsor) operates an Office of Sponsored Programs Administration that approves all grant applications prior to submission and manages more than \$175 million in grant activity annually. They work closely with Grant and Contract Accounting to ensure expenditures are managed appropriately, staff activity is tracked, and agreements are in place. Grant and Contract Accounting, in turn, works closely with the institution's Accounting unit for processing payments related to grant activity. As a function of state government, NDSU is expected to comply with accounting principles, risk management, purchasing protocols, and is audited by the State Auditor's office (audits are posted to the State Auditor's website). Each grant, appropriation, and local fund is uniquely identified, tracked, and managed according to appropriate policies. Our program chart of accounts clearly shows funding sources, balances, and expiration dates for all grants, allocations, and local funds available to us.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A