

Narratives

Executive Summary

The Collier County Board of County Commissioners is the legal applicant and sponsor organization for RSVP of Collier County. RSVP of Collier County has been an active volunteer program since 1998 and its longevity has garnered an abundance of local community support. This support is demonstrated in ways such as the donation of community clubhouse space to host the Bone Builders class, the involvement in volunteer recognition events by numerous local businesses, the Mayor's Day recognition and celebration and the Collier County Board of County Commissioners' willingness to match the grantor's funds. To date, approximately 1,900 volunteers have contributed over 1 million hours at 153 different volunteer stations across Collier County. According to the IRS, this equates to a savings of \$22.5 million to our county because of the time, talent and energy our volunteers dedicate to making a difference. RSVP of Collier proposes an estimated 152 volunteers will serve during this grant cycle. Some of their activities will include disaster preparedness training and outreach, community based mentoring and tutoring, training instructors for the Bone Builders Program, assisting Veterans with transportation to their medical appointments, food pantry support and distribution, and building and rehabilitating homes. The primary focus of the project will be Healthy Futures. At the end of the three year grant, the following Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) outcomes will be met: increasing the number of economically disadvantaged individuals transitioned into housing, improving academic engagement in the number of students in mentoring/tutoring programs, ensuring local Veterans receive CNCS-supported assistance through the transportation program and providing food security to individuals through food distribution and food pantry support. The CNCS federal investment of \$54,522 will be supplemented by \$23,405 of cash and in-kind donations each year.

Strengthening Communities

Collier County is located on the southern end of Florida's Gulf Coast with a population of 339,642 according to the 2013 United States Census estimate. However, Collier's population increases by one third during the winter months (January through April) due to a high migration of northern residents. It is the largest county in Florida by land area and fourth-largest by total area. Collier County is comprised of three incorporated cities: Everglades City, Marco Island and Naples. It also has an unincorporated farming community located in the northeastern portion of the County known as Immokalee.

As are many other communities throughout the state of Florida, Collier County is historically

Narratives

known as a popular spot for retirees. The Florida Department of Elder Affairs (FDOE) reports that 34.1% of Collier's population is comprised of individuals aged 60 and over, and this number is growing. In 2007, there were a reported 3,734,595 Florida residents ages 60-84. The FDOE estimates that in 2020 this number will be upwards of 6 million. Despite the vast majority living comfortably, there are a growing number of seniors who are economically disadvantaged, frail and/or isolated. According to the FDOE, nearly 1 million Florida residents aged 60 and over are living alone. The Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity reports that 14% of Florida seniors are living in poverty (2012). According to a 2012 Huffington Post article, 1 in 3 Florida retirees depends solely on Social Security to make ends meet. Living off a limited income impedes a senior's ability to receive needed services. A survey conducted by Collier County Housing, Human and Veteran Services identified that one need in particular is access to free bone strengthening exercise programs. Our local seniors tell us in structured surveys and informal conversations that they are continually looking for ways to maintain and enhance their stamina, bone strength, balance and stability. RSVP of Collier County currently partners with several local community centers to provide the Bone Builders Program, a health education and exercise program for senior citizens. The Bone Builders Program is a free, alternative exercise program for individuals who want to counteract the negative effects of osteoporosis.

This program is aimed at increasing muscular strength, balance and bone density among our most vulnerable population. The program increases the number of seniors participating in health education programs and focuses on the development of volunteer trainers. Using hand and ankle weights RSVP volunteer trainers lead classes of 5-40 participants several times per week throughout the county, focusing on exercises to improve balance and strength, critical factors in reducing the risk for osteoporotic fractures. In 2013, 1,941 hours were reported by 56 volunteer trainers.

Osteoporosis, a disease of the bones, is characterized by weak and brittle bones, leading to an increased susceptibility to fractures particularly in the hip, spine and wrist. According to the American Society of Bone and Mineral Research, an estimated 10.2 million older adults have osteoporosis, and an even more staggering 43.4% suffer from low bone mass. Regularly attending Bone Builders classes can contribute to increased mobility, reduced chances of falling and a greater sense of confidence. According to our 2012 RSVP Osteoporosis Exercise Program Functional Capacity Survey, 100% of participants indicated they had seen improvement in strength and state of mind. 97% reported that they had seen improvements in their balance and flexibility and 94% reported improvements with their energy levels.

More often than not, seniors may not have the ability to access a group exercise program due either

Narratives

to transportation or finances. RSVP volunteer trainers make it possible to increase access to health education and exercise programs to senior citizens in Collier County through Bone Builders. The Bone Builders Program is open to the public with no requirement for participants.

In addition to recruiting new Bone Builder participants, a particular focus is being placed on recruiting Veterans to participate in this RSVP program. The RSVP Project Director works with local area Veterans' organizations to promote the program and to identify Veterans who are interested in participating in the program, either as trainers or as participants. The RSVP Volunteer Registration form will be utilized to collect and document this data. The RSVP Project Director will also ensure all RSVP Veterans are aware of the VA transportation program through Collier County Veteran Services.

Bone Builders is not just an exercise program, it also offers seniors in our community numerous health and social benefits. In addition to improving health and increasing physical activity, the Bone Builders Program provides the opportunity for companionship and socialization; two factors that greatly contribute to overall wellness. In order for Seniors to avoid isolation and depression, the ability to connect with others is crucial. According to Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging, Research Review, March 2007, social integration, the opposite of social isolation, has been found to be generally beneficial to health across adulthood into old age. Social integration is the participation in a wide range of relationships and activities. According to our 2012 RSVP Osteoporosis Exercise Program Functional Capacity Survey, one participant described Bone Builders as "a support group for women as we face the enemy, that is aging." Another participant said "I enjoy the 15-20 minutes of socializing before class." The RSVP Project Director continues to conduct an annual Osteoporosis Exercise Program Functional Capacity Survey at all locations to determine satisfaction with the program and the benefit to the participants as well as the benefit to the community. The survey includes a self assessment measuring strength, balance, flexibility, energy level and state of mind. Data collected from this survey is used to demonstrate the need for local bone strengthening exercise programs as well as document individual participant results.

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs reports that in Collier County, 21,059 seniors (ages 60 and over) live alone, and only 39.3% of this population has a driver's license. Transportation is one complication many seniors face. Unfortunately, Collier County's alternative transportation services do not serve every area of the county. In order to meet the community's need and increase access to programs, RSVP of Collier County has partnered with 10 provider sites located throughout the county. Bone Builder classes are now conducted 2 to 3 times weekly, and average approximately 960 classes annually.

Narratives

To measure, collect, and manage outcome data, RSVP of Collier County maintains an attendance/timesheet information at each site. This log is maintained by the station captain at each location. Timesheets are reported by the station captain on a quarterly basis to RSVP Project Director. The timesheet assists the RSVP Project Director in reporting the number of hours for each volunteer trainer in the Volunteer Reporter; a volunteer management software database. Volunteer Reporter offers an array of features that helps create custom reports, spreadsheets, templates, mail merge capability, and volunteer profiles. The system also stores information regarding each volunteer station. The information in Volunteer Reporter ensures each volunteer is only counted once when assigned to a service activity. Reports directly related to program objectives can be easily generated, and annual upgrades are available to enhance data collection and reporting. The Project Director enters timesheet hours into Volunteer Reporter on a quarterly basis. Furthermore, the data collected in Volunteer Reporter is used to create mandatory quarterly and annual reports by the grantor. Annual volunteer and volunteer station surveys as well as comment cards are also utilized to regularly monitor volunteer and client satisfaction levels.

Recruitment and Development

The identification of appropriate volunteer stations is the first step in creating high quality volunteer assignments. Once identified, these assignments allow volunteers to use their experiences, skills and abilities to improve our community, For this reason, RSVP of Collier County partners with local agencies or "stations" based the community need they serve and their alignment with CNCS' focus areas. The RSVP Project Director helps participating agencies identify appropriate volunteer assignments that address critical community needs and also align with Healthy Futures, which is Collier County's primary focus area. RSVP of Collier County has historically exceeded placing 25% of our unduplicated volunteers in our primary focus area. Identifying the needs of our seniors is a community priority for Collier County. A recent survey conducted by Collier County Housing, Human and Veteran Services identified that one need in particular is increased access to free bone strengthening exercise programs. Due to this need, RSVP of Collier County expanded the Bone Builders Program to be offered at 10 locations across the county. Volunteer assignments have also been created in Collier's secondary focus areas which include: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, and Veterans & Military Families. Volunteer Stations addressing these focus areas include long standing partnerships with such agencies as the Boys and Girls Club of Collier County, Collier County Veteran Services, Harry Chapin Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity of Collier County, Literacy Volunteers of Collier County, North Naples Fire Department, St. Vincent DePaul

Narratives

Society, and Riviera Golf Estate Respite. New station locations are being developed to incorporate such organizations as the Family Literacy Academy of Immokalee, Rookery Bay and the Naples Historical Society.

RSVP of Collier County provides many opportunities for our local residents to give back to the community. Each week, the Project Director dedicates significant time and effort on recruiting and developing the program. The RSVP Project Director coordinates with local civic groups, known for their volunteer activities, such as Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Club to inform the community of the need for volunteers. Other community agencies including the Immokalee Interagency, Leadership Coalition on Aging and the Citizens Corp of Collier County are utilized to discuss the benefits of becoming an RSVP member. Participating in community events that target seniors, such as the Senior Health Expo is yet another way the Project Director is pursuing to promote recruitment and development of our local program. Volunteermatch.org and Volunteercollier.org profiles are managed to encourage volunteer seekers to join RSVP. These websites are beneficial since a good portion of our volunteer base includes seasonal residents. The Project Director works directly with local media outlets such as magazine and newspaper publications to place both paid and free advertisements to inform citizens of volunteer opportunities. Social media is also an outlet for advertizing the RSVP program; as such a Facebook page has been created to increase awareness of the program by providing information on available stations and volunteer opportunities. Furthermore, partnering with local TV stations that provide free interviews and special briefs on the Collier County RSVP program have also been utilized to promote the program. The above listed opportunities have been shown to help recruit not only volunteers, but increase the number of RSVP stations as well.

To ensure that RSVP volunteers receive the training they need to address community needs, each station must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU incorporates specific language which stipulates what prior placement training volunteers will receive, as well as orientation details. The MOU also includes what the station will furnish, i.e., all materials necessary to complete the volunteer assignment. In addition to the MOU with the station, a Volunteer Assignment Description form is required by each station. This form documents the station's need, the activities the volunteers will perform, the desired results of these activities and the impact the volunteers will have on the agency and the community. Upon submission, the RSVP Project Director reviews the form to confirm the outlined task is appropriate and will notify the station that the program is acceptable.

Once recruited, the volunteer must review the RSVP Volunteer Handbook and complete the RSVP Registration Form prior to starting an assignment. The registration form collects basic demographic

Narratives

information and includes an interest checklist. The checklist assists the RSVP Project Director in determining the right placement for the volunteer.

With the ever changing demographics of Collier County, the RSVP Project Director must monitor the changing needs of the community. According to the United States Census, Collier County's population grew 5.6% from April 2010 to July 2013. Of Collier's 339,642 residents, 89.8% are White, 7.1% are Black, 26.3% are Hispanic or Latino, 1.3% are Asian, 0.5% are American Indian and 0.1% are Pacific Islander. Also, according to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the demographics of our seniors are: 94.6% are White, 5.4% are Non-White, 2.4% are Black and 3.0% are other minorities. 9.6% of Collier's seniors are living below 125% the poverty guideline. DOEA also states that a total of 27,870 Veterans ages 45 and older call Collier County home. The demographics of Collier's current RSVP program align with state data. To increase the diversity of Collier's RSVP Program, the Project Director and Advisory Council members will continue to partner with agencies that serve a wide variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. These agencies include the Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Council of Hispanic Business Professionals and the Collier County Black Affairs Advisory Board. The Project Director will also attend the Immokalee Interagency meetings to promote the RSVP Program in Immokalee and recruit volunteers from the Immokalee area. In addition to partnering with these committees, the RSVP Project Director is a member of the Citizens Corp of Collier County; a committee that was established to provide information to the citizens of Collier County and to act as a coordinating agency for the enhancement of activities that support public safety, emergency services, law enforcement and disaster prevention, preparedness and response. The Citizens Corp assists in the recruitment of volunteers by publicizing and expanding existing community programs such as: Medical Reserve, Neighborhood Watch, Community Emergency Response Teams, Volunteers in Police Service and other public safety and law enforcement programs. The Citizen Corp also facilitates communication between Collier County and state and federal agencies on mitigation activities. It also assists Collier County to identify outside free or low cost resources through grants, training opportunities, and equipment.

Lastly, The Project Director will continue to build and strengthen our current partnership with our sister agency, Collier County Veteran Services, to ensure an adequate amount of volunteers are providing services/assistance to our local Veterans.

Many of Collier's local agencies benefit from the time, energy and expertise that RSVP volunteers offer. Some of our partners, such as Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida reports

Narratives

that they depend upon volunteers to help distribute millions of pounds of food throughout our county. The Boys and Girls Club of Collier County states volunteers make a positive impact, while serving as role models and positive influences in a child's life, the child's future and the child's future impact on our community.

On-going recognition is provided to volunteers in the form of award lunches, volunteer breakfasts, welcome back teas and newsletter spotlights. Each quarter, the RSVP Project Director focuses on a volunteer station and educates the community on what their volunteers are doing. The purpose of recognizing our volunteers is to demonstrate our appreciation for their time and efforts. It is important to ensure our volunteers are enjoying their experience and feel that their efforts are appreciated. Additionally, volunteers will be presented with Senior Corp RSVP polo shirts, t-shirts, hats, water bottles, pens, and other miscellaneous items as part of our recognition and branding efforts. The items will also serve as a way to recruit other seniors to join RSVP of Collier County. The Senior Corp RSVP logo is also included on all RSVP literature. Functions and RSVP gear are funded by the RSVP budget, contributions from local business and in-kind and match from Collier County Government.

Program Management

The day-to-day operation of RSVP of Collier County is managed by a Project Director and follows the RSVP program regulations. The RSVP Project Director is Collier County Government's designated staff member to manage all aspects of the RSVP project. Assignments include recruitment and development of volunteer stations and volunteers, ensuring compliance with grant requirements, preparing annual budgets, developing and implementing policies, generating reports, developing positive public relations and communications, preparing media materials, hosting volunteer recognition events, and serving on applicable community boards, councils and committees. Under the direction of Federal/State Grant Manager, Kristi Sonntag, and Accounting Supervisor, Bendisa Marku, the department collectively holds 27 years in grants administration. To ensure fiscal responsibility, Jacquelyn DeSear, Accountant, and Dora Carillo, Accounting Technician, perform all general accounting and budget services for RSVP of Collier County. Rachel Brandhorst, RSVP Project Director has over 5 years of grant and volunteer coordination in Collier County. The RSVP Project Director functions as a working project manager, actively involved with community organizations, volunteers, and volunteer stations.

The Collier County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) are strong proponents of RSVP of Collier County. The Collier County Board of County Commissioners consists of five elected officials

Narratives

who, as the chief legislative body of the County, are responsible for providing services to protect the health, safety, welfare and quality of life of the citizens of Collier County. The BCC members acknowledge that our government is strengthened by civic participation and increased involvement from our citizens, which align with RSVP objectives. The BCC supports our department's mission, which is to make a positive difference in the lives of our County's residents. Moreover, the Board provides administrative, financial and organizational support and direction for RSVP in Collier County.

Under the Housing, Human and Veteran Services Department, RSVP of Collier County has established policies and procedures that are incorporated into all aspects of our program. A policy and procedure manual was created and is maintained by the Operations Analyst and reviewed annually by the RSVP management team. All of these policies and procedures are reviewed against the national RSVP Operations Handbook and CFR 45: Part 2553, the RSVP Code of Federal Regulations.

In addition to the active Volunteer Stations Collier County has, our office continually develops and recruits additional stations through community outreach in the form of presentations, events, media exposure, and websites. Stations are recruited based on the community needs, identified through community assessment surveys, and how their needs align with the Corporation for National and Community Service focus areas. A willingness to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities and to comply with RSVP of Collier County's policies and procedures is also taken into consideration when choosing volunteer stations. These components are assessed during an informal interview, before the agency becomes an RSVP volunteer station.

To manage volunteer stations, all volunteer stations sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Collier County. The purpose of the MOU is to guide the working relationship between RSVP of Collier County and its participating stations and provide basic provisions for both parties. The MOU outlines programmatic and station responsibilities, as well as other provisions, such as: separation from service, displacement of employees, religious activities, accessibility and reasonable accommodation, indemnification, etc. Once this agreement is in place, the RSVP Project Director begins to match volunteers with the stations need. MOU's for each volunteer station are renewed annually, or whenever there is a change of volunteer assignments or coordinators.

Each volunteer station participant receives a handbook outlining their responsibilities. Station responsibilities include such tasks as, maintaining quarterly volunteer time sheets and submitting them on time to the RSVP office, providing appropriate training, orientation and supervision, as well as the provision of materials necessary for the volunteer assignment. To further ensure compliance,

Narratives

station participants will receive an annual monitoring as well as ongoing support and guidance from RSVP Project Director. A notification of new policies or policy changes is also communicated routinely to volunteer stations. Volunteer station participants are required to fill out a Volunteer Assignment Form for each assignment offered. This form outlines the need warranting a specific volunteer assignment, the volunteer service activity, the anticipated accomplishment as a result of the activity and the anticipated impact of the accomplishment. The information collected will be documented and assessed by the RSVP Project Director as well as the Advisory Council to prevent and/or identify prohibited volunteer assignments, and also to ensure each assignment meets the needs of the community.

Once we have a volunteer station in place, the Project Director begins to define the requirements for our RSVP volunteers. The process begins with an RSVP Registration Form which must be completed by all interested members. Besides basic demographics, this form collects information on personal interests and strengths. This information is utilized to match the volunteer with the most suitable assignment. The RSVP Project Director provides orientation on a one-on-one or group basis, depending on the number of volunteer registrants. Volunteer stations are also required to provide a more specific volunteer assignment orientation and training. A Volunteer Handbook is supplied to each volunteer. The handbook outlines the benefits of joining the RSVP Program, insurance information, station and volunteer responsibilities, rules and regulations, policies and procedures, as well as an invitation to join the RSVP Advisory Council. Lastly, an annual survey is conducted to assess satisfaction levels with volunteer placement, hours served, assignments worked, etc. The information is reviewed and assessed by the RSVP Project Director and the Advisory Council. Issues or concerns are addressed and resolved to ensure each volunteer remains satisfied with all aspects of RSVP of Collier County.

The RSVP Project Director makes all attempts to minimize the disruption to current volunteers and volunteer stations by ensuring that each volunteer assignment outlines a strategy to address one of the CNCS focus areas. On occasion, if the Project Director finds it necessary to graduate a station and relocate volunteers, RSVP of Collier County will inform volunteers through phone calls or e-mails, as well as hold a ceremony to formally recognize and thank the station and volunteers for their community service. The RSVP Project Director will then spend time gauging volunteer interests and relocating them to another appropriate assignment.

Collier County's primary focus area is Healthy Futures, specifically the Bone Builders Program. This program has long been a solid component of RSVP of Collier County. Exercise, good nutrition and

Narratives

education can significantly decrease the risks of osteoporosis and prevent further deterioration of the bones in people who already have the disease. Prevention and treatment of osteoporosis begin with education and understanding of some basic facts about bone, lifestyle, exercise, nutrition and drug therapies. From 2013-2014, 56 volunteers contributed 2,643 hours teaching the Bone Builders class. The program was originally brought to our county in 2003 by a seasonal resident who was interested in developing an osteoporosis prevention program similar to the one she participated in up north. It was determined by the RSVP Project Director that this program would meet with the parameters of the RSVP program and particularly the key focus area of Healthy Futures. Bone Builders was introduced to Collier residents and uses weight training and balance exercises to protect against osteoporosis caused fractures by increasing muscular strength, balance and bone density. The program began with one trainer, and as the County received funds, additional trainers were brought on board. A Train-the-Trainer Program was developed, and interested volunteers became Bone Builders trainers. Since its inception, the program has grown, and many participants sign up to become trainers themselves. Currently, RSVP has 56 Bone Builders trainers. Bone Builders participants are also given an annual survey to measure their satisfaction with the program.

To manage volunteers in all Focus Areas, the RSVP Project Director utilizes Volunteer Reporter, a volunteer management software. Besides demographic information, performance is tracked through the number of hours each volunteer contributes. Hours are then recorded in the software program. Volunteer Reporter is also used to track the progress in service categories relating to the impacts of the project as well as the volunteers. Day to day program management is done through e-mail and phone communication, as well as, at minimum, a monthly site visit to each Volunteer Station. Project Director ensures volunteer satisfaction by communicating frequently.

RSVP Program regulations require grantees to secure community participation in local project operation by establishing an Advisory Council. RSVP of Collier County has had an Advisory Council in place since 1998. The current Council is comprised of 5 members and includes representation from station participants, volunteers and community partners capable of helping our program meet its administrative and programmatic responsibilities including fundraising, marketing, recruitment, station development and assisting with the coordination of annual events. The Advisory Council, along with the RSVP Project Director, is also responsible for completing an annual assessment of the program to track the progress in meeting the needs of our community. Should an issue arise with either the volunteer or the Volunteer Station, the Project Director, along with the Advisory Council will interview each on an individual basis and offer recommendations. Recruiting members for the

Narratives

Advisory Council is a priority, and accomplished through personal invitations and community referrals.

Organizational Capability

RSVP of Collier County has been operating under the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Collier County Government since 1998. RSVP of Collier County is under Collier County's Housing, Human and Veteran Services Department and has a demonstrated track record of sound programmatic and fiscal oversight specifically in grant management. The entire government entity is supported by professionals in Risk Management, Human Resources, and Purchasing. Each area is led by seasoned professionals with appropriate professional degrees and certification credentials. The County Attorney's Office reviews all documents for legality.

Currently, HHVS successfully administers approximately \$30 million in federal and state grants including: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Initiative Partner Program (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), Safe Havens Visitation Program, State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP), State of Florida Criminal Justice Reinvestment Grant, State of Florida CCE, HCE, ADI, NSP-1, NSP-3, DOJ Drug Court, and Disaster Recovery Initiative Program (DRI)/Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

RSVP of Collier County demonstrates highly effective financial management through our written and followed policies and procedures, qualified and trained financial staff, effective communications, succession planning, cross training and self assessments. To further ensure financial compliance of our program, our local Office of Management and Budget provides oversight on all aspects of financial grant management providing an additional layer of internal control over the application, budget, procurement, financial transactions, draws, reports and grant closeout. Furthermore we have a finance department separate from the BCC that provide pre and post audit functions for all fiscal components.

To ensure compliance with RSVP program requirements, staff regularly receive internal trainings on administrative processing, financial tracking and managing sub-recipients. Staff also attend regional, state, and national conferences as applicable. The conferences help develop skills and ideas that will move forward all that are involved or impacted by RSVP of Collier County. The Project Director, along with the County Compliance Unit examines physical files and records and cross references information in Volunteer Reporter to confirm and maintain accuracy. To keep abreast of all RSVP programmatic information including statutes, regulations, and applicable OMB circulars, the Project Director will participate on all webinars and conference calls pertinent to the program.

Narratives

Working together with our fiscal section, the Project Director will ensure responsible and timely spending of grant funds through regular fiscal oversight and budgetary maintenance. Collier County has established purchasing and procurement policies to ensure proper expenditures of funds. Supplies and capital assets such as facilities and equipment will be tracked, distributed and used by staff, volunteers, or volunteer station supervisors. In-kind donation forms are used to track donations for annual recognition events and all volunteers are required to sign for these items as proof that they were received. Before purchasing an item, the Project Director and Accountant will ensure that all items are allowable, reasonable, and allocable. In-kind forms are also used throughout the year to document other donations of goods or services to the program.

Collier County Government has established effective personnel policies and procedures that are incorporated into the operations and programming of the Housing, Human and Veteran Services Department (HHVS). These policies improve our accountability, help achieve performance, improve compliance with laws and regulation and prevent loss of resources and assets. Internal policies and operating procedures are created by Collier County's HHVS guiding principles and are reviewed annually and updated as required. Each policy and procedure is reviewed by the HHVS Director and Federal/State Grant Manager for accuracy and concurrency. Additionally, all policies and procedures are reviewed against the national RSVP Operations Handbook and CFR 45: Part 2553, the RSVP Code of Federal Regulations. RSVP staff will be familiar with all documents and will be kept up to date.

Other

Economic Opportunity:

Collier County RSVP promotes and supports economic opportunity through providing housing to low to moderate income residents through our partnership with Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity is a worldwide organization that has helped to build or repair more than 800,000 houses. Locally, our Habitat for Humanity has constructed over 1,300 homes in 9 neighborhoods across Collier County (4 in Immokalee, 5 in Naples). Habitat for Humanity targets individuals and families with incomes at or below 60% of area median income. RSVP Volunteers will assist in building and rehabilitating homes in Naples and Immokalee. Habitat for Humanity provides the opportunity for low-income families to become homeowners through "sweat equity" during the construction process. In addition to volunteering at the construction sites, volunteers also assist by serving on the selection committee, teaching classes for families and working in the Habitat Home Store. Office work will include helping with bulk mailings, filing and sorting.

Narratives

Education:

The need for education volunteers is increasing particularly in Collier to address disadvantaged children and youth and those non-English speaking students. To address the need for English literacy tutoring, RSVP will target those students from Title 1 schools by partnering with 3 stations to provide tutoring to school aged children. The stations are located at the Boys and Girls Club of Collier County, the Family Literacy Academy of Immokalee and the Literacy Volunteers of Collier County.

The Boys and Girls Club of Collier County serves 3,000 children and teens, ages 6 to 18, in their clubs and afterschool programs, and through their partnership with the Naples Children and Education Foundation and Florida's 21st Century. The Boys and Girls Club provides the opportunity for RSVP volunteers to choose to work with elementary or high school age students, through the tutoring or mentoring program, respectively. Tutoring volunteers work with small groups of 3-4 children at a time from grades 1-5 with their homework and reading comprehension. The mentoring program matches RSVP volunteers with high school aged students to assist with college and scholarship applications, resume building, and career advice.

The Family Literacy Academy of Immokalee provides full service family literacy to farm worker families and their children birth to 5 years of age. RSVP volunteers assist with the Academy's programs including: Adult ESOL, parenting classes, infant/toddler and preschool, and ESOL and healthy living classes. The Academy has successfully served over 330 families since 2003. Sessions run from August to June and offer the 4 components of family literacy: parenting, child education, parent and child together time, and adult education.

The Literacy Volunteers of Collier County (LVCC) has been a premier provider of literacy tutoring in Collier County for over twenty-five years. Their mission is to enhance the lives of school age children and their families by improving their literacy skills. Services offered include: one-on-one tutoring, small group classes, interactive English Language Learning Laboratory, and a Family Literacy Program. RSVP Tutors will prepare lesson plans for each session and meet their students once or twice a week for at least one hour. One-to-one tutoring takes place in local libraries, community centers, church facilities, educational and social service centers in Collier County as well as the LVCC offices -- any public place that is convenience for the student and the tutor.

Healthy Futures- Bone Builders

Narratives

The health and well-being of Collier residents, particularly our senior population has been a critical focus area for the RSVP program for years. Osteoporosis, is common among seniors and the RSVP program volunteers work to combat this disease through our Bone Builders Program. Osteoporosis, a disease of the bones, is characterized by weak and brittle bones, leading to an increased susceptibility to fractures particularly in the hip, spine and wrist. According to the American Society of Bone and Mineral Research, an estimated 10.2 million older adults have osteoporosis, and an even more staggering 43.4% suffer from low bone mass. There are a variety of risk factors that contribute to the development of osteoporosis. One of these factors is being a female. 53.5% of Collier's population is female. Although osteoporosis is more prevalent in females, men suffer from the disease as well. Males and females are encouraged to attend the Bone Builders class. The National Osteoporosis Foundation identifies two types of exercises that are important for building and maintaining bone density: weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercises. Regularly attending Bone Builders classes can contribute to increased mobility, reduced chances of falling and a greater sense of confidence.

According to our 2012 RSVP Osteoporosis Exercise Program Functional Capacity Survey, 100% of participants indicated they had seen improvement in strength and state of mind. 97% reported that they had seen improvements in their balance and flexibility, and 94% reported improvements with their energy levels. Besides improving the health of our local senior citizens, the Bone Builders program provides the opportunity for companionship and socialization, two factors that greatly contribute to overall wellness. One participant described Bone Builders as "a support group for women as we face the enemy that is aging." Another participant said "I enjoy the 15-20 minutes of socializing before class."

Healthy Futures- Food Pantry Support

Nutrition is critical to the healthy future of Collier residents and the RSVP program attempts to impact those who suffer with hunger and poor nutrition. Many people believe that the problems associated with hunger are confined to small pockets of society, certain areas of the country or certain neighborhoods, but the reality is much different. One of the most disturbing and extraordinary aspects of life in this very wealthy country is the persistence of hunger. According to the Harry Chapin Food Bank, the causes of hunger in Southwest Florida include under-employment, low-paying jobs, the current housing slump, the high costs of childcare, and the increasingly high medication costs

Narratives

faced by seniors. In Southwest Florida, the fastest growing segments of need include: children, the working poor and seniors with fixed incomes. Additionally, it was determined that 63% of client households in Southwest Florida lack consistent access to nutritious food and adequate amounts of it. Furthermore, Harry Chapin Food Bank client's average annual income is \$11,200.

The Harry Chapin Food Bank provides food for more than 30,000 individuals each month. In 2013 alone, the Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed 17.5 million pounds of food, provided 14.6 million meals, and turned every \$1 into \$6 worth of food for those in need. The food comes from growers, producers, community food drives, distributors and retailers and is distributed to partner agencies that distribute food to local residents in need.

RSVP Volunteers will increase food security for Collier County residents by assisting at food banks, collection centers, and mobile food pantries performing tasks such as locating food sources, scheduling pick-ups, gathering donations from grocers, caterers and restaurants and sorting and packing foods.

Healthy Futures- Respite

In general, Florida is not well positioned to meet the health care needs of the growing population of baby boomers, however RSVP volunteers work to meet the needs of a few of our most vulnerable. A recent report ranked all the states on four dimensions of long-term care for seniors, the disabled, and caregivers: affordability and access; choice of setting and provider; quality of life and quality of care; and support for family caregivers. Twenty-five indicators were used to provide rankings within these four dimensions. Overall, Florida ranked 44th of the 50 states.

A recent study published by The Journal of Primary Prevention, outlines the high incidence rate (over 40%) of social isolation among seniors living at home versus those living in a senior community. What's so alarming about these findings is the fact that social isolation or loneliness has been linked to numerous negative health effects including: an increased risk of mortality, dementia, re-hospitalization and a higher number of falls. In home services can be provided occasionally or on a scheduled basis. Respite care enables the person to remain in their home, while providing an invaluable service to their primary caregivers. RSVP caregivers provide stimulation, recreation, and companionship to local residents. These services ensure that isolation is mitigated or avoided all together.

Caregivers are a pivotal component of long-term care planning for elders, and many elders provide these services to their own families or friends. For many, the challenges of caring for an elderly,

Narratives

chronically ill, or disabled family member are simply a part of daily life. Caregiving, though, is a demanding job and no one is equipped to do it alone. Even though many families take great pride in providing care to their loved ones so that they can remain in their home, in many cases the physical, emotional and financial hardships for the family caregiver can be overwhelming without some support, such as respite. Respite services provide a break for the primary caregiver, which may prove beneficial to the health of the caregiver. RSVP Volunteers provide companionship through home visits, friendly phone calls and transportation.

Healthy Futures- Food Distribution

The Meals on Wheels Association of America is the oldest and largest membership organization supporting the national network of more than 5,000 Senior Nutrition Programs that operate in all 50 states and U.S. territories. The Meals on Wheels Association of America reports that 8.8 million of America's seniors nationwide, may not know where their next meal is coming from, while in Florida approximately 731,703 seniors may not be able to eat a meal every day. According to the Association, the Meals on Wheels Program not only provides daily warm meals but helps keep 2.5 million seniors healthy, safe and living independently in their own homes each year. RSVP Meals on Wheels volunteers will provide home delivered meals to homebound and isolated seniors as well as disabled adults. 8 RSVP volunteers will deliver hot meals to a total of 260 local senior citizens Monday through Friday. Additionally, another 40 seniors will receive a box of seven frozen meals on a weekly basis.

Veterans and Military Families

Assisting veterans and their families is a target area for our RSVP program. The RSVP program is instrumental in adding veterans with access to healthcare. RSVP Volunteer drivers, most of whom are Veterans themselves assist with our Veterans Transportation Program. The drivers transport Veterans to the three VA medical centers, located in Cape Coral, St. Petersburg, and Miami at no cost to the Veteran. To arrange for transportation, the Veteran will call Collier County Veteran Services to schedule an appointment. The drivers often form personal relationships with their fellow Veteran passengers, staying in touch and providing moral support. Collier County Veteran Services is a section of the Housing, Human and Veteran Services Department and serves as the volunteer station.

Narratives

Disaster:

When an event, such as a hurricane threatens our area, RSVP CERT teams are activated through the North Naples Fire District. During non-emergency periods, volunteers inspect homes for safety and fire hazards. RSVP CERT members are prepared to help themselves, their families, their neighbors and their community before, during and after an emergency or disaster.

Since disasters are sporadic, the second part of the program is assisting homebound seniors with grocery delivery. Through the Serving our Seniors Program, RSVP CERT volunteers deliver groceries to homebound seniors twice per week. This is a service outside disaster preparedness, and occurs on a regular basis. While there are several agencies offering home food delivery services, RSVP services are free of charge. Seniors who are unable to do their own shopping due to isolation and without a support system submit their grocery lists to RSVP volunteers. Working with a local grocery chain, the volunteers pick up and deliver the week's supply of groceries to seniors each week.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

Not applicable.