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Executive Summary

RSVP of the Midlands plans to provide an estimated 500 volunteers at 50 stations serving at least 40,000 yearly hours of service in the community. Some of the activities will include: food delivery via Meals on Wheels (MOW); food distribution via food co-ops and a mobile food pantry; food collection and distribution; telephone reassurance to MOW frozen food recipients and other community homebound; transportation to medical appointments, grocery stores, etc.; and, school-based mentoring and tutoring. Healthy Futures is the primary focus of the 2015 grant proposal. Seniors will also be engaged in numerous other community priorities. At the end of the three-year grant, it is anticipated that more seniors and disabled individuals will report having increased social ties/perceived social support. The CNCS federal investment of \$ 74,863 will be supplemented by \$36,457.

Senior Resources, Incorporated, the legal applicant, is a well-established non-profit organization, established and active in the SC Midlands community since 1967. Their mission is to provide coordinated services, resources and personal choices to promote healthy, independent living through the support of staff and volunteers. The SC FFY 2013-2016 State Plan on Aging recognizes that through volunteerism seniors contribute to the quality of life for other seniors and their communities, offering a wealth of knowledge, skills and abilities. The AARP Foundation (July 2014) states that a purpose in life can prevent isolation among seniors and volunteering is a great way to make a difference and bring meaning back to life. RSVP of the Midlands will place volunteers in diverse settings with opportunities for seniors to provide their expertise to improve their communities. RSVP of the Midlands is also uniquely positioned and qualified due to being housed in an organization that offers comprehensive programs and services along with established relationships with existing aging service providers, state and local offices on aging, and current volunteer stations.

Strengthening Communities

Our community consists of senior volunteers in Lexington, Richland and Newberry Counties who will be placed in a variety of settings performing service activities set forth in the proposed Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures, as well as other focus areas and the community priorities work plan. Service activities for the Primary Focus Area will include: Food Delivery via Meals on Wheels (MOW), food co-ops, the Whitmire Mobile Food Pantry; Transportation through Wheels-Harbisson Area Transit; and Companionship provided from making telephone reassurance calls. These activities will

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be provided by seniors for seniors and disabled persons. We propose to engage 260 unduplicated volunteers through Food Delivery, 40 with Companionship, 5 in Transportation, and 5 in Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (VITA/TCE) for a total of 310 volunteers at 32 stations with an estimated 1745 hours of service per month for the Primary Focus Area. We also plan to engage age 55+ veterans to serve as RSVP volunteers. We are currently posting volunteer opportunities through the American Legion Department of South Carolina and have had dialog with the local Alston Wilkes Society and the Fort Jackson Army Community Services Volunteer Coordinator. With the existing veteran population, along with Fort Jackson and the Dorn VA Medical Center in the Columbia area, opportunities exist to engage veteran volunteers and serve veterans, and active duty military and their families.

Homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation or other services that allow them to live independently will report having increased social ties/increased social support.

Community Description. Richland, Lexington and Newberry Counties are located in the Midlands Region of South Carolina. According to the US Census Bureau, between 2000 and 2010, the 60+ years population increased by 55.7% in Lexington County, 34.5% in Richland County and 22.3% in Newberry County. The 2010 Census reported Lexington County's population at 262,388, with 13.2% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 81.3% of residents are White and 15% are Black, with other races comprising a small percentage. Between 2007-2011, 11.6% of Lexington County residents aged 65 and older lived below the poverty level. Between 2007-2011, there were 23,441 veterans in Lexington County. (source: US Census Bureau QuickFacts)

Richland County is a large commercial center with a population of 384,507, with 10.5% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 48.3% of residents are White and 46.8% are Black, with other races comprising a small percentage. Between 2007-2011, 15.9% of Richland County residents aged 65 and older lived below the poverty level. Between 2007-2011, there were 33,781 veterans in Richland County (source: US Census Bureau QuickFacts). This area is also home to Fort Jackson, one of the Army's primary training bases, training more than 44,000 soldiers each year according to Fort Jackson Public Affairs. Newberry County is a rural county. The 2010 population was 37,508, with 16.8% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 65.8% of residents are White and 31.3% are Black, with other races comprising a small percentage. Between 2007-2011, 16.4% of Newberry County residents aged 65 and older lived below the poverty level (source: US Census Bureau QuickFacts).

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Within Newberry County is Whitmire, a small town of approximately 1400 persons nestled in the Sumter National Forest. The most recent unemployment rate was 15.4%. In 2012 the 27.3% of the population lived in poverty, with the median income of \$28,000, significantly less than the \$43,000 SC average. (sources: US Census, www.sciway.net, Wikipedia).

Community Needs. The following needs will be discussed: our aging population; disabilities; hunger; living arrangements; lack of social support; lack of transportation; and tax assistance.

The South Carolina State Plan on Aging FFY 2013-2016 ("SC Plan") states that the SC senior population is among the fastest growing in the nation, a 319% increase in the aged 60+ in the past 40 years. The population aged 60+ is projected to increase by 123% from the year 2000 to 2030.

Between 2000 and 2010, the 60+ aged population increased by 55.7% in Lexington County, 34.5% in Richland County and 22.3% in Newberry County. Of the more than 917,000 persons aged 60+, at least 42% have at least one disability, which makes them more likely to live below the poverty level.

Of the 65+ aged population surveyed in SC by the National Aging Program Information Systems (NAPIS), 80% had at least one difficulty either with activities of daily living (ADLs), such as bathing, feeding, dressing and toileting or instrumental ADLs (IADLs), such as shopping, preparing meals and transportation.

South Carolina ranks 7th in the nation among states with the highest rates of hunger risk among seniors, with 18.43% of seniors facing the threat of hunger during 2012 ("The State of Hunger in America 2012: An Annual Report"). According to the "Profile of Older Americans: 2013" published by the Administration on Aging, nationwide, over 1 in every 7, or 13.7% of the population, is an older American. Nearly 1 in 6 seniors is threatened by hunger (National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, May 2014). From 2001 to 2011, the number of seniors experiencing the threat of hunger increased by 88%.

The Administration on Aging reports that about 28% of all non-institutionalized older persons in 2013 lived alone. They represented 35% of older women and 19% of older men. Among women aged 75 and older, almost half, 45%, live alone. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that over 12% of seniors 65 and older need assistance with long-term care to perform activities of daily living. Low income seniors or those who live in poverty are even more likely to live at home, even if they require more care. The Alzheimer's Association reports that approximately 60-70% of seniors living in the community have dementia, with 25% of them living alone.

Lack of social support has been tied to detrimental effects upon health and well-being (Social Support Activities Lead to Better Quality of Life as One Ages, www.longtermcarelink.net; A Review of Social

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Isolation, www.medscape.com). In addition to volunteering, participation in community-based services, is beneficial, especially if group activities and dining with others are included. Other causes of social isolation in seniors include lack of adequate transportation and the lack of opportunities to be nurturing to others (14 Ways to Help Seniors Avoid Social Isolation, aplaceformom.com).

The SC Plan also stated that SC lacks an affordable and coordinated transportation system that meets the needs of the senior population. The Plan further concluded that "the inability of seniors to get where they need to go can quickly lead to poor nutrition, diminished mental and physical health and a general isolation from their community." The Wheels -- Harbison program is integral to serving the low income, elderly population of the Harbison community, but additional volunteers are needed.

"Feeding America" poignantly states that for seniors, protecting oneself from food insecurity and hunger is more difficult than for the general population since they do not have the resources to access or prepare food due to lack of transportation, functional limitations or health problems. Also, seniors require greater consideration because lack of adequate food may compromise their health.

Income eligible seniors in our community are in need of income tax assistance. The Financing Your Future program sponsored by The Cooperative Ministry coordinates the local VITA tax preparation program. The coalition prepared 3842 returns during the 2014 tax season, which represented a 23.7% increase over the previous year.

Service Activities. Healthy Futures is the primary focus of the 2015 grant proposal. Service activities will center around seniors and include: pack, serve and deliver Meals on Wheels (MOW); food distribution via food co-ops (sort, pack and deliver fresh fruits and vegetables) and the Whitmire Mobile Food Pantry; telephone reassurance to MOW frozen food recipients and other community homebound; and, transportation to medical appointments, pharmacies, grocery stores, etc. Taxes will also be prepared for needy seniors. All of these activities will contribute directly to an outcome of increased social ties/social support among seniors.

Engaging senior volunteers at senior center to participate in activities such as MOW and telephone reassurance contributes greatly to their sense of purpose. Contact with volunteers reduces social isolation to MOW recipients, with an added benefit of increased food security. Last year, volunteers delivered more than 150,000 meals to 1100+ unduplicated clients living in our 3-county service area.

Measurement of Outputs and Outcomes. The Data Collection Plan revolves around use of well-designed surveys designed to facilitate meaningful responses with a valid return rate, effective collection techniques and accurate analysis. We have more than 40 years of consistent experience with proper data collection processes, resulting in quality, accurate data. The outcomes for our

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primary focus area, Healthy Futures -- Aging in Place, are designed to demonstrate increased social ties/perceived social support. A by-product of the outcomes are the tangible results of allowing our elderly population to their health - physical and nutritional, which promotes them being to stay healthy and remain independent in their homes. A survey to measure outcomes will be conducted in January 2015 and distributed to individuals who receive services related to the primary focus area - congregate meals, home delivered meals, co-ops, food pantry, transportation, and telephone reassurance. The survey will be similar to those conducted in the past -- a brief, but concise questionnaire, customized as needed to address the specific service captured. Surveys will be designed to determine if those receiving services experience increased food security and/or increased social support (real or perceived) as a result of our projects. The National Service Knowledge Network supporting materials and survey samples have been reviewed and will be used as a resource. As the incumbent, we have had extensive experience with designing concise and meaningful surveys. We also have significant experience with distributing, collecting and analyzing surveys.

We have a robust, well-established infrastructure for volunteer data collection and management. Data will continue to be collected and managed via Volunteer Reporter, a program that has been successfully used by us for many years. It will be used to store information for hours, placements, station profiles and volunteer profiles and to generate statistical reports for a variety of categories relating to hours, volunteers and stations. Volunteer Reporter has been utilized for years as a tool for managing and maintaining detailed, accurate information on projects, our volunteers and stations, as well as for reports requested by CNCS and other funding sources.

Aging Trends in South Carolina. South Carolina's 60+ years old population increased by 40.5% between the years 2000 and 2010, and the elderly population is expected to double by the year 2030. In fact, the SC senior population is among the fastest growing in the nation and ranks 17th in the nation for the highest percentage of age 60+ residents. Of the over 60+ age group, at least 42% have at least one disability that makes them more likely to live below the poverty level. (Source: SC State Plan on Aging, FFY 2013-2016). Our Primary Focus Area includes service activities to allow seniors to live independently and experience increased social ties.

Food Security in South Carolina. According to the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, in 2012 South Carolina ranked 7th in the nation among states with the highest rate of hunger among seniors, worse than its 10th place ranking in 2011. The Foundation indicated the percentage of seniors facing the threat of hunger in SC increased from 17.38% in 2011 to 18.43% in 2012.

Senior Hunger in America. "The State of Senior Hunger in America 2012," prepared for the National

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Foundation to End Senior Hunger, reported that 15.3% of seniors, nearly 1 in 6, face the threat of hunger. The report states the seniors most likely to be threatened by hunger live in the South or Southwest, most are racial or ethnic minorities, have lower incomes and are younger (ages 60- 69). The report states that the fraction of seniors experiencing the threat of hunger increased by 44% from 2001 to 2012, while the senior population nationwide grew by 98%. Sadly, the number of seniors threatened by hunger has increased by 49% because of the 2007-2012 recession.

Meals on Wheels. During 2011, the Meals on Wheels Association of America surveyed the Older Americans Act program participants for the U.S. Administration on Aging. The Meals on Wheels clients stated Meals on Wheels ("MOW") helped them: eat better -- 83%; improve their health -- 87%; feel more secure -- 90%; able to continue to live in their own home -- 92%.

Similar findings resulted when RSVP of the Midlands conducted a MOW recipient survey January 2014. There were 113 surveys returned, approximately a 45% response. When asked if they felt more secure having contact with a Meals on Wheels volunteer each day, 90.6% indicated a positive response. More than 95% of the respondents indicated that receiving Meals on Wheels helped them remain independent in their home. Regarding nutrition, 95.4% felt their nutrition has improved since receiving Meals on Wheels and 85.6% felt their health was better. Numerous comments were received relative to the role of the volunteers: "the volunteers take the time to talk with me", "the Meals on Wheels volunteer is the only person I have contact with every day ", and "the people really care and are concerned about me." Regarding nutrition, some referred to a "balanced meal", and stated "I feel better by getting the meals" and "my health has definitely improved by having a very nourishing meal."

Veterans. The Dorn VA Medical Center is currently a volunteer station, so recruiting volunteers to serve there will remain important. We will promote community-based activities that provide service to veterans, active duty military and military families, through contacts such as the American Legion, Fort Jackson, and the Alston Wilkes Society. These contacts will also be sources to engage veterans to volunteer, taking advantage of their vast experience and skills.

Recruitment and Development

Volunteer Assignments. RSVP of the Midlands has a solid plan to create high quality assignments. Care will be taken to ensure that a wide variety of volunteer experiences are available so that the interests of the volunteer can be properly matched to the volunteer station. Assignments will also be designed to provide opportunities for volunteers to share their experiences, abilities and skills to improve their communities and themselves through their community service. Having a detailed

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volunteer application is an important foundation for meaningful assignments and effective recruitment. The volunteer application is periodically reviewed and revised to ensure it is designed to recruit volunteers specifically in focus areas and other community priorities. It also captures their interests, skills and abilities. When volunteers are recruited, their interests are documented. In order to choose a volunteer opportunity that best suits their interests, they are given the opportunity to review a list of available opportunities and these are also discussed with them verbally. Matching the needs of a station and a volunteer's interest is key. RSVP also staff assist the stations in identifying appropriate volunteer opportunities and help develop volunteer job descriptions.

Information from volunteer applications is entered into Volunteer Reporter and hard copies are also filed. Volunteer Reporter is used in multiple ways as a resource to generate reports, such as volunteers without placements, new volunteers, etc., and record assignment information.

The current RSVP Director is dedicated and passionate about visiting stations and interviewing station managers and volunteers. Personal observations and dialog with volunteers are necessary tools to determine and gauge volunteer satisfaction and their willingness to impart their knowledge and skills. It also visibly conveys staff interest, appreciation, concern and commitment.

Station Recruitment. While concentrating on identified focus areas, volunteer stations representative of the Midlands' demographics are recruited based on the impact they make in the community and how their mission correlates with identified community needs. As the incumbent, RSVP of the Midlands already has 40+ stations in existence. Additional stations are developed by multiple methods, to include as a result of dialog with existing stations, community partners, the advisory committee, and consultation with management and other staff.

Station staff are afforded the opportunity to participate in station training opportunities that are geared to volunteer program management. Revised volunteer and station handbooks are also available on the Senior Resources website and by hard copy. The handbooks are reviewed at least quarterly and revised as needed.

Each volunteer station will be visited at least one during the grant period by the RSVP program manager. Quarterly telephone calls with each station manager will be implemented. Station trainings will continue to occur. Discussions will be held with appropriate staff to ensure effective volunteer management practices have been implemented. Monthly updates and group e-mails will continue by the RSVP staff. Station satisfaction surveys are distributed yearly. The current satisfaction survey demonstrated that stations had a positive experience with the RSVP program and felt it was purposeful, useful, important and worthwhile. They were extremely satisfied with our management as

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well as their volunteers. Feedback and ideas for improvement are always welcomed.

Volunteer Recruitment. RSVP staff, as well as the sponsoring agency's Development Director and Executive Director, routinely speak at various venues, including church and civic groups, providing information on the RSVP Program and how individuals can become involved to impact their community. Staff routinely participate in opportunities to recruit volunteers in a variety of settings, from the Fort Jackson United Way kick-off and the Jewish Community Center Senior Fair to the urban Eau Claire community Fun Fest. Care is taken to recruit volunteers that are representative of our community demographics, promoting diversity, the use of volunteers with disabilities and the valuable veteran population.

The Dorn VA Medical Center is currently a volunteer station, recruiting volunteers to serve there will remain important. Contacts such as the American Legion, Fort Jackson, and the Alston Wilkes Society. will be sources to engage veterans to volunteer, taking advantage of their vast experience and skills.

New volunteers are provided with a welcome packet that includes a volunteer handbook and RSVP t-shirt. Staff have observed that volunteers take great pride in wearing their t-shirts and are very receptive to RSVP promotional items. These all are designed to help volunteers feel ownership in RSVP.

The RSVP staff welcomes participation from all individuals, regardless of background, who are willing to help meet the identified community needs. Currently our volunteers are: 76% female and 34% male; and 71% white, 27% African American and 1% Hispanic. Most are aged 65 and older with 39% from Lexington County, 38% from Richland County and 22% from Newberry County.

RSVP volunteers are provided valuable information on many aspects of volunteering. Station staff and RSVP staff work together to ensure that volunteers are trained to carry out the volunteer duties. All station responsibilities, including any training requirements, are outlined in detail as part of the station's Memorandum of Understanding. Our infrastructure is well-established, with the RSVP Handbook as a resource and local CNCS staff are also readily available for consultation. We are fortunate to have the State Program Specialist in the same city as our agency. Many CNCS web-based resources are available and used. The Senior Corps Community Alliance, our advisory committee, is engaged, and for example, will be participating in upcoming September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance activities. The Midlands Affiliate of the SC Association for Volunteer Administration (MASCVA) and the SC Senior Service Association (SCSSA) are also active, available resources.

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Retaining and Recognizing Volunteers. The role of RSVP is to recruit and match volunteers with community needs and the role of the stations is to provide the volunteer with a worthwhile, meaningful volunteer experience. Recruiting is done through a variety of methods. Volunteer opportunities are advertised via: the RSVP of Midlands quarterly newsletter (MOSAIC); postings on an improved website (www.seniorresourcesinc.org) and Facebook; information/health fairs; speaking engagements; word of mouth; our Senior Corps advisory council; websites of partner agencies (such as the United Way); other organizations (such as the American Legion) and media announcements. Success has also been achieved through VolunteerMatch and allforgood.org. Staff is dedicated to exploring new methods of recruiting volunteers and continued collaboration with our agency's Director of Development.

The key to retaining volunteers is maintaining contact with them and expressing appreciation to them -- personal contact is essential. Volunteers must also be satisfied with their assignment. Volunteer stations must be organized, prepared and foster open communication. This includes providing a positive working environment, having a concise position description, and designating a contact person at each station that establishes rapport with the volunteers. Stations are routinely visited by RSVP staff to keep our program visible to volunteers and frequent contact is maintained with station staff via telephone, e-mail and US Postal Service. Recognizing volunteers is accomplished through: birthday cards; get well cards; nominations for various awards beyond RSVP; features in newsletter articles and monthly updates; and annual volunteer recognition events. It is imperative to show appreciation to volunteers for their service. The RSVP of Midlands quarterly newsletter, the MOSAIC, routinely features volunteer photos, station highlights and volunteer spotlights that represent all three RSVP counties. Staff are passionate about producing a high quality newsletter, and it has been well-received. Photos of volunteers and their stories are aggressively posted on an improved, recently-launched updated website and on Facebook. Twitter is routinely used and the agency newsletter has been re-introduced. Stations are routinely contacted by e-mail. Other tools, such as health fairs, speaking engagements, word of mouth and the Board/Advisory Council are used.

It is important to routinely measure impact of volunteer activities by seeking their input and measuring their satisfaction. A Volunteer Impact Survey was sent out December 2013 to each station, with 72 volunteers responding (approximately 24% of volunteers). More than 60% of the volunteers had served more than five years, with one third serving more than 10 years. In summary, the majority of volunteers have indicated moderate to significant change or improvement in their life, and volunteering has increased their quality of life from a moderate amount to a great extent. The

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majority are satisfied or very satisfied with their assignments.

An average of 70% (51-79%) of volunteers indicated significant change or improvement regarding their: sense of accomplishment toward helping their community; feeling they have a purpose in life; look forward to each new day; personal satisfaction gained from volunteering; sense of self-esteem; physical health; and, increase in opportunities to socialize with peers. An average of 35% (17-36%) of volunteers rated these as resulting in a moderate change or improvement.

More than 95% of volunteers reported satisfaction with their current assignment, the RSVP program staff, station supervisor, training and overall volunteer experience. Participating in RSVP was credited with a moderate change in quality of life by 45% of respondents and to a great extent by 51% of respondents.

RSVP staff is active in the Midlands Affiliate of the South Carolina Association for Volunteer Administration (MASCVA), with most of the membership being staff at RSVP stations. This relationship increases the networking opportunities with station personnel. The staff also attends the South Carolina Association for Volunteer Administration annual training conference and available Senior Corps training opportunities. Participation in professional organizations allow staff to take advantage of opportunities for training and networking which will ultimately benefit both the volunteers and the stations.

Volunteer Training. Training of station managers is a key component of volunteer training. The RSVP Program Director and staff conduct a station training yearly and on an as-needed basis or upon request. Evaluations will be provided at the conclusion of station training and reviewed by staff afterwards in order to make program improvements. RSVP staff is available to speak to community groups as well as provide technical assistance to stations. The handbooks for both the stations and volunteers are discussed at the station training and are the primary curriculum and training material. Many components are common to both -- RSVP program overview; station information; types of stations; special projects and events; roles and responsibilities; additional responsibilities; memorandum of understanding (MOU); reporting hours; insurance; volunteer termination and appeal procedure; and staff and office information. Volunteers are also briefed on how to be a successful volunteer and a volunteer Bill of Rights. The importance of time sheets are discussed and time sheets and instructions are provided. The station training emphasizes the obligations stations have in their MOUs to adequately train volunteers and ensure their safety. Stations are also required to submit yearly safety checklists that confirm safety training, training to perform tasks, reporting accidents, first aid, etc.

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Community Demographics. Richland, Lexington and Newberry Counties are located in the Midlands Region of South Carolina. According to the 2010 Census, Lexington County has a population of 262,388, with 13.2% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 81.3% of residents are White and 15% are Black. Between 2007-2011, there were 23,441 veterans in Lexington County. Richland County is a large commercial center with a population of 384,507, with 10.5% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 48.3% of residents are White and 46.8% are Black. Between 2007-2011, there were 33,781 veterans in Richland County. This area is also home to Fort Jackson, one of the Army's primary training bases, training more than 44,000 soldiers each year. Newberry County is a rural county. The 2010 population was 37,508, with 16.8% of the population aged 65+ years. Approximately 65.8% of residents are White and 31.3% are Black. Other races comprise very small percentages in all 3 counties.

Building Public Awareness. The RSVP program is well established and visible in the community, having been in Lexington and Richland Counties for more than 40 years. In January 2010, Senior Resources became the sponsoring agency for Newberry County. The addition of Newberry County resulted in a combined program serving all three counties under the name RSVP of the Midlands. The goal in all three counties is to grow the presence of the program. Board members are updated every meeting regarding RSVP activities. Other efforts that have brought significant attention to our program were the MLK Day of Service and the Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service since RSVP stations were active contributors. The RSVP Director routinely (monthly and as needed) consults with the Executive Director regarding increasing program awareness. It is anticipated that the improved website will be a significant means to build public awareness. Project staff submits volunteer successes to local and state volunteer award programs as appropriate. Both Senior Resources and RSVP staff have been pro-active and passionate about promoting RSVP.

Program Management

Development and Management of Volunteer Stations. Volunteer stations are offered and provided with resources and technical assistance at the time of their inception into the program, as part of the memorandum renewal process and during station training. RSVP staff is also available to help develop and define volunteer position descriptions to insure that they are relevant, meaningful and address community needs. RSVP staff routinely communicates with station staff and volunteers in the station setting. Stations are visited yearly and needs are queried through a comprehensive checklist that has been developed and implemented. It includes a review of the MOU, signage, handbooks, job descriptions, time sheets, assignments, etc. Prohibited activities are discussed and

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suggestions are solicited. Both the RSVP Director and the RSVP Coordinator play active roles in all activities pertaining to stations and volunteers.

Each volunteer station will be visited at least once during the grant period by the RSVP program manager. Quarterly telephone calls with each station manager will be implemented. Station trainings will continue to occur. Discussions will be held with appropriate staff to ensure effective and compliant volunteer management practices have been implemented. Monthly updates and group e-mails will continue by the RSVP staff. Volunteer applications are thoroughly reviewed prior to being entered into Volunteer Reporter and assignments made. Routine discussions are held with the RSVP Coordinator, who has substantial familiarity with the stations and volunteers, and the RSVP Program Director.

Volunteer assignments are routinely reviewed based on contact with stations. Information from Volunteer Reporter is also an important tool and is used to print assignments and hours for review by the Program Director. Monthly time sheets are reviewed and the RSVP Coordinator consulted since she has significant historical knowledge regarding stations and assignments.

Compliance with Federal Regulations. Since 2011, RSVP, Foster Grandparents (FGP) and Senior Companions (SCP) have joined together to form one advisory council called the Senior Corps Community Alliance (SCCA). This council provides oversight and input for Lexington, Richland and Newberry Counties. The Advisory Council consists of volunteers and station staff of the RSVP, FGP, & SCP programs, community representatives from the field of community service and volunteerism, as well as liaisons from the sponsor's Board of Directors. Their familiarity with the program and experience with RSVP in the community enables them to give input and insight as decisions are made.

Their suggestions and ideas for changes and enhancements have made the program more efficient. All meetings are agenda driven and conducted bimonthly with minutes being taken and shared at each meeting.

Our program strives to maintain full compliance with all CNCS requirements. The 2013 monitoring visit identified a few issues that were immediately addressed. The visit also identified numerous program strengths and recognized our program's commitment to compliance.

Status of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). The Volunteer Reporter system is used to identify which MOUs are due for renewal. Station managers are contacted at least 45 days prior to MOU expiration and draft revised MOUs are mailed or e-mailed to them. Follow-up calls or e-mails are made after two weeks if the MOU has not been returned. MOUs are in effect for 3 years and are customized based upon the specific needs of the station. All templates also include standard verbiage

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from the RSVP Operations Handbook. The MOU outlines obligations of both the volunteer station and RSVP of the Midlands. The station must also verify it meets the federal definition of a volunteer station. Prohibited activities are enumerated and discussed in handbooks and is addressed as the first item in each station's MOU.

Volunteer Eligibility. All materials and postings clearly indicate that RSVP is for persons aged 55 and older and there is no compensation. CNCS Senior Corps RSVP brochures are used and our Volunteer Registration Form requests the date of birth and residence information to ensure the potential volunteer resides in a nearby community. Age requirements are also discussed during telephone inquiries. Volunteers are only placed in stations with a signed MOU and applicable job description on file. Non-discrimination practices are strictly enforced.

Graduating Stations. Steps will be taken to minimize disruption to volunteers if stations must be graduated. It is anticipated that several stations will be graduated that do not align with our program's design. Much thought and preparation will occur and the celebrations of each station will be done in the form of a recognition ceremony. The stations will also be consulted and much consideration will be given to how volunteers may alter current assignments to fit shifting needs. However, the stations anticipated to be graduated already have robust volunteer programs in place with directors, so there should be no need for RSVP to manage the program. Other stations targeted to be graduated include those without active volunteers that no longer fit in a focus area or community priority area. From discussions already held with potential stations to be graduated, it is also expected that the volunteers will continue outside of the RSVP program.

Assessment of Project Performance. RSVP staff conduct annual volunteer and station satisfaction surveys. Volunteers are contacted to follow-up on any concerns identified. The results of the evaluations are used to meet and redirect objectives and goals. The volunteer survey indicated the majority of volunteers have indicated moderate to significant change or improvement in their life, and volunteering has increased their quality of life from a moderate amount to a great extent. The majority are satisfied or very satisfied with their assignments. The current station satisfaction survey demonstrated that stations had a positive experience with the RSVP program and felt it was purposeful, useful, important and worthwhile. They were extremely satisfied with our management as well as their volunteers. During the previous grant period, we exceeded the anticipated 500 unduplicated volunteers and 52,000 hours of service.

Organizational Capability

Experience. For more than 46 years, Senior Resources, Inc. (SRI), a private non-profit 501(c)(3)

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corporation, has provided programs and services for the frail and elderly in the community. SRI is the only agency in South Carolina that sponsors all three Senior Corps Programs: Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Senior Companions (SCP), and Foster Grandparents (FGP). Established in 1967 as a Council on Aging, Senior Resources offers programs for home care, senior volunteers, respite, congregate meals, home-delivered meals, information and referral, care management, physical fitness, and telephone reassurance for individuals primarily over the age of 60. The agency operates under a constitution and bylaws and its policies are set by an 18-member Board of Directors. The Board performs fiscal oversight, of the agency, including approval of the yearly budget. SRI has 41 paid employees -- 29 are full-time and 12 are part-time. The RSVP Director is full-time and the RSVP Program Coordinator is part-time.

Senior Resources, Inc. has successfully sponsored the RSVP program on a continuous basis in Lexington and Richland Counties since 1973 and Newberry County since July 2009. The significant experience of current staff will continue to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of resources.

Strength and Development. Senior Resources, Incorporated, the legal applicant, is a well-established non-profit organization. Their mission is to provide coordinated services, resources and personal choices to promote healthy, independent living through the support of staff and volunteers. RSVP of the Midlands is uniquely positioned and qualified due to being housed in an organization that offers comprehensive programs and services, and has had long-term partnerships among local aging service providers (such as Senior Resources), the State Unit on Aging (Lt. Governor's Office) and the local Areas Agencies on Aging (Central Midlands Council of Governments).

The July 2014-June 2017 Strategic Plan for Senior Resources, Inc. identifies four objectives to accomplish our values: developing a comprehensive financial strategy for long term sustainability; expanding our brand in the community; attracting and retaining a committed and competent workforce; and maintaining transparency and accountability.

SRI has proven its ability to evaluate its programs and adjust them as necessary to maintain efficiency and effectiveness. Administrative strengths include: Board of Directors -- they represent some of the largest corporations in the area (such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Palmetto Health, SCANA, Bank of America, Colonial Life) and repeat terms on the Board due to their commitment to our mission; Volunteers -- more than 1100 in all programs; Collaborative Partnerships -- agency leaders maintain relationships with many partner agencies, government agencies and other groups that collectively advocate for the elderly and provide funding, volunteer opportunities and training; IT capabilities are

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robust and well-maintained; public awareness and outreach, engaging the community -- SRI continues to implement measures to increase visibility and support for senior services and also partners with media outlets; Personnel Strengths -- practices include initial and random drug screening and training that includes policies and procedures; the management staff has significant experience in the administration of programs and supervision of employees; and, Financial Strengths - - an established record with extensive experience; 40 years of experience in the proper allocation of costs, with an established and audited Cost Allocation Plan.

Funding. Matching funds and excess funds are secured through donations and grant and funding requests to local governments and corporations. Additional funds are allocated to the program through fundraising which is primarily conducted by the Director of Development, with input from the staff, Board of Directors and Senior Corps Community Alliance members. The Alliance members, with the assistance of the RSVP staff, take on the role of securing in-kind contributions.

Resource Management. The financial activities are managed by Senior Resources, Inc.'s Finance Department. The computerized fund accounting package includes an integrated system for payroll, general ledger, accounts payable, financial reports and cost distribution. Excel spreadsheets are used for cost allocation purposes and budget preparation. The Agency is accustomed to billing funding sources for reimbursement and has established procedures for performance based contracting. Senior Resources has an established Cost Allocation Plan, which is reviewed annually by the Agency's Independent Auditors. The Agency has experienced no disallowances or audit exceptions for over 25 years, and reviews of the Agency's system of internal controls have shown no weaknesses.

Staff. The current staff with their extensive experience will ensure accomplishment of program objectives. Key staff consists of:

Executive Director - BS from Georgia State University (Medical Technology) and MBA from Western Governor's University (Healthcare Management) -- 30 years of experience working with regulatory, grant funded, and aging related programs -- current position since April 2013.

Finance Director -- BS University of South Carolina (Accounting) -- over 25 years of experience as Director of Finance at Senior Resources.

Program Director -- BS University of South Carolina (Biology) and MPH University of South Carolina -- 33 years working with program coordination and development, to include regulatory and grant-funded programs; 21 years volunteer experience, to include working with seniors -- current position since November 2013.

Part Time Program Coordinator -- previous experience working with seniors as a Senior Center

Narratives

Manager and conducting Life Enrichment at independent living facilities-- current position over 7 years.

SRI sponsors all three Senior Corps Programs: Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. In addition, we have over 1,000 volunteers who assist our programs and agency in a variety of ways as advisory council members, board members, Meals on Wheels drivers and packers, etc. These volunteers are a tremendous asset to our agency and have received numerous awards for their volunteer efforts on our behalf.

Financial Management Systems. SRI has an established record of properly managing and accounting for public funds, including federal, state and local dollars. Senior Resources is audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards as required by the US Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. The Agency has experienced no disallowances or audit exceptions for over 25 years, demonstrating its capacity to administer federal grants.

Development & Management of Impact-Based Programming. As a United Way of the Midlands partner agency, Senior Resources has been programming for impact for the past 13 years in addition to the programming for impact that has been required by CNCS. All director level staff has received Outcome Measurement Training on a regular basis. The training has been beneficial in securing additional grants from funding partners. Our list of grants is impressive, and indicative of the agency's dedication to service and ability to attract a large and diverse funding base. Funding partners include: United Way competitive grants, TJ Maxx, Bank of America Foundation, Walmart Foundation, the BI-LO Corporation, Food Lion Foundation, AARP, SC Cable Television Association, Meals on Wheels Association of America, Darden Restaurants Community grant, South State Bank (formerly SCBT), Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC, and South Carolina Electric and Gas.

SRI has an Organizational Chart that is updated yearly and clearly delineates that all agency operations are conducted by the Executive Director under the supervision of the Board of Directors as outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Agency. Each employee of Senior Resources has a defined position description which addresses the essential responsibilities of their position and is updated as needed. All employees are provided with a Policy and Procedure Manual; participate in Agency Orientation, as well as Departmental Orientation by their Program Director, and ongoing training. The Policy and Procedure Manual does include a travel policy as well as an employee benefit section. All employees are eligible for the Employee Assistance Program which is provided by the agency.

Narratives

Evaluation and Improvement. SRI has an evaluation process for all levels of staff and each program. Each program has an evaluation tool to measure the quality of the service and/or the volunteer program. The programs participate in state and federal quality assurance surveys and undergo quality assurance monitoring conducted by local, state and federal sources. All programs meet monthly with the Executive Director. The Board of Directors approved a three Year Strategic Plan in August 2014 for July 2014-June 2017. The RSVP Project Self-Assessment Checklist was used as a tool for to gain an understanding of areas of strength and areas needing improvement in the program. Discussions have also been held on several levels, to include during station visits, previous station surveys, staff and executive level management. The self-assessment results indicated "Excellent" and "Good" indicators in Programming for Impact, Reporting Accomplishments, Project Management and, Communication --Internal.

Other

NA

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

NA