

Narratives

Executive Summary

Future Builders, Inc. (FBI) is the local sponsor of the RSVP of Central Arkansas. Future Builders is a 501 (c) 3 community based organization located in Wrightsville, Arkansas just south of Little Rock. The organization was established in 1990 and is governed by a Board of Directors. The mission of the organization is to empower community residents to become self-sufficient by motivating and stimulating both youth and adults with opportunities for cultural, academic, health education and career building activities within their community.

RSVP of Central Arkansas under the sponsorship of Future Builders, Inc., proposes to utilize the services of 501 unduplicated RSVP members/volunteers.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will address the following service areas described in the CNCS NOFA as the primary focus areas, other focus areas, and other community services and will address the community needs within each area:

1. Veterans and Military Families. Primary Focus Area (25%) - Volunteers will work with veterans and their families to assist with transportations to VA Hospitals and will work with VITA (Volunteers in Tax Assistance), to help Veterans and their families file their taxes for free, office help, companionship, and benefits.
2. Disaster Services - Partnering with disaster emergency agencies during tornados, fire, and flooding.
3. Healthy Futures (SMP) - This focus area educates beneficiaries on Medicare fraud and abuse through the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program.
4. Education - Volunteer will serve in public schools (Elementary) with tutoring, educating through reading programs.
5. Capacity Building - RSVP volunteers will mentor a youth service learning program Above-Beyond-Serve (ABS).
6. Other Community Services-Volunteers will serve patients, young and old in local hospitals, healthcare facilities and nursing homes by volunteering in ICU, gift shops, welcome desk, greeters, office duties, Emergency waiting rooms.

At the end of the 3-year grant, RSVP of Central Arkansas will meet the requirements, outcomes, numbers, and needs of each work plan presented in this grant. The CNCS federal investment of \$88,302 will be supplemented by \$26,491 of non-federal resources.

Narratives

RSVP of Central Arkansas will survey the needs of the community in collaboration with programs throughout the targeted three county service areas of Pulaski, Saline and Lonoke. Collaborative programs include but are not limited to the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, VA Healthcare Centers and Hospitals, Little Rock, North Little Rock, Saline and Lonoke school districts, Arkansas Division of Aging and Adult Services, Arkansas Division of Volunteerism and Arkansas Department Emergency Management.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will utilize an independent/diverse group of volunteer leaders from the surrounding communities to assess the success of RSVP in its ability to meet community needs through surveys, questionnaires, and personal interviews of the stations, clients and RSVP volunteers.

Strengthening Communities

RSVP of Central Arkansas is located in the heart of Arkansas and will be serving three counties. Those counties include: Pulaski, Lonoke and Saline. According to Arkansas Census 2010, the population of the three counties together stands at 570,637. Of this number, over 135,000 are 55 years of age and older.

The three counties carry the following economic status, which has also increased since the 2010 Census: Pulaski County-17.6% live below poverty level which is estimated at 67,300; Lonoke County - 13.2% estimated at 9,237 and; Saline County - 8.7% estimated persons are below poverty level which stands at 9,618.

Pulaski County - is the largest of the three counties. Pulaski is the most populous county in the state. Little Rock is the county seat and the States' Capitol. The economic base is largely government and support services. Pulaski County is also home to the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Presidential Library, which is located on the southern bank of the Arkansas River. Top major employees are: Acxiom, Dillard's Department Headquarters, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and Raytheon. One of the largest public employers in the state with over 9,000 employees is the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences (UAMS), and its affiliates Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS) with a total economic impact in Arkansas of about \$4.1 billion a year. There is one Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System, Eugene J. Towbin Healthcare Center in North Little Rock, and one hospital, John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans Hospital located in Little Rock. There are also two military bases; Camp Robinson in North Little Rock and Little Rock Air Force Base (LRAFB) in Jacksonville. According to the United

Narratives

States Census FY2010 the Veteran population in Pulaski County was 31,608. This number will continue to increase as soldiers come home from overseas.

Lonoke County - is the only county in Arkansas whose county seat bears the same name; named by a railroad surveyor that used a massive red oak tree as a landmark. Lonoke County is still a primarily agricultural county. The Joe Hogan Fish Hatchery, the Smoke Hold Natural Area, Toltec Mounds State Park, and Camp Nelson Confederate Park, are areas of interest. According to US Census for Veterans Affairs, the Veteran population is 7,502.

Saline County - The name comes from early salt works in the area that supplied salt to all of Arkansas and shipped salt to Tennessee, Louisiana, and east Texas. The landscape is hilly terrain in the north and rolling hills in the south. At one time, Arkansas accounted for 97% of the country's production on bauxite. Bauxite was used to make aluminum; most of that came from Saline County. Benton is the county seat. Benton is geographically in the center of the state and within minutes of metropolitan amenities where many enjoy the small town comfort along with national forest recreation and natural beauty. The Gann Museum is composed of large bauxite boulders and contains a collection of antiques and memorabilia on the county's history. The veteran population is 10,421 and growing.

Within the three counties there are two major universities, The University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). There are also three historically black colleges and universities: Philander Smith College, Shorter College and Baptist College. The public schools consist of 8 high schools, 11 middle schools and 52 elementary schools, 2 adult education centers, 1 accelerated learning center, 1 career technical center, and 2 early childhood (pre-kindergarten) centers.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will ensure local input into program design and evaluation by various means and proposes to address the following service areas:

Veterans and Military Families (Primary Focus Area) - 25% of RSVP unduplicated volunteers will serve - The National Center for Veterans Analysis Statistic reported that as of 2013, Arkansas had a population of 2,959,373 with 15.5% reported as veterans ages 65 and older. According to Arkansas Veteran Affairs, there is a great need for volunteers to assist veterans in the areas of transportation to

Narratives

medical appointments; assistance with filing taxes and working with VITA sites; acting as companions to those veterans who have no family while in the VA hospitals and many more opportunities for RSVP volunteers to serve. These services plus many more opportunities are available for volunteers to use their skills and serve veterans in healthcare settings. One hundred thirty six (136) RSVP volunteers will meet the needs of veterans by recruiting from within the community and from the veterans themselves.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will recruit and retain veterans to volunteer at stations where they feel comfortable. While visiting the Veterans hospital, an older veteran, retired United States Marine, Mr. Earl L Graham, 90 years young, once stated that he feels at home when around those who fought for this country. Mr. Graham spends a lot of time at the VA Hospital with routine check-ups, and has stated he would like to volunteer in helping younger veterans who are returning home from overseas. Opportunities he did not receive when he came home in 1948. RSVP will be helping him do just that- volunteer!

Other Focus Areas to be covered during this grant will include:

Disaster Services - According to Arkansas Disaster Emergency Management (ADEM), which serves as the states coordination center for the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from those threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the nation, Arkansas is a key state for tornado's, fires and flooding. As a matter of fact, many call Arkansas Tornado Alley. Disasters are local. On April 26, 2014, an EF4 tornado upset many communities in and around Central Arkansas, leaving 19 dead and homes and businesses completely swept from their foundations. So, Arkansas is no stranger to what disaster brings and how important it is to have trained responders such as RSVP volunteers. These disasters affect us as citizens, our neighbors and our communities. ADEM works with local government to make sure that our communities return to normal as soon as possible. That is why RSVP of Central Arkansas volunteers will play a major role in partnering with ADEM and other agencies' to help those victims. Thirty Five (35) unduplicated RSVP volunteers will be trained to set up Volunteer Reception Centers to help control the chaos during a disaster.

Healthy Futures (Senior Medicare Patrol) - RSVP of Central Arkansas will partner with Arkansas Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), through the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, to

Narratives

recruit and train senior volunteers to recognize instances of healthcare fraud, errors and abuse through reviewing their Medicare Summary Notices (MSN), and reporting fraud. This program will educate others to protect themselves from healthcare fraud and scams. Presentations will be scheduled with organizations such as senior centers, nursing facilities, churches, civic clubs, special events, health fairs, different AARP chapters in all three counties and many other places where seniors gather. The RSVP/SMP volunteers will give one-on-one counseling to the disabled and shut-ins who cannot travel. A call center will be set up for those who find discrepancies in their billing and need to report scams. The Arkansas Attorney General, Dustin McDaniel, is aware and concerned with Medicare scams. KARK Channel 7- Seven on Your Side and Jason Peterson who reports the different and newest scams, advocate to protect our seniors at risk of the Medicare scam artist. The SMP program has proven to be quite effective. The awareness of this scam has empowered the senior population on to report fraud and abuse of the Medicare system, which in turn saves the State money and prosecute those stealing from the pockets of our seniors. Finally, the older generation can be a part of something that benefits them in the long term. The volunteers are provided eight hours of training and given a certificate of completion. These training will be held twice a year or as needed to keep up with the latest Medicare information. Information and data collection will be through the number of presentations, number of clients served, and the number hours served by RSVP volunteer. Reports will be entered into the RSVP software database and hard copies filed away in volunteer and station files. A monthly report will be sent to the SMP office in Little Rock.

Education (tutoring) - 10% outcome - Literacy is a major issue with our children and according to statistics a grave concern for the adult population as well. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy it is estimated that 14% of Arkansans 18 and over lack basic prose literacy skills; 43% of people with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty; 17% receive food stamps and; 70% have no job or part time job. Of course, when adult parents are struggling with literacy issues, it will trickle down to their children. Arkansas Kids Read reports that 7 in 10 Arkansas 4th graders don't read proficiently. These at-risk children are much more likely to drop out of high school, end up on welfare, or end up in prison. Therefore, to assist non-readers with reading proficiency, there is a huge need for tutors. RSVP volunteers will be mentors/tutor's to elementary children who struggle with reading and simple language issues. There will be a schedule set up by the teachers for volunteers to come in on a certain hour and will be given 1-2 hours to work with a child. Data collection will be through the RSVP office and the teacher themselves. Volunteer and the child they will tutor, the hours served. Those reports

Narratives

will be copied and given to RSVP for input into database, printed out and filed away under the volunteer and school served. The outcomes of how many children's reading skills improved because of the one on one counseling they received from RSVP volunteer. End of last semester teachers will report to RSVP office and that document will be filed away under the school file by teacher and student name.

Capacity Building - According to the National Council of Non-Profits, capacity building is vitally important, now more than ever. Capacity building improves and enhances a nonprofits ability to achieve its mission and sustain itself over time. "Great programs need great organizations behind them". That is the reason RSVP of Central Arkansas choose the Above, Beyond Serve (ABS), 10th-12th grade youth service learning program. The program is sustained and managed through RSVP of Central Arkansas. The RSVP volunteers mentor and help educate the youth volunteer in serving areas such as: Veterans, Disasters and helping the elementary student with reading and math skills. The youth program was designed to work with the major high schools who participate in ACT 648, which states that if a student serves 75 hours, holds a 2.5 GPA, and works within a nonprofit organization, that student will receive one (1) credit towards their college education. RSVP volunteers will be assigned to 5 or more student volunteers to help them get established with serving non profits, each student will go through a 2-hr orientation, will be given a handbook with rules and regulations, a parental consent form, so parents can sign off for the student to participate, parents are also invited to the orientation. All students will meet their RSVP mentor at the orientation. A list of non profit opportunities will be presented. Sign up Applications will be available for those student who want to participate. Once all this is in place, students can start volunteering. RSVP mentors will visit, make calls to the student volunteers to make sure their commitments are being followed and that they are enjoying their experience as a volunteer. Time sheets will be given to each student, must be turned into the RSVP office or their RSVP mentor by the 10th of every month. RSVP will enter into a spreadsheet and a copy will be mailed to the high school counselors office to record, so student can receive one credit.

Other Community Service - 30% - Four partner hospitals within the three counties RSVP of Central Arkansas will serve, report a need in the medical care setting where there is a lack of time that doctors, nurses, care specialists and hospital staff have to spend with the patients families. Comfort needs are lacking. RSVP volunteers will be serving in areas such as: Direct Patient Care - feeding,

Narratives

walking or transporting a patient to other areas of hospitals for certain procedures like X-rays. Indirect Patient Care: comforting, talking with, and helping with a patient who has no family, companionship. Play games; write letters to help pass the time. Non-Patient Care: working in office running errands, delivering flowers or newspapers or working on office projects. Some volunteers will work in the gift shops. Station reports will be mailed to each hospital from RSVP office. On the station report will be the name of volunteer, duties they performed, hours served and a place for the volunteer to sign. Reports are mailed back monthly, information will be entered into RSVP database, filed away inside volunteer and station files.

RSVP will form collaborative partnerships with non-profits, governmental agencies, faith-based organizations, proprietary healthcare facilities, and other community partners. RSVP of Central Arkansas will establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with organizations that fall within the primary focus areas, as well as, other areas and capacity building of this grant. RSVP of Central Arkansas program(s) and volunteers will seek to facilitate positive change that lead to long-term measureable outputs and outcomes while strengthening the capacity of the community, neighborhoods, individuals, and our collaborating partner agencies.

Obesity and Food - According to the Arkansas Food Bank there is a need for volunteers to help collect, distribute, store, and serve low income families. RSVP volunteers will serve by planting and harvesting vegetables, fruits and berries when in season, plus honey from honeybee hives, which is maintained by the Arkansas Food Bank. The food bank also has a store called, "Agency Mart", where partners/clients can come and shop for fresh foods and other household items. This will also help maintain pantries at home for their families.

Financial Literacy - RSVP volunteers will be trained and certified to help low income/veterans and their families with income tax preparation and filing. This is a free service that is afforded through the Internal Revenue Service and a program called "Volunteer Income Tax Assistance".

As part of the selection process for community partners/volunteer stations, RSVP staff and council members will determine if the agency meets the requirements to become a volunteer station and then negotiate and sign a Memorandum of Understanding, (MOU), making sure that both parties are in agreement concerning all components of a working relationship. RSVP will also make sure that there is a written position description before recruitment and placement of volunteers. RSVP will also

Narratives

develop a capacity building assessment tool to help collect information during orientation to aid the station and volunteer in achieving their goal.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will build upon a strong community relations program that will ensure public awareness of start-up activities and project development. This will be carried out through many avenues to include but not limited to contact and intervention with social service agencies, city and county officials, senior organizations, other CNCS programs, and the media regarding development, growth and successes of the programs; public awareness; inclusion of RSVP activities in volunteer station newsletters; RSVP staff, volunteers and RSVP advisory council involvement in community activities i.e. service on boards and councils to create community networking; RSVP newsletters mailed to RSVP volunteers, media, volunteer stations and other interested individuals and important contacts and; RSVP website, which will be a gift-in-kind from a retired Air Force Veteran.

Diversity plays a major role anytime you are working the community. Diversity is not always related to race or ethnicity. It may include age, gender, language, social class, religion, education, work backgrounds, etc. Diversity, within age groups and across age groups, will enhance civic engagement when RSVP of Central Arkansas utilizes the talents of each individual. The volunteer experience itself brings together those seeking to expand their knowledge of other cultures. Recognition events will also produce admiration for the efforts of all volunteers of all cultures and especially among the volunteers themselves.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will have a data management system in place to collect and store data, a means of demonstrating the impact of the project(s) and its volunteers.

The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator will use a software program called the Volunteer Reporter to record all volunteer information such as volunteer stations, volunteer duties and hours contributed. Each station will keep records of RSVP volunteers' duties and hours and report to RSVP staff who will maintain all information in an in-house filing system. All information is entered electronically and a printed (hard copy) is retained in each volunteer/station file.

Public awareness will be maintained through monthly publications of volunteer opportunities in online newspapers; through monthly community meetings with non-profits and government agencies; participation in community health fairs and business expositions; Martin Luther King Jr

Narratives

Day of Service activities; 9-11 events involving history reading events to elementary children; community bulletin board announcements on local television; presentations to civic clubs and community organizations and; workshop presentations.

The RSVP staff will initiate a quarterly newsletter of service activities highlighting accomplishments achieved and recognition of volunteers who represent the ideal in service. The RSVP Director has 16 years of experience using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to manage data and store information from assessment reports to budgets.

Recruitment and Development

Volunteer management practices alone do not ensure retention of volunteers. To support retention, RSVP of Central Arkansas will allocate sufficient funds to support volunteer involvement, cultivate an organizational climate that is welcoming and warrants the volunteers an experience worth sharing. RSVP of Central Arkansas' project promises high quality experience for volunteers by creating meaningful opportunities at local stations in the community that works within the focus areas of CNCS. This helps volunteers to use existing skills, develop new skills and make a difference in the lives of the people they serve.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will make full use of the leadership skills of volunteers by placing them, when possible, in supervisory positions. These positions would include but not be limited to:

1. Disaster Response - volunteers would be in charge of setting up Volunteer Reception Centers where volunteers can come and get directions on where they can help. These center will be created for the mire purpose of guidance to those who show up to help.
2. Veteran Assistance - volunteers will go through several days of training to help Veterans and their families plus the low income families with their tax issues. Help veterans and their families with the different VA forms, understanding and help in filling out and submitting appeals about their benefits. These are leadership roles.
3. Medicare Fraud - volunteers will going through 1 day training in educating seniors about the abuse, fraud and scams of the Medicare system and;
4. Youth mentoring - volunteers will facilitate a program where youth lead and mentor elementary children in reading, writing and math skills.

Partnerships will be developed with volunteer stations that have opportunities for RSVP volunteers to learn new skills, develop leadership potential and experience satisfying and meaningful experiences. An example would be partnership with Arkansas Disaster Emergency Management (ADEM), which trains volunteers to help set up call centers for first time responders during a disaster such as,

Narratives

tornados, flooding, fires, etc. These volunteers would be in charge of setting up stations for donations, funds and assigning volunteers to areas that need help.

There will be evaluation tools to allow volunteers to provide input for improving station assignments. RSVP staff will maintain our volunteer base by recruiting through stations, website listings, email campaigns, flyers placed throughout the community and referrals from active volunteers. In addition, RSVP staff will recruit through speaking engagements with a diverse range of non-profits organizations, public agencies, faith-based groups and places where seniors gather.

According to Dr. Judy Esmond, author of many books on managing volunteers, one should treat volunteers as if they are customers and your boss, to see the positive experience start to grow within them. That is where you start, when wanting a strong recruitment of skillful and well experienced individuals who are looking for something to do after retirement. The recruitment and volunteer retention process will be modeled based upon the five types of volunteers:

Suspects - people that know nothing about RSVP. RSVP will begin by attracting their attention. To make contact with suspects/volunteers, RSVP will use a broad-based approach such as direct bulk-mail or newspaper advertising or a more selective approach such as advertising in trade journals or professional publications.

Prospects- are people who have shown an interest in volunteering but have not yet signed on. RSVP will maintain regular contact with prospects/volunteers to encourage them to take the next step and volunteer. We will send them newsletters; invite them to functions/events and call periodically to see if they're now ready to make a commitment.

Newbies- new volunteers are like new customers to a business. First impressions are vital if you are to retain their custom and keep them coming back. RSVP will devote part of the recruitment plan to ensuring that all new volunteers immediately feel like they belong. Inviting them to a meet and greet with other satisfied volunteers, share stories and experiences, educating them on different opportunities within their comfort level and area of expertise. RSVP will share focus areas in the community and allow them an opportunity to make the decision of the experience that best suits them.

Narratives

Repeats- repeat and long-term volunteers are as valuable as repeat/be-back customers in a business. RSVP will look after them and never take them for granted. We will recognize them publicly in our recruitment campaign, as people are inspired by stories of such dedication. Recognition events, award programs and station events are all very important tools.

Raving Fans- are satisfied volunteers who are so impressed with our (RSVP) organization that they tell everyone they meet the greatness of their volunteer experience. It is great when volunteers can blow the RSVP trumpet for us and actively recruit others to volunteer. RSVP will encourage raving fans/volunteers by providing satisfying volunteer work, ongoing support and regular recognition.

Make or break volunteer service can make or break a volunteer program. It can also make or break RSVP collaborative partnerships where volunteers serve. Of course, RSVP wants raving volunteers. So the mission is to maintain a highly successful volunteer management, volunteer recruitment and volunteer recognition program. RSVP aims to convert our suspects into prospects - our prospects into new volunteers - our new volunteers into repeat volunteers and our repeat volunteers into raving fans in order to RECRUIT-RETAIN-RECOGNIZE and recruit again. A task is more likely to be completed and on time when volunteers know that their contribution is important and that others are counting on them. RSVP will let them know the importance of what they are doing and how the job fits into the focus areas/performance measures goals of the organizations.

Retaining RSVP volunteers will be the result of matching the right volunteer to the right assignment, providing other placements when the volunteer seeks diversity and interviewing when the volunteer is unhappy. Annual evaluation of volunteer satisfaction will be completed to ascertain a volunteer's happiness with placement and the necessary adjustments will be made. The RSVP director will collaborate with volunteer stations at least monthly to ascertain need for assistance with training and technical needs of its staff and volunteers and will seek out the appropriate community resource to meet those needs.

Strategies for retention include:

1. Providing orientation to all new members and volunteers as well as old members who may need a refresher course;

Narratives

2. Training- written instructions will be helpful for both recruiting volunteers and retaining new volunteers. Without written instructions an individual may decline to volunteer or may volunteer to do the job but misunderstand exactly what it is he or she agreed to do and may decide not to honor the commitment;
3. Welcoming new members with welcome packets and RSVP newsletters and meeting where they can meet one another, during the meet and greet;
4. Conducting follow-ups with volunteers one month after recruitment;
5. Reviewing hourly reports monthly to identify volunteers that are not reporting hours;
6. Making personal contact with volunteers who are not responding, find out way, and what can be done to make volunteering fun and rewarding;
7. Emailing or calling volunteers once a month to stimulate interest in upcoming events, programs, and volunteer opportunities which will alleviate burn out;
8. Developing educational socials and cultural activities for members/volunteers;
9. Always keep an open door policy, invite them to visit the RSVP office and get acquainted with the staff;
10. Keep smiling and keep working on fresh new ideas and approaches. Allow active volunteers to help.

RSVP will strive to understand each volunteer's individual skills and interests, pair interest with assignments to ensure that volunteers are in comfortable and rewarding positions, and then recognize their strengths and service.

If for some reason a graduated volunteer or station/site is no longer an active station in the targeted county, RSVP volunteers, the staff and advisory council members will work with the volunteer for opportunities to join another station or stations. RSVP understands that CNCS is changing directions that may affect some volunteers and or stations that are doing exceptional work, have made great friends, and loves the RSVP experience. In these situations, RSVP staff will address each circumstance on a one-on-one basis. Efforts will be made to talk with the station and the volunteer to find a way to complement CNCS focus areas. If the station cannot work with RSVP focus area, then RSVP will work with the volunteer. It is the desire of RSVP to retain high impact volunteers however, if there is not a workable strategy, we would encourage the volunteer and site to continue their relationship but advise that the hours can no longer be counted by RSVP. Therefore, the volunteer and work station

Narratives

information will be maintained in a separate file for future reference but would no longer be a part of the RSVP roster. RSVP will stay in touch with the work station and volunteer in case there are opportunities for future involvement with RSVP. RSVP of Central Arkansas will assure a smooth transition and provide necessary training to the volunteer that see change as good.

Once, RSVP has gotten to know and understand each volunteer's individual skills and interests with the right job, knowing that everyone involved is happy and satisfied, and then comes the recognition. Recognition comes in many forms. However, the first thing RSVP staff will do is send each new volunteer a handwritten thank you for filling a position that is much appreciated. Volunteers give up their personal time to participate in activities so it is important to thank them for that sacrifice and recognize them for their efforts. Each volunteer will be thanked personally, preferably with a handwritten note or an email acknowledging specific contributions. Other recognitions will include:

- * Public recognition as appropriate at events or annual banquet;
- * Presentation of a plaque or customized certificate;
- * Acknowledgement at annual awards with special seating;
- * Acknowledgement in section newsletters and web page;
- * Opportunities for volunteer positions with added authority and responsibility;
- * Letter to station acknowledging volunteer contributions if agreed by the volunteer;
- * Nomination of state service award.

KARK, Channel 4, the Office of the Governor and the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, has a televised volunteer distinguished citizen's award each year. RSVP of Central Arkansas nominates volunteers every year for this award. RSVP of Central Arkansas' nominated volunteer won the 2014 award.

Program Management

Stations are developed by networking with new programs, current stations, advisory council members, city officials, and volunteers. RSVP will meet with the station(s) as often as needed to determine impact needs, and help develop site and recruitment of volunteers. The volunteer stations that have exhibited continued success (training, funding, recognition and evaluation) in addressing specific community needs will be continued during the next three year grant cycle. RSVP staff will stay connected with stations on a monthly basis to answer questions, offer technical assistance and ensure that volunteers are satisfied. All stations will be handicap assessable for all those who committed to wheelchairs or have any kind of disability.

Narratives

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drawn up and signed between the stations/partners and RSVP. The MOU will include the stations responsibility to train, report hours of service, self-assessments, recognition event reporting, and community strengthening strategies. Each station will understand what the CNCS calls prohibited activities such as: political activities, non-displacement of employed workers, compensation of service, labor, nondiscrimination, religious activities and nepotism, which is in the CNCS rules and regulations. All stations/partners/volunteers will understand their roles and the do's and don'ts will be clearly and concisely explained in both the MOU and the volunteer welcome packets. It is very important that RSVP explain to each new volunteers about the prohibited activities.

Each RSVP member/volunteer who wants to serve with RSVP will fill out an RSVP volunteer application which asks for name, address, date of birth, if they served in the military, their likes and dislikes, and where they might like to serve. On the application there will be a list of partners/stations and task listed for them to circle or mark if interested in any of our volunteer opportunities. This gives the RSVP staff insight to what the volunteer enjoys and the skills they have to help serve our stations. Application will be signed and dated by volunteer and once entered into the database, the RSVP staff will sign and date. This application will be entered into the volunteer reporter plus a hard copy will be kept in the volunteer file.

The stations/partners will keep RSVP abreast of the volunteers' performance and will report hours and task descriptions. Time sheets, station reports, sign in sheets, evaluations and other means of reporting will be left to the discretion of the station(s) and RSVP. A reporting system will be in place for each volunteer and the tasks/duties they perform.

The Volunteer Reporter, a software database program, is used for data collection on volunteers and stations showing the hours served, service focus area and tasks/duties. If a station has 20 volunteers that provide daily meals to the low-income in the community, the report would reveal that 20 RSVP volunteers give 2 hours daily (Monday thru Friday) and served lunch to 650 low-income persons during the specified month. This raw data is collected by the volunteer station and faxed, mailed or emailed to RSVP. The information is then put into the volunteer reporter database by the volunteer coordinator. To make the stations' reporting structure easier, the RSVP Coordinator can run station

Narratives

reports with the names of the volunteers, the task they perform plus a place where the volunteer can sign off on the hours they serve. These reports can be mailed or faxed to the stations for easy reporting. Impact data is determined by the self-assessments of the stations' achievement of set goals as documented by the raw data reported to RSVP. Annual evaluations, surveys and questionnaires of volunteers and stations are retained in the RSVP office for seven (7) years. Self-assessment reports of the stations are kept on file in the RSVP and station offices.

Plans for a 15 member - RSVP advisory council will represent a diverse, cross-section of business leaders, RSVP volunteers, partners and others who, as a group, will have the following skills:

1. Knowledge of human and social needs of the community;
2. Competency in the field of community service and volunteerism;
3. Capability of helping the local sponsor meet its administrative and program responsibilities including project assessment, publicity, and programming for impact;
4. Interest in and knowledge of the capability of older adults.

Council members will mirror the demographics of the service area(s) and will provide feedback to the RSVP project. The council will serve as spokespersons for the project and; will help assess community needs. The program design will be based on the needs survey(s) conducted by partnering agencies such as the Arkansas Area on Aging for assessment of senior needs; the Arkansas Veteran Affairs to assess Veteran needs and; the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management for assessment of disaster needs. Program designs will also be used in alignment with other focus areas in the CNCS 2015 plan, and state identified needs/guide program design. RSVP partners and station representatives will be contacted quarterly for input and assessment of volunteer needs. RSVP of Central Arkansas will also invite feedback from the volunteers through quarterly newsletters, the RSVP website and evaluations.

Program performance is assessed through surveys and combined into a program evaluation by RSVP advisory council. RSVP Advisory Council, which will meet quarterly. Each member will be equipped with an RSVP advisory manual with all the rules and regulations from CNCS about the RSVP mission, program and what is expected from the council. There will be by-laws in which the council will uphold. Each member will understand the importance of RSVP partnering stations and the roles volunteers play within the stations. There will be several committees within the council such as: recruitment, recognition, and publicity, and each member will be asked to serve on a committee. They

Narratives

will vote on a president, vice president, and secretary and each will be asked to hold office for three terms. They will help evaluate the stations, making sure MOU's are in place and up to date every three (3) years. The RSVP advisory council will be given a roster of stations and volunteers where they can correspond with the station managers and the volunteers to make sure things are working well. This will assist RSVP staff to meet the needs of the station/partners and volunteers.

RSVP of Central Arkansas evaluates project performance to assure all goals and objectives are met and result in a high quality project as outlined in the work plans. The advisory council appraises one aspect of the project each year, Example: Veterans and Military Families, the AC would visit the station, talk with volunteer supervisor and volunteers to make sure everyone is meeting the goals of the project. All performance measures will be met by this project, and RSVP will share the annual assessment of project accomplishments, as reported in our progress reports (PR), to the community funding sources.

In-kind donations to the program will be documented on forms with the donor's signature and a witness signature with a description of items donated and an estimated value. The RSVP website, for example, will be implemented and managed by a retired Air Force veteran for free. The veterans' value is estimated at \$10 an hour, 4 hours weekly x 52 weeks = \$2,080 a year. Another example of in-kind donation is the office space documented by a lease agreement with the local sponsor. Other in-kind donations come in ways of meals for our volunteers who serve more than 4 hours per day at their site. Gifts, awards, meeting space and supplies are other in-kind contributions. RSVP will continue vigorous efforts to secure other in-kinds for our volunteers and program.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will keep abreast of grant funding opportunities and seek such funding where appropriate. The advisory council will address funding resources in its quarterly meetings. The RSVP director will research funding opportunities on-line and will consistently utilize the funding opportunities reported through "Grant Station" weekly reports.

Background checks on all RSVP staff will be done and filed in the employee files. A copy will be given to the local sponsor, Future Builders, for safe keeping. Anyone who is hired with the RSVP program will be required to have a background check. Stations that require background checks on RSVP volunteers will be responsible for that cost.

Narratives

Organizational Capability

The local sponsors' experience with RSVP and non-profit partners allow them to maintain and develop a successful program. Future Builders, Inc. will oversee the management of RSVP of Central Arkansas. The sponsor provides a leadership role in the community through networking and coordination. The Executive Director and the Board of Directors, have been affiliated with non-profit networking for twenty- five (25) years and keeps abreast of every aspect concerning funding, CNCS policies, needs assessment, community needs, personnel policies, travel policies, management support and job descriptions.

The RSVP bi-annual evaluation of staff is based on the organizations' personnel policies and procedures. Upon employment, RSVP staff is provided with an orientation, where the Executive Director sits down one-on-one to explain policies and procedures. The staff members receive a copy of the manual and are requested to read and agree through signature that they understand all information. This insures clarity of job descriptions, roles and responsibilities.

Future Builders provides support to allow the RSVP program to implement strategies and accomplish goals such as developing, recruiting, and marketing materials, providing appropriate recognition of volunteers, providing staff development, upgrading technology, and maintaining safe work environment.

The RSVP Director will be responsible for all RSVP supplies and all invoices/receipts, which will be given to the Executive Director, Linder Conley, and fiscal officer for approval and payment. A copy of all invoices and receipts will be kept in a file inside the RSVP office locked and secure. Originals will be kept in local sponsors office secure. The RSVP Director keeps a monthly Excel spreadsheet of all expenses that are matched to checks and receipts and maintained for CPA review and audits.

The local sponsors' Executive Director, Linder Conley is the founder of Future Builders, Inc. Linder graduated from Philander Smith College with a BA in Social Work, and obtained her Masters in Communications from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Her background includes the development and implementation of curriculum for six community colleges (Capital City Junior College) in Arkansas and Missouri. While serving a six-year tenure at Capital City Junior College, Mrs. Conley worked as Instructor of Leadership Development and various business classes; Director of

Narratives

Placement for the Colleges' federally funded work study program and the graduate program; Director of Education for the Colleges' six school locations; and Director of the Vocational Campus supervising a core staff of 36 and administering a budget of 2.8 million dollars. Linder was also instrumental in the design and implementation of the National AmeriCorps Demonstration Model, an intergenerational service concept involving three states in the Lower Delta areas of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Known as the Delta Service Corps, the program had a budget of over 25 million dollars and assisted communities in the Delta area to become self-sustaining through the efforts of individuals willing to give back to their communities via community service. Mrs. Conley assisted in the design and implementation of the Workforce Investment Program for Pulaski County. Through this program, the Southeast Pulaski County Collaborative formed as a focus point to provide a wide range of support options for welfare recipients and high risk families.

The RSVP Director is accountable for the RSVP project. With eleven years' experience as an RSVP project director; she holds an Associate degree in Business Administration from Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, Texas. The RSVP director has 25 years' experience as a Purchasing Manager for major corporations like Wal-Mart out of Bentonville, Arkansas, and ten (10) years' teaching children in kindergarten in Arkansas. Along with her husband, they own and operate J&M Homes, LLC, in southeast Arkansas.

In 2006, she along with Arkansas Hospice of Southeast Arkansas, implemented and managed a youth program for 9th-12th grade students called, SMILE, Students Going the Extra Mile. These students attended 3-days of training on how to work with Hospice patients. This program has spread throughout Arkansas, and have been very successful. She also started a service learning program in Jefferson County, south of Little Rock, called Students with Opportunities to Soar" (SOS), which is a service learning program for 10th -12th grades, serve their communities, same as the RSVP programs. Two students from that program received the Bill and Melinda Gates \$250,000.00 scholarships, while serving with this program.

The RSVP Director continues her studies by taking on-line classes to improve her understanding of grant writing and to improve storytelling of how volunteers are touching lives in their communities. The director attends yearly conferences which are put on by Points of Light Foundation, and attends webinars' on Veterans, Capacity Building, Recruitment strategies, and other classes when opportunities arise. The RSVP Director will network with CNCS project directors, who offer different approaches to accomplish project goals and achieve outcomes. She will continue to familiarize herself

Narratives

with community resources and area businesses.

The RSVP Director serves on various committees/boards and participates in fund development when necessary. The Arkansas Veteran Affairs Medical Centers in Little Rock and North Little Rock has expressed their need for the RSVP Director and RSVP Volunteer Coordinator to serve as VAVS Representatives on the Deputy Representative Board. The RSVP Director has been a member of the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinator Association (AVCA) since 2009. The Director has also served on the Advisory Board for Senior Medicare Patrol Program for 5 years'. The Director will pursue memberships to the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) and Arkansas Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster (AVOAD), which will be partnering with our Disaster Services work plan. The Director will oversee all staff and their duties, and give annual evaluations of their performances.

The Volunteer Coordinator has 5 years' experience working with the RSVP program and is responsible for recruitment, retention, and recognition activities of volunteers. She assists with recruitment of work stations and uploading and maintaining volunteer records. The Coordinator will oversee the youth service learning program, Above, Beyond Serve, which will be mentored and managed by RSVP members. The Coordinator worked with the Arkansas Children's Hospital for six (6) years, and has experience as an Elementary School Administrator. She also served as Vice-President of the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinator Association, (AVCA), for Central Arkansas in 2012-14. The RSVP VC will put together orientation handbooks for all new volunteers which will contain information about the program, volunteers, stations/partners, the do's and do not rules and regulations, and prohibited activities. The prohibited activities will be explained in detail to each new member and existing member that may not understand. The Coordinator will update and maintain the volunteer reporter database. The volunteer coordinator will give presentations on the RSVP program to new upcoming stations who fit within the new focus areas.

The RSVP Director and RSVP Volunteer Coordinator will attend conventions and trainings in subjects pertaining to seniors, healthcare, and computer training in classes such as: intermediate Excel and Publisher classes at the local community colleges in Pulaski County. The Coordinator will attend the yearly Summit which is part of the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services to learn new concepts of how to recruit and retain senior volunteers.

Narratives

Other duties of the RSVP Director, staff, advisory council and local sponsor will be to educate the community about the programs through presentations and to invite partner agencies to give presentations at special events. RSVP of Central Arkansas will maintain records of clients served on volunteer hourly sheets, which will help measure impact. Filed impact statements provide proof of accomplishments that are recorded and measured. Database reports and impact statements are used to demonstrate concrete impacts of the program and its volunteers. The local sponsor requires an RSVP progress report for its quarterly Board of Directors meetings. This report is used in part, to monitor and evaluate the Program Director and the impact of the program on the community.

The RSVP Director will consult with the newly established RSVP advisory council, which will meet quarterly to assist with assessing community needs and programming strategies. The council will advise on programming priorities and evaluate accomplishments and impact; will advise on funding resources; support increased visibility and recognition in the community; support the local sponsor and director through program development, volunteer recruitment and retention, station acquisition and; review volunteer grievances. The RSVP advisory council is composed of community leaders who come from local businesses, station/partner staff, and RSVP active volunteers. As community leaders, the advisory council members will be aware of community needs, where RSVP is heading in the future and will be actively involved in seeking ways to meet those needs.

Resources, both financial and in-kind, will be recorded by the RSVP Director and local sponsor who will have an aggressive financial management system that is threefold: (1) an internal bookkeeper will manage the fiscal records such as payroll reports and distribution, inventory, supplies and financial reporting; (2) an external Certified Public Accountant, Kathy Qualls, will use QuickBooks to maintain records. The CPA will review the financial records of the internal bookkeeper, reconcile bank statements and prepare 941 and 990 records and; (3) an external auditor, Mike Cobb, with Cobb and Suskie, LTD., will conduct an annual audit in accordance with auditing standards accepted in the USA and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The financial tracking system will detect deficiencies in internal control and compliance and will assure best practices in financial management. All records will be kept with the local sponsor, CPA and the Auditor on internal hard drive and copies filed away under lock and key. Backups are maintained by the local sponsor.

Narratives

RSVP of Central Arkansas will secure in-kind support from their local sponsor for office space, equipment such as computers, printers, fax machines and other office equipment and, meeting and storage space in a centrally located renovated building, which will serve active, handicapped accessible volunteers and visitors in a variety of capacities. RSVP will have many stations/partners who will donate in-kind services i.e. local hospitals, nursing home with meals of RSVP volunteers who will work more than 4 hours/or through lunchtime periods; meeting places for the RSVP advisory council such as; libraries and churches and, the RSVP website up-keep is gratis through an RSVP retired Air Force Colonel of twenty eight years (28) Mr. Ed Merck. Mr. Merck not only maintains and manages the RSVP website but serves on many boards. RSVP of Central Arkansas nominated Mr. Merck to receive the Governor's Distinguished Citizens Volunteer Award for 2014. There were eleven other nominees all deserving of this honor, Mr. Merck won. He was honored with a dinner at the Governors' Mansion that was televised by KARK Channel 4 news station. Mr. Merck who was humbled and pleasantly surprised stated that there is nothing more rewarding then seeing a true volunteer that wears the uniform of the United States of America. Mr. Merck received a standing ovation for speaking those words. Mr. Merck is truly an American Hero and an amazing RSVP volunteer who goes beyond the call to serve.

RSVP of Central Arkansas will report its success in managing its volunteer program through impact based accounts to CNCS, its local sponsor and Arkansas Division of Volunteerism.

Continuation of its programs with Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), state and other important funding since 1996, is a wonderful testament to the reputation it holds today. RSVP of Central Arkansas, local sponsor, CPA and Auditor has read, understood and provided information on all the CNCS rules and regulations, the performance measure requirements containing the focus areas, outcomes and other community priorities and all documents that must be submitted by September 9, 2014.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A