

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

An estimated 230 TRI -CAP RSVP senior volunteers will serve in their communities during the grant period 4/1/15 through 3/3/18. Some of their activities include At Risk Ecosystem recycling and reusing projects under Environmental Stewardship, Caring for Infants under Other Education service, work with Veterans and Military Families, and other Community Priorities that involve service with blood drives and persons integrating back into society.

The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. 136 RSVP volunteers, or 59% of the total number of volunteers will be engaged in Obesity and Food, Aging in Place, and Access to Care service activities. They will serve in a variety of Obesity and Food activities including working at local food banks, preparing and distributing meals, and distributing backpacks of food for long weekends and school vacations for elementary students. The volunteers will work with homebound, older adults and individuals with disabilities through Aging in Place activities to increase social ties and perceived social support, and they will develop and distribute health insurance, health care access and health benefits materials to clients.

Outcome based measures will show that the work of TRI -CAP RSVP volunteers contributed to increased food security for 1000 clients, increased social ties and or perceived social support for 400 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities, and that 1000 clients received access to care information.

Local community funds of \$24,605.00 will supplement the CNCS federal investment of \$41,674.00. The local community has faithfully supported the work of its' TRI -CAP RSVP senior volunteers for over 40 years.

## Strengthening Communities

The Dubois-Pike-Warrick Economic Opportunity Committee, Inc. d/b/a/ TRI -CAP, was founded in 1966 as a private, non-profit Community Action Program. It serves clients according to funding source rules and regulations and agency policies and procedures. TRI -CAP takes action and works together on the identified needs and challenges of the client population in our communities by evaluating, accessing resources and capabilities, focusing on what's important, choosing effective policies and programs, acting on what's important, and evaluating the process. TRI -CAP is funded through a combination of state, federal, and local resources, and provides services to clients regardless of race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status. The Agency is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## Narratives

TRI-CAP RSVP was brought under the umbrella of TRI-CAP in 1972. RSVP serves Dubois, Pike, and Warrick Counties, Indiana which is a rural area in the southwestern part of the state. RSVP is an important connector of health and social services that help empower people to serve and to impact the community focus to work together. These actions complement the CNCS focus areas and the requirements, mission, and vision of TRI-CAP, the sponsoring agency.

The key economic and demographic features of the TRI-CAP RSVP three-county service area are diverse and challenging. Dubois County, Indiana is known for its wood manufacturing and remanufactured engines industries, turkey processing plants, and nationwide distribution centers. It has continued to lead the state of Indiana with the lowest unemployment rate and reported a state best at 4.3% for June 2014. Warrick County is in close proximity to the metropolitan city of Evansville and is home to Alcoa Warrick Operations, various coal mining companies, and a variety of medical facilities. Warrick registered a 5.3% unemployment rate in June 2014. Pike County is best known for its coal mining and agricultural industries and reported a 5.4% unemployment rate for June 2014.

TRI-CAP RSVP seeks to match senior volunteers with both stations requesting their services and in-house projects that are managed by RSVP staff. The stations that provide services in the Healthy Futures focus area include 3 food banks, 1 food distribution center, 1 non profit organization's community meal and back-pack buddy program, 3 senior centers, the Purdue University Extension Service, 4 long term care facilities, and the Dubois County Public Health Partnership. Projects administered in-house for this service area include three monthly lunch and learn collaborations, and the Thanksgiving Day Feast Pie Brigade.

The three Thrift Stores listed under the Environmental Stewardship workplan are under the Food Pantries that they are connected with and are all under one MOU.

The TRI-CAP RSVP office is staffed with one full time Director. The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Volunteer and Station lists are kept current with the help of volunteer management software, and our office takes pride in the sustaining longevity of community collaborations.

In the CNCS focus area of Healthy Futures, we propose to have service activities related to Aging in Place, Obesity and Food, and Access to Care that will impact the elderly, families, and Veterans and Military Families. We propose to place 136 unduplicated or 59% of the TRI-CAP RSVP volunteers in work plans addressing these issues. Low incomes, long term unemployment, economic inequality through under-employed workers, and the lack of reasonably-priced housing continue to be on-going

## Narratives

economic factors that create disparity and lead to the poor accessibility of basic human needs.

Dubois County 2013 census statistics report that 7.9% of its 42,361 population is below the poverty level, while Pike is at 13.2% of its 12,683 and Warrick has 9.4% of its 61,948.

RSVP volunteers will provide food, companionship, and educational opportunities to older adults, caregivers, families with young children and veterans and military families. Volunteers work regularly at three food banks and one food distribution center collecting food, stocking the shelves, interviewing and maintaining client in-take data, cooking and serving at community meal and lunch and learn programs and stocking back-packs with food for elementary students. TRI-CAP RSVP's main concentration in the Healthy Futures area will be focusing on the understanding that the prevalence of poverty cannot be resolved just by handing out food. Providing food to vulnerable populations to help them achieve a higher level of food security will be combined with healthy living projects that reinforce a community understanding of relational brokenness, the risk of isolation, the feeling of disempowerment and loss of hope. Our work will lead us to year three of the grant and the measurement of our outputs and outcomes. We anticipate that 1000 unduplicated families and individuals will be served at food pantries, community meal, lunch and learn and back-pack buddy programs. We anticipate that 750 documented surveys will show the family as having increased food security, 250 will have greater social ties and 1000 will receive health related information.

Dubois County reports that 15.5% of their population is 65 and over, Pike County reports that 18.4% of their population is 65 and over and Warrick County reports that 15.3% of their population is 65 and over. The United Health Foundation recently released an "America's Health Rankings Senior Report" that states a clear disparity in Indiana. It reports that 62.7% of people over 60 with an income of \$75,000 + state that they are in very good to excellent health while 25.5% with an income of less than \$25,000 report having very good to excellent health. It also reports that seniors with a lower income also have a low percentage of health screenings, high obesity, and many poor mental health days.

2013 census statistics report that Dubois County has 1 Mental Health provider for every 1264 people, Pike has 1 for every 2596 people, and Warrick has 1 for every 3220 people. Donna Oeding, Administrative Director of the Dubois County Health Department states, "The Dubois County Public Health Partnership, which includes TRI-CAP RSVP, is addressing the mental health needs of not only our senior citizen population, but also our children and their families. Specifically, the Aging Committee of the Partnership is focusing on several aspects of dementia and providing assistance and education to caregivers. The Healthy Children Committee is addressing suicide, drug and alcohol use, and ostracism. Through several methods of education and outreach, the Partnership's objective is to

## **Narratives**

reduce the number of poor mental health days being reported and will enable a greater level of independent living and greater social ties."

TRI-CAP RSVP's proposed plan is to have their volunteers work with county health departments, senior centers, community meal and lunch and learn programs to create and distribute information on health care services, cost management and healthy living. They will collaborate on an evidenced-based Purdue University pilot program, All In, by addressing generational issues of bullying and ostracism and they will assist on other public health programming that focuses on aging health education for self and caregiver, Primary Prevention, Adverse Childhood Experiences, alcohol and drug use and other issues that produce poor mental health days. The RSVP volunteers will receive training such as the Adult Mental Health First Aid Course and they will be an active part of the infrastructure of public health programming that will provide companionship services, create the assessment, collect assessment data, and manage the results. At year three, our measured outputs and outcomes are anticipated to show that 1000 people received access to care information on services that will be of benefit to themselves and their families and 400 people will have greater social support and increased social ties.

### **Recruitment and Development**

Social media and community social service networking provides connective avenues for the senior interested in contributing to the growth of their communities. TRI-CAP RSVP assures a high quality experience for volunteers through a volunteer registration form that helps guide the senior and RSVP staff to place volunteers where they will be most happy. As feedback is received, the retention of volunteers depends on the satisfaction of their experiences. Through training and job shadowing, volunteers learn and master new skills and broaden their existing ones. Some volunteers want to be the leaders and want to help create, organize and manage parts of the projects. Others are happiest not being in charge. Those volunteers just like doing what needs to be done. Both types of volunteers are essential to RSVP and both receive in-service training and technical assistance for their specific duties. They appreciate developing new skills and take advantage of trainings that build the infrastructure of our work plans such as the Mental Health First Aid Course, Poverty Simulations, Primary Prevention and Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) that are offered through TRI-CAP, volunteer stations, collaborating agencies and organizations.

Health outcomes are positive when people feel good about themselves and the enhancement of their community through their service. We often share statistics and outcomes with the volunteers so they can see the fruits of their labor. Evaluation of data received from program and project assessments

## **Narratives**

and surveys help assure high quality experiences for the senior volunteer. With the upcoming goals and objectives, we feel confident that existing volunteers will come forward to meet the needs and new volunteers will be given tasks that are challenging and rewarding.

We actively recruit for new volunteers when there is a need that we cannot fill with an existing volunteer. Recruitment of diverse populations is on-going through TRI-CAP Open Houses and participation in Health and Resource Fairs held in the Dubois, Pike, and Warrick County service area. The population breakdown for Dubois County is 92.9% white and 6.4% Latino. Pike County has a population of 98.1% white and 1.2% Latino while Warrick County has a population of 95% white, 1.6% Latino, 1.4% Black and 1.7% Asian. TRI-CAP RSVP is successful in recruiting veterans. Over 10% or 27 of the 230 volunteers are veterans and 17 of those address identified community needs of their fellow veterans and military families.

Word of mouth brings in enough volunteers to maintain our volunteer base. Station staffs are primarily responsible for volunteer training at their facilities. Knowledgeable partners such as the Dubois and Pike County Health Departments, each Counties' Purdue Extension Service, and the Dubois County Public Health Partnership conduct volunteer trainings. TRI-CAP the agency, offers Poverty Simulations and trainings that volunteers are encouraged to attend, and TRI-CAP RSVP offers a variety of opportunities that support self and community enhancement such as educational monthly Lunch and Learn programs, trainings for self-directed programs like the Sleep Sack project, and Medication Collections, as well as annual recognition luncheons, and quarterly newsletters that provide educational information, birthday greetings, and sincere appreciation for the volunteers' service. We celebrate the balance of the power of knowledge and the healthy benefits of laughter and camaraderie. We also utilize our Agency Facebook page and website to post photos of volunteers in action and to thank them for their service.

### **Program Management**

Each of the three counties in the TRI-CAP RSVP service area has different needs which determine the actions of the senior volunteers. Each volunteer station has requirements, and each volunteer assignment addresses the specific needs of that station and the needs they impact in the community. TRI-CAP RSVP manages volunteers and volunteer stations with strict adherence to program regulations and applicable laws. The RSVP Director visits the majority of stations on a monthly basis and has good, open relationships with station personnel. That helps to prevent prohibited activities and ensures that stations have current, signed MOU's and that volunteers are eligible and are performing assigned service activities.

## Narratives

For over 40 years, TRI-CAP RSVP has been a community connector as a senior advocate and has had commendable reviews from the Corporation for National and Community Service and its predecessors. Due to funding decreases, this program employs one full time staff person. The TRI-CAP Board of Directors serves as the RSVP advisory council. They annually review any new regulations, policies and procedures and are integral in program design and oversight on a monthly basis.

In the next three years, our plan for activities that reach beyond our Healthy Futures primary focus area, is to support the community in the areas of Environmental Stewardship, Veterans and Military Families Served, and Education. In addition, we have activities that correspond with the Community Priorities area.

In the Environmental Stewardship focus area, volunteers will be working the Medication Collections that are conducted in the spring and fall seasons and will help support natural water sources and drinking water quality by environmentally disposing of 1 ton of pharmaceuticals. Additionally, volunteers working with 3 local thrift stores will keep 4 tons of materials out of landfills. They will pick up, process and sell donated goods that would otherwise be thrown away. Proceeds from the sales in the thrift stores will help less fortunate county residents with basic needs.

In the Education focus area, volunteers will assist the young mothers of TRI-CAP's Healthy Family program with safety, welfare, and health programs. A proposed plan is to distribute sleep sacks to families of infants. TRI-CAP RSVP will raise funds for the material and zippers needed for the sacks, volunteers will sew them to specifications and will give them to the Healthy Family staff. Dubois County reports that those under five years of age are 6.2% of the population. Pike County has 5.7% and Warrick County has 5.9%. Indiana statistics report that the infant mortality rate has been between 7.3% and 8.0% deaths per 1000 live births since 1998 and now ranks 45th among the states. "The #1 cause for infant mortality in babies from birth to 12 months is due to SIDS," says Angie Greulich, TRI-CAP Healthy Family Program Director, "and to combat this cause, parents are urged to utilize sleep sacks that safely and snugly wrap the baby in a comforting fabric that enhances their physical health from avoiding the risks of SIDS."

In the area of Veterans and Military Families Served, RSVP volunteers will impact their fallen comrades' families with Honor Guard Details and through the organization of special Memorial and Veterans Day community services. They will provide transportation to hospitals and doctors appointments to veterans in this rural area, and they will join forces through their service clubs and auxiliaries in fundraising and distribution services of basic human needs and health services. Statistics

## Narratives

report Dubois County as having 3073 veterans while Pike County has 1133 and Warrick County has 5016.

Volunteer recruitment for all RSVP service opportunities involves utilization of phone calls, newsletters, and social media. This has proven to be effective and timely. The issue of graduating stations and volunteers is difficult. TRI-CAP RSVP has allowed attrition to assist in this area in the past and intends to guide volunteers into activities with clearer outputs or outcomes that align with the Corporation's strategic plan. Our program will continue to have stations within the Community Priorities area and will place volunteers in activities that address needs specific to their home county. Each volunteer is important to us and if needed, great care will be given to communicate the transitional changes and direction of CNCS. Community support is a necessity and this issue is delicate.

We intend to use both the suggested and the self-directed tools to quantify the Corporations' National Performance Measures outcomes and outputs. In the Healthy Futures area of Obesity and Food, we will measure successful outcomes via a food bank client survey on food security. Concerning the Aging in Place priority, a client survey focused on social interactions will be used and the number of clients receiving health related information will be documented under Access to Care. Other outputs will be measured using internal and station collected data that is pertinent to the project. Collected data will be analyzed and if projects are not meeting stated goals, they will be adjusted.

The process of assessing RSVP Financial Cost Summaries, special projects and the Program itself is a diligent system of weekly, monthly, and annual checks and balances that ensure accountable, efficient, and effective management. In light of decreases in funding, resources are managed proficiently and all purchases are researched for necessity. TRI-CAP RSVP is fortunate to have Dubois County government support, local grant-funders, donors, and successful fundraising endeavors that comprise our non-federal share of our budget. Accountability assessments and evaluations are conducted on a regular basis.

### **Organizational Capability**

The TRI-CAP administrative authority for the RSVP program through the chain of command begins with the Board of Directors. The 15 member board consists of 5 public, 5 private, and 5 low income representatives of the three county service community. The Board meets monthly.

The TRI-CAP Executive Director is Joyce Fleck. Joyce holds a Bachelors Degree from Oakland City College. She had been the TRI-CAP Fiscal Director for 14 years and is currently in her third year as

## Narratives

Executive Director. Her duties include the establishment of long-range goals, objectives, and plans and policies subject to the input and approval of the Board of Directors. Joyce provides guidance, direction, and authorization to carry out plans, oversees the financial structure of the agency, monitors policies and procedures, and develops and maintains working relationships within the community and general public to increase visibility of the agency. Joyce supervises the Director of Administration, Education and Volunteer Services Director, Health Services Director, and Housing Services Director as shown in the Organizational Chart of the Documents section of the grant request.

Donna Sturgeon is the Education and Volunteer Service Director and has been employed with TRI -CAP since 2006. Donna is the direct supervisor of the RSVP program. Donna is currently working towards her Masters Degree in Management and presently holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Administration. Donna also oversees and manages the Head Start, Healthy Families, and Hoosier Corps Programs plus all related activities to ensure efficient operations and quality of services to children and families.

The Director of Administration is Susan Reichard. Ms Reichard has a B.A. in Economics and Management from DePauw University and has a Master of Business Administration from Indiana Wesleyan University. Susan directs the financial, human resource and administrative activities of the agency and is directly responsible for the submission of RSVP's CNCS financial reports. Susan has been employed with TRI -CAP for three years and directly supervises the Finance Manager, Human Resource Manager, and Accounts Payable Specialist.

The Human Resource Director is Debbie Beckman. Ms Beckman has been employed with TRI -CAP for 17 years. She is a graduate of Northeast Dubois High School and directly supervises the Payroll Specialist and the Receptionists for the county offices.

The TRI -CAP RSVP Director is Mary E. "Becky" Beckman. She has held this position since October 2001. Becky graduated from Indiana State University-Evansville and has a social service, property management, and sales background, and is an active community volunteer. Becky is a Mayoral appointment to the Jasper Community Arts Board and is a former Mayoral appointment on the Jasper Park Board. Becky is also a Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children, a senior advocate, and an active member of her church.

The Director works 37.5 hours a week and handles day to day operations which include but are not limited to program and financial management of RSVP. This position is responsible for volunteer recruitment, orientation, station management and volunteer placement and position management. The Director is responsible for the collection and data entry of volunteer time via paper timesheets,

## Narratives

email and website submissions. Data is entered into the software that produces reports which allows close monitoring and tracking of unduplicated volunteers by focus area. Station reports allow the Director to determine the number of volunteers and hours served for each activity. The Director reports to the Education and Volunteer Service Director on a daily basis, and submits regular reports on the status of program, budget, and agency requirements and other community activities. The Director also works with TRI -CAP sister programs on community and collaborative projects, the fiscal department for daily financial work, and the Executive Director and Director of Administration on trainings and other supervisory matters. The TRI -CAP Board of Directors acts as the Advisory Council for RSVP. The Board reviews monthly reports generated by RSVP staff.

TRI -CAP RSVP has been managing senior volunteers, age 55 and older for over 40 years. Some of our volunteers have been active with us for over 30 years! TRI -CAP is a 501 c 3 non-profit tax exempt organization registered by the State of Indiana and the federal government. TRI -CAP and TRI -CAP RSVP are vital to Dubois, Pike, and Warrick Counties, Indiana.

The track record of the financial sustainability and overall success of managing the RSVP program is evident in its ability to manage the budget cuts and sequestration ramifications. The programming success and RSVP's involvement with seniors is evident through its' proven community impact, collaborations, and the positive response of senior's active participation in community affairs. TRI -CAP RSVP successfully manages this senior volunteer program and is in good standing with the Indiana State Office. Annual audits and evaluations of RSVP and sister programs guarantee continuous improvement of TRI -CAP's procedural systems. TRI -CAP procedures and internal management policies require annual job evaluations, job description changes, required in-service trainings, provision of information for personal continuing education, health maintenance, agency communication surveys and self-assessing monitoring for positive improvement.

### Other

N/A

### PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A