

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Putnam County Office for Senior Resources (formerly Putnam County Office for Aging), located 50 miles north of Manhattan, has been the sole RSVP sponsor since 1973. For the proposed grant period, an estimated 450 unduplicated volunteers will serve the citizens of Putnam County by performing Service Activities aligned with Federal Focus areas at 56 CNCS-sponsored activities.

The primary focus area of this project will be Healthy Futures with emphasis on Demand Response Medical Transportation, Obesity and Food, Access to Care, Aging in Place also addressed will be K-12 Success, under the focus area of Education. At the end of the grant period, 200 seniors will have been able to live independently because of the availability of medical transportation. 800 people will have had increased food security, 500 seniors will have access to socialization and wellness programs, 160 seniors will benefit from telephone reassurance and 42 students will have completed K-12 education programs improving reading scores.

Some of the services RSVP volunteers will perform in Other Service Areas are: conducting safety patrols and responding to natural disasters for disaster services, tutoring and mentoring youth for education, providing income tax preparation and tutoring for economic opportunity, and leading Chronic Disease Self-Management programs and companionship under healthy futures. Other Community Priorities will be serviced by RSVP volunteers in libraries, thrift shops, historians, S.C.O.R.E., Advisory Board, museums and more.

\$41,015 from the Federal grant will be supplemented by \$237,157 in local funding. This represents 15% CNCS and 85% local funding.

## Strengthening Communities

Putnam County is located just 50 miles north of Manhattan and 115 south of Albany and is 231.5 square miles in size. It is bordered on the north by Dutchess County, the south by Westchester County, the west by the Hudson River and the east by Connecticut. The 2010 Census Bureau indicates that 111,883 residents are living in the county. The senior population is the fastest growing population in Putnam County, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census; 23% of the population is seniors. By the year 2015, the population age 60 and over is projected to grow to 19.96% of the total Putnam population. The number of adults 60 years of age and older is expected to grow to 21,449 in the year 2015. That projected change in 60 and older population to 65.57% in 2015 is the largest percentage in New York State. Projected change in the over 85 year old population will be 49.69% in 2015. Seniors helping seniors has become a visible area of concern. The Putnam County government primarily

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exists to provide and facilitate the delivery of essential public services for the health, safety and protection for the residents of the county. The county government works in cooperation with community organizations including RSVP. The Putnam Community Service Network was established in 1985 under the joint sponsorship of the United Way of Putnam to enhance communication and cooperation among public and private human providers in Putnam. The Director of the Office for Senior Resources (previously the Office for Aging) is an officer with the Putnam Network and works to identify any unmet community needs or gaps in service and then recommends solutions where RSVP volunteers can contribute. RSVP is identifying the demographics of the County to ensure that the RSVP population is representative of the general population. An example of RSVP inclusion into a diverse population is shown by Spanish-speaking volunteers who are placed at the food pantries and thrift shops. By changing our enrollment form we are now better able to identify people of diverse backgrounds, including languages spoken, ethnic background and educational levels. We are also able to identify veterans. Another example of our inclusion of diverse population is volunteer veterans placed into our Demand Response Medical Program. The members of the Putnam County RSVP Advisory Board are actively engaged in an ongoing effort to help the project meet and identify needs. The RSVP Advisory Board assists with the promotion of community awareness of the project and its impact on Putnam through speaking engagements, working with the news media, and personal affiliations. The RSVP Advisory Board also solicits community impact and recommendations regarding project operations, accomplishments and impact.

Responding to community needs and partnering with government, town and private agencies to accomplish high goals and measurable impact is what RSVP Putnam does best. RSVP partners with all county departments, legislators, and town supervisors to focus on strengthening individuals', families and communities. RSVP helps to enhance the environment by increasing community involvement and economic vitality. RSVP and the Office for Senior Resources are major stakeholders in County partnerships, and will help to draft an annual strategic plan for volunteers' recruitment, recognition and generate community awareness and support of RSVP. RSVP Putnam brings together senior volunteers and resources to impact our community's most critical issues. We focus on those issues of greatest concern and distribute senior volunteers to achieve the most significant and measurable results. The starting point for this process is to identify issues and determine how they are currently being addressed. Households, health and human services, schools, and government agencies are all asked to share their perspectives and expertise. The Director of the OSR attends "Area Agencies on Aging" meetings and focuses on the needs of senior citizens in Putnam County. The United Way

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conducts an Issues and Resources Assessment Survey to identify focus areas of concern where RSVP volunteers could help make a positive, measurable impact. This survey was done in Putnam County in 2013. Some of the areas of concern cited by the United Way are healthy lifestyles, information dissemination, early childhood learning, and emergency food programs and transportation. RSVP volunteers will be utilized to address some of these challenges in the county. Putnam County is a rural area comprised of 6 towns and no cities. People live more than a quarter mile from a transportation route; there are no sidewalks to use. Many elderly either have no access to a car, do not have the ability to drive and public transportation is not accessible, so isolation is a major issue in living independently in Putnam County. A need for access to care and information on independent living is not only a wish for senior citizens; there is a real economic need. According to the NYS Health Department, the estimated nursing home rate is about \$375 a day.

The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the primary Healthy Futures focus areas.

The most prominent issue affecting the elderly in Putnam County is transportation. Not only is it on today's senior citizen's minds, but transportation will continue to become increasingly insufficient over the next few decades in our community, effecting future seniors as well. Putnam County and the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) completed a Statistic Regional Transit Study and research by the United Way in their 2013 Income and Health Communications Conversation Surveys found that safe, affordable transportation is one of the top financial and health concerns in the County. They used information gathered from residents, stakeholders, regional transit operators, county and state agencies, and government databases. People, especially seniors who no longer drive, need transportation to go to medical appointments. The range of transportation needs depend on where one lives. According to the Department of Senior Services 2010 Census 60%, or about 13,000, of Putnam elderly live in rural areas. Without public transportation, these seniors are isolated. Of these seniors, 12.5% suffer from chronic illnesses and do not have access to dependable transportation to necessary medical appointments. Because of this, isolated residents are considered at-risk of premature deterioration of their health. Preventative medicines keep seniors healthy and independent saving costly hospital bills and nursing home admissions. Taxi service is very expensive and not plentiful. A lack of sufficient transportation services compromises the ability of frail elderly to keep all their scheduled medical appointments, therefore, limiting their overall ability to manage their health care. Volunteer drivers are needed to help fill this need for surrogate public transportation system to serve isolated, rural, and homebound, frail elderly. By providing medical

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transportation, RSVP volunteers help clients remain able to maintain their independent living. A questionnaire is utilized to determine if the program is meeting the "healthy future" objectives. A newly arranged partnership between the OSR Demand Response program and the Putnam County Veteran's Service Agency has been formed which will expand the program. A large donation to the OSR medical program by a local resident will enable Putnam County to purchase vehicles for this purpose. Presently, OSR volunteers and the Veteran's Service Agency transports clients to doctor appointments. Given the anticipated demand of 150 clients, the potential of using 5 cars, would allow us to service the need of isolated seniors and veterans.

Food pantries in the area are reporting record numbers of new users of the service and that the client data base increased by over 25% in the prior year. The 7 food pantries in Putnam County are primarily staffed by volunteers. RSVP volunteers are needed to sustain the operation of these facilities. An estimated 800 people will receive emergency food a year. The United Way's 2013 Income Conversations Survey showed that Hunger and/or Homelessness is the 4th major issue in both Westchester & Putnam County. The 2013 NY State Community Action Association Poverty Report indicated that the poverty rate in Putnam County was 5.7%.

Telephone Reassurance Program volunteers will touch base with 150 seniors each month receiving homebound meals to make sure that the meals received are meeting their needs for independent living. By having weekly contact with the client, changing diet and medical issues are noted and relayed to the County Dietitian. Any problems with delivery of the meals or quality of food are also noted. Satisfaction with the program is recorded via questions asked by the volunteers.

The National Committee on Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure, the 2010 National Health & Nutrition Examination Survey, the Putnam County Health Department and the Putnam County Heart Association say that Blood Pressure Screening activities are necessary especially for the population of seniors, many of whom are at especially high risk for developing hypertension because of limited access to medical care. Blood Pressure Screening at senior centers is an important intervention strategy for fostering awareness about the prevention of hypertension and for monitoring the progress and promoting adherence of hypertensive persons already receiving therapy. RSVP volunteers will conduct blood pressure screenings for 100 or more seniors which will focus on early detection and prevention.

RSVP of Putnam County has recently become involved with "Living Well-Livable Communities." This exciting new project brings together seniors over 60 who have diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure,

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heart disease, chronic lung disease and anxiety to discuss common issues of fatigue, pain, isolation, managing medications, how to cope with "bad" days and the occasional depression they can cause. Eight RSVP volunteers are trained as Peer Leaders to offer a broad understanding of chronic disease with tips on how to manage it to approximately 75 individuals per year.

RSVP wellness leaders are needed to offer programs in recreation, wellness, education and social activities. The population in Putnam County is continuing to grow older causing a need for activities to support older adults in maintaining their independence and enriching their well-being and overall quality of life. The Office for Senior Resources is currently facing a major challenge at nutrition centers due to the increased senior population that is growing both in numbers, diversity and the current economy which is in decline. The nutrition and senior centers must continue to enhance their recognition as a focal point within the community and as the primary source of authoritative information on issues for the elderly. They must develop an image that is attractive and inviting to all people, dispelling the stereotype image of a senior center as being a place you go only when you are really old. In June, 2014, the Advisory Board for RSVP and the Advisory Board for Office for Aging decided to change the name of the Office for Aging to the Office for Senior Resources. This was done in order to cultivate the image of the more active, younger seniors "Baby Boomers" living their future. We must offer programs and services that will continue to attract the younger generation of seniors to ensure our success in the future. The centers must develop new partnerships within the community while striving to continue to nurture current community partnerships to ensure program and funding levels, especially in light of the current economic climate. Finally, the centers must engage in more intensified outreach to increase overall community awareness. Because we need more activities for seniors with less funding and fewer staff, a need for RSVP volunteers to lead activities for more than 300 clients is greater than ever.

More and more medical service information is being stored online, necessitating seniors to be familiar with accessing that information. In a study published in the Internet Journal of Health, it was found that when seniors had access to the proper tools, such as computer skills, they became more empowered, independent, and able to possess an overall healthier lifestyle. The Computer Learning Center for Seniors in Putnam County provides opportunities for seniors to learn basic skills at a safe, convenient daytime location and at low cost. With so many medical services being put online, a major focus of this training is to inform seniors how to access health information online, such as Medicare, Social Security, NIH information about chronic diseases, health plan explanation of benefits, etc. An estimated 200 seniors will receive information on health insurance and access to

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benefits that will help them maintain their independence.

In order to continue their independent living, many seniors are choosing to drive into their advanced years. The AARP Driver Safety program, which is designed for and geared toward seniors, and staffed by RSVP volunteers, will offer driver safety training to approximately 300 seniors a year.

Many programs help clients stay healthy and alert by engaging them in conversation and physical and mental activities. Ombudsman and RSVP Wellness Ambassadors will visit various senior centers, such as nutrition sites, adult day care, PARC, Veteran's Centers, and Cerebral Palsy Day Center to provide companionship, outreach, and socialization to seniors. Hospice volunteers will help provide spiritual counseling and respite to caregivers. Volunteers will help teen moms at the Emmanuel House by arranging pregnancy tests, emergency shelter housing and providing assistance in educational guidance.

The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the Education focus area.

In 2012 approximately 17% of the students entering the 2nd grade in Putnam County elementary schools scored lower than 50% in the New York State testing program and improved literacy is necessary. RSVP volunteers are needed to step in to help enhance the academic success of all students enrolled in Putnam County elementary schools. Recently, one local elementary school reported a high influx of Spanish speaking children and requested 21 RSVP volunteers to help with 42 second graders reading program.

The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the Disaster Services focus area.

The Carmel Police have stated a need for trained boating volunteers to patrol Mahopac Lake and perform boat safety checks, offer boat safety course and water safety class. RSVP volunteers will be utilized on the lake and on the Hudson River. They will also be utilized during disaster situations on these waters. As many as six lives have been saved in the past several summers due to the presence of these volunteers on the water.

As a rural community, Putnam County depends entirely on volunteers to serve as firemen and ambulance drivers. RSVP volunteers are utilized to assist with traffic control, answer phones, perform fundraisers, and in many cases, respond to emergencies. RSVP volunteers will be involved with the Long Term Recovery Coalition, who partners with the Red Cross, to inform other seniors on disaster preparedness. They will provide information as to what to have on hand in an event of an emergency and where to go for help.

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The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the Economic Opportunity focus area.

People request information about starting up a new business. Nine RSVP volunteer counselors, who are members of S.C.O.R.E., the Service Corporation of Retired Executives, are needed to organize the counseling of entrepreneurs and attract more businesses. The Putnam Industrial Development Agency states that local business people will counsel entrepreneurs more efficiently on local zoning, watershed laws and local marketing research than an outside company. S.C.O.R.E. volunteers will assist people with business questions who have nowhere else to go with their questions. Ten new businesses will be generated through their efforts. Working together entrepreneurs and volunteers have a common goal -- success.

Based on estimates from IRS, approximately one-third of elderly, low income and disabled taxpayers are not filing returns and therefore not receiving refunds to which they are entitled. In Putnam, 5 RSVP volunteer tax counselors will assist elderly, low income and disabled taxpayers in preparing and filing federal and state income tax forms. This assistance will occur between February 1st and April 15th at five tax counseling sites throughout Putnam County.

The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the Capacity Building focus area.

RSVP volunteers will solicit donations for three non-profits: March of Dimes, American Heart Association and Friends of the Kent and Mahopac Public Libraries. Volunteers will also act as managers at thrift shops and non-profit senior centers. Over \$3,000 in donations will be raised per year.

The RSVP program of Putnam County will be utilizing their volunteers to strengthen the community under the Other Community Priorities focus area.

RSVP volunteers will provide services to local non-profits which will enable work to be completed by volunteers rather than paid staff, freeing paid staff to spend more time working on the mission of the agency. They will give time to libraries, thrift shops, museums, hospital, Dispute Resolution Center, RSVP Advisory Board, literacy and 4-H.

The RSVP Office will collect and record over 80,000 hours from 450 volunteers, maintain the volunteer data base, coordinate the volunteer recognition, ensure that outcome measurements are collected and tallied, promote the RSVP program in area media, and recruit new volunteers.

## **Recruitment and Development**

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RSVP Putnam strives to provide meaningful opportunities and supports the efforts and mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service with regard to inclusion for all. The RSVP Director's recruitment of volunteers is an ongoing process. Many partnerships and collaborations have been 40 years in development. Senior Centers are the biggest source for potential volunteers, as well as, program awareness from the RSVP volunteers currently enrolled in the program. Sixteen RSVP capacity builder managers recruit additional RSVP volunteers and non-RSVP volunteers by making presentations, updating applications, and interviewing potential volunteers. The Annual Recognition function is videotaped by the local cable company and aired for two weeks following the recognition. The Volunteer Match website is kept up-to-date, as is the RSVP website, with current volunteer opportunities and needs. RSVP volunteers are profiled in various community publications. Publications of the Senior Guide feature an RSVP page which is mailed to every senior in Putnam; about 13,000 seniors. Several Putnam County newspapers are utilized as needed to make people aware of volunteer opportunities in specific locations in the county. All volunteers receive training either by RSVP or their station. Memorandums of Understanding are collected yearly from the coordinator of every station. An RSVP Putnam Friendship newsletter is mailed to all volunteers and stations recognizing wonderful volunteers and describing new opportunities to volunteer. A recognition breakfast is planned. At the recognition, a survey will be distributed to all volunteers so we can gain information about how the volunteer experience has contributed to their own lives. In a prior survey, volunteers said they feel that volunteering allows them to maintain their overall health and provides them with an exciting opportunity to connect with others in their community. The volunteers receive awards and are acclaimed by the community. County, state and local government officials attend and bestow proclamations to recognize the service of the volunteers. A journal is published which lists each volunteer by name with a list of stations and advisory council. This journal is distributed at the annual recognition ceremony. The County Executive presents an award to the "Senior of the Year" and the Director of the Office for Senior Resources presents a Community Service Award. The Putnam County Government website, [www.putnamcountyny.com](http://www.putnamcountyny.com), has a page listing RSVP volunteer opportunities available, and RSVP maintains its own website, [www.putnamrsvp.com](http://www.putnamrsvp.com). There are many opportunities to take on leadership roles and to learn new skills. Our senior volunteers actively participate in other community service programs by taking leadership roles in community events, such as a MLK Day program. This program will involve a canned food drive to support the Community Action Program food pantry. Other examples are: S.C.O.R.E., where volunteers work independently to counsel prospective new business owners and thus must keep up-to-date with new

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and changing Federal and State programs which are set up to encourage business growth. The national S.C.O.R.E. organization provides training for volunteers on an ongoing basis. The Computer Learning Center program offers volunteers the opportunity to take leadership roles in the administration, advertising, and technical aspects of the program. In addition, volunteers are encouraged to take as many classes as they want so that they themselves can learn new skills. Volunteers of various educational and employment backgrounds bring a variety of skills to the program which are shared among the volunteers. For example, a person with a marketing background but no computer skills can easily become a valuable asset to the Computer Learning Center program. Each Thrift Shop needs one or more Coordinators to do the capacity building job; Clubs need Presidents; Exercise Leaders will develop meaningful programs on their own, sharing their talents and educational background in activities yoga, tai chi, art, brain fitness in order to improve the quality of life for isolated seniors transported to nutrition centers. Demand Response Medical Transportation drivers will help clients maintain independent living which in turn gives the volunteer great satisfaction in being able to give back to the community and help others. Demand Response Medical Transportation drivers are given an orientation and training as to how to use the hand-held radio to call for emergency, get directions and instructions from the OSR home base. Upon enrollment, volunteers receive an RSVP Handbook which outlines the rules of the program. Training of the volunteers normally takes place at the station as the station is best suited to train for specific volunteer assignments. Station coordinators are given a Station Handbook which outlines the station responsibilities.

RSVP is identifying the demographics of the County to ensure that the RSVP population is representative of the general population. An example of RSVP inclusion into a diverse population is shown by Spanish-speaking volunteers who are placed at the food pantries and thrift shops. By changing our enrollment form we are now better able to identify people of diverse backgrounds, including languages spoken, ethnic background, veterans and educational levels. RSVP of Putnam has 21 enrolled veterans in our program.

Recruiting efforts to expand and maintain volunteers is multi-faceted. One focus is on the "Baby Boomer" generation coming of age now. Presentations will be made by the RSVP Coordinator to service clubs such as Rotary, Lions and Retired Teachers.

### **Program Management**

RSVP Putnam plans a variety of high quality volunteer assignments which address basic human needs of the community as well as providing meaningful placements for the volunteers. Each year,

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the RSVP Director communicates with each Station Director to ensure that the placements are consistent with MOU and provide an opportunity for dialog. The RSVP Director provides support to the volunteers and stations by assignments, appropriate trainings, and activities, including special events. The RSVP Director is responsible for the collection and analysis of data and reports program outcomes to the Corporation for National Service. Additionally, each station is evaluated for the safety of all volunteers. To assess the RSVP project performance and to ensure our goals and objectives are met, the stations and volunteers are required to evaluate project performances annually. RSVP's Advisory Council does an evaluation to assess that all goals and objectives are met. Data is collected from stations to demonstrate the concrete impact of the project and volunteers. Volunteer stations are visited on a regular basis both to observe activity and discuss the goals and objectives of the station and the volunteers. The RSVP of Putnam has developed partnerships with 56 community organizations in Putnam. Volunteer stations are actively involved with the development of new RSVP program projects through these partnerships. Station managers will report any problems with compliance or prohibited activities directly to the RSVP Director. Satisfaction surveys are given to the volunteers and stations once a year. Station managers will be required to submit monthly timesheets which list the number of volunteer hours for each volunteer. Volunteer hours are entered into Volunteer Reporter, the recommended CNCS software, by the RSVP Assistant (senior typist) to record volunteer and station information, track hours and classify hours in appropriate service categories. The Station Roster is submitted to the state specialist for annual monitoring.

Our primary focus area will be Healthy Futures and will include programs such as Demand Response Medical Transportation, Food Pantries, Evidence-based Wellness Programs, and Telephone Reassurance. All programs utilize RSVP volunteers and staff evaluates responses to questionnaires to assess how well the program meets the needs of the client in terms of meeting the Healthy Future objectives. Counts are kept of the number of clients and appointments as well as the number of volunteers and hours of service provided. OSR Medical Transportation will transport approximately 200 seniors and veterans to their doctor appointments, Putnam County Food Pantries will provide emergency food to approximately 800 citizens, approximately 200 people will benefit from our Evidence-based Wellness Programs, approximately 300 people will benefit from our RSVP Activity Leaders furthering socialization and wellness at senior centers and 150 homebounds will benefit from our Telephone Reassurance program per year.

The RSVP project manages resources, both financial and in-kind, to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources. The Putnam County Office for Senior Resources has

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been sponsoring the RSVP of Putnam for 42 years and is governed by the Board of Legislatures and the County Executive. All fiscal transactions must be approved by the rules and regulations set forth by this jurisdiction. The local government supports the RSVP program with 85% of the funding. The Federal Corporation for National Service allocates 15%. This local funding demonstrates how highly supportive local government is of the RSVP. The RSVP Program submits annual progress reports to the Corporation for National and Community Service. Pat Sheehy, Director of the Office for Senior Resources, sponsor of the RSVP project in Putnam County, will be assessing volunteer needs of the community and planning and developing all phases of this RSVP project operation. A Public Hearing on the "Four Year Plan for the Older Americans Act" is publicized and held each year to receive input from the community about the needs of seniors in Putnam County and to review the Plan. Programs of the OSR are updated or revised as a result of input from the community. Several years ago, in response to reduced funding levels and to ensure alignment with CNCS Focus Areas, we began to "right-size" our program. We continue to streamline our procedures, re-imagine our program opportunities and make "smarter" community partner choices. We have recently graduated 45 volunteers. We will continue to evaluate work stations to ensure that we provide RSVP volunteers service opportunities that meet changing community needs and that we manage the transition to minimize disruption to our volunteers.

### **Organizational Capability**

RSVP has operated in Putnam County since 1973. The Project Director has managed the program since 1991 and has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology. She is responsible for supervision, grant writing, budget preparation, written reports, participation in statewide forums, public relations, nonprofit Board membership, liaison with administrators and community partners, planning and execution of recognition events, grant compliance, preparing newsletters, vouchers, and ordering of equipment. She also handles volunteer recruitment, interviews and placement; site supervisors' liaison; volunteer/worksite troubleshooting; volunteer transportation; statistical reporting; and event planning. Putnam County Office for Senior Resources sponsors RSVP. The sponsoring agency provides a full range of services to approximately 13,000 senior citizens. The broad range of services provided by Putnam County Office for Senior Resources enables it to integrate the RSVP volunteers in a positive and productive way. The Office for Senior Resources utilizes RSVP volunteers in as wellness leaders, Telephone Reassurance, and Demand Response Medical Transportation, along with many other programs. The budget is designed each year to ensure that facilities, equipment, supplies and operations are all adequately funded. OSR financial staff provides budget expertise and financial

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reporting services for county, state and federal RSVP reports. There is an annual evaluation of the RSVP Project Director by the Director of the Office for Senior Resources. A statement of ethics and values has been drawn up for Putnam County employees and continually enforced. SOFA regularly evaluates changing community needs by county-wide assessments and integrates the results into its planning process. The Older American Act requires OSR to provide program management and support, project assessment, and technical assistance for all of its programs. The RSVP Director was given an office in the William Koehler Senior Center which is located in the most densely occupied senior population of the county. The local government supports the RSVP program with 85% of the annual funding. This local funding demonstrates how highly supportive the local government is of the RSVP Program. The Office for Senior Resources has extensive past and present experience in managing federal grant funds. They are administering twenty-eight programs and services under many grants. Project resources are managed by an effective system of checks and balances through the Office for Senior Resources Fiscal Department and the county auditor. Any contracts given to the RSVP program by the state and federal government always demand effective accountability. Reports are made periodically and there are monitoring visits by the county. A precise bookkeeping system is in place and is audited annually. Program finances are governed by the fiscal system of Putnam County and must operate within that system. A full time RSVP driver with a CDL license supplies transportation for volunteers who can no longer drive to their stations. The Office of Senior Resources provides a full-time County employee of 13 years to assist the director with the extensive record-keeping and clerical tasks needed to run this large RSVP program successfully. She provides support to the RSVP Office collecting and recording over 80,000 hours from 450 volunteers. She maintains the volunteer data base (Volunteer Reporter) reporting to CNCS, assisting with the coordination of volunteer recognition programs, promoting the RSVP program in area media, and recruiting new volunteers. The RSVP in Putnam County has an excellent track record in successfully managing volunteer programs including involvement with the seniors and the impact made in the community. We will be celebrating our 42nd year of service at our Annual Volunteer Recognition function. Many government officials like Senators, Assemblymen, County Executive, Legislators, OSR Director and Congressmen in our area attend this luncheon. They attend because they recognize the tireless efforts of RSVP volunteers and recognize the impact they make on the community. Many of the volunteers in Putnam have been enrolled in the program for over 20 years, some even 30 years. The majority have been members at least 10 years. The volunteer assignment and the treatment of the volunteers are the most important quality for volunteer satisfaction and ultimate retention. Satisfaction is the key

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to motivating and retaining volunteers. The RSVP of Putnam successfully maintained at least 450 volunteers for 42 years who reported satisfaction with their volunteer assignment and support. To maintain independence as we age it is critical to stay physically active and mentally engaged. Volunteering provides opportunities for both. "The Corporation for National and Community Service" found that individuals over the age of 60 who volunteer report higher levels of health and physical functioning ability to do everyday activities. The RSVP Volunteers of Putnam who have been able to volunteer for 20 and 30 years after retirement are a testimony to the benefit of volunteering service.

### **Other**

None

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

N/A