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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Need

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) Elders program currently serves individuals from the communities of St. Paul, St. George, Unalaska, Atka and Nikolski; this includes a significant number of Elders that relocate to the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas due to health issues, high cost of living and other challenges that come with living in rural Alaska. Currently, APIA employs a 1.0 FTE Elder Program Coordinator to serve this population; services include case management and hosting social events for Elders to visit with one another in efforts help maintain a high quality and meaningful life in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas. Alaska Native people encompass startling disproportionate rates of psychological distress and behavioral health issues when compared to all other ethnic groups. Research has identified historical trauma as arguably the primary root of psychological distress and addictive behaviors, such as alcohol abuse, among Alaska Native people today. Moreover, APIA recognizes their Elder population as a vulnerable and underserved group with behavioral health needs. Furthermore, a special focus has been to engage Elders in social activities and opportunities that may assist with decreasing instances of depression, loneliness and low self-worth. Such activities may provide Elders with opportunities to feel connected and give back to others promoting continued purpose in life.

Project Plan

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program funds will be utilized to support Elders by engaging entities in the community to promote giving back, utilize acquired skills, feel connected, enhance the community, feel accomplished, maintain a high quality of life, serve others and address community needs. A special emphasis will be based on „Healthy Futures.„ An estimated 290 RSVP volunteers will serve under this grant opportunity. Activities may include: a) Education; assisting youth with culture camps, participating in youth activities and mentoring; b) Healthy Futures; assisting Elders to access health care, companionship and visiting; and c) Economic Opportunity; assisting individuals towards financially independent goals. At the completion of the three-year grant, we anticipate that Senior;s will age in place and their quality of life will have been enriched due to the companionship offered through the RSVP volunteers program. We anticipate that youth will be more connected with the Elders through education, assistance and mentorship. We anticipate that other Elders will have moved towards financial independence, employment and independent housing. Finally, we anticipate

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that those receiving assistance from shelters will be in a less critical state. Ultimately, this funding opportunity will promote the coordination of a volunteer program engaging other entities in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas with its primary purpose to serve Elders.

Funding Request

APIA is requesting a total of \$75,503.00 to staff a 1.0 FTE Elder Volunteer Project Assistant. This position is expected to be responsible for the administrative duties of the program; to act as a sponsor station to other volunteer stations in the area; to support the Elder volunteers with transportation reimbursements to volunteer assignments, orientation and training reimbursements and meal reimbursement for volunteers; and to provide quarterly recognition for service and coordinate with other volunteer stations. This funding source will also allow APIA to expand services to the 55 years or older, Elder populations.

Strengthening Communities

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

Primary Focus Area Need

According to the 2010 Census Demographic data the Anchorage Municipality and Matanuska-Susitna Borough consists of an accumulated population size of 380,821, of that number the 55 years of age and older group consist of 71,884, almost 20% of the population of these areas. By the year 2017, the State of Alaska Research and Analysis Department has projected the 55 years of age and older group to increase to 98,278 in population size. This total is increasing to nearly 25% of the respective projected population for 2017. Alaska has the fastest growing Elder population in the United States according to a recent AARP Alaska region survey. This will result in an abundance of Elders seeking activities in their retired years. It will also result in a lack of resources to assist Elders in health care access and companionship to aging Elders as the need currently outweighs the actual resources available for Elders. Resources for health care and companionship for Elders will be at an all-time high as the Elder population continues to grow at this astonishing rate. Current agencies will not meet the growing demand for these types of needs. Currently, Elder programs involve waitlist of several months for services and a lack of Elder designated activities. Volunteer services will be highly sought after to fulfill the need for this population. In efforts to *think outside the box* and continue to providing a high quality of life for our Elders, utilizing volunteers will be the most effective and useful resource.

National Performance Measure Output

The following focus areas will help contribute towards National Performance Measures (NPM). As

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proposed in our primary focus area, Healthy Futures; assisting Elders to access health care, companionship and visiting; has been demonstrated as a need throughout the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas as evidence by the amount of Elder requests many entities (e.g., South Central Foundation, Alaska Native Health Consortium, Aleut Corporation, Providence Health Center, Access Alaska, Alaska Senior Center, Alzheimer Resources of Alaska) receive in regards to access and resources for health care. These activities will lead to NPM outputs (H9) which is the amount of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support. This will promote independent living amongst the Elders in our community as loneliness will decrease. Companionship in the form of visiting, transporting Elders to social events and providing information on access to health care will alleviate low morale and self-worth in this aging population, while promoting Elders to live independently. Regarding our focus area on Education; assisting youth with culture camps, participating in youth activities and mentoring; this will be meaningful to the youth and volunteer involving opportunities to learn in an exciting environment through mentorships among volunteers and youth. These activities will lead to NPM outputs for education in improving school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children and improving educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle and high schools. Under the category, Economic Opportunity; assisting individuals towards financially independent goals; this will promote access to resources for housing and living independently by providing guidance and education. This will fall in line with the NP (05) amount of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, receiving housing services and will include making repairs to housing units to improve housing structures.

Data Collection Infrastructure

The Elder Volunteer Program Assistant will maintain the National Performance Measure outputs or outcomes by collecting data in the form of pre and post surveys, measuring each survey for outcomes and managing and compiling the data into a data spreadsheet.

Recruitment and Development

RECRUITMENT DEVELOPMENT

All volunteers will meet with the project administration to review skills and knowledge expectations of their assignment. Recruiting efforts will involve thoroughly assessing history of work, skills and knowledge base expected for volunteer assignments. A thorough assessment of volunteer experiences and knowledge will contribute to properly connecting each volunteer to suitable assignments. This will be cross-referenced with volunteer station needs and skills required to carry out the expected tasks.

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Volunteer matching will help prioritize the best fit assignment for each volunteer. Through collaboration with other volunteer stations, our goal will be to prioritize the primary focus along with meaningful assignments for our volunteers. This collaboration will involve volunteer input to reach the highest quality and most effective activities for assignments. We plan to address the needs with each volunteer station by requesting input from clients, members or employees of the volunteer station and through existing community data regarding needs. Meetings will be hosted for RSVP volunteers providing the space to debrief and share experiences. The intent is to support the volunteers and ensure that their assignment is a good match for the clientele. Debriefing sessions will promote opportunities for volunteers to explore ways for improving activities and celebrating success. Such support will further enhance the program while optimizing the most effective and highest quality of service from the volunteers assigned. In addition to the debriefing sessions, a monthly meeting with each contact from the volunteer stations will be hosted to gather input on effectiveness. Volunteers may need additional training to be most effective at each assignment. Community training resources will be utilized to enhance volunteer skills.

COMMUNITY SERVED

The Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna area encompasses extremely diverse demographics. The Alaska Native population, rich in culture, is significant throughout the Anchorage area. Our volunteer pool will reflect the diverse population and mix of cultures within the region. We will be considerate of the diversity and make efforts to recruit a diverse mix of volunteers. Many of the needs of the community addressed through this project will involve the Alaska Native population including some who may require assistance with language barriers. The volunteer pool will consist of individuals who are able to speak multiple languages. The volunteer pool will also recruit Veterans and individuals of military families to support military families served under this project. The recruitment process will capture a wide range of individuals and will strive to be culturally responsive to the needs.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

RSVP volunteers will be recognized for their service on a quarterly basis. We will host quarterly luncheons to recognize these individuals for time served and impact on the community. We plan to award the volunteers with certificates reflecting milestones of service based on number of hours served and community impact. This will be an effective way to engage the volunteers and provide an overview of their impact on the community; this may also increase the volunteer pool. Volunteer recognition luncheons will be hosted within the community. Coordinating regularly scheduled meetings with volunteers and volunteer stations will be implemented in a variety of formats including

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face-to-face or telephonically to promote forums for discussion about challenges and success.

Program Management

PROGRAM MANAGMENT

A primary responsibility of program management will require consistent communication with the contacts at each volunteer station. Program management will be held responsible for ensuring that all regulations are monitored and the primary focus areas are addressed emphasizing communication between the Elder Volunteer Project Assistant and each volunteer station. This may include monthly teleconferences with each volunteer station and face to face meetings; preventing unregulated activities and ensuring all program regulations are followed. Potential RSVP stations will identify and employ a responsible individual to oversee projects and assignments at each volunteer station. As a part of quality assurance, the point of contact assigned to each volunteer station will communicate programmatic needs or challenges to the Elder Volunteer Project Assistant. The Elder Volunteer Project Assistant will be held responsible at the start of the project to visit volunteer stations and observe the structure providing consultation on areas requiring adjustment for success. We have established partnerships and a volunteer pool interested in the RSVP project opportunity. Volunteers have been identified by their interest in activities focusing on this projects primary focus area; the project manager will be mindful of ways to avoid disruption of projects during transition of volunteers. The concept of a structured "volunteer program" for Elders is new to the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA). However, APIA has been successful with informal volunteers promoting Healthy Futures pertaining to companionship with Elders.

PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE

To ensure that each project maintains compliance with the RSVP federal regulations, all projects will involve consultation with volunteers, program coordinator and management. A priority for this project includes establishing an RSVP Advisory Council inclusive of individuals from all diverse backgrounds with past experience with volunteerism, community and social needs to help provide guidance and direction.

The RSVP Advisory Council will also be responsible for supporting the administrative staff of the program and ensuring that all program responsibilities are met. A Memorandum of Understanding will be drafted for all volunteer stations clearly defining the responsibilities of each entity also supporting our quality assurance efforts. Additionally, structured screening processes will ensure that all volunteers are eligible to serve through RSVP and meet all the requirements and expectations.

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Organizational Capability

SUSTAINABLE FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY

APIA's Division of Administration/Accounting employs generally accepted accounting principles that meet all standards required for government and/or nonprofit entities. Serenic Navigator Accounting Software is used for all accounting needs. Modules include General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Encumbrances, Payroll and Jet Reports. Generally accepted accounting principles, internal policies and procedures guide the administration of accounts payable, the reconciliation of the general ledger, shipping and receiving, encumbrances, payroll, accounts receivable and purchasing. The general ledger account structure assures that general fund accounts, grant funds, restricted funds, auxiliary accounts and special revenue are separated according to the type of funding sources. An independent certified public accounting firm conducts an annual audit of all accounting functions in compliance with the standards required for government and/or nonprofit entities. A financial statement and independent auditors report are issued annually.

The Division of Administration/Accounting is led by Mark Hamm, Chief Financial Officer, CPA, Masters of Accounting, BA in Accounting. The division is well staffed with a Controller, Grant Reporter, Payroll/Bookkeeping Coordinator, two Accounts Payable Technicians, and two Travel Coordinators. As a participant in the Self-Governance initiative, APIA was required to demonstrate its administrative and management capabilities. The most recent management letter from our independent auditor confirms continuing compliance with required accounting and bookkeeping procedures. Administrative policies and procedures on personnel, procurement, drug-free workplace, etc., have been approved and accepted by all federal and state agencies.

RSVP PROJECT OPERATIONS

The day to day operations will stem from the Elder Volunteer Project Assistant. This position will be the first contact for any regards of the program. This position will function as the administrative support for all RSVP volunteers and will manage the database for client tracking and volunteer station oversight. The Elder Volunteer Project Assistant will be supervised under the Elder Program Coordinator who will manage directly the performance measures and assist in ensuring all RSVP regulations are followed.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

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N/A