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Executive Summary

SUNY Ulster Community College (SUNY Ulster), the legal applicant for this grant, has been the sole sponsor for 34 years. SUNY Ulster is pleased to submit this 2015 funding application requesting \$48,127 to support the activities of our RSVP Project. An estimated 400 RSVP volunteers will serve. Our activities will include those aligned with Five National Focus Areas. Our Primary Focus Area, Healthy Futures, Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education and Veterans and Military Families. We also have volunteers aligned with Other Community Priorities and with Capacity Building. At the end of the three-year grant, the anticipated outcomes will be: increased food security; veterans will receive CNCS supported services/transportation to medical appointments; economically disadvantaged individuals will be placed in jobs; senior clients will receive information on health insurance, access and benefits; students will have improved academic performance in literacy and/or math; seniors and those with disabilities will have increased social support; cash resources will be leveraged by CNCS supported organizations; volunteers will serve in disaster services assignments; economically disadvantaged individuals receive financial literacy services; volunteers will meet the needs of local community voluntary services by providing clerical support to nonprofits, serve as ambassadors at visitor centers, provide support services at care centers, and provide companionship to seniors and disabled individuals in long-term care centers.

The work of RSVP addresses a core area of our mission, to enhance the quality of life for residents of Ulster County and is critical to the work we engage in our community. We provide help, create hope, make a difference and serve nearly 100,000 people annually.

The CNCS federal investment \$48,127 will be supplemented by \$96,234

Strengthening Communities

Ulster County is located in the east central portion of New York State on the west side of the Hudson River. The region is commonly referred to as the Mid-Hudson Valley. The County covers an area of 1,127 square miles including a large part of the Catskill and Shawangunk Mountains. The County's borders are only 70 miles north of New York City and 45 miles south of Albany, easily accessible via the New York State Thruway, which has three interchanges within the County. There are twenty towns, three villages and the City of Kingston located within the County of Ulster. Kingston, with its location on the Hudson River, is the County seat and government service center. Its neighboring community, the Town of Ulster, has evolved into a major retail and manufacturing center. Saugerties, a Hudson River community on the northern border, is a small village area. The County's

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mountain towns are Woodstock, Shandaken, Olive, Hardenburgh, and Denning. These towns are important recreation destinations, second home locations, forestry product sources and watersheds. Wawarsing and its companion village, Ellenville, are also vacation destinations and home to several resorts and manufacturing firms. New Paltz is the location of a State University and the location of the 12,000-acre Minnewaska State Park. The southern towns of Lloyd, Gardiner, Plattekill, Shawangunk, and Marlborough have easy access to urbanized areas and to the Stewart Airport in the south. They are rural agricultural communities with little public infrastructure. The County has maintained a relatively diversified economic base.

The majority of the County's workforce is distributed among six employment sectors. They are service, retail trade, government, manufacturing and finance, insurance, and real estate. Hotel/Motel receipts and agriculture, although shrinking, still play an important part in the economy. Growth in retail sales and service has leveled. The tough economic conditions have played a major role in increasing the demand by not-for-profits for volunteers to help address community needs. Our 2011 population is listed as 182,493, with 52,661 individuals aged 55 and older. The average age of individuals in the County is 42, the average age of our volunteers is age 73. The Ulster County Department of Labor lists the unemployment rate in our County at 12%, and 14% for those 55 and older.

A County supported facility, the Ulster County Community College, sponsor of the RSVP, is located in the Town of Marbletown, the city of Stone Ridge. In addition, there are nine public school districts located throughout Ulster County.

There are 3 hospitals located in the County. The Kingston Hospital Campus and the Benedictine Hospital Campus are located in the City of Kingston. They have recently joined together with the Margaretville Hospital in Delaware County to form the new health care partnership named the Health Alliance of the Hudson Valley. The Town of Wawarsing is home to the Ellenville Regional Hospital. The County's elderly population is serviced by seven skilled nursing and health related facilities. The Ulster County RSVP Program enlists the support of an Advisory Council to ensure local input into program design and evaluation. The Advisory Council meets as a group six times a year, bi-monthly. We recruit community volunteers and business leaders who value the activities, goals and accomplishments of our program and its volunteers. We reach out to individuals knowledgeable about local human and social needs, skilled in the field of volunteerism, capable of assisting the program with administrative issues, and supportive of promoting older adults as important resources for the community. Capitalizing on the expertise of local individuals allows us to design programming

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to meet the unique needs of our community while tapping into the talents of our community members in strengthening our community. SUNY Ulster has appointed a designated representative, the Dean of Advancement and Continuing Education to serve on the Council. The Ulster County Executive has also appointed a designee to serve on the Advisory Council. RSVP promotes constructive relationships with the community's key individuals and agencies in order to provide ideas and/or contacts for developing new volunteer stations that help meet the critical needs of our community, promote sustainable volunteerism, and affect measurable accomplishments.

The Ulster County Community College was established in 1961 and has a history of community support and collaboration. The Ulster County RSVP has been active since 1980 and continually works to be a visible, contributing component of each area we serve to meet specific and individualized needs, enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions, and advocate for the role of senior volunteer service in discussions regarding solutions to community problems.

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Recruitment and Development

Assure a high quality experience for volunteers that offer opportunities such as building new skills,

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developing leadership potential, reflecting on the meaning of service, and enhancing the quality of their own lives

We assure a high quality experience for volunteers that offer opportunities such as building new skills by engaging them in service opportunities that provide pre-service orientation, volunteer job training and on-going educational opportunities. Once enrolled each RSVP volunteer receives a Program Orientation presented by the RSVP Director followed by a placement interview where skills, availability, commitment level and reason for volunteering are discussed. Volunteers are matched with one or more service opportunities based on the choices they make about how they would like to serve the community. Volunteers are encouraged to attend Ulster County Community College credit and/or non-credit classes.

SUNY Ulster RSVP is uniquely affiliated with several volunteer Stations that provide educational opportunities which are shared with each new volunteer. The Service Corps of Retired Executives has been a partner to RSVP for over 20 years. These volunteers offer on-going business, marketing and social media workshops and seminars which are attractive to seniors as well as affordable. Our partnership with the Senior Computer Learning Center (SCLC) offers a variety of computer trainings, workshops, classes and seminars on trends and technology sure to interest everyone and taught in a senior friendly manner. SCLC has over 15 years' experience in teaching computer classes to enhance seniors' lives. One of our newest collaborations is with the SUNY Ulster Clean Energy Resource Center which provides a Green Resource Room. The RSVP Volunteer staffed "Green Room" houses a wealth of information regarding green building, home construction or re-construction utilizing energy resources such as solar panels, wind turbines, training and certificate program information and courses are also available. These are just a few of the possibilities for skill building and leadership development opportunities for our RSVP volunteers.

The Project Director receives training twice a year on Senior Corps topics. The first is the annual National Conference coordinated by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the second is the state Senior Corps Conference. Current Director has attended the above listed trainings for 20 years. In addition the Senior Service Corps Association meets once each year to offer training which provides a mix of networking discussions and sharing of best practices. Representatives from the NY State Office staff usually attend for a portion of this meeting. The Mid-Hudson Consortium of Senior Corps Directors also meet at least bi-annually.

Group Volunteer Orientations are usually held quarterly at the Business Resource Center Conference Room, following with one-on-one placement interviews. Individual orientation and placement

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interviews are also scheduled at the convenience of the volunteer and provide a one-on-one experience.

RSVP sponsor, Ulster County Community College has a 50 year history of serving the community. Community members are attracted to join RSVP through advertisements placed in the Continuing Education Brochures, the College's Events Website, the RSVP Website, VolunteerMatch postings, and newspaper articles and advertisements, a monthly radio spot on Kingston Community Radio 920 AM, Public Access, presentations to civic groups, senior clubs, faith-based organizations, cultural centers and clubs, libraries, networking opportunities, exhibits at community events sponsored by various ethnicities and cultures and the LGBTQ sponsored events as well as veterans groups, Ulster Green ARC staff, Chamber Events and word of mouth.

Volunteers have reported on annual assessments that they are satisfied with their volunteer experience and often express how gratifying it is to volunteer as an RSVP volunteer. Many volunteers recruit other volunteers, which is an indicator that they are having a quality experience and want to share their fulfillment in volunteering with others.

We cultivate and plan a variety of volunteer assignments that effectively and measurably address the needs of the community. Our innovative programming, such as Senior Computer Learning Center, The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and The Clean Energy Resource Room provide unique opportunities for attracting Baby Boomer volunteers as well as those who have been downsized by the challenging economic times as a means to gain new skills through volunteering with a mindset of gaining a new career.

Targeted recruitment enables us to find individuals who possess specific skills needed to successfully achieve program goals. RSVP is assisting community agencies in the development of new volunteer station partnerships offering opportunities for volunteers to build new skills and develop leadership potential. Volunteers are encouraged to take on leadership roles. Training is provided by all volunteer partner agencies to allow for advancement.

RSVP provides an annual volunteer recognition luncheon with special honors, awards, years-of-service pins and a small token of appreciation.

Program Management

The RSVP Director with the help of Advisory Council members shares the latest information on volunteers and volunteerism with all contracted sites. Each station receives at least one site visit during each program period. The project director, along with advisory council member(s) visits site to ensure volunteer placements are consistent with the memorandum of understanding, to provide an

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opportunity for dialogue with the site, and to get a better sense of the kind of work taking place at each site, this helps to ensure that volunteers are performing their assigned service activities. In addition, the program director evaluates the safety of the volunteers in their placement as required by CNCS regulations. These visits ensure the management practices are in compliance with program regulations, do not include prohibited activities or working in unhealthy or un-safe environments. The results of these visits are compiled on a site visit form and any negative finding are noted and discussed for corrective action. RSVP Director will follow-up to determine when corrective actions have been completed and this information will be noted on the original site visit form.

All prospective stations receive promotional information about becoming a volunteer station. This includes information about Programming for Impact, the mission of Senior Service Corps and the RSVP volunteer program and goals. A proposal for use of volunteers must be received and approved by the Director of RSVP to ensure that programming guidelines are met. Assistance and consideration is given to those agencies that demonstrate that volunteer assignments will help meet an identified need, track measurable outputs and outcomes and provide meaningful placements for their volunteers. All community partner agencies (Stations) are required to complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). All Memorandum of Understanding will start the first day of the first year of the Awarded Grant and will end on the last day of the third year of the grant. A new partner start date would be amended to align with the actual start date of the new partner agency.

In the MOU each station will identify the staff person who will be responsible for the RSVP volunteers assigned to their agency. These coordinators will share information about back ground checks or screening required by the station, training(s) provided, potential schedules for training(s) duration or length of training and additional required volunteer job descriptions. This information will be kept on file in the RSVP Volunteer Reporter database. A Station Handbook is being developed and will be available to all contracted station coordinators.

All volunteer station coordinators are notified of potential new volunteers matched to their agency by the RSVP Project Director. These volunteers have been pre-screened to ensure that they are eligible to serve in RSVP. They have attended orientation and a placement interview has been completed.

Coordinators will notify RSVP to report whether potential volunteers are a good fit for the assignment and the RSVP Program Assistant will add the volunteer placement to the Volunteer Reporter database. All volunteer stations are required to complete and submit monthly RSVP Station Timesheets to report volunteer hours and measurable accomplishments. (These timesheets will be provided to the Station via e-mail, snail mail or via inter-office and intra-County services depending on the preference of the

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station coordinator.) In addition, stations providing in-kind benefits to their volunteers are required to report in-kind contributions by reporting such on the monthly RSVP Station Timesheet and verifying contribution on Quarterly In-Kind Summary document supplied by RSVP. In order to minimize disruptions to current volunteers, graduating stations, will be encouraged to provide a service activity that would support a national performance measure.

RSVP has a healthy track record of working in the Primary Focus Area, Healthy Futures. In Healthy Futures, Objective 1: Homebound Seniors and Disabled, RSVP has managed the Neighbor to Neighbor program for over 20 years. Volunteers available to drive, using their own vehicles, are matched to homebound or older adults and individuals with disability due to injury or age. Each client is surveyed each six-month period to determine whether they have increased social ties/perceived social support

In Healthy Futures, Objective 2: Reducing Childhood Obesity and Increasing Access to Nutritious Food, RSVP has partnered with People's Place since the 80's. The food pantry services provided by the RSVP volunteers enables them to support a major need in our community and they are very satisfied with this assignment. People's Place utilizes a database for intake and distribution of food packages. A participant evaluation form has been utilized for over ten year and the new form will be easily developed to match current goals. People's Place has reported helping over 9,000 individuals per year.

Healthy Futures Objective 3: Increasing Access to Health Care, RSVP volunteers have been placed in service assignments with Office for the Aging as HIICAP volunteers for over 20 years. The extensive training provided by NY State provides the opportunity for volunteers to learn about the complexities of the Medicare system. Volunteers report that they know they are helping individuals to navigate the complicated system and feel great pride in helping their peers. The HIICAP program is managed by a part-time employee who takes great pride in ensuring the volunteers have all the tools they need to complete their assignments. In recent years, HIICAP volunteers have assisted as many as 1,500 volunteer per year.

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RSVP staff with the support and help of the advisory council members will plan and conduct an annual evaluation of the RSVP program to ensure a strong volunteer effort that continues to support the not-for-profit agencies in Ulster County; that volunteer services help to address the needs of the community; that placements will be developed so that service opportunities will continue to be diverse and will attract and interest all individuals aged 55 and older; and that volunteer assignments will enhance the lives of the volunteers and effectively assist those who are served.

Project accomplishments and performance are assessed two critical ways during the year. First the project collects information about the work of the volunteers via survey instruments. The data helps inform whether the volunteer activity is meeting intended goals. These surveys are conducted for each volunteer activity. Surveys are conducted in several ways: 1) Station staff complete survey information and submit results to RSVP at the end of the program period; 2) Advisory Council members go to volunteer Station's activity site to survey clients during a particular service period. Survey is delivered to the RSVP office after completion; 3) beneficiaries complete a survey at the Station's activity site; surveys are forwarded to RSVP at the end of each month

Secondly we use performance measurement to ensure high quality project operations by conducting an annual assessment of one area of programming each year. This allows us to improve where necessary. Data obtained through our performance measurement efforts helps provide the information needed to assist us in making informed choices when discussing options related to program improvement(s).

All survey information not collected by Station site is compiled by a volunteer leader at the RSVP office and entered into a spreadsheet for tallying information therein.

Organizational Capability

Ulster County Community College (SUNYUlster), sponsor of RSVP of Ulster County, is a public, comprehensive community college and a unit of the State University of New York. Ulster is an open admission, affirmative action institution, dedicated to serving the educational needs of the people and of the community of Ulster County. SUNYUlster has a significant record in the areas of economic

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development, small business advisement, workforce development and support of the local community agencies and has been in the community for 46 years. The College seeks to be innovative and targeted in its response to the changing trends and needs of the educational and human service needs of the community.

The SUNYUlster facilities are located throughout the County so that the services of the College are readily accessible to the entire region through both physical location and hours of operation.

Originally located on the Stone Ridge Campus, RSVP has relocated to the Business Resource Center, Kingston, New York, which is the current location of the Offices of Continuing and Professional Education. The Credit Classes and Administrative offices of the College will remain on the Stone Ridge Campus. Some volunteer orientations and trainings will continue to be scheduled on the Stone Ridge Campus but others will be scheduled for the Kingston Campus in the Business Resource Center.

Donald C. Katt is the President of our sponsor organization, SUNYUlster. The RSVP program is administered through SUNY Ulster's Office of Continuing Education (OCE). The Dean of Advancement and Continuing Education also serves on the College Board of Directors, is the founder of the Ulster County Community College Foundation and is the designated representative assigned to the RSVP Advisory Council. The College's financial offices provide accounting assistance and prepare all FSR reports for the Program. The accounting office complies with all SUNY fiscal policies.

Under the general direction of Marianne Collins, the Director of Advancement and Continuing Education, and following RSVP policy guidelines, the Director of the RSVP has full-time responsibility for the development and the day-to-day operation of the local RSVP project in coordination with the RSVP Advisory Council. The Director is a member of the Organization of Professional Administrative Personnel (OPAP) union.

The RSVP Project Director, Catherine Canzian, has served in this position for the last 20 years. She has a varied employment background in the public and private sector, including owning her own businesses. She has resided in Ulster County for 26 years. She is familiar with many agencies and the needs of the community. She serves on several community and faith based boards. Project Director is responsible for recruiting volunteers and new stations. She works closely with the RSVP Advisory Council. She is responsible for the recruitment, orientation, placement and training of the RSVP office volunteers, maintaining volunteer STATION records, promotion and recognition of the RSVP Volunteer Program.

Under the general direction of the Director of RSVP and following RSVP policy guidelines, Esther Viva Feiner, RSVP Program Assistant, is a part-time 17 hour per week employee. Viva is a member of the

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OPAP union. Viva joined the RSVP Program at the end of April, 2014. Ms. Feiner maintains the Volunteer database, Volunteer Reporter, to ensure accurate tracking of the volunteers, jobs, stations, hours, in-kind, and general statistics regarding the program as required by guidelines and sponsor.

The Head Accounting Clerk has handled the finances of the Department for the past ten years.

Christina Mergendahl joined the SUNY Ulster Accounting Department in 2005. She has a degree in accounting with twelve years' experience in the field. She is a CSEA employee. Christina received the President's Award for Excellence in Service in 2007/2008.

All staff roles are defined by programmatic need, job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements. The positions will be sustained by using funding from the RSVP grant as well as funds supplied by Ulster County Tourism Department, NYS Office for the Aging, the Recognition Luncheon Journal advertisements and local business sponsors and private donations.

The RSVP Advisory Council advises and assists the RSVP Director:

- * Forming local policy
- * Planning and developing operating procedures
- * Consistent with program policies and guidelines
- * Promoting community support for projects
- * Advising on personnel actions affecting volunteers and project staff
- * Assists in planning and promoting the mobilization of financial and in-kind resources
- * Evaluates the program and provides an annual report to sponsor
- * Performs periodic assessment of the RSVP program to ensure sustainability.

Ulster County Community College has managed and monitored the CNCS Grant and the RSVP volunteer program since 1980 and has a strong track record of supporting community based initiatives as well as those that rely on volunteer recruitment and participation. Several of the initiatives rely on the support of RSVP program and senior volunteers aged 55 and older. Several thousand volunteers have provided volunteer services to the community.

Due to economic constraints many not-for-profit agencies throughout our community wish to increase volunteer participation in order to maintain, expand or increase services and support to community members. As a result, SUNY Ulster RSVP is continually re-evaluating our volunteer opportunities to fit the current needs and interests of the community and of prospective volunteers.

Ulster County Community College relies on program measurement to provide data that tells the story of service in our community that shows potential partners that our opportunities are interesting, impactful and fun. The data collected through survey and program measurement is used in

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recruitment materials, grant requests and other marketing materials.

Currently, we support a strong corps of 400 unduplicated volunteers. Our Primary Focus Area is Healthy Futures. The remainder of the volunteers are placed in Focus Areas as follows: 40 volunteers will be assigned to Capacity Building, 20 volunteers will be assigned to Disaster Services, 89 Will be assigned to Economic Opportunity, 17 will be assigned to Education, 110 to Healthy Futures, 120 to Other Community Priorities and 4 to Veterans and Military Families.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A