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Executive Summary

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of northern Idaho is sponsored by North Idaho College, a community college in the State of Idaho College system. North Idaho College is a comprehensive educational institution meeting the needs of students and business and industry throughout the region, focusing on the professional technical aspect. We have a unique situation in being able to partner with NIC, as they are present in the same service areas that we focus our RSVP program. The main campus is located in Kootenai County and they have off site campuses in the rural counties of Bonner, Boundary and Shoshone. The Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho of North Idaho (AAANI) is a recognized department of North Idaho College. AAANI is responsible for the administration and supervision of the RSVP Program.

North Idaho College Mission Statement: North Idaho College meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and northern Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho of North Idaho Mission Statement: Our mission is to work in partnership with older adults, families, and the community to secure information and services that maximize independence and quality of life.

Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho of North Idaho Vision Statement: Dedicated to protection, independence and dignity of individuals through advocacy and service.

RSVP is represented by approximately 491 unduplicated volunteers serving throughout the five northern counties of Idaho. In 2013, the RSVP program recruited 96 new volunteers that have performed in Community and Economic Development, Public Safety, Education, Health Futures, Veterans and Military, Disaster Services, and other worthwhile community services. Our RSVP program is requesting \$67, 148. The primary focus areas that will be addressed include: Community and Economic Development, Healthy Futures (including food distribution, meals, nutrition, access to health care, companionship, exercise and other services to help seniors maintain their independence), Education, Disaster Preparedness/Public Safety, Veterans & Military Families, and other community priorities.

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The Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho Four-Year Plan sets up a five county plan that is a valuable tool to meeting and satisfying the needs of seniors. This is our Provider Service area that includes the counties of Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Shoshone. Along with this plan, RSVP and its Advisory Council identifies and invests in community solutions that engage citizens in programs that are either evidenced based or have proven track records and programs that seek to close the gaps in community needs, especially in the rural communities that we serve. We strive to leverage public and private partnerships to expand our reach and impact.

Strengthening Communities

RSVP of northern Idaho has a service area of 8,700 sq. miles that is populated by approximately 217,551 people. Over 90% of the provider service area is rural, centered around the City of Coeur d'Alene. The economic base is government, tourism, education, health, and trade. The demographics are: 95 % Caucasian; 2% Hispanic; and 3 % Native American. This Idaho region has a 65+ population that is 17.5 % of the total population and has experienced 41.9% growth between the 2000 and 2010 census. The percentage of the U.S. population that is 65 years of age and older is expected to increase by nearly 60 percent during the next four decades. This demographic shift will have important implications for the state of Idaho, including helping to ensure older adults remain healthy and active as they age. Engaging older adults through meaningful volunteer activities is one way states can promote wellness while also realizing benefits for communities and businesses.

RSVP's strength comes from its oversight from the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho and its sponsorship by North Idaho College (NIC), the major educational institution of northern Idaho. The Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho is directly responsible for administering and oversight of the RSVP Program. Our sphere of influence includes close associations with various governmental agencies to include County Commissioners, City Councils, School Districts, Chambers of Commerce, Community Action Councils, and Law Enforcement and other vital governmental relationships. RSVP partners with these community leaders and organizations, and an extensive network of community based senior centers that are located in each of the rural counties that we serve. Our ability to tap into these various groups has greatly enhanced the recruitment and utilization of volunteers at the local level; addressing their local community priorities and issues.

There are currently 58 RSVP stations which have greatly enhanced our outreach in each community.

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RSVP has worked closely with other organizations such as Citizens Corps, which played a prominent role in the utilization of volunteers for Homeland Security.

RSVP and the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho staff participate in many Boards and Advisory bodies which allows for information sharing and cooperative planning. Community needs identified through this collaboration enables RSVP to strategically place qualified senior volunteer who expand and enhance the delivery of services.

RSVP ensures local input by working with our partners to effectively evaluate programming areas on an annual basis using interview and board/committee participation with individual stations and nonprofits.

RSVP, being sensitive to the rural nature of our area, selects our community partners by identifying organizations in each county that can benefit from our volunteer base while reaching out to those service areas that are in most need. Our most significant partnerships are with the Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, health organizations, law enforcement, and other major nonprofits.

Public awareness is generated through nearly 60 nonprofit and faith based volunteer stations, public press releases, community presentations, and by establishing a large networking base utilizing all RSVP staff.

RSVP staff participates in the local inter-agency councils to encourage participation from residents representing all segments of our community. We adhere to all federal and state laws including the Civil Rights Act and EEOC; to ensure equal access and representation regardless of ethnicity, gender, economic and educational status, place of origin, age, etc.

RSVP mobilizes community resources by utilizing a large network of public and private agencies that have a need for volunteers and their services. RSVP is widely recognized as the established agency to contact regarding the placement of appropriate, reliable, and dedicated volunteers.

RSVP volunteers participate in community activities that are within the goals and objectives of each partnering nonprofit. Additionally, we are able to promote community activities through our newsletter, which is distributed to all volunteers and workstations on a quarterly basis.

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We enhance the capacity of organizations and institutions within the community by recruiting and assigning capable volunteers who possess the necessary skills and experience, and the desire to give back to their community. Community nonprofits are able to flourish when their volunteers are a good match and become an integral part of their mission.

RSVP is constantly seeking to strengthen our communities by evaluating community priorities and enlisting appropriate work stations and volunteers to address such priorities.

Recruitment and Development

RSVP of northern Idaho has a successful program that focuses on recruitment and development. Currently we are emphasizing the areas of tutoring and mentoring, public safety and disaster preparedness, healthy futures that focus on food and nutrition, exercise and fitness, companionship and independence, Medicare fraud, and community outreach. Mentoring has been successful through active recruitment of retired educator and service organizations. Tutoring has had large growth in our rural areas. Grandparents, service clubs, sewing and quilting clubs, and retired teachers have responded to our requests for additional tutoring volunteers. Our VISTA position has been redirected to administer and supervise an expansion of the mentoring program, as well as keeping the tutoring program at its present level.

The success of several law enforcement agencies who utilize RSVP volunteers for public safety and disaster preparedness purposes has attracted the attention of similar agencies, and has become a model for other departments to emulate. Continued recruitment will focus on retired law enforcement and disaster relief/preparedness personnel. Such efforts shall include the presentation of informational and educational materials to organizations that represent retired employees, service clubs, faith based organizations, and senior centers. RSVP, in partnership with the North Idaho Sheriff's Association and local municipal police chiefs, will continue to focus on the critical needs facing local communities. Northern Idaho is a high retirement area, which has provided a good source of baby boomer recruits new to the area, mainly from California, Oregon, and Washington. The strength of RSVP in those states has led to new senior residents calling us shortly after relocating to Northern Idaho.

RSVP staff plans and participates in training of mentors, tutors, and other volunteers; and participates in annual statewide AmeriCorps training. The annual conference brings together RSVP program

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managers from throughout Idaho; allowing them to brainstorm and discuss program successes, ideas, and solutions.

The RSVP "Friendship Corp" program has evidence based success. This entailed recruiting and training up to 15 senior volunteers to visit twice a month with isolated homebound seniors. The volunteers have become a resource for homebound seniors who are trying to maintain their independence and dignity. The RSVP program has been able to expand the "Friendship Corps" program, providing companionship, friendship, and hope to many seniors who were previously on other agency waiting lists; awaiting a variety of services. This has reduced isolation, depression, anxiety and loneliness for our seniors who are in this program. RSVP "Friendship Corps" program continues to be highly successful. Thanks to the utilization of a VISTA volunteer, we will be able to recruit and train volunteers, and serve considerably more isolated homebound seniors.

In 2013, RSVP, in partnership with SHIBA, implemented an aggressive and innovative pilot project referred to as the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP). The intent of the SMP program is to educate seniors about the growing healthcare fraud problem; and to empower aging adults to protect themselves from Medicare fraud, detect potential billing errors and fraudulent charges, and report suspected fraud to authorities. An RSVP Volunteer Specialist trains volunteers to educate seniors during group presentations, or during one on one counseling sessions. By increasing public awareness of this growing problem and providing seniors with the volunteer support and information needed to combat and prevent Medicare fraud, we continue to create a positive impact on healthcare fraud prevention.

RSVP's experienced staff will work with nonprofits to develop volunteer positions that utilize the skill sets of the Baby Boomer generation. Jobs will be developed that are project oriented with specific goals and objectives that have set timelines. This approach to volunteering will allow the younger volunteer to have time for their quality of life endeavors. We utilize the Aging Network's Volunteer Collaborative to assist us in this endeavor.

The majority of volunteers will be and continue to be recruited through organizations that have a high concentration of mature members. These groups will include: government retirement organizations, young retirement communities, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Realtors Association.

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Our Agency newsletter and website will be used as primary tools in assisting volunteers in maintaining their interest in giving back to their communities. Featured stories, placement opportunities, and reflections on the meaning of service to the community will be regular components of these communication tools.

Training will be set up on an individual station basis as each nonprofit develops a game plan to utilize volunteers. RSVP will assist with the development of appropriate volunteer job descriptions that meet the agency goals and objectives. RSVP staff will assist with hands on training and supervision as may be necessary.

As we continue to aggressively promote the RSVP in the provider service area, we are constantly made aware of the tremendous benefits of volunteering to both our local communities, and to the volunteers themselves. We instill and promote that volunteering activities have unique personal benefits. Older volunteers experience fewer health issues with advancing age and report diminishing symptoms for existing health conditions. The mental health benefits of volunteering also are well documented. Volunteering reduces feelings of depression and anxiety among older adults; and leads to increased self-esteem and self-worth for participants.

Moreover, the benefits of volunteering are not limited to personal well-being. Volunteerism by older Americans can bring substantial benefits to communities, such as an increase in economic productivity and the strengthening of intergenerational relationships. Volunteering among older adults generates approximately \$162 billion annually for the U.S. economy. During the past twelve (12) months, our volunteers completed 76,141 hours of service, resulting in an economic impact of \$1,516,729.00 to our northern Idaho communities.

Program Management

The volunteers of northern Idaho RSVP are viewed as highly valuable resources in our program. RSVP ensures that they go through an interview and evaluation so that their volunteer experience is positive for them and the station that they are assigned to is an appropriate fit. We work with each station to train their volunteers to handle additional responsibilities. This enhances the volunteer's ability to serve and also prepares them to expand their volunteering to additional stations.

Major factors of our program management for 2014 are:

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1. Volunteer station evaluations and training assistance. During 2014 we will continue to focus on work stations which align with our focus areas and community priorities. The Advisory Council will be a major player in achieving this continued approach.
2. Renewed emphasis on the recruitment of Baby Boomers with support from Aging Network's Volunteer Collaborative.
3. Continued public relations through press releases, community presentations, and RSVP newsletter; with renewed emphasis on program successes throughout our five county service area; particularly in the rural communities.
4. The RSVP Advisory Council will continue to assist program evaluation.
5. Additional reliance on RSVP Volunteer Reporter Software for essential program data.
6. Fundraising and exposure through Service Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, RSVP newsletter, and majority community contributors.
7. The RSVP program will continue to focus on recognition of our volunteers who are eligible for Presidential awards and agency certificates.

Quarterly review and analysis of data for evaluations, and additional recruitment, publicity of successful programs, and value of volunteer service is available through the RSVP Reporter data base. This data is reviewed by the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho and compared to previous years. Additionally, the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho periodically conducts a quality improvement analysis and report for review by the RSVP Advisory Council.

As requested by volunteer stations, RSVP staff will work one on one with station staff to develop effective community needs assessment and to place previously screened volunteers in an appropriate position that best utilizes their skills.

The goals and objectives reflected in the work plans are a summation of the individual goals of the stations providing service to their community. Information provided by an annual assessment of RSVP Reporter data as well as surveys or interview with station staff will provide insight to station effectiveness in meeting the needs of the community.

RSVP resources are managed by a detailed monthly budget report provided by the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho Fiscal Officer. This allows the RSVP Director to manage appropriate resources

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to effectively assist volunteers, stations, and the RSVP program.

Cash and in-kind resources are constantly sought by RSVP staff and documented through an agency defined procedure. Cash is sought from appropriate community charitable and service organizations within the public and private sectors. Cash donations have been very hard to come by in today's tough economic times; but in-kind contributions have risen steadily. The business community has become increasingly supportive of the RSVP program; and increasingly appreciative of the remarkable efforts of our volunteers.

Organizational Capability

RSVP of northern Idaho is sponsored by North Idaho College (NIC), and administered by the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho which is a department of NIC. The business affairs office is the trustee and oversees all financial transactions. In addition, the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho and the RSVP undergoes an annual audit by an outside independent agency which is selected by North Idaho College. The management and governing structure are actively committed to volunteer engagement.

RSVP staff consists of one full-time employee who serves as the program director and is responsible for overseeing all components and programs within RSVP. This position is part of the AAANI management team, engaging volunteerism in many aspects of the departmental planning.

One part-time employee is solely allocated to implementing and maintaining our RSVP Senior Medicare Patrol; and two VISTA staff is solely allocated to the Tutoring and Mentoring Program, and the Friendship Corps, respectively. Our staff possesses a wealth of experience in human resources, program management and implementation, grant writing, recruiting and placement of volunteers, assessing community needs, public speaking, and administration of budget. Both program employees are cross-trained and the Director participates in the program implementation.

The RSVP Program relies on a strong Advisory Council for assessment and evaluation of existing and proposed programs, as well as assisting us in volunteer recognition activities. Their composition will be carefully expanded to assist us in the redesign of work stations and community impact.

The Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho is in the business of senior services that provide

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information and services that maximize the quality of life for our seniors located in our provider service area. Under the supervision of North Idaho College, in collaboration with the Idaho Commission on Aging, the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho manages several federal grants in volunteerism, nutrition, ombudsman, home care, adult protection, care transitions, care coordination, and case management.

There is a strong, positive philosophical/commitment statement guiding the organization's involvement with volunteers. The impact of services rendered are measured annually and improvements implemented as needed. All programs are audited annually by the North Idaho College. As a department of North Idaho College, the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho is governed by North Idaho College rules, regulations, and policies. The College oversees human resources, payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and annual internal audits.

Other

RSVP of northern Idaho continues to flourish. The need for volunteers continues to escalate, and the response of the growing senior population of northern Idaho has been heartwarming. Adults of the age of 55, especially in our most rural areas, continue to show renewed interest in serving as volunteer.

As more and more adults reach retirement age and begin to look for ways to donate their time and expertise, the economic productivity level of volunteers can only be expected to increase. Older adults' desire to remain active and give back to their communities is well documented. Between 60 percent and 70 percent of older adults engage in formal or informal volunteer activities. Nearly two-thirds of older adults not currently volunteering express an interest in donating their time in the future. This interest, coupled with the large demographic shift occurring in the United States, could result in a substantial increase in the number of older adults willing to donate their time and expertise through volunteerism. The dramatic increase in the number of retirement-age Americans affords states unique opportunities to tap a large, highly skilled, and motivated pool of older adults as potential volunteers. Such an increase in volunteering could bring sizeable benefits to older adults' physical and mental well-being as well as benefits to states in terms of stronger communities and reduced health care costs.

Remaining engaged in social activities is a key to staying physically and mentally healthy. Engaging

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older adults in unpaid activities is just as effective as engaging them in paid work for maintaining community and social engagement. The mental health benefits of engagement are clear for older adults. Volunteerism can soften the effects of aging on mortality rates, help offset the loss of purpose felt by many older adults, and lead to an overall improved quality of life. Volunteerism also reduces despair and depression, two conditions strongly linked to heart disease and worsening physical health in older adults.

In addition, volunteering can result in fewer physical health problems with advancing age. Older adults who volunteer more than 100 hours per year are two-thirds less likely to report health problems, even when previous health concerns are taken into account. Moreover, volunteerism can reduce negative symptoms related to chronic pain conditions. In fact, the benefits of participating in volunteering and other productive community activities equal those of increased exercise and physical fitness activities in terms of long-term health benefits. During a five-year period, older adults who volunteered with two or more organizations experienced a mortality rate 44% lower than that of their non-volunteering peers with similar health and family factors.

Positive health and wellness indicators associated with volunteering are not limited to the individual. The rising cost of caring for older adults is well documented, and this cost is projected to increase rapidly as more workers retire. Long-term care for older adults is one of the most costly components of the nation's rising health care expenditures. In 2000, 3.7 million Americans either lived in a nursing home or received paid home care. This number is expected to more than double during the next 30 years. Volunteering by older adults improves their mental health and life satisfaction and reduces the occurrence and severity of physical disabilities. For these reasons, volunteerism among older adults holds considerable potential to reduce the need for and duration of long-term care among these adults.

Volunteerism is especially beneficial for health and education organizations, two sectors that are now facing labor shortages. For example, older volunteers have proven effective in reducing hospitalization rates and improving family well-being as a result of their involvement in home visitation programs, such as the "Friendship Corps".

Similarly, programs that link older adults with school-age children afford benefits for both age groups.

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Older adults report high levels of satisfaction from volunteering, while children, particularly younger school-age children, respond positively to the meaningful relationships they forge with older adults. In communities where young people lack positive relationships with adult figures, intergenerational volunteer programs can provide an alternative source of values, culture, and history handed down from an older generation.

RSVP is looking ahead to the future:

1. . During 2014 RSVP will be evaluating volunteer work stations to ensure that they meet the needs of local communities, and align with the major focus areas.
2. RSVP will continue to evaluate the quality of volunteers, and the appropriateness of volunteer placements. Our goal is to provide quality volunteers, not necessarily more volunteers.
3. RSVP will continue to partner with relevant community agencies and organizations to ensure that we meet the local needs of all communities throughout northern Idaho. We will continue forging partnerships with Panhandle Health, SHIBA, School Districts, law enforcement agencies, food banks, and nutrition sites that focus on congregate and home delivered meals and other organizations that we have outlined in our objectives and programs.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

NOT APPLICABLE