

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Garland County RSVP will be sponsored by Future Builders, Inc., a 501 (C) 3 community based organization located in Southeast Pulaski County. Future Builders serves Pulaski, Saline, Lonoke, Faulkner, Garland, Perry, Arkansas and Jefferson Counties. The Organization is a multi-service grass roots initiative which focuses on human potential to empower community residents to become self-sufficient through resource mobilization, education and training. For twenty-five (25) years Future Builders has touched the lives of thousands by creating social networks and coalitions to enhance the lives of young people, growing families, and senior citizens.

Garland County RSVP (GCRSVP), under the sponsorship of Future Builders, Inc. proposes to utilize the services of 163 volunteers and, will seek \$57,064 in funding from the Cooperation for National and Community Service, (CNCS), with a non-federal match of \$5,707.00.(10%- first year) According to Appendix A.

The primary focus of the Garland County RSVP will be Environmental Stewardship. Other focus areas are veterans and military families, education, healthy futures, and disaster services. Volunteers will address needs such as: working with parks and recreational areas, planting and maintaining grounds in the natural gardens and natural parks, transporting veterans to and from doctor appointments in nearby veteran healthcare centers, tutoring elementary children in reading to improve reading levels, assisting with hunger relief in the low income/poverty areas of Garland county, making presentations on the fraud abuse and scams to Medicare/Medicaid beneficiaries, providing respite care for family caregivers, providing food and clothing and advocacy for those in need and working with disaster services during tornados, flooding and fires within the county and working within hospitals, healthcare facilities to help relieve nurses and office staff so they can perform their jobs. The Garland County RSVP volunteer will also help recruit veterans and the disabled in services that fit within the realm of CNCS focus areas.

These community needs will be documented through statistics (local and national); through surveys and as documented by the agencies/stations where volunteers serve. Garland County RSVP will survey the needs of the community in collaboration with programs throughout the county, including, but not limited to National Parks and Recreation of Hot Springs, Garland County Health Department, VA Healthcare Center, Disabled American Veteran (DAV) and, Arkansas Division of Aging and Adult Services.

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Garland County RSVP will utilize an independent group of volunteer leaders from the community to evaluate the success of the RSVP program in its ability to meet community needs through questionnaires and personal interviews of the stations, clients and volunteers.

### **Strengthening Communities**

According to the United States Census 2010, Garland County sets in the west central section of Arkansas. This is a rural area with a population of 96,024 and is estimated to increase in population of 97,173 by the next Census. Cities within Garland County include: Hot Springs, Hot Springs Village, Royal, Mountain Pine, Fountain Lake, Lonsdale, Lake Hamilton, Rockwell, and Piney. Adjacent counties include: Saline County - east, which is included in the RSVP of Central Arkansas territory.

Garland County is Arkansas' 68th county, formed on April 5, 1873, from portions of Saline County. It was named for Augustus H. Garland, eleventh governor of Arkansas. The first settler was Jean Pierre Emanuel Prudhomme. In 1807, Prudhomme, the sickly owner of a plantation at Red River, heard of the healing hot springs of the Indians. He built the first real settlement by the springs and lived there two years. Isaac Cates and John Percival, two trappers from Alabama, joined him. Cates was mostly concerned with trapping but Percival foresaw a great potential for the area and built log cabins in order to rent to visitors to the springs.

Garland County, in the heart of the Ouachita Mountains, is a special place to both the residents and also to the thousands of people who choose to visit the many county attractions each year. Garland County and its county seat, Hot Springs, share a rich and colorful history.

Due to the scenic beauty of the area and the 47 natural hot water springs along the base of Hot Springs Mountain, President Andrew Jackson in 1832, set aside land for the enjoyment of future generations and designated Hot Springs the first Federal Reservation. This designation made Hot Springs National Park America's first area in the nation, to be set aside for protection by the federal government and the only national park within a city. Garland County itself was formed in 1873 and named for Augustus H. Garland, Governor of Arkansas, U.S. Senator, and President Grover Cleveland's Attorney General. The county and Hot Springs were historically a favorite vacation destination for both the famous and the somewhat infamous.

Garland County offers many rich and varied assets and attractions for residents and visitors alike. The economy is diverse with strong support from tourism, health care, retirement locations, industries, and manufacturing. The county's natural beauty, scenic lakes including; Lake Ouachita, the states' largest manmade lake, and a host of recreational, cultural, and historical activities makes Hot Springs

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and Garland County a popular destination.

Recreation and tourism have always been mainstays of the county's economy, along with livestock production and logging. One of the largest quartz crystal mining operations in North America is located in Garland County. The famous Oak lawn Park offers thoroughbred horse racing from February through April. Three lakes, Lake Ouachita, Lake Catherine and Lake Hamilton all offer a full range of water sports and recreation facilities.

The springs flow from the western slope of Hot Springs Mountain, part of the Ouachita Mountain range. In the park, the hot springs have not been preserved in their unaltered state as natural surface phenomena. They have instead been managed to conserve the production of uncontaminated hot water for public use. The mountains within the park are also managed within this conservation philosophy in order to preserve the hydrological system that feeds the springs.

People have used the hot spring water in therapeutic baths for more than 200 years to treat rheumatism and other ailments. While it was a reservation, the area developed into a well-known resort nicknamed. "The American Spa" that attracted not only the wealthy but indigent health seekers from around the world as well.

The parks' includes portions of downtown Hot Springs, making it one of the most easily visited national parks. There are numerous hiking trails and camping areas. Bathing in spring water is available in approved facilities at extra cost. The entire Bathhouse Row area is a National Historic Landmark District that contains the grandest collection of bathhouses of its kind in North America, including many outstanding examples of Gilded Age architecture. The row's Fordyce Bathhouse serves as the park's visitor center; the Buckstaff and Quapaw are currently the only facilities still operating as bathhouses. Other buildings of the row are currently in various states of interior restoration or are used in other capacities. They are being restored.

The parks' has become increasingly popular in recent years, and recorded over 2 million visitors in 2013, as well as nearly 2.5 million non-recreational visitors. The Ouachita National Forest is the oldest National Forest in the southern United States. The forest encompasses 1,784,457 acres, including most of the scenic Ouachita Mountains. Six locations in the forest, comprising 65,000 acres, have been designated as wilderness areas. Ouachita is the French spelling of the Indian word Washita which means good hunting grounds. The forest was known as Arkansas National Forest on its establishment

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on December 18, 1907; the name was changed to Ouachita National Forest on April 29, 1926.

Environmental Stewardship - (25%) will be the Primary Focus Areas for Garland County RSVP. There is so much beauty in and around the Hot Springs National Parks and gardens. RSVP volunteers will be trained to serve in areas of national parks and the hot springs. RSVP volunteers will serve in three areas: Plant establishment or removal; Debris; and Land restoration.

Thirty(30) volunteers will be trained to serve is areas of planting trees, shrubs, and flowers that will help reduce erosion and promoting habitat for the wildlife. Ten (10) volunteers will be trained on how debris can cause pollutants in the air. Cleaning up the environment to make it safe and healthy.

Fifteen (15) volunteers will be trained to remove unwanted vegetation without causing further damage and help the land revert to its natural state by planting native plants. RSVP focus will be on the amount of land that is being restored back to its natural state. Saving of the natural habitat for wildlife to continue to thrive and not furious.

Other Focus Areas:

Veterans and Military Families - RSVP volunteers will go through different classes, orientations and training to serve/work with veterans of all ages.

Twelve (12) RSVP volunteers will go through safety driving courses (yearly) and be approved by the Disabled Arkansas Veterans (DAV) to transport veterans to the VA Hospitals and healthcare clinics.

Thirteen (13) RSVP volunteers will go through orientation on the different areas within the healthcare and hospital settings. RSVP volunteers will serve in areas such as; companionship, feeding patients with disabilities, transporting veterans to different areas within the hospital; delivering flowers and newspapers; and office duties to help staff with special events. RSVP will also help the veterans who may not understand how to manage the different VA forms, understanding and filling out in a timely manner. Some will get help with understanding benefits and who they need to seek to understand the appeal process of benefits.

Education (10% outcome)-There are six elementary schools, five middle schools, five high schools, several magnet schools and one tech center in Hot Springs school district. Test scores are usually the biggest category that people look at when it comes to choosing a school for their child. The test scores represent the average results that the students in school end up with on standardized tests. Ethnic or racial group data is important for a number of reasons. One, it may be imperative that the student be

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placed in a school that is most fitting for them. For example, if a non-Hispanic child is placed in a predominately all Hispanic school, it may be difficult for that child to be content which in turn could lead to low test scores. Economics also plays a part in the way people gauge the education that the school will provide. For example, a school with a high percentage of disadvantaged students may anticipate a decrease in SAT test scores. According to the Arkansas Literacy Council, Arkansans of all ages and backgrounds need help with literacy. Forty two percent of ALC students are between the ages of 25-44. It is known that as the education level of a parent improves, so does a child's success in school. Therefore, helping adults improve basic skills will have a direct and measurable impact on both the education and quality of life of the child. Garland County RSVP volunteers from varied backgrounds will help tutor elementary children who are struggling with simple reading skills, to help in improving their reading levels and staying up with those children who's reading skills are at grade level. The child will have confidence in themselves and will feel comfortable reading aloud in class. Main purpose is to improve reading skills.

Seven (7) RSVP volunteers will go through an orientation on how the different school districts handle tutoring of elementary children. Garland County RSVP volunteers from varied backgrounds will help tutor elementary children who are struggling with simple reading skills, to help in improving their reading levels and staying up with those children who's reading skills are at grade level. The child will have confidence in themselves and will feel comfortable reading aloud in class. Main purpose is to improve reading skills.

Healthy Futures - Seven (7) Garland County RSVP will partner with Arkansas Senior Medicare Patrol through the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Service to recruit and train senior volunteers to recognize healthcare fraud, errors and abuse through reviewing their Medicare Summary Notices (MSN), as well as how to report fraud. These volunteers will be provided eight (8) hours of training and given a certificate of completion, which will allow volunteers to go out and give presentations on the fraud and abuse of the Medicare system. These trainings will be held twice a year or whenever the volunteers need to know about new information as it is given to the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services or the Arkansas Attorney General office on scams alone. RSVP volunteers will also help man phones with a local news station program called "Seven on Your Side", with the many scams that target the senior population.

Disasters - Ten (10) RSVP volunteers will be trained by the Arkansas Department of Emergency

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Services (ADEM) to set up Volunteer Reception Centers (VRC) to help volunteers and well as victims on where they need to go to distribute and collect food, clothing and household items; where to help clean up debris; where to file on claims with FEMA.

According to Arkansas Disaster Emergency Management (ADEM), which serves as the states coordination center for the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from those threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the nation, Arkansas is a key state for tornado's, fires and flooding. As a matter of fact, many call Arkansas Tornado Alley. Disasters are local. On April 26, 2014, an EF4 tornado upset many communities in and around Central Arkansas, leaving 19 dead and homes and businesses completely swept from their foundations. So, Arkansas is no stranger to what disaster brings and how important it is to have trained responders such as RSVP volunteers. These disasters affect us as citizens, our neighbors and our communities. Garland County RSVP volunteers will play a major role in participating and partnering with the Arkansas Department of Human Services/Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support to work alongside RSVP of Central Arkansas and other RSVP stations in the state of Arkansas to set up Disaster Volunteer Reception Centers (VRC) to help produce order out of potential chaos.

Other Communtiy Services:

These services fall under the 30% and outcomes.

Other- 30% - Forty-eight (48) RSVP volunteers will go through an orientations in the (4) healthcare centers and hospitals to help serve the patients, the patients family and visitors. Some of the duties will include; front desk greeters helping patients/family/visitors get to the right departments and units within the hospital setting; serve in ER waiting rooms, ICU units with doctor/nurse communications to patients family; they work within office settings; and gift shops.

Food Distribution and Food Pantry Support - Nine (9) RSVP volunteers will be trained to prepare, serve, collect and help store food items. They will also help distribute food, clothing and helpful materials on healthy eating habits. RSVP volunteers will work within food pantries, by serving low income families with sorting, packing and distributing food items.

RSVP of Central Arkansas has contacted more than 20 sites/stations located in Garland County.

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Many of these stations have existing volunteers and are anxious to renew their partnership with CNCS through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with RSVP. Our main focus will be to generate partnerships that complement our focus areas and comply with the rules and regulations of CNCS.

Monthly meetings with non-profits reveal areas of need resulting in the refinement of RSVP contributions. Each volunteer station will evaluate its service to the community and will report its success to RSVP and the community via newsletters, newspaper articles and social media. Stations will communicate with the Department of Volunteerism, the sponsor organization and the newly created Garland County Advisory Council. The Garland County RSVP will establish a corps of RSVP volunteers to visit each collaborating station to complete a survey of its services to ensure volunteer satisfaction and station compliance to its MOU with RSVP.

Public awareness will be maintained through monthly publication of volunteer opportunities in the daily newspaper, monthly community meetings with non-profits and government agencies, participation in community health fairs and business expositions, MLK Jr. Day of Service activities, Senior Corp Service events, 9-11 Commemoration events, annual Veterans Recognition Events at the Little Rock Air Force Base (LRAFB), community bulletin board announcements on local television, presentations to civic clubs and organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinator's Association, and the National Senior Corps Association. The RSVP director and RSVP administrative assistant are both members of several organizations and boards and will share information with other members and their organizations.

RSVP volunteers will be from varied backgrounds and will serve in many festivities of diverse cultures in the Hot Springs area. Therefore, volunteers will mix, match and blend their ethnicities as they work together on numerous projects. The volunteer experience itself will bring together those seeking to expand their knowledge of other cultures. Recognition events will produce admiration for the efforts of all volunteers of all cultures and especially among the volunteers themselves.

RSVP will mobilize volunteers to serve through their assignments to various local non-profit groups. Volunteers will be able to express an area of interest that will be matched to service need(s). The diverse experiences volunteers will bring to the assigned agency will produce valuable benefits to the agencies served and to their clients. Funding from other local and state businesses will help mobilize

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the expansion of services such as operating within the focus areas of the CNCS. The RSVP Director and RSVP staff will seek additional types of funding for the Garland County RSVP as time allows.

RSVP volunteers will expand the ability of agencies to serve those less fortunate by allowing the volunteers to serve and assist staff in that many agencies may not have the funding necessary to hire staff to do the work that volunteers can do.

The Garland County RSVP will have a system in place to collect and store data; another means of demonstrating the impact of the project(s) and its volunteers through data management.

The RSVP volunteer coordinator will use a software program called the Volunteer Reporter that records the volunteers' information, station/agency/non-profit information, MOU updates, duties performed by the volunteers, and hours the volunteers contribute on certain duties/tasks. Each station and agency will maintain records of RSVP volunteer duties and hours, and then report to RSVP staff who will maintain all information in an in-house filing system. All information is entered electronically with a hard copy retained in each volunteer and station's file for no more than seven years.

The appointed RSVP director has 16 years of experience using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to manage information from assessment reports to budgets to managing volunteer database.

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### **Recruitment and Development**

Volunteer management practices alone do not ensure retention of volunteers. To support retention, Garland County RSVP will allocate sufficient funds to support volunteer involvement, cultivate an organizational climate that is welcoming and authenticates to volunteers an experience worth sharing. The Garland County RSVP project promises high quality experience for volunteers by creating meaningful opportunities at local stations/sites in the community that work within the focus areas of CNCS. This allows volunteers a means of using existing skills, developing new skills and, making a difference in the lives of the people they serve.

Garland County RSVP will make full use of the leadership skills of volunteers by placing them, when

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possible, in supervisory positions. These positions would include but not limited to:

Disaster Response - where volunteers set up call centers, recruit and place volunteers where they are needed;

Presentations - educating seniors/beneficiaries about the fraud and abuse of the Medicare system and;

Partnerships will be developed with volunteer stations that have opportunities for RSVP volunteers to learn new skills, develop leadership potential and, practice satisfying and meaningful experiences.

Examples include training RSVP volunteers to set up Volunteer Reception Centers (VCR), which would train volunteers to help generate order out of potential chaos. So many citizens want to help, but don't know where to go. RSVP volunteers will be in place to direct people who want to donate food and clothing, or those who want to help clean up debris. With RSVP volunteers in position, things can and will run a lot smoother.

There will be evaluation tools to allow volunteers to provide input for improving station assignments.

RSVP staff will maintain a base of volunteers using station recruitment, referrals from active volunteers, website listings, email campaigns, flyers placed throughout the community and social network. In addition, RSVP staff will recruit through speaking engagements with a diverse range of non-profits organizations, public agencies, faith-based groups and places where the disabled/veterans/retired/seniors gather. Garland County RSVP will recruit and retain veterans to volunteer at stations where they feel comfortable and where their life experiences and skills match.

Garland County RSVP started a transportation program called "Vets Transporting Vets" (VTV). This program proposes to continue a successful door-to-door medical appointment transportation service for the disabled veteran and the frail/elderly in Garland County. Currently, the VTV program is the only free door-to-door demand/response transportation service available for veterans in Garland County. The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) transportation service offers free transportation to the VA hospital, but does not provide door-to-door service to local healthcare facilities, thus the veteran must find transportation to the pick-up sites. The lack of reliable transportation causes many veterans to miss scheduled medical appointments thus compromises continuity of care.

Diversity plays a major role anytime you are working in the community. Diversity is not always related to race or ethnicity. It may include age, gender, language, social class, religion, education, work backgrounds, etc. Diversity, within age groups and across age groups, will enhance civic

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engagement when RSVP of Central Arkansas utilizes the talents of each individual. The volunteer experience itself brings together those seeking to expand their knowledge of other cultures. Recognition events will also produce admiration for the efforts of all volunteers of all cultures and especially among the volunteers themselves.

According to Dr. Judy Esmond, author of many books on managing volunteers, one should treat volunteers as if they are customers and your boss, to see the positive experience start to grow within them. That is where you start, when wanting a strong recruitment of skillful and well experienced individuals who are looking for something to do after retirement. The recruitment and volunteer retention process will be modeled based upon the five types of volunteers:

**Suspects** - people that know nothing about RSVP. RSVP will begin by attracting their attention. To make contact with suspects/volunteers, RSVP will use a broad-based approach such as direct bulk-mail or newspaper advertising or a more selective approach such as advertising in trade journals or professional publications.

**Prospects**- are people who have shown an interest in volunteering but have not yet signed on. RSVP will maintain regular contact with prospects/volunteers to encourage them to take the next step and volunteer. We will send them newsletters; invite them to functions/events and call periodically to see if they're now ready to make a commitment.

**Newbies**- new volunteers are like new customers to a business. First impressions are vital if you are to retain their custom and keep them coming back. RSVP will devote part of the recruitment plan to ensuring that all new volunteers immediately feel like they belong. Inviting them to a meet and greet with other satisfied volunteers, share stories and experiences, educating them on different opportunities within their comfort level and area of expertise. RSVP will share focus areas in the community and allow them an opportunity to make the decision of the experience that best suits them.

**Repeats**- repeat and long-term volunteers are as valuable as repeat/be-back customers in a business. RSVP will look after them and never take them for granted. We will recognize them publicly in our recruitment campaign, as people are inspired by stories of such dedication. Recognition events, award

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programs and station events are all very important tools.

Raving Fans- are satisfied volunteers who are so impressed with our (RSVP) organization that they tell everyone they meet the greatness of their Garland County experience. It is great when volunteers can blow the RSVP trumpet for us and actively recruit others to volunteer. RSVP will encourage raving fans/volunteers by providing satisfying volunteer work, ongoing support and regular recognition.

Make or break volunteer service can make or break a volunteer program. It can also make or break RSVP collaborative partnerships where volunteers serve. Of course, RSVP wants raving volunteers. So the mission is to maintain a highly successful volunteer management, volunteer recruitment and volunteer recognition program. Garland County RSVP aims to convert our suspects into prospects - our prospects into new volunteers - our new volunteers into repeat volunteers and our repeat volunteers into raving fans in order to RECRUIT-RETAIN-RECOGNIZE and recruit again. A task is more likely to be completed and on time when volunteers know that their contribution is important and that others are counting on them. RSVP will let them know the importance of what they are doing and how the job fits into the focus areas/performance measures goals of the organizations.

Retaining RSVP volunteers will be the result of matching the right volunteer to the right assignment, providing other placements when the volunteer seeks diversity and interviewing when the volunteer is unhappy. Annual evaluation of volunteer satisfaction will be completed to ascertain a volunteer's happiness with placement and the necessary adjustments will be made. The GCRSVP director will collaborate with volunteer stations at least monthly to ascertain need for assistance with training and technical needs of its staff and volunteers and will seek out the appropriate community resource to meet those needs.

Strategies for retention include:

1. Providing orientation to all new members and volunteers as well as old members who may need a refresher course;
2. Training- written instructions will be helpful for both recruiting volunteers and retaining new volunteers. Without written instructions an individual may decline to volunteer or may volunteer to do the job but misunderstand exactly what it is he or she agreed to do and may decide not to honor

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the commitment;

3. Welcoming new members with welcome packets and RSVP newsletters and meeting where they can meet one another, during the meet and greet;
4. Conducting follow-ups with volunteers one month after recruitment;
5. Reviewing hourly reports monthly to identify volunteers that are not reporting hours;
6. Making personal contact with volunteers who are not responding, find out way, and what can be done to make volunteering fun and rewarding;
7. Emailing or calling volunteers once a month to stimulate interest in upcoming events, programs, and volunteer opportunities which will alleviate burn out;
8. Developing educational socials and cultural activities for members/volunteers;
9. Always keep an open door policy, invite them to visit the RSVP office and get acquainted with the staff;
10. Keep smiling and keep working on fresh new ideas and approaches. Allow active volunteers to help.

RSVP will strive to understand each volunteer's individual skills and interests, pair interest with assignments to ensure that volunteers are in comfortable and rewarding positions, and then recognize their strengths and service.

If for some reason a graduated volunteer or station/site is no longer an active station for Garland County RSVP volunteers, the staff and advisory council members will work with the volunteer for opportunities to join another station or stations. RSVP will assure a smooth transition and provide necessary training.

RSVP understands that CNCS is changing directions that may affect some volunteers and or stations that are doing exceptional work, have made great friends, and loves the RSVP experience. In these situations, RSVP staff will address each circumstance on a one-on-one bases. Efforts will be made to talk with the station and the volunteer to find a way to complement CNCS focus areas. If the station cannot work with RSVP, then RSVP will work with the volunteer. It is the desire of RSVP to retain high impact volunteers however, if there is not a workable strategy, we would encourage the volunteer and site to continue their relationship but advise that the hours can no longer be counted by RSVP. Therefore, the volunteer and work station information will be maintained in a separate file for future reference but would no longer be a part of the RSVP roster. RSVP will stay in touch in the work

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station and volunteer in case there are opportunities for future involvement with RSVP.

### Program Management

Stations are developed by the RSVP Director, RSVP Volunteer Coordinator, local sponsor by networking with new programs, current stations, advisory council members, city officials, and volunteers. RSVP will meet with the station(s) as often as needed to determine impact needs, and help develop site and recruitment of volunteers. The volunteer stations that have exhibited continued success (training, funding, recognition and evaluation) in addressing specific community needs will be continued during the next three year grant cycle. RSVP staff will stay connected with stations on a monthly basis to answer questions, offer technical assistance and ensure that volunteers are satisfied. The RSVP staff will be addressing the need to recruit for the different focus area within CNCS to the different stations and volunteers.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - will be drawn up and signed between the stations/partners and Grant County RSVP. The MOU will include the stations responsibility to train, report hours of service, self-assessments, recognition event reporting, and community strengthening strategies. Each station will understand what the CNCS calls prohibited activities such as: political activities, non-displacement of employed workers, compensation of service, labor, nondiscrimination, religious activities and nepotism, which is in the CNCS rules and regulations. All stations/partners/volunteers will understand their roles and the do's and don'ts will be clearly and concisely explained in both the MOU and the volunteer welcome packets.

Each RSVP member/volunteer who wants to serve with Garland County RSVP will fill out an RSVP volunteer application which asks for name, address, date of birth, if they served in the military, their likes and dislikes, and where they might like to serve. On the application there will be a list of partners/stations and task listed for them to circle or mark if interested in any of our volunteer opportunities. This gives the RSVP staff insight to what the volunteer enjoys and the skills they have to help serve our stations. This application will be entered into the volunteer reporter plus a hard copy will be kept in the volunteer file.

The stations/partners will keep RSVP abreast of the volunteers' performance and will report hours and task descriptions. Time sheets, station reports, sign in sheets, evaluations and other means of reporting will be left to the discretion of the station(s) and RSVP. A reporting system will be in place for each

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volunteer and the tasks/duties they perform.

The Volunteer Reporter, a software database program, is used for data collection on volunteers and stations showing the hours served, service focus area and tasks/duties. Example: If a station has 20 volunteers that provide daily meals to the low-income in the community, the report would reveal that 20 RSVP volunteers give 2 hours daily (Monday thru Friday) and served lunch to 650 low-income clients during the specified month. This raw data is collected by the volunteer station and faxed, mailed or emailed to RSVP. The information is then put into the Volunteer Reporter database by the volunteer coordinator. To make the stations' reporting structure easier, the RSVP Coordinator can run station reports with the names of the volunteers, the task they perform plus a place where the volunteer can sign off on the hours they serve. These reports can be mailed or faxed to the stations for easy reporting. Impact data is determined by the self-assessments of the stations' achievement of set goals as documented by the raw data reported to RSVP. Annual evaluations, surveys and questionnaires of volunteers and stations are retained in the RSVP office for seven (7) years. Self-assessment reports of the stations are kept on file in the volunteer station offices.

Program performance is assessed through surveys and combined into a program evaluation by RSVP advisory council. Garland County RSVP will have a new diverse, 15-20 member advisory council, which will meet quarterly. Each member will be equipped with an RSVP advisory manual with all the rules and regulations from CNCS about the RSVP mission, program and what is expected from the council. There will be by-laws in which the council will uphold. Each member will understand the importance of RSVP partnering stations and the roles volunteers play within the stations. There will be several committees within the council such as: recruitment, recognition, and publicity, and each member will be asked to serve on a committee. They will vote on a president, vice president, and secretary and each will be asked to hold office for three terms. They will help evaluate the stations, making sure MOU's are in place and up to date every three (3) years. The RSVP Advisory Council will be given a roster of stations and volunteers where they can correspond with the station managers and the volunteers to make sure things are working well. This will assist RSVP staff to meet the needs of the station/partners and volunteers. The Advisory Council will also interact with the local sponsors' Board of Directors with monthly reports or when the local sponsor calls for meetings.

RSVP evaluates project performance to assure all goals and objectives are met and result in a high

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quality project as outlined in the work plans. The advisory council appraises one aspect of the project each year. Example: Veterans and Military Families - the AC will visit each station and visit with the station supervisor and the volunteers to make sure all goals are being met. Reports to the RSVP Director on any accounts that something might need to be addressed. If so, the RSVP Director and President of the Advisory Council will meet and discuss possible ways to address the need, and solve any issues that may arise.

Most performance measures will be met by this project, and RSVP will share the annual assessment of project accomplishments, as reported in our progress reports (PR), to the community funding sources.

Program finances will be discussed in the organizational capability.

In-kind donations to the program will be documented on forms with the donor's signature and a witness signature with a description of items donated and an estimated value. The RSVP website, for example, will be implemented and managed by a retired Air Force veteran for free. The veterans' value is estimated at \$10 an hour, 4 hours a week x 52 weeks for a total of \$2,080 a year. Another example of in-kind donation is the office space documented by a lease agreement with the local sponsor. Other in-kind donations come in ways of meals for our volunteers who serve more than 4 hours per day at their site. Gifts, awards, meeting space and supplies are other in-kind contributions. RSVP will continue vigorous efforts to secure other in-kinds for our volunteers through local businesses and civic clubs.

Garland County RSVP will keep abreast of grant funding opportunities and seek such funding where appropriate. The advisory council will address funding resources in its quarterly meetings. The RSVP director will research funding opportunities on-line and will consistently utilize the funding opportunities reported through grant station weekly reports.

Background checks on all RSVP staff will be done and filed in the employee files. A copy will be given to the local sponsor, Future Builders, Inc., for safe keeping. Anyone who is hired with the RSVP program will be required to have a background check. Stations that require background checks on RSVP volunteers will be responsible for that cost.

### **Organizational Capability**

The local sponsors' experience with RSVP and non-profit partners allow them to maintain and develop

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a successful program. Future Builders, Inc. will oversee the management of Garland County RSVP. The sponsor provides a leadership role in the community through networking and coordination. The Executive Director and the Board of Directors, have been affiliated with non-profit networking for twenty- seven (27) years and keeps abreast of every aspect concerning funding, CNCS policies, needs assessment, community needs, personnel policies, travel policies, management support and job descriptions.

The RSVP bi-annual evaluation of staff is based on the organizations' personnel policies and procedures. Upon employment, RSVP staff is provided with an orientation, where the Executive Director sits down one-on-one to explain policies and procedures. The staff members receive a copy of the manual/handbook and are requested to read and agree through signature that they understand all information. This insures clarity of job descriptions, roles and responsibilities.

Future Builders, Inc. provides support to allow the RSVP program to implement strategies and accomplish goals such as developing, recruiting, and marketing materials, providing appropriate recognition of volunteers, providing staff development, upgrading technology, and maintaining safe work environment.

The RSVP Director will be responsible for all RSVP supplies and all invoices/receipts, which will be given to the Executive Director, Linder Conley, and fiscal officer for approval and payment. A copy of all invoices and receipts will be kept in a file inside the RSVP office locked and secure. The RSVP Director keeps a monthly Excel spreadsheet of all expenses that are matched to checks and receipts and maintained for CPA review and audits.

The local sponsors' Executive Director, Linder Conley is the founder of Future Builders, Inc. Linder graduated from Philander Smith College with a BA in Social Work, and obtained her Masters in Communications from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Her background includes the development and implementation of curriculum for six community colleges (Capital City Junior College) in Arkansas and Missouri. While serving a six-year tenure at Capital City Junior College, Ms. Conley worked as Instructor of Leadership Development and various business classes; Director of Placement for the Colleges; federally funded work study program and the graduate program; Director of Education for the Colleges' six school locations; and Director of the Vocational Campus supervising

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a core staff of 36 and administering a budget of 2.8 million dollars. Linder was also instrumental in the design and implementation of the National AmeriCorps Demonstration Model, an intergenerational service concept involving three states in the Lower Delta areas of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Known as the Delta Service Corps, the program had a budget of over 25 million dollars and assisted communities in the Delta area to become self-sustaining through the efforts of individuals willing to give back to their communities via community service. Mrs. Conley assisted in the design and implementation of the Workforce Investment Program for Pulaski County. Through this program, the Southeast Pulaski County Collaborative formed as a focus point to provide a wide range of support options for welfare recipients and high risk families.

The RSVP Director is accountable for the RSVP project. With eleven years' experience as an RSVP project director; she holds an Associate degree in Business Administration from Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, Texas. The RSVP director has 25 years' experience as a Purchasing Manager for major corporations like Wal-Mart out of Bentonville, Arkansas, and ten (10) years' teaching children in kindergarten in Arkansas. Along with her husband, they own and operate J&M Homes, LLC, in southeast Arkansas. The RSVP director continues her studies by taking on-line classes to improve her understanding of grant writing and to improve storytelling of how volunteers are touching lives in their communities. The RSVP Director will network with CNCS project directors, who offer different approaches to accomplish project goals and achieve outcomes. She will continue to familiarize herself with community resources and area businesses. In 2006, she along with Arkansas Hospice of Southeast Arkansas, implemented and managed a youth program for 10th-12th grade called, SMILE, Students Going the Extra Mile. These students attended 3-days of training on how to deal with Hospice patients. This program has spread throughout Arkansas. The RSVP Director serves on various committees/boards and participates in fund development when necessary. The Arkansas Veteran Affairs Medical Centers in Little Rock and North Little Rock has expressed their need for the RSVP Director and RSVP Volunteer Coordinator to serve as VAVS Representatives on the Deputy Representative Board. The RSVP Director has been a member of the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinator Association (AVCA) since 2009. The Director has also served on the Advisory Board for Senior Medicare Patrol Program for 5 years'. The Director will pursue memberships to the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) and Arkansas Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster (AVOAD), which will be partnering with our Disaster Services work plan. The Director will oversee all staff and their duties, and give annual evaluations of their performances.

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The Volunteer Coordinator has 5 years' experience working with the RSVP program and is responsible for recruitment, retention, and recognition activities of volunteers. She assists with recruitment of work stations and uploading and maintaining volunteer records. The Coordinator will oversee the youth program which will be mentored and managed by RSVP members. The Coordinator worked with the Arkansas Children's Hospital for six (6) years, and has experience as an Elementary School Administrator. She also served as Vice-President of the Arkansas Volunteer Coordinator Association, (AVCA), for Central Arkansas in 2012-14. The RSVP VC will put together orientation handbooks for all new volunteers which will contain information about the program, volunteers, stations/partners, the do's and do not rules and regulations, and prohibited activities. The prohibited activities will be explained in detail to each new member and existing member that may not understand. The Coordinator will update and maintain the volunteer reporter database. The Volunteers Coordinator will have support from the RSVP Director, Local Sponsor, Advisory Council, and Board of Directors of Future Builders, Inc.

Each volunteer will also receive a copy of the CIMA Insurance that is provided to active RSVP volunteers. This is an added incentive to help in the recruitment process. The CIMA Insurance can be seen in the budget section of this grant.

The RSVP Director and RSVP Volunteer Coordinator will attend conventions and trainings in subjects pertaining to seniors, healthcare, and computer training in classes such as: intermediate Excel and Publisher classes at the local community colleges in Pulaski County. The Coordinator will attend the yearly Summit which is part of the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services to learn new concepts of how to recruit and retain senior volunteers.

Other duties of the RSVP Director, staff, advisory council and local sponsor will be to educate the community about the programs through presentations and to invite partner agencies to give presentations at special events.

Garland County RSVP will maintain records of clients served on volunteer hourly sheets, which will help measure impact. Filed impact statements provide proof of accomplishments that are recorded and measured. Database reports and impact statements are used to demonstrate concrete impacts of

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the program and its volunteers.

The local sponsor requires an RSVP progress report for its quarterly Board of Directors meetings. This report is used in part, to monitor and evaluate the Program Director and the impact of the program on the community.

The RSVP Director will consult with the newly established RSVP advisory council, which will meet quarterly to assist with assessing community needs and programming strategies. The council will advise on programming priorities and evaluate accomplishments and impact; will advise on funding resources; support increased visibility and recognition in the community; support the sponsor and director through program development, volunteer recruitment and retention, station acquisition and; review volunteer grievances. The RSVP advisory council is composed of community leaders who come from local businesses, station/partner staff, and RSVP active volunteers. As community leaders, the advisory council members will be aware of community needs, where RSVP is heading in the future and will be actively involved in seeking ways to meet those needs.

Resources, both financial and in-kind, will be recorded by the RSVP Director and local sponsor who will have an aggressive financial management system that is threefold: (1) an internal bookkeeper will manage the fiscal records such as payroll reports and distribution, inventory, supplies and financial reporting; (2) an external Certified Public Accountant, Kathy Qualls, will use QuickBooks to maintain records. The CPA will review the financial records of the internal bookkeeper, reconcile bank statements and prepare 941 and 990 records and; (3) an external auditor, Mike Cobb, with Cobb and Suskie, LTD., will conduct an annual audit in accordance with auditing standards accepted in the USA and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The financial tracking system will detect deficiencies in internal control and compliance and will assure best practices in financial management. All records will be kept with the local sponsor, CPA and the Auditor on internal hard drive and copies filed away under lock and key. Backups are maintained by the local sponsor.

The Garland County RSVP will secure in-kind support from their local sponsor for office space,

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equipment such as computers, printers, fax machines and other office equipment and, meeting and storage space in a centrally located renovated building, which will serve active, handicapped accessible volunteers and visitors in a variety of capacities.

RSVP will have many stations/partners who will donate in-kind services i.e. local hospitals, nursing home with meals of RSVP volunteers who will work more than 4 hours/or through lunchtime periods; meeting places for the RSVP advisory council such as; libraries and churches and, the RSVP website up-keep is gratis through an RSVP retired Air Force Colonel of twenty eight years (28) Mr. Ed Merck. Mr. Merck not only maintains and manages the RSVP website. but serves on many boards, one being the Senior Olympics in Hot Springs, Arkansas which is in the heart of Garland County. RSVP of Central Arkansas nominated Mr. Merck to receive the Governor's Distinguished Citizens Volunteer Award for 2013. There were eleven other nominees all deserving of this honor, Mr. Merck won. He was honored with a dinner at the Governors' Mansion that was televised by KARK Channel 4 news station. Mr. Merck who was humbled and pleasantly surprised stated that there is nothing more rewarding then seeing a true volunteer that wears the uniform of the United States of America. Mr. Merck received a standing ovation for speaking those words. Mr. Merck is truly an American Hero and an amazing RSVP volunteer.

Community businesses and merchants will also donate recognition tokens for the RSVP annual events. The RSVP staff, board and local sponsor will be seeking ways to receive gifts in-kind donations annually.

RSVP Director will be seeking ways to receive State, and other funding through foundations and other agencies.

Garland County RSVP will report its success in managing its volunteer program through impact based accounts to CNCS, its local sponsor and Arkansas Division of Volunteerism. Continuation of its programs with Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), state and other important funding since 1996, is a wonderful testament to the reputation it holds today.

RSVP has read all the CNCS rules and regulations, the performance measure requirements containing the focus areas, outcomes and other community priorities and all documents that must be submitted by September 9, 2014.

## Narratives

**Other**

N/A

**PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

N/A