

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

A. Executive Summary, The St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin propose to develop an AmeriCorps program serving our rural reservation communities in northwest Wisconsin in the three-county area of Burnett, Barron and Polk that will focus on the CNCS focus areas of Economic Opportunity, to increase economic opportunities in our communities, particularly the employability of opportunity youth. The CNCS investment of \$56,024.00 will be matched with \$1,127.00 cash in Tribal funds and \$18,062.00 in kind. No AmeriCorps members will be needed to execute this plan.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

B.1. Problem/Need Our tribe was long known as "The Lost Tribe" however, with the 1934 passage of the Indian Reorganization Act, we were finally able to reclaim a small portion of the original homeland we had been occupying in northwest Wisconsin for over 200 years. Our reservation consists of 4,689 acres of trust land mapped by the federal government in a checkerboard of small tracts of land in northwest Wisconsin primarily in Barron, Burnett, and Polk Counties. Tribal members reside in scattered rural communities separated by non-reservation land by as much as 50 miles.

We have identified a Planning Team of key stakeholders that possess the knowledge, enthusiasm and vision necessary to ensure the successful design, implementation and management for our future AmeriCorps program. A one-year Planning Grant would provide the capacity and length of time these team members require to be able to respond to the level of complexity in many of the AmeriCorps program elements. Our planning process will focus on addressing the high level of poverty and unemployment experienced by tribal members living in our reservation communities. According to the 2013 American Indian Population and Labor Force Report, U.S. Department of the Interior, in 2010, 25%-28.2% of AIAN families in Wisconsin had incomes below the poverty level, ranking Wisconsin 24 out of the 33 States with Federally recognized Tribes, with only 9 states having a higher percent of American Indian families living below the poverty level. As of March 2015, we had 1,095 enrolled members (St. Croix Enrollment Office); and percent population by age: 15% ages 0-17; 20% ages 18-29; 20% ages 30-39; 23% ages 40-54; and 22% ages 55-99. There are 108 tribal members between the ages of 16-24. A 2010 Bureau of Indian Affairs Labor Force Report stated that of our total service population of 3,185 there were 671 individuals employed with annual earnings below federal poverty guidelines and 1,749 individuals were available to work who could not find employment.

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We will target ten tribal youth to participate in our AmeriCorps service activities ages 16-24 who meet income and other criteria to be termed "Opportunity Youth." CNCS defines Opportunity youth as "economically disadvantaged individuals ages 16-24 who are disconnected from school or work for at least six months prior to service, economically disadvantaged as used in the member development performance measures, receiving or meet the income eligibility requirements to receive: TANF, Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, SCHIP, Section 8 housing assistance." CNCS defines "disconnected from school or work" as unemployed, underemployed, and not in school for at least six months prior to service."

### **How Will the AmeriCorps Program be Developed and Address Need**

Tribal agencies and the Planning Team members will identify recruits, advertise in the Tribal Newsletter, and hold Community Feasts to seek recruits. They will be invited to an orientation on the opportunities for personal and community growth made possible through AmeriCorps and will then sign up for an interview to become a candidate. During the interview each recruit will share the strengths and skills they have or hope to acquire in the areas of: skilled trades, construction, plumbing, HVAC, heavy equipment, and electrical.

The candidates will review the training regimen including the motivational trainings for all candidates on team building, leadership development, and community service learning, as well as selective technical training for candidates. After the selection process the candidates will be asked to commit to the initial 12-month term with the expectation they will become an influential community change agent for the future.

### **How AmeriCorps Members Will Impact Community Need**

The Program will be based on ten AmeriCorps members as Skill Seekers: Up to twenty percent of their time will be committed to receiving coaching and training from representatives of the St. Croix Tribal Construction and Housing Departments and the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College as part of a training program for construction labor and skilled trades (carpentry, roofing, plumbing, electric, HVAC, masonry, heavy equipment). Prior to beginning their member service activities, the AmeriCorps members will help to determine tribal housing needs and the skill base needed to repair homes. A long-term goal will be for the development of a Tribal master/apprentice program and other opportunities for learning the required skills, as well as a business conceptual model for a Workers Cooperative.

### **Planning Process, Time Line and Leadership**

The Planning Team will initially consist of our Tribal Human Resource Director who will oversee the

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planning process, our Tribal Housing Office and Construction Program Directors, and two consultants. The HR Director will be the onsite contact for the program and will make arrangements for all meetings and events. The Staff Consultant, a Tribal member with over 25 years in public education, community consulting and social work, will support the HR Director and other team members with project operations and facilitate staff and community meetings. The Staff Consultant will convene the Planning Team and ensure the one-year planning process results in a solid framework outlining exactly how moving forward with a team of optimistic and enthusiastic AmeriCorps members will impact generations of high unemployment.

The Training Consultant for the AmeriCorps Program will develop motivational and inspirational leadership and training materials for the team members and future AmeriCorps service members. The consultant will be a tribal member, well versed in community service, tradition, cultural pride and language. He will have a strong background in the skilled trades, master-apprentice concepts for learning, connections to higher learning, and vast experience working with youth.

The above Planning Team members and two consultants, together as Native elders and St. Croix Tribal members, will build the foundation for St. Croix AmeriCorps members to flourish. The team will implement the following planning process:

Invitation to regional stakeholders such as the Indianhead Technical College to participate as the AmeriCorps Planning Team to oversee design, financing and implementation of the Program, Community Feast for Planning Team, staff and Tribal members to celebrate possibilities with AmeriCorps with unveiling of AmeriCorps banner,

Design recruitment, interview, selection process for AmeriCorps members,

Design orientation for members including Personal Strength Plan detailing their strengths, skills and skill enhancement needs; visitation process and supervision agreements for the volunteer sites; review of compliance and accountability,

Design leadership and preliminary technical training regimen for future AmeriCorps members,

Contract with partner agencies and schools regarding their involvement and resource allocations for training,

Convene Planning Team to identify, review and select evidence based interventions for work of members and design a theory of change and logic model that captures the American Indian tradition of supporting tribal members in an inter-generational holistic and comprehensive manner,

Ensure all CNCS compliance requirements are incorporated, to include prohibited activities,

Respond to CNCS requirements for reporting and attendance at trainings.

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## Planning Timeline

Leader 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Develop Training and Staff Consultant Service Agreements HR Dir x

Convene Regional Stakeholders and Tribal Program Directors as AmeriCorps Planning Team Staff Consult x x

Community Celebration Feast Dir Construction x

Develop leadership, unity and cultural pride training modules; create plan for technical skill building

Train-ing Consult x x x x x x x

Planning Team Workshops: Explore evidence based interventions and logic model design/outcome stmt; dev plan for reporting to CNCS Staff Consult x x x x x x x

Outline and prepare selection process for members; design orientation to volunteer sites; get written commitment for supervision HR Dir,

Dir. Construction

x x x x x

Reporting to NCS and attendance at NCS Training HR Dir x x x

## How Planning Period Will Impact Future Management Components

The planning period will give the planners and partners of the AmeriCorps Program the time necessary to build trust and develop strong working relationships to ensure long-term commitments for community change. The poverty and unemployment challenges of the St. Croix Tribe have taken generations to develop and the solutions will be complex and comprehensive. As each phase of the logic model is developed, the Planning Team will seek input from those within Tribal government and Tribal agencies who may be impacted by the work and presence of AmeriCorps volunteers.

## Organizational Capability

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The St. Croix Human Resources Director has the knowledge and capability to carry out the activities

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of the Planning Grant. Mrs. Hazel Hindsley, is the Human Resources Director and Graduate of UMD MSW Program and a former Tribal Council Member.

Skill Seeker Component: Director of St. Croix Tribal Construction (Rueben Buck) will participate on the Planning Committee as the supervisor for future Skill Seekers. Francis Songetay, the primary organizer and presenter of technical skills for the future Skill Seekers will work with Rueben to develop skill requirements and appropriate training.

As the Training Consultant: Francis Songetay is a member and cultural leader for the Tribe, fluent in Ojibwemowin and active as a tribal elder in traditional activities. He is a certified machinist and mold maker, woodworker, and carpenter who is knowledgeable about the use tools within the skilled trades. He has worked for the Tribe as Tribal Administrator, Youth Director, and with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Staff Consultant, Judie Cutler, MSW has worked extensively in the field of multicultural education as a school social worker creating programs to support the health and wellness of families from many cultures. She holds degrees in social work: program development, policy and administration, sociology, and American Indian Studies. Judie has been involved across the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin working extensively for policy and systems changes to improve collaborative efforts between community agencies, organizations, schools and Tribes. She is a private consultant and trainer on school-community linkages, community coalition building, leadership development and cross-cultural communication. Her qualitative research projects are centered on community capacity building and the inclusion of low-income families and people of color in decisions that affect them and their families.

Judie is enrolled with the Lake Superior Band of Chippewa, the St. Croix Tribe.

"If you want to build a ship, then don't drum up people to gather wood, give orders, and divide the work. Rather, teach them to yearn for the far and endless sea."

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

The St. Croix Chippewa Tribal members are governed by a five-member Tribal Council Executive Body elected for two-year terms. The Council consists of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and two council members. The Tribal Constitution and By-Laws were approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior on November 12, 1942 and amended to include the St. Croix Tribal Court on February 3, 1984. Decisions by the Tribal Council are made by a majority rule. The Tribal Council meets monthly and is responsible for the general welfare of Tribal members and the management of day-to-day

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Tribal business which includes overseeing business operations, programs and departments.

The Tribe has been monitoring and reporting on federal, state, county and foundation grants and contracts for over 25 years. The federal awards include HUD, DHHS, USDA, IHS, and BIA. In the period from 2009 to 2012, the St. Croix Financial Department accounting staff managed grants from a low amount of \$8,697,248 to a high of \$40,879,882.

The Tribe's major operations include general government, health services, general assistance, public safety, education, public works, environmental management, and natural resources. Many of the services are funded by the United States and other agencies through grants and contracts. In addition, the Tribe owns and operates twelve enterprises: travel, construction, grocery, rehabilitation, professional buildings, check cashing, fishery, software development, housing, convenience stores, and casinos.

### **Basis of Accounting:**

Within each audit is a schedule of expenditures of federal and state awards including the federal grant activity of the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. The grant activity presented on the schedule of expenditures of federal and state awards is accounted for through the Finance Department and is presented on the modified accrual basis of accounting. The information in this schedule is presented in accordance with the requirement of OMB Circular A-133, Audit of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations and the State of Wisconsin Single Audit Guidelines.

**Fund Financial Statements:** The fund financial statements provide detailed information about the most significant activities of the Tribe but not the Tribe as a whole. A fund is a set of related accounts that is used to control resources that have been segregated to carry on specific activities or to attain certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations. Some funds are required by law and by loan or bond covenants. The Tribal Council establishes other funds to control and manage money for particular purposes or to segregate certain grants or contracts (such as aid from the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development and Justice). The Tribe, like other state and local governments, uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. All Tribe funds can be divided into three categories: governmental funds, proprietary funds and fiduciary funds.

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

We believe we have designed a cost effective program with an adequate budget

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

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NA

### Clarification Summary

St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin:

Time Line for Activities of St. Croix Skills Seekers AmeriCorps Planning Team

Week 1 Month 1

Responsible Party: Tribal Legal Department

Obtain Criminal Background Checks for HR Dir., Dir. of St. Croix Construction Program and Planning Director, Verify Results and Document results in AmeriCorps Grant File

Responsible Party: CFO and other Financial Management Staff

Meet with HR Dir and Planning Dir regarding AmeriCorps Grant Administration reporting and compliance requirements, sign required grant documents with Tribal Council

Responsible Party: HR and Planning Dir.

Finalize Tribal AmeriCorps Training and Staff Consultant Contracts, Obtain Signatures

Week 1 through week 5 Month 1 and 2

Responsible Party: Tribal Council Representative for Planning Grant, Tribal AmeriCorps Consultants, HR Director, Planning Dir., Dir. of St. Croix Construction, St. Croix Housing, Dir. Tribal Education Director

Develop Components to Promote Community Member and Partner Organizations in AmeriCorps

Develop Awareness Campaign Materials for St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Planning Team

Activities to include Celebration Meeting and a Community Celebration Feast: Dates, agenda, handouts, plan for inviting community members, partner organizations and tribal program directors presentations to include: AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Power Point Presentations, Flyers, articles for area newspapers and reservation newspaper The Vision, Post on St. Croix and other identified websites.

Post Flyers for tribal members throughout reservation communities.

Schedule and provide power point presentations and Flyer developed for partner stakeholder

organizations to include: County Government Programs in three-county area, Economic Development; Regional Planning Commissions; Local Community/Technical Colleges; Workforce Development Agencies. Obtain commitments to attend Kick-Off Celebration Meeting.

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Provide AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Presentation to Tribal Council; for Tribal Program Directors in Monthly Meeting

Week 6 -8 Month 2

Responsible Party: Tribal Council Members, Tribal AmeriCorps Consultants, HR Director, Planning Dir., Dir. of St. Croix Construction, St. Croix Housing Dir.

St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Kick Off Celebrations Held: Meeting and Feast.

Strategy Meeting to develop St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Planning Team.

Membership based on commitments to participate obtained in two celebration events above: to include Tribal Council, Tribal AmeriCorps Consultants, HR Director, Planning Dir., Dir. of St. Croix Construction, St. Croix Housing Dir. Identified community members and Partner organizations.

Month 3 & 11

Responsible Party: Lead: Tribal AmeriCorps Training Consultant. Scheduled feedback/input sessions with full membership of St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Planning Team.

Develop leadership and preliminary technical training regimen for future AmeriCorps members, unity and teamwork training modules; create plan for technical skill building.

Month 3 & 11

Responsible Party: Lead: Tribal AmeriCorps Staff & Training Consultant.

Workshops with membership of St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Planning Team.

Design orientation for future AmeriCorps members including Personal Strength Plan detailing their strengths, skills and skill enhancement needs; visitation process and supervision agreements for the volunteer sites; review of compliance and accountability,

Contract with partner agencies and schools regarding their involvement and resource allocations for training,

Identify, review and select evidence based interventions for work of members and design a theory of change and logic model that captures the American Indian tradition of supporting tribal members in an inter-generational holistic and comprehensive manner,

Ensure all CNCS compliance requirements are incorporated, to include prohibited activities,

Respond to CNCS requirements for reporting and attendance at trainings.

Outline and prepare recruitment, required criteria and eligibility for selection of AmeriCorps members;

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design orientation to volunteer sites; get written commitment for supervision.

Develop draft of St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers AmeriCorps Program Design

Month12

Responsible Party: St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers Planning Team

Finalize and submit to CNCS: St. Croix AmeriCorps Skill Seekers AmeriCorps Program Design

### **Continuation Changes**

na

### **Grant Characteristics**