

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

The Modern Maturity Center, Inc. (MMC) is a multi-purpose senior center located in Dover, Delaware. The MMC is a resource for companionship, education, wellness, nutrition, and recreation for older adults as they age in place. This nonprofit human service agency is invested in its mission to provide programs and services that enhance the quality of life, with respect and dignity, for individuals age 50+. The MMC has been sponsoring the RSVP project since 1972. The current project will be comprised of approximately 763 active RSVP volunteers. We are requesting \$48,617 to run the Kent County RSVP program successfully. This project will meet the local needs of Kent County within the service categories of Food Security (MANNNA), Respite Care, Transportation for Independent Living, Companionship, Coaching, Elder Abuse Protection, Jumpstart, School-Based Mentoring, Housing, Adult Basic Education, Financial Literacy, Veteran Support, At-Risk Ecosystems Plant Establishment and Removal, Disaster Preparation Assistance, and Other Community Priorities. By the end of the three year grant cycle, RSVP of Kent County will serve approximately 25,500 Kent County residents.

According to the Institute for Public Administration College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy at the University of Delaware, "The Delaware Population Consortium predicts that New Castle, Kent, Sussex Counties will experience rapid growth in the number of seniors residing in the jurisdictions over the next several decades. The Share of people 60+ living in these jurisdictions will nearly double, with increases of 84.7, 90.4, and 97.5 percent, respectively" (Institute for Public Administration College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy 2). In reference to the same data, 20% of low-income older adults reside in Kent County, reducing their financial ability to access to essential services within this rural area (3). Nonprofit organizations will need to organize volunteers to meet the increased service demand. In response to this matter, The Modern Maturity Center intends to uphold the U.S. Department of Human Services Administration of Community Living's goal to increase access to community supports by continuing and expanding strong volunteer partnerships throughout Kent County (Administration for Community Living, par. 2).

In order to reach these residents, RSVP volunteers will support this growing population of older adults through providing resources and services to meet the needs of Healthy Futures, the priority focus area, throughout Kent County, Delaware. These service activities will include partnerships with Meals on Wheels, local senior centers, veterans centers, TRIAD, and adult day care programs. By implementing the necessary support for older adults in Kent County, residents will have the opportunity to live

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independently longer within their own homes, reducing the utilization and cost of services provided at the state and federal level. These services are provided by RSVP volunteers to seniors, including delivering meals to homes, transporting residents to and from doctor's appointments, accommodating caregivers through adult day care, providing companionship services, presenting information on Medicare Fraud, and making requested check-in calls to support older adults as they continue to reside at home. In addition to meeting the needs of older adults, Kent County RSVP will also provide volunteers to fulfill other state initiatives that meet community needs and priorities.

### Strengthening Communities

Kent County positioned within "the central part of the state of Delaware," is locally known as the "The Heart of Delaware" (Kent County Levy Court, par. 1). The county "...is part of the Dover, Delaware, Metropolitan Area and comprises a total of twenty Cities and Towns" (par. 1). This division of Delaware is located midway between New York and Washington D.C. The United States Census Bureau estimates that Kent County has a population of 171,987 residents, an increase of 5.9% since the 2010 census. Out of this population, 26,829 residents are age 65 years or older, making this rural location a priority for initiatives like RSVP's focus category Healthy Futures. According to the Caesar Rodney Institute, this population increase will result in one of every four Delaware residents being over age 65 and will account for 62% of Delaware's net growth over the next decade (Caesar Rodney Institute 3). Conversely, these older adults also offer a wealth of highly skilled, diverse potential RSVP volunteers for Kent County (United States Census Bureau). By utilizing Delaware's network of over 50% of U.S. "publicly-traded companies, [including] 64% of the Fortune 500," that reside in state, RSVP of Kent County will continue to maintain and build strong community relationships (Wink, par. 1).

RSVP Volunteers will provide a variety of services to meet the priority focus of Healthy Futures. For example, the Modern Maturity Center is the only Meals on Wheels provider for Kent County, Delaware. There is a desperate need for volunteers to ensure meals can be delivered to all home bound residents. Meal delivery helps Kent County residents stay independent and healthy while allowing them to find assistance and live life with dignity within their own homes. RSVP Volunteers ensure meal delivery is not interrupted so that seniors get the daily nutrition they need to stay independent (Meals on Wheels Delaware, par. 1-5).

So far in 2015, the Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance (MANNA) program reported

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meal delivery to over 600 clients, receiving 194,607 meals. Out of these meals, 191,832 deliveries were hot and shelf stable meals while 2775 deliveries were nutrition supplements. RSVP Volunteers ensure that the only Meals on Wheels program in Kent County can sustain at this capacity. During this grant period, 160 RSVP Volunteers will deliver over 200,000 meals to home bound residents throughout the area.

In order for seniors to maintain their independence, they must be able to continue day to day activities. However, many older adults grow visually impaired and can no longer drive. Often it is hard for these individuals to find alternative transportation that does not burden others. Leaders are seeking community-based solutions for older adult transportation services in Delaware (O'Hanlon 2). More affordable, reliable, and available transportation services are needed through community-based services.

RSVP Volunteers serve as committed, dependable drivers to help individuals reach doctor's appointments, run errands, and assist in other basic needs. These volunteers even offer assistance within the facilities helping seniors who have physical disabilities navigate around the building. These volunteers will serve at assisted livings, senior centers, older adult communities, and veteran organizations. Not only will these individuals complete the task at hand, but also these residents get a sense of security, as they do not have to do these tasks alone. During this grant period, 80 RSVP Volunteers will provide 11,520 hours of transportation services, 1 hour per volunteer per week, to approximately 300 Kent County residents.

RSVP Volunteers will also serve within memory loss programs. Due to a large population of older adults in Kent County, many residents will experience memory loss as they age. The Center for Disease Control reports 9.6% of older adults already have Alzheimer's or dementia in Kent County, Delaware ("Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia" ). This number is only expected to increase. In 2015, the Alzheimer's Association projected a 21.7%-26.4% increase of Alzheimer's Disease cases in Delaware between 2015 and 2025 (Alzheimer's Association 20).

Within Kent County, progressive memory loss among residents must be addressed. A large body of research, including the Harvard School of Public Health "Health and Retirement Study" and the clinical trials at the Southern California Permanente Medical Group, shows how socialization and

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mind engaging activities have an impact on delaying memory loss (The Ageing Mind Initiative National Listserve, par. 1-7)(Schwartz, par. 1-13). These studies encourage routine socialization, strategy games, and physical exercise. Meanwhile, research, such as the "The Impact of Adult Day Programs on Family Caregivers of Elderly Relatives" from the Journal of Community Health Nursing, presents adult day care programs as services that allow caregivers to maintain their wellness through respite care in order to avoid burnout (Warren, Kerr, Smith, Godkin, and Schalm 220).

For this impacted population, both potential clients and caregivers, participation in programs like Front Porch and Day Break are vital for older adults suffering with memory loss. Through program participation, these individuals are able to get out, by utilizing program buses, and avoid social isolation in order to preserve brain health. Due to a high community need, programs like Front Porch and Day Break have wait lists. These programs are at full capacity and program staff must lead activities. 50 RSVP Volunteers will provide at least 7,200 hours of service to ensure every individual receives one-on-one support.

In 2012, the Medicare Strike Force reported over \$432 million dollars in false billings (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). Many of these crimes were committed by medical professionals involved in fraud schemes. Medicare fraud impacts all residents as it raises taxes and healthcare costs. The DE Senior Medicare Patrol program helps fight against Medicare fraud. Through this state sponsored program, volunteers are able to speak to seniors to help them prevent, identify, and report healthcare fraud. These groups present on identity protection, local scams, and Medicare Summary Notices. These presentations even lead to Medicare fraud referrals, which will go under investigation to recover lost funds. The DE Partners of Senior Medicare Patrol program makes community visits all around the county. 15 RSVP Volunteers will partner with the DE Partners of Senior Medicare Patrol program to help prevent elder abuse. Volunteers will participate in 75 visits around Kent County to share insight on Medicare Abuse.

Amongst the priority initiatives of Healthy Futures, RSVP of Kent Co will also dedicate volunteers to other service initiatives in Delaware. One of these initiatives is to support At-Risk Ecosystems through preserving trails. Community transportation has been an on-going discussion in Delaware, especially trails and other walkable and bikeable routes that provide accessible pathways for Delaware residents. Trails in Delaware help residents stay active. Calls to action like the State of Delaware's "First State

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Trails and Pathways Initiative" and the Walkable Bikeable Delaware 2013 Summit emphasize the community need to preserve trails, including trails in Kent County (Delaware Greenways, par. 1)(Taylor 6). RSVP volunteers will partner with organizations like Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in order to cut back vegetation along trails, transport trail material, remove brush and weeds, and apply landscaping maintenance. 30 RSVP Volunteers will help improve trails and at-risk ecosystems through 4,320 hours of service.

### **Recruitment and Development**

The RSVP staff of Kent County are committed to creating a valuable civic experience that will meet the needs of the community and the volunteers. Before going on site, all potential program participants must engage in an informal interview with the Volunteer Coordinator. Potential volunteers are invited to express past work experience, skills they would like to improve upon, and personal volunteer interests as well as required placement accommodations. In turn, the Volunteer Coordinator will also ask the volunteers about what compelled them to join RSVP and if the volunteers are 55 or better, which will provide background information on the individuals, ensure volunteers meet eligibility requirements, and contribute recruitment data for the program. Typical interviews last for approximately thirty minutes. In order to ensure volunteers will be matched with an appropriate RSVP station, the Volunteer Coordinator will discuss the required duties of each location that interests the volunteer. At the end of the interview, the volunteers will be provided with the task descriptions for the potential volunteer stations identified. The Volunteer Coordinator will then contact the identified RSVP Stations who will invite the volunteers to meet for an additional on-site interview and follow up trainings.

RSVP of Kent County will continue to work closely with RSVP stations to ensure volunteers receive appropriate, consistent training for volunteer assignments that are impact-based and meet the critical needs of the community. All stations are expected to give at least a two hour training session on their organization, the volunteer duties, and how the service meets the community need. These stations are also assessed annually for retention of volunteers in terms of performance, safety, and equal opportunity. During the annual review, volunteers and stations are separately invited to evaluate the training and support provided for volunteers in order to identify current volunteer training and satisfaction needs that could be supported by RSVP Staff. In addition to the training provided at the RSVP stations, RSVP of Kent County will host volunteer training sessions on vulnerable populations, ethics, and leadership, which will help volunteers continue to improve upon their skills and service.

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Recognition is a priority for this program. Along with many recognition events voluntarily hosted by RSVP stations throughout the year, RSVP volunteers are also recognized by RSVP of Kent County at the annual recognition event in April presented by the Modern Maturity Center. This event, planned by the Advisory Council Recognition Committee, lasts for four hours and includes a meal, gifts, and entertainment. Dignitaries are invited to host this event and are asked to honor RSVP Volunteers with a service pin. Pins are given different significance in recognition of years of service. In addition, veterans will now be recognized for serving their country twice in regard to their dedication to their country through the armed forces and in civic community service.

In order to continue expanding RSVP of Kent County, RSVP staff utilize many public relations materials: e-newsletters, handouts, videos, brochures, and articles. Many of these materials are comprised of information provided by the National Corporation of Community Service. In addition, the RSVP program is provided with a news page within the Modern Maturity Center's Bulletin to share recent volunteer stories and upcoming volunteer needs. Often this page includes educational and service articles as well as photos of volunteers in action. The bulletin is distributed monthly to the MMC network and the local community, reaching 15,000 individuals and businesses throughout central Delaware. Often the RSVP news page is used as a recruitment tool for both volunteers and stations. Further, the MMC website provides a designated RSVP webpage, which displays the same recent volunteer stories and current volunteer needs and also features the National Corporation of Community Service RSVP website to inform interested parties about the program.

Due to partnering with a large sponsoring agency, the RSVP of Kent County has the opportunity to recruit and develop the program through making appearances in agency events throughout the year. One large event made up of over seventy local partnerships is the Annual Community Education and Health Fair, which provides an occasion to share and promote the program to local stakeholders as well as potential volunteer stations and volunteers. In addition, the Project Director will routinely visit to make a brief statement on behalf of RSVP at social clubs, membership meetings, veteran associations, state and community agencies, and other local organizations. These routine visits to different groups and organizations help RSVP of Kent County recruit a diverse team of volunteers. The MMC also hosts a quarterly New Member Welcome Breakfast for MMC members, typically hosting around two hundred guests, where RSVP of Kent County is given the opportunity to engage with new

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members and invite them to join RSVP. Meanwhile, due to new membership and recruitment taken on by the MMC, potential RSVP volunteers are often self-recruited by stopping into the RSVP office on a daily basis. Overall, RSVP staff will evaluate the program's volunteer pool annually through the self-assessment survey conducted in December in order to ensure the program's diversity reflects the community served.

### **Program Management**

Before taking part in the RSVP program, all potential RSVP stations must undergo a detailed interview with the RSVP Project Director. This interview focuses on the overall mission of the potential volunteer station and the work plan for RSVP of Kent County. During this conversation, the agency director and the RSVP Project Director will agree upon a data collection method to meet the requirements of performance measurement. Over the course of the three-year performance period, RSVP volunteers' service must be in line with solving priority needs, which ensure equal opportunity and safety for all parties. Assessments to ensure quality service will be evaluated annually. Overall, designated RSVP stations must provide service opportunities for RSVP volunteers that promote diversity, offer leadership opportunities, and meet the identified community need. Any potential station that identifies prohibited activities, such as religious or political activities will not be accepted as a station and the interview will end. However, if a mutual understanding of data collection and ethical practices is reached, the agency director will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU obligates the RSVP station to provide consistent, ongoing training as well as uphold organizational responsibilities. The MOU will be renewed before the performance period expires in order to uphold integrity to the National Corporation of Community Service.

Performance Measurement Data is collected through the RSVP Volunteer Reporter software. This program manages all data, records, and volunteer hours, which are recorded and updated monthly. The MMC's IT department will ensure the Volunteer Reporter software receives all software upgrades and technical support by the software company.

Evaluation methods incorporate feedback from RSVP staff, station representatives, the Advisory Council, volunteers, and community members. This review is performed in December each year. The RSVP Director evaluates current stations in terms of focus, Healthy Futures, Education, Veterans and Military Families, Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, and Environmental Stewardship and station type: county government organizations, senior agencies, health-care organizations, etc. This

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survey also considers volunteers in terms of training, retention, satisfaction, and recognition as well as communication methods for outreach within the community. The Project Director will also assess the RSVP Advisory Council to ensure the members of the group are making progress within committees and fundraising ventures.

During grant cycles, RSVP of Kent County observes the community's current needs through assessments and evaluations conducted by both the RSVP staff and Advisory Council. This information is observed objectively through quantitative and qualitative data as well as information provided by both stations and volunteers. The RSVP staff creates a plan that is anticipated to minimize disruptions of current RSVP stations. However, RSVP of Kent County holds the responsibility to graduate volunteer stations that no longer fulfill changing community needs. When the decision is made to graduate a volunteer station, the RSVP Director contacts the organization to ensure that the program can no longer meet CNCS's needs.

The MMC Accounting Department will continue to handle management of all financial project resources. All charges made by RSVP staff are made through requisitions and reimbursement documentation. All RSVP Volunteers who drive for Meals on Wheels also request reimbursement through thorough mileage documentation, including odometer readings and locations. These mileage sheets are signed by the site supervisor and are recorded by the Volunteer Coordinator. All charges are then verified by the RSVP Director and are reviewed during a meeting with the Accounting Director on a monthly basis. All financial documents are secured safely within a filing system, based on organization by the month the transaction occurred, secured within the accounting department. All transactions are also documented within the latest version of Quickbooks software.

Although the RSVP program does not directly participate in fundraising for the RSVP project, the Accounting Department manages in-kind donations raised by the RSVP Advisory Council and local community for the annual RSVP Volunteer Awards & Recognition event held at the Modern Maturity Center in April.

In order to ensure local needs are being met by the RSVP program, The Modern Maturity Center will continue to foster a strong RSVP Advisory Council committed to the program in regards to focus, design, and evaluation. These members of the Advisory Council are diverse, including current RSVP

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volunteers, community members, and nonprofit leaders. Peggy Sparks, the Advisory Council President, is a retired educator who has partnered with different nonprofit organizations throughout Delaware. Jen Allen, the Vice President, is the Executive Director for the First State Manufactured Housing Association. She is also involved with many committees within the Kent County area. Jean King, the Secretary, was appointed by the governor to be a member of The Executive Committee of the Child Placement Review Board and has held this role for many years. In addition to these highly regarded members within the community, other advisory board members come from diverse backgrounds of nursing, law, education, and other community professions. The Advisory Council will complete project assessments based off of self-evaluation performance measurement tools provided by CNCS. The Advisory Council will also work to expand the program by identifying community needs and reaching out to potential RSVP stations. In addition, this group will continue to seek donations and funding to assist with planning the Annual Volunteer Recognition event. Every year the Advisory Council will organize the Recognition Committee, send invitations, and prepare the Recognition location.

### **Organizational Capability**

The Modern Maturity Center, the sponsoring agency, was founded in 1969. The MMC provides services to the senior community in the areas of health, nutrition, companionship, education, and wellness. This organization has demonstrated the capacity and fiscal resources for sound financial and program management. The MMC has a \$5.5 million budget and employs approximately 230 individuals. The organization is led by the CEO who oversees the day to day operations of the center. The Board of Directors, made up of nineteen members, provides financial oversight and develops strategic planning goals for the organization. The three Vice Presidents, Marketing & Development, Building & Grounds, and Finance, ensure each department runs effectively. There are seven program directors, including the RSVP Director and the Accounting Director.

The financial/fiscal office manages more than 3 million dollars in federal grant funds each year. The center requires and maintains accurate record keeping through the accounting department for fiscal management and program compliance. All procedures are established for review in accordance with the MMC's policies and procedures. A position description is provided for the Project Director who holds a part-time position of 24 hours per week. In addition, the Volunteer Coordinator, also part-time, serves as an assistant to the director and places volunteers at official RSVP stations. The MMC provides offices for the staff members and access to necessary equipment and supplies. The sponsor

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also ensures that the RSVP project staff has the necessary funding to attend conferences, professional workshops, and meetings offered by CNCS and other local agencies and partners. When changes occur for program policies, regulation, and/or governance, the RSVP Director will check monthly for changes and make program staff aware of the change. All affected RSVP staff will meet to ensure a mutual understanding. The RSVP Staff, both the programming and accounting department, hold credentials that provide project support and ensure program compliance:

The Project Director, Brittany Dillard, holds a Masters of Science in Administration of Human Services. In the past, Brittany completed 300 hours of service through Students in Service with Americorps. Currently, she attends workshops and seminars on volunteerism and professional development in the human services. Her professional experience aligns with program management, ethics, and vulnerable populations. The Project Director is responsible for managing the grant, volunteer stations, and program staff as well as maintaining the program budget, the PRS, policies, insurance, resources, and records. The Project Director will also conduct timely check in calls and in person visits to ensure volunteer stations are well supported. Since the RSVP project for Kent County has been established since 1972, many stations are already well managed and oriented in MOUs, insurance, and volunteer hour sheets. The project's success will continue even with part-time program management.

The Volunteer Coordinator, Linda Darling, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Special Education K-12 and Early Childhood Education. She has worked 14 years as a preschool teacher and 11 years as an Activity Coordinator in Long-Term Care. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for recording volunteer hours monthly and volunteer training as well as interviewing, recruiting, and placing volunteers.

The Accounting Director, Karlett Walker, holds a Bachelor of Science -- Accounting, Certified member of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners. She has completed the Becker CPA Review in preparation for the CPA exam. Her years of experience include accounting and auditing where she served for the City of Dover and the State of Delaware. She is responsible for budget management, the payment management system, the FFR, and monthly budget review as well as upholding current federal, state, and organizational policies.

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The Payroll Clerk, Brenda Olivio, has 7 years of accounting and human resources experience within nonprofits around Delaware. She is responsible for record keeping, detailing expenses within QuickBooks, and entering bi-weekly time sheets.

The RSVP Project Director and the Director of Accounting will meet once a month to review the budget: both the CNCS share and Grantee share. Both employees stay updated on statutes, regulations and applicable OMB circulars to ensure efficient and effective use of available resources. All RSVP employees are given both an MMC Employee Handbook and an RSVP of Kent County Employee Handbook to ensure policies are held with integrity: including, but not limited to, the Payment Management System, time sheets, reimbursement, staff travel, and accurate reporting. These policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis in regard to compliance monitoring procedures.

The organization's procedures and systems are in place to self-assess, evaluate, and improve the professional culture of the MMC with strategic planning completed every three years. The RSVP Advisory Council and stations report on satisfaction and areas for improvement. The RSVP Director and Advisory Council meet to regularly to make progress on the project.

### **Other**

#### Justification for Part-Time Project Director

RSVP of Kent County would like to formally request part-time status for the Project Director. If granted funding, the Project Director will fulfill all required duties during the three-year term documented within the CNCS eGrants submission and the Modern Maturity Center Project Director Job Description. We have established procedures for this position to function part-time since 2010. After discussing the updated policies and procedures of the Corporation for National and Community Service with the staff and volunteer station representatives, we feel confident that we can accomplish all requirements of the grant within a part-time capacity.

#### Clarification of Volunteer Recognition

All 763 volunteers highlighted within the Executive Summary will receive recognition for their service, regardless of hours completed. The Annual Volunteer Recognition will be a two hour breakfast, including community member leaders and volunteer station representatives. RSVP Volunteers who have dedicated 50 hours or more to the RSVP projects within the year will be invited to this recognition. All other 263 RSVP Volunteers with 49 hours or less within the year will be recognized

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through certificates and a small gift in the mail.

How Recruitment will ensure a Diversified Volunteer Pool Reflective of Community  
RSVP of Kent County is committed to recruiting a diversified volunteer pool reflective of our community. According to the 2014 statistics from the United States Census Bureau, Kent County is made up of a diverse population: Caucasian 68.3%, African American 25.2%, American Indian and Alaska Natives 0.7%, Asian 2.3%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander 0.1%, Two or More Races 3.4%, and Hispanic or Latino 6.9% (United States Census Bureau). In order to recruit members of each group, the RSVP Staff of Kent County are committed to reaching out to potential volunteers through community presentations. Currently, the RSVP Staff are scheduling presentations for the Sankofa Cultural Arts Center in Dover, Westside Health, and other locations that focus on other ethnic groups in order to reach a more diverse volunteer pool. In addition to community presentations, the staff will be reaching out to diverse publications to advertise to potential volunteers, including Hoy en Delaware and El Tiempo Hispano.

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### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

Not applicable