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Executive Summary

An estimated 82 RSVP volunteers will serve. Of this number 58 will be placed in outcomes assignments. Some of their activities will include tutoring low-income students, reading to Head Start children, delivering Meals to home-bound residents and providing skills based volunteers to help build the capacity of area nonprofit agencies to improve their effectiveness. The primary focus area of this project is Education. At the end of the three-year grant 80% of students participating in the RSVP America Reads program will demonstrate improved academic performance in literacy; and 80% of participating Head Start students will demonstrate gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills. The CNCS federal investment of \$50,906 will be supplemented by \$20,657 in non-federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

Chester County is located in Pennsylvania, a Philadelphia suburb; it is adjacent to Delaware and Montgomery Counties. As of the 2010 census, the population was 498,886. Chester County is the highest-income county in Pennsylvania and 24th highest in the nation as measured by median household income (as of 2010). But don't let that deceive you because according to the US Census, American Community Survey in 2013 6.9% of the population in Chester County were living below the poverty line, up from 6.2% in 2010. There are pockets of extreme need for example the following municipalities in Chester County far exceed the national average (15.4%) for poverty levels; City of Coatesville 33.4%, West Chester Borough 27.6%, Modena Borough 28%, South Coatesville Borough 26% and Oxford Borough 23.6% of the population are living below poverty.

According to the Chester County Food bank 70,000 households in Chester County don't have enough food. The food bank is in need of a variety of volunteers to help in the warehouse, kitchen or local farms. They distribute food to over 90 food cupboards and social service agencies in Chester County, which are themselves in need of volunteers to help distribute food to individuals and families.

The Chester County Meals on Wheels includes 21 chapters that served 733 home-bound neighbors last year (including 680 over the age of 60). Meals on Wheels are seeking additional volunteers to serve the growing senior population in the county. Each year the % of residents over the age of 65 has grown. According to the US Census in 2010 12.8% of the population was over 65 in 2014 that figure rose to 14.5% in the county. In 2013, 16,841 or 9.1% of households in Chester County had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. --source American Community Survey. This explains

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the call for additional Meals on Wheels volunteers.

Our proposed work plans address this community need with an increase of volunteer jobs in the Healthy Futures Focus Area (increasing the number of volunteers working in food distribution). Poverty is also a factor in education as disadvantaged students score lower on PSSA tests and are not proficient.

Results of the 2011-12 PSSA testing indicates half of the 12 Chester County school districts did not meet Adequate Yearly progress targets (set by the PA Dept. of Education). Economically disadvantaged students and English Language Learner students are even further behind; 41% of economically disadvantaged students and 77% of English Language Learners are NOT proficient in reading.

In both Kennett Consolidated and Coatesville Area School Districts 49% of disadvantaged students are NOT proficient in reading. Disadvantaged students (those eligible for free or reduced lunch) account for 53% of Coatesville students and 39.4% of Kennett students. We have already approached the Superintendent of the Coatesville Area School district and she is very interested in adding RSVP volunteer reading tutors to their elementary schools. In Octorara SD 50% of disadvantaged students are not proficient in reading and in Oxford SD 39% are not proficient. (Source: Pa Dept of Ed, 2014-15) Given these statistics Education is our primary focus area in Chester County.

Recruitment and Development

Our plan is to replicate highly effective and proven programs currently in place in Montgomery County and introduce them into Chester County where the programs meet the needs in the Chester County community. RSVP's educational programs provide high quality RSVP volunteer assignments that match the desires of specific volunteers to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and youth. Many of these volunteers are retired teachers, are patient, communicate well and enjoy working with children. They understand that society's future rests with the young having opportunities to live up to their potential. We believe that the high quality nature of these volunteer assignments is the reason 25% of our volunteer pool serves in RSVP Educational programs in Montgomery County. Volunteers serving in the same job (ex. tutoring through the America Reads program) are brought together on a regular basis to share best practices and learn from one another. Program outcomes are shared with volunteers so that they can see the impact of their work. Our

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program evaluations and volunteer surveys help ensure that we maintain the highest quality volunteer assignments.

RSVP's Community Links Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for maintaining relationships with our Stations. The Community Links Volunteer Coordinator visits each station to ensure compliance and volunteer safety. Volunteer job descriptions are discussed with the agency staff to be sure all assignments are appropriate and help meet the identified needs in the community. Required skills are discussed and documented so that RSVP can make the most suitable volunteer match. Our Community Links Volunteer Coordinator interviews volunteers who choose an assignment in the community serving at one of RSVP's Stations. The Community Links Coordinator then matches their interest and skills with open volunteer assignments in their neighborhoods.

Training for volunteers is both general and program specific. The Volunteer Coordinator reviews the RSVP volunteer handbook with every volunteer and performs the initial volunteer orientation. During orientation volunteers are trained on the parameters of volunteerism, grievance procedures, reporting of hours and volunteer benefits are described.

The program coordinators will train volunteers who choose to serve in one of the RSVP run programs such as America Reads (tutoring K-4th grade students), Family Literacy (reading to Head Start children) or Volunteer Executive Consultants (capacity building for nonprofit agencies). This training is program specific for example: America Reads volunteers receive training regarding specific strategies a tutor can use to improve the skills of a young reader. Strategies include modeling, decoding and using positive feedback to encourage children. Each America Reads tutor is also given an RSVP tutor reference manual. Family Literacy Volunteers receive read aloud tips including tips for engaging children while reading; and how to help promote literacy development. Volunteer Executive Consultants receive nonprofit management orientation, meet monthly to discuss ongoing projects, and participate in monthly in-service training. Volunteers that are placed in Stations, such as Meals on Wheels or Food pantries, are provided job specific training by the agency where they are placed.

According to the US Census Bureau 2014 quick facts Chester County demographics are as follows: 86.7% of Chester County resident are white, 6.4% are African American, 4.8% are Asian, 7.1% are

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Hispanic. 6.1% of Chester County's population is veterans. 30% of the population in Chester County is age 55 and over. 46.3% of those 55 and older are male, 53.7% are female.

We plan to recruit volunteers from all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, and gender. RSVP recruits volunteers in a variety of ways. The majority of volunteers are recruited through word of mouth and the Internet via our website, volunteer match or other online sources such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. RSVP utilizes the "boost" feature in Facebook to target volunteers in specific zip codes with specific interests including volunteering. This has been an effective method of recruiting a diverse group of volunteers. In addition RSVP's Public relations coordinator publishes articles in the local newspapers and utilizes press releases to attract volunteers. We schedule speaking engagements at Rotary Clubs and Chambers to inform the public about our programs and volunteer opportunities. We also reach out to veterans groups and participate in Veterans Expos and Health Fairs in order to recruit Veterans and their family members.

RSVP holds Volunteer Orientation events every three weeks at a different location to recruit volunteers from a large geographic area. This enables RSVP a wide reach without requiring volunteers to travel far from home to learn about opportunities and enroll with RSVP. In addition RSVP Staff are available at other sites one day per week (libraries and other high traffic sites) strategically identified by the Director of Community Engagement. Staff availability is promoted by the library via flyers and their online e-news and website. This allows volunteers and potential volunteers to know that they can stop in any Thursday from 10-2 at a specific location if they would like to speak with RSVP in person. This model has been extremely effective in Montgomery and Delaware Counties where we have recruited an average of 25 volunteers each month during 2015.

Volunteers are recognized for their service through publicity in the press, our newsletter, Facebook page, recognition events, and through personal notes and words from the ED and staff. We hold an annual volunteer recognition reception honoring our volunteer for years of service. Volunteers are nominated for Senior Corps Awards quarterly and awards are presented at the annual volunteer recognition reception. At the reception volunteers are given the opportunity to share their experience and how volunteering has changed their lives.

Program outcomes are shared with volunteers on a regular basis to acknowledge that they are making a significant difference through their volunteering.

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All RSVP volunteers receive a photo id so that they can identify with RSVP and so clients and stations know that they are RSVP volunteers. All volunteers are provided with excess liability insurance. Each year RSVP volunteers receive a satisfaction survey to give staff feedback about how we are doing and how we can improve. Volunteer feedback is taken very seriously as we strive to make each volunteer's experience exceptional.

Program Management

The volunteer coordinator interviews each potential volunteer to ensure that they are eligible to serve as RSVP volunteers. Volunteers are required to complete a volunteer enrollment form and a copy of their driver's license is requested to verify age and identity. If volunteers will be working in one of our programs with children, driving clients or will enter the home of an elderly client all necessary clearances are run including criminal, child abuse and driving records.

Compliance is part of all levels of RSVP management from the Community Volunteer Coordinator who directly oversees Stations, ensuring that MOUs are current, and site visits are made and volunteers are performing their assigned service activities; to the Director who is responsible for approving new volunteer stations, preventing prohibited activities; to the Board of Directors' Compliance Committee who review the federal OMB and make certain that our program is compliant with federal regulations.

Stations are selected based on their appropriate fit within RSVP's identified work plans. RSVP Staff visits each Station prior to placement of volunteers and at least annually thereafter for safety checks. RSVP Staff reviews the Station Handbook with Station Management and leaves a copy for their reference. The Station Handbook outlines requirements and prohibited activities. Community Links Coordinator remains in regular contact with station staff and volunteers.

For the last 42 years our agency has been recruiting and placing volunteers in meaningful positions throughout the county. RSVP's track record in our primary focus area of education includes over 20 years working with Montgomery County schools and Head Start. These efforts have grown significantly over the years to include 25% of our unduplicated volunteers serving over 1,500 students pre-K through 12th grade in 55 schools and 30 Head Start classrooms. Our Protégé Mentoring program, Family Literacy Volunteer Program and America Reads Program have each been awarded Program of National Significance grants from CNCS, which helped to enhance the volunteer growth

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in each program. While we have been gathering performance measurement output and outcome information for many years, a 2011-12 organizational effectiveness \$40,000 grant from the Philadelphia Foundation has enabled us to strengthen our performance measures. As a result we can more accurately report our impact as well as continuously improve our program quality and ensure that our primary focus areas conform to the appropriate national performance measurement outcomes and outputs. The performance measurement consultants have developed surveys and measurement tools for each of our programs as well as an improved volunteer satisfaction survey. They have trained our staff in best practices for developing surveys and collecting data so that we can design future survey tools and continue to improve our current tools. Results are tracked using Survey Monkey an online survey and analysis tool.

Organizational Capability

RSVP (Legal name: Retired Senior Volunteer Program of Montgomery County, Inc) has been a 501c3 agency and self-sponsored RSVP project since 1979, and is recognized as the primary provider of senior volunteers in the county. In 2015 RSVP began running the RSVP program in Delaware County, PA as well. Sound programmatic and fiscal oversight, operational support, data collection and internal policies are ensured through the following: our Executive Director (ED) has a BS in Business Administration, finance concentration and over 20 years of experience in management and finance. The ED is responsible for operations as outlined in the by-laws. RSVP has an active Board of up to 25 Directors who, guided by those same by-laws outlining responsibilities, manage RSVP policies and oversight and are also responsible to fundraise. The Board's Finance Committee oversees development of the annual budget (which is approved by the Board at their December meeting), ensures accurate tracking, monitoring and accountability for funds; and ensures adequate financial and in-kind controls. A rolling 12-month cash forecast is prepared monthly and reviewed by the Board at our monthly meeting. Under the auspices of the Board Audit Committee, we employ an independent auditor annually. The Board Compliance Committee reviews federal OMB circulars reviews RSVP policies/processes to be sure that we are compliant. Our personnel policies are clear and up to date including conflict of interest, anti-discrimination, and whistle blower policies. The Board takes an active role and meets with the ED monthly.

All computers have recently been upgraded thanks to a 2014 grant from the Mclean Contributionship.

All capital equipment is assigned an asset number, tracked using an Excel database to ensure accurate inventory and proper depreciation according to our audit schedule. Files are stored in the

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cloud using SharePoint to ensure proper backups and allow for file sharing and remote access by all staff and board. Volunteer Reporter is our volunteer database program allowing volunteers the option to report hours online. Station hours are collected by the Community Links Coordinator and entered into Volunteer reporter. Systems are in place to ensure that volunteer hours are not duplicated.

Our financial management consists of strong systems of records, oversight and check signing protocols. Our bookkeeper is supervised by the Director of Operations and overseen by our Treasurer and Audit Committee. We utilize Quickbooks accounting software to enter every transaction and generate monthly reports, custom Excel timesheets to track federal/non-federal hours and ADP for payroll. The ED and Board Treasurer review payroll. Purchasing and check signing policies are in place to provide proper oversight. Purchasing is handled centrally at the home office. All purchase requests require prior approval by the Executive Director or Board and in accordance with our written purchasing and approval policy.

Our facilities include rented space in Blue Bell, PA (Home/Admin Office) and ten mostly in-kind office locations throughout Montgomery and Delaware Counties. Locations include an office in Colledgeville; office hours one day per month at the Pottstown Library, Bala Cynwyd Library, Newtown Library and Upper Perkiomen Thrift Shop; volunteer orientations every three weeks at a variety of locations including Blue Bell, Eddystone, Colmar, Newtown Square, Soudertown and Media. Our plan is to secure in-kind space in Chester County for staff and volunteers and provide orientations for volunteers at various in-kind sites throughout the county (Stations will often allow us to meet volunteers at their sites) allowing us to reach volunteers in their neighborhoods.

We have job descriptions for all staff and evaluate staff progress annually. We continue to cross train staff and identify succession plans. The annual meeting each year serves as a time to review the past and look to the future; sharing written accomplishments of the past year and goals for the coming year.

RSVP has a 20 person staff (3 full time 17 part time) including:

The Executive Director has managed the RSVP of Montgomery County federal grant for six+ years;

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developed cutting edge programming (My Free Tutor virtual math tutoring) to meet the current needs in the community, and has a strong background in Finance and Management. The ED develops program goals based on our RSVP Strategic Plan developed by our Board of Directors; provides guidance to all staff and has an open door policy. She manages expenses to meet budget goals, oversees the measurement of outcomes and analyzes the results in order to improve program quality. Our Executive Director will mentor the Chester County Director.

Director of Operations (Program Manager of the Delaware County RSVP grant) is an organizational and quality management specialist, has been with RSVP for 6+ years' and currently manages day-to-day operations, IT and bookkeeping. His 30+ years' experience and attention to detail has been an asset.

Director of Community Engagement will be the Program Manager for the Chester County RSVP grant. Has 7+ years' experience with RSVP, Masters in Business Administration (Strategic management) and Graduate Degree in Management Studies and Personnel Management. She has a proven track record as a successful leader in non-profit management and understands RSVP regulations.

Community Links Coordinator, with oversight from the Director of Community Engagement, manages all station relationships, ensuring that stations are compliant and volunteer jobs are appropriate and impactful.

Volunteer Coordinator has over 8 years' of experience at RSVP recruiting, interviewing, screening and placing volunteers in meaningful assignments that utilize their experience and interests. She is the first point of contact for our volunteers.

Our Development Staff consists of two positions both salaries are NOT charged to the federal grant; Development Coordinator, BA in English, with 28 years at RSVP. She is a gifted writer with vast understanding of our programs. She has been very successful in grant writing and assists with outcomes analysis. Development Associate, part time: responsible for special event fundraising and annual appeal. Our Development staff will explore grant opportunities in Delaware County to help support program related costs and allow for expansion.

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Public Relations Coordinator has a BFA in communications, working previously for nonprofit organizations, including Pearl S. Buck Foundation. She writes newspaper articles press releases and posts on social media to help recruit volunteers and build awareness of the RSVP program in the community. She also posts volunteer opportunities on volunteer match, patch and community newsletters such as United Way and Coming of Age. Our PR Coordinator will be key to our expansion into Chester County helping build awareness of the RSVP Program and volunteer needs in the county.

IT Specialist handles the My Free Tutor help desk answering tutor questions and ensuring optimal computer connections. He also assists with staff computer set up and troubleshooting when necessary.

A Program Coordinator manages each RSVP Program with experience in the focus area. These include America Reads (MA in Reading, former classroom and reading remediation teacher), My Free Tutor Program (BA, experience managing youth education programs), Protégé Mentoring Program (former teacher MEd), Family and Adult Literacy Volunteer Programs (Masters in Counseling, 27 years with the literacy program, expert trainer, published writer, founded the Montgomery County literacy Network), Help on Call Program Coordinator (7 years' experience matching the needs of home-bound clients with volunteers), Apprise Coordinator (MBA who has become an expert in medical insurance issues and been with RSVP for over 20 years), Volunteer Executive Consults coordinator (BA, 30 years' experience in the nonprofit industry).

RSVP of Montgomery County has managed federal grant funds from Action and CNCS since its inception. Our sustainability has the underpinnings of support from more than 40 foundations corporations and local organizations that fund our agency each year, including two local United Ways, Montgomery County Aging and Adult Services, COSA and Pew Charitable Trusts. We have Development Coordinators and an active Board to continuously seek and obtain new sources of support, protecting us for unforeseen shifts in funder priorities or mandatory breaks in funding. We also further diversify our funding base with a yearly fundraiser and an annual appeal.

Other

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy:

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Our agency, RSVP, already has the infrastructure in place to successfully run the RSVP Program in both Montgomery and Delaware Counties. We also have the expertise in developing and running performance measurement work plans including those specifically proposed in Chester County. This minimizes the cost of expansion into Chester County. We forecast the project will cost \$70,244 per year or \$1,003 per volunteer based on 70 volunteers.

Our plan to secure the non-federal share includes utilizing our Development staff to research additional grants specific to Chester County; expand on existing grants in support of Educational programs for Children and expanding our annual appeal to include Chester County residents. We also will be rolling out a new comprehensive Corporate Sponsorship package in 2016.

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

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