

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction															
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)																	
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 12-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11AC122977		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 09ACHWI0010008														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																	
LEGAL NAME: Operation Fresh Start, Inc. DUNS NUMBER: 086695798		NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Connie F. Bailey TELEPHONE NUMBER: (608) 244-4721 FAX NUMBER: (608) 244-8162 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: cferrisbailey@operationfreshstart.org															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1925 Winnebago St Madison WI 53704 - 5314 County: Dane																	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 237108090		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Community-Based Organization															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State		11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Operation Fresh Start-AmeriCorps															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): City of Madison; Village of Cambridge; Dane County; Green County; Rock County; Jefferson County; Columbia County; Sauk County; and Iowa County, Wisconsin.		11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/16/11 END DATE: 08/15/12		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="WI 002"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="WI 002"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="2"/>		16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 564,126.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 572,581.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 1,136,707.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 564,126.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 572,581.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 1,136,707.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
a. FEDERAL	\$ 564,126.00																
b. APPLICANT	\$ 572,581.00																
c. STATE	\$ 0.00																
d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00																
e. OTHER	\$ 0.00																
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00																
g. TOTAL	\$ 1,136,707.00																
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																	
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Gloria Nelson		b. TITLE: MIS Coordinator	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (608) 244-4721														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 05/11/11															

Narratives

Executive Summary

Through this Year 2 continuation request, Operation Fresh Start seeks to enroll unemployed, low-income youth, ages 16-24, and continue participation in CNCS' national performance measure pilot, focusing on Opportunity measures. Members' service will involve environmental conservation and affordable housing projects. As youth corps members, they will work to complete high school certification, develop career skills, and secure employment.

Rationale and Approach

COMPELLING COMMUNITY NEED

DISADVANTAGED YOUTH: Since its founding in 1970, Operation Fresh Start (OFS) has defined its primary mission as providing a 'second chance' to youth and young adults who have not succeeded in mainstream institutions. OFS' target population lack a high school credential and have left school; are unemployed and lack skills needed for living-wage employment; and, may have serious barriers to independence, such as criminal records, mental health problems, substance abuse, or disabilities. OFS provides young people an opportunity to acquire needed skills and make critical behavioral changes in the context of community service. OFS recruits its members from the most challenged neighborhoods in Madison and Dane County. Data from the 2000 US Census shows poverty levels in these neighborhoods ranged from 14% to 29%. More recent data indicate a sharply increased level of need. Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) data show that from 2000-09, student eligibility for subsidized lunch increased from 28.1% to 45%. MMSD data also show the school district struggling with a serious achievement gap between white and/or economically advantaged students, who predominately performed at the "Proficient" and "Advanced" levels on the 2008 10th Grade State Reading test, and minority and/or economically disadvantaged students who, in the majority, performed at the "Minimal" and "Basic" levels. Many students who are performing poorly will drop out of school. Without intervention, the future prospect of these individuals is not promising, and the larger

Narratives

social problems as well as missed opportunities for productive lives will be costly to the community.

Awareness of the serious nature of this problem has prompted OFS to look for ways to increase the number of youth enrolled in its youth corps. OFS proposes to expand from its current 63-members to a 97-member corps. OFS will expand by increasing from 7 year-round housing construction crews and 2 summer-only conservation crews to 7 year-round housing crews and 2 year-round conservation crews.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & RESTORATION: For the past 25 years, OFS has provided conservation services to local governments within Dane County. By increasing its commitment to conservation, OFS will be able to expand the area it serves from Dane to surrounding counties - Columbia, Sauk, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, and Rock. Resources to be preserved include significant wetland, prairie, and oak savanna remnants, outstanding water resources, and unique geologic landforms. During the past decade, several factors have contributed to increased need for environmental conservation within areas held and managed by units of government and non-profit organizations. In 2003, Wisconsin ended its support for the Wisconsin Conservation Corps (WCC), an organization that annually fielded 50-60 youth crews to perform conservation work around the state. During its 20 years of service the WCC supported an average of 2-3 crews annually working within OFS' target counties developing trails, improving state natural areas, planting trees, controlling soil erosion, and building recreational facilities. The loss of the WCC has been compounded by the current economic recession which has caused government and private conservation agencies to cut back staffing needed to improve parks, trails, and conservation areas.

These cutbacks have come at a time when more, not fewer, conservation resources are needed. In South Central Wisconsin, the floods of 2007-08 damaged trails, eroded shorelines, and degraded natural areas. The popular hiking destination Parfrey's Glen, for example, has been closed to the public since

Narratives

2007 because its trails were washed out and never repaired. At the same time, conservationists have continued to expand the public land base in this area where population growth threatens valuable natural areas. This is particularly true in Dane, Wisconsin's fastest growing county. According to projections from Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, Dane County, whose population was 426,526 in 2000 will grow to 480,573 in 2010 and to 624,500 by 2030.

HOUSING REHABILITATION/CONSTRUCTION: Since 1970, OFS crews and volunteers have constructed affordable housing for sale to low-income families in Madison and Dane Co, WI. This community service has proven to be an effective vehicle for job training and member development. Also, it has been and will continue to be done in response to need expressed by City of Madison and Dane County communities, where the cost of homeownership is a special challenge to lower income families. Here, despite the dramatic fall in housing costs elsewhere, the price of home purchase remains high compared to income. In Madison, the 2008 median household income, \$53,340, was only slightly higher than the statewide median, \$52,249 (US Census). Yet, according to the Wisconsin Realtor's Ass'n, the 09/09 median cost of a home in Dane County, including Madison, was \$206,500, while the median cost statewide was \$148,000 (www.wra.org).

The high cost of housing has caused both the Madison and the Dane County CDBG commissions to rank creation of affordable homeownership opportunities among their top priorities. Madison's "2010-2014 Strategic Plan" states: "The Committee has placed a high priority on those households in the 50% to 80% of adjusted median income range who currently rent, that with some assistance, could possibly purchase homes and stabilize their housing situations." The Dane County "2010-2014 Consolidated Plan" states "...housing costs in Dane County continue to rise at a disproportionate rate to family income, even with the current housing market slowdown, thus creating a greater demand for such housing." The County plan indicates that growth in the median sale price of homes increased 46% since

Narratives

2000, "...far outstripping the Midwest Urban Consumer Price Index which has increased by 18% over the same period."

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Since 2002, OFS AmeriCorps members have constructed 34 new Energy Star homes. Since 2007, 28 OFS homes have been certified as Green Built Homes - 15 newly constructed homes, and 13 renovations. All have been marketed to lower-income homebuyers. The need for this work is especially strong in Madison, where according to the City Building Inspector, 80% of the housing stock was built before 1978, when the first Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) was adopted in response to the 1970's energy crisis. In Dane County, Census figures indicate that about 1/3 of all housing units were built before 1960, prior to adoption of the UDC. A study conducted by the Energy Center of Wisconsin, "Energy and Housing in Wisconsin - A Study of the Single-Family Owner-Occupied Homes (2000)," revealed the following findings: Low-income homeowners spend 7-10% of annual income on energy, compared to 2-3% for all homeowners. 25% of Wisconsin homes are excessively leaky to air infiltration, 15% have uninsulated walls, and 20% have under-insulated ceiling areas. In an energy ranking of 0-100, new Wisconsin homes achieve an average score of 85, while low-income homes rate lower, with an average score of 73. In building new Energy Star homes, OFS will construct homes that exceed the energy-efficiency standards of the just adopted, 2008 UDC. By renovating older, sub-standard homes, OFS will address energy deficiencies present in older homes, such as inadequate insulation, leaky doors and windows, and leaky siding. The training and practice of constructing energy-efficient housing will also prepare disadvantaged young people for placement in the workforce, including in residential construction, weatherization, and related job sectors.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND MEMBER ROLES: OFS requests 97 AmeriCorps members for the 2010-11 program year: 10 FT, 52 HT, and 35 MT members. 70 members will be assigned to work year-round building low-income housing and 27 members will work on year-round conservation crews. At

Narratives

times, members of conservation crews may also work on housing projects. Members will work in crews of 8--10 members, each closely trained and supervised by an adult construction or conservation trainer. All members will report daily to OFS' Madison office and be transported to service sites in OFS vans. Members will work four 8.5-hour days per week. A typical member day will involve 80% of time working on service sites and 20% in supervised classroom instruction. Unpaid member development activities will also take place outside of regularly scheduled AmeriCorps service, during evenings, week-ends, and on the fifth weekday.

This diverse group of young people will perform the hands-on tasks of constructing energy efficient, affordable housing; completing environmental conservation projects; and participating in national and local days of service. They will recruit and join with episodic volunteers who on organized volunteer days will contribute to these service projects.

In housing construction, members will perform all tasks not requiring highly specialized equipment (such as foundation excavation) or requiring a trades license (such as plumbing). Depending upon the needs of each project, OFS members will perform demolition and recycling; waterproofing basement walls; basement floor concrete pouring/finishing; rough framing; rigid/soft insulation; house wrap; vinyl siding; soffits/fascia; roofing; drywalling; installation of windows, doors, cabinets, interior trim; painting; pouring/finishing sidewalks; and landscaping. Where needed, licensed contractors will perform abatement of lead-based paint or asbestos removal.

In conservation activities, members will perform a diversity of labor-intensive work activities, excluding routine, low productivity work. Projects will require varied skills and training, including construction (boardwalks, shelters, kiosks, interpretive signs), removing or treating invasive vegetation, trail development, installation and protection of native plants, conducting controlled burns.

Narratives

In member development activities, members will be guided by classroom teachers and counselors to complete personal development goals in education, independent living, and career development to assure self-sufficiency after service. In these activities, members needing special assistance will be supported by periodic volunteer tutors/mentors. All members will complete CPR/First Aid training, and members will complete 30 hours of Civics/Citizenship education.

Current and proposed efforts to meet identified needs include:

HOUSING -- CURRENT: Since 1970, OFS has built or renovated 201 homes at the request of and in partnership with the City and County. In recent years, OFS has completed 8-9 affordable, well-built, and energy-efficient homes annually. Homebuyer assistance provided by the municipalities has helped make the homes affordable to income-eligible buyers.

HOUSING - PROPOSED: In 2010-11, members will complete 7 houses in Madison and 2 in the Village of Cambridge. OFS will own the sites and act as the general contractor throughout construction. Construction will meet or exceed the UDC. All newly constructed homes will meet Energy Star standards and will have in-foundation passive radon abatement systems. All renovated homes will be free of lead paint and asbestos. All homes, both newly constructed and renovated, will meet Green Built Home standards. OFS staff will market the housing units affirmatively. Each home will be sold to a low-income buyer who will have access to downpayment assistance and \$21,000 deferred payment second mortgages administered by local government partners.

ENVIRONMENTAL - CURRENT: For the past 25 years, OFS members have worked in partnership with local Dane County cities and villages, the county, and non-profit organizations to restore and

Narratives

maintain valuable natural lands and build and repair trails and park facilities. In the past 10 years, most of this service has been provided to the City of Madison to restore the 2,400-acre Cherokee Marsh and other Madison conservation parks and to Riverland Conservancy, a public land trust, to restore natural areas and repair facilities within the 1,800-acre conservancy, located along the Wisconsin River. Our partners have provided partial funding to support the supervision of the youth crews, have identified the projects they wish to be completed, have provided guidance, materials, and some tools. OFS has provided the crew and its supervisor, transportation, safety gear, and tools. For the past 3 years, OFS crews have completed 14 environmental projects annually, most during summer months.

ENVIRONMENTAL - PROPOSED: In 10-11, members will complete 42 environmental projects assigned by OFS' environmental partners: the Madison Parks Commission, Riverland Conservancy, Wisconsin DNR/South Central Region, Swamplover's Foundation. Projects will be selected that provide long-term conservation benefits, enhance highly desirable natural, recreational, or endangered resources, and benefit a variety of user groups. Working year-round, the crews will be able to address a broader spectrum of conservation needs than when working only in summer.

CNCS REQUIREMENTS: OFS' Management Team is familiar with the restrictions on activities supported by Corporation funds described in 45 CFR 2540.100, including the prohibition on duplication, supplantation, religious or political activity, and other restrictions. These guidelines are reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the Management Team and reiterated within organizational documents, such as the By-Laws and employee handbook. OFS staff who manage members are specifically trained in these guidelines.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING & SUPERVISION PLAN: Members will be organized into 7 housing and 2 conservation crews of 8-10 members, each crew directly supervised by an adult Site

Narratives

Supervisor capable of training members in needed skills and leading them to complete complex service projects. The Site Supervisor will also serve as mentor, counselor, and role model to assist youth corps members to mature through service, to accomplish the goals of their member development plans, and to graduate from service prepared to assume productive roles in the community. The Site Supervisor will be assisted by a staff team including: the Deputy Director for Service Projects, who will supervise and train the Site Supervisors as well as teachers and counselors who will help members achieve education, independent living, and career goals.

PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES: OFS' Participant Handbook, Employee Handbook, staff training manual, board policies, and member contracts identify prohibited activities, including lobbying, influencing union organizing, engaging in religious instruction, conducting voter registration drives, and other activities which may not be practiced while performing service supported by OFS or CNCS funds. The Management Team will annually review 45 CFR 2520.45, 45 CFR 2520.65, and the AmeriCorps Provisions, and, if necessary, revise OFS documents to assure that they completely and accurately identify all CNCS prohibited activities. At member orientation and staff and board trainings these policies and sanctions for violating them will be explained.

VALUE OF AMERICORPS GRANT: Since its founding in 1970, OFS has operated in a manner consistent with the AmeriCorps definition of Youth Corps. AmeriCorps funding, emphasis on volunteer mobilization, and increased opportunities for collaboration have helped OFS and its members to serve the community. OFS has been able to expand the number of members engaged from 24 to 63, and proposes to expand to 97 members; the number of houses completed annually from 6 to 9; and the number of conservation projects completed annually from 10 to 14, and proposes to expand to 42 projects. Members benefit from AmeriCorps membership by becoming eligible for an Education Award, by a greatly enhanced understanding of the value of community service, and by association with

Narratives

a national service organization and community service movement.

MEASURABLE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

FOCUS AREAS: OFS will address the goals of two CNCS focus areas - the Opportunity Corps and the Clean Energy Corps.

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURE PILOT: OFS will participate in the National Performance Measure Pilot by addressing the following measures of the OPPORTUNITY CORPS:

Measure 12 (Aligned Performance Measure): In each year, 97 economically disadvantaged, unemployed AmeriCorps members will be enrolled (Output Measure). In each year, 97 economically disadvantaged members will receive job placement assistance (Intermediate Measure). This measure will be linked with Measure 15.

Measure 15: In each year, 55 members who complete terms of service or leave service due to compelling personal circumstances will be placed in jobs during service or within one year of leaving service.

Measure 13: In each year, 65 economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent will be enrolled and receive classroom education. This measure will be linked to Measure 16.

Measure 16: In each year, 44 members without high school diplomas will complete the GED/HSED or high school diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after completing service.

Narratives

Measure 17: In each year, 30 members will complete a college course during service or within one year after completing service.

OFS will participate in the National Performance Measure Pilot by addressing the following measures of the CLEAN ENERGY CORPS:

Measure 4: In each year, OFS members will clean or improve 4,160 acres of state, city, county parks or other public lands.

Measure 5: In each year, OFS members will clean, improve, or create 48 miles of trails or rivers owned/maintained by state, county, or city governments.

OFS will also SELF-NOMINATE the following performance measure to be reported to CNCS:

Construction/rehabilitation, sale or transfer of energy-efficient, affordable housing: In each year, members will rehab or construct 9 energy-efficient, affordable homes. All new homes will be Energy Star certified, and all new or renovated homes will be Green Built Home certified. Upon completion, the 9 homes will be marketed to low- or moderate-income buyers or will be transferred to other non-profits for rent to very-low income households or households with a member with a disability.

OFS will also report the following performance measures to Serve Wisconsin:

Volunteer Management: In each year, OFS members will recruit 170 volunteers to provide 2,000 hours of service.

Narratives

Citizenship: In each year, 70% of FT/HT members who complete their term of service will complete the Civics Literacy Curriculum.

CPR and First Aid Training: In each year, 100% of members who complete their term of service will receive CPR and First Aid training.

TRACKING OUTCOMES: Completion of service projects is assessed and recorded by the Deputy Director for Service Projects; attainment of member development outcomes is assessed and recorded by the Educational Director; and, volunteer recruitment data is maintained by the VISTA. All outcome data is reported to the MIS Coordinator who completes or supervises all computer data entry and outcome reporting.

PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT & IMPROVEMENT: The basis for continued periodic evaluation by the Management Team and OFS Board, corrective action if needed, and new program initiatives will be detailed information recorded by direct service and management staff and collected, entered, and tracked in the OFS database by the MIS Coordinator.

The data gathered include:

Member demographics at recruitment, member development progress, and, member satisfaction;

Volunteer demographics, service, and satisfaction;

Housing construction/sale information by site;

Homeowner satisfaction;

Narratives

Conservation project completion by site; area owner/manager

satisfaction;

Youth Policy Committee (YPC) feedback;

Graduate progress -- 1 year, 2 years, and long-term;

Other funding source feedback; and,

Self assessment/peer review evaluations: In 2010, OFS will

complete two self-assessment batteries: YouthBuild USA's (YBUSA) "Self-Assessment for Re-accreditation," and Corps Network's "Excellence in Corps Operation."

This information is evaluated by the Management Team in quarterly meetings. Strengths and weaknesses of the program are noted and response plan developed. In at least annual planning sessions between the Management Team and OFS Board, outside feedback and quantifiable data, will be reviewed to identify areas which need to be addressed by changing approaches or bringing more resources to bear on problems.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

DISADVANTAGED YOUTH: Throughout its 39 years of service to disadvantaged youth, OFS has sought partnerships with others serving this target group, such as local school districts, Madison Area Technical College (MATC), the Workforce Development Board, local employers, social service agencies, and community corrections agents. OFS maintains continuous, even daily, contact with the individual counselors, agents, employers, and staff of these entities to exchange information on the progress and needs of individual young people of mutual concern. The young people themselves contribute to the planning process in several ways. They participate in developing personal goals and are active participants in monthly progress evaluations; they interact on a daily basis with and provide feedback to

Narratives

direct service staff; they participate in daily planning sessions on service sites; members and graduates provide feedback via surveys, which can be anonymous, and through public speaking engagements at Open Houses and graduations; the YPC expresses member concerns to the Management Team.

HOUSING: OFS members will address the housing needs established by Madison and Dane County CDBG commissions, each of which includes representatives of low-income communities to be served by OFS' affordable housing projects. Throughout the year, OFS reports to these commissions and meets with them to request funds and approval for specific projects. In Madison, OFS seeks housing sites in neighborhoods prioritized for revitalization and collaborates with other agencies, such as Habitat for Humanity, addressing the same priorities. In Dane County, OFS selects housing sites in concert with the Commission and with local officials of cities and villages. In selecting its housing sites for 2010, OFS met with Village of Cambridge leaders and obtained local approvals and financial support to construct two affordable homes within the village. Local school officials have encouraged OFS to recruit members from the Village.

CLEAN ENERGY: The primary beneficiaries of OFS' clean energy activities are homebuyers, from whom OFS receives feedback during marketing and sale of the houses, as well as via a homebuyer survey, sent out to owners 1 year after purchase. OFS is committed to assuring that all home projects meet Green Built Home standards and that each new home meets Energy Star standards. As these standards evolve, so will OFS' practices evolve. OFS receives energy-related grants and rebates from several community partners including Madison Gas & Electric, Alliant Energy Foundation, Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corps (WECC), and Focus on Energy. OFS consults with these partners to assure that our work meets their standards. We have engaged a pro-active Energy Star consultant who reviews and makes recommendations at the outset of all OFS projects, both new and rehab. In addition, a 15-year member of the OFS Board, a WECC Project Manager, consults with housing staff to assure that our

Narratives

energy conservation measures are up to date.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION: OFS completes projects as assigned by our conservation partners. These groups assess needs through various procedures: Through a public hearing process, Madison Parks Commission has prioritized restoration of the Cherokee Marsh and other Madison conservation parks. The staff of Riverland Conservancy consults with DNR and US Fish & Wildlife Service and engages a restoration planner to guide long range planning. Swamplovers has developed a long-term restoration plan to protect key native plants and animals. At DNR, the South Central Regional Director has developed a preliminary list of projects for OFS located in Blue Mound, Mirror Lake, and Lake Kegonsa state parks; along the Badger State Trail; and, within the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CNCS PROGRAMS: OFS is an active participant in the training and celebration activities of WNCSB. OFS actively recruits members from the CNCS website. Informally and through technical assistance contracts, OFS has shared best practice information with other youth corps in Wisconsin and around the country. As a member agency of Corps Network and YBUSA, OFS has shared best practice information on corps-based service programs at national workshops where many groups in attendance are AmeriCorps programs. OFS participated in the 3-year Corps Network/USDOL demonstration project, entitled the "Youth Civic Justice Corps," to test the effectiveness of youth corps programs in helping youthful offenders avoid recidivism. For the past 2 grant cycles, 07-08 and 08-09, OFS has participated in YBUSA's National Direct YouthBuild AmeriCorps, recruiting 20 members annually to be trained as energy specialists who in turn train other crew members in skills required to achieve residential energy efficiency. OFS currently hosts a VISTA, sponsored by YBUSA, whose charge, in part, is to recruit and manage volunteers at OFS. OFS is registered with RSVP, a local Senior Service Corps, for referral of older adult and baby boomer

Narratives

volunteers.

POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION: In 1998, with the encouragement and support of the WI Governor's Office, OFS worked to create a state fund, administered by the Dept. of Commerce, to partially support creation of a network of youth service programs replicating the OFS Youth Corps model within rural and urban communities. The network is called Wisconsin Fresh Start (WFS), and in 2009, a total of 9 WFS programs are operating in 21 neighborhoods around the state engaging young people in construction of affordable housing. These programs are supported by diverse funding sources, including local public and private funding, state, federal pass-through, and federal dollars. Several WFS programs have received grant funding from CNCS to support youth corps. OFS, under contract to the Dept. of Commerce, provides technical assistance to WFS programs. Under contract to YBUSA and Partners for Community Solutions, a HUD/DOL training contractor, OFS also provides technical assistance to groups around the Midwest interested in developing youth corps in their community. In 2010, OFS will provide this support to local non-profits in several Iowa communities and to the Northern Kentucky CAC, Covington, KY, to create and sustain youth corps programs following the OFS/Youthbuild model in their communities.

Organizational Capability

SOUND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: OFS was founded in 1970 to provide young male offenders and high school dropouts with a paid, 30-hour/week opportunity to learn basic work skills, prepare for the high school equivalency examination, secure and retain employment at the end of training, and contribute to the community by renovating sub-standard housing into safe, energy-efficient, affordable homes sold to low-income families. During the ensuing 39 years, OFS has expanded its target population to include women, single parents, and in-school youth, has diversified its funding, and continuously evolved its concept of success. OFS has served 7,300 individuals; 90% have been youth, ages 16-24. It has assisted 83% of its participants to satisfactorily complete the goals of the program --

Narratives

job placement and/or graduation to post-secondary schooling. OFS' long-term follow-up studies show that 65-68% of graduates remain self-sufficient. OFS construction training crews have built or re-built 201 homes sold to low-income buyers or leased to very low-income households. Since 2002, OFS has prioritized achieving certification in residential energy efficiency. OFS has provided over 25 years of conservation stewardship work to local government and owners of public trusts.

Recent AmeriCorps Outcomes: OFS received 3 AmeriCorps grants, during 06-07, 07-08, 08-09 to recruit young people to serve the community as OFS/AmeriCorps. During this period, OFS' goal for housing construction was to complete and sell a total of 27 homes. To date, OFS has completed and sold 23 homes. In the 5th Quarter of Year 3, OFS is on track to complete 3 additional homes, for a total projected outcome of 26 homes. OFS continues to market completed homes and those in progress. OFS' 3-year conservation goal was to complete a total 42 conservation projects, and OFS completed 41 projects. OFS' total 3-year goal was to recruit 510 volunteers serving 6,000 hours. OFS engaged a total of 311 volunteers serving 4,196 hours.

Member development goals were consistently met or exceeded during this period. During each year, OFS goal was for 80% of FT/HT members without high school diplomas to achieve educational goals. During 06-07, 84% achieved education outcomes; during 07-08, 90% achieved these outcomes; and, during 08-09 86% achieved these outcomes. During each year, OFS' goal for career development was for 85% of FT/HT members to be placed in post secondary education, employment, or further training. In 06-07, 85% were placed; in 07-08, 88% were placed; and, in 08-09, 85% have been placed.

Capacity to Manage a Federal Grant: Since 1994, OFS has been awarded 15 WIA, 6 Youthbuild-HUD, and 1 Youthbuild-DOL grants. For 15 years OFS has successfully administered AmeriCorps funds from the WNCSB. In 2009, OFS manages and accounts for 78 separate sources of revenue. Federal sources

Narratives

include the US departments of Agriculture, HUD, Labor, and CNCS. State sources include the departments of Corrections and Public Instruction. Local government sources include Madison CDBG and Parks Dept.; Dane County CDBG and DCHS; and, 17 area school districts. Private sector sources include United Way, the Realtors' Ass'n, Alliant Energy Corp, 6 local foundations, the Gates Foundation, and 11 local lenders.

OFS has a uniform, double entry, full-accrual accounting system. Fiscal staff prepares monthly entries processed through an in-house computerized Solomon accounting system, providing monthly compilation of financial statements. An independent certified public accounting firm conducts the annual audit in accordance with GAS standards and the provision of OMB Circular A-133. Prior year audit reports have found no material internal control deficiencies. OFS enters all member information and financial information into the national eGrants reporting system and the Wisconsin OnCorps member management system. OFS has an internal computerized MIS.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, & STAFF: OFS functions under the direction of the all-volunteer OFS Board of Directors, a group with professional expertise in the areas of banking, finance, real estate, commercial construction, low-income housing, energy conservation, alternative education, policing and public safety, and program evaluation. The Board, whose chief responsibility is fiduciary oversight, delegates oversight of the agency to the Executive Director who reports to the Board and who oversees daily programming and supervises management and program staff. The Board meets monthly. Its housing, personnel, and finance committees meet periodically and as needed.

The Executive Director has overall responsibility for administration. The Deputy Director for Service Projects oversees housing, conservation, and community service day activities and supervises the 9 Site Supervisors and VISTA. The Deputy Director for Member Services conducts member screening and

Narratives

intake, oversees member support services (including service by outside providers), provides counseling, and supervises the Educational Director and Career Developer. The Educational Director supervises 2 classroom teachers and the College Navigator and volunteer tutors/mentors. The Career Developer supervises the Job Coach.

OFS has the needed principal staff on board for this program. Key managers are named and their relevant qualifications described:

Connie Ferris Bailey, Executive Director: B.A., Social Work; 33 years OFS management experience, 15 years experience managing AmeriCorps program. Duties: Administration of OFS - staff hiring, funding source and public relations, long-range planning and evaluation, fiscal oversight, staff to the OFS Board of Directors.

Rita Ihm, Finance Director: CPA, 28 years business finance experience, 11 years CPA, 8 years AmeriCorps program experience. Duties: Administration of fiscal and personnel records, preparation of budget, supervision of payroll, maintenance of financial MIS.

James Sanders, Deputy Director/Member Services: M.S., Psych., LPC; 30 years OFS employment and training experience, 15 years AmeriCorps program management experience. Duties: Participant intake and periodic evaluation, development of individual counseling plans, individual/family counseling, crisis intervention, oversight of in-house and off-site member program services.

George Riffin, Deputy Director/Service Projects: 10 years Wisconsin Conservation Corps, as Project Coordinator, Crew Supervisor and Field Support Specialist; 6 years OFS construction Site Supervisor; 8 years OFS Director of Service Projects. Duties: Supervision of service activities, acquisition and design

Narratives

of housing sites, coordination of conservation projects, project budgeting and scheduling, procurement of materials, selection of sub-contractors, provision of on-site technical assistance to construction and conservation trainers.

Brian McMahon, Career Developer: B.S., Sociology; 5 yrs. private sector carpentry experience; 6 yrs OFS/AmeriCorps construction Site Supervisor; 6 years OFS Career Developer. Duties: Job/educational placement planning, job/OJT development, pre-employment skills & career development competency training, independent living skills instruction, follow-up services/documentation.

Karen Ball, Education Director: State Certified/Math Education, Grades 6-12; 7 years classroom experience with at-risk youth; 1 year OFS conservation Site Supervisor. Duties: Program development, supervision of education staff, assessment, basic academic skills instruction, tracking of Gateway progress.

7 Housing Site Supervisors: Highly skilled construction trainers, all currently on staff. Most with private sector experience including trade union members and sole proprietors. All closely trained and supervised by the Deputy Director. Duties: Primary construction site management and training of members in residential construction skills, assessment of member employability skills and barriers, development of Gateways goals, monthly member evaluations, day-to-day counseling, enforcement of safety standards, communication with social services.

2 Conservation Site Supervisors: To be hired. Must be experienced in team-based project management and work with at-risk youth. Will be closely trained and supervised by Deputy Director. Duties: Conservation crew management, work cooperatively with conservancy staff in project implementation and member training; assigns tasks, assesses member employability skills and barriers, development of

Narratives

Gateways goals, monthly member evaluations, day-to-day counseling, enforces safety standards, communicates with social services.

Gloria Nelson, MIS Coordinator: 5 years MIS Coordinator and 15 years OFS Classroom Teacher. Development and maintenance of MIS to track service and member outcomes and report to grant sources and OFS Management Team.

Myke Kempf, Job Coach: 1 year Job Coach, 2 years OFS construction Site Supervisor. Monthly follow-up contact with OFS graduates in employment, group meetings, troubleshooting to support job retention.

Emily Cochran, College Navigator: 1 year OFS College Navigator, MS Education, State Certified Teacher, State Certified School Counselor. Assists current OFS members and graduates to enroll in college programs and classes, monitors academic progress and financial aid, provides troubleshooting to promote retention.

PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT OR IMPROVEMENT: OFS Board and Management Team assess the strengths and weaknesses of organizational elements and makes adjustments where needed to sustain the agency. Three major sources of information are analyzed: 1.) The annual financial audit; 2.) Results of financial and program audits by funders; and, 3.) Two comprehensive self-assessment batteries conducted triennially to qualify as an affiliate of YBUSA and Corps Network. These latter assessments require critical review of governance and accountability, leadership, staffing, staff development, organizational planning, public and government relations, fiscal management, risk management, program design, participant development practices, quality of service projects, and evidence of success. As part of the Corps Network ECO Self-Assessment, Corps Network evaluators make a site visit.

Narratives

PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: OFS will continue to attend WNCSB and CNCS trainings. OFS has developed a training manual which provides a schedule of trainings for all direct service staff in both site work and member development topics. OFS has monthly staff trainings coordinated by Deputy Director/Member Services on topics concerning member development. In the past year, for example, OFS has engaged a youth psychologist to present quarterly in-service trainings on assisting youth who have mental health problems. "Training the trainers" on service sites is the responsibility of the OFS' Deputy Director/Service Sites who pairs newly hired with experienced Site Supervisors and who demonstrates needed skills on-site. The Deputy Director attends trainings and conferences presented by experts in residential construction, energy efficiency, and environmental conservation and trains Site Supervisors in these new approaches.

SOUND RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AS AN ORGANIZATION

Volunteer Generation and Support: OFS' fills gaps in organizational knowledge or skill through strategic recruitment of Board members, all volunteers. OFS has benefited from the knowledge of Board members with private sector experience in real estate, finance, construction, and marketing skills. OFS also builds partnerships with its periodic volunteers, seeking deeper commitment to the organization where possible. Recently, an especially committed volunteer mentor was invited to join the Board. He has become its Vice President and has helped increase OFS' private funding base. Another OFS volunteer mentor, an individual with landscaping skills, was engaged to help members design and install attractive landscaping around OFS homes. OFS supports these contributions by nominating volunteers for community awards, recognizing them at OFS Open Houses, and including them in OFS holiday and graduation celebrations.

Narratives

Organizational and Community Leadership: OFS continuously works to improve its understanding of and service to disconnected youth and shares its expertise and insights with other agencies serving at-risk youth. Its staff has presented at national workshops held by YBUSA and Corps Network. For the past 13 years, OFS has worked to initiate and strengthen a network of Youth Corps in Wisconsin - Wisconsin Fresh Start - who provide at-risk young people with the opportunity to serve the community by constructing affordable housing. Currently, this network, some of whom have successfully operated AmeriCorps programs, includes 9 agencies working in 21 neighborhoods. In late 2006, OFS' lead staff successfully advocated for the creation of United Way of Dane County's Task Force on Disconnected and Violent Youth. The Task Force brought about agreement from local political, institutional and business leadership that this problem is real, acute, and requiring of immediate attention

The agency, its members, volunteers, and staff have been recognized locally and nationally. Recent awards include:

1997 Wisconsin Power & Light Partners in Conservation Award

1998 Governor's Replication Initiative

1999 Dane County Juvenile Court Outstanding Service Award

2000 Governor's Workforce Innovation Award

2000 Executive Director Connie Ferris Bailey received National Governor's Association "Distinguished Service to State Government" Award

2002 Wisconsin Community Service Award

2004 Wisconsin Association of Child & Youth Care Professionals Program of the Year

2005 Executive Director Connie Ferris Bailey named YWCA

Narratives

Woman of Distinction

2006 Governor's Volunteer Service Award to Volunteer Mentor

David J. Lehrer

2007 Dane County Juvenile Court Outstanding Achievement Award

to member Travis Weisensel

2008 Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission, "Tony Maggiore"

Award to member Tyler Miller

2008 Dane County Juvenile Court Outstanding Achievement

Award to member Jordan Sharlow

2008 United Way Community Volunteer Award to Mentor Paula

West Kaplan

2009 Friends of Focus Award for Alternatives to Incarceration

2009 Dane County Neighborhood Intervention Program, Joe

Thomas Positive Image Award to Deputy Director Jim

Sanders for significant contributions to families.

Success in Securing Match Resources: OFS' match record for the past 6 grant cycles has been: 67% (04-05); 64% (05-06); 58.19% (06-07); 58.22% (07-08); 56.38% (08-09); and, 63% (09-10). For the proposed 10-11 cycle, OFS has secured \$654,101, or 54% of program costs. These matching funds all come from local, non-federal sources, including City of Madison and Dane Co, Dept. of Corrections, local school district state aids, United Way and private corporations.

SUCCESS IN SECURING COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

Collaboration: To complete housing goals: 1.) OFS recruits volunteers from local corporations,

Narratives

building trades organizations, AmeriCorps graduates, and members' families; 2.) OFS housing staff develop a design and construction budget submitted to the OFS Board Housing Committee comprised of volunteers from financial and construction-related business; 3.) Funding for housing costs comes from no-interest construction loans from City and County CDBG, the Realtors Assoc, and below market-rate loans from local financial institutions; 4.) OFS refers first-time homebuyers to the Dane County Housing Authority's Homebuyer Seminars; 5.) As a member of the Homebuyer's Roundtable OFS assists in organizing the annual Homebuyer's Fair scheduled each March in Dane County; and, 6.) County and City CDBG Commissions will provide \$21,000 to new homeowners in the form of no-interest second mortgages.

To complete conservation projects: 1.) Madison Parks Commission, Riverland Conservancy, Swamplover's Foundation, and Wisconsin DNR will develop plans for OFS crews to complete 42 environmental projects annually; 2.) Conservation staff will assist in training members to work on specific projects; 3.) City of Madison will provide \$25,000 to help fund the restoration of conservation parks; 4.) Riverland Conservancy will provide \$15,000 to help fund OFS work within the Conservancy; and, 5.) OFS is negotiating with Swamplover's Foundation for financial support for OFS' conservation work.

To accomplish member development goals: 1.) MMSD, DCHS, WI Dept. of Corrections, Dane County Job Center, Children Come First will refer young people to OFS for possible enrollment; 2.) OFS and MATC have developed an MOU for enrolling members in MATC introductory classes and short-term certification programs; 3.) OFS refers members for mental health or AODA assessment and treatment to Family Service, Mental Health Center of Dane County, or to private therapists for treatment on a sliding scale or no-cost basis; 4.) Community Coordinated Child Care will assist members to access quality childcare; 5.) OFS will recruit volunteers mentors/tutors from RSVP, the United Way Volunteer

Narratives

Center, Madison Urban Ministries, UW School of Education, and Edgewood College Education Dept.; and, 6.) Volunteer student nurses from the UW School of Nursing, under the supervision of OFS Clinic Director and UW nursing faculty, provide health assessments, education, and advocacy to members.

Local Financial and In-kind Contributions: OFS continuously works to maintain current funding sources at the same time it endeavors to diversify funding. In 2007, OFS received funding from 54 sources; in 2008, from 58 sources, and in 2009, from 78 sources, including several new corporate sources. At the local level, our consistent funding partners have been the City of Madison CDBG Commission; DCHS; WI Dept of Corrections; MMSD; Dane County United Way, and, the Workforce Investment Board. OFS receives an on-going no-interest revolving loan from the Realtor's Foundation of South Central Wisconsin. OFS receives in-kind donations from Springs Window Fashion (insulated window coverings) and Madison Gas and Electric (high efficiency furnaces). To provide support service to at-risk members, OFS receives increasing cash assistance from such local and corporate foundations as Cartier, Bassett, Cremer, Evjue, Rotary, and the Madison Community Foundation. This increase has been approximately 200% over the last 4 years.

Wide Range of Community Stakeholders: OFS has forged strong referral or case management relationships with counselors at all 17 Dane Co school districts; Corrections officers, and DCHS delinquency supervision workers. OFS has developed cooperative relationships with the Madison and Dane Co CDBG commissions. In addition to providing consistent long-term funding, these agencies assist OFS in project acquisition, budget development, environmental review, lead/asbestos abatement, plan development. The City of Madison Parks Dept. and Alliant Energy's Riverland Conservancy have provided funding and project management to assist OFS members to remain engaged and contributing to multi-year conservation projects.

Narratives

A wide range of stakeholder agencies has provided volunteers or assisted in their recruitment, including RSVP, the United Way Volunteer Center, the UW-Madison, and numerous private corporations, such as Summit Credit Union, and Wells Fargo Bank.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is \$12,995

Diverse non-federal support: For Year 1, 2010-11, OFS will exceed the cash match requirement for this program by garnering \$654,101 or 54% cash match from 17 non-federal (local) sources including DCHS, Children Come First, WI Dept. of Corrections, Dane County Juvenile Corrections, MMSD, WI State Education Aids, United Way of Dane County, Madison Parks, Alliant Energy Foundation, 7 corporations, and OFS labor charged to houses.

Decreased Reliance on Federal Support: Consistently during the last 6 years, OFS has provided more than 50% cash match to the AmeriCorps program. During this same period, OFS has increased housing production from 8 to 9 affordable homes, proposes to increase conservation projects from 14 to 42 annually, and has enrolled a greatly disadvantaged group of young people who are re-entering the community from prison or county jail.

Budget Adequacy: The budget, including CNCS funds and match, provides funds needed to pay for all program costs for member outreach, orientation, training, allowances, healthcare, supervision, member education, and member development to meet AmeriCorps' Youth Corps requirements. In addition, the budget supports staff who help place graduates in post secondary education and employment.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

At the end of the current cycle, 09-10, OFS will conduct an internal audit that will compile 3-year data on the following measures:

Narratives

Member demographic information at recruitment, member

development progress information; and, member satisfaction;

Volunteer demographics, service, and satisfaction;

Housing construction/sale information by site;

Homeowner satisfaction;

Conservation project completion by site;

Conservation area owner/manager satisfaction;

YPC feedback;

Graduate progress -- 1 year, 2 years, and long-term;

Other funding source feedback; and,

Self assessment/peer review evaluations: In 2010, to maintain affiliation with two national youth service agencies, YBUSA and the Corps Network, OFS will complete two self-assessment batteries:

YBUSA's "Self-Assessment for Re-accreditation," and Corps Network's "Excellence in Corps Operation."

This 3-year evaluation will be compiled and presented to the OFS Board for analysis and response. The final document will be conveyed to the State Commission and CNCS in compliance with the AmeriCorps Regulations.

If funded for a new 3-year cycle, OFS will engage an independent evaluation firm, selected by bid. The same program and organizational elements will be evaluated, as well as any additional areas recommended by the evaluator. The costs of this evaluation will be incorporated into the 2012-13 application to CNCS.

Amendment Justification

Narratives

NA

Clarification Summary

Personnel (Budget Clarification Item): The narrative incorrectly states that OFS will have 7 site supervisors. We are applying to increase to 9 Site Supervisors. All 9 Supervisors will be allocated 100% FTE to the AmeriCorps program. However, through matching funds, OFS will pay for 50% of personnel costs, and we request 50% from CNCS.

Payment for Credit-Bearing Classes: OFS will provide comprehensive member development and community service training at no cost to members. The cost of this training will be paid from CNCS and matching funds. For those members taking credit-bearing classes during AmeriCorps training time, the cost of any tuition will be paid by OFS from funds raised for that purpose.

Member Orientation: Initial orientation to service begins in intake interviews between the AmeriCorps applicant and intake staff (including the Deputy Director for Member Services, Site Supervisor, and Classroom Teacher). During these interviews, the benefits and responsibilities of members, the expectations of the program, the nature of community service are clarified so that the applicant is fully informed about the AmeriCorps program prior to enrolling. Prior to full-time enrollment, the member is assigned to a classroom teacher who, with the member, reviews the OFS Member Handbook and the AmeriCorps contract. As a group, new members watch the OFS video and take a project site tour. All AmeriCorps paperwork is completed and educational assessments are undertaken. This orientation takes approximately 10 hours.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS, TRAINING, and SUPERVISION, OF SITE SUPERVISORS:

A.) OFS Site Supervisors are Program Staff: All 9 Site Supervisors are OFS AmeriCorps program staff

Narratives

who are hired by OFS because of their skills at motivating and educating Youth Corps members.

Construction Site Supervisors have backgrounds in residential construction and are skilled at training young people in the phases of housing construction. Conservation Site Supervisors have demonstrated knowledge of the tasks required on conservation sites and have ability to guide members to complete these tasks.

B.) Training of Site Supervisors: Training of Site Supervisors is the responsibility of the OFS Deputy Director for Service Projects. Newly hired Supervisors must pass a 6-month probationary period during which their work is carefully monitored and problems addressed with training. Newly hired supervisors are initially paired with experienced Site Supervisors for on-the-job training by the experienced Site Supervisor and Deputy Director. When the newly hired Supervisor is assigned to his/her own project site, the Deputy Director provides considerable on-site monitoring, hands-on training, and feedback until the new Supervisor has demonstrated ability to operate independently. Training of all Site Supervisors in residential construction or conservation techniques or member management/development topics is also provided by the Deputy Director via scheduled group training sessions. Site safety is a constraint priority for group instruction and on-site training.

C.) Supervision of Site Supervisors: Supervision of the Site Supervisors is the responsibility of the Deputy Director for Service Projects. On a daily basis, the Deputy Director is available for consultation to all 9 Site Supervisors during 60 minutes each morning before the crews depart for their community service sites. During the workday, the Deputy Director circulates among the sites to monitor each crew's progress and is available by cell phone all day to respond to questions and concerns. In his oversight of community projects, the Deputy Director enforces member management guidelines, safety requirements, work and materials handling quality, project timelines, and project budgets.

Narratives

CNCS and Matching Money Support of Site Supervisors: All 9 Site Supervisors are 100% FTE employees allocated 100% to supervision of AmeriCorps Youth Corps members on housing construction or environmental conservation projects. OFS requests that CNCS support 50% of their personnel costs, while 50% will come from matching sources.

Criminal History Checks: Members-OFS will conduct the WI State Criminal Registry, NSOPR, and WCCA/CCAP checks on all members as part of determining eligibility. Staff charged to the grant-OFS has conducted the WI State Criminal Registry, NSOPR, and WCCA/CCAP checks on all employees, to meet the background check requirements prior to 11/23/2007 and for the period 11/23/2007-9/30/2009. No new staff have been hired since 10/1/2009. OFS will complete the required checks (WI State Criminal Registry, NSOPR, and WCCA/CCAP) for the two supervisors scheduled to be hired under this grant.

National Performance Measure Pilot: OFS will not be addressing the "Member College Course Completion" measure, as referenced in the narrative, because we anticipate enrolling very few members who already have a high school diploma or equivalent.

CLARIFICATION RESPONSES FY10-5/18:

FY10 Budget Clarification Response-5/18: Food Preparer/Fringe Food Preparer-Operation Fresh Start's members will be a part of an Opportunity Corps. By design, this youth corps will enroll disadvantaged, very low-income young people. The members will engage daily in very physical service activities on housing construction and environmental conservation projects. This service will require the members to have proper nutrition which they may not be able to access outside OFS due to their poverty. Our food program is an integral part of OFS' program design.

Narratives

Clarification of Start and End Dates: This application's start date is 08/16/2010 and end date is 08/15/2011.

CLARIFICATION RESPONSES FY11-4/28/11:

I.A. Justification for food preparer-Operation Fresh Start's members will be part of an Opportunity Corps. By design, this youth corps will enroll disadvantaged, very low-income young people. The members will engage daily in very physical service activities on housing construction and environmental stewardship projects. This service will require the members to have proper nutrition which they may not be able to access outside OFS due to their poverty. Our food program is an integral part of OFS' program design. It also provides the opportunity to educate members about good nutritional choices.

1. Clarification of Start date-This application's start date and member enrollment period start date is 08/16/2011.

2. Living Allowance Waiver-As per our understanding since 2001, the living allowance waiver from CNCS gives us the opportunity to pay a wage with non-CNCS funds, according to the source's requirements, and report it as match when the source allows it.

3. Member Compensation-HT and MT members do not receive compensation while receiving classroom training (GED/Diploma attainment assistance); FT members do not receive classroom training because they have earned a diploma or equivalent prior to enrollment. All members are compensated equally for required training such as First Aid/CPR.

Environmental Stewardship Performance Measures EN4 and EN5-As with our housing measure, these measures have been removed, as they are primarily a delivery mechanism for the outcomes desired in

Narratives

the members. In response to the recommendation to remove the environmental stewardship measures, we have also re-allocated all 43.41 MSY's to Opportunity. OFS will continue to track and separately report on housing and environmental services delivered.

Management Change-Effective March 1, 2011, Connie Ferris Bailey resigned from her position as Executive Director and is now working part-time as a YouthBuild Coach, providing technical assistance to YouthBuild programs across the country. Gregory Markle was selected by our Board of Directors to be OFS' new Executive Director.

Continuation Changes

OFS proposes the following changes:

RATIONAL AND APPROACH

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND MEMBER ROLES:

HOUSING-PROPOSED: In response to the national housing market downturn, OFS has adjusted its approach to affordable housing development. In the past, OFS has owned, marketed, and sold the housing sites developed by our members. In Year 2, OFS will be the general contractor and our members will construct or rehabilitate housing owned by other non-profit housing providers. OFS has concluded or is developing general contractor agreements with the following non-profit housing owners: Movin' Out, Madison Area Community Land Trust, Habitat for Humanity, and the Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development. Once OFS members have completed each project, the owner agencies will sell or rent them to income-eligible households whose incomes may range from very low income to moderate income. Some will include persons with disabilities. In Year 2, OFS will construct or renovate 5 houses in Madison, 1 home in Cambridge, and 1 home in Windsor, Wisconsin. This

Narratives

number represents a proposed reduction from 9 to 7 homes to be completed in Year 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP-PROPOSED: In Year 1, OFS expanded to support 2 year-round conservation crews and has solicited project sponsorship from a wide array of owners of public parks and conservation land trusts. In Year 2, OFS anticipates working with the following partners to improve or restore natural areas and parkland: The Nature Conservancy, Dane County Parks Department, Village of DeForest Parks, Village of McFarland Parks, City of Fitchburg Parks, USRWA Upper Sugar River Watershed Association, Wisconsin DNR, Riverland Conservancy, City of Madison Parks Division, and Swamp Lovers Conservancy. We will continue to seek project sponsorship from additional conservation and public park partners.

MEASURABLE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES: OFS will eliminate Measure 17 in the Opportunity Focus Area (Completion of a College Course) from its list of objectives. Measure 17, paired with Measure 14, applies only to members who have already completed high school certification. Upon enrollment, most of our members still need to complete high school certification and thus do not qualify under this measure. To expose them to the college environment, OFS begins to enroll members in college classes even before they have attained the GED, HSED, or high school diploma. OFS will continue to engage members in post secondary education activities, but will not elect to pursue this measure.

OFS will eliminate the self-nominated performance measure by which in the past we have reported the development of affordable housing units. OFS members will continue to complete these meaningful projects as described above under "HOUSING-PROPOSED." However, OFS will concentrate its service and reporting efforts on member development measures related to skill development, high school diploma completion, and job placement described in the Opportunity Focus Area. Development of affordable housing projects is a critical community service provided by OFS members. However, in the

Narratives

context of a youth corps, their most important function is to provide a world-of-work environment in which economically disadvantaged young people acquire employability, career, and life skills. The completed houses are the secondary outputs of youth corps training and mentoring; the primary outcomes of this work are the skills, credentials, and jobs obtained by the members in the process of community service.

MEMBER OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT: As in years past, OFS will request a waiver of the AmeriCorps living allowance, a waiver which we have traditionally received. OFS will pay members at a rate of \$7.25/hour, and these funds will come from non-CNCS sources. As it has in the past, OFS will compensate FT members for both service and training activities. In a departure from past practice, however, OFS will compensate HT and MT members for service, but not for training activities.

ENROLLMENT: To date (11/04/2010) in the Year 1, OFS has enrolled 41 of 97 awarded slots (42.2%), as follows: 9 of 10 FT, 26 of 52 HT, and 6 of 35 MT members. OFS has scheduled to fill 100% of slots in time for members to complete their terms of service within the grant cycle, as follows: 1 FT member to be enrolled by 11/15/10; 26 HT members to be enrolled by 3/15/2011; and, 29 MT members to be enrolled by 6/30/2011. OFS schedules enrollment of MT slots to provide half-day service opportunities to at-risk in-school youth during the first and second school semester and full day opportunities during summer break. OFS anticipates that in Year 1, we will enroll 100% of our 97 awarded slots. During the previous full-year of program operation, 2009-10, OFS enrolled 103.2%, including slot refills.

RETENTION: To date (11/04/2010) in Year 1, OFS has retained 100% of 41 members enrolled. In the previous full year of program operations, 2009-10, OFS' retention rate was 81.5%. OFS strives to retain

Narratives

100% of members. However, the disadvantaged young people we enroll often have multiple barriers to success, and 100% retention is an unlikely achievement. OFS is committed to a process of continuous improvement to help a higher percentage of our members succeed in service. In the past 5 years, OFS has implemented a series of member development improvements designed to assist members to succeed in service and to become employed, self-sufficient community members. These changes include a concerted focus on career development; assertive exposure of members to community college and occupational credential opportunities; a goal-setting framework called "Gateways" that helps members set individualized goals moving them progressively toward career-track employment; and, 2-year supportive follow-up of graduates to help them retain employment and educational placement and to succeed within them.

In the past year, OFS has instituted "Gateway Zero," a framework which engages applicants on the OFS waiting list in goal-setting and goal attainment prior to enrollment. Gateway Zero provides OFS a way to provide services to many of the disadvantaged young people on its waiting list, which typically includes over 400 young people. It also provides a way for those who eventually will be enrolled to advance their personal goal setting, to understand the expectations of the OFS AmeriCorps program, and to demonstrate their commitment to the program. OFS feels that Gateway Zero will be an effective means of fostering retention among those who become enrolled.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & SUPPORT: During 2009-10, OFS benefited from the work of a VISTA assigned, in part, to develop and coordinate our volunteer program. In Year 1, OFS has chosen to assign a FT member to allocate 25% of her time to manage the OFS volunteer program. OFS will pursue this same strategy in Year 2.

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY:

Narratives

OFS proposes the following Budget Changes:

Section I

A.) Personnel Expenses: Approximately \$15,000 reduction in site-supervisor costs because more time has been allocated to other funders.

B.) Personnel Fringe Benefits: Health insurance increase planned at 6% increase.

C2.) Member Travel: Increased maintenance cost for aging van fleet.

E.) Supplies: OFS reduced programmatic supplies by closely monitoring inventory.

G2.) Member Training: HSED fees and materials increased because 30 additional members receive this training; CPR training costs increased to pay for certificates and rental of artificial lungs and AED's.

I.) Other Program Operation Costs: Background checks increased from \$2 to \$7; space costs are reduced by approximately \$3,100 because other funders are paying these costs.

Section II.

A.) Living Allowance: Reduction because HT and MT members will no longer receive compensation for training/classroom time.

Narratives

B.) Member Support Costs: FICA and Workers' Compensation have decreased due to reduction in living allowance line; health insurance increased due to increase in premiums.

Section III.

A.) Corporation Fixed Amount: Increased due to increase in administration salaries.

MATCH: In Year 2, OFS' match amount will decrease from \$654,101 to \$572,581, or from 54% to 50%. This reduction occurs because OFS applies 100% of its matching dollars to paying member costs. These will decrease as OFS has ceased to pay HT and MT members for training activities.

Operation Fresh Start meets the required match percentage. Its cost per MSY, which has not changed, is less than the allowable maximum. In Year 2, OFS requests the same amount of CNCS funds as during Year 1.

EVALUATION SUMMARY OR PLAN: With the assistance of an evaluation team from the Corps Network, OFS has concluded an extremely thorough internal and external evaluation entitled "Excellence in Corps Operations," or "ECO Evaluation." OFS has attached both our internal assessment, entitled "Corps Network ECO Self-Assessment, Operation Fresh Start, October 26, 2010," and the site review report of the Corps Network ECO Team, entitled "The Corps Network Report, Operation Fresh Start, October 27-29, 2010."

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

- AmeriCorps Member Population - None
 Geographic Focus - Urban
 Geographic Focus - Rural
 Encore Program

Priority Areas

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans and Military Families |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 43.41

Service Categories

Other Education

At-risk Ecosystems Improvement

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Economic Opportunity

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

OFS will recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged, unemployed young people and provide them with individualized assessment and training in pre-employment and career development skills, and will also provide assistance to those members to secure employment, either during their term or within one year after finishing their term.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

OFS will provide pre-employment, career development, and job-seeking assistance to members and assist them to secure employment during their term of service or within one year after completing their term.

Indicator: O15: Members that secure employment.

Target : Number of members who complete their terms or leave for compelling circumstances who secure employment.

Target Value: 55

Instruments: Employment Verification Form

PM Statement: In Year 2 (2011-12), 55 members who complete their terms or leave for compelling circumstances will secure employment either during their term or within one year after.

Result: Output

Result.

OFS will recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged, unemployed young people.

Indicator: O12: Members unemployed prior to service.

Target : Economically disadvantaged, unemployed members enrolled.

Target Value: 97

Instruments: Intake questionnaire to determine eligibility.

PM Statement: In Year 2 (2011-12), OFS will recruit and enroll 97 economically disadvantaged, unemployed young people.

Priority Area: Economic Opportunity

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

OFS will recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged young people who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service and will provide classroom training to assist them in obtaining a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing their term.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

OFS will provide classroom training to assist members in obtaining a diploma or equivalent while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing their term of service.

National Performance Measures

Result.

Indicator: O16: Members that obtain a GED/diploma.

Target : Number of members who obtain a high school diploma or equivalent

Target Value: 44

Instruments: Transcript

PM Statement: In Year 2 (2011-12), 44 members will obtain a high school diploma or equivalent while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing their term.

Result: Output

Result.

OFS will recruit and enroll disadvantaged young people who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to their term of service.

Indicator: O13: Members without a high school diploma prior to service.

Target : Number of disadvantaged young people who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

Target Value: 65

Instruments: Intake questionnaire

PM Statement: In Year 2 (2011-12), OFS will enroll 65 disadvantaged young people who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable