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Executive Summary

Native American communities in rural regions face enormous socio-economic, health, educational and cultural challenges. McKinley County is one of those communities. These problems have resulted in a poorly trained workforce and weak or nonexistent support for healthy child and adolescent development. The National Indian Youth Leadership Project (NIYLP), Gallup, NM, has been serving youth in McKinley County for more than 20 years through its flagship positive youth development program, Project Venture. As a community member, NIYLP has first hand knowledge of the problems youth face as well as the lack of trained youth development professionals, as illustrated by consistent challenges in recruiting adequately trained staff. To improve outcomes for youth in our community, we propose to engage a small three member AmeriCorps team in support of evidence-based positive youth development strategies, resulting in positive outcomes for local youth and increased employment opportunities for members.

Rationale and Approach

a. The Problem

McKinley County is located in rural northwestern New Mexico. The population is 70,513; 75.7% is American Indian; and 32.2% is under the age of 18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 estimate). Gallup (pop. 19,976) is the largest city in the county and sometimes called the “Indian Capital of the World” for its location in the heart of Native lands. The county encompasses the Pueblo of Zuni and portions of the Navajo reservation and is served by Zuni Public School district and Gallup-McKinley County School District, which, with covering almost 5,500 square-miles, is geographically the largest school district in the continental U.S. Infrastructure outside the city of Gallup has been described as “third world” in Congressional testimony.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISPARITIES. McKinley County has the highest poverty rate of all counties in New Mexico, with 30.8% of the population living below the poverty level (Economic Research Service

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(ERS/USDA, 2008).

HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES. The New Mexico Department of Health's 2010 Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Report Card cited American Indians as having the worst rates for the highest number of disparities compared to other populations in the state. American Indians had the highest rates for diabetes deaths, alcohol-related deaths, homicide, motor vehicle deaths, pneumonia and influenza deaths, youth obesity, late prenatal care, and youth suicide.

Suicide among Native American youth in McKinley County is at crisis level. Within a period of five months in 2010, seven youths age 17 and younger have taken their own lives in a rural corner of the Navajo Nation in Eastern McKinley County. And there were 25 reported attempts of suicide in that same area in the first half of 2010. American Indian youth in NM had the highest suicide rate of all racial and ethnic groups, with 43.6 suicides per 100,000 population in 2006 (NMDOH, 2009).

ACADEMIC DISPARITIES. Recent local data provided by Gallup/McKinley County Schools (GMCS) indicates that children entering the district's kindergartens are roughly a full 1.5 to 2.0 years behind their New Mexico peers in language and cognition. Over 35% of the district's 13,200 students are English Language Learners (ELL). GMCS student proficiency in meeting New Mexico Standards Based Assessments (NMSBA) in core subjects is poor at all grade levels, with proficiency levels below state averages in every subject. Only one of the district's 35 schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2008-09, with 34 (97.1%) at some level of school improvement designation.

With an overwhelming burden of socio-economic, health, and academic disparities in an isolated geographic region that offers little opportunity or engaging activities that are culturally relevant, Native American youth in McKinley County are in serious need of positive support that demonstrates a promising future is indeed possible and offers a path to get there.

b. Solution: AmeriCorps Member Roles and Responsibilities

The National Indian Youth Leadership Program (NIYLP) proposes engaging three AmeriCorps

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members in supporting positive youth development programming that uses experiential and community-service learning to foster leadership and self-esteem. This program, Project Venture (PV), is a national evidenced-based, culturally appropriate, outdoor experiential program developed over 20 years of work with high-risk American Indian youth. The program relies on American Indian traditional values to help youth develop the "Six Cs" of positive youth development (Lerner, 2005): competence, confidence, connection, character, caring, and contribution. PV is the only evidence-based substance abuse prevention model for Native adolescents listed on the National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices. PV has also demonstrated positive outcomes for other youth development indicators related to mental health promotion, teen pregnancy prevention, and HIV prevention.

From their time at NI YLP, AmeriCorps members will receive hands-on training in positive youth development and gain the skills and experience to be fully employable in the positive youth development field. They will achieve this by working alongside NI YLP staff to design and implement PV programming and activities and to engage with communities in meaningful ways. Local youth development agencies have difficulty recruiting qualified staff and, after completing their AmeriCorps service, members will find employment opportunities in the areas of positive youth development and social services. With NI YLP's recent expansion, it will likely become a major employer of these AmeriCorps members.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES. AmeriCorps members will work alongside NI YLP staff to facilitate and lead school, community, and wilderness based experiential activities with American Indian and other adolescents in NI YLP's service areas. School based activities are tied to academic curriculum when possible, and move from less challenging ice breakers to more difficult group problem solving exercises. These activities build upon constructs of service leadership, group problem solving, and reflective dialogue, and build essential skills for outdoor activities. Teachers assist

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members and staff in providing these activities in the classroom.

Out-of-school-time experiential and community-based programming occurs before and/or after the school day for two to three hours per session and on weekends, holidays, and in the summer for day-long or multi-day sessions. This experiential learning component is an alternative to the typically passive classroom-based educational environment. Participants are engaged in outdoor adventure activities such as hiking, rock climbing, physical education programs, and other activities that develop critical thinking skills alongside physical abilities. In surmounting physical challenges, participants gain a better sense of self and build confidence in their abilities. AmeriCorps members will learn to facilitate and lead outdoor activities.

Project Venture's service learning component develops empathy and a sense of duty in participants and engages youth in their communities. Members will help youth plan community service projects to meet specific community needs. Youth participate in a minimum of one activity per week after school and one weekend or holiday activity per month, with some achieving 150 hours or more of program activities per year. Parents give consent for youth to participate and are encouraged to attend specially designed family/community events throughout the year.

In addition, AmeriCorps members will work with local government and civic leaders to build capacity to recognize youths' strengths and positive activities and to inform them about positive youth development tenets and applications to prevention activities. NI YLP is a working member of the New Mexico Forum for Youth and Community, a state-level intermediary group providing a cohesive vision for the field of youth-serving organizations. The forum works to move forward an agenda rooted in positive youth development.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS' ROLES. The AmeriCorps members will operate in school and community settings and serve as positive youth development services staff. They will collaborate with NI YLP staff, elders and older teens to design activities that provide holistic, proactive prevention

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messages that address high risk behaviors, enhance and support youths' existing protective factors and assist in their developing additional protective factors. A high priority will be placed on confidence, competence, and contribution. For example, members introduce an activity to youth using clear, simple language to focus the discussion, then give just enough information for youth to understand how to proceed and establish ground rules. Members will use stories and metaphors to help students connect to the activity more deeply. Afterwards, members will conduct a debriefing process as follows: describe the experience, discuss its significance, and examine how it applies to youths' lives. Members will maintain an attitude of fun and flexibility, which will help participants in their struggle to complete challenges, overcome obstacles, and solve difficult problems. Members will attend meetings with NIYLP and provider agencies, local government officials, and other youth-serving organizations.

c. AmeriCorps Member Selection, Training, and Supervision

RECRUITMENT. NIYLP intends to recruit three AmeriCorps members per cohort year to participate in the program. The manual, *Recruiting AmeriCorps Members: Creating a Strategy and Making It Work*, will help to guide recruitment strategies which will focus geographically in McKinley County including Gallup, Navajo and Zuni tribal lands; Cibola County including Grants, Laguna and Acoma Pueblos; and Albuquerque, the nearest large city, and utilize a combination of public events, media, grassroots and personal contacts. Outreach tactics include posting information at the Navajo Reservation and Pueblo Chapter Houses, sharing our search information with tribal leaders and organizations; having information booths at volunteer centers and county, tribal and career fairs; placing notices on bulletin boards at local stores and libraries; contacting the McKinley Workforce Development Center and nearby Job Corps Centers; and recruiting candidates through the community service centers of local universities; the University of New Mexico, Gallup branch; the New Mexico State University; Western New Mexico University; Navajo Technical College; and Dine College.

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Media outreach will focus on placing announcements during strategic programming on radio and public access cable television. Electronic recruiting strategies will include listing information on NI YLP's Web site.

SELECTION. All gender, ethnic and adult age groups will be invited to apply to our AmeriCorps program. However, since American Indians compose the demographic majority of the target area, they will be given preference in recruiting.

Several factors will inform the selection process. Primarily, we will consider a candidate's interest in and experience working with American Indians and adolescents in outdoor, experiential education situation. Personal qualities we will look for include tolerance for diversity; good verbal communications and social skills; a positive attitude, enthusiasm and vitality; and access to dependable transportation.

ORIENTATION. All candidates selected to participate in NI YLP's AmeriCorps program will be teamed with an NI YLP staff mentor before the program begins. Before arrival members also will receive an orientation packet that will include the following items: maps and information about McKinley and Cibola Counties and the nearby Navajo and Pueblo Nations; an introduction to NI YLP and Project Venture; a preliminary service work plan; and information about fellow AmeriCorps program members. Mentors will meet AmeriCorps members upon their arrival and assist them with getting settled.

NI YLP plans an intensive program orientation lasting three weeks. Members will participate first in icebreakers and team-building exercises to develop trust and cohesiveness; then next to NI YLP's internal employee orientation process; proceed to learn program-specific information related to the AmeriCorps program and articulated in the AmeriCorps Member Handbook; and finally be oriented on Project Venture and positive youth development approaches. Topics covered include: AmeriCorps program goals; NI YLP's mission, history, vision and programs; financial benefits such as living

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allowance, health coverage, student loan deferment, and the education allotment; how to create a culture of civic engagement; work placement site orientation; evaluation performance measures; and NIYLP employee policies and procedures.

NIYLP staff will give an overview of PV and these areas: adolescent development; group facilitation process and debriefing; communication skills; experiential education; the Red Cross model of first aid, wilderness first aid and first response skills; technical skills such as canoeing and kayaking, rock climbing and rappelling, wilderness camping; and prevention/healthy living skills, all with locally appropriate adaptations.

TRAINING. NIYLP's Director of Training and Staff Development will facilitate a structured ongoing training schedule to promote members' personal and professional growth. The training will address skills needed to implement PV, outdoor education content areas, and the culture of service and civic responsibility. Team-building activities and training on experiential education will be ongoing throughout the year. In addition, monthly training sessions will be conducted on topics such as meeting and group facilitation skills; conflict resolution; handling difficult situations; leadership; member wellness (physical, psychological and emotional health); working with adolescents in outdoor education; service-learning; civic participation; and, as the year winds down, planning for post-AmeriCorps life. Training will be evaluated regularly by the training director and director of operations, and members will receive additional or remedial training as needed. Members also will be encouraged to take online tutorials offered at the EnCorps Resources Webs site. Example tutorials are ¿What's Next¿, on life after AmeriCorps and information on how to use the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award in an efficient way.

SUPERVISION. The NIYLP Director of Operations and Experiential Programs Manager will directly supervise program members. Supervision will be a primary vehicle of member support and occur regularly in a combination of individual, team and group activities. The entire group will attend bi-

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monthly meetings for either supervision or training purposes. Supervisors will individually review the members' service work plans and discuss achievements, problems, and needs on a monthly basis. In addition, members will be involved in the NIYLP professional development system, which includes quarterly meetings with the project director to set goals, develop action plans to achieve the goals, review progress and adjust or set new goals. In addition, supervisors will use weekly meetings, direct supervision and activity logs to monitor member compliance. Members will also complete a feedback survey each quarter.

Journaling is an important component of member supervision. On a regular basis members will be asked to record written personal responses to questions such as: What in the past week's AmeriCorps activities was meaningful to you about teamwork? Why?; What in the past week's AmeriCorps activities was meaningful to you about communication? Why?; What in the past week's AmeriCorps activities did you learn about your community?; Did any experiences in the past week change the way you think, feel, or act with regards to your community or the topics addressed in this AmeriCorps program? If so, please explain.; This week I performed very well with regards to the following: (Describe).; This week I could have done better with regards to the following: (Describe). These questions were designed, in part, to encourage members to reflect on their growth as citizens and future professionals. In the last quarter, mentors and supervisors will assist members with developing an accomplishment portfolio. Photographs, videos of PV activities, mid-year and end-of-the-year reports, and letters of recommendation are some of the items found in the portfolio.

To recognize members' achievements, the program will establish a 'Member of the Month' award that honors creativity and initiative. The 'member of the month' will be featured at monthly staff meetings, on the NIYLP's Web site and in the quarterly newsletter, which is disseminated nationally. Members may also be recognized in the Gallup Journey, a local monthly newspaper/ magazine. A final dinner will be held to honor the members' service, and all member accomplishments will be

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recognized and awarded. Youth who have participated in the year's activities will create a tribute to all AmeriCorps members.

Based on NI YLP's previous experiences, AmeriCorps members will find that they work in a positive and supportive work environment, have ample opportunities to learn and grow personally and professionally, have a responsible and respected role to play, and are an important part of the NI YLP community.

d. Outcomes/Performance Measures

We expect that AmeriCorps members will increase NI YLP's ability to provide positive youth development services to a minimum of 300 adolescents per year enrolled throughout NI YLP's existing program sites in McKinley and Cibola Counties, thereby enabling NI YLP to deliver more intensive, higher quality programming to more youth on a more consistent basis. Program services to youth are generally one year in duration, including summer wilderness camp, and can provide up to 150 service hours for the highest "dosage" youth groups. Youth outcomes include increased protective factors such as resilience/assets, and decreased risk factors such as those related to substance abuse, suicide, and pregnancy prevention as measured by baseline and exit outcome scores on a specially designed survey. NI YLP utilizes "dose-response" analyses to compare youth with varying levels of participation, so careful documentation of attendance and activity logs will be essential. NI YLP has been measuring and reporting on these outcomes annually for the past twenty years and has a sophisticated Evaluation Team which includes a team leader, survey administration specialist, and videographer/photographer. NI YLP has thoroughly field tested these measures on its outcome survey and will have access to outcomes from non-AmeriCorps enhanced programs to serve as comparison groups. Data from the NM Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey will also be reviewed for comparison purposes.

Also of importance are outcomes related to AmeriCorps member performance including the ability to

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move on to higher education and/or employment in fields related to positive youth development, experiential learning, education, and the like. These outcomes will be measured through regular performance evaluations by the two program supervisors and follow up contacts with members after they have completed their term of service.

e. Volunteer Generation

NIYLP has a two-pronged approach to generating volunteers to participate in its programming: 1) Cultivating an ethic of service and volunteerism among high school-aged youth through NIYLP's Service Staff program; and 2) Offering volunteer opportunities to community members. AmeriCorps members will participate actively in both efforts.

The Service Staff program targets high-school youths who have participated in PV programming at the middle-school level. This program is designed to increase social and emotional competency, life skills, leadership experience and skills for mentoring and modeling positive behaviors with younger youth. A key component of this program is participation in service learning activities. These activities help youth to understand their value to community and to install a life long "service ethic". Service staff participants will meet after school, a minimum of one-time per month, and participate in at least three full day or weekend trips or treks annually to support adult staff. Program sessions are intentionally designed to increase in AmeriCorps members will be trained to work as Service Staff facilitators. In this role members will recruit program participants in local high schools, facilitate after school sessions, and work with them to develop service-learning projects. In addition, members are empowered to take on more and more responsibility in this program as they build facilitation skills and technical skills in a range of outdoor adventure based-activities and service-learning projects.

AmeriCorps members will actively recruit adult volunteers. They will be trained on the importance of networking for program improvement and their own professional growth, providing verbal thanks to volunteers whenever possible, and acknowledging contributions at any event where school staff

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and/or the public are in attendance. Since a focus of member activities includes increased participation in the communities, and tribes, civic lives, they will engage civic and governmental leaders to become involved, contribute invaluable connections to citizen participants or provide meeting places that are accessible and conducive to learning.

f. Partnerships and Collaboration

NIYLP has a successful, two-decade history of cultivating collaborative partnerships to leverage resources and creatively serve youth in its communities. Partner organizations include schools, providers, community-based organizations, providers, elders and youth.

Community organizations enhance the work of NIYLP in every way. From program planning, to implementation and evaluation, collaborative efforts create a nexus of support and guidance to ensure that programs in the area are reaching targeted audiences in the manner that was intended. Because faith is integral to Native American culture, including in education and business practices, the term "faith based" takes on a more global and applicable meaning when working in Native communities. Rather than drawing churches into collaborative efforts, the influence of spiritual beliefs and guidance is considered an essential aspect of program planning and implementation. NIYLP works with a number of Navajo Chapter Houses and Pueblo agencies, which act as the local arms of tribal government, as well as with tribal contract schools in its service area throughout McKinley and Cibola Counties. In 2006, NIYLP created an Elders' Council model whereby traditional elders in local communities are identified and involved as leaders and advisors in important community conversations, along with NIYLP's Board of Directors-all distinguished individuals in Indian Country. The Gallup-McKinley County School District and the Laguna Board of education have been important and evolving partners with NIYLP in delivering high quality youth development services to young people throughout the districts. Examples of school-based programming NIYLP has developed with the school district are two prevention programs with upper elementary and middle school youth,

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a cross-age mentoring program, the Corn Pollen Pathway program for youth in all seven district high schools, and the Carole E. White training grant for physical education teachers. NI YLP is entering its fourth year of programming at Laguna Middle School under the Elev8NM program funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies through the NM Community Foundation-both foundations are also important partners in our work.

Other organizations that are important NI YLP partners include the Borderlands Boys and Girls Club, Youth Conservation Corps, and the Gallup-McKinley County Coalition for Healthy and Resilient Youth (a federal Drug-Free Communities support program that was formerly part of NI YLP but now has its own nonprofit status). This coalition is comprised of 12 community stakeholder groups representing parents, healthcare providers, educators, law enforcement, private business, youth, media representatives, first responders, local government, fraternal organizations, and other local volunteer groups. Lastly, NI YLP works with state and national funding agencies to deliver services throughout the community.

g. Sustainability

As mentioned earlier, a goal of this proposal is to create a cadre of qualified staff experienced in working with American Indian youth in positive youth development. Qualified staff in this field are minimal, and for local agencies and provider organizations to meet the needs of American Indian youth in McKinley and Cibola Counties, they must fill positions that serve this segment of the population in constructive and positive ways.

NI YLP is a past recipient of both AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve grant awards. Members who participated in both programs have remained in the local community and moved into careers of service in community-based nonprofits and tribal organizations. For example, after serving a term as NI YLP programs manager, former AmeriCorps member Kimberly Ross-Toledo now directs the Coalition for Healthy and Resilient Youth. Working with governmental and civic leaders, these former

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members are now in the position to help shift perceptions of youth to a strengths-based, positive youth development perspective. Changing adults' expectations of youth from negative to positive may help counter the self-fulfilling prophecy that comes with self-destructive attitudes and behaviors held by many youth who engage in substance abuse and get into trouble with the law. An improved community climate and changed attitudes of governmental and civic leaders can, in the long run, impact funding decisions.

Organizational Capability

a. Organizational Background

The National Indian Youth Leadership Project (NIYLP) is a 20-year old nonprofit dedicated to empowering the lives of American Indian youth through community based experiential education in a positive learning environment. NIYLP has the proven capacity, experience, and talent to manage the proposed AmeriCorps program with fidelity. NIYLP Executive Director McClellan Hall will be the primary contact for the AmeriCorps grant; Director of Operations Beth Wonson will be the secondary contact.

NIYLP is a nationally recognized leader in American Indian community based service learning. NIYLP was named a Milestone Program by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for its national service learning initiative, the Turtle Island Project, which paired tribal community colleges with local schools to deepen the commitment and capacities of practitioners through service learning projects.

NIYLP is committed to continuous capacity building and conducting high quality, ongoing research and program evaluation. Evidence of our commitment and capacity is demonstrated through the consistent success of Project Venture (PV) over the years. The original NIYLP office was opened in Gallup, NM in 1985 under the leadership of McClellan Hall. Project Venture became the first Native American "prevention" program to be designated a model evidence-based program by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and the National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs

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(NREPP). After a rigorous review, Project Venture was found to be among the top five programs in the 2002 CSAP National High Risk Youth Student and was identified as the most effective program of all those serving Native American populations. Today, NI YLP has impacted over 10,000 Native American youth in communities in west central New Mexico alone. Across the United States, Canada and Europe, Native and non- Native communities have been trained by NI YLP to implement Project Venture.

In previous years NI YLP was awarded two Learn and Serve America grants and successfully operated a twenty-member AmeriCorps program in New Mexico and Arizona from 1997-2001. The AmeriCorps program continued as a local Native Service Corps program with locally generated funding for several years after funding ended.

The organization has a 20+-year history of receiving funds from federal and state agencies and managing them according to strict federal regulations and guidelines. In 2009, for example, NI YLP received contributions from the following 12 philanthropic or governmental organizations: Atlantic Philanthropies; Daniels Fund; Marguerite Casey Foundation; Gallup/McKinley School District; Holt Foundation; Kellogg Foundation; McKinley County; Messengers of Healing Winds; NM Community Foundation; U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; New Mexico Department of Health; OptumHealth; and Value Options. Contributions from several of these funders support our general operating expenses and will therefore also support this program. NI YLP has successfully managed six multiyear grants for Project Venture and its adaptations from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration totally approximately six million dollars. NI YLP has recently been awarded its largest direct services grant to date-three million dollars from the federal Office of Adolescent Health to implement a five year Teen Pregnancy Prevention initiative. NI YLP maintains strict financial oversight. A Chief Financial Officer (CFO) manages overall financial operations assisted by a business office manager in our Albuquerque office and a business office

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manager in our Gallup office who each handle day-to-day accounts payable in these locations. An Accounts Receivable professional has just been hired and will work out of the Albuquerque office. The CFO reports directly to the Director of Operations and is a certified public accountant. Our fiscal management process is guided by an explicit set of accounting policies that adheres to basic nonprofit accounting principles. An independent external auditor conducts an audit annually, and the organization's Board of Directors administers a thorough, comprehensive annual financial review. NI YLP has a FY 2010 operating budget of \$1,367,076. The projected budget for FY 2011 is \$1,500,000. The AmeriCorps budget request would represent approximately 3% of the total organizational budget.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE. NI YLP is governed by a Board of Directors-Executive Director management system. Six Board members are Native American, representing Kickapoo, Navajo, Chippewa, Potawatomi, Native Hawaiian, and Cherokee nations, and one Board member resides in a replicating community. NI YLP Board members are dedicated to positive youth development principles and proactively support the organization's growth and capacity. For example, their input in a strategic planning process with staff enabled NI YLP to obtain a major grant from the Atlantic Philanthropies for organizational development and capacity building.

The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the organization. The organization is structured around three main areas: 1) Experiential Programming; responsible for delivery, growth, and ongoing quality development of the Project Venture program and managed by the experiential program manager; 2) Operations; supports the finance, logistics, and administrative functions of the NI YLP organization; and 3) Training and Replication; supports high-potential Project Venture replication sites. An executive team composed of the executive director, director of operations, experiential programs manager, evaluation coordinator, business office manager, and chief financial officer meet weekly to oversee operations and ensure focus on key initiatives, including the AmeriCorps program, if funded.

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An administrative support staff will provide administrative support to the AmeriCorps program and its members.

REPLICATION PLAN. NI YLP has a strong national and international track record of building programs that can be replicated among Native American populations. With its Project Venture designated a SAMSHA evidence-based substance abuse prevention program, the only Native American prevention program in the country, and being recommended for replication nationally and internationally, NI YLP set out to develop a comprehensive replication system. Replication tools include training and technical assistance, a well-written replication guide and an evaluation system developed by NI YLP's Evaluation Coordinator including process and outcome evaluation as well as a fidelity tool to support quality assurance. Currently Project Venture has been replicated in more than 50 communities across 16 states, Canada, Europe, and the Pacific Islands. NI YLP has the capacity, experience, and talent to assure adaptation of its program model by interested organizations.

b. Staffing

NI YLP currently employs 22 full-time staff, 16 of whom are trained experiential educators working directly with youth. Nineteen staff members are Native American. All employees must abide by the employee Standards of Conduct, a policy outlining acceptable employee conduct, behavior, and performance with the goal of helping employees become fully contributing members of the organization. The NI YLP Employee Handbook and Risk Management Manual were revised recently in 2009. AmeriCorps members will be subject to NI YLP's employee policies and procedures.

A driving force behind NI YLP and Project Venture's effectiveness and success over the years has been a solid program management structure composed of strong team players and a seasoned, committed executive director. Key staff who will and their specific roles in the AmeriCorps program are outlined below.

NI YLP Executive Director McClellan Hall will provide oversight for the entire AmeriCorps program

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and coordinate all partner organizations and agencies. Mr. Hall is a recognized leader in the areas of prevention, service learning, and experiential education for youth. As NIYLP founder and executive director for over 20 years, Mr. Hall has managed program funds, direct service interventions, and spearheaded NIYLP's evolution as a successful nonprofit organization with an evidence-based model. Mr. Hall is the recipient of numerous service awards, including the "Spirit of Crazy Horse Award" for his work with youth; the "Kurt Hahn Award" for his outstanding contributions to the field of experiential education; and the Trailblazer Award for being one of the founders of the service learning movement in the U.S. Most recently, Mr. Hall was awarded Alice B. King award for public service in New Mexico.

Bart Crawford, Director of Training and Staff Development, is responsible for designing, developing and implementing both internal and external group development and train-the-trainer workshops locally, nationally and internationally. Mr. Crawford has 17 years of experience with experiential learning organizations. Mr. Crawford will play an important role in the program by facilitating team-building work and essential training workshops with the new AmeriCorps members to ensure their adherence to the Project Venture model, and by working with the NIYLP Management Team to develop and implement an effective member training, supervision and support system.

The NIYLP Director of Operations, Beth Wonson, and NIYLP Experiential Programs Manager, Neal Ferris (Eastern Shoshone) will be responsible for implementing the program within the community and supervising and supporting AmeriCorps members. Wonson is responsible for building internal organizational capacity and administrative and operations systems. She also oversees replication and outreach, sales, and fee-for-service work both nationally and internationally. Ms. Wonson spearheads strategic planning initiatives and their implementation, develops and manages program budgets and ensures fiscal controls and accountability processes are in place. Ferris is a leader in developing and implementing the outdoor/experiential components of the program. He supervises all experiential

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educators and is also responsible for implementing internal control mechanisms through developing procedures and guidelines/training to maintain staff accountability.

NIYLP is confident of its capacity to fully comply with the terms of the AmeriCorps program contract. The organization has a strong track record of fiscal and program management. Any technical assistance needed for member training will come from consultation with Board Members, the New Mexico Community Commission for Volunteerism and partnerships with community-based organizations. NIYLP will develop a tracking system to check in with service sites to identify additional training and technical assistance needs on an ongoing basis. Ongoing member training in programmatic issues has been described in this proposal in Section C, ¿AmeriCorps Member Selection, Training, and Supervision.¿ Any need for additional training will be assessed by the Experiential Programs Director through a combination of member and partner feedback and observation of member activities in the community.

c. Special Circumstances

In over 20 years since its inception, NIYLP has evolved from a small, local youth service provider to a leader on the local and national scene in Native American positive youth development, substance abuse prevention, community strengthening, and the dissemination of Native American cultural traditions. Despite these successes, NIYLP faces a number of challenges due primarily to the rural impoverished conditions of the service area and the struggle of its inhabitants to maintain traditional cultural ways in the face of modern world encroachment. The targeted communities are largely impoverished, rural and remote¿with the exception of the city of Gallup¿and burdened with enormous social, economic, and health disparities, as detailed in the ¿Problem¿ section of this proposal. Corporate resources are nonexistent. Philanthropic resources, while represented in a handful of valuable but limited-scope programs, are inadequate to address the level and complexity of community needs. These conditions contribute to the crisis-level problems to be addressed by the

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program.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

a. COST EFFECTIVENESS

The model we are proposing will fully integrate AmeriCorps members in to the NI YLP organization. The decision to recruit and retain a small three member AmeriCorps Team in Year 1 was made strategically to ensure our ability to fully support members without creating undue strain on the organization's management and fiscal resources. We felt this necessary in order to stay below the suggested MSY cost which leaves little funding for anything beyond member living allowances. NI YLP is fortunate to be able to tap into several sources of non-federal funding in order to fully support program implementation including an operational support grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies of \$300,000. The AP funds had been set aside as our match for the Social Innovation Fund which we were not able to apply for in the end. We will only require a small amount of this fund to provide all of the matching funds we will need to manage the program. Existing staff will provide supervision and support as part of their regular responsibilities. Since all of the programs in which AmeriCorps members will be placed are already required to conduct program evaluations, NI YLP's Evaluation Coordinator will be able to collect performance measures data specific to the AmeriCorps program along with existing contracts. If successful in Year 1, we hope to expand the numbers of members recruited in subsequent years if allowable.

We estimate the need for \$29,079 in non-Corporation funds to support program implementation. As noted above, this cash match will come from The Atlantic Philanthropies operational support grant. In addition, NI YLP will be contributing substantial in-kind resources including the time of senior staff to supervise and manage the members and the program, as well as the time of NI YLP's external evaluation coordinator. We will also contribute some costs related to member travel to program, meeting, and training locations; prorated costs for rent and operations/utilities; office supplies;

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telecommunications; and other general operating expenses. Finally, we are contributing the remainder of our 17% indirect cost rate, beyond the fixed amount allowed by the grant.

c. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

As discussed above in Section 1. a., the NI YLP service area includes some of the poorest communities in the state, including areas of the Navajo and Zuni nations located in west central NM. In addition to being resource-poor, these communities are also among the most remote in the state. The Gallup-McKinley County School district, for example, is the geographically largest in the US, with more than 100 miles between the farthest schools.

d. BUDGET ADEQUACY

As discussed above, NI YLP will fully integrate AmeriCorps members within the existing staff and program structure, thereby limiting the requirement for financial commitments which would otherwise be required if funding a full stand-alone program. We believe this model of efficiency makes sense in light of the funding structure of the AmeriCorps program which basically only supports members' living allowance cost and little more, in order to stay under the suggested MSY amount. NI YLP's Management Team along with two full-time administrative assistants, will provide in-kind services in order to recruit, manage, and supervise members. It should be noted that AmeriCorps members are supplementing, not supplanting NI YLP staff capacity, enabling NI YLP to deliver more services, at more intensive dosage levels, to more adolescent participants.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

NA

Amendment Justification

NA

Narratives

Clarification Summary

NA

Continuation Changes

NA

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 3

Service Categories

- Service-Learning Primary Secondary
Leadership Development Primary Secondary

Substance Abuse Prevention

Service Category: Leadership Development

Measure Category: Not Applicable

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Members will assist NI YLP staff to implement Project Venture with adolescent youth participants.

Activities include adventure based experiential learning in school, community, and wilderness

settings throughout the school year and summer. Project Venture curriculum aims to strengthen

internal assets such as communication & cooperation, self-awareness, problem-solving, self-

efficacy, empathy, goal setting & aspirations-all of which contribute to decreased substance use (for

users) and improved attitudes related to substance abuse prevention. Members will also recruit high

school aged service staff (junior staff) volunteers to work with middle school participants engaged

in Project Venture activities.

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

Curriculum includes carefully sequenced activities, increasing in personal and physical challenge. Classroom based curriculum includes approximately 20 sessions. Weekly after school sessions are two hours in length and prepare youth for more difficult challenges. Day long or multi-day activities and field trips are offered monthly and may include mountaineering, camping, kayaking, etc. Program culminates with a 10 day wilderness camp. Service learning projects are incorporated within school and community based components and are culturally guided. Examples include extensive repairs to the Navajo Nation Zoo to improve visitor and animal areas, creating signage in Navajo, and assisting staff as docents. The program will serve approximately 300 middle and high school aged youth in the school based component. About 100 of these youth will also participate in the higher intensity activities in the community and wilderness settings.

Results

Result: Output

Members will deliver approximately 150 hours of Project Venture programming to 300 middle and high school youth throughout the school year and summer.

Members will increase their knowledge and skills related to positive youth development and experiential program facilitation.

Indicator: serving students

Target: 300 adolescents are contracted to be served by the Project Venture program throughout the school year. Participation groups will include in-school only (low dosage group, n=300), and a high dosage group of up to 150 hours of programming (n=100).

Target Value: 300

Instruments: Outputs will be measured by documenting attendance and activity descriptions in a daily dosage log. A stakeholder survey will collect information about program strengths and challenges.

PM Statement: AmeriCorps members will deliver Project Venture positive youth development programming to 300 adolescents throughout the NIYLP service area in both high (up to 150 hours) and low (20-50 hours) dosage groups.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Youth who participate in the Project Venture program will demonstrate increased resilience and life

Result: Intermediate Outcome

skills.

Indicator: Increased internal developmental assets

Target: 300 adolescents are contracted to be served by the Project Venture program throughout the school year. Participation groups will include in-school only (low dosage group, n=300), and a high dosage group of up to 150 hours of programming (n=100).

Target Value: 300

Instruments: NIYLP Project Venture outcome survey administered to youth participants at pre and post.

PM Statement: Youth who participate in the Project Venture program will demonstrate increases in internal developmental assets including communication & cooperation, self-awareness, problem-solving, self-efficacy, empathy, goal setting & aspirations.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

Result: End Outcome

As a result of participation in the Project Venture program, there will be a statistically significant change from pre to post on measures of substance abuse prevention.

Indicator: Decreased substance abuse prevention indicators in attitudes and behaviors.

Target: 300 adolescents are contracted to be served by the Project Venture program throughout the school year. Participation groups will include in-school only (low dosage group, n=300), and a high dosage group of up to 150 hours of programming (n=100).

Target Value: 25%

Instruments: NIYLP Project Venture outcome survey administered to youth participants at pre and post.

PM Statement: 25% of youth who participate in the Project Venture program will demonstrate statistically significant changes from pre to post on measures of substance abuse prevention attitudes and behaviors.

Prev. Yrs. Data:

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable