



## Narratives

### Executive Summary

FSW proposes to support an ACFL program that serves in high needs communities in Westchester County: Yonkers, White Plains, Port Chester and New Rochelle. Each district encompasses large clusters of poverty and youth identified as at-risk in such areas as low performances in reading and in other areas of academic achievement, as well as insufficient social skills. The program connects youth with caring adults: mentors who can support their educational and emotional development.

### Rationale and Approach

Rationale and Approach:

Family Services of Westchester (FSW) proposes to support an AmeriCorps Future Leaders program (ACFL) that serves in the following high needs communities in Westchester County: Yonkers, White Plains, Port Chester and New Rochelle. Each district encompasses large clusters of poverty and youth identified as at-risk in such areas as low baseline performances in reading and/or English literacy and in other areas of academic achievement, as well as insufficient social skills, as a result of recent immigration and limited resources for both parents and low performing school districts. Youth living in these communities face tremendous challenges, making it difficult for them to establish the assets of positive youth development. Each of these four communities targeted by ACFL comprises a significant segment of at-risk families that are culturally diverse. These communities were chosen because of their "high needs" status and the disproportionate numbers of youth living below or near the poverty line, making them at-risk in multiple areas.

Compelling Community Need:

(Description of Yonkers, White Plains, Port Chester and New Rochelle communities and their needs)

The Journal News wrote in its article on education in Westchester county (Alison Bert, "Middle Schools Strive for Improvement," March 24, 2004): "As fourth-graders five years ago, they showed academic proficiency in English and math. Once they reached middle school their academic achievement waned in

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more than half the school districts in Westchester and Putnam counties. For example, in Greenburgh only one in three eighth-grade students met or exceeded the English language arts standards, though in fourth grade more than half the class had passed. The passing rate dropped by more than 10 percentage points in our targeted communities of Yonkers, New Rochelle, White Plains and Port Chester.

The Yonkers School District is a large, highly diverse urban/suburban district serving over 25,000 students from pre-k through twelfth grade. The district is in SINI (schools in need of improvement) status. In many ways, the district resembles New York City with its racial/ethnic diversity and its contrast between rich and poor. However, the contrast is even more pronounced in Yonkers. Statewide test results indicate that only 66% of Yonkers 8th graders scored at or above the State Reference Point (SRP) in math and 62% in English Language Arts (most recent NYS Dept. of Education data from school year 2005-2006). Graduation rate of Yonkers students is 55% - the lowest rate in the county. Yonkers has the highest student/teacher and student/support staff ratio (15.4 and 219.9 accordingly) in Westchester County (data of NYS Education), meaning Yonkers' students do not have much opportunity for individualized attention in school. The NYS Dept. of Education concludes that this significant drop-off from elementary school performance indicates that 'a solid academic foundation must be implemented at an early age, and is an important protective factor in producing healthy young people.'

Yonkers has one of Westchester's lowest median household incomes: all schools are eligible for Title I assistance and 66% of all students receive free or reduced lunch on a daily basis. The district serves 592 of the county's homeless children; 25% of Yonkers children live below poverty line. Other conditions making Yonkers a prime location for an AmeriCorps program: in the past decade more than 51,000 non-citizens moved to Yonkers, equal to 26% of its population; and 18% of all Yonkers students are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students who arrived in the US within the previous 3 years.

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The proportion of persons of color living in Yonkers is dramatically higher than in the general New York area. According to Census 2000, Yonkers' population is 29% Black or African American, and 37% Hispanic or Latino, while New York City is 67.9% white, 15.9% Black or African American, and 15.1% Hispanic or Latino. The student body represents a similar racial/ethnic mix, including ten percent who are recent immigrants. The schools are facing academic gaps and financial constraints. The General Education Expenditure rate in Yonkers is consistently one of the lowest in Westchester County.

White Plains is a city with a population of 53,077, covering an area of nearly 10 square miles. Like Mt. Vernon, however, it falls well below the county median household income level. The 2003-4 Westchester County Needs Assessment prepared by the County Youth Bureau reports that White Plains ranks third in the county (after Yonkers and Mt. Vernon) in number of children in family assistance cases and fourth in number of homeless children reporting White Plains as their community of origin. Poverty in Westchester, highly correlated with race/ethnicity and female-headed households, is concentrated in five cities with White Plains and Yonkers topping the list while Port Chester heads the list of villages. All three of these areas highly correlate with concentrations of minority populations, according to 2003-2004 Needs Assessment. Welfare to work initiatives have directly affected the families of youth within these three targeted communities and virtually all programs which support youth are struggling to fill the void that is created when a single parent goes to work and is unavailable to provide the day-to-day support needed to help youth develop the academic, social and emotional skills necessary to achieve their optimal potential. ACFL is thus a vital resource to White Plains.

The village of Port Chester consists of 2.4 square miles with a population of 27,867, and per the 2000 census, has highest percentage Latino population (46.2%) of any municipality in the county. As reported in the N.Y. Times April 16, 2001, Port Chester's Hispanic population increased more than 350% from 1980 to 2000. During the same period, the proportion of non-Hispanic whites dropped to 43% from

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70%. The Port Chester School District reports that Hispanics represent 62% of the student body. According to the Needs Assessment 2003-2004, the village of Port Chester has both the highest number of children living in poverty and homeless children among the county's other towns/villages.

In New Rochelle, 44% of students receive free or subsidized lunch on a daily basis. Twelve percent (12%) of children live below poverty line. Eighteen percent (18%) of all drug-related arrests are youth under 16. Fifty percent (50%) of all families with income lower than \$24, 999 are Black or Hispanic. Recent legal and undocumented immigrants bring children who come to schools having little or no command of English. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of New Rochelle's student population is foreign-born. Thirteen percent (13%) of all students in New Rochelle have limited English proficiency (LEP), while in Westchester County this rate is 8%.

In all four of these communities that FSW's ACFL AmeriCorps program proposes to serve, there are common underlying conditions that demonstrate negative impact on academic, social and emotional skills for youth (source: Westchester County Youth Bureau Needs Assessment), including: large clusters of minority populations, increased immigration, substantial numbers of single parent households, and poverty.

All factors given above present a high need for additional teachers and after school programs. Many parents have no opportunity to do homework with children or to support them in their academic studies. According to research commissioned by LeapFrog Enterprises, Inc. in conjunction with the National Education Association, almost half of school students (48 percent) say they have gone to school without finishing their homework because it was too difficult and/or because they could not find anyone to help them (National Education Association website, September 29, 2006).

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The data indicates the need for additional support in English Language and Math to assist students with increasing their basics skills and improving their academic performance. Good education starts in elementary school and continues in middle school. Low academic performance and low school interest push children toward disruptive behavior and expressed violence through hitting, intimidating, and bullying. Our task is to raise school interest in students and to prevent disruptive behavior through creative solutions. We believe that the additional individualized attention offered by an AmeriCorps member in the classroom or at the afterschool program will facilitate achievement of this task.

### Description of Activities and Member Roles:

The program connects youth with caring adults -- mentors who can support their educational and emotional development. Twenty four full time equivalent members (15 full time/18 part time) will serve in the four high needs communities at educationally based institutions as teacher's assistants providing one-on-one academic support, mentoring services, literacy skill building activities and homework assistance to targeted high school, middle school, elementary and pre-school students.

FSW's ACFL program will recruit, train and place members at sites in the four targeted municipalities: Yonkers, White Plains, New Rochelle and Port Chester elementary schools and public libraries. At each site ACFL members will provide services with a goal of empowering each child/youth to become a contributing member of the community, consistent with FSW's mission and ACFL's objectives, i.e. improving academic, social and emotional skills, consistent with the overarching values of positive youth development. All members, regardless of placement, work under the day-to-day supervision of a head teacher and program coordinator. The ACFL program coordinator has biweekly contacts with all sites and makes regularly scheduled visits in order to assess members' performance in program activities on an ongoing basis.

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As part of their assignment, ACFL members will spend one-on-one time with targeted children/youth at their sites, to provide extra help for those children/youth who are struggling with various academic, cognitive, and behavioral issues. At the schools ACFL members will serve in the role of teaching assistant/aide, providing such activities as one-to-one reading time with teacher-selected children.

An ACFL member is prohibited from organizing or engaging in strikes; assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing; or impairing existing collective bargaining agreements. By no means will a member provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization at the time of his/her service. Also, a member will not be engaged in any kind of political activity (union organizing, political elections, etc.)

As a result of on-going ACFL program, it is anticipated that: the thirty three (33) full and part-time members will gain increased tutoring/ mentoring skills as a result of their community service and participation in the on-going member development classes. Each member is required to deliver a brief presentation to the other members or to write a newsletter article describing a personal experience related to any of the member development components; other measurement tools regarding members will be pre- and post testing following the completion of membership development training components, self evaluations, host site and program coordinator supervisory reports.

Youth who are the beneficiaries of member/volunteer services will show improved reading scores (pre-reading skills for pre-schoolers) over the school year, as measured by report cards and teacher reports, and the Transition form assessment tool based on the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for pre- school aged youth.

The on-going ACFL program has identified community needs and risk factors related to youth

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performances and will specifically deploy the full time equivalent of 24 (MSY) members to provide supportive services that will directly address the identified needs areas and implement a volunteer component to begin to establish an on-going infrastructure that can subsequently lead towards sustainability. Without an AmeriCorps grant these program activities will not continue.

Measurable Outputs and Outcomes:

FSW's ACFL program will focus on addressing the Education priority area and we will continue using standard performance measures. FSW plans to achieve measurable impact on members (participants of the program), students, and communities. By the end of the first ACFL program year, the following objectives in three major areas will be achieved:

\* The program will increase the students' academic performance. AmeriCorps members help students improve the academic achievement and overall well-being of children and young people living in economically-challenged communities. They can help children become proficient, confident readers and reduce behavioral problems. As a result of 24 MSY members providing in-class assistance to teacher-identified under-performing children, 65% of elementary, middle and high school students who receive one-on-one academic support will demonstrate improvement in report cards and according to teacher reports, and 85% of pre-schoolers will have reached an age-appropriate developmental skill level as measured by the Transition Form assessment tool based on the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum. Better grades will be shown in report cards, teacher reports, and higher level of development for pre-schoolers, shown through Transition Forms (assessments based on the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum).

\* The program will strengthen the communities of the four geographical areas (Yonkers, White Plains, New Rochelle and Port Chester). Three members will strengthen the community through outreach and recruitment of volunteers. Volunteers will continue to engage in community service which will ensure



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the program sustainability. The community will thus become more self-supportive so that members of the community will be more responsive in trying to meet their community's complex needs. Meetings within the communities will show the increase of community support at least 30 %, in comparison with the year 2009.

\* The program will achieve positive impact on members (program participants). As a result of member training sessions and AmeriCorps service experience, each member (at least 95%) will be able to develop competency in areas important to career development, which will enhance his/her belief in his/her ability to attain goals, and to learn more about American culture. New skills and knowledge will play an essential role in reaching positive life and career goals. In addition, at least 75% of members (program participants) will report positive changes: 1.in members' creative life and career plans; 2.in getting full-time employment and/or enrollment in college studies (for those who were unemployed or not enrolled in studies); 3.in active life attitude and worldview.

The major long-term impact of our program will be identified by the end outcome of the first performance measure: improvement of academic performance.

The aligned measurable output, intermediate outcome and end outcomes are as follows:

Output: Students in need of academic assistance at New Rochelle, White Plains, Yonkers and Port Chester schools will receive one-on-one and group academic support by AmeriCorps members. 700 students will receive at least 30 hours every week of one-on-one and group academic support over the school year.

Intermediate Outcome: Students who will receive one-on-one and/or group academic assistance and mentoring services will gain confidence in their ability to read. Each year, 65% students who will receive one-on-one and/or group academic assistance and mentoring services will increase by at least 10 points on the reader self-confidence index (pre/post test).

End Outcome: Elementary and middle school students will improve their academic skills. 65% of

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elementary and middle school students who receive one-on-one and/or group academic support will demonstrate improvement in report cards and according to teacher reports, for the period 10/2011 - 09/2012. Also, 85% of pre-schoolers (35 students) will reach an age-appropriate developmental skill level as measured by the Transition Form assessment tool based on the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, for the period 10/2011- 09/2012. School report cards grades and Transition Form assessment results will be increased by 10 points or more.

Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement:

In order to achieve the specified performance measures, the following evaluation plan is proposed: 1. Teachers' evaluation of students' progress through testing and report cards, members' performance evaluation (done by site supervisors), parents' surveys, and other indicators of students' academic progress. 2. Surveys and scales for evaluation of member development. 3. Tracking the number of volunteers and their hours of service for the benefit of the community; community surveys that would show the increase in volunteer initiatives due to AmeriCorps members' presence. All these data will be used for the self-assessment and quality improvement of the program.

The specified performance measures will provide us with indicators that identify strengths and weaknesses, so that we can develop appropriate solutions to the problems that may arise. For example, if we see that the members lack knowledge and skills in some specific area, like resume writing, we will add one or two sessions in order to develop this specific skill. Later we will distribute a questionnaire that will show whether we have achieved our target of member development in this area. This feedback will be provided to members later.

Community Involvement:

We engaged the targeted communities in the process of identifying their needs. The school

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administration and community leaders of the Yonkers, New Rochelle, White Plains and the Port Chester school districts, teachers, parents, and youth filled out questionnaires regarding school academic performance and urgent needs of students in the areas. Once compelling needs were identified by community stakeholders, a plan to achieve the targeted outcomes was developed. This plan was shared with all stakeholders. The specific sites for member activities were specified. The ACFL Advisory Board was formed.

The role of the School District Administration, site supervisors, and Advisory Board members is to advise, guide, control and evaluate the members and staff of AmeriCorps program. The responsibilities vary. The School District Administration is responsible for choosing the site schools, providing match for the member cost, and evaluating the program effectiveness. The site supervisors are responsible for training, guiding, supervising and evaluating the AmeriCorps members. The Advisory Board members are responsible for attending the AmeriCorps Advisory Board meetings, for providing general guidance and the feedback that ensures that the program works for the benefit of the communities it is serving.

Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs:

The program director actively participates in all training workshops and seminars of the Corporation for National and Community Service. These events represent an excellent opportunity for networking and sharing information between other national and community service programs. The program director has established fruitful relationships with other AmeriCorps program directors. It is especially important to cooperate with programs in similar areas (education), because of the possible partnerships and exchange of information.

Potential for Replication:

The program has been and can be replicated again in other communities with similar needs by utilizing

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the science-based outcomes that are incorporated into the program. In this final year of funding we are still working on enhancing the existing program. In conjunction with the Advisory Board, we will be looking for strategies to replicate this program in the future.

### Organizational Capability

#### D. Organizational Capability

Sound Organizational Structure/ Ability to Provide Sound Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight:

FSW is a private, not-for-profit mental health and social service organization founded in 1954. Our mission is to provide a broad range of social and mental health services to strengthen and support families, children and individuals and the communities in which they live and work. As a comprehensive children and family service agency, FSW provides a spectrum of programs and services to meet the diverse needs of individuals, children & families at all stages of the life cycle. The organization has grown from its beginning days with one social worker--the agency founder--to its present size and scope, with more than 50 different program initiatives; over 450 professional and paraprofessional staff (including Master's level social workers, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, child care workers; nurses; certified home health aides; and management professionals; and an annual budget of \$19.5 million.

Since 1954, Family Services of Westchester (FSW), a nonprofit organization, has been providing Westchester and the tri-county area with a broad range of social and mental health services that strengthen and support families and individuals at every stage of the life cycle. Last year Family Services of Westchester helped 16,000 people lead more fulfilling lives. Mental health and counseling services remain core to our mission; community outreach programs engage youth in schools and other community settings; and FSW is at the forefront of developing high-quality, innovative programs that

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help seniors live their later years in dignity. FSW is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families & Children.

In 2004 and 2007, Family Services of Westchester received twice a three-year federal grant for implementing AmeriCorps Future Leaders (ACFL) program. AmeriCorps program at FSW is about education, and its goal is to improve their academic performance. Currently twenty four and one half FTE AmeriCorps members provide one-on-one academic support, mentoring services, literacy skill-building activities and homework assistance to elementary, middle school and pre-school students in target communities of Port Chester, Yonkers and White Plains. FSW's ACFL program has proven to successfully meet its projected outcomes for the last six operating years, and we are well ahead of target during the first quarter of the seventh operating year.

The success of FSW's AmeriCorps Future Leaders program is not surprising when viewed within the context of the framework upon which it was built. FSW's extensive experience providing mentoring and volunteer-based programs makes for a particularly close fit for the AmeriCorps Future Leaders program. For example, FSW offers the only Big Brothers Big Sisters program in Westchester, which recruits, trains, individually matches and supervises adult volunteers as role models to boys and girls between the ages of 7-15 who are in need of mentors. FSW recognizes that all children need a consistent adult role model/mentor to booster self-esteem and confidence. Our school-based mentoring program engages high school students as "Bigs" for elementary students while the Latino Mentoring Program recruits and trains adult Hispanic volunteer advocates to help Port Chester's Latino youth adapt to differences in language, culture and environment.

FSW offers a broad range of preventive programs targeted at adolescents as part of our mental health programs. Our many school-based programs provide preventive/educational services to children and

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adolescents as well as clinical treatment services to more than twenty schools in the county. FSW provides on-site intensive case management and clinical services to homeless families at two shelters in Mt. Vernon. FSW'S Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services program (APPS) is a school-based service that encourages positive decision-making about sexual behavior. FSW operates two group homes in White Plains for at-risk youth between the ages of 14 and 18 years, certified by the NYS Dept of Social Services. Therapeutic Foster Care homes and Respite Care homes for children offer special services such as enhanced independent living skills and tutoring.

Our community-based youth programs emphasize youth development, leadership, advocacy and empowerment. The Respite program provides therapeutic recreational services to seriously emotionally disturbed children, helping to support and maintain these children in the community. Recreational services include the weekend recreational program, Summer Camp Success, Writing Club, Careers Club, Art Club and Latino Club. These summer activities will afford school-based members the opportunity to continue their valuable work throughout the year.

Westchester Youth Council empowers teens to become an active "voice" and sounding board throughout Westchester County for such important areas of county responsibility as health, mental health, youth and social services planning procedures. By providing training in leadership and advocacy, Youth Council helps teens develop skills for success. Participants interact with local governments, commissions, task forces and with agencies that work for youth. This interactive approach helps Youth Council implement its agenda utilizing modalities of training, education, events, advocacy, etc. Platform areas of focus are: 1) Community Service, 2) Teen Pregnancy/HIV/AIDS, 3) Substance Abuse, 4) Youth Violence, and 5) General Advocacy. These needs areas correlate to those identified in county-wide needs assessments.

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The above is just a sampling of the diverse services FSW offers to strengthen children and families; many other programs such as Camp Viva (a summer camp for families affected or infected with HIV/AIDS), Adoption & Children's Services, Family Strengthening Team and Parenting Again, supporting kinship care families) are examples of other innovative programs FSW has developed to realize our vision of strengthening individuals and families.

As a private not-for-profit agency, FSW is committed to keeping our operations cost-efficient. Fully 91 cents of every dollar is spent directly on services to children, families and individuals. AmeriCorps is one of five federal grants administered by Family Services of Westchester; the other is the Head Start. As a rapidly growing agency offering more than 50 programs with an annual budget exceeding \$19 million, FSW's Finance Department and administrative staff have significant experience managing a diverse number of programs supported by multiple and diverse public and private funding sources. ACFL's program coordinator reports to the program's Vice President who, together with FSW's Chief Financial Officer, is ultimately responsible for the fiscal integrity of the program.

The ACFL program expands and strengthens our partnerships and collaborations in the targeted communities. The program is currently in its seventh operating year, and we are constantly strengthening our relationships with collaborators and host sites. In addition, we have increased our volunteer pool. We are building upon our successful experience over the past five years, and have developed a system of open communication and scheduled site visits that ensure quality service and consistent ongoing supervision. From the outset, community feedback has been instrumental in planning this ACFL AmeriCorps program. Both the targeted communities and specific ACFL placements were chosen as a result of stated needs and high levels of enthusiasm regarding working with ACFL members.

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Each host site has signed a formal memorandum of understanding regarding its own responsibilities and the member responsibilities serving at their sites. The program director has the responsibility to ensure that each host site and member is adhering to the policies mutually agreed to according to the "MOU" and the corporation guidelines. Host sites are visited weekly, and members receive ongoing supervision from both the site supervisors and the program director. The Advisory Board also plays an important role in monitoring service delivery. It is anticipated that an advisory team of two persons will visit one host site annually. The teams will visit sites with which they have no previous relationship.

The elements and activities have been reviewed and observed by the Advisory Board which consists of administrators of the host sites and representatives of the targeted communities. These collaborations and ongoing programmatic oversight ensure that the overall mission and vision of the program is unified.

Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff:

The ACFL program director is supervised weekly. She reports to the program's Vice President who, together with FSW's Chief Financial Officer, is ultimately responsible for the fiscal integrity of the program. Top executive and administrative staff meets to share program developments, community issues and other concerns in a weekly Executive Staff Meeting, thus ensuring implementation of a coordinated vision as well as mutual problem-solving in addressing service delivery and other agency issues. FSW's active Board of Directors stays updated through e-mail exchange and Board meetings and plays a strong role in supporting fulfillment of the agency's mission through active committees such as Finance and Strategic Planning.

ACFL staff features a full-time program director and a .5 FTE assistant coordinator/recruiter. Both



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individuals work closely together, overseeing the day-to-day program operations, screening, training, monitoring and evaluation of members and their community placements, as well as the recruitment and orientation of members. Each staff member has established strong liaisons with prospective host sites and site coordinators ensuring fidelity to the "MOU." The director works with the program vice-president to recruit additional members for the Advisory Board including clergy and other community residents who can bring additional expertise to the board. The director schedules Advisory Board meetings and gives progress reports on a regular basis. The director and assistant enter data onto the CMS/e-grants system, and both are responsible to ensure that programmatic needs, performance measures and all other milestones are achieved. The director arranges for members to attend the annual "Kick-off" in Albany and ensures that each member has a meaningful service experience. The director is responsible for coordinating and facilitating member development activities and ensuring that the citizenship curriculum is an ongoing process of the members' service experience.

The Advisory Council that consists of representatives of all four communities provides considerable assistance and feedback to ensure that the program meets the needs of both the members and the communities it is serving.

Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement:

Every FSW program participates in FSW's Continuing Quality Improvement (CQI) process, which consists of four elements: 1. Utilization Review: ensures that clients are receiving the most appropriate level of service to meet their needs and to facilitate their functioning at the highest possible level; 2. Critical Incident Review: examines each critical incident as defined by each program/oversight agency (e.g. OMH) to determine, that proper protocols were followed in responding to the incident; what needs to be changed in working with this client to prevent further incidents; whether this or other similar

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incidents could be prevented for other clients; any trends/patterns in critical incidents occurring within/across all agency programs; actions to address such trends or patterns. 3. Staff Development and Training: an inter-departmental committee that identifies general and specific staff needs and provides in-service training to address such needs. 4. Safety and Sanitation: reviews issues related to operation of agency facilities.

Each of these four CQI elements is overseen by a committee chaired by one of FSW's Program Vice Presidents. Minutes and reports of these committee meetings, as well as regular program reports for each of FSW's more than fifty programs, are submitted to FSW's CQI Director, who then reports to FSW's Board of Trustees. FSW is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), which has approved this CQI component for both overall agency functions and for each of the agency's individual programs.

Plan for Effective Technical Assistance:

Family Services of Westchester provides solid and effective financial and programmatic technical assistance to the ACFL program. FSW provides space, electricity, heat, telephone, computer and FAX communications. FSW also offers staff support: training facilitators; technical computer support; supervision; marketing and development services.

Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization/ Volunteer Generation and Support

FSW benefits from the efforts of more than 350 volunteers in our many programs and services. In 2004-2010, volunteers have served alongside members in Mt. Vernon, Port Chester and White Plains. They have worked with children in schools, libraries and other organizations of the target communities. Their hours were determined by individual schedules and availability. Volunteers are always welcome to

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participate in our bi-monthly training sessions. The community volunteer initiatives have been strengthened because of the AmeriCorps presence in the area. AmeriCorps program benefits both volunteers and the communities in which they serve. Our members and volunteers acknowledge that through their participation in the program, they have strengthened their connection to the community; become more involved in civic activities; shown personal growth; developed career skills; and shown greater confidence in their ability to accomplish educational goals. We anticipate that in 2011-2012, the community strengthening should be enhanced through enrollment of more volunteers in all target communities.

As reported in the demographics, any successful program in Port Chester and Yonkers must include bi-lingual staff, so our ACFL staff continues to feature mostly Latino or bilingual members and/or volunteers in the area. FSW's sites in the Family Center and in the Port Chester schools continue to focus on assisting LEP students and their families to become acclimated within the school community and community at large. ACFL staff recruits volunteers from the Hispanic community to become leaders by training them in leadership skills, education regarding resources and entitlements, encouraging voter registration and civic engagement and empowering them to learn advocacy skills which can be disseminated throughout the community, ultimately reaching isolated families with little or no English proficiency. ACFL volunteers and members will play a significant role in strengthening the capacity of FSW's outreach to Yonkers, White Plains and Port Chester's underserved Hispanic population. We plan that in total 12 volunteers will provide at least 900 hours for the year 2011 (on average 75 hours per year for every volunteer).

Organizational and Community Leadership:

The best evidence of FSW's leadership in the Westchester community is that we are now approached by

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community stakeholders when a need for a new program or services is identified. FSW staff actively participates in more than fifty committees, networks and coalitions, taking a leadership role in many of them. For example, FSW staff currently chair or have chaired in the very recent past, the children's system of care community networks in Mt. Vernon, Port Chester, Tarrytown/Sleepy Hollow and Yonkers, as well as adult service provider networks and other similar groups. Another example is FSW's well-deserved reputation as a leader in programming for Westchester's rapidly growing Latino communities. In 1993, our Family Mental Health program was the first mental health clinic in Westchester to offer treatment in Spanish; and now nearly every FSW Family Center is staffed with bilingual, bicultural professionals. All of our programs feature culturally sensitive services, including Latino Connections for new immigrants with young children and our Latino mentoring program.

Success in Securing Match Resources:

We are working on fundraising and have been successful with WESTCOP, White Plains, Yonkers, New Rochelle School Districts, and the White Plains Youth Bureau and Yonkers YMCA.

Success in Securing Community Support/Collaboration:

Collaborations that FSW has developed increase the quality and reach of services we provide. The agency is the member of the Council of Community Services of Port Chester. We have developed collaboration with the Yonkers School District and Yonkers YMCA. FSW's White Plains Family Center is home to many community youth programs. The City of White Plains is also the next targeted municipality for the Communities that Care Program; the Youth Bureau and FSW are actively participating in the early planning stages of this community initiative. ACFL members are fully integrated into the White Plains Family Center, and as part of their orientation, they gain a full

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understanding of the resources available within the community in order to enhance their community service project performance.

### Local Financial and In-kind Contributions:

Yonkers and New Rochelle School Districts provided letters of support for the next 2010-2013 three-year cycle. White Plains Youth Bureau, Yonkers YMCA and other organizations have invited ACFL program for collaboration. At present AmeriCorps members and volunteers are recruited, trained and placed at these organizations. Our relationships with our committed partners in Port Chester are already well established through previous grants and alliances as well as joint community initiatives. An example of a successful joint initiative is the recent award of a 21st Century grant in the high school specifically targeting Latino immigrant youth, in which FSW will be working closely with the school to provide academic and social support. The previous LDYC program in Port Chester was very successful, and the district feels the loss of such a valuable resource from the community.

FSW encourages staff to assume voluntary positions in the community in order to ensure that all of our programs are well integrated within the local service network. Networks for Youth, Communities that Care, Port Chester Youth Coalition Task Force and Youth Council of Westchester all compose a cross section of Port Chester community members and providers who share a common goal: to identify physical and environmental barriers and to replace them when possible with protective factors to reinforce the resilience that each child brings to the world.

### Wide Range of Community Stakeholders:

FSW has a wide range of community stakeholders, including individuals and families, schools and local

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businesses, local officials and faith-based organizations, and many others. FSW offers more than 50 programs, and practically there is no one in Westchester County, who would not be affected by their positive results. Thus, ACFL program has community support and participation.

Representatives of community organizations participate in Advisory Board meetings. They help provide training and instruction for the AmeriCorps members at the sites. These representatives of the community organizations evaluate ACFL program and provide feedback on member service. They also assist members to achieve their hours during school vacations and holidays, inviting them to participate in community projects.

Special Circumstances:

FSW was started in 1954. For 52 years FSW has become an example of stable and reliable service for the benefit of the community. The 3 communities that ACFL serves were chosen because of their "high needs" status and the disproportionate number of multiply at-risk youth living near the poverty line. Members from each target community will continue to serve on the ACFL Advisory Board and benefit directly from their involvement in the planning grant process.

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

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Cost Effectiveness/ Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY):

As a private not-for-profit agency, FSW is committed to keeping our operations cost-efficient. Fully 91 cents of every dollar is spent directly on services to children, families and individuals. AmeriCorps is one of two federal grants operated out of Family Services of Westchester; the other is the Head Start. As a

## Narratives

rapidly growing agency offering more than 50 programs with an annual budget exceeding \$19 million, FSW's Finance Dept. and administrative staff have significant experience managing a diverse number of programs supported by multiple public and private funding sources.

FSW's ACFL staff works on the program's sustainability. In order to make the program more sustainable, the program director in cooperation with FSW executives tries to diversify the funding sources. Yonkers, White Plains, New Rochelle and Port Chester School Districts, WESTCOP and other organizations in the targeted communities actively support the program. Yonkers, White Plains and New Rochelle School districts have provided letters of support for 2010-2013. Yonkers YMCA has invited FSW to place AmeriCorps members in the current year 2010-2011. Because this program targets economically distressed communities, some host sites cannot contribute to the match financially, but are asked to provide in-kind support such as professional development trainings, service on the Advisory Board and other programmatic contributions that enhance the overall program.

### Diverse Non-Federal Support:

FSW strives to expand financial support for the present ACFL program. FSW works collaboratively with partnering organizations to secure matching funding from them. Yonkers School District and New Rochelle School District administration has provided letters of support for AmeriCorps members that will serve in Yonkers and New Rochelle struggling schools. White Plains School District in cooperation with the White Plains Youth Bureau signed a contract with FSW on supporting AmeriCorps program. WESTCOP is a large community organization that stays in good partnering relationship with FSW. AmeriCorps members serve in Open Door program that prevents youth from substance and drug abuse. Also, FSW constantly supports AmeriCorps program by in-kind contributions.

### Decreased Reliance on Federal Support:

## Narratives

Decreased Reliance on Federal Support:

The three school districts (White Plains, New Rochelle, and Yonkers) are aware that we are proposing a three-year grant with escalating match requirements reaching 50% in the last year. They have indicated that should the program be successful in the first year then they will be willing and able to meet the match increase requirements. FSW's ACFL has met its match since its inception which has included and increases in match requirements each year.

ACFL strengthens the communities it serves with no reliance on federal support, when AmeriCorps graduates become employees of schools and various community organizations, involve their friends and family members in the life of their communities. More volunteers are eager to help without pay. For example, those former members who were employed by Port Chester School District invited their friends to volunteer at Port Chester Elementary schools and support school activities, especially after-school programs.

At the annual graduation ceremonies many graduates stated that they have been hired or they will be soon employed by school districts and community organizations, such as YMCA, Youth Bureau, etc.

As an agency, FSW has continued to grow and serve more individuals in the community, partially as a result of our involvement with ACFL program, with no cost to the federal government.

Lastly, as the match requirement increases and is met by local community organizations, the need for increased federal support decreases. We have met this standard each and every year of our operation both in ACFL program and in the work we do at FSW.

Budget Adequacy:



## Narratives

FSW's ACFL program complements and fulfills unmet needs that have been identified in needs assessments because FSW is well established in and very familiar with the needs of each of the four targeted communities. Our existing budget provides vital support, but is not the only resource that is contributed to the process. This is why the budget is sufficient to support the member activities directly linked to the projected outputs and outcomes.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

#### F. Evaluation Summary or Plan

FSW pays a lot of attention to the program evaluation. For the last five years ACFL program has always achieved outcomes. The following measures are used for evaluating students' academic achievements and general well-being:

- o Yonkers/White Plains/New Rochelle schools: member activities will be measured in the end of the year by hours of one-on-one service, changes noted by the teacher in classroom performance of selected child (e.g. decrease in disruptive behavior, increase in academic performance and classroom attendance, etc), report cards and member evaluation forms which will be completed jointly with the site director and program coordinator.

- o White Plains Head Start: members' roles as teaching assistants lead to outcomes measurable in the children's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language development by the Creative Curriculum© tool utilized (by monthly observation/documentation) by FSW's Head Start.

- o Port Chester schools: as in Yonkers, New Rochelle and White Plains, member performance will be measured in the end of the year in two ways: by attendance and joint evaluation by the site supervisor and program coordinator; and by changes perceived by the teacher in the classroom performance of the

## Narratives

selected child (e.g. decrease in disruptive behavior, increase in academic performance and classroom attendance).

The program participated in the Statewide Evaluation of New York's AmeriCorps programs. The evaluation was conducted by the Center for Human Services Research (CHSR), in partnership with the State Commission on National and Community Service and Office of Children and Family Services.

### Amendment Justification

Not Applicable

### Clarification Summary

BUDGET CLARIFICATION SUMMARY (05/10/2011)

Section I.G. Member Training: Member Special Events Training and Cultural Activities: Please clarify if the "light refreshments" mentioned in the clarification summary will be provided at an appreciation event or at a training.

Light Refreshments will be provided at special events because knowledge dissemination and training is at the core of these events. Members learn the following new skills: team building, communication skills, public speaking, cultural diversity and skills in other important training areas.

BUDGET CLARIFICATION SUMMARY (04/29/2011)

Desired Grant Award Start Date: October 1, 2011

Member Enrollment Start Date: October 1, 2011

Starting approximately from June 1, 2011, prospective members should be identified, interviewed, recruited, screened with fingerprints and other checking background procedures, trained, familiarized

## Narratives

with the sites and fully prepared for the October 1, 2011 start.

Additional Information that did not fit in the Budget Narrative:

C. We reviewed our grant narrative and the AmeriCorps rules for travel reimbursement. We disconfirm that only full-time members will be reimbursed. Both half time and full time members' travel from their local sites to our central site (training location) and back will be reimbursed.

Member reimbursement is for travel between subsites for training and support, and not for travel from home to work.

Section I.E. Supplies: Please provide description of Members Starter Kits and Other Supplies: to meet members' needs

Member starter kits: 33 members @ \$48

Starter Kit includes:

AmeriCorps shirt - \$8

AmeriCorps lapel pin - \$2

AmeriCorps Apollo pen - \$2

AmeriCorps Pocket Folder and Red Journal Book- \$9.50

Member Handbook - \$2.50

Paper, pencils, required forms, printed power-point presentations

(In color) - \$10

Book on tutoring/mentoring skills for the discussion

at the pre-service orientation training - \$14

## Narratives

Other Supplies to Meet Members' Needs:

Educational/Training Materials and Literature - \$120;

Flip Charts -- 6 x \$20 = 120;

Business Cards - \$60;

Ink for Printers - \$80;

Copy Machine Partial Leasing - \$157;

Office supplies (paper, pens, pencils, sticky pads, erasers, notebooks, etc.)

--33 members x \$5 per month x 12 months = \$1,980

TOTAL: \$2,517 for supplies throughout the year of service for 33 members

Section I.G. Staff Training: Please provide information about what \$970 covers for staff training (i.e. registration rate per staff member, materials, etc.)

Corporate sponsored training relates to the important aspects of professional duties and responsibilities of the program director and assistant coordinator.

Expenses for one workshop per year in upstate NY or another state include:

\$250 -- registration fee;

\$400 -- airfare and other transportation (taxi);

\$200 -- hotel;

\$120 -- food

Section I.G. Member Training: Please provide calculation for Member Special Events Training and Cultural Activities

Special Events and Cultural Activities:

According to the Training Calendar, there are four special events per year are planned:

## Narratives

1. Mid-Year Member Appreciation Event
2. The End of the Year Appreciation Event / Graduation
3. Two Field Trips to Museums of Westchester (i.e. Hudson River Museum, etc.)

The expenses related to these events include the following:

Space cost for mid-year and the end of the year appreciation events --  $2 \times \$600 = \$1,200$ ;

Light Refreshments / other seasonal supplies (like room decoration)

--  $33 \text{ members} \times \$10 \times 2 = \$660$ ;

AmeriCorps Graduation Gifts:  $\$30 \times 33 \text{ members} = \$990$ ;

Transportation for the field trips (buses) -  $\$200 \times 2 = \$400$ ;

Museum Group Fee --  $2 \times \$150 = \$300$ ;

Miscellaneous - \$122

Total: 3,672

Section I.I. Other Program Operating Costs: Please ensure that the required FBI checks are included in members' and staff's criminal history checks.

The AmeriCorps Future Leaders program provides three-part check for prospective AmeriCorps members. The check includes:

Sex offender registry check (NSOPR);

Statewide criminal history registry check and

FBI fingerprint-based check.

FBI checks are obtained via public school systems. Every prospective member is sent to the public school district. The Background check/Fingerprinting cost includes FBI checks required for the members and staff with recurring access to vulnerable populations. The program will reimburse all

## Narratives

members for the FBI/background checks.

### BUDGET CLARIFICATION SUMMARY (previous response)

1. Clarify gas mileage rate.

45 c per mile -- gas mileage rate. This is the reimbursement rate we pay our staff when they drive their own vehicles. 1.5 employees @ 35.56 miles per week for 50 weeks make \$1,200

2. Clarify training as only 24 MSY's as opposed to 33 members are noted in the budget.

24 is the number of MSYs reflected in the proposal. However, this number is broken down between full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) members (15FT and 18 PT) equivalent to 33 individuals as noted in the budget.

3. Elaborate on staff training

The staff attend trainings in the areas of working in large systems (schools), skills and supervision of difficult children, working with teachers, staff, other members of the classroom and school system, acquisition of advocacy skills, communication skills etc.

Staff train AmeriCorps members three times per month for four hours per session. Much of the training that AmeriCorps staff receive comes from internal activities generated by our FSW Staff Development and Training Committee, in addition to ongoing consultation with our 450 employees of various backgrounds servicing over 50 programs in Westchester County.

4. Please explain special event training

## Narratives

Special events include members' team building activities in which they learn how to get together in group activities which promotes the acquisition of advocacy skills, learning how to work with difficult youth etc. The workshop in the end of the year helps to build members' commitment and esprit de corps, pride to be an AmeriCorps member and mutual support.

5. Provide details as to what the \$9,500 is for Grant funded staff are not identified as receiving background checks

The in-house program evaluation of COI is the percentage of the salary which is paid to FSW position to supervise, monitor, evaluate and report on the AmeriCorps program success during its operation. This includes reports to the Board, and making liaison links with the community members, school districts and to the community-at-large.

6. Please provide calculations for the CNCS meeting

CNCS-sponsored meetings involve the following expenses: travel expenses (bus, subway, Amtrak train, and taxi), food, and hotel room. Staff attends two CNCS meetings per year. The expenses are variable. They include travel, which can be local bus (\$4.50 per round trip), subway (\$4.50), Amtrak (variable, approximately \$120), taxi (\$10-15 depending on location of the trip), food (\$30 per day), hotel room (between \$100-\$200, depending of location), airfare (variable, depending upon national location).

For example,

Bus \$4.50

Subway \$4.50

Taxi \$15

Food \$30 per day; \$60 for two days

Hotel Room - \$100

## Narratives

Airfare \$200

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Total \$384 per 1 meeting per person for two days

Explanation: during the course of the year staff may attend one or two meetings and both the director and coordinator may attend one meeting. Given the variable nature of the above fares, staff plans to attend 2 meetings, one of which will include both the director and coordinator. Total calculations will be \$384 per person per meeting; total estimated cost will be  $\$384 \times 3 = \$1,152$ .

FSW is ready to compensate the difference between the \$971 in the budget and the above amount. Note: since the last budget was written this is only the estimated cost. The amount of \$971 is a grantee' share.

7. Sources of match are not listed

We are working on fundraising and have been successful with WESTCOP, the White Plains, New Rochelle and Yonkers School Districts, White Plains Youth Bureau and Yonkers YMCA. Yonkers and New Rochelle School Districts provided contracts in which they agree to pay the match for the next 2010-2013 three-year cycle. White Plains Youth Bureau, Yonkers YMCA and other organizations have invited ACFL program for collaboration. At present AmeriCorps members are recruited, trained and placed at these organizations. Our relationships with our committed partners in Port Chester are already well established through previous grants and alliances as well as joint community initiatives.

The list of match sources is as follows:

- \* Yonkers School District -- \$98,000 projected match
- \* Port Chester School District -- \$8,000 projected match
- \* New Rochelle School District -- \$30,000 projected match
- \* White Plains School District -- \$30,000 projected match



## Narratives

\* Westchester Library System -- \$12,000 projected match (supporting the school system when the schools are closed)

\* Yonkers YMCA -- \$6,000 (supporting Yonkers after-school programs when the schools are closed during winter, spring and summer breaks)

\* Local businesses, banks, and community centers (in-kind contributions) - \$7,227

(Donations and in-kind contributions are helpful since the school budgets are limited)

TOTAL MATCH: \$191, 227.00

### PROGRAM CLARIFICATION SUMMARY

1. Clarify the need for educational and emotional support in Port Chester and New Rochelle, as the need is clear for Yonkers and White Plains but somehow lacks for the other two areas

Port Chester is a village of 28,000 in eastern Westchester County, New York, just north of the Bronx and bordering Connecticut. Port Chester's high number of undocumented immigrants makes the accepted unofficial population 15% higher, or 32,000. It is estimated by the schools that Hispanic families make up over 74% of the population. Port Chester's demographics and needs closely resemble those of large urban centers with such factors as poverty, unemployment, racial diversity, high drop-out rate, juvenile delinquency and high numbers of undocumented immigrants. Port Chester has disproportionately high number of poor female --headed households, with the county's lowest median household income level and high concentrations of poor children (Westchester Co. Youth Bureau Annual Report, 2000). Many recent immigrants live in over-crowded illegal housing. Port Chester is the poorest village in the county with a median income of \$45,381; 45% of households are "cost-burdened" by HUD standards. Last year 83% of students in two elementary schools and over 50% in the other two were eligible for free lunch;

## Narratives

60% of middle school and 52% of high school students are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Port Chester is the county's most densely populated village.

New Rochelle: Despite being a wealthy district, New Rochelle has the fourth lowest high school graduation rate of every city in Westchester County surpassed only by Yonkers, Port Chester and Mt. Vernon. This is due in part to a myriad of issues such as poverty, single parent households, limited English proficiency, communities at risk, increasing gang activities, and disproportionately high adolescent pregnancy rates due in part to immigrant population.

New Rochelle has one of the highest rates in teen pregnancies (ages 15-19) in Westchester County. At 10801 zip code, there are 81 teen pregnancies per 1,000 population. This number exceeds Yonkers data in three zip-codes (52.8; 26.6; and 33.3), and is compared with the other two (96.1 and 85.1) zip codes (data of NYSDOH 2004-2006).

In New Rochelle High School only 55% of Black students and 51% of Hispanic students graduated on time (data of New Rochelle School District; June 2009).

All social problems which were described above for Port Chester, Yonkers and White Plains relate to New Rochelle. Problems don't stop at the border. Poverty, recent immigration, limited English proficiency, drug abuse issues, and single parent households are the features of New Rochelle; for example, in 2004 there were 617 drug-related arrests; in Yonkers -- 850.

Graduation rates in Westchester county from high schools for whites is 92%; for blacks 61%; for Hispanics and Latino -- 61%; for LEP -- 44% and economically disadvantaged -- 65%. Those who are disabled have graduation rate of 60%. These groups are disproportionately represented in New Rochelle, Port Chester, Yonkers and White Plains (Westchester Children by the Numbers, 2008).

## Narratives

2. Clarify on the tutoring reference in the narrative.

"Tutor is defined as someone whose primary goal is to increase academic achievement in reading or other core subjects through planned, consistent, one-to-one or small-group sessions and activities that build on the academic strengths of students in kindergarten through 12th grade, and target their academic needs. A tutor does not include someone engaged in other academic support activities, such as mentoring and after-school program support, whose primary goal is something other than increasing academic achievement." Americorps members will have at minimum a High school diploma and be under the supervision (on site) of the classroom teachers and be visited by the program director from FSW, on a regular basis. The members receive training from the program director in addition to the teacher's in school. The members are not considered tutors; we do not claim to tutor, nor does our program represent itself as a tutoring program.

"At a minimum, you must articulate in your application how you will recruit, train, and supervise members to ensure that they have the qualifications and skills necessary to provide the service activities in which they will be engaged." -- AmeriCorps Regulations

For the purpose of this proposal, the word "tutoring" means direct service measurable activities that members provide to students in their everyday study activities and in preparing homework under the supervision of a teacher in the classroom both during the daytime and in the after-school program in the summer the work is off school sites and is comprised of academic support of interest in learning and saying connected to positive behaviors that will support academic achievement. The goal of this activity is to increase students' academic performance in reading and other core subjects. This does not refer to the member being the agent of change through tutoring. Our members perform mentoring group

## Narratives

activities as well.

The AmeriCorps staff pay a lot of attention to screening and recruiting process. Every ACFL member has at least a high school diploma and some experience working with children. Members receive a pre-service orientation and training seminars throughout the AmeriCorps year. The area include as a small component "tutoring" like activities. However, mentoring skills, child development, personal development, child abuse issues, community involvement, bettering your situation as a person, engaging youth in prosocial activities are just some of the area's our members work in to achieve our goal of increased grades and improved behavior. Other topics relate to helping children learn to be able to use one to one supervision. Members are constantly supervised by teachers on site and by AmeriCorps staff through weekly visits to the schools.

3. Clarify how members will be recruiting other members; the staff review was not certain what this activity would entail.

Every member periodically receives flyers and promotional materials on AmeriCorps Future Leaders program from AmeriCorps staff. They spread the word about AmeriCorps in their communities, involving their friends, relatives, and community. The general public is also educated about AmeriCorps activities in their communities. In order to provide AmeriCorps information, the members visit libraries, schools, and local places such as supermarkets to place the flyers and informational booklets. They also participate in annual AmeriCorps Week event.

4. Clarify how a large population of minorities equals low academic performance; no data or statistics were provided that would substantiate this claim.

## Narratives

The majority of Westchester students (80%) are graduating from high school in four years, but there is a discrepancy between White students, 92% of whom complete high school in four years, and Black or Hispanic students, among whom only 61% of either group graduate after four years. (Westchester Children by the Numbers, 2008, p.89).

The minority percentage in White Plains is 48% (Black or Hispanic); in New Rochelle 46.4% (Black or Hispanic); Port Chester -- 53.2% (Black or Hispanic); Yonkers -- 48.5% (Black or Hispanic). Poverty is directly connected to the minority population percentage. Being a member of a minority population group with poverty and other social issues equals low academic performance. The statistics indicate that being a minority in poverty increases chances that you are from a single parent household and struggling with issues such as housing, basic necessities, healthcare, increasing risk factors for substance abuse, mental health issues, domestic violence, and youth gang involvement, adolescent pregnancy, etc. You are less likely to have family support, community support, adequate childcare, etc. Lastly poverty disproportionately affects children under 18 and minorities. Families in poverty are less likely to have a member with a high school diploma, and are six times more likely to live in a single parent household.

Most recent data on 4 year High School Graduation Rates provided by the school districts (www.nysed.gov; June 2009):

Port Chester graduated 65% of Black students and 68% of Hispanic students

White Plains graduated 70% of Black students and 70% of Hispanic students

New Rochelle graduated 55% of Black students and 51% of Hispanic students

Yonkers overall graduation rate: 55% (Westchester Children by the Numbers, 2008)

5. Clarify that members are not displacing regular employees. Role of a member versus a teacher

## Narratives

assistant confirm that this is not displacement, confirmation from the placement site should be included.

In discussion with the 4 school district superintendents the AmeriCorps staff always raise the question, will this create any problem with unions or teacher aids' positions. The discussion always ends with an understanding that the members' hours of direct service and their commitment to the program will be supportive to the teachers' aids in non-competitive way to their job functions. Linda Puoplo, Deputy Director, White Plains Youth Bureau, confirms this statement. Ms. Linda Puoplo is a liaison and coordinator of the AmeriCorps program for the White Plains School District representing the superintendent Dr. Christopher P. Clouet. Ms. Puoplo is in a process of drafting a letter and confirming the above statement in a written form. The letter will be sent upon request.

6. Clarify the accuracy of the activity description that members will provide at least 30 hours every week of one-on-one and group support to students, this would mean that a member would be with only one student each day.

At ACF we have AmeriCorps members who are full-time and part-time. Full-time means the members need to complete 1,700 hours per year; that makes 35 hours per week (minimum 30 hours). Part-time members serve 900 hours per year; that makes 20 hours per week.

All members serve under the teachers' supervision. A teacher decides whether a member should work one-on-one or with a group of students during the day. A teacher may have an AmeriCorps member work with a number of children one to one during the course of the day, in addition to working with small groups of children in a classroom.

## Narratives

7. Please provide updated statistics on the four targeted communities (various sections of the application seem that they're not updated from the original application).

In the original application Yonkers and New Rochelle were not included; the majority of our previous work was in Mt. Vernon. Please refer to the additional statistics provided above in response to questions 1 and 4.

8. Clarify in the narrative, "Three members will strengthen the community . . ." Please clarify three members (typo?). The panel of reviewers felt it might be "These." In this same paragraph, you write that meetings within the communities will show the increase of community support at least 25% in comparison with the year 2006. Please update.

All members are involved in the recruitment of other members and /or volunteers: they spread the word about AmeriCorps in their communities, involving their friends, relatives, and community in general. However, certain members, selected by the AmeriCorps staff and trained by FSW Development Dept., will participate in Board meetings and community events and will make an outreach to their communities. The members will participate in an outreach in addition to their tutoring and mentoring service. We will select three members as liaison persons between AmeriCorps and their communities (one from Yonkers, one from White Plains, and one member will represent Port Chester and New Rochelle).

In 2009 we started working with new communities (New Rochelle, Yonkers) and were successful in engaging community members. Meetings within communities will show the increase of the community support at least 30% in comparison with the year 2009. (For example, we had the local 5 meetings at New Rochelle and Yonkers libraries in 2009-2010; we expect to have at least 8 meetings in 2010-2011.)

## Narratives

9. Clarify collaboration with other AmeriCorps programs.

The AmeriCorps staff has an opportunity to meet their colleagues from other AmeriCorps during CNCS training workshops. At these seminars program directors discuss their programs and its management, identify the best practices and challenges. Such discussions help enhance program's effectiveness. Thus, during the recent training the ACFL staff spoke with other program directors from NYS and learned about new ways of networking with local organizations.

The director of AmeriCorps program has personal and phone contact with other AmeriCorps programs in NYS. The assistant coordinator is a former AmeriCorps member herself. Both director and assistant coordinator are actively involved online in keeping up the latest innovations of AmeriCorps programs.

10. Please clarify how you will recruit diverse members and volunteers (recruitment plan/strategy).

In the six years of the current director tenure the program has been better than 80% Black or Hispanic every year. In Mt. Vernon two years ago the members were 95% Black or Hispanic. Recruitment planning strategy, as outlined above, includes advertising in local communities, meetings at local schools and libraries that are mostly serving people of color. FSW is a diverse agency whose Executive Director is a woman of color, whose staff speaks at least eight languages. Our middle management structure consists of Black, Latino, Asian and members from other countries, including Russia, Poland, and Caribbean etc. Our constituency is a diverse group by nature.

Given that the school districts direct and support our recruitment efforts in the local communities, we have always have members who are representatives of the people they serve.

11. Please clarify what you mean by "advocacy" in the citizenship section.



## Narratives

Every AmeriCorps member attends a pre-service orientation, where it is explained to him that certain activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps programs (section 2520.65 of AmeriCorps Regulations).

Participating in or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials are prohibited activities.

By "advocacy" the AmeriCorps staff means active support of their communities: civic approach to community problems, environmental concerns, support of schools and community centers are being discussed at the AmeriCorps training sessions.

### 12. Clarify steps taken to replicate the program.

This application is a replication of the successful program that had been utilized in the City of Mt. Vernon School District, and is now being run and operated in New Rochelle, White Plains, Yonkers and Port Chester. The superintendents of all four school districts have agreed to meet the match requirement and committed to three years of AmeriCorps involvement should the application be approved. We have three written MOUs on file. Port Chester has verbally committed, and given that FSW's decades of multiple workers in P.C. Schools, they have welcomed us with open arms.

### 13. Clarify how the program will secure/provide technical assistance to your members.

Our program has utilized in the past and will continue to utilize our IT Department, and our Tech Center with 35 PCs as a means of technical support. Whether a member needs technical support (computers, e-mail, etc.), the AmeriCorps staff and IT Department of FSW are ready to help.

## Narratives

The agency also has a staff development committee with members representing a wide range of programs and identified interests. Training is offered on a regular basis and AmeriCorps is, as is any other program, able to utilize staff from our many areas of expertise for technical support and training. This policy has provided a valuable opportunity and learning experience for our member development activities. Our close relationship with our service sites as well as other concurrent collaborations within those sites ensures that we are always communicating with each other. Our AmeriCorps advisory board consists of members from all service sites.

14. Criminal History Check Requirement: Criminal History checks are required for all grant funded staff and AmeriCorps members. A detailed description of the requirements can be found at: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/criminal-history>. Please verify that you will conduct criminal history checks on all members and grant-funded staff.

All AmeriCorps members, due to the nature of their service, have access to children. The Human Resource Department and the school districts provide the following required searches:

1. State Criminal Registry Check, and
2. National Sex Offender Public Registry Check --are both done by the FSW HR Dept.
3. Fingerprints and Personal Data Package are performed through the School Districts. Members are reimbursed by ACFL program for this procedure.

No member can start his/her service without Family Services of Westchester's Human Resources Department and the School Districts' approval which includes a review of their criminal clearance.

15. Performance Measurement: Thank you for opting in to the Education Priority Area. For each Priority Area you select, you will have to complete an MSY chart indicating the proportion of AmeriCorps

## Narratives

members' time they expect to be devoted to that Priority Area. The total of MSY's in all Priority Areas (including Other) should be equal to your total budgeted MSYs. If they are not equal, then please provide an explanation in the "clarification" section of the application narrative.

TOTAL MSY: 24

Priority area: Education

TOTAL MSY devoted to Education: 24

A national measure was selected ED5. Although we are based on mentoring. See performance measurements. The target value is 700 youth served with 455 meeting the outcome goal listed in the narrative and performance measurement section.

### Continuation Changes

No Changes

## Performance Measures

### SAA Characteristics

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

### Priority Areas

- Education  
*Selected for National Measure*   
 Environmental Stewardship  
*Selected for National Measure*   
 Economic Opportunity  
*Selected for National Measure*   
 Healthy Futures  
*Selected for National Measure*   
 Veterans and Military Families  
*Selected for National Measure*   
 Other  
*Selected for National Measure*

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 24

### Service Categories

Elementary Education

## National Performance Measures

**Priority Area: Education**

### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

24 fulltime MSY's comprised of 15 FT and 18 PT members will serve in the four high needs communities at educationally-based institutions as teachers' assistants providing one-on-one academic support, mentoring services, literacy skill-building activities and homework assistance to targeted high school, middle school, elementary school, and pre-school students.

### Result: Output

Result.

700 high school, middle school, elementary and pre-school students will start in an AmeriCorps Education Future Leaders program.

Indicator: ED1: Students who start in an AC ED program.

Target : In the four school districts (Yonkers, New Rochelle, Port Chester and White Plains), 700 pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students will participate in supplemental academic support provided by FSW's AmeriCorps members.

Target Value: 700

Instruments: Student monthly contact logs, education service output summary sheets

PM Statement: FSW's AmeriCorps Program will provide academic support to at least 700 pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students in four targeted school districts, i.e. Yonkers, New Rochelle, Port Chester and White Plains.

### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Students who are served by AmeriCorps members will increase academic performance in at least one of the subjects (Reading and/or Math) and achieve at least a 3 score (with a rubric between 1-4) on standardized NY State English language Arts Proficiency Test and NYS Math Test, which reflects the NYS Education Dept. Standards for improvement.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED5: Students w/ improved academic performance.

Target : Students who are served in four high needs communities, i.e. New Rochelle, Yonkers, White Plains and Port Chester, will increase academic performance.

Target Value: 350

Instruments: Standardized NY State English Language Arts Proficiency Test, standardized NY State Math Test

PM Statement: Students will be served in four high needs communities. 350 out of 700 students will increase academic performance in at least one of the subjects (Reading and/or Math) and achieve at least a 3 score (with a rubric between 1-4) on standardized NY State English language Arts Proficiency Test and NYS Math Test, which reflects the NYS Education Dept. Standards for improvement; the tests will be administered in the beginning and in the end of the AmeriCorps school year.

### Result: Output

Result.

455 pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students will complete participation in FSW's AmeriCorps

## National Performance Measures

Result.

Education Future Leaders program.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED2: Number of students who complete an AC ED program.

Target : In the four districts (Yonkers, New Rochelle, Port Chester and White Plains), 455 pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students will complete participation in supplemental academic support provided by FSW's AmeriCorps members.

Target Value: 455

Instruments: Student monthly contact logs, education service output summary sheets.

PM Statement: 455 pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students will complete participation in FSW's AmeriCorps Education Future Leaders program in the four districts (Yonkers, New Rochelle, Port Chester and White Plains) in supplemental academic support provided by FSW's AmeriCorps members.

## Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Already on File at CNCS

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable