

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)

1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:

Application Non-Construction

2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):

3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:

13-JAN-11

STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:

2b. APPLICATION ID:

11AC123660

4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:

FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:

09ACHOH0010005

5. APPLICATION INFORMATION

LEGAL NAME: The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks

DUNS NUMBER: 075645791

ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county):

51 N. High St.
Suite 761
Columbus OH 43215 - 3031
County: Franklin

NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes):

NAME: Dustin Speakman

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (614) 221-4336 31

FAX NUMBER: (614) 221-4338

INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: Dustin@oashf.org

6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):

341677838

7. TYPE OF APPLICANT:

7a. Non-Profit

7b. Statewide Association

8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box).

NEW NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE

CONTINUATION AMENDMENT

If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es):

A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION

C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):

9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:

Corporation for National and Community Service

10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.006

10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State

11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT:

HarvestCorps

12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc):

Ohio - Statewide

11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):

13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 09/01/11 END DATE: 08/30/12

14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant b.Program

15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #:

a. FEDERAL \$ 380,873.00

b. APPLICANT \$ 405,776.00

c. STATE \$ 0.00

d. LOCAL \$ 0.00

e. OTHER \$ 0.00

f. PROGRAM INCOME \$ 0.00

g. TOTAL \$ 786,649.00

16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?

YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON:

DATE:

NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372

17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?

YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. NO

18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.

a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

Dustin Speakman

b. TITLE:

Director of Community Services

c. TELEPHONE NUMBER:

(614) 221-4336 31

d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

e. DATE SIGNED:

04/28/11

Narratives

Executive Summary

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks seeks a continuation grant to support the HarvestCorps program for a third year. HarvestCorps members fight "food insecurity" -- hunger -- by connecting Ohioans in need to critical support programs such as SNAP (Food Stamps) and the EITC, as well as increasing capacity at Ohio's Foodbanks to serve the ever-growing numbers of those in need.

Rationale and Approach

A. Compelling Community Need

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service report of November 16, 2009 stated that more than 607,000 Ohio households, or 13.3% of Ohio's residents are "food insecure", which means that they do not have consistent access to sufficient, nutritious food. In addition, Ohio ranks third in this nation in food insecurity for children under the age of five! The food insecurity rate reflects Ohio's current poverty rate of 13.1%. Although 700,000 Ohio children are enrolled in the free and reduced-price school lunch program, only 524,000 of them received meals during the school year, according to Ohio Department of Education data.

A recent report issued by Feeding America, Child Food Insecurity in the United States: 2005 -- 2007, states that 3.5 million American children, ages five and under, are food insecure. This is the first time the USDA data has ever been analyzed to determine how many children under the age of five live at risk of hunger. Living in food-insecure households means they are unable to consistently access adequate amounts of nutritious food necessary for a healthy life.

This same report states that thirteen studies on child health and development outcomes associated with food insecurity and food insufficiency found the following conditions to be more likely for children of food-insufficient households than for children in otherwise similar food-secure households:

* Poorer health of children, as reported by parents

Narratives

- * More stomach aches, frequent headaches, and colds among children
- * Higher hospitalization rates of young children
- * Iron deficiency anemia in young children
- * Behavioral problems in 3-year-olds
- * Lower physical function in children ages 3 -- 8
- * Poorer psychosocial function and psychosocial development in school-age children
- * Higher rates of depressive disorder and suicidal symptoms in adolescents
- * More anxiety and depression in school-age children
- * Higher numbers of chronic health conditions in children
- * More 'Internalizing' behavior problems in children
- * Lower math achievement and other achievement gains in kindergartners
- * Lower math and reading gains from kindergarten to third grade
- * Lower arithmetic scores and higher likelihood of repeating a grade for children ages 6 -- 11

To date, the Ohio Benefit Bank has identified more than \$40,216,476 in Food Assistance and more than \$123,322,079 in Health Coverage for Ohio families. Jason DeParle and Robert M. Gebeloff reported in the January 3, 2010 edition of The Wall Street Journal that 314,200 Ohio families have identified Food Assistance (formerly known as food stamps) as their only income. The expansion of The Ohio Benefit Bank, using NCCS members is critical to helping Ohioans who are facing the loss of jobs and health benefits for the first time in their lives, where they live, work play and pray.

Narratives

The cold, hard facts are simple--Poverty and hunger are increasing at alarming rates in Ohio: In 2008, 13.4% of Ohioans lived in poverty. Vicki Escarra, president and CEO of Feeding America said: "Research on previous economic recessions indicates that people who fall into the grips of poverty in a time of recession often times never recover."

The cold hard facts are simple - Poverty and hunger are increasing at alarming rates in Ohio:

Of America's top 10 poorest cities, three are in Ohio, Cleveland ranked 2nd with a poverty rate of 30.5%, Cincinnati ranked 7th with 25.1% and Toledo ranked 8th with 24.7% of its residents living at or below the poverty level. No other state had more than one city in the top 10. (US Census).

There is much work to be done in the area of Food Assistance and Health Care in Ohio. We know that currently:

- * One in four Ohioans over the age of 18 earn \$10 or less an hour, making them potentially eligible for Food, Health and Energy assistance. (Columbus Research Partners)
- * One in eight Ohioans is currently receiving Food Assistance (Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services)
- * One in six Ohioans is on Medicaid/SCHIP (Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services)
- * One in four Ohio children under age 5 are hungry or significantly risk being hungry (Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services)
- * One out of every two children born in our state are eligible for WIC (Women, Infants and Children's Supplemental Nutrition

Narratives

Assistance Program(USDA)

* Forty% of Ohio's students are eligible for free and/or reduced price school meals(Ohio Dept. of Education)

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF), Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing twelve foodbanks and 3,000 member charities, including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters, reports that demand for food assistance is up approximately 21 percent, compared to one year ago. OASHF purchased and distributed 24.5 million pounds of nutritious fruits, vegetables and protein items through its network in SFY 2009.

In an effort to stabilize families who are suffering the effects of Ohio's troubled economy, OASHF became the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB), a web based software program that helps individuals file income taxes free of charge and access assistance such as food and energy assistance, health benefits, and a host of other work supports, through one on one interviews with trained counselors. These interviews result in completed applications that are sent via an electronic gateway for review by an appointed worker at each County Department of Job and Family Services. Clients appear at their first interview with the required documentation to move forward to attaining benefits.

Since inception in 2006, by using its existing Foodbank network, OASHF has grown The OBB to more than 1,100 sites and 4,500 trained volunteer counselors throughout Ohio. To date, The OBB has identified more than \$184,670,096 in potential work supports for 95,744 individuals. A recent study done by Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs reports that The Ohio Benefit Bank helps Ohioans, their communities, and the state by:

Narratives

- * Stabilizing families
- * Infusing resources into the State economy that translate into economic stimulus
- * Building Public-Private Partnerships
- * Promoting Modernization of Ohio's Social Service System

The Ohio Benefit Bank program has been the light at the end of the tunnel for 57,834 Ohio households. Families arrive at Ohio Benefit Bank sites with little hope and often times, no knowledge of how to navigate 'the system'. During these times, it is accurate to say that many OBB clients are not even aware that they may qualify for an Earned Income Tax Credit or that they can access the work supports that they have paid into for their entire work life.

B. Description of Activities and Member Roles

OASHF currently sponsors a team of 30 AmeriCorps*State members serving in the HarvestCorps program. These members, who began their service on September 1, 2009, are striving to meet the basic needs of their communities through service at Ohio foodbanks and Ohio Benefit Bank sites across Ohio. OASHF respectfully seeks a grant to continue their vital work for a second year.

OASHF awarded 23 full-time members to 18 Ohio Benefit Bank sites across the state through an RFP process. Service sites were selected based on predetermined criteria such as experience with National Service programs, plan of supervision, capacity to meet goals, etc. A committee of reviewers representing OASHF as the Sponsor, the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and a community representative scored each application based on the above criteria.

Narratives

HarvestCorps members serving at Ohio Benefit Bank sites receive intensive training in the use of the software for benefits applications and tax assistance as well as the general policies related to each of the benefits and tax credits support by The Benefit Bank. Following the training, they receive mentoring from an OASHF Regional Coordinator and AmeriCorps*VISTA Community Trainers for The Ohio Benefit Bank. Coordinators make themselves accessible to HarvestCorps members and touch base frequently by telephone to ensure that members have what they need to be successful. Members are required to submit monthly activity reports, which are reviewed by the Site Supervisor, Program Coordinator and Director of Community Services, and any issues or concerns reflected in these reports are addressed by the appropriate person. Communication between the Regional Coordinators and on-site supervisors is critical to the program's success. Trainings take place quarterly and topics range from software enhancements, changes in procedures, and/or tax law revisions.

In addition to working directly with clients to connect them to much-needed resources, HarvestCorps members will promote the services of their service site and the OBB within the community through attendance at community meetings and events, distributing marketing, and networking with other National Service programs and social service organizations. All 30 HarvestCorps members will also recruit at least a total of 150 community volunteers.

Already in the first two months of the program, 23 HarvestCorps members have assisted individuals and families complete a total of 330 applications for vital work support programs, including 210 applications for Food Assistance and medical programs.

The remaining seven HarvestCorps members are diligently working specifically to fight hunger in Ohio, with five members assigned to OASHF member foodbanks serving a total of 36 Ohio counties and one member assigned to the FoodLine, a food pantry referral hotline operated by FIRSTLINK, Central

Narratives

Ohio's Information and Referral agency. This member will continue to connect food insecure families and individuals in Central Ohio to emergency food providers such as food pantries and soup kitchens by fielding over 600 calls to the hotline per week. This member will also conduct follow up surveys with callers served through the FOODLINE program to determine their satisfaction with the process and the level of service they received.

The six members serving at Ohio Foodbanks will continue the work begun this program year to increase the capacity of the foodbanks, and their member agencies to meet the unprecedented demand for their services. by ten percent. The demand for the backpack program is much greater than what foodbanks can meet. OASHF is currently advocating the United States Department of Agriculture for a waiver that will allow reimbursement for backpack food (which is eaten off-site, which prohibits reimbursement from the Child and Adult Care Food Program); and if obtained, will increase the numbers served by backpack programs by hundreds, if not thousands. These HarvestCorps members will be instrumental in the recruitment of volunteers to pack the bags; work with schools to participate in the program; donors and secure food items for the backpacks, if the waiver does not come through.

A three-member team will continue to operate as a "swat team" dispatched from the Mid-Ohio FoodBank to its member agencies across Central Ohio to support and assist them with building their capacities to better serve the community. A two-part assessment has been started by the current team, in partnership with The Ohio State University to determine the level of hunger and/or food insecurity in the area as well as the capacity of the agencies to meet that need. The members are surveying randomly-selected member agencies on their ability to adequately serve the community by studying factors such as hours of operation, proximity to other service providers, and the amount of food they are able to receive and distribute. The team is starting this project by researching similar studies by foodbanks across the country.

Narratives

In year two, this team will begin to identify ways to increase the capacity of the agencies by at least ten percent by addressing the needs and gaps identified in the survey phase of the project. This could include establishing a capacity grant program to award small amounts of funding to member agencies to purchase equipment such as coolers, industrial shelving, computer equipment, etc. The members will also identify and implement development opportunities for the member agencies to meet the needs identified in the study, such as volunteer management, fund development and food safety.

C. Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

OASHF's HarvestCorps program will address the Opportunity priority area and will use the standard performance measures.

OASHF anticipates that the 23 members serving as full-time Ohio Benefit Bank counselors will assist at least 250 individuals and families to complete and submit applications for vital work supports and tax credits, resulting in a total of at least 5,750 households receiving assistance from HarvestCorps members at Ohio Benefit Bank sites statewide. These targets are easily tracked through the reporting system built into The Benefit Bank software, which logs the activity of each counselor, enabling easy retrieval of data such as number of applications completed and submitted by program (Food Assistance, Energy Assistance, etc.) and, in most cases, the potential amount of each benefit. Of the 5,750 households assisted, OASHF expects an intermediate outcome of at least 85% of these households will, with the assistance of the OBB counselors, successfully complete the processes to receive the benefits applied for. The anticipated end outcome for this initiative is that these families and individuals will become more financially stable and able to begin taking steps to become self-sufficient.

Members working specifically on anti-hunger initiatives will increase the capacity of the foodbanks and

Narratives

their networks of food pantries by ten percent. This will be done by volunteer recruitment, securing product donations, participation in special events and increasing the visibility of the foodbank through outreach and education. OASHF currently received six figure support from the Wal-Mart Foundation for the AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA program. In addition, Wal-Mart stores across Ohio are willing to donate food to OASHF's twelve member foodbanks. This is the kind of partnership that AmeriCorps members can implement to increase a foodbank's capacity.

D. Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, as the lead agency in Ohio for The Benefit Bank, holds a maintenance and programming contract with Solutions for Progress, Inc., the developer of The Benefit Bank software. As part of this contract, Solutions for Progress provides OASHF with very detailed reporting on a weekly, monthly and as needed basis for all activity at each Ohio Benefit Bank site. These reports detail how many applications each site and counselor has completed, for what benefits or credits, and, in many cases, the potential benefit amount. This information proves incredibly useful in planning outreach and targeting services. OASHF will use these data to regularly evaluate the project's progress toward meeting the stated goals and objectives and make adjustments as needed.

OASHF is constantly looking for ways to improve our programs and services. This is achieved through a variety of methods including surveys, conferences, webinars and regular regional meetings with all OBB sites. A recent survey issued by OASHF to Ohio Benefit Bank counselors indicates that 94% of all OBB counselors are able to more effectively and efficiently assist their clients using The Benefit Bank software. OASHF has also contracted with the Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to conduct a second study following up with 500 clients for six months from their first appointment at an OBB site. This study will focus on actual benefits received by clients and how these benefits affect the quality of life of the clients as well as whether receiving the benefits allows the

Narratives

individuals and families to achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency.

OASHF program management will continue to hold monthly conference calls with all AmeriCorps team members. These calls will afford the members the opportunity to give feedback and input on their service experience. This conference call is also an opportunity for OASHF to provide program updates, acknowledge achievements and discuss policy. Members will also be required to complete and submit a monthly service report. OASHF will use the information collected from the calls and reports to discern any issues and will act quickly to resolve them. It is expected that most member-related issues will be resolved at the local level by the on-site supervisor. Any issues or problems that cannot be resolved at the local level will be addressed and mediated by the OASHF program coordinator and/or Director of Community Services. In the unlikely event that an issue cannot be resolved by OASHF program management, the Director of Community Service will request the intervention of our program officer at the Ohio Community Service Council.

E. Community Involvement

OASHF determined the need for the activities proposed in this application by surveying both the Emergency Food Network and The Ohio Benefit Bank network. In April 2009, OASHF surveyed the network of Ohio Benefit Bank sites to determine their needs and capacities. The survey results indicate that 42% of OBB sites need additional human resources, such as volunteers and/or more staff, while 18% indicated that they need additional monetary resources. In response to the monetary issue, OBB received an award from the Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives in the amount of \$800,000 to disburse, through a competitive grant process to current OBB sites. The outcome of these awards is that more clients will attain work supports throughout Ohio, using The Ohio Benefit Bank.

Narratives

OASHF also surveys clients of the foodbanks' member agencies using the No Names, Please! survey. These surveys ask a variety of questions related to employment and choices made between paying for food and other basic needs such as medicine and utilities. These surveys consistently indicate that many of the clients of Ohio's emergency food providers are bypassing the food assistance program (formerly Food Stamps), which is the first line of defense against hunger. OASHF will address this by working to increase participation in the food assistance program. This will be achieved through the members assigned to Ohio Benefit Bank sites.

OASHF will continue to involve the community and stakeholders through regular surveys, regular community meetings and briefings, and the creation of an Ohio Benefit Bank advisory board. The board will be comprised of Ohio Benefit Bank counselors, representatives of the low-income community, state government agencies, and private partners, including current funders. The first steps to establish this board are in process. OASHF is working closely with the Governor's Office to identify individuals to serve on the board as well as roles and responsibilities. It is confidently anticipated that this board will be established and actively engaged by the middle of this program year. This board will provide unbiased guidance related to the implementation not only of the Ohio Benefit Bank in general, but also the related general anti-poverty/anti-hunger work of the OASHF National Service program (AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA).

OASHF continues to receive strong community support for its Outreach and Education and National Service initiatives. The Columbus Foundation, the nation's 4th largest community foundation, continues to take a leadership role in not only providing financial support totaling over \$1 million, but also in convening other foundations, donors and grantees to encourage them to become involved in the OBB and OASHF's National Service initiatives. Members of OASHF's senior management team were recently invited to present on these and other initiatives to the Kresge Foundation, who recently chose

Narratives

OASHF as one of the first recipients of their new, innovative interest-free non-profit loan program. The program office from The Columbus Foundation also attended this meeting to convey their strong support.

F. Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs

A second year continuation of HarvestCorps, the OASHF AmeriCorps*State project, will compliment and build upon the work of SHARECorps (Second Harvest AmeriCorps VISTA Resource and Engagement Corps) the OASHF AmeriCorps*VISTA project -- the largest in the state. Since July 2006, OASHF VISTA members have served a total of 72 Member Service Years (MSY) or an estimated 135,000 hours. The vast majority of the OASHF VISTA members are Ohio Benefit Bank Community Trainers. They recruit new Ohio Benefit Bank sites and train their staff and volunteers to be OBB tax and benefits counselors. The AmeriCorps*State members will be trained and mentored by the OASHF AmeriCorps*VISTA members. They will also be placed at host sites that were likely developed and continue to be served by the VISTA Community Trainers.

AmeriCorps team members will also partner with other AmeriCorps*State projects already using The Benefit Bank, such as Columbus Housing Partnership and Campus Compact. OASHF also sponsored a ten member AmeriCorps*NCCC team this year and expects to apply for another team for next tax season. The AmeriCorps*State team members will work very closely with the NCCC members if a team is awarded.

AmeriCorps*State members working on anti-hunger initiatives rather than OBB initiatives will also have many opportunities to work with other projects from around the state. OASHF intends to have a stronger and more visible presence on special days of service such as MLK Day and Make A Difference

Narratives

Day. It is anticipated that our AmeriCorps team will partner with other State and VISTA projects on these special days as our VISTA project has done and expand upon those partnerships.

G. Potential for Replication

The OASHF AmeriCorps*State project is designed to be easily replicated by other multi-service organizations. The Ohio Benefit Bank initiatives in the project plan can easily be adopted -- and adapted -- by other organizations with a desire to assist low- and moderate-income Ohioans in accessing the resources needed to stabilize them. OASHF is ready and willing, through its AmeriCorps*VISTA Community Trainers, to train AmeriCorps*State members from projects across Ohio, as OASHF VISTA members are the only certified OBB Community Trainers in the state. In fact, this is already being done through partnerships with Columbus Housing Partnership, Family & Community Services, Inc., and others. It is anticipated that the success this project will achieve will enable OASHF to replicate it within not only its own network, but within the networks of external partners.

The Ohio Benefit Bank, lead by OASHF, and OASHF's National Service initiatives are nationally recognized recognized as model programs. OASHF has been called on by numerous other states, including Michigan, Florida, Iowa, Kansas and Washington, to provide technical assistance in replicating The Ohio Benefit Bank model in those states. Ralph Gildehaus, the first, and former, Director of The Ohio Benefit Bank in the Ohio Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, currently serves as a Senior Fellow at MDC, Inc., a non-profit organization located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In his new role, Mr. Gildehaus leads the Work Supports Initiative, a project aimed at increasing access to work supports and benefits across the nation. Mr. Gildehaus continues to point to Ohio and OASHF's leadership with The Ohio Benefit Bank as a highly replicable model and often calls on OASHF to provide leadership in developing plans to roll out The Benefit Bank in other states.

Narratives

OASHF has also received substantial recognition for its National Service initiatives. In December, 2009, OASHF was awarded the Victory Against Hunger award by the Congressional Hunger Center, recognizing the work of OASHF's 2009 VISTA Summer Associates who brought over 4,000 new participants into Ohio's Summer Feeding programs and helped serve over 100,000 meals. OASHF has also been called on to assist other organizations in establishing National Service initiatives. Most recently, OASHF's Director of Community Service worked very closely with Feeding America on the development of their Child Hunger Corps and the structure and application for an AmeriCorps National project. OASHF has also assisted many other organizations in Ohio and across the nation in developing and strengthening National Service programs.

Organizational Capability

A. Sound Organizational Structure

1. The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) has, since 1991, remained Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger. The mission of OASHF is to assist Second Harvest Foodbanks in Ohio in providing food and other resources to people in need and to pursue areas of common interest for the benefit of people in need. As a statewide member-supported organization, OASHF represents the 12 certified Feeding America Foodbanks and OASHF distributed over 24.5 million pounds of food and grocery items to over 3,000 member charities in all 88 counties so far in State Fiscal Year 2009 (July 1, 2009 -- Present). 81 percent of these member charities are faith-based organizations with annual operating budgets of less than \$25,000 and virtually all of them are volunteer-operated.

OASHF recognizes that hunger is merely a symptom of poverty. For this reason, OASHF has led outreach and education initiatives beyond the scope of traditional food programs. In 2005 and 2006, OASHF served as the lead agency for the Ohio Chapter of the Access to Benefits Coalition (ABC). Under the leadership of OASHF, the Access to Benefits Coalition -- Ohio Chapter, along with Coalitions across the nation, partnered with the National Council on Aging in a national Medicare Part D outreach and

Narratives

education campaign called "My Medicare Matters." OASHF led the Central Ohio and Cincinnati outreach for this program, holding or scheduling over 200 community enrollment events. OASHF has also partnered for a second year with the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Service in a strategic campaign to raise awareness about the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

In 2008 OASHF developed and was awarded the state's first Food Stamp Outreach plan by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services (USDA FNS). This plan enables OASHF to partner with 6 foodbanks in Ohio to utilize a federal reimbursement mechanism that allows partners to be reimbursed for 50% of their food stamp outreach activities. This Ohio State Food Stamp Outreach plan is the largest plan in USDA Region Five (the Midwest Region) and one of the largest plans in the country, totaling more than \$1.7 million each year in federal funding.

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks has vast experience in managing large, multi-site projects. In addition to providing compliance monitoring for the food programs with over 3,000 member charities, OASHF also manages the state and eight-state region's largest AmeriCorps*VISTA project with over 45 sites across the state, one of the largest state-based VISTA project under one sponsor in the nation. In early 2010, CNCS will convert OASHF's VISTA program to an Operational Grant program with a budget totaling nearly \$1 million. Working with the ever-expanding AmeriCorps*VISTA project, OASHF has developed and implemented strong multi-site management strategies such as online monthly reporting for members, webinars and conference calls and quarterly in-person, all-member meetings.

2. Board of Directors, Administrators and Staff

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 14

Narratives

members. Twelve of the members are directors of the twelve foodbanks represented by OASHF. This board structure facilitates strong involvement by the board in all program areas.

The OASHF AmeriCorps*State project will continue to be directed by Dustin Speakman, OASHF's Director of Community Services. In this capacity he oversees all National Service initiatives, including AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps*VISTA Summer Associates, and AmeriCorps*NCCC, as well as other volunteer initiatives. Dustin is also part of the senior management team charged with overseeing the statewide implementation and management of The Ohio Benefit Bank. Prior to joining the staff, Dustin served as a contract consultant for OASHF coordinating outreach efforts around the Home Energy Assistance Program and My Medicare Matters. Dustin began his career in the non-profit sector as an AmeriCorps*VISTA Member with The Ohio State University African American and African Studies Community Extension Center where he developed unique after-school programming for disadvantaged youth, including forming only the second urban 4H club in the state as well as the first Science Olympiad team to come from a community center. He then went on to complete a year of service as an AmeriCorps*VISTA Leader with Family and Community Services, Inc. Dustin served as the co-chair of the Ohio Anti-Poverty Task Force's Multiple Barriers to Employment and Community Engagement work groups, a founding member of the Ohio Prosperity Guidance Coalition, and various other boards and commissions. Dustin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in French and History from Catawba College. Dustin will be responsible for directing the AmeriCorps*State program, including developing the project plans and writing the grant applications, managing the budgets, compiling and submitting progress reports, securing funding and hiring and supervising the AmeriCorps*State Program Coordinator. Dustin will also promote the program statewide and nationally.

Jason Elchert has been the Director of Outreach and Education for the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks for the past 4 years. Currently he manages The Benefit Bank implementation in

Narratives

Ohio and the Home Energy Assistance Outreach Campaign. His expertise is in community engagement and working with low and moderate income families and individuals to help them achieve stability and self-sufficiency. Jason is a certified trainer of The Ohio Benefit Bank as well as a certified trainer of Bridges Out of Poverty. Prior to joining the staff of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks he served three years as a national service volunteer evaluating social service contracts and providing technical assistance to non-profit organizations to help them achieve a greater capacity to serve their community. Jason will be responsible for developing and implementing training programs for members and directing the Ohio Benefit Bank aspect of the project plan.

Working directly with the Director of Community Services is the National Service Coordinator for AmeriCorps*State, Harmony Cox. Harmony recently completed her second term in the OASHF VISTA project, most recently as one of five VISTA Leaders. Harmony graduated on the Dean's List from The Ohio State University in 2006 with a BA in English with a minor in Women's Studies. Harmony will be responsible for managing the daily administrative tasks related to the program, including monitoring time, processing expense reports, and providing mentorship and guidance to the members. Both Harmony and Dustin will conduct official site visits to each of the AmeriCorps host sites at least twice annually.

Ultimately responsible for all activities of the organization is Executive Director Lisa Hamler-Fugitt. Lisa also serves as the volunteer Legislative Liaison for the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. She has worked previously as the Public Policy Director and statewide food & nutrition program coordinator for the Ohio Hunger Task Force, and regional sales manager for Quaker State Corporation and BancOhio National Bank as an international loan supervisor.

Narratives

3. Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks commissions annual A-133 audits that carefully review the accounting procedures for all aspects of the organization. OASHF also compiles an annual report that details in very specific terms the deliverables related to the food purchase programs as well as outreach and education initiatives.

OASHF has in the past few years experienced rapid growth of its staff and programs. To better manage this growth, OASHF commissioned an in-depth organizational assessment by ZCI Consulting, Inc. This assessment reviewed all of the organization's systems, including policies and procedures, human resource systems, communications, IT, and outreach. OASHF has embraced the results of this study and has already completed phase one of the implementation plan recommended by ZCI Consultants, Inc.

OASHF has also commissioned a study of its largest outreach and education program, The Ohio Benefit Bank, by The Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs. This study, completed in January 2009, reported on the economic impact of The Ohio Benefit Bank in a variety of ways using an econometric model. Additionally, through generous support of The Columbus Foundation, OASHF is again collaborating with The Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to study the long-term impact of the Ohio Benefit Bank by following recipients of OBB services for one year, to determine the actual impact that the OBB services has had on their lives.

4. Plan for Effective Technical Assistance

OASHF currently provides ongoing training and technical assistance to all 12 of its member foodbanks as well as their 3,000 member charities. This training and technical assistance is focused on compliance

Narratives

with federal and state regulations as well as capacity-building issues. OASHF has, in the past, operated capacity-building grants to member agencies when funding has permitted.

The Outreach and Education team also provides ongoing technical assistance and training to the nearly 900 Ohio Benefit Bank sites across the state. This support ranges from implementation and systems reviews and resource generation to volunteer recruitment and coordination. OASHF has also operated several highly successful "mini-grant" programs to build the capacity of Ohio Benefit Bank sites. These will continue into the new program year provided funding is available.

OASHF will provide relevant, ongoing support to AmeriCorps host sites in the way of development opportunities for members and supervisors, resource generation assistance, monetary grants when available, and general technical assistance related to establishing and successfully administering a National Service project. OASHF will host a mandatory orientation for all new site supervisors to cover the basics of the program, as well as semi-monthly conference calls and quarterly meetings. OASHF will use these opportunities to engage and educate host sites on a variety of service-related topics.

B. Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization

1. Volunteer Generation and Support

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks' AmeriCorps*VISTA program has demonstrated great success in the area of volunteer recruitment. In just the first six months of the current program year, OASHF's 23 currently-serving VISTA Members have recruited 1,389 Community Volunteers who have served a combined total of 1,469 hours at foodbanks, food pantries and Ohio Benefit Bank sites. Volunteers serving at the organizations represent a wide variety of diverse backgrounds: seniors, school-aged children, entire families and Baby Boomers. Of the 1,389 volunteers recruited during the first six months of the current program year, 506 -- or 36% -- are Baby Boomers.

Narratives

2. Organizational and Community Leadership

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks has long been regarded as a leader in the advocacy and non-profit community. OASHF has taken the lead on several policy reform initiatives.

Examples include:

OASHF advocated for expanding Ohio State-funded food programs and for simplification of state food and nutrition programs as well as other public benefits through the following efforts:

- * Partnered with Freestore Foodbank to host the Hormel Hunger Summit in Southeast Ohio in October 2007, which brought together leaders of the for-profit, not-for-profit and legislative communities to discuss how to better address the hunger issue.
- * Hosted the "Hunger Knows No Holiday" tour of Southeastern Ohio with U.S. Representative Zack Space in December, 2007. Congressman Space and his staff toured the area, met with anti-hunger advocates and emergency food recipients and loaded cars at food distributions.
- * OASHF worked with the Ohio Federal Budget Coalition to support provisions of the 2007 Farm Bill that would stop food stamp benefit erosion, increase TEFAP allocation, including storage and distribution, and restore the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.
- * Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Executive Director, worked with reporters from various media outlets about hunger and poverty; the use of state funds in feeding Ohio families and the growing need for

Narratives

food; access to public benefits; and other services in Ohio.

* Lisa Hamler-Fugitt serves on the Ohio Food Policy Council, which was created through an Executive Order in August, 2007, working to maximize coordination and increase collaboration between federal, state and local resources. Lisa also co-chairs the Health Food Access workgroup.

* Lisa, Jason Elchert, Director of Outreach & Education, and Dustin Speakman, Director of Community Services, are also active on Governor Strickland's Anti-Poverty Task Force, working with service providers, advocates and state agencies to address the increasingly complicated needs of Ohioans working to gain and sustain their self-sufficiency.

* Secured \$12 million to feed Ohio families and increase access to public benefits.

* Nora Nees, Director of Child and Senior Nutrition, conducted two USDA sponsored "Listening Sessions" in Columbus, OH in 2009 that brought together decision makers from all over the State who are fighting to end childhood hunger. These stakeholders brainstormed new and innovative methods of ending childhood hunger and are investigating policy changes that could impact the number of children living in food insecure homes. These events were coordinated by the current Ameri*Corps VISTA member assisting in this department.

* The Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations (OANO) bestowed an Award of Excellence to The Ohio Association of

Narratives

Second Harvest Foodbanks for The Ohio Benefit Bank. OANO showcased OASHF's collaborative efforts that produced 867 OBB sites throughout Ohio, that were established at existing civic, faith and non-faith based entities, and the process and people that made that growth possible.

OASHF works with ODJFS to advocate for simplification to the application process for all public benefits by working to implement electronic submission of Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB) applications into the CRIS-E system. A County Coordinator works at each County Department of Job and Family Services and specifically designated to process OBB applications. The legibility of the applications and the preparation by the OBB in obtaining or informing clients of necessary supporting documentation has enabled the Franklin county pilot project to process an average of five applications an hour; a considerable accomplishment when her previous average was one an hour.

3. Collaboration

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks has developed a strong network of public and private collaborations over many years. One of the first and perhaps strongest collaborations has been with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). For over ten years ODJFS and OASHF have partnered to provide nutritious food to Ohio's hungry through the Ohio Food Program and the Agriculture Clearance Program, described as Ohio's most successful public/private partnership. OASHF has also collaborated with ODJFS on the implementation of The Ohio Benefit Bank. The OBB could not enjoy the tremendous success it does without the full support of ODJFS and the local County Departments of Job and Family Services.

OASHF has worked in close partnership with ODJFS over the past year to develop a system that allows

Narratives

for the electronic submission of benefits applications for the first time in Ohio history. The newly-launched "eGateway" allows an Ohio Benefit Bank counselor to electronically submit an application from The Benefit Bank into an electronic holding area. Once received by the eGateway, a coordinator in the appropriate county is alerted and the application is reviewed for completeness and potential duplication prior to being imported into the state's electronic benefits eligibility system. This new system cuts down on the administrative burden at the county level, increases efficiency for both the client and the caseworker, and ensures the accuracy of applications.

OASHF has also worked closely with ODJFS on policy reform issues such as the adoption and implementation of categorical eligibility. Categorical eligibility eliminates the "resource test" for the food assistance program in Ohio. Not only does this mean more Ohioans are eligible to participate in the program, but it also means county JFS offices no longer have to collect and verify resource documentation. This policy change has resulted in the lowest food stamp error rate in Ohio history. This policy is critically important in a state like Ohio that continues to hemorrhage jobs at an alarming rate. Historically, recently dislocated workers were generally not eligible to participate in the food assistance program (formerly Food Stamps) because they may have had a small savings, a retirement plan or 401 (k), or college savings plan. The elimination of the resource test through categorical eligibility means more Ohioans can participate in the program without first spending themselves into abject poverty.

OASHF also has a long history of working with the Ohio Department of Development (ODoD) and the Community Action Network. In 2006 ODoD awarded OASHF a grant to spearhead outreach for the Home Energy Assistance Program. OASHF continues to work closely with ODoD on the implementation of The Ohio Benefit Bank. OASHF successfully advocated for the distribution of funds to Ohio's Community Action Agencies, through ODoD, to hire dedicated staff to operate The Ohio

Narratives

Benefit Bank.

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks also works very closely with the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GOFBCI). When Governor Strickland took office in 2006, he embraced the work of OASHF on The Ohio Benefit Bank as part of his "Turn Around Ohio" plan. This included establishing a position in his office for a Director of The Ohio Benefit Bank. This position was created to rally support for The Ohio Benefit Bank from across nearly ten state agencies with jurisdiction over programs and benefits. The Director of The Ohio Benefit Bank in the GOFBCI also acts as the contract manager for the state support of the OBB.

OASHF enjoys very strong partnerships among community and faith-based organizations around both the food programs and The Ohio Benefit Bank. Ohio's 12 foodbanks collectively represent over 3,000 member charities: soup kitchens, food pantries, homeless shelters and other emergency food providers. The vast majority of these charities are faith-based, volunteer-driven organizations with annual operating budgets of less than \$25,000 per year. The Ohio Benefit Bank, under the leadership of OASHF, has grown from a few scattered sites in church basements and a few pantries to nearly 900 sites across the state. Ohio Benefit Bank sites are located at Community Action Agencies, union halls, schools, homeless shelters, work search organizations, and a diverse group of social service organizations.

OASHF also strives to build and strengthen relationships with other National Service program Sponsors across the state, having collaborated with numerous AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps*VISTA programs on National Day of Service projects, recruitment events and other, less formal networking events. Director of Community Services Dustin Speakman has been instrumental in assisting organizations to apply for and launch their own National Service initiatives, including having served on the advisory boards of

Narratives

other projects and was instrumental in bringing Ohio's VISTA sponsors together for the first meeting of its kind in November 2009, where sponsors discussed ways to partner and collaborate on recruitment, training, development and recognition.

4. Local Fiscal and In-Kind Contributions

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks enjoys wide and diverse funding from a variety of local partners. The Columbus Foundation, which has historically not funded OASHF because of its status as a statewide organization, was one of the first and strongest supporters of The Ohio Benefit Bank. With an initial investment of nearly \$220,000, The Columbus Foundation funded OASHF's AmeriCorps*VISTA project and additional activities to jump-start the implementation of The Ohio Benefit Bank on a statewide scale. Since then, The Columbus Foundation has continued to expand funding for the OBB resulting in over \$1 million of support to-date. Most recently, OASHF was awarded a "Continuous Improvement Grant" by The Columbus Foundation. This very generous award enabled OASHF to purchase a custom van -- The OBB Express -- outfitted with a satellite for Internet access, two fixed work stations and 8 removable work stations. The OBB Express will roll into communities hit hard by the economy and job losses, factory closings, etc. to assist recently dislocated workers to apply for much-needed help through work support programs. The OBB Express will also take The Benefit Bank to those who can't get to a site, such as in rural Appalachia and Northwest Ohio. The grant also includes funding to support two full-time staff people for the van and all maintenance and storage costs for two years.

OASHF also continues to receive generous and diverse support from the George Gund Foundation, Charter One Bank, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Share Our Strength, Episcopal Community Services Foundation, and United Way of Greater Cincinnati. These organizations support a variety of OASHF's activities including outreach and education, advocacy and policy work, food purchasing, The

Narratives

Ohio Benefit Bank and general support. The most recent supporter is the Wal-Mart Foundation, which, in 2008, donated \$300,000 to OASHF to support food purchasing initiatives.

5. Wide Range of Community Stakeholders

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks' programs and initiatives are supported by a strong network of stakeholders, including both public and private partners. As detailed previously, stakeholders of the food programs and outreach and education initiatives include 12 member foodbanks, over 3,000 member charities, state agencies such as the Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services, Development, Aging, Education, and others. Community Stakeholders include more than 1080 OBB sites, and many other partners such as funders, legislators and advocacy groups.

In the fall of 2009, OASHF hosted the second annual Ohio Benefit Bank User Meeting and Training. This two-day conference was attended by over 600 Ohio Benefit Bank counselors, supporters, and partners. OASHF strives to fully engage all of its stakeholders in effective and impactful ways. A strong and strategic plan is currently underway to form an Ohio Benefit Bank Advisory Council. This group, comprised of public and private partners from across the spectrum, will provide input and guidance around the implementation and administration of The Ohio Benefit Bank project as well as OASHF's National Service initiatives. Because of the sheer size and scope of the Ohio Benefit Bank project, it may be necessary to establish a separate advisory group specifically and exclusively for OASHF's National Service initiatives -- both AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps*State. OASHF is currently working through this with current and potential stakeholders.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks recognizes the challenging economic times the state -- and nation -- are currently experiencing and has made a firm commitment as an organization to be good stewards of our public and private funds. For this reason, and because the Association enjoys wide

Narratives

support from a variety of sources, OASHF has proposed within this budget a 43 percent match, well above the required 24 percent. OASHF believes that well-funded organizations should take only the resources they absolutely need to run their programs effectively, leaving additional funds on the table for other organizations and initiatives.

The budget proposed within this application results in a cost-per-MSY for the Corporation for National and Community Service of \$12,577. This meets the limit set by the Ohio Community Service Council of a maximum cost-per-MSY of \$12,600.

The OASHF match for this project will come from a variety of public and private sources and OASHF will notify each funder of the intended use of funds. A significant portion of the match will come as in-kind supervisor time.

OASHF believes that the budget proposed in this application is adequate and sufficient to carry out the mission of the project: to connect low- and moderate-income Ohioans to much-needed benefits, work support programs and tax credits which in turn infuses dollars into local economies; and to increase the capacity of anti-hunger and emergency food providers. A strong emphasis has been placed on training and development of the members as well as staffing to implement, manage and monitor the progress and growth of the project.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

In the clarification field, please confirm your desired grant award start date and member enrollment

Narratives

period start date:

RESPONSE: OASHF requests that the grant begin on September 1, 2011 and that member enrollment period begin at the same time.

Please make the following changes directly in the application budget and budget narrative in eGrants:

* Staff Travel & Member Training- Necessary meals should be included as per diem to ensure cost limits are not exceeded per day.

RESPONSE: In regards to meals, OASHF utilizes a travel policy for the entire organization and for all federal, state, and private grants. This travel policy is in lieu of a per diem paid to employees for the purpose of traveling. This policy outlines the limits for meals dependent upon the time of day traveling.

* Supplies-Please list items that are included for Member Service Gear.

RESPONSE: Two long-sleeve Oxford shirts, three short-sleeve polo shirts, and 3-in-1 Winter jacket with removable lining. All pieces include the AmeriCorps*Ohio logo on the right sleeve and the HarvestCorps logo on the front pocket. Members are required to wear uniform shirts at all times.

* Contractual-Please move supervisor time to personnel and provide supervisors monthly or annual rate of pay in the calculation.

RESPONSE: Completed in e-Grants as requested.

* Other- Please provide more detail for the parking charge. Is this a fringe benefit that is included in the

Narratives

organizational package?

RESPONSE: Yes, this is a fringe benefit that is extended to all staff and AmeriCorps*State members assigned to the downtown Columbus headquarters for OASHF.

* Member Support-Provide documentation that it is a state requirement that unemployment percentage must be charged for service positions.

RESPONSE: The State of Ohio requires that unemployment be collected from AmeriCorps members and thus reflected in the budget. The Ohio Community Service Council (OCSC) has provided the written documentation to the Program Officer at the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) assigned to Ohio.

Programmatic Clarification Items:

Please make the following changes in the eGrants narrative filed labeled "Clarification Summary."

* A training position is described in the application narrative and has a considerable role with the program but is not include in the budget. The applicant should confirm that the trainer should not be included in the budget.

RESPONSE: Ohio Benefit Bank Community Trainers are actually AmeriCorps*VISTA members engaged through our SHARECorps VISTA project, so they are not included in the budget for this project.

* The applicant should clarify if the Director of the program is also identified as an employee of the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The

Narratives

RESPONSE: Director of Community Services for the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) is the Sponsor's project director and is not an employee of the state. There may be some confusion with the Director of the Ohio Benefit Bank for the Office of Governor Ted Strickland. This employee of the State of Ohio is charged with working with over 7 state agencies to implement the Ohio Benefit Bank within state government. OASHF is the private, nonprofit organization that, with public and private grants, implements the program within Ohio's communities.

* 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.nationalserviceresources.org/criminal-history>. Please verify that you will conduct criminal history checks on all members and grant-funded staff.

RESPONSE: OASHF has three staff positions dedicated to the management of the HarvestCorps project: Director of Community Service and two program coordinators. All three will secure background checks.

* Please provide further information on the non-federal benefits that members will sign up and/or refer clients for, to ensure compliance with Serve America Act prohibitions on exclusively referring clients to federal benefits.

RESPONSE: Although many HarvestCorps members primarily work with the Ohio Benefit Bank, our members are highly engaged in a variety of other direct service activities. Our members conduct food pantry intake and assist pantry clients, conduct financial literacy classes, and survey and interview clients to improve services. HarvestCorps members also provide referrals to organizations to help clients receive services such as utility assistance, elder care, and SafeLink telephones. Members assigned as

Narratives

OBB Counselors are very engaged in volunteer recruitment and the planning and execution of at least four National Days of Service projects. These members are also very engaged in promoting their projects through scheduling and leading presentations to schools, businesses and community groups. They also use these opportunities to promote AmeriCorps and National Service and volunteerism in general.

Continuation Changes

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks respectfully seeks a continuation in funding to support the HarvestCorps program. While our members have done an outstanding job in meeting their performance measures, unfortunately the need has only gotten greater.

Now more than ever it is imperative that individuals and families facing food insecurity be connected to critical resources to meet their basic needs, and there is no more basic a need than food. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps) is the first line of defense against hunger. Connecting Ohioans in need is truly a win-win-win: SNAP is primarily-federally funded program which enables Ohioans to put food on their table while spending those benefits locally, generating desperately-needed economic activity at the local level.

HarvestCorps, the OASHF AmeriCorps State project, aims to connect the neediest among us with not only SNAP, but a wide array of work supports and tax credits through an innovative movement called The Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB). A number of HarvestCorps members will be trained as OBB counselors and placed at faith-based and community organizations across the state to connect Ohioans to programs such as the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), medical programs, Child care and more, as well as tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit. By connecting folks in need to these important programs, not only are their most basic needs met, they become more economically stabilized and able to begin thinking about paths to self-sufficiency. Last year OASHF

Narratives

added the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the suite of programs on The Benefit Bank already as a means to begin the conversation of higher education leading to that self-sufficiency.

In the first year of formula funding for the HarvestCorps program (September 1, 2009 -- August 31, 2010), AmeriCorps members had a collective goal of serving at least 4,000 individuals or families across the state. Because some of the members assigned to this initiative terminated the program early, they ended the year having served 3,969 individuals and families -- a mere 31 short of the goal. Had all members completed service successfully, the goal would have been far surpassed. The other primary goal of the project in year one was to increase capacity at two OASHF-member foodbanks. This measure was met at the Freestore Foodbanks where, in large part due to HarvestCorps members, member agencies of the foodbank reported the following increases: Soup Kitchens (15%), Shelters (10%), and other pantries (33%). The measure was also met by the members serving at Mid-Ohio FoodBank, which saw an average increase of 11.8% in pounds per person in poverty. The third significant measure was volunteerism. The year one target for volunteers recruited was 150 or 5 volunteers per member. This goal was impressively surpassed tenfold, with members recruiting over 1,500 community volunteers who engaged in nearly 10,000 hours of service!

OASHF is seeking to maintain a Corps of 30 full-time members.

Ohio has the dubious distinction of making the top 10 list of America's poorest cities with Cleveland ranked 2nd, Cincinnati ranked 7th and Toledo ranked 8th. Jason DeParle and Robert M. Gebeloff reported in the January 10, 2010 edition of The Wall Street Journal that 314,200 Ohio families identified SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps, as their only source of income. It is clear that while the Food Stamp program was meant only to supplement a family's food budget, all too often the program is the primarily, and only, source of funds for food. If awarded the requested 30 slots, the HarvestCorps program will attack food insecurity in two ways. First, 20 of the 30 members will be

Narratives

assigned to Ohio Benefit Bank sites across the state through an RFP process. Existing host sites in good standing will be given preference. These members will connect at least 6,000 households to critical supports including SNAP. The remaining 10 members will fight hunger in the trenches at local Foodbanks. The goals for these hunger-fighting members will remain the same: increase capacity by at least 10%. One change in the program, if awarded, will be to assign one HarvestCorps member to the Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio. This small but mighty foodbank provides food and other critical resources to agencies in Crawford, Erie, Huron and Lorain counties, four of the hardest-hit counties in the "Rust Belt."

OASHF will continue to leverage public and private funds through the efforts of its National Service initiatives, which include a 79-member VISTA program and, in 2010, a 100-member VISTA Summer Associate program. Together with these two programs, the HarvestCorps program was fundamental to receiving major gifts from the Walmart Foundation and Associate Giving programs. Since 2009, the first year of the HarvestCorps program, Walmart has given a total of \$325,000 to support OASHF's National Service programs. OASHF also believes strongly in being good stewards of all public funding; because of this, OASHF is committed to exceeding all match and CPM targets. The accompanying budget reflects a match of 51 percent and a Cost-per-MSY of only \$12,962, far beyond the 24% match requirement and well below the maximum CPM of \$13,300.

Additionally, The Columbus Foundation, the 11th largest community foundation in the nation, has contributed \$180,000 toward the required match for the first two years (1 formula and 1 competitive) of the program. OASHF has forged strong relationships with these two grant-makers that surpass funding alone. The Columbus Foundation has been intimately involved in the implementation and expansion of The Ohio Benefit Bank, having called together groups of grantees for briefings, participated on advisory boards, and provided research funding.

Narratives

The Columbus Foundation has also included OASHF in its Great Needs Challenge 2010, a matching grant program to leverage funding for critical needs. If successful in the challenge, OASHF will receive funds to program Veteran's benefits onto The Benefit Bank. The first benefits to be programmed will be around education programs for veterans. At this time of climbing unemployment, it is imperative that returning veterans be connected to programs that will assist them in transitioning back into the workplace. These programs will be promoted across the state by the 20 HarvestCorps members working on the OBB initiative.

As previously noted, many accounts indicate that any recovery realized in the near future will likely be a jobless recovery. The repercussions of the Great Recession are still being strongly felt across the state and the numbers of those in need of the basics of life -- food, shelter, medical care -- continue to rise at an alarming rate. On July 26, 2010, the Toledo Free Press reported that Ohio had 58 mass layoff events in June, compared to 47 in May and 61 in April.

With a jobless recovery, a rise in food insecurity is to be expected. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service reported on November 15th that 14.8 percent, (679,172) or more than one in seven of Ohio households are facing a daily risk of hunger, or "food insecurity." Ohio is tied at 9th in the nation for states with the highest rates of food insecurity, above comparably populous states like California, Florida, and New York. Ohio's rate is above the national average of food insecurity, which rests at 14.7 percent.

Hunger in Ohio 2010, a study conducted by Mathematica Policy Institute, Inc., in conjunction with Feeding America and are confirmed by the USDA's Household Food Security in the United States, 2009. Hunger in Ohio 2010 found that of those served by Ohio's emergency food network:

- * 52 percent are choosing between buying food and paying for utilities
- * 43 percent are choosing between buying food and paying for rent or mortgage

Narratives

* 42 percent are choosing between buying food and paying for medicine or medical care

These data confirm that Ohioans are at great risk of hunger. OASHF, with an approval for 30 AmeriCorps State members, will expand its fight against hunger and food insecurity resulting in at least 2,000 additional households being connected to critical and often life-saving resources directly through the work of its HarvestCorps members. HarvestCorps members will be assigned to one more foodbank than in the first two years -- in North Central Ohio -- increasing capacity of the foodbank to serve their member food pantries by at least 10%. This would be measured by the increase in food distributed and other services provided.

OASHF launched HarvestCorps in 2009 with a full team of members and without a planning grant. Because of the tight turnaround and quick ramp-up, some placements were made that, with more time to interview, may not have been otherwise. Going into the first year of competitive funding, OASHF program staff required each host site to develop and submit a recruitment plan. It is anticipated that a continuation of funding will see a much higher retention rate. Other provisions have been adopted to ensure high retention, including the addition of three team leaders. OASHF has also developed an in-depth supervisor's orientation and accompanying supervisor handbook. OASHF Program Staff have also increased email and phone communication with site supervisors as well as more regularly-scheduled conference calls. OASHF has also developed a corrective action process that requires a site found to be in violation of HarvestCorps or OCSC policies. OASHF believes that these improvements, plus the addition of a \$750 per member, per year fee to all host sites not members of the Association (non-foodbanks) will prove very effective in holding sites more accountable, thus increasing retention.

In accordance with provisions in the Serve America Act, HarvestCorps members serving as OBB counselors will not devote all or the majority of their time to assisting low-income Ohioans in applying

Narratives

for federal benefits. HarvestCorps members serve at least a quarter of their time assisting low-income customers in completing and filing state and federal taxes. They also devote a considerable portion of their service to assisting customers in applying for Ohio-specific programs such as Bureau of Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh) programs, Amachi mentoring, Fatherhood Program referrals, Ohio's Best Rx prescription assistance and the Golden Buckeye senior citizen discount.

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 30

Service Categories

Other Community and Economic Development Primary Secondary

Foodbank Capacity Increase

Service Category: Food Security

Measure Category: Not Applicable

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Economic Opportunity

Performance Measure Title: Ohio Benefit Bank

Service Category: Other Community and Economic Development

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

OASHF AmeriCorps members assigned to the Ohio Benefit Bank will give presentations and distribute marketing promoting the Ohio benefit Bank services offered by their host site. They will attend community meetings, join coalitions and use social media to raise awareness of the program within their communities.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

By assisting 7,500 households in accessing a wide variety of state and federal resources, at least \$12 million will be returned to communities, contributing to the economic engines of those local communities. Research has shown that every \$1 spent in SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) generates at least \$1.74 in local economic activity.

Indicator: Dollar amount of tax returns, credits, public benefits and work support programs

Target : At least \$12 million will be returned to local communities in the way of public benefits, work supports and tax credits received by the 7,500 households assisted by HarvestCorps OBB members.

Target Value: 12

Instruments: Reports generated by The Benefit Bank software.

PM Statement: HarvestCorps members serving as OBB counselors will assist at least 7,500 low-income Ohioans in accessing at least \$12 million in work supports, public benefits, state and federal tax returns and tax credits such as the EIC and Child Tax Credit.

National Performance Measures

Result.

returned to local communities.

Result: Output

Result.

OASHF AmeriCorps members will assist at least 7,500 households in completing and submitting applications for SNAP, as well as other work support programs such as Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Medicaid health care programs and non-federal benefits such as Ohio's Best Rx, BCMH, Amachi Mentoring, Fatherhood referral programs, Golden Buskey and assistance with filing state and federal tax returns, including tax credits such as the EIC, Child Tax credit and others.

Indicator: (NOW H11) O7: Individuals receiving services to alleviate hunger.

Target : Number of households assisted with applying for public benefits, work supports and tax credits and returns.

Target Value: 7500

Instruments: Reports generated by The Benefit Bank software.

PM Statement: At least 7500 households will become financially stable through assistance in accessing state and federal resources, free tax assistance, and referrals to other services.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable