

## PART I - FACE SHEET

<b>APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE</b>		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction														
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)																
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:  10-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID:  11AC125008	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:  09ACHMA0010005														
<b>5. APPLICATION INFORMATION</b>																
LEGAL NAME: Just A Start Corporation  DUNS NUMBER: 067727057	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes):  NAME: Evangeline Spanos  TELEPHONE NUMBER: (617) 494-0444 305  FAX NUMBER: (617) 494-8348  INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: vanspanos@justastart.org															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1035 Cambridge Street #12 Cambridge MA 02141 - 1154 County: Middlesex																
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):  237121174	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit  7b. Community-Based Organization															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box).  <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>  A. AUGMENTATION        B. BUDGET REVISION  C. NO COST EXTENSION    D. OTHER (specify below):	9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: <b>Corporation for National and Community Service</b>															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: YouthBuild Just-A-Start AmeriCorps Program															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Cambridge, MA, Middlesex County; Chelsea, MA, Suffolk County	11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 10/01/11    END DATE: 09/30/12	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <u>MA 008</u> b.Program <u>MA 008</u>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <u>2</u>	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON:  DATE:  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 276,120.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 203,997.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 480,117.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL	\$ 276,120.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 203,997.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 480,117.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
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b. APPLICANT	\$ 203,997.00															
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e. OTHER	\$ 0.00															
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00															
g. TOTAL	\$ 480,117.00															
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Evangeline Spanos	b. TITLE: Project Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (617) 494-0444 305														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 01/10/11														

## Narratives

### Executive Summary

YouthBuild Just A Start engages 49 AmeriCorps members to address the need of maintaining affordable housing in the cities of Cambridge & Chelsea, by providing teams who upgrade housing while maintaining affordability. Program targets low-income youth as members, provides career goal setting, life skills training & extensive support services to encourage retention and success. Members who have dropped out of high school (approx. 83%) receive academic training leading to a high school credential.

### Rationale and Approach

#### A. RATIONALE AND APPROACH

Just-A-Start Corporation (JAS), a non-profit community-based organization with 42 years of success in administering youth and affordable housing programs, proposes to continue to provide the YouthBuild Just-A-Start AmeriCorps Program (YB/JAS), successfully operated for the past 9 years. YB/JAS is a 16-year-old youth development program which engages 17-25 year-old youth in service to the community while providing them with extensive education services (leading to a GED or high school diploma), career, and leadership services. There are 3 needs to be addressed in the cities of Cambridge and Chelsea, MA: maintaining affordable housing; providing services to local community organizations; and providing services to at-risk youth.

1) COMPELLING COMMUNITY NEED: THE MAJOR NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IS THE SHORTAGE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITIES OF CAMBRIDGE AND CHELSEA. (Opportunity Priority Area-Standard Measure 4)

A 2009 University of Massachusetts' Donahue Institute/Citizens Housing and Planning Association poll reported that 63.4% of respondents identified housing affordability as an issue of significant concern with 45.5% reporting housing costs make it difficult for their family to make ends meet. This is supported by U.S. census data showing that 48.6% of all renters in Massachusetts paid 30% or more for

## Narratives

housing (3rd highest in the nation 2006) with 81,500 households on the Section 8 housing subsidy waitlist statewide as of August 2009, up 31,255 since June 2008 (MA Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Organizations.) The situation is even more acute in Cambridge and Chelsea where 19.3% and 24.3% of its citizens have incomes below the poverty level, compared to 9.9% for the state as a whole. (2007, city-data.com)

IN CAMBRIDGE, the lack of an adequate supply of affordable housing is exacerbated by the highly competitive real estate market, made so by the presence of colleges and universities; the city's small size and lack of undeveloped land; and decreasing availability of federal Section 8 rental subsidies. Many low-moderate income residents are unable to find any housing, and others face overburdening housing costs. The Cambridge Housing Authority's (CHA) Sec. 8 wait list was closed in FY'04 because of excessive demand, reopened periodically, and then closed again in FY'08. The City's 2009 Annual Plan cites a CHA wait list of 10,910 (November, 2007), which translates into a wait of 2-9 years depending on size of unit (CHA).

IN CHELSEA, an aged housing stock, growing immigrant population, and lack of community resources cause significant pressures on housing. Chelsea Community Development Department figures indicate that 3% of households live in units lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. Many families are paying a high percentage of their income on rent, some over 50%, and over 40% paying 30+% of their income on housing. A consequence of this is that many low-income families share their apartments with other families, with some living 10-12 people in an apartment to keep housing costs down.

CAMBRIDGE has made a real commitment to maintaining and increasing its supply of affordable housing and thereby maintaining the socio-economic diversity of the city. It is one of the few municipalities in the country that channels its own local resources towards this end. In the latest Five

## Narratives

Year Consolidated Plan, the city has outlined four primary objectives. The first is to create new affordable rental units, targeted for extremely low, low, and moderate income families. The second is to increase affordable homeownership opportunities. The third is to preserve affordable rental housing opportunities, and increase access for low-income renters. The fourth is to continue to stabilize owner-occupied one-to-four unit buildings owned by low/moderate income people, which is accomplished mainly through the city's Home Improvement Program. The goals for the current five year period are as follows: to create 223 new affordable rental units, to add 325 affordable homeownership units, preserve the affordability of 250 rental units, and to stabilize 250 units through rehabilitation.

CHELSEA is geographically the smallest community in the Commonwealth and also one of the poorest. The majority of residents are very low to moderate income, with the median household income in 2000 being \$30,161, as compared to \$57,158 for the Boston MSA. Chelsea's current Five Year Plan outlines an urgent need for additional housing units, and cites the poor condition of existing housing stock as the primary obstacle to meeting the city's need for safe and affordable housing. Unlike Cambridge, the city does not have its own local resources to apply towards these problems; therefore, it is affected even more by the cutback in federal subsidies, which are a major catalyst to affordable housing development. The Plan also notes that non-profit housing development corporations have not had the capacity, including financial and staffing, to create affordable housing (Chelsea CDD). 17% of the city's affordable housing stock is public housing units. The Chelsea Housing Authority reports a 99.4% occupancy rate in its 8 developments, with wait lists ranging from 1 to 5 years. Housing Authorities across the country have experienced severe budget cuts over the past five years as a result of federal budget reductions. The situation has been exacerbated in Massachusetts by concurrent cuts in the state budget. In Chelsea, these cuts have affected all phases of operation, including operating subsidies, rental subsidies, and modernization funds. The Chelsea Housing Authority (ChHA) has attempted to respond by streamlining its operations and laying off staff, with a number of these layoffs being maintenance staff. The result is

## Narratives

that conditions have deteriorated, with major deficiencies existing in some buildings. In addition, ChHA has not had the manpower to perform substantial upgrades to units that are in need of major modernization. ChHA's annual goals are to substantially renovate 24 hallways or similar common areas, thereby upgrading conditions in 144 units, and to convert 2 out of 8 available non-dwelling units to habitable housing units.

A SECOND NEED IN THE REGION IS FOR SERVICES TO SMALL NON-PROFITS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS. We have gained this insight through participation on community boards, contacts with the faith-based community, as well as partnerships developed over the years in operating this program. A common need expressed by these organizations is assistance in maintaining or upgrading their physical plants. Services required include painting, small landscaping/spruce-up projects, specialized carpentry projects, and larger renovations. Small organizations rarely have sufficient resources budgeted for these activities since they concentrate on putting every dollar into direct services and often find it very difficult to raise funds for this purpose. Even minor physical improvements often have a major impact on the organization's ability to deliver services effectively. Another common need expressed by small organizations is for capacity building, to improve the quality and scope of services they offer. They always need volunteers to expand the capacity of their staff and increase the number of people served. Although developing sufficient resources is a challenge for small CBO's and FBO's even in the best of economic times, this need has been exacerbated over the past 2 years with the decline in the economy.

A THIRD NEED IS FOR SERVICES TO AT-RISK YOUTH who have dropped out of high school. (Opportunity Priority Area-Standard Measures 13, 16) We will address this need chiefly by enrolling these youth in the program as HT, QT, and MT members. The program targets youth from the Metro North region, particularly from Chelsea and Cambridge, in addition to other southern tier communities

## Narratives

including Everett, Malden, Medford, Somerville, and Revere. According to U.S. Census data that rank poverty rates in state school districts, Chelsea has the fifth highest poverty rate in the state, with 35% of students living in poverty, followed by Revere-25%, Everett-22%, Cambridge-20%, Somerville-18%, and Malden-15%. Metro North Regional Employment Board-compiled data indicate the following percentage of residents in these communities who have not obtained a high school diploma or GED: Chelsea-40%, Everett-23%, Revere-22%, Somerville-18%, and Malden-16%. JAS has placed a focus on disadvantaged youth for many years, and has committed its resources to providing these youth with the skills, supports, training, and education needed for productive citizenship through comprehensive, structured services.

### 2) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND MEMBER ROLES: MEMBERS PROVIDE DIRECT SERVICE RENOVATING/REPAIRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

Members will be divided into 2-3 teams, each supervised by staff skilled in construction work. One to two teams will serve in Cambridge and one to two in Chelsea, on projects developed by housing partners, with the partners providing all materials and the members performing direct renovation/repair services. All members who have dropped out of school, (28 HT, 8 QT, and 5 of 10 MT), alternate weeks of service with weeks of training and education leading to a GED or diploma. This allows for concentrated hours spent on training and member development every other week for each group, with smaller member/staff ratios. This configuration results in at least 80% of time on direct service activities and up to 20% on member development and training. The 3 FT members perform service for 30+ hours every week, with up to an additional 7.5 hours/week of training. Although the service activities they perform are essentially the same as those performed by other members, FT members serve weekly providing additional manpower and increased continuity on service sites. As high school and often college graduates, they also often bring a level of seriousness, maturity, and commitment to service, which allows them to serve as positive role models for our HT, QT, and MT

## Narratives

members. 5 of the 10 MT members serve for 8-10 weeks during spring and summer months, on the same type of schedule as the FT members, supplementing the work teams during the months when service demands are greatest. In order to extend the opportunity for AmeriCorps participation to a broader group of youth, we expect to enroll some in-school youth for these MT summer slots.

MSY CONFIGURATION: For 2010-2013, the program proposes 21.23 MSY's, including 3 FT, 28 HT, 8 QT, and 10 MT members (49 members total). For the first 6 years as an AmeriCorps program, YB/JAS enrolled only 36 Half-Time members, who were all at-risk high school dropouts. For 2007-2010, YB/JAS slightly adjusted its MSY configuration (20 MSY's) to include 3 Full-Time members (who were program or other graduates), in addition to 32 Half-Time and 5 Minimum-Time members who were at-risk high school drop-outs (40 members total). Building on the success of this configuration and what we've learned from implementation and Internal Evaluation, the new 21.23 MSY configuration described above is designed to increase the level of direct housing service to the community and extend AmeriCorps participation to a broader group of youth (49 members). It will also better align the AmeriCorps term of service with the corresponding academic component, which lasts from 1-2 years depending upon desired educational outcome (diploma 22-24 mos.; GED approx. 12-15 mos.), and will give some members an opportunity to provide two terms of service. This configuration will focus on enrolling first year students into longer HT slots and second year students into a QT or MT slot that best supports their anticipated education completion date. This will maximize the number of youth who can participate and will, we believe, increase the number of youth who receive full Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. This new configuration will be part of the focus of our next AMERICORPS INTERNAL EVALUATION.

A MAJOR GOAL OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE HANDS ON HOUSING REHABILITATION SERVICES TO STABILIZE AND UPGRADE EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS OR TO

## Narratives

CREATE NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN CAMBRIDGE AND CHELSEA. The target population to be served is low/moderate-income homeowners and renters, including tenants of both public and private housing. The service projects are developed by housing partners, who provide all development and packaging services and materials. The members perform carpentry, construction, wallboard installation, painting, landscaping, weatherization, and other service, under supervision of skilled program staff. Since the services provided by AmeriCorps members are unique in the agency and not performed by any regular staff, there is no violation of non-duplication, non-displacement, and non-supplementation requirements. Members do not displace licensed trades people but rather provide services which are not within partner budgets, enabling housing rehab projects to go forward which might otherwise not be feasible and go unaddressed.

IN CAMBRIDGE, YB/JAS WILL WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE CITY'S HOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (HIP) ON UPGRADING 1-4 FAMILY HOUSING UNITS. The HIP Program uses reduced- or zero-interest loans to income-eligible homeowners to bring properties into compliance with building and health codes, while keeping them affordable for both the owners and tenants. Member crews will generally be utilized on projects in two areas: where economic need is the greatest; and where the service performed by the crews frees up very limited dollars for heating, roofing, plumbing and electrical work which can only be done by licensed tradespeople. The availability of a YB/JAS crew often makes an affordable rehab package viable.

THE PROGRAM WILL ALSO SUPPORT CAMBRIDGE'S GOAL OF INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING BY PROVIDING SERVICE ON PROJECTS PACKAGED BY CITY-SPONSORED NON-PROFIT DEVELOPERS, CHIEFLY THE JAS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. These partners buy properties that become available on the open market and package them for rehabilitation, using a range of public and private funding programs. Depending on the size



## Narratives

and other characteristics, they either sell them to income-eligible first-time homebuyers, or keep ownership for rental by income-eligible families, generally through the Sec. 8 rental subsidy program. At rare times when vacant land becomes available, new units may be constructed for sale or rental, with crews participating in new construction. Ten such units were created during 2007-2010. Both ownership and rental units created have provisions built in to ensure that they will remain affordable over the long term. Whenever possible, projects incorporate green building elements such as use of low/no VOC paint, sustainably harvested materials, installation of energy star appliances, etc.

IN CHELSEA, THE PROGRAM'S MAJOR PARTNER WILL BE THE CHELSEA HOUSING AUTHORITY. In line with the Authority's rehabilitation goals, member crews will be engaged chiefly in renovation of hallways in public housing developments, repairing deteriorated conditions caused by water leaks and deferred maintenance. When requested, crews also provide repair services in apartments, performing activities such as mold removal, wall and ceiling reconstruction, and painting. To address the Housing Authority's goal of adding new units to its inventory, crews may also undertake one or more housing conversion projects over the course of the 3-year grant cycle if expected leveraged funds remain available, providing construction and repair services needed to convert space currently not used as housing to habitable dwelling units. Two such units were created during 2007-2010, utilizing green building principles noted above.

All members will report each day to the program site in Cambridge. Those scheduled for member development remain at the site; those scheduled for service divide into teams and are transported with their supervisors to the service sites. One afternoon a week, housing service activities will end early, and members will engage in different types of service at community agencies and faith-based organizations in the area, working individually or in small teams. This service will increase the capacity of those organizations to better serve their clientele.

## Narratives

TRAINING ON PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES is provided to members, program staff, and service partners, so that no service projects are developed that violate the rules. All service proposed for members is reviewed directly by the Program Director, who ensures that it conforms to AmeriCorps guidelines.

### 3) MEASURABLE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

IN ADDRESSING HOUSING NEEDS THROUGH THE CORPORATION'S OPPORTUNITY PRIORITY AREA STANDARD MEASURE 4, the program will provide housing rehabilitation assistance on 18 units of affordable housing in Cambridge and 40 units of public housing in Chelsea in 2010-2011.

In Cambridge this will involve rehab/repair activities on units being rehabilitated through the city's Home Improvement Program, thereby stabilizing the units as affordable housing. The service activities will also include construction/reconstruction of 1 new unit of housing, thereby adding to the city's affordable housing inventory. In Chelsea, the program will substantially renovate 8 hallways (or other common areas), thereby upgrading conditions for 40 housing units. This will meet 18% of Cambridge's goal of rehabilitating 100 units of affordable housing annually, and 28% of the Chelsea Housing Authority's goal of upgrading 144 units annually either directly or through renovation of public spaces. This will increase to 19 units in year 2 and 20 units in year 3 in Cambridge; to 45 units in year 2 and 50 units in year 3 in Chelsea. Needs were identified by housing staff of the City Of Cambridge's Community Development Department and a ChHA management team in Chelsea. Both will receive quarterly and annual reports on services performed, with meetings held them annually to reassess needs. We have consistently met these goals in the past, exceeding goals in the last 2 years rehabilitating 24 units in Cambridge; 46 in Chelsea in year 1, and 20 in Cambridge; 95 in Chelsea in year 2 of the current 3-year cycle.

## Narratives

IN ADDRESSING MEMBER NEEDS THROUGH THE CORPORATION'S OPPORTUNITY PRIORITY AREA STANDARD MEASURES 13 AND 16, the program will provide educational enrichment for economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service with goal of 50+% completing their GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps. (Approximately 50% may take longer due to entering the program with lower reading and/or math levels. YB/JAS continues to provide educational support as a part of intensive follow-up.)

4) PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT: ALL HOUSING SERVICE ACTIVITIES ARE SUPERVISED AND MONITORED BY PROGRAM STAFF IN COORDINATION WITH STAFF OF PROGRAM PARTNERS.

The program's Field Coordinator (FC) visits each service site at least once/week to monitor quality and progress and assure satisfaction of the housing partner and family being served. The housing partner and FC communicate on a regular basis, at least weekly, to discuss progress of the service activities and identify any problems needing to be resolved. When a project is completed, they jointly certify that the job is completed satisfactorily, and the housing partner submits a written evaluation of the project, including an evaluation of crew performance. A letter is also sent to the client or family who received the service, requesting that they complete an evaluation of the activities performed and of their satisfaction with the experience. These reports are compiled by the FC and submitted to the Program Director (PD). Any performance problems are addressed with positive comments communicated to the crews. The PD and FC meet bi-monthly to review ongoing and upcoming projects, as well as other requests for service from community partners or other community organizations. The FC provides a written monthly production report, and the Program Manager provides a quarterly report that includes an analysis of progress toward meeting annual goals. Formal meetings with Program Manager, YB Project Director, Field Coordinator, and housing partners are held monthly to discuss ongoing projects and review

## Narratives

projected projects, to ensure that both immediate needs and annual goals are being addressed.

ALL EDUCATION SERVICES are provided in alignment with Cambridge Rindge & Latin School guidelines for meeting high school diploma requirements and in alignment with GED attainment standards. Members receive semi-annual progress reports and complete annual evaluation of the program.

### 5) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Housing needs were identified by housing staff of the Cambridge Community Development Department and a Chelsea Housing Authority management team in Chelsea. Both receive quarterly and annual reports on services performed and success in meeting annual goals. Meetings will be held annually over the three-year contract period to reassess needs and review annual goals. YB/JAS maintains on-going communication with non-profits and faith-based organizations at which service projects are performed, allowing for regular assessment of needs and impact. Similarly, YB/JAS maintains on-going contact with member-referring school districts and social service agencies in addition to members and their families to ensure program best serves needs of targeted at-risk youth population.

### 6) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS:

Program staff will participate regularly in statewide meetings organized by the Massachusetts Service Alliance, which involve all state AmeriCorps Programs. Program staff also participate in monthly meetings of the Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition. Coalition members include some YouthBuild AmeriCorps Programs that operate through YouthBuild USA as the national direct, rather than through the Massachusetts Service Alliance. YB/JAS staff also serve on national committees and projects of YouthBuild USA, a national coordination organization of which YB/JAS is one of 167 Affiliates and 13 Accredited Affiliates. These meetings provide the opportunity for program providers to get to know one

## Narratives

another's programs, to share best practices, and to collaborate on service activities. The communication among programs provided through these avenues also decreases the chance for duplication of services.

### 7) POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION:

There are a number of programs in the state and around the country that have successfully combined the national models of YouthBuild and AmeriCorps. The AmeriCorps model engages community members who devote a year to provide a needed service in their community. The YouthBuild model emphasizes member development and the transformation of disadvantaged youth through direct service to the community utilizing the core theme of "rebuilding our communities and our lives." Meshing these models creates a powerful vehicle, which we feel is worthy of both further replication and recognition as a way of involving non-traditional populations in community service.

### **Organizational Capability**

#### D: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

##### 1). SOUND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

##### PROVISION OF SOUND PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL OVERSIGHT:

Just-A-Start Corporation (JAS) is an approved 501(c) 3 non-profit community development corporation, based in Cambridge, MA. Established in 1968, its major focuses are: development and stabilization of affordable housing; and provision of education, training, and employment services to disadvantaged populations. JAS's mission is to stabilize working class neighborhoods against gentrification. Strategies include empowering people to help themselves by providing education and training; addressing multiple needs comprehensively; leveraging many resources; and harnessing community resources through volunteerism. One of the reasons YB/JAS has been so successful, meeting or exceeding goals in previous contracts, is that its mission is so consistent with AmeriCorps goals. Over the past 42 years, JAS has established a track record of administering programs that are well-managed,

## Narratives

fiscally sound, and produce positive results. JAS's stable, experienced administration is respected at both state and local governmental levels and in private foundation/corporate giving circles. JAS has successfully operated the YouthBuild AmeriCorps Program for over 9 years, and has managed 6 HUD YouthBuild grants ranging in size from \$325k to \$700k, a US Department of Labor YouthBuild grant of \$1.1 million, and a number of City, State, and private grants. State entities with which JAS has contracted to operate programs, ranging in size from \$75k to \$227k, have included the following: the Departments of Transitional Assistance, Employment & Training, Elementary & Secondary Education; Commonwealth Corporation; and the Metro North Regional Employment Board. JAS has sound fiscal/accounting procedures that meet accepted auditing standards, and is audited annually by an independent auditor, Sandberg, Gonzales, & Creedon.

THE AMERICORPS GRANT ALLOWS JAS TO PERFORM THE FOLLOWING: maintain the size of the YouthBuild Program at its current level in terms of both number of members and comprehensiveness of program services; provide the level of support services needed to ensure that its at-risk members will be successful in achieving goals and that member development outcomes will be met; maintain the numbers of members and capacity for providing housing services thereby ensuring that outcome goals are met; maintain a level of core program funding upon which to build and appeal for leveraged resources; and attract and engage in community capacity building activities and engagement of volunteers at levels that it would not otherwise be able to sustain. Furthermore, the grant has both spurred and enabled the agency to develop and refine its methods for engaging at-risk youth in service and using that experience to reconnect them to the community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND STAFF:

YB/JAS is administered by JAS's Director of Training and Education (DTE), Van Spanos, who has an M.A. in Social Work and has held that position for 40+ years. She is responsible for funding

## Narratives

development and fiscal monitoring, and reports directly to the founding Executive Director (ED), Gordon Gottsche, who implements all private and corporate fundraising. The ED reports to JAS's Board of Directors, which meets formally on quarterly basis, more frequently as needed, to provide oversight of corporate activities, guidance and assistance, particularly in the areas of community support, strategic planning, and funding development. The DTE oversees preparation of fiscal reports based on monthly reports received from the agency Controller, and reports quarterly to the JAS Board of Directors. The Project Director (PjD), John Bengel, reports to the DTE and supervises the Program Manager and Program Director. He has directed AmeriCorps Programs in Massachusetts since 1993, with 12 years leading YouthBuild AmeriCorps programs. The PjD is responsible for the overall direction, strategy, and development of the program, including assisting with resource and staff development, monitoring contract goals and budgets, and coordinating with collaborators. The Program Manager, Anne Beckmann, (BA, 19 years of management supervisory experience at JAS), monitors program outcomes, insures compliance with AmeriCorps regulations/requirements, and prepares all program reports to MSA and allied funders. The Program Director, (PD) Robbie Sanders, a licensed social worker, (MSW/LCSW, 10+ years of operational management/supervisory experience at JAS), oversees daily program operations and supervision of all YB/JAS program staff, supervises/maintains reporting systems for tracking progress, and assists in the preparing reports to MSA/CNCS and other funders. Field Coordinator, Henry Howell, M.Ed., is a licensed contractor with 20+ years experience; all 3 service supervisors, Charlie Parker, Salvatore Mancini, and Lisa Bolstad, are MA Licensed Construction Supervisors with 10+ years of experience each in the construction trades. All 3 teachers, Gretty Leal, Alyssa Liles-Amponsah, and Margaret Hassey, hold Masters degrees and are experienced in working with low-income young adults studying for the GED or high school diplomas. Two counselors coordinate recruitment, orientation, and support services for all members. One, Bill Timmins, M.Ed., has 39 years teaching experience, 12 as coordinator of an alternative education program in the Cambridge Public Schools; the second, Joel Miranda, has 8 years experience at JAS, is bi-lingual

## Narratives

(Spanish), an AmeriCorps alum, and a graduate of YB/JAS. The Career/Placement Counselor, Julie Fennell, implements "Life after AmeriCorps" for members including career exploration and transitions to jobs and higher education. She holds a B.A., is a certified Professional Career Coach, and, prior to YB/JAS, worked for 12 years at TMP/Monster Worldwide.

### PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT OR IMPROVEMENT:

The Board of Directors meets quarterly to review and assess overall agency operations as well as specific programmatic issues. The Finance Committee of the Board reviews and approves the annual agency budget, reviews the annual audit, periodically receives financial updates, and assists in strategic planning, including current engagement in development of a 3-year plan. The Development Committee of the Board assists in developing annual funding and development goals and strategies. A senior management committee, involving the executive director, the directors of each agency department and the controller, meet quarterly to review and assess current operations and capacity, discuss agency-wide issues and concerns, assess the need for changes in agency policies and procedures, and identify potential challenges. The agency controller meets quarterly with the auditor to review financial system operations. The Executive Director receives quarterly performance reports from each department and from the controller.

For YB/JAS, the Program Director receives monthly reports from all staff responsible for implementing objectives to evaluate progress, and ensure that procedures are being followed and data collected on an ongoing basis. Once each quarter, the Program Manager prepares a formal written assessment of progress towards meeting objectives for the PjD and DTE. Weekly staff meetings are held to discuss progress in all areas. A specific meeting on the housing sites, the major area of service, is held every other week. These meetings include feedback from the clients being served, via written evaluations upon completion of projects from housing partners. Monthly meetings are held with housing partners. A



## Narratives

computerized data management system is in place for providing a weekly update on individual member and overall program rates of attendance, retention, and hours served, and a meeting is conducted by the PD every other week to review this information. A system is also in place for monitoring acquisition of competencies and the progress of members towards achieving graduation requirements.

YB/JAS conducts an annual program evaluation consisting of several different elements to assess its effectiveness in many different areas. This includes an overall assessment of the program's success in meeting goals and objectives, including specific outputs and outcomes. Members and staff evaluate the program, focusing on member satisfaction, success of the program in meeting their needs and expectations, and assessment of the success of the program in meeting service and other goals. The evaluation process also includes an evaluation by housing and community partners, including a review of output and outcome goals. In addition, the program is regularly evaluated by funders and outside parties such as monitoring visits by the Massachusetts Service Alliance, Regional Employment Board, and U.S. DOL, in addition to peer reviews by the Massachusetts YouthBuild Coalition. Several years ago, the program underwent a rigorous assessment of its member development activities and management practices and was accepted for membership in the Massachusetts Best Practices Network, with independent evaluators noting such strengths as good program design, excellent curriculum, and strong measurable outcomes, community partnerships, and staff commitment to continuous improvement process.

### PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

YB/JAS will continue to take advantage of training and technical assistance (TA) opportunities provided by the Massachusetts Service Alliance. These include bi-monthly Program Director Meetings and webinars, which offer a combination of formal trainings, sharing of best practices and networking opportunities, as well as a series of formal trainings in both fiscal and programmatic areas. YB/JAS

## Narratives

receives TA from YouthBuild USA, HUD and DOL's national technical assistance provider for YouthBuild, which each year provides a number of TA hours in an area designated by the program. YouthBuild USA also organizes several institutes and conferences throughout the year, which provide training in areas such as attendance and retention of at-risk youth and improving program outcomes. The PD is responsible for addressing specific programmatic or staff development needs, which she identifies through supervision of coordinators and staff meetings. The program budget includes funding for training, and the PD arranges for on-site training by consultants or external training, as needed. The Field Coordinator assesses the need for staff or member training in particular housing service site activities through ongoing monitoring of sites. He generally provides training himself, engaging consultants/arranging for attendance at trainings, as needed.

### 2) SOUND RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AS AN ORGANIZATION

VOLUNTEER GENERATION AND SUPPORT: Just-A-Start includes as part of its Mission Statement the goal of "harnessing and directing community resources through volunteerism and engagement of all segments of the community", and strives to meet this goal throughout all its programmatic activities. In addition to mobilizing the resources of an active, committed Board Of Directors, the agency invites community involvement from a broad spectrum of volunteers in a number of other ways. Several programs have individual Advisory Committees, with representation from the employment, higher education, and social service communities, former clients, neighborhood representatives, and other interested stakeholders. These include YB/JAS, Biomedical Careers, Just-A-Start House, and Home Improvement Programs. Over 50 volunteers are recruited and trained each year as adult Mentors for agency youth programs; over 30 volunteers serve annually as Tutors, Program Assistants, Speakers, Review Panelists, or in some other service capacity in programs. Over 80 local neighborhood volunteers serve annually on Ad-Hoc Committees to plan and review plans for affordable housing developments. At

## Narratives

least 6 to 8 groups from local companies, educational organizations, or other organizations (each bringing 8 to 15 volunteers) engage in Service Projects organized by agency programs, most of them alongside our AmeriCorps members. All in all, the agency creates opportunities for over 150 volunteers each year to provide direct service in the community or with agency clients, advise and direct program activities, and shape program services to meet community needs. In addition, for the past 15 years, JAS has organized an annual Walk for Housing, Training and Jobs, involving over 100 people each year in showing their support for these activities and in raising funds for agency support. JAS staff have participated in training programs in volunteer recruitment and management conducted by the Voluntary Action Center of the United Way of Massachusetts, with JAS certified as "meeting high standards for organizations involving volunteers."

### ORGANIZATIONAL AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP:

JAS has received numerous citations for its work in affordable housing development and education and training of low-income people, from many community sources. These include MA State House of Representatives' citation to the agency "in recognition of many years of outstanding dedication and loyal service to the youth and people of Cambridge"; MA State Senate's citation "in recognition of success in maintaining affordable housing in Cambridge"; the US Department of Labor's JTPA Presidential Award for Outstanding Community Service Project to the JAS Summer Program; the city of Cambridge's and Cambridge Historical Commission's Certificate of Merit in recognition of organizational achievements in preserving housing. The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce on 2 occasions named the agency "Community Service Organization of the Year". Other awards include the Boston Society of Architects' Urban Design Award for the Rindge Ave. Apartments development; the Cambridge Housing Authority's plaque in recognition of commitment to the CHA's Leased Housing Program; the MA Reaching All Youth Coalition's designation of YB/JAS Program as a Best Practices Program, citing excellence in education and training of at risk youth; and Cambridge City Council's numerous resolutions over the

## Narratives

years congratulating the agency and its individual training and housing programs for their accomplishments. A number of program staff have also been recognized for their service and accomplishments: The Executive Director has been named "Man of the Year" by Massachusetts Institute of Technology and received a Vocational Service Award from the Cambridge Rotary; the Director of Training and Education and the Director of Housing Development were honored on separate occasions as "Outstanding Women of the Year" by the Cambridge YWCA; the ED and DTE were each presented with plaques by the Cambridge City Council in appreciation of dedicated service to the city; YB/JAS's Case Manager was named "Youth Worker of the Year" by the Cambridge Reaching All Youth Committee. JAS and its staff provide leadership in the community in a number of ways. JAS is an active member of the MA Association of Community Development Corporations, the MA Alliance on Teen Pregnancy, and the MA Adult Diploma Coalition. Program staff currently serve on such Boards and Task Forces as the Metro North Youth Council, Cambridge Reaching All Youth Committee, Healthy Families Advisory Board, MA YouthBuild Coalition, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School Athletic Advisory Board, Cambridge Green Jobs Task Force, and YB USA Affiliated Network.

### SUCCESS IN SECURING MATCH RESOURCES:

For the past 9 years, YB/JAS has significantly exceeded required financial matching requirements, which clearly demonstrates both support for the program and ability to achieve long-term sustainability. Significant staff resources are devoted to grant and proposal writing at the local, state, and national level throughout the year. In the first year of the current 3 year cycle, the overall match was 75% of total program costs, exceeding the budgeted match by 10%. For the second year, the overall match was 78% of overall program costs, exceeding the budgeted match by 11%. In the past year, in spite of experiencing substantial cuts from state and some federal sources as a result of the economic downturn, the program's leveraged resources accounted for 48.8% of the overall budget, exceeding the required match by 18.8%.

## Narratives

### 2). SUCCESS IN SECURING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### COLLABORATION:

Since the inception of the program, YB/JAS has benefited from long-term collaborations with Cambridge Housing Partners, who include the city Home Improvement Program, JAS Housing Development Department, and Cambridge Housing Authority. Several years ago we began serving the city of Chelsea as well, and created a partnership with the Chelsea Housing Authority, now a major partner. Over the years, some of these collaborations have expanded in other areas. The Cambridge Housing Authority, for instance, now provides a program-based Sec. 8 housing subsidy, which we utilize in a JAS housing development to maintain an apartment that is used to provide transitional housing for a member or alum. The Cambridge School Department (CSD), a major collaborator in our education program, assisted us in developing a competency-based curriculum for which they award a high school diploma to our members. The CSD also support our Drivers' Education Program, allowing school vehicles to be used by our members for road training. We collaborate with Boston University's School of Social Work, through which they provide case management interns to work with members. This collaboration has significantly expanded program capacity in this important area.

#### LOCAL FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS:

As previously stated, grant writing for corporate and foundation support is on-going. Regular donors to the program have included Cambridge Savings Bank, MIT Community Service Fund, and WR Grace Foundation. The agency also conducts an Annual Walk which raises funds, some of which are allocated to YB. The program also leverages significant in-kind resources. These resources are provided by Program Partners and other community agencies and organizations that perform a number of functions at no cost to YB/JAS. In the housing service area, these functions include development packaging of

## Narratives

housing sites, general contractor management and construction oversight, and provision of materials/supplies for construction and renovation. We work with a large number of agencies, non-profits and faith-based organizations whose services increase the scope and quality of member development and support resources that we are able to provide. These include Neighborhood Health Centers (health care), Wayside & Communities for People (emergency housing and homelessness prevention), CEOC (life skills speakers), CASPAR (substance abuse education), and Community Cooks (member breakfast & lunch program). Finally, each year we work with a broad network of agencies and organizations that assist us by recruiting and referring applicants to the program.

### WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS:

Community stakeholders include the City Of Cambridge, the Chelsea Housing Authority, and residents; local school departments, the youth, their families. They also include a wide range of local non-profits and faith-based organizations that provide individual service sites for HT members, who spend one afternoon a week at their sites, and then provide ongoing training and supervision. Our Community Service Partners include Chelsea and Somerville YMCA's, Chelsea Boys and Girls Club, First Church Meals Program, and more. Many partnerships have existed since the inception of the program, with new relationships created each year. With some organizations, the scope of the service opportunities for members has broadened, in some cases giving members the opportunity to use/apply more advanced academic or interpersonal skills learned in the program, or gain career exposure. A benefit of these relationships is that members become connected to organizations in their own communities and may stay engaged even after completion of AmeriCorps service.

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

#### E: COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

##### 1). COST EFFECTIVENESS

## Narratives

### CORPORATION COST PER MEMBER PER MEMBER SERVICE YEAR (MSY)

The program proposes to enroll 3 FT, 28 HT, 8 QT, and 10 MT members, for a total of 21.23 MSY's, with per MSY of \$13,006.

DIVERSE NON-FEDERAL SUPPORT: Long-term sources of non-federal support include the City of Cambridge, the Cambridge Housing Authority, and MA YouthBuild funds through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Grant writing for corporate and foundation support continues, though is a challenge in these bad economic times. Cambridge, through its Community Development Block Grant Program and other sources, has provided core support for both administrative and operational expenses since the YB/JAS inception. Other long-term support has come from successful competitive proposals to HUD Youthbuild, DOL YouthBuild, and DOL Workforce Investment Act (WIA). New corporate donors include Wal-Mart through YouthBuild USA (Green Building & Health Careers Pathways initiatives), and the Hyams Foundation, (Life After AmeriCorps activities).

DECREASED RELIANCE ON FEDERAL SUPPORT: The program match proposed for Year 1 slightly exceeds the required match of 38%. Proposed matching funds comprise 40% of the Year 1 budget. We expect that the match that will be achieved by Year 3 of the program will represent over 46% of overall program costs, with the federal portion of overall program costs decreasing each year. The required match will be met in each year, and it will not be necessary to rely on an averaging of match funds each year to achieve the required match by year 3.

We will accomplish our match goals, resulting in a decreased reliance on federal funds each year, by continuing and expanding our fundraising approaches successfully utilized in the past. A key feature of our strategy is to create a diversified funding base, raising funds from state, local, and private

## Narratives

foundation/corporate sources, as well as from other federal sources.

JAS's Executive Director conducts private fundraising with local and national private foundation and corporate donors on a year-round basis. Long-term donors expected to maintain their levels of support include the Cambridge Savings Bank Foundation, MIT Community Service Fund, WR Grace Foundation, and the Mifflin Memorial Fund. Although federal Department of Labor WIA funds are not expected to increase overall, the portion of funds designated to serve out-of-school youth is increasing, which should result in additional funding from that source. While we expect that CNCS share of program costs will decrease each year, continued federal support from AmeriCorps remains a critical base from which to leverage matching funds.

### 2) BUDGET ADEQUACY:

Over the past year, due to national economic downturns, YB/JAS, like most other human service programs, has experienced serious funding reductions, including reduction of DOL YouthBuild funds, State Department of Education funds, and private corporate and foundation support from many traditional donors. Agency and program staff have spent a great deal of time researching new funding opportunities, and several new sources have been developed. A great deal of effort has also been spent on identifying ways to consolidate and streamline program operations, which has created savings without reducing program quality or comprehensiveness. We are therefore able to state that AmeriCorps support, combined with the other sources of public and private support described above, will create sufficient funding to operate the program as described. We are able to provide a match of \$187,037 exceeding the required match of 38%. A major portion of the budget supports a team of professional, experienced staff who are critical to both achieving output and outcome goals and to providing core activities needed for community capacity building and program sustainability. A high staff-to-member ratio is maintained because of the wide-ranging needs of the at-risk youth population, and because of



## Narratives

program commitment to significant member development. Staff includes certified teachers, case managers, and a career counselor, as well as the housing service staff and highly credentialed management staff. Commitment to member development and support is also reflected in funding allocated for the following types of activities: educational supplies; enrichment activities such as drivers' education; emergency needs of members; a transitional housing unit; and program supplies and program-wide activities that support member recognition, community building, and service learning. Commitment to continuous improvement and quality programming is reflected in funding dedicated to staff development.

Administrative costs are kept low, in spite of extensive contract management, budget management, fundraising, and other administrative burdens brought about by accountability to multiple funding sources. The low level of administrative costs to the program has been made possible largely because of in-kind resources and other support services provided to the program by Just-A-Start Corporation.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

#### F. EVALUATION SUMMARY/ PLAN

FOR THE 2007-2010 INTERNAL EVALUATION, submitted in-full to CNCS, 01/14/10, YB/JAS examined member retention initiatives and potential impact on improved retention utilizing member, staff, and outcome surveys.

#### RETENTION STRATEGIES EVALUATED:

An Interdisciplinary Team case management approach and staff training/development were implemented 2007-2010. 896 additional case management hours and were provided in 2007-2008; 1212 hours in 2008-2009.

#### RESULTS:

## Narratives

In year 1, 2007-2008, 22 members received full and 16 received partial Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards with 26,334 total corps service hours. In year 2, 2008-2009, 26 members received full and 15 received partial awards, with combined corps service total of 32,558 service hours.

While the program is pleased with this progress made 2007-2010, we continue to focus on steadily increasing the number of full Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards earned by our corps members as a high value for program success and key member achievement, which contributes to post-secondary educational opportunities which can lift members out of poverty. Evaluation results guide on-going retention initiatives, proposed MSY configuration, and plans for 2010-2013 EVALUATION (pending funding).

FOR THE 2010-2013 INTERNAL EVALUATION, YB/JAS will again focus on member retention initiatives including our new MSY configuration, number of members achieving a GED or diploma, number of members receiving Segal Education Awards, and total corps service hours (outcome evaluation) and staff and member feedback on retention initiatives utilizing member, staff, and outcome surveys (process evaluation).

### Amendment Justification

N/A

### Clarification Summary

FY10 Programmatic Clarification Response for Just-A-Start Corporation 10AC111279:

YOUTHBUILD JUST-A-START AMERICORPS PROGRAM

Proposed Start/End Dates: 10/01/10-09/30/11

## Narratives

### BUDGET CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

(1) Personnel Expenses-role of counselors. All members are young low-income men and women, who have not completed high school with multiple barriers to both success and completing their service. The two counselors provide the practical and emotional support our members need to complete their service and earn their ed-award.

(2) Personnel Expenses- clarification of field service staff. The 3 field service staff in the budget include 1 field coordinator and 2 service supervisors (construction).

(3) Personnel Expenses- role and duties of support staff. The Support Staff include one Service Site/Logistics Driver who procures materials, moves members to sites, gets tools, equipment repaired, etc., and one maintenance/janitor person for our program location at 1175 Cambridge Street, who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and cleaning of our program space.

(4) C. Travel-CNCS training event. The CNCS training event has been separately itemized in the Staff Travel section for a total of \$2000, with expenses broken out as follows: \$250 registration, \$850 hotel, \$550 air travel, \$350 food. These are not duplicated costs.

(5) C. Travel-calculations. In Staff Travel/Trainings and conference, the conference budgeted at \$1000 for 1 staff member is YouthBuild USA's annual National Affiliated Directors Meeting. This is the key meeting of the year for YB Directors, where best practices are shared, and issues are aired and solutions built. The budget is \$400 air travel, \$500 hotels/meals and \$100 registration. These are not duplicated costs.

For staff mileage, a correction was made in the number of miles to be traveled so that the calculation is

## Narratives

now correct. The travel is necessary because YB staff, including directors, teachers, counselors, career/placement staff, and construction staff often must travel to construction sites, to meetings and trainings of other funders, to private companies, to our One Stop Center, to state-wide YouthBuild meetings and events, and to Mass Service Alliance (state commission) Program Director meetings, etc. In Member Travel, the \$110 per member are the costs associated with sending 2 members to YouthBuild USA's Conference of Young Leaders in Washington D.C. This includes registration fee (\$100) and ground transportation in MA (\$10) for each of two members.

(6) Contractual and Consultant Services-need for staff development consultant. Staff development is important to develop staff capacity. We envision three - 3 to 4 hr trainings, two workshops on "Dealing with Difficult Members Emotionally & Practically" and the third one on "Integrating Green Building into our Service."

(7) G. Training-clarification of driver's education. All members are low-income, so-called "at risk" young people. When they complete their service, they will need to find a job. Those of age need to have a driver's license to have the widest ready access in order to have the best chance for employment. A driver's license is a key step in this process.

(8) G. Training-community strengthening. The \$31.61/member is for the costs associated with field trips (admissions and transportation) and program wide activities to mark the end of our three 4 month periods of service and for other community building activities. Trips include Museum of Science, Kennedy Presidential Library, Old State House, etc., but vary from year to year.

We have moved CORI checks to section I, Other Program Operating Costs.

The program is not capping out-of-state members at 5, but rather is trying to reflect our past experience.

## Narratives

We rarely have out-of-state application to YouthBuild Just-A-Start. We are budgeting for 5 just in case.

(9) G. Training. We have moved criminal history checks to I. Other Program Operating Costs.

(10) Other Program Operating Costs-budget for criminal history checks. Other Program Operating Costs-budget for criminal history checks. The program performs criminal history checks on all staff and all members. The program has a fee-exemption from the Commonwealth of MA, which means that all in-state CORI/SORI checks are free to the program. For this reason, we have not budgeted funds for in-state checks. We have budgeted for out-of-state checks as described in #8.

(11) Other Program Operating Costs-purpose of vehicle. The vehicle (a passenger van) is necessary to transport teams and all their tools to their service sites. This is the most effective and efficient means to do so.

(12) Other Program Operating Costs-premise cost. The program operating space is a unit of a condo development, so premise expense includes condo fees, mortgage interest, and depreciation. The rent expense covers the cost of off-street overnight parking for 2 program vehicles at \$100/month each, and for daytime parking for 4-5 staff vehicles at \$80/month for 12 months.

(13) Other Program Operating Costs-calculations. Mortgage interest includes interest on 2 mortgages. The condo fee on the program space is \$758.07/mo. The rent calculation is explained above. The costs of utilities and maintenance and repairs are for the program space, and are estimates based on current actual costs. The rental depreciation cost is the actual amount of cash cost that will be applied to that expense. Total operating costs for the condo space are \$64690. The AmeriCorps share is prorated at

## Narratives

91%, based on the fact that approximately 9% of the total space is used for non-AmeriCorps purposes such as agency storage of files and equipment.

(14) Member Support Costs-FICA. We have received an exemption from the IRS for FICA, which is on file with our state commission, the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

(15) Clarification of Depreciation in Source of Funds. The assignment of In-kind funds for Depreciation in the Source of Funds chart was an error, and has been removed. All depreciation has been charged as part of premise expense as a cash cost, and the amount charged as in-kind has been assigned to State/Local and Federal sources as cash match.

(16) The program has the permission of the federal agencies noted (HUD, including CDBG and DOL) to use their funds as cash match.

### NARRATIVE CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

(1) "Other Services" performed by members include volunteer services at local non-profits and faith-based organizations. Upon entry to the program, members, with guidance of staff, select a local non-profit or faith-based organization at which to provide individual or small-group service on Thursday afternoons. (These organizations become service partners.) This gives members the opportunity to provide additional types of service outside of the realm of affordable housing (e.g. volunteering in a soup kitchen, working with youth, etc.) and contributes to their development (building interpersonal skills, leadership, and, in some cases, career development). This also provides one aspect of the program's support for the second need in the region for services to small non-profits and faith-based organizations

## Narratives

identified in A. RATIONALE AND APPROACH, section 1, where the goal is to help the organization expand the capacity of service provided.

(2) YouthBuild Just-A-Start employs trained teachers who provide targeted instruction in the major subjects of English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science to assist members who have not yet received their secondary education credentials (approximately 84% of members) in obtaining them. This instruction is provided during member development periods on alternate weeks. Members seeking a High School Diploma complete Diploma Portfolios to demonstrate mastery of required skills and material. Diploma Portfolios are reviewed and approved by the Cambridge Rindge & Latin School which awards the diplomas. Those seeking a GED prepare for and then complete the GED examination. This examination is administered by SCALE, the local GED testing facility. Members who are seeking a High School Diploma usually need up to 2 years of targeted instruction/support; those seeking a GED, 1 year. Those needing more than one year of targeted instruction/support either enroll for a second AmeriCorps term of service or receive this targeted instruction/support from the program as part of their life after AmeriCorps services.

(3) YouthBuild Just-A-Start AmeriCorps Program is requesting a MSY increase of \$406, from \$12,600 set in the 2007-2008 program year to \$13,006 (approximately 3%). Just-A-Start Corporation will still continue to include the required match, leveraged from public, private, and corporate sources - a match which has increased over time. The increase in the overall CNCS proposed contribution will help to offset the cost of running the program which has increased by over 8% since the last cost/MSY was set. Some of the more significant rising costs have included fuel and site utility costs, health care, and very modest annual cost-of-living allowances (COLAs) for staff. The increase will also help to offset decreases in sources of match brought on by the economic downturn. These include decreases in state funding as well as the capacity for private fundraising, both of which we would expect to improve as the

## Narratives

economy improves. As noted above, the program continues to meet the required match in spite of these decreases.

(4) HUD (including CDBG) and DOL have given their approval to be used as cash match for AmeriCorps.

### CRIMINAL HISTORY REQUIREMENT:

YouthBuild Just-A-Start AmeriCorps Program conducts CORIs and SORIs for all staff. Just-A-Start Corporation is a non-profit and has received a fee exemption for in-state CORI checks. Just-A-Start has historically had very few staff or members apply from outside of Massachusetts. On the rare occasion this should occur, out-of-state CORIs are conducted with sources obtained from matching funds. There is no limit on out-of-state applicants.

### PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT:

YouthBuild Just-A-Start AmeriCorps Program is opting into Economic Opportunity standard performance measures 4, 13, and 16. Additionally, we are submitting NON-standard performance measures for Civic Engagement Training-Education and Volunteer Generation-Human Needs. We did not apply for Education standard performance measures.

### FY11 Budget Clarification Items

1. Section A. Personnel: The Mentor Coordinator will spend approximately 11 hours per week recruiting adult mentors, matching them with appropriate members, and following up on match interactions to insure that they are successfully meeting the goal of providing members with an additional source of



## Narratives

support. It is expected that approximately 10 matches will be made. The additional support provided by the mentors will supplement support services provided by Case Managers.

2. Contractual and Consultant Services: The IT consultant will trouble shoot and resolve problems with computers and other equipment used by staff, by members in the computer lab, and in the classrooms; will replace or update computers as needed; will maintain networks and update licensing agreements; and will maintain/update/troubleshoot program databases needed for programmatic and fiscal recordkeeping and reporting.

3. Other Program Operating Costs: The program has a fee-exemption for in-state checks, and sufficient funding is budgeted to conduct out of state CORI/SORI checks. The program performs criminal history checks on all staff, volunteers, and members. These include a search of statewide criminal history repositories and the National Sex Offender Public website. The members' service focuses primarily on renovating and stabilizing affordable housing. As a result, no members or employees have recurring access to vulnerable populations, so FBI checks are not required.

4. Other Program Operating Costs: Premise expenses are calculated as follows:

Mortgage Interest: \$21987 includes average monthly cost of \$1832.25/month for 12 months for 2 mortgages.

Condo Fee: \$9097 includes \$758.07/mo. x 12 mos.

Rent: off-street parking for program vehicles and staff cars-\$7660. This includes the cost of overnight parking for 2 program vehicles at \$100/mo each x 12 mos. = \$2400; and for daytime parking for 5-6 staff vehicles (varies throughout the year) at \$80/mo x 12 mos (\$960/yr)= \$5260.

Utilities: \$7847 includes estimated cost of heat/air cond. and electricity for 12 months based on past expenses.

## Narratives

Maintenance: \$5897 includes estimated cost of maintenance supplies and scheduled and unscheduled repairs and maintenance services based on past expenses.

Rental Depreciation: \$8035 includes cash cost that will be applied to rental depreciation of program facility.

5. Section II. B. Member Support Costs: Workers' Comp is provided for all members, including those not charged to the grant. The amount shown on the budget is for members charged to the grant only.

### Continuation Changes

YouthBuild Just A Start is not proposing any changes to the program design or performance measures submitted in the original proposal.

#### Enrollment

YB JAS met 100% of our enrollment goal in 2009-2010, and is on-target to meet 100% of our goal in 2010-2011 with 3 Full-Time, 28 Half-Time, and 5 Quarter-Time Members enrolled to date; an additional 3 QT to be put into the system, and 10 Minimum-Time members to be identified and to start no later than July 2011.

#### Retention

YB JAS has worked diligently to improve our retention over the past 6 years and has had success in doing so with our youth corps comprised almost exclusively of at-risk high school dropouts, ages 17-24. Our 2009-2010 corps, while not achieving 100% retention, resulted in 20 full and 19 partial Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards, generating 31,743.47 member service hours, 2578 non-member volunteer service hours, and enabling the program to meet or exceed all performance goals. Additional CNCS grant funding of \$6239 is requested, which will be used mainly to support a new Mentor Coordinator position introduced in 2010-2011. The Mentor Coordinator recruits and trains adult

## Narratives

mentors who are matched with members, thereby providing an additional level of adult support for addressing the serious needs of our at-risk member population. We feel this new initiative is an important part of our member retention strategy.

On-going Challenge. Corps members comprise nearly 100% low-income youth, who are high school drop-outs, many of whom have other risk factors including being a young parent, trauma survivor, having learning disabilities, housing instability or homelessness, and other challenges - all of which can impact attendance and ability to complete a full term of service.

Challenge specific to the 2009-2010 Program year. 2009-2010 was a particularly challenging program year. A larger number of members than usual exhibited risk factors of homelessness/ housing instability and mental health issues which negatively impacted member retention with regard to numbers of youth earning full Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. We would note that most of the youth were retained throughout the service year. However, challenges faced by the youth meant that they were not able to fully participate during parts of the year and these reduced hours meant they did not earn full awards. (Although staff worked very hard, it took longer to remove barriers standing in the way of struggling participants' full participation.)

On-going strategies to promote retention within at-risk corps: The program continues to combat our members' disadvantages by providing comprehensive services including education leading to a GED or High School Diploma, case management to help remove barriers to service, resource referral, and goal setting, life skills, leadership, sponsors, career development, placement, and post-placement services. It should be noted that this range of services can only be provided by maintaining a high staff-to-member ratio. We continue to enhance this ratio through our 4-year partnership with the Boston University School of Social Work whereby we host 2 first-year Masters-Level Social Work interns each year to further enhance member support services. Additionally, we continue to provide a stipend also to HT,

## Narratives

QT, and MT members through dual enrollment in the YouthBuild Program.

Enhanced Plan for Improvement for 2010-2011 and on-going: Just-A-Start has written a number of grants over the past year in order to maintain the scope and quality of the program, address continuing areas of need, and meet the increased match requirements. A majority of these were successful, including a grant to create a mentoring program for our at-risk corps members beginning in 2010-2011. It is our intent that the mentoring program will provide an additional level of support to members while in the program and assist with their transition to life after AmeriCorps. Additionally, JAS is, as of 2010-2011, implementing a new MSY configuration, one that we feel better aligns with our members needs. Specifically, we have reduced the number of half-time awards from 32 to 28, added 8 QT slots, and increased the number of MT slots from 5 to 10. (Note that FT slots remained at 3.) We feel that this configuration is a more natural fit with the needs of our youth corps members who are simultaneously working toward their high school diplomas or GEDs, allowing for first year members to serve as half-time members and second year members to serve as quarter and minimum time members which better align with the need to finish service and devote more time to completing their secondary school credential.

YouthBuild Just-A-Start is also proceeding with our plan to again make retention the focus of our formal program evaluation for 2010-2013. This will include, but is not limited to, a thorough evaluation of our retention strategies implemented to date, identification and assessment of other retention strategies, and an evaluation of our new MSY configuration to assess if it is, indeed, a better match with our program structure and member needs.

### Performance Measures

#### SAA Characteristics

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

#### Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 21.24

#### Service Categories

- |                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| GED/Dropouts           | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Leadership Development | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Housing Infrastructure | Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Other Human Needs      | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |

### Stabilization of Affordable Housing-Cambridge, MA

**Service Category:** Housing Infrastructure

**Measure Category:** Needs and Service Activities

#### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Working under the supervision of skilled program staff, on sites provided by housing partners, members will provide housing rehabilitation services on affordable housing sites. Specific activities involve carpentry, painting, etc., depending upon the needs of the site.

#### Results

**Result: End Outcome**

N/A-End Outcome no longer required.

Indicator:

Target: N/A

Target Value: 0

Instruments: N/A

PM Statement: N/A

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Result: Output**

19 affordable housing sites will be stabilized in Cambridge, MA, in year 2 (2011-2012)

Indicator: Number of housing sites stabilized in Cambridge, MA.

Target: Year 1: 18 units in Cambridge, MA

Year 2: 19 units in Cambridge, MA

Year 3: 20 units in Cambridge, MA

Target Value: 19

Instruments: Monthly Housing Production Reports which outline the number of units served.

PM Statement: YouthBuild Just-A-Start will stabilize 18 units in year 1 (2010-2011), 19 units of housing in year 2 (2011-2012), and 20 units of housing in year 3 (2012-2013) in Cambridge, MA.

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

100% of housing units served will be upgraded and stabilized as affordable housing.

Indicator: Percent of units in Cambridge, MA, which remain affordable.

Target: Year 1: 100% of units in Cambridge, MA, will remain affordable.

Year 2: 100% of units in Cambridge, MA, will remain affordable.

Year 3: 100% of units in Cambridge, MA, will remain affordable.

Target Value: 100%

Instruments: Housing Partner Sign-Off Sheets, completed at the end of a project, indicating completion.

PM Statement: 100% of Cambridge units served will be upgraded and stabilized as affordable housing in year 1 (2010-2011), year 2 (2011-2012), and year 3 (2012-2013).

Prev. Yrs. Data

## National Performance Measures

**Priority Area:** Economic Opportunity

**Performance Measure Title:** Upgrading Public Housing-Chelsea, MA

**Service Category:** Housing Infrastructure

### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Working under the supervision of skilled program staff, on sites provided by our housing partner, members will provide housing rehabilitation services on public housing sites. Members will repair/upgrade and, as funds allow, develop new public housing in Chelsea, MA, where funding cuts have meant many units have fallen into disrepair and demand far exceeds supply. Specific activities involve carpentry, painting, etc., depending upon the needs of the site.

### Result: Output

Result.

45 affordable public housing units will benefit from repair/development services in Chelsea, MA, in 2011-2012.

Indicator: O4: Housing units made available for low-income people.

Target : Year 1: 40 units in Chelsea, MA

Year 2: 45 units in Chelsea, MA

Year 3: 50 units in Chelsea, MA

Target Value: 45

Instruments: Monthly Housing Production Reports which outline the number of units served.

PM Statement: YouthBuild Just-A-Start will provide repair/development services to 40 units of public housing in year 1 (2010-2011), 45 units in year 2 (2011-2012), and 50 units in year 3 (2012-2013), in Chelsea, MA.

### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

100% of housing units served will be upgraded and stabilized as affordable housing.

Indicator: Units served and upgraded as affordable housing

Target : Year 1: 100% of units (40) in Chelsea, MA

Year 2: 100% of units (45) in Chelsea, MA

Year 3: 100% of units (50) in Chelsea, MA

Target Value: 45

Instruments: Housing Partner Sign-Off Sheets, completed at the end of a project, indicating completion.

PM Statement: 100% of Chelsea units served will be upgraded and stabilized as affordable housing in year 1 (40 in 2010-2011), year 2 (45 in 2011-2012), and year 3 (50 in 2012-2013).

**Priority Area:** Economic Opportunity

**Performance Measure Title:** Educational Enrichment Leading to a GED/Diploma

**Service Category:** GED/Dropouts

### Strategy to Achieve Results

## National Performance Measures

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

YouthBuild Just-A-Start will provide AmeriCorps Members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service with educational enrichment on alternating weeks provided by trained teachers aimed at achieving their GED or high school diploma within one year of the end of their AmeriCorps term of service.

### Result: Output

Result.

AmeriCorps Members who have not yet obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service will receive academic enrichment by trained teachers on alternating weeks to prepare them to attain their GED or high school diploma.

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

Target : 100% of AmeriCorps Members who have entered the program without their GED or high school diploma - anticipated 41 members.

Target Value: 41

Instruments: Withdrawal/drop-out letter from high school, self-attestation.

PM Statement: 100% of AmeriCorps members entering the program without their GED or high school diploma (anticipated 41 members) will receive academic enrichment by trained teachers on alternating weeks to prepare them to attain their GED or high school diplomas.

### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Members receiving academic enrichment will attain their GED or high school diploma.

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

Target : More than 50% of members entering without their secondary school credential will attain their GED or high school diploma within one year of completion of their AmeriCorps term of service.

Target Value: 21

Instruments: GED test results from testing facility (currently SCALE in Somerville, MA); completion of high school diploma requirements, portfolio and competencies, approved by the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

PM Statement: More than 50% of members receiving academic enrichment will attain their GED or high school diploma within one year of completion of their AmeriCorps term of service.



## Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Already on File at CNCS

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable