

## 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:  07-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID:  11AC122073		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:  09ACHMD0010006														
<b>5. APPLICATION INFORMATION</b>																	
LEGAL NAME: Volunteer Maryland DUNS NUMBER: 021897810		NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Maureen Eccleston TELEPHONE NUMBER: (410) 767-6251 FAX NUMBER: INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: meccleston@volunteermaryland.org															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 301 West Preston Street 15th Floor Baltimore MD 21201 - 2305 County: Baltimore (city)																	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 526002033		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. State Government 7b. Other State Government															
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: Volunteer Maryland															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): State of Maryland (statewide initiative)		11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/31/11      END DATE: 08/30/12		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <u>MD 007</u> b.Program <u>MD 007</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;">\$ 401,100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 517,480.00</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;">\$ 918,580.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 401,100.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 517,480.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 918,580.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
a. FEDERAL	\$ 401,100.00																
b. APPLICANT	\$ 517,480.00																
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f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00																
g. TOTAL	\$ 918,580.00																
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: Maureen Eccleston		b. TITLE: Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (410) 767-6251														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 06/03/11															

## Narratives

### Executive Summary

(The Executive Summary is included in the Continuation Changes narrative.)

### Rationale and Approach

#### A. RATIONALE + APPROACH

Volunteer Maryland's (VM) mission is to build stronger, healthier communities by developing volunteer programs that meet critical needs in the areas of education, human needs, public safety, homeland security, and the environment. VM's goals are 3-fold: improve the lives of Maryland (MD) citizens and the natural environment; build and sustain the capacity of secular and faith-based nonprofits to mobilize community volunteers; and develop the leadership skills and ethic of service of MD citizens.

VM is requesting CNCS funds to support 96 AmeriCorps members (ACMs) to serve at 90 Service Sites across MD over the next 3 years. The ACMs will serve as volunteer coordinators and mobilize at least 15,660 community volunteers in the next grant cycle. These volunteers, in turn, will provide 250,560 hours of service to 111,897 MD citizens (targets are based on average cumulative program results).

This narrative describes VM's program design and outcomes for the next 3 years. Source documentation, evaluations, and training curricula are on file at the program office and available for review.

#### A(1) COMMUNITY NEED

MD human + environmental needs: MD is a state of great prosperity and one with significant social and environmental problems. Often referred to as "America In Miniature," MD's geographic, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity reflect the nation as a whole. From sprawling farmland on the Eastern Shore to the dense urban setting of Baltimore, MD citizens often face intractable human and

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environmental problems. According to the most recent census, 461,954 Marylanders (8.2 %) live below the federal poverty level. In 2009, 7.1% of Marylanders were unemployed, up 3% from 2008, and 1 of every 250 homes went into foreclosure. Of all states, MD ranked eighth in violent crime; from 2007 - 2008, the crime rate in MD increased by 2.1%. Almost 20% of the population lacked a high school diploma or GED and 15% lack health coverage.

Environmentally, MD struggles to balance the needs of a fast growing population with fragile coastal and inland ecosystems. Population projections indicate a growth of over 1 million more Marylanders by 2030, all while the Chesapeake Bay is suffering from runoff from sewage treatment facilities operating without modern technology, runoff from agricultural and developed lands, and vehicle and power plant emissions. These pollutants kill fish, plants, and other animals and dramatically impact citizens' health and the commercial industries that rely on the Bay. Damage to the Chesapeake Bay affects all areas of the watershed -- Washington DC, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York, in addition to MD.

Need to build capacity of nonprofit organizations: To tackle these community challenges, a diverse network of over 28,000 nonprofits has evolved to offer a myriad of services and programs. To maximize their effectiveness, MD nonprofits regularly report that they need help recruiting and managing local volunteers. In fact, 3 decades of research indicates that this is a constant challenge for the nonprofit sector--in MD and across the US. The Urban Institute reports that agencies that are "interested in retention of volunteers should invest in recognizing volunteers, providing training and professional development for them, and screening volunteers and matching them to organizational tasks."

Unfortunately, most nonprofits lack adequate resources to assign a staff person to these tasks. In 2004, a national study showed that only 19% of nonprofits stated that they largely adopted the practice of training paid staff to work with volunteers and in 2006, more than one-third of individuals who

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volunteered did not continued to volunteer the following year.

A 2009 report in the Stanford Social Innovation Review emphasized an increased need for volunteers: "The nation's nonprofits are under strain from the current economic crisis, a leadership drain as older executives retire, and high turnover among younger staff. Volunteers are an undervalued and underused resource for tackling these challenges."

By training ACMs in the best practices of volunteer management -- including recruitment, recognition, retention, and volunteer training -- and placing these volunteer coordinator ACMs in local nonprofits, VM bridges the gap between communities facing critical human and environmental problems and citizens who want to volunteer to solve those problems.

In addition to the immediate support provided to MD nonprofits and communities through ACM placement, trained and experienced VM alumni are poised to fill a looming leadership gap. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the nonprofit sector will lose more than half of its nonprofit leadership over the next ten years as baby boomer executives retire. ACMs are trained in all of the core competencies for volunteer program managers as determined by the Association for Volunteer Administration and often choose to stay in the nonprofit sector -- many in leadership positions.

VM serves all MD regions and addresses the diverse needs of its citizens. It is the only MD program that provides this vital service to prospective nonprofit leaders, the nonprofit sector, and local communities.

The data in this section was compiled from a variety of state and national research, including reports from the US Census, Environmental Protection Agency, MD State Police and Departments of Education and Natural Resources, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, MD Association of Nonprofit Organizations, the

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Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, and the Urban Institute. All reports are on file at VM's office.

### A(2) ACTIVITIES + MEMBER ROLES

For VM, the goal is always to improve the lives or environment of a MD community. Therefore, VM's central function is the establishment of partnerships with nonprofits (called Service Sites or sites) that mobilize volunteers to tackle the types of human and environmental problems noted above. In the next grant cycle, VM will work with 90 sites to assess community needs, develop action plans and volunteer projects, and implement appropriate evaluation elements to capture the broader outcomes of VM partnerships. Together, VM and site staff will work together to recruit, train, and supervise ACMs to serve as volunteer coordinators at local sites.

In addition to articulating their community needs and volunteer program plans to meet those needs, VM's sites will create measurable outcome goals (i.e. work to be done by volunteers, number of clients/beneficiaries served by volunteers, type and level of improvement of clients or community). Sites will describe the difference the volunteers' service will make in the lives of people or the environment and outline their strategies for capturing the outcomes of their volunteer programs. VM will provide extensive training and technical assistance on each of these elements during site partnership negotiations and throughout the partnership year.

VM will recruit new sites each year; sites for the 2010-2011 program year will be selected in June 2010. Accomplishments and examples from former sites are used in this narrative to illustrate VM's program model and outcomes.

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Here are 3 examples of community needs, volunteer activities, and measurable outcomes from VM sites in the current grant cycle. They also offer a glimpse of the issue diversity addressed by VM:

-A report by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation demonstrated that Wicomico County on MD's Eastern Shore leads all other MD counties in the percentage of farmland lost to development between 1982 and 1997. In another report by the MD Department of Planning, Dorchester and Caroline counties join Wicomico as threatened in land protection. The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance (NWA) works to protect these 3 counties and 2 in Delaware, encompassing a 370,000 acre watershed. NWA partnered with VM to build the Nanticoke Creekwatchers Water Monitoring Program. The VM ACM coordinated 111 volunteers in monitoring water quality and cleaning up 725,000 watershed acres in MD and Delaware.

-At Patterson Park Public Charter School (PPPCS) in Baltimore City, 40% of 3-6 grade students tested below proficiency in reading and 20% were below grade level in math in 2007. PPPCS partnered with VM to engage parents as volunteers during academic, enrichment, and school support activities. The VM ACM developed an orientation and training program for volunteers and created flexible volunteer opportunities that enabled parents to volunteer in a way that fit their existing schedules. As a result, 88% of PPPCS families participated in the school community in the 2008-2009 school year. 95% of evaluated family members indicated increases in their students' interest in academics, behaviors, attention, and social skills as a result of the contributions of parent volunteers.

-MD has the 6th highest breast cancer rate in the USA; in 12 MD counties, breast cancer mortality rates are above the national average. While early detection is the key to surviving, in 2006, 20% of women over 40 had not gotten a mammogram in the past two years. Susan G. Komen for the Cure partnered with VM to create a volunteer speakers' bureau that would provide breast health education at businesses, schools, health fairs, and community events. The VM ACM developed a volunteer program

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and recruited 34 volunteers who educated 2,310 individuals in breast cancer prevention and health. Nearly 80% of all who attended the educational events reported an increase in breast health knowledge after the presentations.

Each year, VM will establish partnerships with 30 new Service Sites; recruit, train, and manage 32 ACMs to serve as volunteer coordinators at local sites; and provide coaching and technical assistance to ACMs and sites on volunteer program development. In general, VM AC positions will require full-time participation in order to complete the extensive volunteer program development, nonprofit capacity building, and volunteer mobilization activities outlined in this grant narrative; part-time placement may be considered for nonprofits with some existing volunteer program infrastructure and/or experience working with AC or VM.

Program design: VM's program is a design called the "Multiplier Model." Over the next 3 years, a small AC program staff will establish partnerships with 90 new sites across MD and recruit 96 new ACMs. Together, VM, the ACMs, and sites will mobilize more than 15,660 community volunteers to serve at least 111,897 MD citizens. Here are a few examples of the Multiplier Model in action:

-1 ACM worked with 185 volunteers to plant 230 trees and shrubs, remove 7,000 pounds of trash from 6 parks and 2.5 miles of stream, and establish 1 butterfly garden.

-1 ACM worked with 427 volunteers to provide over 6,400 hours of service to 464 senior citizens through rideshare and meal delivery services.

-1 ACM worked with 111 volunteers to provide foster care and adoption services for 985 homeless and/or abused animals.

-1 ACM recruited 59 volunteers to provide support services for 755 adults recovering from drug and alcohol addiction, their families, and community members.

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-1 ACM doubled the size of an existing volunteer program, from 51 to 99, serving 154 youth in a teen court program.

VM staff will provide written instructions and extensive training to ACMs and Site Supervisors (SS) on prohibited service activities and program restrictions, including non-duplication. This will occur during site partnership negotiations, ACM interviews, SS orientation, ACM training days, and monitoring site visits throughout the service year. Sites and ACMs will also provide written agreement to abide by VM and AC restrictions in their ACM contracts and site Memoranda of Understanding.

A(3) OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES--Program outputs and outcomes will be measured with internal and external evaluations and will include quantitative and qualitative data collection, participant feedback, and external assessment. VM will also utilize the services of an external evaluator who will evaluate outputs and outcomes and validate program results for all VM activities each year; through a partnership with the University of MD Baltimore County, VM's evaluator has been analyzing VM data and providing support to the evaluation process for more than 12 years. In addition, VM staff will collect, compile, and analyze data quarterly from ACM and site reports, participant and partner surveys, and monitoring site visit documentation.

Below are all performance measure statements for the next 3 years.

Mobilizing Community Volunteers: In the next 3 years, VM will mobilize 15,660 community volunteers to meet critical human and environmental needs of 111,897 MD citizens. Activities will vary each year, and will fall into 1 or more of the national priority areas: Education, Clean Energy/Environment, Healthy Futures, Veterans, and Opportunity.



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Building Capacity of Nonprofit Organizations to Recruit + Manage Volunteers: Completion of the VM AC program will enhance the ability of nonprofit agencies to recruit and manage local volunteers, with 85% reporting an increased volunteer management capacity as a result of the VM partnership and ACM service.

Sustaining Capacity of Nonprofit Organizations to Recruit + Manage Volunteers: Community-based nonprofit agencies will sustain their capacity to recruit and manage volunteers after the VM AC partnership year and ACM service, with 85% reporting that they have sustained their organizational capacity to manage volunteers for 3 years after the completion of the VM partnership.

Meeting Human + Environmental Needs in MD Communities through Volunteer Service: Volunteers recruited and managed by VM will provide direct, measurable, and effective service to improve the lives of MD citizens and the health of the natural environment, with 85% of VM sites reporting that they achieved their client outcome goals each year.

Building Professional Skills + Knowledge of ACMs: Completion of the VM AC program will lead to an increase in program participants' professional knowledge and skills, with 85% reporting that their skills and knowledge of volunteer program development, national service and volunteerism, and leadership have increased by the end of the year.

Sustaining the Ethic of Service of ACMs: VM alumni will sustain the ethic of service fostered during the AC year for at least 3 years, as evidenced by at least 85% of program alumni reporting that they remain actively engaged in their communities following their VM year.

A(4) SELF-ASSESSMENT + IMPROVEMENT--VM will utilize a comprehensive system for assessing

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program strengths and weaknesses, evaluating core systems and functions, and continuously improving all program activities including written surveys of alumni and community partners, focus group discussions of ACMs and sites, and staff evaluations. Staff will solicit feedback from ACMs, sites, funders, and other partners, and incorporate feedback and recommendations for program improvements immediately. ACMs and sites will provide feedback on VM's site and ACM training program, partnership support, and communication. VM staff will also evaluate each of these elements throughout the year during weekly team meetings.

To assess performance measure progress, VM staff will distribute and analyze annual site and ACM surveys and the program materials submitted by ACMs (work plan, mid-year reports, and final report), and then report on sustainability, volunteer generation, capacity building, and leadership development. VM will also conduct mid- and end-of-year evaluations and interviews with ACMs and sites to receive feedback on the service experience, and apply this feedback in subsequent partnerships.

VM will also utilize the services of an external evaluator. The evaluator will provide detailed analysis and written summary of VM evaluation instruments that measure ACM skills assessment and Service Site partnership. VM staff will distribute the pre- and post-Partnership Surveys and Member Skills Assessments. The evaluator will then analyze the data and report on VM's site capacity building and ACM skill development outcomes each year.

A(5) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT--An important element of VM's program effectiveness is the identification of community problems and solutions by the community itself; VM does not apply a prescriptive approach to serving the needs of local communities. The cornerstone of the VM program model, therefore, is the development of Service Site partnerships with nonprofit and governmental organizations across MD. Each year, VM will recruit a new and diverse pool of 30 sites serving MD's

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human and environmental needs.

To establish these vital partnerships each year, VM will conduct a comprehensive site selection process that will include an annual statewide series of public information sessions for potential sites, webinars and podcasts, detailed site applications, site visits and partnership negotiations by VM staff, and a 1-day orientation for Site Supervisors. This process will allow VM to assess community need and the agency's readiness and ability to support an ACM while also preparing the sites for the requirements of supervising an ACM.

VM has a strong track record of recruiting diverse sites. In terms of location, 56% of sites have been in the Baltimore area, 21% in the DC area, 10% on the Eastern Shore, 7% in Western MD, and 4% in Southern MD since 1993. Typical issue area distribution has been 53% human needs, 20% education, 17% environment, and 10% public safety/homeland security. In the last 3 years, 85% of VM sites were local, state, or national nonprofits; the remaining were local or state government agencies.

A(6) RELATIONSHIP TO SERVICE PROGRAMS--VM has a talented staff that consistently offers high-quality training in volunteer program management. In 17 years of turning novice ACMs into veteran service leaders, VM has amassed a wealth of knowledge and program materials related to volunteer generation and volunteer coordinator recruitment and management. VM is committed to sharing all of this institutional knowledge with all CNCS programs and with the broader field of volunteerism. This commitment has manifested as VM staff have served as mentors and coaches for new AC program staff, consultants for community service programs, and training and technical assistance providers to CNCS programs and other agencies.

In 2007, VM became an AmeriCorps\*VISTA Project Sponsor. In this role, VM serves as an intermediary

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agency for nonprofits that address the root causes of poverty and work to bring MD citizens or communities out of poverty. These organizations apply to VM to host a VISTA member for a year of full-time national service. VM VISTA members serve in one of 3 assignment areas: resource development, marketing and technology, and evaluation.

In 2009, VM applied for additional funds from CNCS through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These ACMs are 2nd year VM ACMs serving as volunteer coordinators at community agencies.

AC program mentor + consultant: VM staff regularly provides consulting and mentoring for new AC program directors and staff. They discuss AC regulations and guidelines, and share program materials and resources. VM has fostered these types of relationships with Community Mediation Maryland, the Greater Homewood Community Corporation, and NCCC.

In 2008, as new elements of the online recruitment system, the My AmeriCorps Portal, were launched, VM staff provided coaching for MD Campus Compact. When MD's Department of Planning received funding in 2009 to launch a new program to place VISTA members statewide through the Recovery Act, VM provided sample materials to the new Project Director to assist in supporting the VISTA members. VM's experience with AC\*State and VISTA enabled VM staff to provide this level of assistance.

AC training resource: Since VM's inception, staff members have trained more than 3,000 CNCS program staff and members from all streams of AC service on volunteer and AC program management. Programs trained include VISTA, NCCC, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Public Allies, JumpStart, Community Mediation MD, and more.

In 2008, VM trained all members at the NCCC Northeast Campus as part of the pre-service training.

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400 members received 4 hours of training in volunteer motivation, recruitment, and supervision techniques.

In 2009, VM offered a free full-day conference for all MD AC and VISTA members. 50 program staff and members attended workshops on the AC education award, in-kind donations, resume development, and volunteer recruitment. A keynote presentation was provided by the National Coalition for the Homeless.

During AC Week 2009, VM staff participated in the Renew America Opportunities Fair for ACMs and community members, a collaborative effort between NCCC, GOSV, and the MD CNCS State Office. VM staff participated in a panel discussion concerning national service opportunities and facilitated a resume development and education award workshop.

In addition, VM staff provided a Train the Trainer course in Volunteer Management through Chesapeake College. Over 2 days, participants were equipped with basic training skills in topics of volunteer management (planning, recruiting, training, and recognizing). Participants included staff of 2 county Departments of Social Services, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity.

ACM collaboration: Along with cross-stream training, VM ACMs and staff have also collaborated with other CNCS programs in service. In the current grant cycle, 2 VM ACMs joined the VM VISTA Leader and ACMs from Community Mediation Maryland, Maryland Conservation Corps, and other AC programs at the Maryland Food Bank sorting thousands of pounds of food for the hungry in MD; and 5 VM ACMs and 3 VM staff joined VISTA members, NCCC members, Teach for America members, and community members for the rebuilding of a Baltimore playground destroyed by arson.

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A(7) REPLICATION--VM does not plan to replicate its program per se; rather, the program staff remains committed to serving as advisors, consultants, and trainers for other CNCS programs and nonprofit organizations as they expand their own capacities to recruit, train, and supervise volunteer coordinators and community volunteers in MD and throughout the AC network.

### Organizational Capability

#### D. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

##### D(1) SOUND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

D(1a) PROGRAMMATIC/FISCAL OVERSIGHT--In 1989, Governor William Donald Schaefer commissioned 2 studies to identify the best approach for leveraging additional volunteers in MD communities. 1 study surveyed the needs of community-based nonprofits and the other surveyed MD citizens on their attitudes and interests in volunteerism. Not surprisingly, MD's research findings supported what national studies had shown for decades: nonprofits sorely needed volunteer help to serve their clients and, overwhelmingly, citizens wished to serve in their local communities. Based on these findings, the Governor directed his staff to create a program that would bring together people who wanted to help with organizations serving some of the MD's most troubled communities.

At about the same time, the Commission on National and Community Service began awarding grants to fund National Demonstration Programs as part of the National and Community Service Act of 1990. In 1992, the MD Governor's Office received funding to launch a new type of program, a volunteer generator program, called Volunteer Maryland. Today, VM is a state competitive AC program.

VM's results are remarkable: In the last 17 years, 521 VM participants have designed effective and sustainable volunteer management systems at 445 rural, urban, school- and faith-based, secular, and other community-based agencies. Together, they have mobilized more than 83,400 community volunteers and 52,000 service-learning students. Volunteers have served nearly 1.4 million hours valued

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at more than \$21 million. ACMs have also acquired over \$1.2 million in additional goods and services for their local communities.

For the last 17 years, VM has been in the business of mobilizing community volunteers; VM staff and alumni are experts at quickly assessing the needs of community-based agencies and helping them design systems for volunteer mobilization and management. Each year, VM delivers 1 of the most comprehensive training programs in the country for ACMs, nonprofit staff and volunteers, and other AC program staff. Finally, VM is committed to expanding its knowledge base and service delivery throughout the AC network.

Accomplishments in volunteer mobilization + meeting community needs:

Environment: VM has mobilized 16,692 volunteers to meet MD's environmental needs. These volunteers have maintained 61 miles of trails, educated 86,200 people on environmental issues, planted 9,211 trees and 26,050 plants, removed 85 tons of trash, cared for 2,710 injured or homeless animals, and more.

Education: VM has worked with more than 60 agencies that educate and support youth, bringing on 4,670 volunteers to serve 37,919 young people. Volunteers provided tutoring and mentoring as well as adult literacy programs for over 1,640 adults. VM has also worked with 710 teachers and administrators and 52,722 students, who have contributed more than 139,000 service-learning hours.

Public Safety/Homeland Security: VM has engaged 2,839 volunteers to patrol neighborhoods, design safe communities, and educate the public on emergency preparedness and other safety issues, reaching 40,360 community members.

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Human Needs: VM has mobilized more than 53,800 volunteers to serve over 1.3 million MD citizens. Volunteer activities included meal delivery to homebound senior citizens, low-cost housing construction, drug counseling, emergency shelter for people who are homeless or victims of domestic abuse, mentoring youth with disabilities, job counseling for immigrants, and social support for refugees.

Accomplishments in nonprofit capacity building: VM has significantly improved the capacity of its local sites to manage and sustain volunteer programs. According to VM's external evaluator, 100% of sites reported a statistically significant increase in their ability to effectively manage volunteers as a result of the VM partnership in 14 of 17 evaluated VM classes. As one former site stated: "VM provides a well-trained volunteer coordinator, training for us, and a supportive staff that makes the development of the volunteer services well-rounded and of high quality."

This increase in site capacity lasts beyond the investment of AC resources. Over the past 3 years, 91% of former sites have reported that they sustained or increased their capacity to manage their volunteer programs beyond the end of the VM year.

Accomplishments in ACM development: According to VM's external evaluator, there was a statistically significant increase in service knowledge and skills (knowledge of national service, volunteer program development, teambuilding/communication, and leadership) in 86% of all VM ACMs. In addition, the ACMs demonstrated statistically significant increases in all 4 sub-areas (vision, foundation building, implementation, and continuous improvement).

These skills and knowledge are also utilized by alumni long after the term of national service. In 2009, 95% of alumni said they continued to use skills developed at VM; these skills included professional



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networking, conflict resolution, and public speaking.

Federal grants administration: VM is a program of the Governor's Office and has a high functioning program staff and fiscal management system. Financial oversight is provided by the Governor's Finance Office (GFO); both GFO and VM staff are experienced in administering federal and CNCS grants.

Multi-site structure: VM's office is located in Baltimore City. In the next grant cycle, 96 ACMs will be individually placed at nonprofit and government agencies across MD. Over the last 17 years, VM has established an effective system for orienting, monitoring, and supporting ACMs and site partners in this statewide initiative.

-Site Selection: VM will conduct a comprehensive site selection process that will include a detailed site application, site visit and partnership negotiation by VM staff, and a 1-day orientation for Site Supervisors. This process will allow VM to assess and verify the agency's community need and ability to support an ACM. It is conducted by all VM staff and takes 3 months to complete. This lengthy process assures that VM has a full understanding of the sites' financial and programmatic capabilities, and it prepares the sites for the rigors of partnering with VM and supervising an ACM.

-Relationships with Sites: Sites contribute a cash match to partner with VM. The match is based on the site's operating budget and ranges from \$4,500 to \$9,500 for a full-time ACM. VM recruits new site partners each year; consecutive partnerships may be allowed for large agencies with multiple or multi-site volunteer projects. In all, 28% of sites have worked with VM in a prior year.

-Monitoring Sites: VM will conduct monthly site visits to monitor fiscal and program requirements, assess progress towards partnerships goals, celebrate accomplishments, and identify challenges.

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Informal monitoring will include regular phone and email communication. VM's Director and Program Manager will conduct formal and informal monitoring activities throughout the program year.

-Orienting and Training Sites: Site Supervisors will attend a 1-day orientation to VM and AC before the start of the partnership year. They will also receive a 70-page Training Manual outlining all VM and AC supervision, program, and fiscal requirements. Once ACMs are enrolled, sites will attend 3 additional training days on volunteer program development and sustainability.

-Connections: VM will develop connections among the sites informally via phone conversations, email exchanges, and site-specific resource sharing. Formal connections will be fostered during training days and site visits with ACMs and sites. VM training will include issue-specific focus groups of site partners to share program models and resources. VM will also schedule networking opportunities for sites in similar locations in MD on training days and during public information sessions.

D(1b) BOARD, ADMINISTRATORS, STAFF--As a program of the Governor's office, VM's Director reports to the Chief of Staff of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives. VM staff members have 24 years of combined volunteer and AC program management experience. AC duties and relevant experiences include:

-Director: hire and supervise staff; conduct ACM and staff evaluations; complete program reports; oversee VM's training program. Completed 2 AC years, provided technical assistance to Learn and Serve and AC National Direct programs, on staff since 2008.

-Outreach Manager: conduct site and ACM recruitment and VM program marketing; screen and select ACMs. Completed 2 AC years, on staff since 2003.

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-Program Manager: evaluate ACMs and site partnerships; provide technical assistance to sites and ACMs. Completed 2 AC years, on staff since 2008.

-Program Manager: oversee VM's VISTA program, evaluate VISTAs and site partnerships, process payments and assist with financial reports. Completed 2 AC terms, on staff since 2009.

D(1c) SELF-ASSESSMENT--VM staff will complete a strategic plan in Summer 2010 to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program systems, structure, staffing, and operations. Staff will solicit input and recommendations for improvement from current and former ACMs and sites, Governor's Office staff, funders, other CNCS programs, and the GOSV. The strategic plan will complement the program-wide review, budget evaluation and development, and staff performance process that occurs each spring.

D(1d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE--To respond to ongoing training and technical assistance needs, VM will draw on the AC network of technical assistance and training resources. VM has worked with Project STAR, the Northwest Regional Laboratory, and the United Way to improve evaluation and marketing at VM and local sites. VM also works with a network of 30 professional trainers and volunteer management consultants in MD. These colleagues frequently consult with VM staff and sites, and they design and deliver training upon request. Ongoing training and technical assistance needs will be determined through regular communication and site visits, and will be provided through in-person training days, monthly resource mailings, site visits, conference calls, webinars, and individual phone calls and emails.

### D(2) ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

D(2a) VOLUNTEER GENERATION/SUPPORT--In addition to volunteers mobilized at VM sites, each

## Narratives

year up to 25 volunteers work with VM staff, ACMs, and sites. They provide technical assistance, marketing and material development, training, and consultation throughout the program year. Recent volunteer contributions include web page design, database entry, and media training. Approximately 10 alumni also attend VM training days each year to share their stories and experiences with current ACMs and sites.

D(2b) ORGANIZATIONAL AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP--Since its inception, VM has been a leader in MD's service community. Staff members are active in the MD Volunteer Center Association, deliver keynote addresses, and serve on grant review panels. In the last 17 years, VM has collaborated with over 200 national and community service programs and trained over 3,000 staff members, ACMs, and nonprofit staff. VM has consulted and trained local and national agencies such as AmeriCorps\*NCCC and VISTA, the Latin American Youth Center, and Howard County Volunteer Coordinators Association.

Each year, VM ACMs and sites are honored by MD's Governor for their exemplary community service during National Volunteer Week. In 2003, VM received MD Volunteer Network's Volunteer and Community Service Advancement Award.

VM staff members were founding members of Volunteer Central in Baltimore and the Volunteer Center for Anne Arundel County. VM has fostered particularly strong relationships with MD's Volunteer Center Network by providing specialized training and ACM placements. To date, VM has worked with all active volunteer centers in MD.

D(2c) MATCH--VM has successfully secured all required match in each year of the program's history. In the current grant cycle, VM has exceeded the required match with an overall match of 57%.

## Narratives

### D3. SECURING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

D(3a) COLLABORATION--Since its inception, VM has collaborated with MD associations and membership organizations to recruit the greatest number and diversity of site partners. VM has established strong collaborations with 2 statewide associations: the MD Volunteer Center Association (MVCA) and MD Association of Nonprofit Organizations (MANO). MVCA represents the 15 volunteer centers that operate throughout MD to mobilize volunteers and connect individuals and nonprofit organizations in service. VM attends MVCA quarterly meetings, collaborates on trainings and volunteer recognition events, and exchanges resources and ideas. Through websites, newsletters, and social networks, the volunteer centers promote VM information sessions, ACM recruitment information, and Service Site information. VM has also worked closely with MANO to provide tailored training programs to its 2,400+ membership--all of which serve MD human and environmental needs. By using MANO's distribution system, nonprofit career development board, and in-depth training, VM, ACMs, and site partners regularly promote volunteer and program opportunities, recruit partners, and acquire program resources.

D(3b) LOCAL FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS--In 2010-2011, matching funds (\$350,822) will be raised by sites (\$180,000), MD state general funds, and private donors. VM will also raise \$155,372 worth of in-kind donations to support the program. Detail of the matching funds are provided in the budget narrative. Since 1993, VM has reduced the federal share of the budget from 60% to 44%, while increasing cash and in-kind contributions from sites, the State of MD, donors, and private funders. Matching funds will be utilized for staff salary and benefits, travel to Service Sites, training expenses, VM gear, member support costs, and general operating expenses.

D(3c) STAKEHOLDERS--As discussed earlier in this narrative, VM's primary relationships (and

## Narratives

stakeholders) are with the local Service Sites where ACMs serve as volunteer coordinators. In the next grant period, 90 sites will invest financially and provide in-kind services to support 96 ACMs. Additional stakeholders are: ACMs and alumni; former sites; 5,220 new community volunteers/year; 111,897 MD citizens/year, who will have access to food and shelter, receive tutoring and mentoring, and a wealth of other services from community volunteers; and community partners, who will be connected to VM sites and clients as a result of the ACMs' service.

Investment by VM's stakeholders has increased in amount, scope, and diversity as the program has evolved. An indicator of this increase can be seen in the average number and demographics of volunteers mobilized by VM each year. In 1996, each ACM brought on 80 volunteers/year. Over time, that average has increased to 174/year. Local volunteers recruited by VM sites and ACMs continue to be diverse in terms of types of volunteer projects, age, race, and education.

D3(d) SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES--N/A

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

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

E1. COST EFFECTIVENESS

E(1a) CORPORATION COST PER MEMBER SERVICE YEAR (MSY)--\$12,593. In terms of cost effectiveness for CNCS, VM will provide \$3 worth of goods and services for MD citizens for every federal dollar invested (based on the past 3 years).

E(1b) NON-FEDERAL SUPPORT--VM has a sound track record of acquiring non-federal support, with \$5.4 million raised from local, state, and national funders including the MD Service Funding Collaborative, Public/Private Ventures, and the Chesapeake Bay Trust. In 2010-2011, matching funds (\$351,322) will be raised by Service Sites (\$180,000), MD state general funds, and private donors. VM

## Narratives

will also raise \$155,372 worth of in-kind donations to support the program.

E(1c) RELIANCE ON FEDERAL SUPPORT--VM has consistently reduced its reliance on federal funds since the program was founded. VM has reduced the federal share of the budget from 60% to 44%. At the same time, VM has expanded the number of volunteers mobilized, MD citizens served, and community partners.

### E2. BUDGET ADEQUACY

VM's budget details program and member expenses to support all activities described in this narrative. To fully implement the program and achieve all projected performance outputs and outcomes, VM's budget provides appropriate and adequate staffing, operations, and member and staff development. In 2010-2011:

-2.75 FTE staff provide training, outreach, and member support to 32 ACMs and 30 Site Supervisors; 57% of staff salary and benefits are provided by VM.

- 10% of the CNCS budget share is dedicated to VM's comprehensive training program. This training provides 17 days of training in the best practices of volunteer coordination and nonprofit management to ACMS and 4 days for Site Supervisors, directly meeting VM's goals of developing service leaders and creating strong, sustainable volunteer programs. In addition to the CNCS share, VM is consistently able to acquire in-kind donations of training workshops, facilities, and equipment.

-Approximately \$10,000 is dedicated to ACM and Service Site outreach. Despite increasing costs for attending career fairs and utilizing print media, VM has decreased this amount in the last five years, supplementing with in-kind media coverage, webinars, and the use of free social networks.

## Narratives

- \$5,000 is budgeted for VM's external evaluator, a decrease of \$1,000 since 2007. VM's evaluator provides analysis of ACM skills assessment and the success or areas for improvement in Service Site partnerships. In addition, VM's evaluator has provided coaching on increasing the response rate of multi-year surveys.

-More than half of the budget is dedicated to ACM Support Costs. VM provides a living allowance of \$13,500 for a full-time ACM; this is \$1,700 above the minimum living allowance and is an incentive for enrollment and service completion.

With this budget and the improvements to VM's member enrollment plan, VM will continue to meet program objectives, demonstrate excellent leadership and management, provide high-quality service opportunities to ACMs, and collaborate extensively to strengthen national service and volunteerism to serve communities across MD.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

#### F. EVALUATION SUMMARY/PLAN

VM conducts evaluation internally and externally. Evaluation elements include in-person monitoring, pre and post tests and surveys, and annual ACM alumni and site surveys, as detailed below.

Monitoring Volunteer Mobilization, Program Development, and Community Needs:

The capacity of Service Site volunteer programs is measured by the Volunteer Program Survey, an instrument that is administered at the beginning and end of each partnership year to assess the Site's appraisal of the quality of service provided by volunteers to clients, the efficiency and effectiveness of their program, and the agency's ability to manage direct service volunteers. The results of this survey are



## Narratives

analyzed and reported by VM's external evaluator.

The quality of volunteer experience is measured by each ACM within their Service Site. The results of this evaluation are reported in the partnership final reports.

Regional Coordinators and VM staff conduct regular site visits to assess the development of the partnerships, suggest course adjustments, and provide additional resources. VM staff also conduct follow-up surveys with Sites for three years after the conclusion of the partnership to monitor the sustainability of the volunteer program.

The number of volunteers recruited and hours served are measured and reported in mid-year updates, a final report, and a Volunteer Program Survey. The Volunteer Program Survey also provides data on the age and race of volunteers. Diversity of the ACMs is measured by the enrollment form. VM provides resources on database development for each ACM and Service Site to collect this data.

The development of on-going partnerships at the Service Sites is reported and measured through the ACM work plan and in the Final Report.

Monitoring Member Development Objectives:

ACMs complete a Skills Assessment Checklist at the beginning and end of the service year to assess their service leadership skill development. The results of this survey are analyzed and reported by VM's external evaluator.

ACMs complete a goals worksheet at the beginning and end of the service year. This instrument provides

## Narratives

professional, personal, and issue-related categories; the ACMs revisit these goals mid-year. Regional Coordinators and VM staff use the goals worksheet to tailor the support provided to each ACM.

VM conducts follow-up surveys with alumni for three years to survey their on-going service involvement and attitudes toward their AC experience.

Stakeholders, feedback, program improvement:

VM has developed a thorough and on-going process for soliciting feedback and suggestions for program improvements from primary stakeholders. These include:

-VM Program: VM staff conduct regular monitoring site visits with ACMs and Site staff and attend weekly VM staff meetings to evaluate internal operations and brainstorm improvements. In addition, VM's Director holds closure meetings with Regional Coordinators to solicit suggestions for program improvements.

-VM Training Program: Daily feedback forms are solicited for ACMs and a thorough evaluation form is completed by each ACM at the completion of Pre-Service Training. Regional Coordinators also hold informal brainstorming sessions with ACMs on improvements or additional topics to address.

-ACM Service: VM staff hold on-going meetings with Site Supervisors to assess the ACM's development and orientation to the agency. ACMs and Supervisors submit written mid-year and final evaluation forms to assess the quality of their service to the Site.

-Volunteer Experience/Client Service: ACMs develop and administer their own evaluation mechanisms

## Narratives

for soliciting client and volunteer feedback related to the volunteer program. These mechanisms may be informal group discussions, written surveys, or formal in-person interviews. VM provides technical assistance to develop the evaluation plans as needed.

VM has consistently demonstrated program excellence as evidenced by community and peer collaboration, ACM development, nonprofit capacity building, and volunteer mobilization.

### Amendment Justification

n/a

### Clarification Summary

GARP Program Clarifications:

--Please provide detail regarding specific strategies to ensure a diverse corps is recruited.

VM recruits nationally and locally through colleges, community centers, local and regional newspapers, Senior Centers, nonprofit partners, idealist.org, craigslist.org, the My AmeriCorps Portal and more. To broaden VM's reach and recruitment message, VM is utilizing additional outreach methods to attract a diverse pool of qualified applicants. In addition to traditional outreach methods of career fairs, tabling at colleges, and print and online ads, VM is utilizing newer social networks including facebook and twitter. VM launched a blog on February 1 that will follow ACMs through their service year, has created and posted short videos through animoto, and is producing a series of podcasts that will highlight experiences of ACMs and Sites.

VM promotes a broad recruitment message and relies on Service Sites to promote their specific recruitment message within their community of clients, volunteers, and other stakeholders. ACM diversity is an important quality of each VM class.

Since 1995, the age range of ACMs has been 17 to 79 years old:

## Narratives

14% were 17-22; 34% were 23-29; 30% were 30 -49; 22% were 50 plus.

With regards to education:

32% completed some college; 55% completed an undergraduate degree; and 13% received a graduate degree.

In terms of ethnicity:

30% were African-American; 3% Asian; 63% Caucasian; 1% Hispanic; and 3% described their ethnicity as Other.

In all, 23% of VM ACMs were male and 77% female. ACMs have also represented a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, religions, and mental and physical abilities.

--Please provide further detail regarding organizational self-assessment and improvement as opposed to programmatic self-assessment,

Volunteer Maryland's primary focus is AmeriCorps. By assessing programmatic strengths, weaknesses, and functions, VM is assessing the entire organization. During a strategic planning process in Summer 2010, VM staff will conduct a SWOT analysis, look at job design, review VM core processes, and set goals and objectives for meeting areas of improvement and growth.

--Performance Measurement Guidance:

When clicking "other," eGrants does not allow a number other than zero to be typed into the MSY chart.

This was confirmed by the eGrants Help Desk on May 3, 2010. VM's total MSY request is 32.

### Continuation Changes

## Narratives

### I. Narrative

#### Executive Summary

Maryland communities struggle with diverse needs: over 8% of Marylanders live below the poverty level; 20% lack a high school diploma or GED; and the Chesapeake Bay is suffering from runoff that is killing wildlife and impacting citizens' health. To meet these needs, Volunteer Maryland (VM) recruits, trains, and supervises AmeriCorps members to serve as volunteer coordinators. Over 3 years, 96 VM AmeriCorps members will mobilize 15,660 volunteers to serve at least 111,897 community members.

#### A) Summary of Service Activities

For the 2011 -- 2012 program year, Volunteer Maryland (VM) is requesting CNCS funds to support 32 full-time AmeriCorps members (ACMs) to serve at 30 civic, governmental, faith-based, education, and other nonprofit agencies (called Service Sites or sites) across MD. ACMs will serve as volunteer coordinators and mobilize 5,220 community volunteers to serve 78,300 hours and 37,299 citizens (averages based on cumulative program results). VM ACMs conduct agency needs assessments; develop volunteer program vision statements; implement tracking systems and evaluation procedures; develop volunteer program policies and procedures, position descriptions, and recruitment materials; and recruit, screen, train, supervise, and recognize community volunteers.

VM sites will address all AC issue areas. New sites are selected each year and are representative of MD's geography and diverse community needs. In the 2010 - 2011 program year, 61% of sites are in the Baltimore metropolitan area, 24% are in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, 12% are on the Eastern Shore, and 3% are in Western Maryland. Within the traditional AmeriCorps issue areas, 37% are human needs programs, 30% are education programs, 24% are environmental programs, and 9% are public safety or homeland security programs.

## Narratives

### B) Program Strengths

In 2010, VM was recognized by America's Service Commissions and Innovations in Civic Participation as one of the 52 most innovative AmeriCorps\*State programs in the country. VM was noted for its "lasting impact on members, exceptional partnerships, and cross-program connections."

This is proven through VM's annual evaluation. In the 2010 evaluation of VM alumni from the past 3 years, 90% of reporting alumni are currently involved in service activities and 90% currently utilize skills and knowledge acquired as a VMC. In the 2009 - 2010 program year, 100% of VM ACMs who completed the service year reported an increase in knowledge of volunteer program development, national service and volunteerism, and leadership. In the 2010 survey of former sites from 2006 - 2009, 91% of reporting sites have sustained or improved their ability to recruit volunteers and 100% have sustained or improved their ability to manage and utilize volunteers effectively.

Much of this success is due to the training and support VM ACMs receive throughout the service year. VM provides a comprehensive volunteer management training program. The participants of the training include the ACMs and the Site Supervisors. VM's training program is based on a cross-section of materials and activities that promote excellence in national service and volunteer management. The trainers represent a diverse array of experiences and the training materials have been culled from international, national, state, and local programs since VM's inception in 1992. The VM training program also draws on the diversity of the participants and their communities.

For any VM training, the materials and activities are tailored to meet the needs of the participants. However, the outcomes of any VM training will address one of the following broad program goals. As a result of VM training, participants:

- Acquire and demonstrate an understanding of the history of national service and volunteerism in the

## Narratives

United States.

- Practice all key elements and skills of effective volunteer management.
- Enhance their communication and problem-solving skills.
- Expand their leadership abilities and strengthen their abilities to work effectively as members of diverse teams.

One way VM supports ACMs and site partnerships is through cross-program networking opportunities. In December 2009 and June 2010, VM held joint trainings between VM's AC program and the VM VISTA program. The days consisted of facilitated networking exercises and roundtable discussions, storytelling with small groups consisting of members from each program, and breakout time for each program to focus on program-specific training needs.

An additional training opportunity, held during AC Week 2010, was "Destination AmeriCorps," a networking event held in collaboration with "Sowing the Seeds of Sustainability Volunteer Management Conference," facilitated by the MD Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism. This event, spearheaded by an ARRA Regional Coordinator, engaged 10 ACMs (5 VM ACMs, 3 VM VISTA members, 1 national VISTA member, and 1 Civic Works ACM) in planning a networking event for ACMs serving in Maryland. Approximately 50 ACMs were in attendance, including VM ACMs and members from A STAR!, HandsOn Corps, Public Allies Maryland, and Rebuilding Together Capacity Corps.

In addition, 2 ACM meetings were held with VM ACMs and VM VISTA members serving on the Eastern Shore. These meetings were an opportunity for networking, resource sharing, and socializing and were very popular, as members serving on the Eastern Shore can often feel isolated.

VM staff and ACMs continue to develop innovative ways to meet community needs and conduct ongoing

## Narratives

program evaluation and improvement. As one example, VM implemented a wait list of screened AC applicants to ensure 100% enrollment in 2010. VM also utilizes second year AC leaders, called Regional Coordinators, to help support the ACMs throughout the year. In 2009 -- 2010, VM had a 94% retention rate and continues to look for ways to support members throughout the year in an effort to retain 100% of ACMs.

VM also looked to technology as a way to recruit and engage new community partners, promote the service of ACMs, and provide additional resources to ACMs, partner organizations, and the larger service and volunteerism sector. Beginning in the 2009-2010 program year, VM aimed to use social networking to promote VM as a resource and share ideas about volunteerism, service, and the nonprofit sector. In addition to networking through facebook and twitter, VM developed promotional videos through Animoto, including a 90-second video featured on the VM web site. The VM blog, featuring ACMs and staff writers, was launched January 25, 2010. Every weekday through the end of the program year, one of the writers shared an experience about his/her service year. Topics included social networking, professional development, direct service opportunities, relaxation techniques, and more. At the end of the program year, members were highlighted and results from the year were shared. In order to maintain the social networking presence, one Regional Coordinator developed a "Digital Media Guide" for VM staff and future Regional Coordinators and the VM Director began blogging on a more regular basis.

VM also developed a few videos and is working to make the videos accessible through a VM YouTube account. Videos created include:

- Kayam Farm Volunteers: A look at what volunteers can accomplish in one day at Kayam Farm, an organic educational farm at the Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center, with the direction of a VM ACM.



## Narratives

- Community Preservation Development Corporation (CPDC) Youth Mentoring program: A look at a VM ACM's accomplishments in building a youth mentoring program from the ground up at a CPDC community in Park Montgomery.
- Why did you decide to become an ACM? Different perspectives from VM ACMs on why they chose to enter the program.
- What has been the best part of your ACM year? Different perspectives from VM ACMs on what has been their favorite part of the partnership year.

Through all of this, VM's focus on creating long-lasting community impact remained paramount. In the 2009-2010 program year, VM ACMs mobilized 5,940 community volunteers and served 48,539 community members. 86% of partner organizations reported that they achieved some or all of their client outcome goals by the end of the program year; and 90% of partner organizations reported that volunteer activities are better managed and supervised as a result of the VM partnership.

The report by America's Service Commissions and Innovations in Civic Participation was a reminder of the importance of innovation in supporting ACMs and site partnerships and meeting community needs. Through VM's intensive training program, cross-stream networking opportunities, and ongoing program improvement, VM will continue to evaluate its strengths and challenges and work with ACMs, staff, and site partners to make a lasting impact on MD communities.

### C) Program Challenges

1. Transition to new director: On July 1, 2009, VM's Director of 10 years transitioned to a new role and VM's Project and Resource Manager was appointed as the new Director. In addition to the anticipated learning curve of this new role, the Director continued to manage all aspects of her previous role, as the Project and Resource Manager position was unfilled from July 1 through the first week of October. In

## Narratives

July and August, VM enrolled 24 new AmeriCorps\*VISTA members, creating the largest class of VISTA members in VM's three-year history with the program; the Director continued to manage the VISTA program, as well as overall agency resources, while this position remained unfilled. Though a challenging time, the members of the VM Support Team (3 staff, 4 Regional Coordinators, and a VISTA Leader) all stepped up and formed a strong team that was more than capable of ensuring goals continued to be met while the program remained understaffed and the Director learned the nuances of the role.

2. Program Manager Turnover: In April 2010, VM's Program Manager resigned. The position remained unfilled through the rest of the program year, requiring VM's Director, Outreach Manager, and VISTA Program Manager to absorb the Program Manager's duties. While this turnover did not adversely affect the performance of the ACMs, it was both challenging and stressful for VM staff. Fortunately, the position was filled in September by VM alumnae Laura Aceituno. Through ARRA, Laura excelled as a Regional Coordinator and VM is excited to be working with her in a new role starting with the 2010 -- 2011 program year.

Although staff turnover presents challenges, opportunities also abound. Through this program year, VM staff embraced the opportunity to work together and grow stronger as a team, continuing to put the needs of ACMs, nonprofit partners, volunteers, and community members at the forefront of their work. The response of the VM staff to such challenges gives confidence in the current and upcoming program years.

### D) Enrollment

For the 2009-2010 program year, VM's enrollment rate was 97.1%. 35 individuals (32 MSY) were selected to serve as ACMs and were matched with appropriate Service Sites. On the first day of Pre-

## Narratives

Service Training, one individual did not attend and consequently withdrew; this position was immediately refilled with a waitlisted candidate who was able to begin on the third day of Pre-Service Training. After one week, this individual accepted a full-time job and withdrew from the program. As a result, VM's Class 22 began with 34 ACMs (31 MSY). Although the waitlisted candidate did not continue with the program, VM will continue to have a waitlist in future years, as the strategy increases opportunities for individuals to serve and for Service Sites to meet their community needs. It should be noted that the waitlist enabled VM to have 100% enrollment for the 2010 - 2011 program year!

### E) Retention

In the 2009 -- 2010 program year, VM's retention rate was 94.1%. Due to compelling personal circumstances, 1 full-time member exited with a partial education award in February, having served 656 hours and meeting all VM and AmeriCorps requirements until the early exit. The second member did not exit for compelling circumstances and, although she had served 606 hours, she had not met all VM program requirements or the expectations of her Site Supervisor. Because many of the challenges were due to productivity and attendance, the differences were irreconcilable and, after several weeks of mediation by VM staff, an early exit became the only viable option. The third member was significantly behind in hours, had missing assignments, and was not meeting the program requirements or expectations. Although she was released from service, VM continued to support the site; a Regional Coordinator dedicated several hours to recruiting guest speakers for the site's summer camp program and facilitated an afternoon service activity for the campers in June; 2 other VM staff members, the VISTA Leader, and 1 VM AmeriCorps member facilitated additional activities at the summer camp.

While VM aims for 100% retention, there are occasional unforeseeable circumstances that impact retention (i.e., health issues, a member not fulfilling the contract requirements). VM has continued to improve the retention rate. This improvement is likely due to a combination of factors including strong

## Narratives

Regional Coordinators; providing in-service training workshop choices that meet a wide variety of VMC interests, goals, and prior knowledge; and an intense screening and placement process to ensure a good fit between VM, ACMs, and Service Sites. VM staff continue to look closely at the successes and challenges in member retention with an eye on 100% in the 2010 -- 2011 service year.

### F) Portal and Reporting Compliance

100% of members were enrolled within 30 days of their start date. All but 1 member was exited within 30 days of program completion; that ACM was exited after 32 days after unsuccessful efforts to obtain the exit form from the member. VM staff attempted to reach the exited member by phone, email, and postal mail in order to obtain the exit form. This was an unusual circumstance; if an ACM must exit early, VM staff requests that the exit form is submitted with the final timesheet. All efforts to obtain the exit form are pursued. All quarterly narrative and financial reports were submitted.

### II. Performance Measures

No changes to the performance measures are being proposed for this continuation application.

### III. Budget

In 2011-2012, matching funds (\$356,152) will be raised by sites (\$195,000), MD state general funds, and private donors. VM will also raise \$149,118 worth of in-kind donations to support the program. Details of the matching funds are provided in the budget narrative. VM has maintained its overall match of 56% while some program costs have risen. Health coverage costs have risen \$200 per member and the addition of FBI fingerprint checks to the background checks adds an additional \$3,390 to the budget. VM has reduced costs in other areas, and the cost per MSY, \$12,646, remains below the maximum and has increased just \$68 per MSY from 2010-2011.

## Narratives

### IV. Conclusion

In the 2009-2010 program year, VM met challenges with energy and creativity. 31 ACMs successfully completed a year of service, leveraging nearly 6,000 community volunteers and serving 48,539 MD citizens. In 2010-2011, VM successfully enrolled 100% of allotted MSY with ACMs ranging in age, education, ethnicity, and background. These ACMs are serving across AmeriCorps issue areas to meet serious community needs through volunteer program development and mobilization. With continued innovation and improvement, VM will continue to meet strong program objectives and provide a valuable service to ACMs, MD's nonprofit sector, and MD citizens.

### Performance Measures

#### SAA Characteristics

- AmeriCorps Member Population - None
- Geographic Focus - Rural
- Geographic Focus - Urban
- 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 type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other                     |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services                    |   |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 0

#### Service Categories

Other Human Needs Primary  Secondary

### Increasing Nonprofit Capacity

**Service Category:** Other Human Needs

**Measure Category:** Not Applicable

#### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Over one year, Volunteer Maryland will increase the capacity of MD nonprofit organizations, schools, and government agencies to meet critical human and environmental needs by developing or improving volunteer programs and recruiting and mobilizing volunteers. AmeriCorps members will receive training in volunteer program development and they will apply the training effectively at their Service Sites, increasing the amount of direct services provided to the community. While AmeriCorps members serve at local sites across the state, VM program staff provide extensive training and technical assistance on nonprofit management and volunteer program development to all members and sites throughout the year. Volunteer Maryland's training and technical assistance plan is updated each year to reflect the diversity and needs of the AmeriCorps members and service sites. This is necessary since VM recruits new members and sites in each program year, and the sites traditionally

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

serve the diversity of human and environmental needs across Maryland (e.g. sites may provide meals to homebound seniors, monitor water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, mentor at-risk youth, and more). This assistance will help local nonprofits strengthen their infrastructure, recruit more volunteers, and maintain their programs and services beyond the AC partnership and member service.

In the 2009 - 2010 program year, Volunteer Maryland AmeriCorps members mobilized 5,940 community volunteers who served 58,349 hours of local community service at partnering organizations in Maryland. In the 2010 survey of previous partner organizations, 91 percent of responding sites have sustained or improved their ability to recruit volunteers and 100 percent have sustained or improved their ability to manage and utilize volunteers effectively.

**Results**

**Result: Output**

Sites will build their capacity to recruit and manage volunteers.

Indicator: Increase in site staff knowledge of volunteer program management principles.

Target: 22 sites (75% of 30) will demonstrate a statistically significant increase in their volunteer program management knowledge.

Target Value: 22

Instruments: Pre and Post Volunteer Program Management Knowledge Assessment

PM Statement: In one year, 22 VM sites will demonstrate a statistically significant increase in volunteer program management knowledge as a result of VM member service and program staff training and technical assistance.

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

Sites will sustain their capacity to recruit and manage volunteers.

Indicator: Maintenance of volunteer program management principles by site staff.

Target: 22 of sites (75% of 30) in the most recent completed year will report that they have maintained or increased their usage of volunteer program management principles.

Target Value: 22

Instruments: Annual Assessment of Site Volunteer Program Management Knowledge

PM Statement: 22 VM sites will sustain their organizational capacity to recruit and manage volunteers as a result of VM member service and program staff training and technical assistance.

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Mobilizing Volunteers**

**Service Category:** Other Human Needs

**Measure Category:** Not Applicable

## Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Over one year, Volunteer Maryland will increase the capacity of MD nonprofit organizations, schools, and government agencies to meet critical human and environmental needs by developing or improving volunteer programs and recruiting and mobilizing volunteers. AmeriCorps members will receive training in volunteer program development and they will apply the training effectively at their Service Sites, increasing the amount of direct services provided to the community. While AmeriCorps members serve at local sites across the state, VM program staff provide extensive training and technical assistance on nonprofit management and volunteer program development to all members and sites throughout the year. Volunteer Maryland's training and technical assistance plan is updated each year to reflect the diversity and needs of the AmeriCorps members and service sites. This is necessary since VM recruits new members and sites in each program year, and the sites traditionally serve the diversity of human and environmental needs across Maryland (e.g. sites may provide meals to homebound seniors, monitor water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, mentor at-risk youth, and more). This assistance will help local nonprofits strengthen their infrastructure, recruit more volunteers, and maintain their programs and services beyond the AC partnership and member service.

In the 2009 - 2010 program year, Volunteer Maryland AmeriCorps members mobilized 5,940 community volunteers who served 58,349 hours of local community service at partnering organizations in Maryland. In the 2010 survey of previous partner organizations, 91 percent of responding sites have sustained or improved their ability to recruit volunteers and 100 percent have sustained or improved their ability to manage and utilize volunteers effectively.

## Results

### **Result: Output**

Volunteer Maryland will design volunteer program management systems in partnership with local nonprofits to recruit, train, and manage community volunteers to meet critical human and environmental needs across the state each year. This work is central to the AmeriCorps members' service and VM's program model.

Indicator: Number of volunteers recruited



**Result: Output**

Target: 5,000 volunteers will be recruited and mobilized to serve at partnering community agencies.

Volunteer Maryland AmeriCorps members recruit, on average, 166 volunteers at each site.

Target Value: 5000

Instruments: Site surveys conducted by members at 3-month intervals

PM Statement: In one year, VM AmeriCorps members will recruit and mobilize 5,000 volunteers to serve at partnering community organizations in Maryland.

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

VM will train and deploy community volunteers to provide a variety of human and environmental services each year. AmeriCorps members will provide volunteer training and then manage volunteer projects throughout the program year.

Indicator: Number of volunteer service hours

Target: Volunteers will serve, on average, 12 hours per year; by the end of the year, they will provide

60,000 hours of service.

Target Value: 60000

Instruments: Site surveys conducted by members at 3-month intervals

PM Statement: In one year, VM AmeriCorps members will train volunteers to provide 60,000 hours of local community service across Maryland.

Prev. Yrs. Data

## Required Documents

**Document Name**

**Status**

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable