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### Executive Summary

The Milwaukee Christian Center Youthbuild is a Youth Corps that engages low-income, unemployed, out-of-school youth in a comprehensive program providing job training and other skill development services. Members completing their term of service will be expected to earn a GED/diploma, secure employment and/or complete a college course. Members will construct two homes that are made available for low-income families or people with disabilities. Members will be trained to respond to disasters.

### Rationale and Approach

#### 1) Compelling Community Needs

This project addresses four compelling community needs:

AT-RISK YOUTH -- According to the 2000 census, families living in the target area for this project -- Milwaukee's federally-designated, south side Renewal Community -- experience poverty at three-times the national average, unemployment at two and one half times the national average, and lack high school credentials at three and one half times the national average. 32% of the population in this area is foreign born, and 60% of the population over 5 years old speaks a language other than English at home.

The Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) and its Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) are located in the City's 15th Neighborhood Strategic Planning area (NSP); most of MCC/NIP's housing work, however, is located in the adjacent NSP area - 16. The demographics for these two areas are as follows:

#### Neighborhood Demographics - NSP Areas 15 and 16

Demographic	NSP 15	NSP 16
Population under 25 years of age	46.8%	50.0%
Population between 18 and 24 years of age		

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12.7% 14.9%

### Race

Latino	51.2%	71.4%
White	33.0%	16.1%
African American	5.6%	7.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2.2%	1.1%
Asian	5.7%	2.2%
Other	1.3%	1.7%
Total minority population	67.0%	83.9%

### Labor force

Not in labor force	42.2%	39.7%
Unemployed	7.5%	8.2%

### Education

Not a high school graduate	47.5%	59.6%
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### Income

Median household income	12,299	17,958
Persons below poverty	25.3%	34.5%

### Housing

Owner occupied residential	64.4%	44.2%
Average assessed residential value	\$90,053	\$64,824

(Source: 2000 U.S. Census)

Additionally, a recent study (2003-04) by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute revealed that only 31% of African American male students in the Milwaukee Public Schools graduate from high school; this

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figure is 46% for African American females. These figures for Latino males and females are 36% and 50%, respectively. These low graduation rates are in stark contrast to the graduation rates of white males and females which are 66% and 75%, respectively.

Another dramatic statistic relates to the number of working families that live below the poverty level in MCC/NIP's target area. MCC is located in the 53204 zip code area. A recent report by the Employment and Training Institute at the University of Wisconsin -- Milwaukee (UWM) noted that in this zip code area, fully 41% of employed family households have total earnings below the poverty level.

A large number of youth from the age of 18 to 24 who live in this community are out of school or attending alternative high schools, do not have a high school degree, are unemployed, and are in need of job skills, educational remediation, mentoring, and an opportunity to serve their community.

HOUSING -- The city of Milwaukee has a shortage of affordable housing: a 2007 study by UWM's Employment and Training Institute reported that 41% of Milwaukee homeowners with mortgages and 56% of city renters spend 30% or more of their total household income for their housing. HUD has determined that families that pay more than 30% of their income for housing are "cost burdened" which results in difficulties affording the basic necessities of life, e.g., food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Further, between 2000 and 2006, the percentage of households with mortgages spending half of their income or more on housing nearly doubled in Milwaukee, from 10% to 19%; for renters these percentages were 21% in 2000 and 31% in 2006.

In addition, many Milwaukee households live in overcrowded conditions. The largest number of overcrowded households is in the primary target area of MCC -- the near south side. In the 1990's the number of housing units declined in the city by 5,000. The greatest loss was in central city

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neighborhoods where the highest percentage of families with children live and the highest rates of poverty and unemployment exist. Housing values are also low. The 2000 median value of single-family, owner occupied homes in Milwaukee was \$80,400, compared to a median value of \$112,200 in the State of Wisconsin and \$199,600 nationally. (Source: "City of Milwaukee -- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing - 2005") Further, low-income households are under-represented as homeowners in the city of Milwaukee. Limited income, lack of credit, and discrimination in both mortgage lending and insurance underwriting has certainly contributed to this under-representation. Finally, the Employment and Training Institute (in the study referenced above) noted that given the income earnings of families in the 53204 zip code area and the predominance of single-parent families, housing prices are rapidly rising above the capacity of local families to purchase homes in this neighborhood.

ENVIRONMENT -- The Kinnickinnic (KK) is the most heavily urbanized river in Wisconsin. The watershed has over 5,800 residents per square mile. In 2007, the KK earned the distinction of being one of the 10 most endangered rivers in the United States by American Rivers magazine.

Pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polyaromatic hydrocarbons, have flowed into Lake Michigan for years. With its two larger and more well-known cousins, the Milwaukee and Menomonee, the KK is one of 43 areas of concern in the Great Lakes region, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The pollution qualifies the KK for federal funding under the Great Lakes Legacy Act, which is used to clean up toxic hot spots where there is not a responsible party to pay for a cleanup. The EPA is providing \$14.3 million, the state is funding \$7.7 million and the City of Milwaukee is spending \$2.4 million.

The KK River watershed is so highly urbanized all but 10% of it has been developed. Due to this, rain picks up pollution as it runs off roads, parking lots, and rooftops and into the river. The city of Milwaukee plans to construct a 2 1/4 mile trail along the KK River linking the racially and economically

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diverse south side Milwaukee neighborhoods of Lincoln Village and Bay View to each other, to the downtown area, and to Milwaukee's lakefront.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY -- Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for services. Factors such as the number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages will prevent people from accessing emergency services. People will have to rely on each other in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs. If those offering assistance are untrained, there is a high likelihood that the victims and those attempting to assist will lose their lives.

As required by the Disaster Mitigation Act passed by Congress in 2000, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department is responsible for recruiting and training volunteer Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to aid first responders (police and fire fighters) in times of natural disasters. These teams are critical in the provision of effective first response strategies, as they provide organized physical labor support when disasters occur. Activities may include fighting brush fires, sandbagging river banks, clearing debris from roadways, and general clean-up.

### 2) Description of Activities and Member Roles

Twenty-five out-of-school and at-risk high school youth between the ages of 17 and 24 will participate in this Americorps program. Three out-of-school youth will serve 40 hours per week, 14 out-of-school youth will serve 32 hours per week, and 8 at-risk high school youth will serve 12-16 hours per week during the school year. [At the beginning of 2008, MCC became a vendor for the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) providing construction training to at-risk students enrolled in MPS alternative high schools as part of a State of Wisconsin Department of Instruction GED Option 2 grant that MPS

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received. MPS participants are on site 12--16 hours per week during the school year. Participants that complete the academic portion of the program receive a high school diploma.] Corps members come to the MCCYB office and are transported to respective service sites (housing construction sites, the KK River Corridor). Out-of-school youth are then transported to Journey House for academic programming. For the at-risk high school youth, the educational instruction is provided by MPS. This program directly addresses the needs for employment, skills training, and education remediation among low-income, out-of-school and at-risk high school youth in the city of Milwaukee. By serving this at-risk group, MCCYB is a program that directly addresses the CNCS strategic priority - ENSURING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL OF AMERICA'S YOUTH.

Service is provided in the areas of housing, the environment, and disaster response, as follows:

HOUSING -- The 25 members are placed on two crews, supervised by MCCYB's highly skilled and trained staff. Due to the varying schedules for academic instruction and construction skills training, there are generally no more than 8 corps members on a single site at any given time. Site supervisors are trained to perform as mentors, role models, counselors, teachers, and supervisors. Supervisors utilize the sites to assist young people in gaining the skills and attitudes required to become productive, self-sufficient citizens. MCC owns the sites and acts as the general contractor throughout construction. The new homes comply with Wisconsin Energy Star guidelines. Construction meets or exceeds State of Wisconsin Uniform Building Code standards.

MCCYB crews complete the equivalent of two houses each year. The worksite supervisors and the construction manager teach the skills needed to complete each phase of housing construction including identification and proper use of tools and materials, material selection, safety guidelines, the reading of blueprints and building specifications, construction-related measurements and calculations, the

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ordering of materials, and the specific skills needed to complete the construction work itself. Members complete most phases of the construction including the following: framing; roofing, including sheathing and shingling; insulation; drywall installation, mudding, taping, and finishing; installation of windows, doors, and cabinets; interior trim installation; priming and painting. MCC/NIP subcontracts for foundation excavation and pouring, HVAC, plumbing and electrical, and flooring. MCC/NIP has strong collaborative relationships with our subcontractors and some of them allow corps members to shadow them while they are completing these jobs. The projected outcomes of this on-site training are the following: (1) corps members will master the construction skills necessary to prepare them for employment in the building trades and (2) corps members will acquire work maturity skills that will transfer to future life situations, i.e., reliability, thoroughness, punctuality, task completion, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

Corps members are also afforded opportunities to work in other MCC/NIP housing programs serving low-income residents through which they acquire other housing construction, rehabilitation and support skills. This is typically done as a limited term exposure; however, for a second term member who is particularly interested in pursuing a career in the building trades, it may be a month-long commitment. These other programs include the following: 1) the Handicap Accessibility Program -- tasks involved include ramp building, lift installation, and interior accessibility modifications; 2) the Housing Production Program that installs modular homes for sale to low-income owner occupants. Tasks involved include set preparation, finishing the house where the marriage walls meet, and constructing basement stairs, porches and garage building; 3) the Owner-Occupied Rehab Program, which MCC/NIP has operated for 33 years. Tasks involved include exterior painting and paint removal in a lead safe manner, window replacement, porch building, siding, and wall repair. Corps members assigned to rehab crews on more than an exposure basis are trained for and expected to pass the State of Wisconsin lead (Pb) worker certification; and 4) MCC maintains an in-house inventory of building



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materials and delivers materials to job sites. Corps members working in this area learn such skills as inventory management, material acquisition, and materials distribution.

MCCYB utilizes a local, bilingual broker to market the housing units produced through this program. Further, it utilizes the services of local housing assistance programs, i.e., the United Community Center, Select Milwaukee, and others which provide homebuyer education and counseling services. Each unit is sold to a low-income homebuyer who has access to a variety of financial assistance programs, i.e., grants for down payment and closing costs (the American Dream Initiative and the Housing Organization and Direct Assistance Program) and 0% (United Community Center) and other low-interest loans.

This program addresses the need for affordable housing in the target area, while providing homeownership opportunities for low-income homebuyers.

ENVIRONMENT -- MCCYB is working under the direction of Groundwork Milwaukee to create additional non-paved hiking trails along the banks of the KK River. They are clearing brush, debris, trash, and invasive vegetation from the river corridor between E. Lincoln Avenue and S. Chase Street to make the river more accessible. In the past year, corps members have removed over 300 pounds of invasive vegetation. In the coming year, MCCYB members may be deployed in a larger project to enhance the recently completed set of looped trails with a set of stairs that will prevent erosion and connect a section of the paved KK River Trail (which will run along an elevated, abandoned railroad right away) to the new hiking trails on the banks of the river. The crews will assist with the finishing work of the stair cut, installation of the stairs, and placement of chipped bark along the pedestrian trail. This activity occurs every Thursday afternoon from April to November.

These activities also give the corps members a tangible project that they can look at and be proud of

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their accomplishments.

Members are also actively engaged in recruiting and leading groups of volunteers in two community cleanups that occur annually in the KK watershed. More details in Section C3 Volunteer Recruitment and Support.

DISASTER -- Corps members receive CERT training from the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department. Their participation in this training directly addresses the strategic initiative of HELPING COMMUNITIES RECOVER FROM AND PREPARE FOR DISASTERS. This 2 ½ day training covers disaster preparedness, fire safety, basic disaster medical operations, light search rescue, disaster psychology, terrorism, and team operations. Upon deployment by the Sheriff's Department, corps members provide organized physical labor support when disasters occur; activities may include fighting brush fires, sandbagging river banks, clearing debris from roadways, and general clean-up.

This program addresses the need for trained, organized labor support when disasters occur. This certification and training gives the members a broader perspective on who their community is and how they can offer a vital and necessary service. While most members will not be called to respond to a disaster, this training has already proved valuable on a smaller scale. In November of 2007 a MCCYB member was sleeping in a friend's house that caught fire. He was able to use his training to save himself and a friend by escaping through a window. According to Aaron, "Everything happened so fast. I never thought I'd use the CERT training I went through a few months ago, but the things I learned at the training kicked in....know your surroundings, remain calm, and make sure everyone is accounted for and out of harm's way. Now I really appreciate the importance of the CERT training...it helped me rescue my friend from the fire." His story was featured in the State of Wisconsin Emergency Management Office's Spring 2007 Homefront newsletter.

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This is one more component of the program which teaches community participation.

MCCYB has rules in place that define prohibited service activities, i.e., political lobbying, religious instruction. These rules are published in the member handbook and thoroughly reviewed with corps members at orientation. Staff is well versed in these prohibited activities and monitors compliance on a daily basis.

### 3) Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

- \* Twenty-five low-income, unemployed, out-of-school and at-risk high school youth will be enrolled in this AmeriCorps program each year.
- \* Corps members will develop the skills and be provided with the support, education, and training necessary to enable them to complete the construction of the equivalent of two three-bedroom houses each year which will then be sold to low-income homebuyers, thus increasing the job skills of members AND the availability of affordable homes and homeownership among low-income households.
- \* Corps members who complete their term of service will participate in a civic literacy/citizenship curriculum, resulting in 70% of the members demonstrating an increased understanding of citizenship concepts.
- \* Corps members will participate in career development counseling and pre-employment skills training, resulting in 75% of the members who complete their term of service completing an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) and being placed in employment, post-secondary education, advanced job training, or entering a second term of AmeriCorps service.
- \* All out-of-school corps members will complete an Individual Education Plan (as part of the IGP) with the academic instructor.
- \* All out-of-school corps members who complete their term of service will participate in basic skills (for

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those with basic literacy and numeracy skills below the 9th grade level) and/or GED/HSED preparation classes, with 50% achieving a GED or HSED and 70% passing at least two GED/HSED tests or increasing one or more literacy/numeracy levels.

- \* Corps members will recruit, train (as needed), and engage 400 volunteers in 1,200 hours of meaningful service activities each year.
- \* All corps members who complete their term of service will complete a class in first aid and CPR.
- \* Corps members will complete 30 environmental projects, primarily in the KK River Corridor.
- \* 93% of corps members will be CERT trained and be available to respond to disasters within the county.

#### 4) Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement

As the owner and general contractor for the new homes, MCC/NIP monitors construction and ensures that timelines are met and the homes are completed within the project period. MCC/NIP will then contract with an independent evaluator to monitor its progress towards stated outputs and outcomes. This individual will work with MCCYB and Journey House staff in developing outcome-specific data gathering tools and will then collate and analyze this data at the end of the first year for review by program staff and the state commission. Specific data to be gathered and monitored are included in the Evaluation Plan section of this proposal.

MCCYB staff, collaborators, and members meet monthly to discuss concerns and to monitor program activities. Identified strengths are maintained or enhanced, and weaknesses are addressed through program modifications, as may be indicated. One of the duties of the MCCYB coordinator is to act as a conduit, ensuring that feedback flows from and to members, collaborators, and staff on a continuous basis.

#### 5) Community Involvement

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The City of Milwaukee instituted a neighborhood planning process 13 years ago. Stakeholders in each of the City's neighborhood strategic planning areas meet on a regular basis to identify needs, to develop strategies for addressing those needs, and to monitor progress towards the same. It is these stakeholders who have identified skills training, educational remediation for those who have not finished high school, and affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for low-income households as targeted needs for this project. The stakeholders in MCCYB's target area include residents, business leaders, churches, youth-serving, employment and training, housing, adult education, family services, human services, and organizing agencies. This formal process of neighborhood planning will continue throughout the project period.

Further, MCC/NIP has been certified as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). CHDO's are required by law to have a formal process for involving potential and actual low-income HOME program beneficiaries in the design, siting, and development of CHDO programs and projects. In fact, no less than one-third of the CHDO's governing board must be residents of low-income neighborhoods (defined as at least 51 percent of households with incomes below 80 percent of median), low-income residents of the CHDO's target area, or elected representatives of low-income organizations located in the target neighborhood. So, extensive resident input is the modus operandi for all of MCC/NIP's programming.

### 6) Relationship to Other National Community Service Programs

MCCYB is an affiliate of Wisconsin Fresh Start (WFS) and a replication site for Madison, WI's Operation Fresh Start Program (OFS). OFS has received both Youthbuild and AmeriCorps funding. MCCYB has received Youthbuild funding and continues to receive extensive technical assistance from OFS. MCCYB is building on the successes of the OFS model by demonstrating the model's effectiveness in a large urban community. Milwaukee is the only large urban replication site in Wisconsin. Further, MCC/NIP

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is currently in the process of securing designation as an affiliate of YouthBuild USA.

### 7) Potential for Replication

As noted above, MCCYB is a replication site for OFS. As the only large urban replication site, MCCYB could well be the model for future replications in other large cities in the United States. Strategies for that replication will be developed in collaboration with OFS, which is also a certified, best-practices provider of technical assistance for YouthBuild USA.

### Organizational Capability

#### 1) Sound Organizational Structure

##### a) Ability to Provide Sound Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight

MCC was established in 1921 as an American Baptist missionary project. Over the years, MCC has grown into a multi-faceted social service/neighborhood improvement agency that serves about 6,500 individuals annually through programs including NIP, the senior adults program, an emergency food pantry, juvenile justice programs, and youth programming at four sites.

MCC's mission is to move people beyond the challenges of poverty through life-affirming programs and supportive services. Our programs are based on the concern for the well-being of others. Thirty years ago, MCC's leadership identified a need among lower-income, elderly homeowners for help in maintaining their aging homes, as well as a need for employment opportunities for Milwaukee's central city youth. In 1975, MCC created NIP to respond to these needs. MCC/NIP was established to improve the housing conditions of low-income, owner-occupants residing in deteriorating and /or unsafe homes within targeted areas and to provide meaningful work experience for youth from Milwaukee's central city. MCC/NIP began operations with eight painting crews and one carpentry crew.

Over the years, MCC/NIP's target area has expanded to include the entire Community Development

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Block Grant area. Since 2006, MCC/NIP had worked in thirteen of the fifteen Milwaukee aldermanic districts. According to a 2008 Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) report, the average age of the structures on which MCC/NIP worked in 2003 was 99.2 years. The majority of homeowners for which MCC/NIP provides services are female heads of households and elderly individuals. Greater than 50% of the clients are people of color. Since 1985, (according to DNS records), MCC/NIP has completed 1,317 housing rehabilitation projects.

MCC/NIP's scope of work has also expanded over the last 30 years to meet the ever-changing needs of the community and it has worked in conjunction with DNS and Business Improvement Districts to address these needs. Services now include home rehabilitation, graffiti removal, ramp and lift installation, and MCCYB. MCC/NIP meets the needs of low-income homeowners, businesses, individuals dealing with graffiti vandalism, and mobility-challenged individuals. In addition, MCCYB meets the needs of our community's at-risk young adults.

MCC has demonstrated its capacity to provide on-site monitoring of the financial and other systems required to administer an AmeriCorps grant. As a sub-grantee of the City of Milwaukee, MCC has received Community Development Block Grant funds on a continuous basis since 1975, HOME funds since 1992, and CHDO funds since 2006. For 2009, the City of Milwaukee has awarded MCC \$2,606,700 of combined federal funding for five separate activities. The length of funding and the variety and amount of that funding demonstrate unequivocally MCC's ability to administratively, programmatically, and financially manage grants.

The management team (executive director, MCC/NIP director, MCCYB coordinator, and finance director) conducts an overall program evaluation on a quarterly basis, which is reported back to the board of directors. The finance director maintains the financial records according to standard GAAP

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procedures and meets monthly with the executive director and the board's finance committee. MCC's finances are audited annually by an independent certified public accountant. MCC has consistently received unqualified reports on these audits.

As noted earlier, the AmeriCorps project has added significant value to MCC's existing service activities by providing the resources necessary to build more homes for community residents, thus increasing the number of affordable housing units and homeowners in its central city target neighborhood. It has also enabled the organization to work with a larger number of young people, engaging them in positive activities that improve the community.

### b) Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff

MCC, a non-profit organization, functions under the direction of a volunteer board of directors. The executive director has overall responsibility for the administration of the agency. The MCC/NIP director is responsible for overseeing NIP operations and directly supervises the MCCYB coordinator who oversees the MCCYB program and supervises its staff. She also oversees all corps member services, including the provision of support services from outside providers, including the academic component provided by Journey House. The construction manager and the assistant rehab construction manager assist as needed. The management team (executive director, MCC/NIP director, MCCYB coordinator, and finance director) conducts an overall program evaluation on a quarterly basis, which is reported back to the board of directors. The finance director maintains the financial records according to standard GAAP procedures and meets monthly with the executive director and the board's finance committee. MCC's finances are audited annually by an independent certified public accountant. MCC has consistently received unqualified reports on these audits.

The following are the key program and fiscal positions/individuals at MCC who are responsible for the



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MCCYB program:

JanMarie Lambert, Executive Director: B.S. Spanish and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska -- Kearney; M.S. Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska -- Omaha; 20 years experience working in the nonprofit and criminal justice fields. She has worked with children, juveniles and adults who were facing barriers in school, community and the court system. Ms. Lambert has worked as a court advocate, case manager for single mothers at risk, high risk juveniles and adults at risk or already involved in the criminal justice system.

Michael Van Alstine, NIP Director: B.S. UW-Green Bay; Continuing Education Certificate as Housing Development Finance Professional, The National Development Council, #09202-049I, 2002; 30 years experience managing housing rehabilitation; 25 years managing MCC/NIP activities. AmeriCorps (AC) duties: Overall responsibility for administration of AmeriCorps, staff hiring/supervision, communication with funding sources and the public, long-range planning and evaluation, fiscal oversight, coordination of AmeriCorps activities to achieve goals and objectives.

Jodi Hazen, Finance Director: B.A., Economics, UW-Milwaukee; Associate Degree in Accounting, MATC; 21 years experience. AC Duties: Administration of fiscal and personnel records, preparation of budgets, payroll, maintenance of financial management information system.

Bernadette Arellano, MCCYB Coordinator, B.S., Human Services, currently enrolled in graduate studies. Bernadette assumed this position in July 2007, previously serving as the coordinator of MCC's Emergency Food Pantry and facility manager. AC duties: Youth recruitment and screening, development of IGP's, referrals, coordination of relationships with partner human services agencies, job placement and follow-up, supervision of classroom teacher.

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Michele M. Bria, Classroom Instructor: B.A & M.A. Marquette University; PhD UW -- Milwaukee; Executive Director and Adult Education & HSED preparation teacher at Journey House, a community outreach site; 18 years adult education experience. AC duties: Academic assessments, development of IEP's, GED classroom instruction that integrates life skills, technology, family literacy, leadership skills, and pre-employment skills, assessment, assistance with IEP's, and reporting.

Mark Mudek, Construction Manager: 27 years in charge of carpenters and scheduling for NIP rehab program; certified Lead Inspector/Risk Assessor and Hazard Investigator; completed the Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Course and will attend the required continuing education courses for maintaining his State Contractor Certification. Recently took a two day course by the Energy Center of Wisconsin on Certifying Green Building. AC duties: Manages overall construction of new homes, plan and site development, project budgeting, hiring of subcontractors, scheduling work and material delivery, supervision of worksite supervisor.

John Kaye, Housing Production Manager: 23 years experience non-profit housing development, approximately 250 units; Real Estate Broker, 18 years; Lead Risk Assessor, 8 years. AC duties: Assists construction manager in plan and site development, project budgeting, hiring of subcontractors, scheduling work and material delivery. Responsible for sale of homes.

Josue Luis, AmeriCorps Worksite Supervisor: 9 years carpentry experience and over three years with the MCCYB program; MCCYB worksite supervisor; bilingual. AC duties: Supervises AmeriCorps members on jobsite, support and training of participants, counseling, assistance with IGP's, job placement and follow-ups.

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Manuel Jara, AmeriCorps Worksite Supervisor: 9 years rehabilitation experience; almost three years experience with the MCCYB program; MCCYB worksite supervisor; bilingual. AC duties: Supervises AmeriCorps members on jobsite, support and training of participants, counseling, assistance with IGP's, job placement and follow-ups.

Emilio Lopez, MCC Associate Director: B.S. Education, UW-Milwaukee; J.D. Law, UW-Madison; 5 ½ years principal of Aurora Weir Early College Bilingual High School; over 30 years experience working with at-risk youth in alternative schools and community centers. AC duties: Available to AmeriCorps members for counseling.

### c) Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement

MCC's management team continuously monitors programs and systems within the organization and implements changes/modifications as detailed in the beginning of the previous section. Supervisors conduct annual staff reviews, and staff and board participate in regular strategic planning activities. This planning examines all MCC programs, considering their respective viability, strengths and weaknesses and how these programs fit into an agency operating in an ever-changing neighborhood. The MCCYB program, which focuses on housing, at risk youth, and volunteerism, is an especially good fit for the challenges facing the neighborhood traditionally served by MCC. Ensuring that the program remains a good fit is a function of the organization's regular strategic planning activities. On a monthly basis, the program committee of the board of directors reviews MCC programs, examining in particular those experiencing particular successes or challenges. The normal process has been that one program is invited to make a detailed presentation and subsequent review each month. Additionally, any new program proposals are brought to this committee for consideration. The City of Milwaukee conducts annual audits of the organization as a part of its process for monitoring public expenditures.

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### d) Plan for Effective Technical Assistance

As noted earlier, MCCYB is a replication of the nationally-recognized OFS. As a participant in that replication, MCCYB receives on-going technical assistance and support from OFS. As a Youthbuild grant recipient, it has also received significant technical assistance from YouthBuild USA. MCC/NIP is currently in the process of securing designation as an affiliate of YouthBuild USA. As an official YouthBuild USA site, MCCYB will be eligible for member support, while also committing to specific YouthBuild USA program requirements. The finance committee of the MCC board of directors (which meets monthly) provides financial technical assistance, as needed.

MCC/NIP has been doing housing rehab and construction for over 30 years. The organization has staff that is capable of providing on-going technical assistance and orientation for new staff and corps members. The organization also has a full-time finance director who provides orientation and technical assistance relative to financial matters for all staff.

MCC continuously evaluates staff/organizational training needs through regular program and staff reviews. In addition to the resources noted above, the organization utilizes the local Nonprofit Center, which provides a wide variety of training programs for nonprofit professionals, and other local continuing education resources, i.e., UW-M, Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), UW - Cooperative Extension.

### 2) Sound Record of Accomplishments as an Organization

#### a. Volunteer Generation and Support

As noted earlier, MCC uses volunteers on a regular basis and has a volunteer coordinator who recruits, trains, and monitors the work of these individuals. In 2007, 48 volunteers per month assisted in the organization's youth, senior, and food pantry programs, as well as in other volunteer capacities.

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Individuals and groups of volunteers assisted with special programs and major projects, such as graffiti removal, painting projects, and neighborhood clean-ups.

The executive director, board members, and the Board Development Committee recruit volunteers to serve on the board of directors. The goal is to engage individuals who can assist the organization in increasing its overall capacity, i.e., people who bring skills and experience in fundraising, program development and evaluation, and financial management. Board recruitment also focuses on recruiting new members who reside in our service area. Staff is well connected to the construction industry after 30 years in construction work and are able to recruit industry volunteers for technical assistance when needed.

### b. Organizational and Community Leadership

As noted above, MCC was established in 1921 as an American Baptist mission project and has grown into a multi-faceted social service/neighborhood improvement agency. As an established community-based institution, it has demonstrated leadership in its target area for many years. Some of the accomplishments include:

- \* MCC is a founding member of United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM), a federation of eight settlement house-based neighborhood agencies. (The executive director serves on the UNCOM board of directors.)
- \* MCC helped to establish three other community-based organizations in Milwaukee: the United Community Center, Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, and the Bay View Community Center.
- \* MCC opened the first senior program in Milwaukee County. The program now specializes in serving Southeast Asian participants.
- \* MCC's NIP program was the first in Milwaukee.

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MCC received a Certificate of Appreciation in 2005 from Milwaukee Brighter Futures for its exemplary youth programming. MCC's emergency food pantry consistently receives the highest 4-star rating from the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee. In 2004, MCC received an award from Safe & Sound for its significant collaborative efforts with UNCOM.

MCC's executive director is an active member of the Agency Executives Group of the United Way of Greater Milwaukee; the Layton Boulevard Providers Group; the Juvenile Crime Enforcement Advisory Board; and the National Association of Community Action Ministries.

MCC/NIP's project director serves as vice-president of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee and recently served as a member of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Task Force. He has served as a member of both the Lead and Graffiti Task Forces, as established by the City of Milwaukee. In 2001, he was recognized by TriCorps Housing -- another local housing producer - with a Civic Involvement Award and by the Milwaukee Common Council with a Distinguished Service Award.

### c. Success in Securing Match Resources

MCC has a long and successful history of raising funds to support its programming. In respect to MCCYB and as noted earlier, in addition to revolving loans from Marshall and Ilsley Bank and LISC, MCCYB has been successful in garnering match resources from the City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants Administration, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, MPS, Focus on Energy, the Department of Housing and Urban Development -- Youthbuild, private corporations and foundations, and individual and congregational donors. MCC uses a proactive approach to finding program funding which expands our ability to have match as required.

3) Success in Securing Community Support That Recurs, Expands in Scope, Increases in Amount and is

## Narratives

More Diverse

a. Collaboration

MCC's strongest collaboration is represented through its founding membership in the United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM). The eight settlement house-based neighborhood organizations serve 36 neighborhoods in the city of Milwaukee, combining the knowledge and experience of 500 staff members, 1,000 volunteers, and 3,364 families. UNCOM agencies 1) implement high quality model programs by sharing best practices and replicating what works best; 2) deliver programs and services effectively by leveraging their expertise and resources; and 3) achieve citywide impact for children and adults, empowering residents of all ages and backgrounds.

UNCOM community organizations, including its faith-based members, serve in a variety of roles in the collaboration -- providing facilities for sports leagues, sharing staff, sharing transportation, providing grant writing services, and acting as fiscal agents for various grants. The executive director of each organization serves on the UNCOM board of directors.

MCC also partners with its alderman in supporting a grassroots movement to increase public safety and resident involvement in the Clarke Square neighborhood. The organization serves as the fiscal agent for this movement. Activities to date have included raising money from the community to pay for overtime for community police officers, installation of cameras in areas with high crime rates, and increased street and alley lighting.

MCCYB has a strong collaboration with Journey House, a neighboring organization that provides adult education as an MATC community site. Journey House provides the academic instruction (basic skills and GED/HSED preparation), life skills programming, civic literacy and citizenship education, pre-employment skills training, and career development counseling for this program.

## Narratives

### b. Local Financial and In-Kind Contributions

MCCYB has received support from two local foundations - the Greater Milwaukee and the Northwestern Mutual Foundations -- and from Wal-Mart. It has also received funding through the State of Wisconsin: through the Department of Commerce, Division of Housing, the state has been supporting MCCYB as part of the Wisconsin Fresh Start Initiative. This has included funding from the Department of Corrections, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, and the Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation. MCC has had a contractual relationship with the State of Wisconsin for MCCYB since 2005.

The City of Milwaukee also supports MCCYB through the allocation of Community Development Block Grant Funds for programming support costs and the allocation of HOME funds for construction-related expenses. MCCYB has received funds for these activities from the City of Milwaukee since 2004.

MCCYB has already been approved for CDBG and HOME funds for 2009. MCC/NIP's CHDO designation makes it eligible for the retention of those HOME dollars expended in construction upon sale of each property. These revolving funds can be used for any allowable program expense and are not restricted to construction costs. (The net proceeds for each of the first three homes sold by MCCYB have averaged approximately \$90,000.)

In addition, MCCYB has received a variety of in-kind contributions. Justice 2000 through its Center of Drivers License Recovery and Employability assists corps members in recovering driver's licenses that have been suspended or revoked. A board member, who is an architect, uses front and side elevation drawings to prepare "three dimensional" renderings of MCCYB houses which are also used for the signs at construction sites. She also reviews plans and building materials. The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) donated building plans for seven homes that it had developed for single-family



## Narratives

home construction in the City of Milwaukee. MCCYB has used these plans for some of its projects. Independence First, a local organization advocating for people with disabilities, reviews the plans for MCCYB houses to ensure handicap accessibility of these houses. The Social Development Commission, a local poverty-serving agency, donated furniture for the MCCYB office/classroom. Arrowhead High School donated desktop computers and tables for the MCCYB classroom and lunchroom. The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department provides CERT training for MCCYB, at no cost. And, as previously mentioned under collaboration, Journey House provides academic instruction and other non-construction training for participants at no cost to MCCYB - other than the cost of books and GED testing fees.

### c. Wide Range of Community Stakeholders

As noted earlier, MCC's stakeholders include area residents, business leaders, churches, and a variety of agencies focused on youth, employment and training, housing, adult education, family services, human services, and organizing. These stakeholders participate with MCC in regular planning activities focusing on the needs of MCC's target community (neighborhood strategic planning areas #15 and #16). MCC's major stakeholders are the low-income program participants whom it serves, including infants, youth, families, and seniors of all ethnicities and walks of life. Additionally, low-income homeowners are engaged as stakeholders when they participate in the organization's ramp, graffiti removal, and home rehabilitation projects.

In-kind support from stakeholders is essential to the organization's viability. Volunteers expand the organization's ability to meet the needs of its participants and are essential to its programs. Volunteers donate hundreds of hours of service every year. Program participants also donate their time as volunteers. MCC also has very effective collaborative relationships with other non-profit and

## Narratives

community-based organizations with whom we partner to provide in-kind services. All of these relationships combine to provide a diverse, broad-based support system.

### d. Special Circumstances

MCC/NIP faces three challenges that directly impact us. The first is the poverty rate. Our primary target area has a poverty rate three-times the national average, unemployment is two and one half times higher than the national average and the rate for lacking high school credentials is three and one half higher than the national average. Second, the Milwaukee community is identified as an area where the philanthropic giving is lower than the national average. Milwaukee has embarked on several expensive capital projects in the last few years which have affected giving to smaller community-based organizations and the current economical climate has also had a direct effect. Finally, a large percentage of foreign born and non-English speaking people reside in the MCC/NIP target area. The language and cultural barriers directly affects opportunities for education, employment and community involvement as well as participant and volunteer recruitment.

### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

#### 1) Cost Effectiveness

##### a. Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

MCCYB proposes the enrollment of three full-time, 14 half-time, and 8 reduced half-time corps members which translates into 13.05 MSY. MCC is submitting a budget which requests \$163,800 in corporation-budgeted grant expenses, which results in a corporation cost of \$12,552 per MSY.

##### b. Diverse non-Federal Support

As noted earlier, MCCYB has been successful in obtaining diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability. These sources include the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Wal-Mart, the City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants

## Narratives

Administration, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, MPS, Focus on Energy, HUD -- Youthbuild, private corporations and foundations, and individual and congregational donors. These donors are in addition to revolving loans available from Marshall and Ilsley Bank and LISC.

### c. Decreased Reliance on Federal Support

MCCYB has not decreased its reliance on federal support. It has, however, remained relatively stable with 27% to 30% federal support in years one through three and 31% in year four. MCCYB has consistently provided more than twice the match required: a program in its fourth year is required to provide 26% match. MCCYB is providing 69% match.

### 2) Budget Adequacy

The submitted budget is more than adequate to support the program design. Further, it exceeds the minimum overall share match requirement for a program that has received 10 years of AmeriCorps funding (50%) with 69% of program expenses to be paid by sources other than AmeriCorps.

In addition to the size of the match, the diversity of match sources demonstrates the adequacy of MCCYB's budget. MCCYB's largest source of match is the City of Milwaukee: \$100,000 in CDBG funds and \$125,000 in HOME funds. The CDBG funding ensures that there are sufficient funds to pay corps members while they are engaged in non-construction activities, i.e., academic programming, and while recruiting and working with volunteers. The HOME funds are the primary source of payment for subcontractors and the building materials needed for housing construction. The combination of HOME funds and construction loans from M&I Bank ensure that the construction and sale of two homes a year occurs. The sale of the homes results in net proceeds (averaging \$90,000 per house) being revolved back into the program to be used for either construction or program costs.

## Narratives

In addition, Journey House provides \$35,000 per year of in-kind services by providing the academic and civic/citizenship programming.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

MCC will contract with an independent evaluator to monitor its progress towards the outputs and outcomes presented earlier in this proposal. In the first month of year one, this individual will work with MCCYB and Journey House staff in developing the outcome-specific data gathering tools and related collection processes that will be utilized by project staff throughout the three-year grant period. The evaluator will then collate and analyze this data following the end of year one. The evaluator will prepare the annual project evaluation report for submission to MCC's Board of Directors and to the State Commission within two months of the end of the first project year. Specific data to be gathered and monitored include the following:

Evaluation Data	Source
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- 1) Enrollment and retention data -- Member files --enrollment and completion records
- 2) Construction skill competencies achieved -- Member files -- site supervisor case notes/tallies of competencies achieved; Employability Skills Certificates
- 3) Housing units completed -- Construction documents/Code Compliance Certificates
- 4) Housing units sold -- Broker listing contracts, sale documents
- 5) Civic Literacy Certificate of Completions, civic credits as part of a high school diploma, or WI GED/HSED, civics tests (or other approved test) completed/achieved -- Member files -- certificates/report cards/test results

## Narratives

- 6) Individual Growth Plans (IGP) and Individual Education Plans (IEP) completed -- Member files -- IGP's and IEP's with progress notes
  
- 7) Numbers employed, entering advanced skill training, entering higher education, or entering a second year of AmeriCorps service upon completion of term of service -- Member files -- employment and/or enrollment documentation
  
- 8) Numbers achieving a GED/HSED -- Member files -- GED/HSED tests/certificates
  
- 9) Number achieving increases -- and at what level -- in educational functioning levels -- Member files -- TABE test results, scores on GED predictor tests
  
- 10) Number of volunteers recruited -- Volunteer sign-in sheets/logs
  
- 11) Number of volunteer hours contributed -- Volunteer logs
  
- 12) Documentation of first aid, CPR, and CERT training -- Member files -- certificates of completion
  
- 13) Number of -- and detail about - environmental projects completed -- Environmental project log
  
- 14) Details on disaster response activities -- Disaster response log
  
- 15) Member satisfaction -- Satisfaction surveys

## Narratives

### Amendment Justification

NA

### Clarification Summary

Programmatic Clarifications:

Please clarify the \$5,850 increase to the CNCS share of the program cost.

Workers Compensation rate increased from 7.5% to 10.4%.

We had experienced a favorable experience modification rate that had reduced our effective WC rate charge against payroll. Following a WC audit our experience modification rate increased resulting in the increase in the effective WC rate applied against payroll. With the same amount of wages this results in an increase of \$4,427.

Additional staff member utilizing health insurance.

In the previous submitted budget, neither worksite supervisor (which is a 100% funded CNCS position in both budgets) used the agency offered health insurance. The current proposed budget reflects that a new worksite supervisor has elected to use the agency health insurance resulting in an increase of \$7,629 to the Health Insurance line item. However the amount of the premium paid by the agency decreased under the current budget (from \$849.71 to \$635.71). So the actual increase in the CNCS Health Insurance line item was \$5,061.

Criminal History Check Requirement

## Narratives

MCCYB will conduct the following criminal history checks on all staff that are funded under this grant. Wisconsin - state criminal registry check, National Sex Offender Public Registry check, and Wisconsin Circuit Court Access/CCAP check.

MCCYB will also conduct the following criminal history checks on all AmeriCorps members. Wisconsin - state criminal registry check, National Sex Offender Public Registry check, and Wisconsin Circuit Court Access/CCAP check.

The Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) considers background checks for staff an administrative expense. Accordingly, the budget will not reflect the cost of background checks for grant funded staff. However the budget will reflect the cost of background checks for AmeriCorps members as MCC considers members to be program participants and not MCC staff.

### CLARIFICATION 2011-12 Program Year Application

1. Desired Grant Award Start date: 09/01/2011

Member enrollment period start date: 09/01/2011

2. MCC verifies that the criminal history checks conducted for members and staff will include an FBI fingerprint check in addition to the state registry check and the NSOPR for anyone with recurring access to vulnerable populations.

3. Please address how the program intends to regain funding sustainability given decrease in home values and program's significant dependence on home sales to fund operation costs.

## Narratives

MCC recognized that the stagnation of new home sales in the near Southside of Milwaukee coupled with the decrease in home values seriously compromised the MCC Youthbuild program model. Under that model MCC anticipated the sale of 1.5 homes which under an agreement with the City of Milwaukee allowed the proceeds of the sale to be revolved back into the YB program. Depending upon bank loans and final sale prices, MCC could have expected \$135,000 of program income to reinvest into the program in any given year. In our 2010-11 application budget for our current grant award we listed "Net Proceeds - Sale of MCCYB houses" at \$71,087. Responding to the dearth of sales MCC did not include program income from home sales as part of the 2011-12 application budget.

In response, MCC expanded its efforts in submitting grant applications, and became more actively engaged in partnerships with the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB), the City of Milwaukee, and the Workforce Funding Alliance which has resulted in MCC being a partner in joint applications, many which were funded.

In particular, the addition of the following two new grant awards (\$50,000 & \$20,000), very nearly matches the amount of net proceeds from sales in our current year application budget -- \$71,087.

Charles O'Malley Charitable Trust - \$50,000 was first received in December of 2009 and another \$50,000 received in 2010. One of the three trustees lives in the Milwaukee area ensuring that a portion of the annual distribution occurs in the Milwaukee area. MCCYB is eligible to receive a donation again in 2011.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) -- MCC had applied previously and was denied. In 2010 MCC revised its application and was awarded a \$20,000 grant in May of 2010.



## Narratives

MCC will reapply in 2011.

In 2009 MCC became part of Milwaukee Builds (MB) which is a partnership with MAWIB, the City of Milwaukee and two other organizations that also provide workforce training programs in the City of Milwaukee: Northcott Neighborhood House (NNH) and the Milwaukee Community Service Corps (MCSC). As part of this partnership MAWIB submits applications on behalf of the partnership so MCC, NNH and MCSC are not submitting competing applications to national funders. This is particularly important for Department of Labor (DOL) grant opportunities (such as Youthbuild) which typically require a relationship with the local Workforce Investment Board and the likelihood of more than one grant being awarded in a city the size of Milwaukee is unlikely. This relationship has been exceedingly fruitful.

### Performance Measure Clarification Items

#### PM # 1 -- Volunteer Management -deleted

As noted volunteer generation is not the primary focus of the MCC Youthbuild program. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission- Serve Wisconsin, we expect that MCC will continue to collect and report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

#### PM # 2 -- Environmental Projects - deleted

As noted the environmental activities are indeed a delivery mechanism for the primary objective of the program which is the transformation of economically disadvantaged youth members. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission, we expect that MCC will continue to collect and report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

As suggested, MCC did consider the National Performance Measure. We ultimately determined that it did not adequately capture the nature of our work in the Kinnickinnic River Corridor. For purposes of counting, we consider each afternoon of service as a project. In the spring that could be removal of

## Narratives

Garlic Mustard Weed that blooms in May. It is most easily identifiable then and it is important to remove it before going to seed. We remove trash April to November. In the fall, the leaves of Glossy Buckthorn remain green long after other leaves have browned and dropped. That is the easiest time to identify and then remove this invasive woody plant. We return to the same areas many times throughout the year. Our current service model did not seem to fit easily into the data collection requirements of EN4.

PM # 3 -- Affordable Housing -- removed

As noted the affordable housing activities are indeed a delivery mechanism for the primary objective of the program which is the transformation of economically disadvantaged youth members. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission and an integral part of our program model, MCC will continue to collect this data and expects to report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

While our activity closely aligns to the National Performance Measure there remains a relatively insurmountable barrier. MCC utilizes HUD Home funds to construct the house. The HUD income requirement for buyers is 80% or less of county Median Income. This income limit exceeds the income eligibility requirements for the National Performance Measure. Especially in this climate of tight money, it would be very difficult for someone who meets the National Performance Measure for income eligibility to be able to afford to purchase a new home.

PM # 4 GED/HSED Training -- opted in.

As encouraged, MCC has opted into National Performance Measures Pilot -- O13 and O16 which closely align with MCC's applicant-determined measure on GED attainment. MCC will enroll 25 members and expects that 19 of them will not have a GED/diploma. In the past, MCC has not restricted applicants by score on TABE tests which can be used as a predictor as to whether the applicant should be placed in basic skills class or begin GED preparation. MCC will need to develop an enrollment strategy that balances the number of basic skills and GED preparation applicants. Unfortunately, this means that

## Narratives

MCC will not be reporting on increasing educational functioning levels which is a useful measurement tool for members whose educational levels at enrollment make attaining a GED in one term unlikely. Of course this is still information that Serve Wisconsin may choose to have us collect and report.

PM # 5 - Disaster Services -- removed.

As noted, MCC's program design focuses on helping economically disadvantaged members complete their high school education, attend college, and/or obtain employment. MCC has elected to opt into the national performance measures for member development in the Opportunity Focus Area. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission- Serve Wisconsin, we expect that MCC will continue to collect and report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

PM # 6 - Career Development -- revised. This was the only Performance Measure Clarification that did not recommend removal or opting into a national performance measure. As MCC considered and ultimately followed all other Corporation recommendations, we did so here as well.

1. MCC has revised the output to measure that 100% of the members that complete their term of service will create a resume which will be in their file and that 100% of members will complete the Pre-employment Assessment Skills Competency which will also be kept in their file.

2. MCC has revised the intermediate outcome to be broad enough to include the targeted goal but narrow enough to be a valid measure of impact. MCC is bringing this measure closer to alignment with the National Performance Measures Pilot -- O15: Number of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members that secure employment during their term of service or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps; with the caveat that MCC considers that enrolling in college or a second AmeriCorps Term is also a successful outcome.

PM # 7 -- First Aid and CPR -- removed.

As noted previously, MCC's program design focuses on helping economically disadvantaged members complete their high school education, attend college, and/or obtain employment. MCC has elected to

## Narratives

opt into the national performance measures for member development in the Opportunity Focus Area. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission- Serve Wisconsin, we expect that MCC will continue to collect and report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

PM # 8 -- Citizenship Training -- removed

As noted previously, MCC's program design focuses on helping economically disadvantaged members complete their high school education, attend college, and/or obtain employment. MCC has elected to opt into the national performance measures for member development in the Opportunity Focus Area. Therefore we have removed this performance measure. As this measure is important to the state commission- Serve Wisconsin, we expect that MCC will continue to collect and report this data to Serve Wisconsin.

### Continuation Changes

RETENTION RATE: 79% - 19 AmeriCorps members that were enrolled completed their term of service. One of those members was exited for compelling reasons. Six members were exited without cause.

Three of the members that were exited without cause were young men that were on either on probation or parole with the Department of Correction. These individuals are usually dealing with more issues than those members that do not have a relationship with the correction's system. One of these members re-offended, which (obviously) violated the terms of his release. He was re-incarcerated and thus unavailable to complete his term of service. The other two young men had attendance issues which we were not able to resolve and we were forced to exit them from the program.

The other three members that were exited without cause were all at risk students of the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) System who were attending alternative high schools. They were all members of the

## Narratives

GED Options #2 program which allows authorized school districts to use the GED test battery to measure proficiency in lieu of high school credit for students enrolled in an alternative education program. A student who passes the GED tests and completes the other requirements for graduation is entitled to the traditional high school diploma. Wisconsin received approval to offer this opportunity to local school districts as part of its waiver application to GED Testing Service. The positions they filled were all Quarter or Minimum Time. When a student is enrolled in our program, part of our agreement with MPS is that the student must continue to attend class. Two of the individuals who were exited were not fulfilling their attendance requirements with school. One had acceptable attendance with our program and was considered a "good" member; the other had attendance issues at our program as well. The third MPS student that was exited without cause had attendance issues at our program which were unable to be resolved and she was let go.

Plan for Improvement -- MCCYB has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Corrections - Community Corrections Employment Program (CCEP). This relationship will provide more support services for individuals who are referred to our program from Corrections. Eligible individuals will be co-enrolled in the Wisconsin Community Services -- Men of Color program (funded through Department of Corrections) which provides case management for primarily African-American and Latino men reentering society following incarceration. For this program year all eleven (11) of our members on probation or parole are eligible for the program and nine (9) are already enrolled. As stated previously, individuals re-entering society from prison have more challenges. We hope that enrollment in this program will provide a greater level of support to these individuals and afford them a better opportunity to succeed.

With respect to the MPS at risk students we will attempt to work more closely with their high school counselors. While it probably goes without saying, students attending an alternative high school are

## Narratives

there because for one reason or another, they were not able to succeed in a traditional high school setting. To be enrolled in the GED Options #2 program they must be at least one year behind their 9th grade class in credits earned. Students are referred to our program because they have expressed interest, the counselor has some belief that they may be a good fit and finally the hope that the student's enrollment in our program may provide the extra incentive that allows the student to finish the school year, pass their GED test and earn a high school diploma. Unfortunately sometimes it is not just enough and the students stop attending school, our program or both.

### CONTINUATION CHANGES 2011-2012

#### JUSTIFICATION FOR INCREASE IN REQUESTED COST PER MSY -- 2011-12

CORPORATION SHARE: Typically we have charged personnel costs to our AC grant. While we are not projecting any raises for 2011, we are including pension, as the Milwaukee Christian Center Board has not taken that off of the table for 2011. Our Unemployment Compensation rate has increased from 6.6% to 7.1%. Health insurance is projected to increase 9%. Our combined worker compensation rate has increased from 10.4% to 10.939%

GRANTEE SHARE: MCC-YB has been experiencing pressures. Our program design assumed that the proceeds of the sale of our properties would be revolved back into the program. Historically we sold three houses every two years. Each house would net close to \$100,000. That meant that on the average \$150,000 of program expenses could be covered annually with sale proceeds.

The last YB house to close was December of 2008. As a result, rather than having revenue to revolve back into the program we have experienced an increase in holding costs (utilities, security, snow removal, grass cutting, graffiti removal, insurance, property taxes, and loan interest). Additionally we have twice experienced floods at one property (1900 W. Arrow) that have required us to replace two water heaters, one furnace and a heating module. Both flooding events required cleaning the basement.

## Narratives

MCC-YB is not immune to the decrease in property values seen nationwide. The house at 1900 W. Arrow has been on the market since July 2009. We have been forced to reduce our asking price a number of times. The offer we accepted this October 2010 was for \$99,900. The identical model sold for \$134,000 in December 2008. We have lost approximately 25% of the value in the last two years. Rather than sale proceeds of \$100,000, we can expect less than \$70,000.

Currently MCC has four new houses on the market. Three of those are houses that our AmeriCorps crews constructed and one is a house started by the local Technical College that our AmeriCorps crew is finishing. We do have accepted offers on two of the houses. Both are scheduled to close at the end of November.

AGENCY PRESSURES: Milwaukee Christian Center as an agency is experiencing financial pressure. The agency overall administrative rate is close to 15%. Many grants including AmeriCorps will not provide administrative support at that level. As a result unrestricted funds that could be used to pay for programmatic expenses must be used to cover administrative and overhead expenses.

In order to have a balanced budget for 2010, the MCC Board was forced to require furloughs from one to two weeks of all employees earning \$10.00 an hour and above.

No raises were approved for 2010.

MCC changed to a higher deductible insurance plan.

Contributions to the MCC pension plan were suspended for 2010.

ENROLLMENT: The enrollment rate for our 2009-10 program year was 100%. 27 of 27 members were enrolled.

### RETENTION

The retention rate for our 2009-10 program year was 48% or 13 of 27 members completed the program. Obviously what we tried to do this past year did not work. Our partnership with the Men of Color

## Narratives

program did not have the desired outcome.

This past term, MCC Youthbuild lost an inordinate amount of participants to personal and family crises. Much of this was unavoidable. However, compounding the problem of retention is the fact that the age group with which we work is particularly susceptible to the temptation to "live in the moment," and have a hard time measuring current actions against potential long-term consequences. Especially problematic were the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) - referred participants (only 1 out of 6 completed successfully). Of the remaining eight participants that did not complete the program, five were referred to us through their parole officers in the Department of Corrections (DOC). This may suggest a theme in our success rates. Namely, that those who are referred to us through outside organizations (i.e. DOC, MPS) may come with different ideas about the nature and focus of MCC Youthbuild, and thus have greater difficulty adapting to its structure. As an example, many of the failed participants were unable to see past the hourly wage, and regarded Youthbuild as a part-time job, not a developmental training program. This preconceived notion (perhaps from their P.O. or MPS staff) was hard to debunk. Additionally, these candidates did not show the same commitment to the program (either in terms of attendance or personal development) as other participants who applied of their own volition. While this is merely a guess, we will communicate with our contacts at DOC and MPS to see how they represent Youthbuild to potential candidates and correct discrepancies.

Also MPS Alternative High School program coordinators were much slower in referring students to the program last year. The last MPS participants started in March of 2010. While there was adequate time to finish the required components of the program (hours, certifications and trainings), the constricted time-frame did not allow for "bumps in the road" that are normally afforded to participants who begin in September of the previous year (in this case, September 2009). The nature of the program and the participants we serve has historically required more flexibility in dealing with issues of attendance,



## Narratives

discipline, and correction.

We are taking several steps to ensure the problem of retention does not continue. We are doing an overview of the program before we even bring people in for an interview. Once most of the members are in place they are going to watch the AC video as well as the MCC video to try to get them to "see the bigger picture."

During the interview process for this program year we have included the Journey House teacher. As he is responsible for the educational training that occurs as part of the program, it is very appropriate to have him involved.

The worksite supervisors explain the rigors and demands associated with working on an unheated construction site in the winter. Based on the response of the applicants they can develop a feel as to whether our program is a good fit. The Project Coordinator will be focusing upon whether the applicant is committed to making a change in his or her life which is critical to success in the program.

However, at least 20% of the member's time is spent in the classroom, preparing to take GED tests or working on improving their basic skills. If an applicant is not equally committed to putting in the effort in the classroom to succeed, the chance that the member will successfully complete his or her term is greatly reduced. Utilizing the teacher, the person most responsible for motivating the member in the classroom, in the interview process will help us enroll members that will succeed. This is the second year that we have had the same teacher. He will have a better idea what it takes for a member to succeed.

Unlike last year all eight of our slots for MPS alternative high school students are now filled, although

## Narratives

not yet enrolled. This put us two months ahead of last year and gives the students a greater opportunity to serve their hours and complete their term. We are working with a new MPS GED Coordinator from Custer High School. He has a real connection with the students he has referred. He has continued that connection by communicating with the YB program coordinator requesting updates on his students. This communication will allow us to address concerns before they develop into serious problems that could affect retention.

Department of Corrections -- we are working with some new Parole & Probation Officers who have referred members to us. We continue to emphasize the importance of ongoing communication with the officers. Maintaining communication during the members term of service and not just in the beginning or following a violation will head off some of the behaviors that have resulted in termination of our DOC referred members.

Additional staffing has been committed to member recruitment and retention beyond the teacher's involvement.

Trinity Fellow Program- the MCC's Trinity Fellow has been reassigned to work with MCC's housing and training programs. The Trinity Fellows Program of Marquette University (MU) was created in keeping with an ideal central to the university's mission -- the promotion of justice and faith through service -- to develop urban leaders with a commitment to social and economic justice. Trinity fellows are graduate students at MU that must have Peace Corps, AmeriCorps or other comparable service experience. The MCC Trinity Fellow assigned to MCC served in the Peace Corps and has construction experience. He has been participating in interviews and has developed one-on-one relationships with members.

Case Manager Intern -- We are receiving an African-American male case manager intern from

## Narratives

Milwaukee Area Technical College. As 52% of the members are African-American and all but one of them males, having a case manager that looks like them and is enrolled in higher education can only have a positive influence upon those members.

Case Manager -- through the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board's Transitional Job Program we created a slot for a Case Manager. She is a Latina who is bilingual. As 28% of our members are Latinos, she will help in making that connection. She began in October. Part of her job is helping members' complete paperwork. This gives her an opportunity and an excuse to connect with every member. Additionally, the assistance on paperwork frees up some of the Program coordinator's time to work with individual members and whatever issues they may have.

Counseling - Rev. David Trembley our counselor has begun bringing two African American deacons on his visits. As over half of our members are African-American, we have seen connections being made between members and the deacons.

Finally we are working to create more positive interactions for our members. We will begin to host for the members monthly meals with a speaker. We are recruiting speakers who will be able to connect to the members. The first scheduled speaker is a carpet layer who owns his own business. He is Native American and an ex-felon. We are looking at this as another way to make connections with members.

### 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"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services                               |   |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/>            |   |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 13.05

#### Service Categories

- |                      |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| GED/Dropouts         | Primary <input type="checkbox"/>            | Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Vocational Education | Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>            |

### Career Development

**Service Category:** Vocational Education  
**Measure Category:** Participant Development

#### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

MCCYB shares a significant collaboration with Journey House, a neighboring organization that provides adult education as an MATC community site. Journey House provides the academic instruction (basic skills and GED/HSED preparation), life skills programming, civic literacy and citizenship education, pre-employment skills training, and career development counseling for this program.

The Classroom Instructor is Michele M. Bria has a B.A & M.A. from Marquette University; and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin ' Milwaukee. She is also the Executive Director. She has 18 years adult education experience. She will be providing the following activities to participants: academic assessments, development of Individual Growth Plans (IGP), GED classroom instruction that

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

integrates life skills, technology, family literacy, leadership skills, and pre-employment skills, assessment, assistance with IGP, and reporting.

The worksite supervisor and the construction manager will train corps members in the skills needed to complete each phase of housing construction including identification and proper use of tools and materials, material selection, safety guidelines, the reading of blueprints and building specifications, construction-related measurements and calculations, the ordering of materials, construction cost accounting, and the specific skills needed to complete the construction work itself. Members will complete most phases of the construction including the following: framing; roofing, including sheathing and shingling; insulation; drywall installation, mudding, taping, and finishing; installation of windows, doors, and cabinets; interior trim installation; priming and painting; pouring and finishing sidewalks; and landscaping, including clean-up, rough and fine grading, and planting. They will be extensively trained on each phase prior to beginning their work and receive on-going training as the work progresses.

Counseling support/supervision will be integrated into every facet of the participant's day. AmeriCorps staff will assume multiple roles as mentor, counselor, teacher, and trainer; they will address personal, social, family, and AODA issues and counsel participants on the attitudes and behaviors needed to attain and retain a family-supporting job. Staff will arrange for support services with outside agencies, including Symmetry, MCC's contracted employee assistance program, as needed. These services will include AODA outpatient treatment, anger and stress management, assistance with family issues, job performance concerns, and individual therapy primarily for physical, sexual and emotional abuse issues. Monthly reviews of progress towards each individual's IGP ensure regular monitoring and guidance.

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

The MCC Youthbuild Coordinator will be responsible for placement services.

**Results**

**Result: Output**

All members that complete their term of service will create a resume which will be in their file and complete the Pre-employment Assessment Skills Competency which will also be kept in their file.

Indicator: attendance

Target: All members that complete their term of service will create a resume which will be in their file and complete the Pre-employment Assessment Skills Competency which will also be kept in their file.

Target Value: 100%

Instruments: attendance records

PM Statement: All members that complete their term of service will create a resume which will be in their file and complete the Pre-employment Assessment Skills Competency which will also be kept in their file.

Prev. Yrs. Data

**Result: Intermediate Outcome**

75% of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members that complete their term of service will secure employment and/or enter a post secondary education program during their term of service or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps, or enter an additional term of AmeriCorps service.

Indicator: Increase in knowledge or skills

Target: 75% of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members that complete their term of service will secure employment and/or enter a post secondary education program during their term of service or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps, or enter an ad

Target Value: 75%

Instruments: Placement verification form in member's file.

PM Statement: 75% of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members that complete their term of service will secure employment and/or enter a post secondary education program during their term of service or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps, or enter an additional term of AmeriCorps service.

Prev. Yrs. Data

## National Performance Measures

**Priority Area:** Economic Opportunity

**Performance Measure Title:** Member GED/Diploma Attainment

**Service Category:** GED/Dropouts

### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

According to the 2000 census, families living in the target area for this project ' Milwaukee's federally designated, south side Renewal Community ' experience poverty at three-times the national average, unemployment at two and one half times the national average, and lack high school credentials at three and one half times the national average. 32% of the population in this area is foreign born, and 60% of the population over 5 years old speaks a language other than English at home.

Additionally, a recent study by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute revealed that only 31% of African American male students in the Milwaukee Public Schools graduate from high school; this figure is 46% for African American females. These figures for Latino males and females are 36% and 50%, respectively. These low graduation rates are in stark contrast to the graduation rates of white males and females which are 66% and 75%, respectively.

Another dramatic statistic relates to the number of working families that live below the poverty level in MCC/NIP's target area. MCC is located in the 53204 zip code area. A recent report by the Employment and Training Institute at the University of Wisconsin ' Milwaukee noted that in this zip code area, fully 41% of employed family households have total earnings below the poverty level.

A large number of youth from the age of 18 to 24 who live in this community are out of school or attending alternative high schools, do not have a high school degree, are unemployed, and are in need of job skills, educational remediation, mentoring, and an opportunity to serve their community.

Specifically for the two Neighborhood Planning Areas (NSP) primarily served:

NSP 15: 47.5% of the residents are not high school graduates

NSP 16: 59.6% of the residents are not high school graduates.

## National Performance Measures

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

MCCYB shares a significant collaboration with Journey House, a neighboring organization that provides adult education as an Milwaukee Area Technical College community site. Journey House provides the academic instruction (basic skills and GED/HSED preparation), life skills programming, civic literacy and citizenship education, pre-employment skills training, and career development counseling for this program.

The Classroom Instructor is Michele M. Bria has a B.A & M.A. from Marquette University; and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin ' Milwaukee. She is also the Executive Director. She has 18 years adult education experience. She will be providing the following activities to participants: academic assessments, development of Individual Service Strategies (ISS's), GED classroom instruction that integrates life skills, technology, family literacy, leadership skills, and pre-employment skills, assessment, assistance with ISS, and reporting. 100% of all new and continuing full- and part-time out of school members who do not have a high school diploma will be assessed in reading, math and language skills to determine their educational needs and will receive individualized academic training appropriate to those needs.

Progress towards the ISS will be evaluated monthly by the classroom teacher and the AmeriCorps coordinator and recorded in the member's personnel file. Basic skill and GED/HSED test results will also be entered into the individual's personnel file. Post-placement information, i.e., employment, enrollment in education or training programs, will be documented in the individual's personnel file as well.

Out of school members without a high school diploma or equivalent will receive 6 to 7 hours of academic instruction each week.

Members without a high school diploma or equivalent will be assessed in reading, math and language skills to determine their educational needs and will receive individualized academic training appropriate to those needs.

Members without a high school diploma or equivalent will regularly participate in basic academic training to increase literacy/ numeracy skills;

### Result: Output

Result.



## National Performance Measures

Result.

MCCYB will enroll 19 economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

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

Target : MCCYB will enroll 19 economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

Target Value: 19

Instruments: Enrollment applications with income information.

PM Statement: MCCYB will enroll 19 economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Eight MCCYB members will obtain a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps

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

Target : Eight MCCYB members will obtain a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps

Target Value: 8

Instruments: Verificaton of GED/HSED/High School Diploma

PM Statement: Eight MCCYB members will obtain a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps

## Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable