

**Expanding CIL Capacity:
One CIL's Experience with
Volunteer Service Corps**

August 26, 2014

3:00 P.M.- 4:30 P.M. EDT

Presenters:

Margie Moore

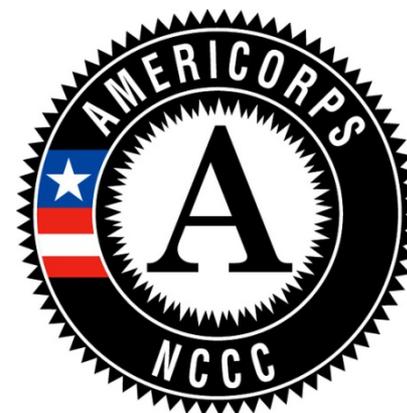
Augusta Smith

What You Will Learn



- Background and process used by one CIL to establish and maintain a partnership with a volunteer service corps that transitions people with disabilities out of institutions and into the community
- Criteria and crucial first steps in assessing the viability of a volunteer services program in their state
- Administrative duties in developing and maintaining a volunteer services program, including compliance, financial recordkeeping, reporting, and volunteer recruitment
- Benefits of a successful volunteer services program that include significant capacity building as described by one CIL with a longstanding and proven track record

What is AmeriCorps?



AmeriCorps Umbrella Consists of Three Distinct Programs



VISTA – Volunteers In Service To America



NCCC – National Civilian Community Corps



AmeriCorps State and National

VISTA

- Provides full-time AmeriCorps members to non-profits, faith-based organizations and other community organizations, as well as public agencies.
- Creates and expands programs that bring low income individuals and communities out of poverty.

- Full-time residential program for men and women, ages 18-24 who engage in short-term service projects across the country.
- Operates on a regional basis with five campuses in different parts of the country.
- Members serve on teams and complete projects in the geographic region served by their NCCC campus.
- Leads the CNCS (Corporation for National Community Service) disaster services initiative, FEMA Corps.

AmeriCorps State and National

- Largest of the 3 AmeriCorps Programs.
- Involves hundreds of organizations and reaches all states and US territories.
- Provides grants to eligible organizations to meet needs in education, health, the environment, economic opportunity, veterans services and disaster service.

The remainder of this presentation will focus on AmeriCorps State and National.

AmeriCorps State and National Grants, cont'd.



Activities are designed for AmeriCorps members that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities and solving community problems.

- Allows an organization to better address community needs by utilizing AmeriCorps resources to build capacity or deepen the impact of the service to individuals and communities.
- Broadens the scope of the service activities to reach previously underserved communities.
- Funds cannot supplement resources that organically exist in a community.

What do AmeriCorps State and National Programs Do?

- Train citizens in disaster preparedness
- Respond to disaster events
- Provide recovery and/or mitigation
- Improve housing situation for economically disadvantaged people
- Improve school readiness of pre-k children
- Improve the academic performance or academic engagement of K-12 students

What do AmeriCorps State and National Programs Do? cont'd.

- Improve environmental condition of distressed public lands and waterways.
- Enhance quality of life for homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- Increase access to food resources for economically disadvantaged individuals.
- Engage veterans and military families in service or providing service to these individuals

How Does an Organization Become an AmeriCorps State and National Program?

There are two ways an organization can become an AmeriCorps Program.

1. Apply directly to the CNCS (Corporation for National and Community Service)

or

2. Submit an application to a State Service Commission.

Single-State AmeriCorps Programs

If your program wishes to address community needs in only one state, your organization must apply to your state's State Service Commission for AmeriCorps funding.

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions/all>

Multi-State AmeriCorps Programs

- Address community needs in at least two states
- Have relationships with entities in different states that will operate the local programs
- Consult with State Commissions in each of the states where they operate programming
- Submit grant applications directly to the Corporation

Questions & Answers

AmeriCorps Grants Applications



- NOFA and application instructions are provided by CNCS
- Organizations submit grant applications to CNCS via online eGrants system or to their State Service Commission's competition

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/>

- Applications consist of a narrative, budget, and performance measures, plus a few supplementary items such as letters of commitment
- Budgets include costs such as: member living allowance and benefits, member and staff training, personnel costs, supplies, and evaluation

How AmeriCorps Applications are Processed

Single State Programs

- Apply to State Commission (deadlines vary)
- Commission conducts review of applications
- Commission submits application to CNCS

Multi-State Programs and Indian Tribes

- Submit application directly to CNCS
- The rest of the process is identical

Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) Priorities and Objectives



- Disaster Services
- Education
- Healthy Futures
- Opportunity
- Veterans
- Environmental Stewardship

Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) Priorities and Objectives, cont'd.



- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified need(s) exist in the targeted community(ies) **(5 points)**
- Describes the ways in which members are a highly effective means to solve the identified need(s).
Communicates the unique value added by AmeriCorps **(15 points)**
- Describes how the interventions that the AmeriCorps members and volunteers are engaged in are both evidence-based and will have a measurable community impact **(15 points)**

Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) Priorities and Objectives, cont'd. 2



- Describes the program components that enable the AmeriCorps members to have powerful service experiences **(10 points)**
- Convincingly links the above elements **(5 points)**

Fiscal Responsibilities Under Grant Administration

- The Grantee has full fiscal responsibility for managing all aspects of the grant and grant supported activities, subject to the oversight of the Corporation and the State Commission
- The Grantee must expend grant funds in a judicious and reasonable manner

Exceptions for Federal Financial Reports

- Grantees with fixed amount grants are not subject to the requirements of Federal Financial Reports. This includes EAP fixed amount grants

REMEMBER...

- A Living Allowance is not a wage
- Programs may not pay living allowances on an hourly basis. Payments should not fluctuate based on the number of hours served in a particular time period
- If a member serves all required hours and is permitted to conclude their term of service before the originally agreed upon end of term, the grantee may not provide a lump sum payment to the member

Living Allowance, cont'd.



- If a member is selected after the program's start date, the grantee must provide regular living allowance payments from the member's start date and may not increase the member's living allowance payment or provide a lump sum to make up any missed payments
- The federal unemployment compensation law does not require coverage for members because there is no employer-employee relationship. Therefore, no unemployment insurance is to be deducted from living allowances. And no unemployment compensation is available to members upon exiting the program
- Living Allowances are subject to FICA and personal income tax

Living Allowance, cont'd. 2

- If Workers Compensation is not available through your agency, grantees must obtain liability (occupational, accidental, and death and dismemberment) coverage for members to cover in-service injury or accidents
- The Grantee must provide healthcare insurance to full-time members who are not otherwise covered by a healthcare policy
- Programs may provide health insurance to less-than-full-time members serving in a full-time capacity; however, federal funds cannot be used
- No health care for family members

Members Contracts

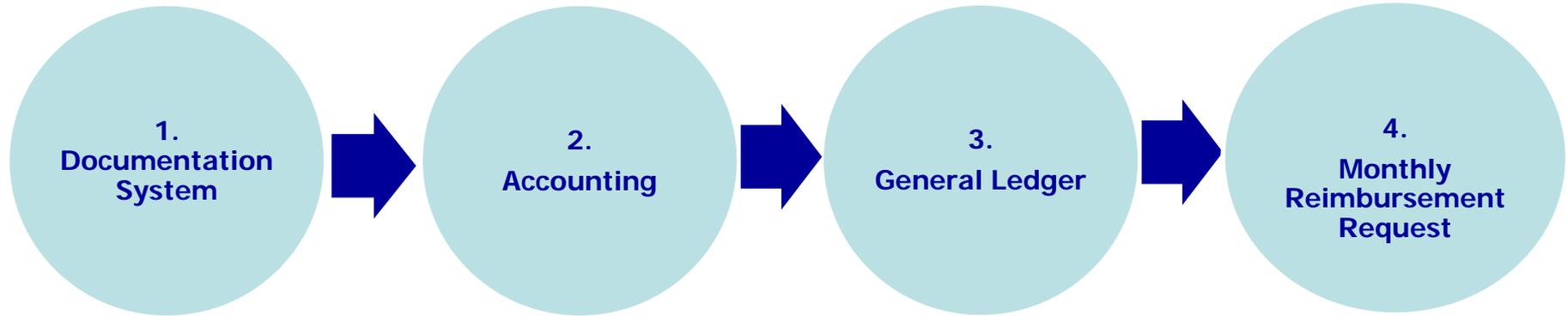
- All member contracts must specify the member service year, including start and end dates, the number of pay periods, and the amount to be received per pay period

Financial Management— Financial Management Standards

The Grantee must maintain financial systems that include the following:

- standard accounting practices
- sufficient internal controls
- a clear audit trail
- written cost allocation procedures

Develop a Clear Audit Trail



Questions & Answers

Financial Management Systems

- Must be capable of distinguishing between grant versus non-grant related expenditures
- Must be able to identify costs by program year
- Must be able to identify by budget category
- Must be able to distinguish between direct and indirect costs (Administrative Costs)

- Direct Costs
 - Specific expenses related to the operation of a specific project
- Indirect/Administrative Costs
 - General expenses related to overall administration of an organization receiving CNCS funds
- Indirect/Administrative Costs
 - Expenses incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identifiable with a specific project or cost objective.

What are Direct Costs?

- Allowable direct expenses for members, e.g., living allowances and insurance costs
- Cost for staff who train, place, or supervise
- Evaluations of programs
- Supplies and Facility costs
- Travel
- Training

What are Administrative Costs? cont'd.

- Accounting, auditing, contracting, budgeting, and general legal services
- Facility occupancy costs, e.g., rent, utilities, insurance, taxes, and maintenance
- General liability insurance that protects the organization (not directly related to a program)
- Depreciation on building and equipment
- General and administrative salaries and wages

Reporting

- All Monthly Reimbursement Requests must be supported by the accounting system and should match the information on the general ledger
- Financial records must be retained for seven years from the date of the submission of the final Federal Financial Report (FFR)

Selected Items of Costs— Gifts and Memorabilia

- Cost of promotional items and memorabilia, including gifts and souvenirs are not an allowable cost under OMB Circular A-87
- Grantee cash match funds may be used for recognition items such as engraved plaques/awards as long as the AmeriCorps logo is included on these items

Selected Items of Costs— Member Service Gear



- The maximum cost of member service gear is in your approved budget
- All member service gear must include the AmeriCorps logo
- Service gear should be purchased early in the program year. It is to be worn by members in order to make AmeriCorps visible in the community

Matching Requirements

- Your approved grant application contains your approved budget
- The federal and match amounts under each section must be met in the percentages stated (both for federal and match funds). Failure to meet the required approved percentages for match will result in the pro-rating of your federal expenditures to ensure compliance with your approved budget percentages.

ALLOWABLE—What Does It Mean?

To be allowable under a grant, match must:

- Be in your approved budget
- Be adequately documented
- Not be included as contributions for any other federally-financed program
- Have written approval from the federal agency, if federal funds are used as match
- Be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient accomplishment of program objectives
- Be allowable under applicable OMB cost principles

Documenting In-Kind Contributions

- Document the basis for determining value of personal services, materials, equipment, space usage, etc.
- Obtain written acknowledgement from donor to include the following:
 - Name and signature of donor
 - Date and location of donation
 - Detailed description of item or service
 - Value of contribution
 - Whether the contribution was obtained with Federal funds

Project LINC AmeriCorps Program

- 20 full-time members statewide serving individuals in 82 counties
- 5 members currently serve with Living Independence for Everyone's (LIFE) State Office in Jackson, MS, the remaining 15 members serve with LIFE satellite offices (Biloxi, Greenwood, Hattiesburg, McComb and Tupelo).
- Members serve 40 hours per week – 8 hours per day
- AmeriCorps members are not considered “employees” and do not accumulate personal, sick or vacation hours
- Members provide LIFE's core services: Independent life skills training, peer support, advocacy, and Information & Referral

Project LINC AmeriCorps Members...



- Served 757,320 hours over the last 12 years.
- Transitioned 225 individuals from institutional settings back into local communities.
- Recruited 15,000 volunteers to provide 25,600 hours of community service to Mississippians with disabilities.
- Provided life skills trainings to 6,720 individuals with disabilities.
- Assisted with home modifications that included building 36 wheelchair ramps and 25 handrails.
- Completed 636 Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Surveys to ensure community accessibility for individuals with limited mobility.

Impact of Service/Members

Members indicate the following impact:

- Awareness to the barriers or issues that individuals with disabilities face daily
- Increased self-esteem and self-confidence
- Empowering individuals to live independently
- Making a difference in the lives of others
- Giving back to their community
- More than 90% of LIFE staff are Project LINC AmeriCorps alums!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dwight Owens

- Dwight Owens Receiving AmeriCorps Spirit of Service Award



Questions & Answers

Contact

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Wrap Up and Evaluation

Please *click the link below* to complete your evaluation of this program:

<https://vovici.com/wsb.dll/s/12291g56c86>

New Community Opportunities Attribution



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