Expanding CIL Capacity: One CIL’s Experience with Volunteer Service Corps

Presented by Margie Moore on August 26, 2014

>> Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Tim Fuchs with the National Council on Independent Living. I want to welcome all of you to our newest webinar and teleconference, expanding CIL capacity, one Center for Independent Living's experience with volunteer service corps. So this webinar is being presented by the new community opportunities center, a national training and technical assistance program of ILRU independent living research utilization in Houston, Texas. And today's webinar was organizes and facilitated by those of us here at NCIL the international council on independent living in Washington, D.C. support for today's presentation is provided by U.S. Department of Education at RSA.
So anyway, we are recording today's call as we always do so that we can archive it on ILRU's Web site and within 48 hours you'll be able to access this webinar as it happened, see the PowerPoint, listen to the audio, read the captions. Share it with your coworkers, all free of charge. So don't forget that's an option for you.
We will break several times during the program to take your questions. You can ask questions in a variety of ways depending on how you're connected today. If you're on the webinar, you can type your question in the chat. And you just type it in the text box underneath the list of attendees and hit enter.
And you can type your questions or comments at any time and we'll address them during the Q&A breaks.
If you're on the full screen CART captioning today, you can type similarly. You can type your question in the chat and I'm logged in there and I'll keep my eye on that during the presentation. And if you're only on the telephone today or if you prefer to ask your question live, and you're dialed in, you can press star pound during our Q&A breaks. And that will let us know that you have a question. I'm going to mention, too, if any of you have problems hearing the audio on the computer today, of course let us know and if it's something that we can handle, like speaking louder, we'll certainly do that. But sometimes the audio is stronger on the phone. So, if you are on the webinar and you have audio problems, you're always welcome to dial into the teleconference and we'll put that number in the chat in just a moment so that you have that handy.
One other thing I want to mention today is the PowerPoint. For many of you on the webinar, the PowerPoint is already displayed and of course that will stay current with the presentation and we'll move it for you as we run through the program today.
But, if you're just on the telephone or you're on the full screen CART and you don't have the PowerPoint handy, you'll want to do that now. It will make today's presentation a lot easier to follow along with. So, if you didn't realize, the PowerPoint was included as an attachment in both pdf and plain text and the confirmation email that was sent to you. And if you don't have that handy for any reason, you can email me at Tim@NCIL.org. That's tim@ncil.org and I'll send it over to you.
Of course, if you're on the webinar, it should be right in front of you now.
The last thing I want to mention before I introduce our presenter for today is the evaluation form. The evaluation form just like the PowerPoint was in that confirmation email that was sent to you. It's a link online. Very short and easy to complete and we hope you'll do so.
It is also in the one of the final slides of today's presentation. So when we finish the presentation today, I will end by going to that evaluation link. It's aa live link, do be aware it may take you out of the webinar platform so you want to be sure you're done watching the presentation before you click on it. If you're participating in a small group today, that's great. We encourage it. But I do hope that each of you will fill out the evaluation so we have everyone's opinion.
Those are my housekeeping notes. I want to get us started and introduce our presenter today, Margie Moore. I want to thank Margie for being willing to step up here and present Augusta's pieces today. She wasn't able to be with us today something came up that she had to deal with. As new executive director I'm sure many of you know the story there. She regretted that she couldn't be with us and Margie has been kind enough to offer to present Augusta's pieces.
So anyhow, as you probably saw in the announcement, Margie is the coordinate toward for project link, that's the linking individuals into neighborhoods and communities. That's the Americorp program operated by live of Mississippi. Margie is responsible for the coordination and programmatic goals and objectives. I have enjoyed working with Margie over the last few months to organize this program and I'm glad to have her here with us today. With that, I'm going to turn the call over to Margie and go to slide two as we continue. Margie?
>> MARGIE MOORE: Okay. Thank you. What you will learn is the background and process used by one CIL to establish and maintain partnership with the volunteer service corps that transitions people with disabilities out of institutions and into the community. The criteria and crucial first steps in assessing the viability of a volunteer service program in their state, and the administrative duties in developing and maintaining the volunteer service program. Including clients, financial recordkeeping, recording and volunteer recruitment.
The benefits of a successful volunteer services program that includes significant capacity building as described by one CIL with a longstanding and proven track record. Okay. I'm ready for the next slide.
What is Americorp. Before I talk about Americorp.
A.Let me talk about the corporation format policy national service. That is our funding agency for all AmerCorps programs. Established in 1993, the corporation for national and community service or CNCS is a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans and in service through the core program, senior core, Americorp and social innovation fund. As the nation's largest grant maker for service and volunteering, CNCS plays a critical role in strengthening America's nonprofit sector and addressing our nation's challenges through service.
What is AmeriCorps.
Americorp is a local state and national service program that connects over 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs and education, the environment, public safety, health and Homeland Security. Americorp members serve with over 2,000 nonprofit agencies and community organizations. The members serve over a 10-12-month period. Upon completion of their service, members receive a Americorps education award up to $5,645 to pay for college, graduate school or to pay back qualified student loans.
Those members who serve part time will receive a partial education award. Those members who participate in the Vista program also have the option to select either the single Americorps education award or an end of service type end of $1,200. Members also have assessed other benefits such as health insurance for members only, childcare, training, and student loan forbearance during their service. Some members also receive a living allowance depending on their term or program and with our particular program our members do receive a living allowance.
Okay. I'm ready for the next one.
Vista volunteers and service to America national civilian community corps or NCCC, Americorps state and national. With the Vista program, volunteers in service to America, members ages 18 and older form capacity building activities over a course of a year through private nonprofit organizations and public agencies. VISTA's members address issues related to poverty such as public health, education, the environment, public safety and employment.
NCCC or national civilian community corps members range from ages 18-24 and they serve in a 10 teen based residential program. The teens usually include 10 to 14 individuals to complete a variety of projects in the areas of education, disaster services, the environment, and other unmet needs. NCCC members often travel to projects throughout their regions and I just like to say with the NCCC members, they were a vital asset to Mississippi during the Hurricane Katrina and with the disaster responses that we've had in our state, the NCCC teams always were in the forefront of disaster response.
And the Americorps state and national members ages 17 and older serve in either teams or individually through national and community-based private and public organizations. The members have solved community problems with direct and indirect service in the areas of education public safety, the environment and other needs such as health and human housing. Ready for the next oAnd I explain briefly about each program. As you can see on the slide, it talks about VISTA and the services that those AmeriCorps members provide with VISTA. The next one?
NCCC we covered the full time residential program for ages 18-24 and they serve and live with their teams on different campuses. And we do have a campus here in Mississippi, located here in Vixburg, Mississippi. AmeriCorps state and national is the largest of the three programs. They involve hundreds of organizations and they reach all states and U.S. territories. With our particular program here in Mississippi, our mer corporates are corps program is anomer Corp. state program.
These are some of the activities for the AmeriCorps state and national programs. The activities are designed for AmeriCorps members that demonstrate and evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities.
I'm sorry, Tim, my screen just went black. Okay. I'm back up.
>> Okay. Great,?
>> MARGIE MOORE: I wanted to talk briefly about some of the differences between the AmeriCorps state programs and the AmeriCorps VISTA. One of the differences is the age requirement. And when you're talking about AmeriCorps program especially with AmeriCorps state programs, the primary function of the AmeriCorps members is to provide direct activities such as teaching life skills, tutoring or building homes and capacity building such as volunteer recruitment for the organizations they serve. With the AmeriCorps VISTA program is direct and indirect and is mostly building the organizational administrative and financial capacity of organizations. So with the AmeriCorps state program, all of those members are the majority of the members are hands on in the community. Okay.
This is just a continuation of some of the services that the AmeriCorps programs provide. Improving environmental conditions of distressed public lands and waterways, enhancing the quality of life for home bound or older adults. Our program focuses on transitioning individuals from nursing facilities and institutions back into the community. They also engage veterans and military families in service and providing service to these individuals.
Okay.
How does an organization become anomer corps state or an AmeriCorps program? There are two ways you can become an AmeriCorps program. The first one you applied directly to the corporation for national and community service or you submit an application to a state service commission.
Now, if your program wishes to address community needs in only one state, you must apply to your state service commission. These are submitted by your program and the commission summits the grant applications to the corporation for national service. Every state should have a state service commission and there are boards of 15-25 individuals nominated and appointed by a state's Governor. And this appointed board oversees the implementation of national and community service.
If you're going to submit an application to your state service commission, you will submit your application and the state service commission will review the application. They will resubmit the application if it needs to be strengthened. Once the application is complete, the state service commission will submit your application to the corporation for national and community service.
Okay.
If you wish -- and I think we've already covered that. Wishing to address community needs in only one state, applying to your state service commission. For your AmeriCorps fundiMultistate Americorps programs, they address community needs in at least two states. So, if you're living in the state of Alabama and you want to have separate programs in Alabama and Mississippi, you would need to work with the state service commissions in both states to submit your application and you will submit your application directly to the corporation.
That's for the multistate AmeriCorps program. But our program is a single state service -- a single state program so our application was submitted to the state service commission. Next one.
>> All right, we're going to take our first break for questions. And that was just an overview.
>> Was I going too fast.
>> Tim: No, no, no, that's fine, Margie. So we want to stop now and see if any of you have questions about Margie's overview and introduction to the AmeriCorps program and project link. If you have a question on the telephone, you can press star pound and if you have a question on the webinar, you can type your question in the chat and that's the text box underneath the list of attendees and enter enter. I'll give you some time to type out any questions you may have and if not, we'll move on. And we'll have two more Q&A breaks later in the presentation. So, if you don't have questions yet, that's fine.
Again, if you have a question on the phone, you can press star pound and if you have a question on the webinar, you can type it in the chat. Same with the full screen CART, if you're locked into CC productions for the full screen CART captioning, type your question theOkay.
Well this is introductory information and it's been about 30 seconds. I don't see anyone timing and there's no one on the phone queue. So we will break again on slide 28 and then at the end of the presentation for more questions. For now I'm going to slide 15 and turning it over to Margie.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Okay. AmeriCorps grants applications NOFA and application instructions are provided by corporation for national and community service. What I can say is that if you're interested in the AmeriCorps program, I would talk with my state service commission to find out about the availability of funding and to find out the dates that you need to submit your application. You also want to focus on what's important in your particular area. In our area in Mississippi, it was the transitioning of individuals from institution and nursing facilities. But for other areas, you might want to gather a group of people and focus on the needs in your particular area. And your application should consist of a narrative, a budget and your performance measures.
And you want to have -- also have letters of support and your budget should include your member living allowance and benefits, member and staff training, your personnel costs, supplies and evaluation for each AmeriCorps member it is $13,000 per member for the AmeriCorps program. There's also healthcare benefits that needs to be included. The childcare is not something that would be covered because that's paid for through the corporation for national service. And also with the education award, that is also paid through the national service trust. That education award is placed in the trust for the members for 7 years once they complete their term of service. A member can 7 for one year but they also have the option of serving for four years if they complete their service requirements satisfactorily. But they have seven years to use the education award and that is a big bonus for most persons who want to become a AmeriCorps members is the education award. And the opportunity to serve in their communiThe AmeriCorps applications are processed through the single state programs. If you want to become anomer corps program in single states, you need to apply to state commissions and talk to your state service commissions as soon as possible to find out about the deadline and the commission conducts the review of applications and how the commissions submit the application to CNCS. So, if you're going to complete an application and you submit it to the state service commission, they will review your application and they want the strong applications to go forth so you're going to get a lot of back and forth between the state service agencies on how to strengthen your application. So the multistate programs and Indian tribes submit directly to the corporation for national community service and the rest of the process is identical.
The priorities for the CNCS is disaster service, education, healthy futures, opportunity, veterans, environmental stewardship. These are the priorities for the corporation. And they have what they call they also have their performance objectives. And if you go on to apply for a program, I would advise you to focus on one of these priorities to focus your performance measures and goals around. With project link AmeriCorps program our focus was healthy futures because we're providing life stills to persons with disabilities and we're also transitioning individuals from nursing facilities. This year we transitioned 85 people from nursing facilities this year. And we provided skills training to over 600 individuals with disabilities. That was our primary performance measure with healthy futures and in addition to that we're providing ADA site surveys and volunteer recruitments for service projecOkThe Corporation for National Community Service's priorities and objectives. These are the points how you're going to be graded by your service commission for your state. And they're going to look at your evidence that identified needs exist, the unique value added by AmeriCorps, and how you will have a measurable community impact. And as you can see with the first one, it's 5-point -- 15 points for the unique value and the community impact is 15 points.
Okay.
You want to describe the program components that enable the AmeriCorps members to have powerful service experience. Now this was new to AmeriCorps this year. Most of the focus in the previous years focused on the service that we provided to individuals in the communities. Now they're focusing also focusing on the experience for the AmeriCorps members. How are they making an impact on the community and how is our agency providing the opportunity for them to have a powerful service experience.
And then you want to link all of the elements with the -- that 5 points. And the first one is 10 points. So a total of 15 points. So when you submit your application to the service commission, they're going to look at your applications and this is how they're going to grade it and then resubmit it back to you if you need to make any types of improvements.
Fiscal responsibilities under the grant administration and the grantee has full fiscal responsibility for managing all aspects of the grant. The grantee must suspend grant funds in a reasonable manner and I cannot emphasize enough there's this documentation, documentation, documentation, documentation. You have to document everything. I can say that our program was selected for the Inspector General audit in 2010 and after the completion of the audit our program was the only program in Mississippi with no findings or citings. So you want to make sure that you document everything. Your sound financial matters, sound financial ledgers, everything is documentation. And I can't stress that enough. Okay. Exceptions for federal financial reports is grantees for fixed amount grants. There are some grants with the AmeriCorps programs that are called fixed amount grants. And with the fixed amount grants, the only money that is paid for the AmeriCorps members is the amount that is provided for the corporation for the members service for their living allowance, everything else the agency is responsible for. And that's the type of grant that we have with project link AmeriCorps program is the fixed amount grant is that life is responsible for all of the budgets or the reporting for all of the AmeriCorps members.
A living allowance, our AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance of $12,100. That is the minimum amount that can be paid for in AmeriCorps member. It is not a waste. AmeriCorps members are not paid a living allowance on an hourly basis that is the sum total of what they receive for the year. Now, we pay our living allowance twice a month based on their dependence and their tax exemption that they claim. But all members are required to serve all required hours which is 1700 hours and conclude their term of service. They may not receive a lump sum payment because members are not paid hourly.
All full time members -- and that's what we have with our particular program -- receive $12,100 and they serve 1700 hours to complete their term of service.
This is just about the living allowance itself. If a member is selected after the program start date, the grantee must provide the regular living allowance payments from the member's start date. Our start date with our program this year is September 2nd, 2014, and ends August 31st, 2015.
If a member starts -- begins their term of service October 16th, they cannot receive the prorated amount their amount of living allowance begins from the date that they begin service with us.
The federal unemployment compensation does not require coverage for members. There is no employee/employer relationship. Once the member ends their term of service with the project link AmeriCorps program, they cannot receive unemployment wages once they end their term of service with any AmeriCorps program, they cannot receive unemployment wages. Living allowance is subject to FICA and personal income tax.
Okay. If the workers comment Asian is not available -- compensation is not available grantees must obtain liability. This is available through our organization, that is something we provide to members we also must provide healthcare insurance to all members and all of our members are full time members and we provide the healthcare insurance who are not otherwise covered by healthcare policy. The programs may provide health insurance to less than full time members serving in a full time capacity. However, federal funds cannot be used. But that is up to your discretion. If you're going to provide healthcare insurance to a less than full time members. No healthcare for family members at all. Your member contracts, all member contracts must specify the member service year including start and end dates. The number of paid periods and the amount to be received per pay period.
That is very important. Because your program -- our program begins September 2nd and ends August 31st, 2015.
If a member begins serving with our program and they receive all of their 1700 hours before August 31st, and they decide well, I no longer want to become -- stay with the program because I have 1700 hours, they cannot exit. They have to remain with the program until the end date which is August 31st. If they exit before that time, before their required program time, they cannot receive a lump sum. Their program service ends when they -- with their exit date.
You must maintain financial system that include the following. Standard accounting practices, sufficient internal controls, a clear audit trail, written cost allocation procedures. These are Augusta's slides I'm going through with you now. But it's basic information about sound accounting practices and make sure you have sufficient internal controls and clear audit trail because when that auditor comes through your agency -- and hopefully they won't -- you want to make sure you have a clear audit trail and a written cost allocation procedures and your standard accounting practices are souOkay. Developing a clear audit trail. General ledger, monthly reimbursement request, I know this is something that you all already know about. But it's just something that AmeriCorps requires and that's a clear audit trail. Okay.
>> Tim: All right, going to open things up for questions and answers once again. I want to point out too as we go to a second Q&A session we've got a relatively small group today. So we have an opportunity that we sometimes don't have to be very conversational here. So as you all have been interested in the topic and Margie has been through this from application to implementation and carrying out a successful program, I hope you'll take the opportunity today to pick her brain. So again, if you're on the phone, you can press star pound to ask questions. Or you can type your question in the chat. Again, we'll give it a minute or so for folks to type out their questions. We saved a lot of time for Q&A today. So I hope you all will take advantage. I see people typing and if you're on the phone we can press star pound. Here's questions coming in. First is from Jennifer Moore and Margie, Jennifer asks "There seems to be a lot of emphasis on grant development. How long did the application process take?"
>> MARGIE MOORE: The process actually took two to three months. It was a lot of questions and answers about what are we going to focus on. But I think it was a no brainer because I know our core services and that core services transition. As many of you know, Mississippi has the highest population of persons with significant disabilities institutionalized. And that's what we wanted to focus on. So the process itself took about two to three months. Talking with the service commission to finding out what are the guidelines, the availability of funds.
>> Tim: Okay. Thank you, and same question think you answered it. Rachel is wondering what is the cost to the agency? Let's call that an annual cost to LIFE to run the project?
>> MARGIE MOORE: 266,000 a year.
>> Tim: Okay. Good.
>> MARGIE MOORE: And that's based on the cost reimbursement for the maximum cost per member service year which is 13,300.
>> Tim: Okay. And you have 19 members there at the center, correct?
>> MARGIE MOORE: Mm-hmm.
>> Tim: Okay. And again we've got plenty of time so I'll leave the Q&A session open. And again I think most of you on the webinar but just in case star pound if you want to ask a question on the phone. Jennifer Moore is asking did you start with the full team of 19 members or did that increase during -- as the program got off the ground?
>> MARGIE MOORE: We started with a full team of 20 members. You have to have at least 20 members per program. One of the members exited the program midstream so right now we have 19. But you have to have at least 20 members.
>> Tim: Okay. Good. Thank you. Do you know the cost per member?
>> MARGIE MOORE: The cost per member is 13,300. That's with our -- with our fixed grant, that's the cost per member. That's because we pay the minimum amount which is 12,100 but it's the member service year is 13,300.
>> Tim: Okay.
>> MARGIE MOORE: None if anyone knows or not but corps is comprised of 95% of our members are persons with disabilities and the remaining 5% are family members of individuals with disabilities.
>> Tim: Okay. Good.
So Rachel has a question that I imagine a number of people are wondering about.
So she comes from a small agency. They're only interested in one person. Is that permissible? And do you have any recommendations for folks that might not know how quite to step in to running a full program for 20 people but might be interested in partnering with other centers or looking at a way to access just one or two VISTA volunteers?
>> MARGIE MOORE: If I wanted to just start and maybe not sponsor anomer corps program, you might consider becoming a partner agency with another AmeriCorps program and that way you would have one member that could serve with your particular agency and you'd have a site supervisor to be responsible for monitoring that person's activities.
And you know, that term of service ends, you decide maybe this is something that you want to do with a larger corps, this is something you could step into, I would talk with my state service commission. Because each state is different. There might be an opportunity for you to have one member with our particular state but with our state we have to have at least 20 members and at least two per service site?
>> Tim: Okay. Good. If you want to find out where other programs are, you could contact the state service commission to find out who you might talk to.
>> MARGIE MOORE: That's correct. And you could also with the state service commissions, I would look up what the other states are -- what the other programs are providing. And if they're providing something that if they're not providing something that you think would be needed in your community, I would focus on that as the program mission for your AmeriCorps program.
>> Tim: Okay. Good tip. Okay. All right. I'll give about 30 seconds more just to make sure we've got all the questions answered.
Okay. No one waiting on the phone and I don't see anyone typing so I'm going to go to slight 29. Margie, all yours.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Okay. With financial management systems, this is something I know you already know, you must be capable of distinguishing between the grant versus nongrant related expenditures, identify the costs per program year and identify by budget category and identify between direct and indirect costs which is your administrative costs.
And the next screen is definition of the direct costs is specific expenses related to the operation of a specific project. Your indirect or administrative costs the general expenses related to over all administration and the -- and indirect administrative costs as expenses incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a specific project or cost objective. These are Augusta's slides and I'm just going through them just the basic overview of them. But, if there's anything that I'm not covering, and there probably is a lot of information, please go to the AmeriCorps provision guidelines.gov and all of your information on how to begin anomer corps program, your financial guidelines, all that information will be included on that Web site. But this just an overview of the cost of direct costs and indirect administrative costs.
What are the direct costs. Direct expenses for members, living allowances and insurance costs. Cost for staff who train, place or supervise, evaluations of programs, supplies and facility costs, travel and training, these are just examples of direct expenses for the AmeriCorps program which is the living allowance and insurance cost. We're responsible for that. With the living allowance and insurance cost, of the corporation does not pay any of that for our program because we're a fixed grant. And what that basically means we're responsible for the cost per member for each service year.
So the healthcare insurance we are providing that the FICA, we're providing that through project link AmeriCorps program. If you have a state-funded AmeriCorps program that's not being covered today, you can find that information. The state mer corporate funding program, those expenses, the corporate maze one share of the expense and the agency will pay an additional share of the expense for the member. Okay.
What are the administrative costs? Accounting, auditing, contracting, facility, the general liability insurance that protects the organization, depreciation on building and equipment, and general and administrative salaries and wages, these are all administrative costs.
Reporting: All monthly reimbursement requests must be supported by the accounting system and should match the information, financial records must be retained for seven years. That's how long the corporation requires us to keep the financial records. But after the Inspector General's audit, I I've been keeping records forever. I still have audit records from back in 2003 and I'm not throwing them away. I'm going to keep them here in the office.
But everything must supported by the accounting system and should match the information on the general ledger. Now each state service commission, they have their own forms or system of how you report your information to the service commission. Because everything goes through the service commission. And then the service commission summits it to corporation for national service. So, if you have -- if you decide you want to sponsor an AmeriCorps program your state service commission will be your funding agency and you will have a program director through the state service commission that will monitor your program to make sure you're in complianOkay.
The selective item of cost gifts and memorabilia. Costs of promotional items and memorabilia and gifts and souvenirs are not an allowable cost under the circular A-87. Grantee cash match funds may be used -- this is just basically saying that if you want to recognize members or recognize volunteers for providing services to your agency, you can't use catch matched funds for that. To recognize AmeriCorps members or volunteers. But as long as you have the AmeriCorps logo, it has to be included on these items. So, if you purchase AmeriCorps gear, you have to have the AmeriCorps logo. If you want to recognize a volunteer for service to your agency, it has to have the AmeriCorps logo. You cannot distribute anything to anyone under your program's name without the AmeriCorps logo. That is a big no no. It has to include the logo.
Okay?
The maximum cost of member service year is in approved budget and all member service gear must include the logo. Mississippi has we have to have the AmeriCorps logo and in addition tetromer corps logo, we have to have the Mississippi lowing on on the AmeriCorps logo. So our members are required to have the Mississippi and 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. If your program begins September 2nd, you cannot wait until November 5th to purchase your AmeriCorps gear. Your AmeriCorps gear should be purchased within one month of members beginning service and must include the AmeriCorps logo.
Okay.
Matching requirements. Your approved grant application contains your approved budget and federal and match amounts under each must be met in percentages stated above for federal and matched funds. That's what the standard AmeriCorps grant. And failure to meet the required approved percentages for match result the prorating your federal expenditures, that's for your standard AmeriCorps grant. If you're going to amy for anomer corporate grant and use the standard AmeriCorps grant. You must have matches. With the fixed grant we don't have to have matches because we don't have the partners or the funds to match it. So we have the mixed amount which requires that we are responsible for all of the line items, the mer corporation gear, the insurance, everything.
Okay.
Allowable. What does it mean to be allowable on a grant, you must be in your approved budget be adequately documented but not included as contributions for any other federally financed program. Be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient accomplishment of program objectives. So anything that's on your grant has to be in your budget. If it's not in your budget, it's not allowable under the grant. OkDocumenting in-kind contributions. You want to make sure you document the basis for determining the value of a personal services materials, obtain written acknowledgments from the donor to include the following and name and signature and date and location and just regular information you would get from someone that is donating services or equipment.
Okay?
Project link AmeriCorps program. We have 20 full time members, we serve statewide in all 82 counties. LINC. Five members currently serve with living in independence for everyone in the Jackson office and remaining satellite offices. We have offices in Biloxi, greenwood, Hattiesburg, McCormick and Tupelo. Our members serve 40 hours per week 8 hours a day. They're not considered employees because there's no employee/employer relationship. They provide life's core services, life skills training peer support advocacy and referral. We could not meet any of our objectives without our AmeriCorps members, we currently have 12 staff here in Mississippi. And with the addition of the 20 full time mer corps members, they provide opportunity for us to get into the rural areas and to areas where 12 staff members could not go. And they provide services in all 82 counties. 95% of persons with disabilities, the remaining 5% are family members of ids with disabilities.
We've been transitioning individuals for over 11 years and we've successfully transitioned over 200 individuals from nursing facilities and institutions into their own homes in the community and we could not have done this without our AmeriCorps members. They are vital to living independence for everyone. The members serve 757320 hours over the last 12 years. They've transitioned 225 individuals. We've recruited 15,000 volunteers to provide 25,000 hours of community service. We provide life skills training to 6,000 individuals with disabilities and that included assistance with home modification, and we've completed 636 Americans with disabilities accessibility surveys. I can say that the youngest person we transitioned this year was 11 years old. She lived in an institution because -- her mom did not have home modifications. And the modifications consisted of building a wheelchair ramp and bathroom modifications. Mississippi has a money follows the person demonstration grant and we're collaborating with that grant. And with the assistance of the money follows the person grant, we were able to provide home modification and I home and community-based service and this young lady is living home with her family and attending school daily. And this could not have been done without the AmeriCorps program and our money follows the person program here in Mississippi. The AmeriCorps members are out in the community daily. They're visiting institutions. They're visiting nursing facilities. They're talking with the school system. They're talking with students. They're talking with individuals to change those attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities should not live independently in their own homes in the community. And that's what our members do daily. Okay.
Impact of the service of members: The awareness to the barriers or issues that individuals with disabilities face daily, increased self-esteem and self-confidence empowering individuals to live independently and making a difference in the lives of others, giving back to their community. More than 90% of our staff are project LINC AmeriCorps alum. More than 90% of our staff are alums. They serve in our offices, they serve in the community. And I had the opportunity to talk with one of our members in the Hattiesburg office. And she said that without the AmeriCorps program, she would be sitting home daily because she felt that she didn't have anything to offer and that the only thing that she could do every day was sit home at watch soap operas.
Well, we're always in the community presenting information about project LINC AmeriCorps and about life and she was in the mall and she attended one of our health fairs and she thought Okay. Let me just see what I can do. I'll apply to the program and she was accepted and she's coming back next year for her second year. And serving in the office. She was actually instrumental in a program or project in laurel, Mississippi, called taking back our city. And the focus was on disabilities and anti-bullying. And I'm extremely proud of all of our AmeriCorps members because without them, we couldn't do what we do every day.
Dwight 0 opens, receiving the AmeriCorps spirited of service award. Every year or each year American corps recognizes one AmeriCorps members who exemplified the AmeriCorps spirit of service. And this one AmeriCorps member is representative of all 75,000 AmeriCorps members, when I nominated Dwight I knew he was an awesome fantastic person and I thought I'll nominate him for the award. And after nominating him, I received a telephone call a month later stating that Dwight was receiving the AmeriCorps spirit of service award. He received this award in 2010. Radio city music hall in New York City. And that was the president of the corporation for national service, Patrick at the time that's presenting Dwight with that award. At the spirit of service award in radio city music hall. Needless to say I was right down front because a cleared my aisle and ran down front to wave at him. I was so proud of him. Dwight as a young man who was injured when he was 25 years old, hit by a drunk driver. And Dwight actually went to court to petition for leap yensy for this person because he said that no one should die in prison. And this gentleman did die in prison but it's not because Dwight wanted him there. But I think he exemplifies the AmeriCorps spirit of service.
>> Tim: Thank you, Margie, that's a powerful way to end the presentation. And as you all know, we want this to be interactive. We have a lot of time left. This is a 90 minute webinar. And we've got over 30 minutes. And we probably won't need all that time and that's fine. But I really want to make sure that you all know that we want to be responsive and help you all as you plan and think and prepare about how you all might take advantage of this, whether it's for 1 or two volunteers or for a whole program like LIFE has done. Let me go ahead and open it up for our final Q&A break. And again you all know the drill by now. You can type your questions out in the chat or you can hit star pound if you have a question on the phone. I'll give you time to type out your questions. Okay. Looks like we have a question on the phone. Let's get the caller's line open.
And caller, you can go ahead.
>> Caller: Yeah, I'm wondering if this will be available in your archives and if so, when.
>> Tim: Sure, yeah. The full presentation will be archived and it should be available in 48 hours. So it will be up on ILRU's Web site under "on demand trainings" and you can access the webinar just like it happened including the audio, PowerPoint and captioning.
>> That's great. That's quick.
>> Tim: Yeah. Yep, thanks for the folks at ILRU for getting that up so quickly and that's true of every training we offer under the new community opportunities project and IL net project and others that they do. So it's a fantastic resource.
Okay. And here's a question on the web.
Let's see. It appears as if these are not current staff members. What type of people, for example, students versus people with disabilities, et cetera, typically become AmeriCorps members?
>> MARGIE MOORE: Some of the people that currently have become AmeriCorps members are persons that currently are op our case load with our independent living specialists. They're students who are exiting the school system. They're Department of Vocational rehabilitation. And we have an online recruitment through e grant and a lot of people apply for the AmeriCorps program onli>> Tim: Okay. Good.
Rachel is wondering if you can revisit the difference between VISTA members and other types of AmeriCorps members?
>> MARGIE MOORE: Okay. With Vista members, majority of their responsibility is indirect. They're more administrative organizational and grant writing. With the AmeriCorps state program these members are direct, hands on in the community.
Our members -- the members who provide direct service cannot perform clerical duties, they cannot answer -- I mean, they can answer the telephone if it's a question related to peer support or information referral. Borough members cannot perform clerical duties, they have to be out in the community providing hands on service.
>> Tim: Okay. Thank you. Rachel says thanks.
>> MARGIE MOORE: You're welcome.
>> Tim: We do have a short wrapup today but I want to make sure we answer all the questions first. And also, speaking of which, Margie and Augusta, although Augusta couldn't be on the phone, have both been generous enough to offer their contact information. And I will remind you of mine as well. So, if you all have any questions that you think of later or say you share the on demand training with some of your colleagues and they have a question and you can always contact us after the fact and that's just on slide 44. There's a peak and I'll go back to it before the end of the call. I want to thank Margie and Augusta for offering their contact information. Mine is just Tim@NCIL.org. So, if you have a question about the training program, about NCO or IL Net, I'll be happy to answer that and if it's content related I'll be happy to forward it to Margie or Augusta.
We've got plenty of time. I see a couple people typing so we'll wait for a moment. Margie, Larry asks if the state minimum wage change will change or does change what the cost is?
>> MARGIE MOORE: It hasn't changed so far. But the cost right now is 13,300.
>> Tim: Okay. All right. Few other questions coming in. Just wait for them to finish up.
Larry is asking if that includes healthcare.
>> MARGIE MOORE: No, it doesn't. That's separate.
>> Tim: Okay. And Rachel has a similar question. Will we have to provide the same health insurance to AmeriCorps members that we give to our employees?
>> MARGIE MOORE: No, you don't. The AmeriCorps has its own separate AmeriCorps health insurance, if you choose to use them. But we also had the option of the affordable healthcare this year. And that's what we decided to use 4 our members. We currently have Blue Cross Blue Shield for our staff. But our members have the affordable healthcare because that's something that they can take with them once they exit the program.
>> Tim: Okay. Thanks. And to clarify, if you wanted to stick with your healthcare program, that would be an option. Send like you don't have to use the AmeriCorps healthcare option?
>> MARGIE MOORE: No, you don't.
>> Tim: Okay. Okay. I'm going to ask these in reverse order. Layery wants to clarify the 13,300 is just the wage for the members, is that correct?
>> MARGIE MOORE: That's correct. MSY or member service year.
>> Tim: Okay. Thanks and Rachel is wondering if you know the cost of the AmeriCorps healthcare option.
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>> MARGIE MOORE: The cost CIGNA is $199 per member. But with the affordable healthcare and that's the option that we chose this year, it depended on the members dependence or the member's status but the highest cost we're paying per member right now is $30 per month.
>> Wow.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Previously we paid 110 per month but that changed last year.
>> Tim: Okay. Great. Thank you. Okay. I get the sense we're beginning to wrap up. Happy to take more questions if we have them. I'm watching the chat and the phone, I'm going to begin to wrap up here. If I see any questions, don't be shy. I'll go back to them.
Again, here on slide 44, Margie and Augusta have been generous enough to offer their contact information and please don't forget you're welcome to email if he if you have questions about the program or if you'd like me to forward a question on and that's just Tim@NCIL.org.
And finally, as I mentioned in the beginning of the call, here's the live link to the evaluation form. If you're participating in a small group, I hope that each of you will fill it out. Of course, this link is also included in the confirmation email that you received. And this may, depending on your browser, this may take you away from the webinar platform so be aware of that before you click on it. But, if you've done these calls before, you know I'm telling the truth. The evaluation is very short. But please do share your thoughts and comments with us. We take them very seriously as we are always looking at ways to improve the program. I don't see any additional questions. So I'll move to wrap up. Margie, I want to thank you so much. Really helpful presentation today. Really well done.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Thank you. Thank you for providing an opportunity for us to share information about our program.
>> Tim: We've been aware of it for a long time and impressed by it and I really appreciate you all taking the time, Augusta as well ahead of time and Christy, before she left the center.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Yeah, fearless leader.
>> Tim: Yeah to put us all in touch and get this done. This is helpful for us to hear this. For those of you on the phone, thank you for taking time today to be part of this and don't forget that you and your colleagues can access this on ILRU's Web site after the fact and please do be in touch if you think of additional questions or comments whether it's later this afternoon or in two months. We'd love to hear from you. With that, we'll go ahead and close. Thanks, everyone. Have a wonderful afternoon. Bye-bye.
>> MARGIE MOORE: Thank you, bye.