# **PART I - FACE SHEET**

APPLICATION FOR FE	1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:					
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conf	m)	Application X Non-Construction				
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY  3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:				STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:		
SERVICE (CNCS):	14-JAN-11	14-JAN-11				
2b. APPLICATION ID: 4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AG			ENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:		
11ES124566				11ESHMS0010001		
5. A PPLICATION INFORMATION						
LEGAL NAME: University of Mississippi			OR PROJECT DIRECTOR			
DUNS NUMBER: 067713560			PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes):  NAME: Stephen Monroe  TELEPHONE NUMBER: (662) 915-7178			
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): Ofc of Research and Sponsored Programs						
100 Barr Hall University MS 38677 - 0907			FAX NUMBER: (662) 915-5792  INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: smonroe@olemiss.edu			
County: Lafayette			INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: Smorride@olerniss.edu			
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 646001159	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Higher Education Organization - State Controlled					
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate be	nx)		_ 7b. 4-year college			
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	VIOUS GRANTE	:E				
CONTINUATION AMENDMI  If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box						
A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION	ON					
C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify b	elow):					
			9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:  Corporation for National and Community Service			
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSIS	TANCE NUMBER	R: 94.006	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT:			
10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps Fixed Amount Grant (	UM College Corps					
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities,	es. etc):	11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):				
Oxford MS Lafayette County MS						
Editayono obaniy ino						
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/01/11 END DATE: 07/31/12			14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant MS 001 b.Program MS 001			
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: 1			16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?			
a. FEDERAL \$ 7,113.00			YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE			
b. APPLICANT	\$ 0.00		TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE:			
c. STATE	TATE \$ 0.00					
d. LOCAL \$ 0.00		X NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372  17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?    YES if "Yes," attach an explanation.   X NO				
e. OTHER \$ 0.00						
f. PROGRAM INCOME \$ 0.00						
g. TOTAL \$ 7,113.00						
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BEI DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY IS AWARDED.	,				*	
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: b. TITLE:			c. TELEPHONE NUMBER:		=R:	
Stephen Monroe Assistant Dean				(662) 915-7178		
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:					e. DATE SIGNED: 01/14/11	
					0.7.177.11	

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**Executive Summary** 

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** 

Our program, the College Corps, based at the University of Mississippi (UM), is an experiential

community-based service-learning program that will address problems related to education and

opportunity in Oxford and Lafayette County, Mississippi. AmeriCorps members will be deployed to six

community partner organizations: the LOU Homeless Task Force, ICM, the Leap Frog Tutoring

Program, the Oxford Public School Homeless Children and Youth Tutoring Program, the Oxford Boys

and Girls Club, and More Than a Meal. All six of these organizations are doing important work, filling

existing needs in the areas of education and opportunity. Each organization has voiced a desire to

develop a more purposeful and intentional partnership with the university and field long-term student

volunteers through the College Corps. By providing stable, reliable AmeriCorps members, we will add

a new layer of strength to each of these operations. Our program will add value by organizing and

expanding the involvement of University of Mississippi students, who through our program will

become AmeriCorps members. We will recruit, train, and support 42 minimum time education award

only AmeriCorps members, who will be strategically deployed to our six partner organizations.

Through this newly created network, our members and our community partners will work together 1)

to increase the number of K-12 students who start and complete participation in existing tutoring and

enrichment programs and 2) to increase the number of unduplicated individuals transitioned to

greater self-sufficiency. The College Corps will be a powerful team of student leaders--leaders united in

service to our local community.

Rationale and Approach

RATIONALE AND APPROACH

PROBLEM: COMPELLING COMMUNITY NEED

Our program, the College Corps, based at the University of Mississippi (UM), will address problems

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related to education and opportunity in Oxford and Lafayette County, Mississippi. AmeriCorps members will be deployed to six community partner organizations: the LOU Homeless Task Force, ICM, the Leap Frog Tutoring Program, the Oxford Public School Homeless Children and Youth Tutoring Program, the Oxford Boys and Girls Club, and More Than a Meal. All six of these organizations are doing important work, filling existing needs in the areas of education and opportunity. Each organization has voiced a desire to develop a more purposeful and intentional partnership with the university and to field long-term student volunteers through the College Corps. Unfortunately, several of these organizations operate in various states of precariousness. Our current VISTA has worked with each organization to establish and clearly define their needs, and thus these community partners have contributed to the planning of this application. We know that our partners want our assistance and that the current proposal will be effective and desirable. By providing stable, reliable AmeriCorps members, we will add a new layer of strength to each of these operations. Our program will add value by organizing and expanding the involvement of University of Mississippi students, who through our program will become AmeriCorps members. We will recruit, train, and support these 42 minimum time education award only AmeriCorps members who will be strategically deployed to our six partner organizations. Members will work with at-risk K-12 students through the Leap Frog Tutoring Program, the Oxford Public Schools Homeless Children and Youth Tutoring Program, and the Oxford Boys and Girls Club. All of these organizations are working at capacity and need additional support. Students in our area need tutoring support. Last year, Leap Frog served 95 atrisk first and second graders, and there are more students that need their services. AmeriCorps members will allow Leap Frog to remain stable and to expand.

During the 2009/2010 school year, the OPS Homeless Children and Youth Program served 87 students identified as homeless on the Title X, Part C McKinney-Vento Survey, plus other academically at-risk students. This organization also sees additional needs and would like to expand.

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The Oxford Boys and Girls Club is working at or near capacity, serving mostly students from the three low-income public housing projects in Lafayette County.

Our members can make an immediate impact on our community by providing reliable, committed support for these excellent organizations. Through these placements, we seek to increase the number of K-12 students who start and complete participation in these existing tutoring and enrichment programs (ED 1 and 2). Members will work directly with the LOU Homeless Task Force, ICM, and More Than a Meal to offer individuals support, services, education, and/or referrals to alleviate food insecurities. According to the Food Research and Action Center (www.frac.org), "Food insecurity refers to the lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources." Additionally, "mental and physical changes that accompany inadequate food intakes can have harmful effects on learning, development, productivity, physical and psychological health, and family life" (http://www.frac.org/html/hunger\_in\_the\_us/hunger\_index.htm). U. S. Census data (May 2010) reveals an unemployment rate of 11.5 for Mississippi (the sixth highest rate nationally), and an unemployment rate for Lafayette County of 8.2 (the fifth highest in the state). In the last quarter alone, ICM and the LOU Homeless Task Force assisted 127 families with basic needs. 203 individuals from 86 families were provided with temporary housing, utilities payments, food assistance (via the local food pantry and/or More Than a Meal), health needs (medications, physical and/or mental health care), and/or educational (budget) counseling. More Than a Meal relies upon a compassionate but episodic group of volunteers to provide meals, basic personal care items (deodorant, shampoo, soap, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, combs, brushes, etc.), reading support and books for school-age children, to approximately 70 individuals each week. The majority of More Than a Meal "patrons" are primarily multiple-child (infants and pre-K-6) single-parent families. All of these organizations report strain as increasing numbers of people show up to their events and appeal for their services. Our partners will benefit almost immediately from our

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AmeriCorps members. Through these placements, we will seek to increase the number of individuals transitioned to greater self-sufficiency (O7).

The College Corps will be a newly created network that will solve two additional pressing problems: 1. Leaders of these local organizations have told us that the university is not doing enough to incentivize, coordinate, and reward student contributions. At present, UM students do volunteer, but that volunteerism is irregular and sometimes unreliable. The College Corps will formalize student involvement. Where we now have well-intentioned, independent students working irregular hours for indeterminate, short periods, we will have a dedicated, committed team of AmeriCorps members working ten hours per week during the entire academic year. This will provide vital stability to local leaders and transform nebulous town and gown relationships into organized partnerships. 2. Students complain that they are vaguely encouraged to volunteer but that the university is not doing enough to incentivize, coordinate, and reward their contributions. Currently, students must find their own service opportunities and rarely do they receive training or support. We do have annual service fairs, during which local organizations present themselves to (and seemingly compete for) our students. The College Corps will be a step toward a more sophisticated system of matching students and community organizations.

## SOLUTION: DESCRIPTION OF MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We seek AmeriCorps support for philosophical and practical reasons. Our members will be our students, and we wish to introduce them to the national ethic of service promoted and embodied by AmeriCorps. We also seek to create incentives for service, and AmeriCorps education awards will be a critical part of our incentive package. We will pair EAP dollars with work-study funding to make service attractive to all students and possible even for those with financial need. Finally, we realize that AmeriCorps support lends credibility and momentum to any project, thereby increasing the

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chances of its success.

Community partners and on campus constituents react favorably when they hear the AmeriCorps name, and we wish to affiliate ourselves with the organization and its proud tradition. We request 42 minimum-time (300-hour) education award only positions without CNCS living allowances. This type of member slot aligns with our program design/activities and will be well-suited to our members, who will be full-time students recruited from the College of Liberal Arts. Members will serve with local organizations already working on problems related to education and opportunity. The 300 hours of service will translate into approximately 10 hours per week, a number of hours that our partners indicate is realistic to meet their needs and provide a meaningful contribution (impact) in each service area/agency. We anticipate that 300 hours of service spread over the course of an academic year will be manageable for full-time college students and that it will also build a sense of community involvement and civic responsibility. The idea for the College Corps emerged from discussions with leaders of these organizations, whose needs have informed the proposed structure. We have chosen community partners who are operating successfully and who are eager to form partnerships with us. Members will serve the following partners in the following proportions: 1. LOU Homeless Task Force (3 members); 2. ICM (2 members); 3. Leap Frog Tutoring Program (15 members); 4. Oxford Public School Homeless Children and Youth Tutoring Program (15 members); 5. Boys and Girls Club of Oxford (5 members); 6. More Than a Meal (2 members). Each member will remain with one organization throughout the entire year of service. Member activities will vary across placement sites. AmeriCorps members working with the LOU Homeless Task Force and ICM will be able to support the community in any combination of the following activities: assist clients in the application process with forms and documents; assist the director of ICM with maintenance of the database; assist with advertising and organizing fundraising events; work to raise community awareness; work with Task Force members to develop and deliver educational workshops on budgeting and job interview skills;

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gather/develop/maintain a dress-for-success clothing closet for persons in need of appropriate attire for job interview. At More Than a Meal, AmeriCorps members will prepare and serve meals at the community center, provide reading support to the children who attend the meal, as well as specific homework assistance according to need, distribute personal care items, maintain logs and database for services, publicize and organize community fundraising and awareness activities, seek in-kind contributions from organizations and individuals (meal preparation, personal care items, and books), deliver meals to shut-ins, work with the UM Homeless Outreach campus student organization to develop a larger volunteer base and increase student awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness and other economically driven needs in the Oxford - Lafayette County community. AmeriCorps members placed with the Oxford Public Schools (OPS) Homeless Children and Youth Program and Leap Frog will provide direct tutoring or support to identified (enrolled) students in reading and other subject areas under the direct supervision of qualified teachers. Tutoring activities may include reading with or to the child, vocabulary and spelling, literacy games and activities, writing, homework in specific subjects, etc. AmeriCorps members who serve at the Boys and Girls Club will provide after-school homework support and enrichment activities and will mentor children who, primarily, live in Oxford's low-income housing project. In general, AmeriCorps members will tutor at-risk children; work with agencies to provide meals and alleviate food insecurities; mentor atrisk teenagers; organize supply drives; assist homeless families as they transition to housing; and generate groups of student volunteers. AmeriCorps members will act broadly in support of our partner organizations.

Overseeing the program will be the Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. He will be supported by the Coordinator of the College Corps (a newly created position), one of the College's senior secretaries, and by our AmeriCorps VISTA. Members will be recruited, trained, supervised, and supported by the Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and by the Coordinator of the College

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Corps. Members will participate in additional training provided by our partner organizations and will have the support of our AmeriCorps VISTA, who will assist them with any capacity building or volunteer recruitment activities. Our VISTA will assist members and program staff only as appropriate and will not supervise or manage our members. The senior secretary will assist with correspondence and record keeping. Again, we request minimum-time member slots because such slots best align with our program design and goals. We will recruit our members from our student body, most of whom are full-time students. We have chosen community partners whose activity schedules complement the academic schedules of our potential members. Most service activities will occur on afternoons and evenings, times free for full-time students who take most of their classes during the day. Furthermore, our university's financial aid office has agreed to reserve work study dollars for our members, allowing us to leverage the power of the Segal Education Award.

MEMBER SELECTION, TRAINING, AND SUPERVISION

MEMBER SELECTION

Members will be primarily recruited from our student body. We will recruit via announcements in the student media services (newspaper, radio, campus organization Facebook pages, etc.), informational meetings, posters and signs. We will direct students to the AmeriCorps websites to learn more about AmeriCorps, its various programs, and recruitment (http://www.americorps.gov). At present, we have some 6,000 students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts, and our goal will be to recruit a diverse leadership group of forty-two students interested in service to the community. Qualifications will include a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and a demonstrated commitment to service. We will issue a call for applications in summer of 2011 for one-year terms beginning in fall of 2011. Applicants will be asked to write briefly about their service commitment and experience. Interviews may be

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conducted. A committee of faculty, administrators, and graduating student leaders will select the inaugural Corps. We will seek to select a diverse group in terms of traditional demographics, but we will also strive to select a balance of out-of state and in-state students to ensure that some members will be from the community served by the program. Our call for applications will be posted around campus and e-mailed to all students. We will also use the university's Brand Services division to write a news story about the program, for distribution through campus and local outlets. Furthermore, we will visit the Associated Student Body, the Graduate Student Council, and other campus organizations to promote the College Corps and to recruit applicants. IT personnel at UM will create a website devoted to the College Corps, where we will post program information and the application itself. We do have non-traditional students (individuals with disabilities, veterans, and those who are 55+) on campus who might be interested in the College Corps. We will recruit those students actively through Mr. Camp Best, a student affairs staffer and graduate student who has become the unofficial spokesperson for non-traditional students. We will also distribute our call for applications to retired faculty and staff, who maintain their own listsery and interest group. Even though these persons are not usually full-time students, we will strongly encourage them to apply for College Corps positions and gladly consider their applications. We will also distribute our call for applications to the commanders of our ROTC units, who often know of veterans at UM who have enrolled in school following their military service. Through such actions, we will actively recruit members who are 55 and older and/or who are military veterans.

## MEMBER TRAINING

We will build community among the College Corps by bringing the group together 1) for orientation, 2) for periodic training, and 3) for an end-of-the year social event. Orientation will be conducted in two stages. In the first stage, program staff will introduce members to AmeriCorps, to program

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expectations and procedures, and to the community service landscape in our city and county. We will invite an MCVS staff member to contribute and will ask our AmeriCorps VISTA to speak about her experiences in service. We will also engage members in a brief reading and discussion exercise on the meaning of service. In the second stage of orientation, members will travel to their respective placement sites to meet with leaders of our partner organizations. Members will learn about the specific organizations they'll be serving and about the partner's specific expectations for the year of service. (Program staff will meet with partner organizations beforehand to plan this portion of the orientation, thinking together about what information will be most useful to our new members). Periodic training will occur in person and online throughout the term of service. Members will gather virtually through a College Corps listserv. This listserv will enable program staff to distribute important information and will give members a place to ask questions and to reflect upon their service. Around the mid-point of the term of service (January), members will gather together in person for a "Meaning of Service" workshop, led by UM and MCVS staff who have been trained by the Illinois and Mississippi Humanities Councils. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Again, we will invite an MCVS staff member to participate and to speak to the group, perhaps about service opportunities available in the following year. Throughout the year we will use the listsery discussion boards and periodic meetings to address topics such as "life after AmeriCorps" how to incorporate AmeriCorps service experiences on your resume and in job interviews, how to access and effectively use the education award, etc. Because our members will be college students, many will be looking toward graduation and beyond, and we will use this mid-point gathering to promote the value of other AmeriCorps programs like VISTA and Teach for America. At the end of the term of service, we will bring College Corps members together for a banquet. This gathering will be a final opportunity for members to reflect on and learn from their service and will be a time for recognizing and rewarding their valuable contributions to the community. Leaders of our partner organizations and civic and

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university leaders will be invited and will be asked to speak briefly about the members and their contributions. We will take a group photograph, which will be distributed to our members and community partners as mementos of the year. It should be noted that most of our partner organizations have training programs in place. Our members will be required to participate in such training, which will be training in addition to College Corps training requirements described above. The College Corps will be an experiential community-based service-learning program, and it will, we hope, provide ample opportunity for reflection and developing a critical awareness of important community issues as well as a commitment to civic involvement and responsibility.

### MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Members will be rewarded with recognition at the end-of-year banquet. Stories about the College Corps and its members will appear in View from Ventress, a newsletter distributed annually to some 25,000 alumni and supporters, and in other campus and local news outlets. Members will be encouraged to build professional and leadership skills by attending relevant campus events, news of which will be delivered through our listsery. At least once during the year, the Office of the Dean will arrange a special meeting for members with a relevant visitor to campus. This past year, for example-had the program been in place--the College Corps members would have met with guest speaker Dave Isay, founder of StoryCorps. The Office of the Dean may also arrange a special meeting with Chancellor Jones, who can offer encouragement and recognition. Finally, program staff will work with Marc McCloud, Director of the Career Center, to distribute information on presenting service as experience to potential employers and on life after AmeriCorps. Program staff will monitor member retention by communicating regularly with our community partners and members and by quickly addressing any lags in commitment or attendance. At least once during the term of service, each member will meet individually with the Assistant Dean to discuss his or her placement and any

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potential issues or problems. During orientation and training, program staff will emphasize the importance of completing the full term of service. Members will be asked to support and encourage each other, and we will seek to create a culture of completion. The College Corps will be considered the official student leadership organization of the College of Liberal Arts. As such, members of the Corps may be invited to participate in focus groups (no more than one per semester) on various issues related to the College. At several points throughout the year, College Corps members will be surveyed (anonymously through Qualtrics) about their satisfaction with the program and about any ideas for improving the College Corps.

### MEMBER SUPERVISION

The assistant dean and the College Corps coordinator will supervise members through 1) regular communication, 2) visits to placement sites, 3) review of timesheets, and 4) discussions with community partners. The assistant dean has broad management experience and training. The College will select a second staff person to serve as Coordinator of the College Corps. This coordinator will have experience working with university students and with non-profit organizations. The staff person will be trained by the assistant dean and will also participate in the "Supervising of Student Workers" workshop offered by UM's Department of Human Resources. Members will have an open line of communication with the assistant dean and the program coordinator. Guidance and information will be offered throughout the term of service through regular communication, informal discussions, and individual meetings. Each member will meet one-on-one at least once with the assistant dean and/or the program coordinator during the term of service. Program staff will meet at least once per month with community partners, to ensure that the placements continue to be appropriate and beneficial. Of course, supervisors at our partner organizations will also be critical. We have already established strong relationships with all six of our partner organizations and have identified best candidates for

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supervising members on site. These site supervisors will meet to plan the year--and will also meet regularly throughout the year. They will be given detailed information about the overall design of the program and will have home and work contact information for the assistant dean and the coordinator. We realize that these site supervisors will be critical to our success, and we plan to build strong working relationships with these people. Members of the College Corps will be members of the University of Mississippi community and will thus be governed by the conduct policy outlined in the M-book (our handbook of standards). All College Corps members will be expected to be professional and courteous representatives of the university and of AmeriCorps and to conduct themselves according to the principles of the UM Creed. Program staff will quickly address any misconduct. We will conduct regular surveys of our site supervisors to ensure that any conduct problems are caught.

#### OUTCOME: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Our program will address the Education and Opportunity focus areas, and we will use the national performance measures. We have assessed our partner organizations current service achievements and then set attainable but somewhat ambitious goals. We want our members to make a positive impact in their first year of service. Thirty-five of our members will be placed with established organizations actively tutoring K-12 students. Thus, we expect to achieve outputs ED1 and ED2. We will document the number of unduplicated students who receive tutoring from members by using a modified version of the "Student Monthly Contact Log" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Packet." We will document the number of unduplicated students who complete participation in the program by using a modified version of the "Education Service Output Summary" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Packet." Completion will be defined as fifteen contact hours per student per semester. In addition to counts of unduplicated students receiving direct tutoring from our members, we will document the number of unduplicated students receiving tutoring in program expansions made

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possible by the contributions of our members. We know, for example, that the Leap Frog Program wishes to expand but has not had the human resources necessary. Their board has discussed our proposed partnership and has determined that it will enable them to increase the total number of students served by some 15%. Even if these students are not directly tutored by our members, we will document their contact hours and completion rates.

In addition to the above two outputs, we will use national performance measure ED5, the number of students with improved academic performance, including on-time course completion. Students are referred to our partner organizations by their classroom teachers or school administrators. Thus, we can ensure that our members will be working with at-risk students. For all students who start an education program staffed or facilitated by our members, we will track relevant course and grade level completion using a modified version of the "Student Grade Level/Course Completion Data Request Form" provided in AmeriCorps' "Outcome Instrument Packet." For students who complete an education program staffed or facilitated by our members, we expect that 80% will achieve on-time completion of the course most closely associated with the tutoring received. For most students served by our members, this will mean on-time completion of a current course in Reading/Language Arts.

Not all of our members will be placed with partner organizations involved in tutoring. Seven will be placed with partner organizations working to alleviate food insecurities. Thus, our program will also address the Opportunity focus area, specifically output O7. We will track the number of unduplicated participants receiving services from our members by using modified versions of the "Participant Output Summary Log" and "Session Attendance Form" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Pack." Completion will be defined as attendance at ten or more "More than a Meal" events or five or more contacts with members of ICM or the LOU Homeless Task Force. For participants completing a program, we expect that 60% will have improved levels of food security. Members will survey

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participants after completion to determine levels of food security. Surveys will be conducted by phone or in person using a modified version of the Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM) and will include questions about perceived changes in levels of food security over the last year.

Finally, because our members will be students admitted to and attending our university or retirees from the university, all will have high school diplomas or equivalents, but most will not yet have college degrees. Thus, our program will also address the Opportunity focus area through output O14 and outcome O17. Program staff, stationed in the dean's office, will have ready access to our members' academic transcripts and will be able to determine whether or not members have completed college courses within 12 months of their terms of service. We expect that 90% of our AmeriCorps members will meet this national performance measure.

### **VOLUNTEER GENERATION**

Members will work with partner organizations to determine the need for volunteers. Members will then work with program staff, our AmeriCorps VISTA, and with other UM staff (e.g., the Office of the Dean of Students) to recruit volunteers from the campus community. We expect to recruit approximately 200 volunteers who will serve 2-5 hours each. These volunteers will be episodic. We will respond to our partners' needs, and we will coordinate with campus participation in national service days like MLK Day. Our group will also support the Dean of Students, which is planning to organize a spring day of service. (We plan to apply for another one-year AmeriCorps VISTA placement. If we are unsuccessful in securing this placement, program staff will take the lead on generating volunteers). Members will serve in such instances as liaisons between their peers who have volunteered and the leaders of the partner organizations. We expect this will be a major benefit of our program. Community organizations now complain that student volunteers are vitally important but

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not always reliable or organized. Furthermore, local organizations deal with unpredictable patterns of student volunteerism. Months may pass with few volunteers, and then suddenly an entire fraternity wishes to spend a week with an organization. Such tidal shifts create obvious problems for our partner organizations. We seek to improve this situation by embedding within organizations our AmeriCorps members, who are also students at the university. It is difficult to predict the number of volunteers to be recruited, but AmeriCorps members will recruit from campus as requested by the leaders of our partner organizations, and program staff will provide oversight and coordination, routing volunteers to organizations in need at particular moments and perhaps diverting volunteers from organizations that have reached capacity at particular moments. With so many students available on the Oxford campus, our members will certainly have a sufficient pool from which to recruit, and we will track the number of volunteers recruited and the number of service hours those volunteers contribute.

Additionally, we will actively recruit retired faculty and non-traditional students (55 and older) for these volunteer opportunities. For this specific sector, we will rely on the retired faculty listserv and on Camp Best, UM's unofficial spokesperson for non-traditional students.

### PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Our community partners were the inspiration for our program, and they will be actively involved in its implementation. As discussed in a previous section, our members will be placed with six existing organizations: LOU Homeless Task Force, ICM, Leap Frog Tutoring Program, OPS Homeless and Youth Tutoring Program, the Oxford Boys and Girls Club, and More Than a Meal. As part of her capacity building work, our AmeriCorps VISTA has worked with leaders from these organizations during the last four months, visiting their sites and events and listening to their needs. All six of these organizations are doing important work, filling existing needs in the areas of education and opportunity, and all six are eager to partner with us. Unfortunately, several of these organizations

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operate in various states of precariousness. By providing stable, reliable AmeriCorps members, we will add a new layer of strength to each of these operations. Their leaders have all expressed excitement at the prospect of hosting motivated AmeriCorps members who will contribute service and who can recruit and organize additional university volunteers. We will communicate regularly with our community partners, listening carefully to their needs and concerns, and we will make program adjustments accordingly. Program staff will make telephone contact at least once per month with each partner organization's leadership. We will visit program sites regularly, and we will work with our community partners to plan orientation, training, and recognition events for our members. Finally, we will continue to communicate with community stakeholders not immediately involved in our work. The Mayor of Oxford and the Chancellor of our university are two examples. They have both been extremely supportive of our project idea, and we will continue to provide such important stakeholders with progress reports.

### SUSTAINABILITY

If successful, we will request a second year of support through MCVS/CNCS. If partially successful, we will make program adjustments and request a second year of support through MCVS/CNCS. The same is true of our program's third year. Beyond that period, the College will seek grant funding from other sources and/or private donor support for the College Corps program. What will be EAP incentives could easily be transformed into scholarship incentives, and we will investigate repurposing existing scholarship funds or finding new scholarship monies for this purpose. In our view, we are designing a long-term framework for connecting our students to meaningful service opportunities and for partnering respectfully with community organizations. We believe the College Corps will become the primary vehicle for our community engagement efforts, and thus we intend to sustain the project beyond the grant period. Additionally, we plan to form a "Service Advisory Board," with

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representatives from each of our partner organizations. This board will advise the dean on the College Corps and related matters and will not be disbanded upon the expiration of the grant period. Finally, we expect other schools within UM to request participation. If this should occur, we will work to scale our project and to work with the central administration to match the education award. We will also open discussions, especially during the current strategic planning cycle, into requirements or recognitions for service learning course credit.

#### SINGLE SITE PROGRAM

AmeriCorps members will be based on the Oxford campus of UM. Even so, they will be serving at nearby sites with six local organizations. Although all six partners are underfunded and somewhat strained, they all have demonstrated records of quality community involvement. Their leaders are well known in the community, and the service sites are safe and easily accessible. Members serving with Leap Frog, for example, will work most often from the Episcopal church, which is just off the town square. Members serving with More than a Meal will serve at the Stone Center, which is owned by the City. In selecting our partners, we focused on established but effective organizations. We have no previous funding relationships with the organizations, but we have participated in their events and board meetings. These organizations are making a difference and have sound reputations within our community. Even so, they are understaffed and underfunded and will benefit from our support.

#### TUTORING PROGRAMS ONLY

The College Corps is not in and of itself a tutoring program. Even so, many of our members will be involved in tutoring and/or in supporting organizations that offer tutoring. Those members will have high school diplomas and will have completed high-quality tutor training. For members placed with Leap Frog, OPS Homeless and Youth Tutoring Program, and the Oxford Boys and Girls Club, the

**Narratives** 

organizations themselves have extensive training informed by research in the field of education. We will work with our partners to determine if our members need additional training specific to tutoring. If so, we will provide additional workshops for our members, partnering with our School of Education. Any member involved in tutoring will receive pre-service and in-service training and will be supported/supervised by qualified personnel.

**Organizational Capability** 

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

The primary contact for this grant application is Dr. Stephen Monroe, Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Mississippi. The secondary contact is Dr. Glenn Hopkins, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. The College of Liberal Arts is currently hosting an AmeriCorps VISTA, an enterprise that has enabled much progress in the area of service and service learning. Research faculty throughout the College have much experience administering federal funds, especially research funding from NSF and NEH. All such grant funding is coordinated by UM's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Although the university has administered a handful of AmeriCorps grants in the past, these projects have been housed in other divisions. At present, one major AmeriCorps project exists at the university, a new region of America Reads Mississippi. The College of Liberal Arts is the oldest and largest division of the university. The dean reports directly to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (the Provost) who himself reports directly to the Chancellor of the University of Mississippi. The current

operating budget of the university is some \$1.5 billion, and thus the proposed project represents a tiny percentage of the organization's budget. Even so, we believe that the funding will make a significant impact, giving us an ideal way to encourage, support, and reward students interested in contributing

## **Narratives**

to the community. The College has enjoyed success in raising funds to support service activities. The McLean Institute for Community Development and the Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation are two notable examples, both community engagement centers housed within the College that were initiated using significant support from private donors. In addition to the new coordinator position related to the College Corps, existing staff members and administrators will be used to support the program. The assistant dean will work closely with the coordinator to manage the College Corps and will provide weekly updates to the dean. Secretarial support for the program will be provided by Dr. Monroe's administrative assistant.

Public Relations support will be provided by the College of Liberal Arts' brand manager, who is a full-time staffer in UM's Brand Services division. As mentioned previously, the AmeriCorps VISTA placed in the College during the current year has reinvigorated our service and service-learning efforts.

Hildreth Davis, our VISTA, has been a dynamic force within her first four months of service, enabling us to research best practices, to create a service learning development program, and to plan purposefully for our future. She has developed relationships with community organizations, including the partners named in this grant proposal, and she has seen and voiced the need for an organized system of incentives and training for our service-minded students. The College Corps is truly an idea built from the work of our VISTA, who came to us through the MCVS. Finally, our ideas about getting our students more involved came into focus during a site visit from our MCVS VISTA Program

Manager and VISTA Leader. It was during those conversations that we learned of the potential availability of EAP dollars, which seem to be a perfect fit for our current needs. With almost 7,000 students in the College and with many deserving and under-resourced community partners at work within our county, we are starting small by requesting only 42 minimum-time AmeriCorps member slots.

## **Narratives**

#### POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

We wish to pilot our program on a manageable scale, even as we cultivate our own optimism that many more students will be interested in participating in the College Corps. If successful, we will consider forwarding a more ambitious proposal for the second year. What's more, we believe that a program like the College Corps could be replicated as a university-wide program. The chancellor knows of our plans and has asked for regular updates. If we are successful at the College level, we plan to investigate the idea of replicating our model across the university.

### **CURRENT OR RECENT GRANTEES ONLY**

The College of Liberal Arts has received support from MCVS/CNCS in the last year. We have a VISTA serving presently in the College. Although this represents far less than one percent of our total funding, the VISTA placement has been a wonderful success and has made a positive impact on the College. Our capacity for service and service learning has already been measurably increased. Our VISTA, Hildreth Davis, has an office alongside the dean, associate dean, and assistant dean, and she has worked closely with many faculty, staff, and students. She receives secretarial support from Dr. Monroe's administrative assistant; technical support from the Assistant to the Dean for Technology; free meals from Aramark, provider of on-campus dining services; slightly subsidized on-campus housing from UM's Division of Housing; and free tickets to cultural performances at UM's Ford Center for the Performing Arts. Her first four months have been busy and successful, and she has become an important member of our campus community. Finally, our VISTA has created new and potentially valuable bridges between the university and community organizations involved in fighting poverty.

## **Narratives**

### **STAFFING**

A team of three will work together to administer the College Corps program: 1. The Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (primary leadership responsibility); 2. The College Corps Coordinator (a newly created part-time position devoted to day-to-day operations); and 3. Our AmeriCorps VISTA (volunteer generation and capacity building only - no supervisory responsibilities). Supporting this team will be one administrative assistant reporting directly to the assistant dean and, if necessary, one or two student workers and/or graduate assistants. We will also have access to a fiscal staff person in the College of Liberal Arts, who can assist on budget matters. If our grant proposal is successful, we will immediately open a search to fill the part-time position devoted to the College Corps. Qualifications will include previous experience working with university students; previous experience working with non-profit groups on issues related to poverty, preferably experience with AmeriCorps; and a demonstrated record of professionalism and collegiality. This staff person will be trained in the philosophy and practice of the program and will be expected to build positive relationships with campus stakeholders and community partners. The assistant dean and the AmeriCorps VISTA will coordinate the training and orientation for this key staff person. Although our members will be deployed to several local sites for their service, all sites are within a short distance of campus, making frequent visits by program staffers possible.

In addition to visits to sites, we will also monitor compliance through frequent telephone and e-mail communications with our community partners and our members. In an ongoing effort to assess organizational effectiveness and to look for improvement areas, the assistant dean will conduct periodic surveys of members and community partners. Furthermore, program staff will meet individually with members at least once during the term of service to discuss the program, their placements, and their future plans. We will work diligently to retain members and to make the program a success. All assessment data, including survey data, will be collected and archived using

## **Narratives**

TracDat, the university's assessment tracking software.

#### TRAINING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

We hope that our partnerships will have tangible benefits for our partners beyond the work of our members. In our area, the university has tremendous influence and support. In some cases, we may be able to leverage the power of our organization to assist our partner organizations, some of whom are small and have little clout. For example, More than a Meal is searching for a permanent site for distributing its meals. The assistant dean plans to assist in this search, working with his contacts in the mayor's office and beyond. We also plan to encourage our partners to apply for grants, and to support them in that work. Members may organize supply drives for our community partners. More Than a Meal, for example, is always in need of toiletries, which are distributed to their participants. Members placed with More than a Meal might organize an on-campus supply drive to fill this important need. In such cases, our AmeriCorps VISTA could be deployed to assist. As for the College Corps budget, it will be administered by the assistant dean, who has experience in such matters. Should he need assistance, he can call upon the College of Liberal Arts' accounting assistant.

### PLANS FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

Assessment and monitoring will rely upon three mechanisms: 1) Regular surveys of members, community partners, and participants; 2) Regular communication and visits between program staff, members, and community partners; and 3) Feedback from our CLA Service Advisory Board, which will include representatives from our partner organizations. Through these mechanisms, we will seek to identify problems. The program staff will respond quickly to resolve any such problems. We will also seek to identify strengths. Such findings will be recorded in a management journal, which will be reviewed at year's end. We expect to make mistakes during the first year, and we plan to make

## **Narratives**

program adjustments based on lessons learned. All assessment data will be logged in TracDat (the university's assessment software/database) and will thus be readily accessible for reports and/or reflections.

### **Budget/Cost Effectiveness**

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGETARY ADEQUACY

DECREASED RELIANCE ON FEDERAL SUPPORT: CURRENT GRANTEES ONLY

We request \$800 per MSY. With 42 minimum-time member slots, our total MSY will be 8.904. Thus, we request \$6,678 to be used to offset administrative costs. We have carefully reviewed our plan, and we feel confident that we have adequate resources to accomplish our goals. For a variety of reasons, now is the right moment for the College Corps. Our newly installed chancellor has made public service the focus of his administration. He has asked all members of the UM community to think purposefully about service and to expand and organize service opportunities for our students. The College Corps fits perfectly into this vision, and thus is seen as a priority. The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts strongly supports the plan, and he has authorized his assistant dean to devote a portion of his work schedule to making the College Corps successful. Furthermore, the College Corps will accomplish another campus goal: the creation of a student leadership group in the College of Liberal Arts. The College Corps accomplishes and then enhances this idea by giving the group a worthwhile mission and a unified set of goals. Because the College Corps will add value to our institution and provide new learning and serving opportunities for our students, it has attracted sufficient resources to succeed. We have in-kind contributions of employee time and campus resources like office space and travel support. By hiring a part-time coordinator, we will add an important layer of support to the program, a person who can stay focused on the College Corps project and who can work alongside the assistant dean to manage the members and to maintain sound relationships with our community partners. In relation to the overall College budget, our program will not be expensive. Even so, we

## **Narratives**

realize that costs may be higher than expected, and we are prepared to meet those costs. It will, however, require much hard work, and we have planned accordingly by marshaling these in-kind contributions from within our institution.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

N/A

#### Amendment Justification

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

-Please clarify the community need/s being addressed by the proposed program and provide well-documented support for that need within the target community. Is the need 1) capacity building for the six organizations, 2) addressing issues related to food insecurity, homelessness, and tutoring for atrisk youth, or 3) providing meaningful volunteer opportunities for the college students?

The proposed program will address issues related to food insecurity, homelessness, and tutoring for atrisk youth. Food insecurity is a well-documented problem in our area. In 2008, 85.4% of U.S. households were "food secure." In Mississippi, this percentage was much lower, with only 75.2% of households being "food secure," placing MS at the bottom of the national rankings (http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR83/ERR83b.pdf). Locally, we see evidence of this statewide problem. In Lafayette County, where nearly 21% of persons live below poverty, our members will serve warm meals; distribute toiletries, clothing, and other household necessities; and route homeless individuals to transitional housing. Our members will also tutor at-risk youth, seeking to fight poverty through education. In 2009, 22.4% of children and teens in Lafayette County lived in poverty (datacenter.kidscount.org). Many of these young people need academic support to succeed in school. At present, local tutoring programs are unable to meet the demand.

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In addition to addressing issues related to food insecurity, homelessness, and tutoring for at-risk youth, the proposed program will also address two other community needs: 1) It will enable our six partner organizations to build much-needed capacity; and 2) it will provide our college students with meaningful volunteer opportunities. Although these are secondary goals of the proposed program, we do see them as interrelated and as extremely important.

-Please clarify the research or evidence basis for the proposed intervention. Explain how you determined the member activities best suited to have a measurable impact on the identified need.

We know that food insecurity is a serious problem that compounds other problems related to poverty. As Bitton and Roth report, food insecurity is particularly pernicious for women, children, and elderly individuals. "Children born into households with food insecurity show sustained disadvantages, including effects on cognition, academic performance, long-term nutrition status, and psychosocial development. Older persons with food insecurity are at higher nutritional risk, are more likely to forgo purchasing prescribed medications, and are more than twice as likely to report inferior health status (JAMA 2010). In a recent position paper on food insecurity, the American Dietetic Association recommends a multi-sector approach to fighting the problem. This includes "community-based programs" that "can boost the effectiveness of federal programs" and that can "educate the public on nutrition and food security." We propose to support just such an intervention. Individuals with food insecurities will be fed healthy meals, will be provided with toiletries and household necessities, and will receive information regarding healthy eating habits. Our members will also refer individuals, who often struggle with multiple issues related to poverty, to other community resources and agencies. We also know that educational outcomes are vital to the long-term improvement of socio-economic conditions for children living in poverty. Much research supports the efficacy of tutoring programs. In

## **Narratives**

a meta-analysis conducted by Elbauam, Vaughn, Hughes, and Moody, the authors found that "one-on-one instruction, provided as a supplement to classroom teaching, is generally considered to be the most effective way of increasing students' achievement. The effectiveness . . . has been validated by empirical research, especially for students who are considered at risk for school failure" (Journal of Educational Psychology, 2000). Later studies by Hock, Pulvers, Deshler, and Schumaker and by Baker and Clendaniel support earlier findings that after-school tutoring programs, when properly planned and administered, positively impact educational outcomes for at-risk youth.

-Please identify if this is a tutoring program and provide information about how it is compliant with AmeriCorps tutoring program requirements.

The College Corps is not in and of itself a tutoring program. Even so, many of our members will be involved in tutoring and/or in supporting organizations that offer tutoring. Those members will have high school diplomas and will have completed high-quality tutor training. For members placed with Leap Frog, OPS Homeless and Youth Tutoring Program, and the Oxford Boys and Girls Club, the organizations themselves have extensive training informed by research in the field of education. At various intervals, we plan to supplement this training with additional workshops for our members. Any member involved in tutoring will receive pre-service and in-service training and will be supported/supervised by qualified personnel.

-Please clarify the program will complete criminal background checks for all members and staff on the grant, including site supervisors and FBI checks will be performed for all persons with recurring access to vulnerable populations.

## **Narratives**

Yes, we will complete criminal background checks for all members, staff, and site supervisors. For members and staff with recurring access to vulnerable populations, more extensive FBI checks will be completed.

-Please explain how host sites are monitored.

Host sites will be monitored on two levels: 1. Daily supervision of members will be conducted by site supervisors from our community partners. During the planning phase of this program, we have met several times with these site supervisors and have visited all proposed sites of service. All partner organizations have long track records of success and extensive supervision policies and procedures in effect. For example, at Leap Frog, program staffers supervise tutors who work with students at individual tables in several large rooms. Staff are experienced tutors who are there to provide support as well as supervision. The director and assistant director of the program move from room to room, providing additional supervision and support. Similar procedures are in place at the Oxford Public Schools After School Tutoring Program, where teachers monitor tutors working at individual tables in the cafeteria and other large rooms. Tutors are never allowed to be alone with their students. 2. The College Corps Coordinator will make weekly visits to each and every site, to monitor our members and to check-in with site supervisors. The assistant dean will make monthly visits to each and every site. In addition to these regular and ongoing site visits, we will also monitor sites through frequent telephone and e-mail communications with our community partners and our members.

-Please explain how the AmeriCorps VISTA will be involved with the proposed program.

Our AmeriCorps VISTA will recruit AmeriCorps members and support our community partners in

## **Narratives**

their efforts to build capacity. The VISTA will not supervise members or be involved in any direct service. For example, the VISTA may assist the Leap Frog director and board as they make strategic plans to expand their program and to serve additional at-risk students. The VISTA will not tutor at-risk students.

## **Continuation Changes**

N/A

# **Performance Measures**

SAA Characteristics			
AmeriCorps Member Population	x Geographic Focus - Rural		
Geographic Focus - Urban	Encore Program		
Priority Areas			
x Economic Opportunity		Environmental Stew ardship	
Selected for National Measure	x	Selected for National Measure	
x Education		Healthy Futures	
Selected for National Measure	X	Selected for National Measure	
Ueterans and Military Familie		Other	
Selected for National Measure		Selected for National Measure	
☐ Disaster Services			
Selected for National Measure			
Grand Total of all MSYs en	tered for all	Priority Areas 8.89	
Service Categories			
Tutoring and Child (Elementary	) Literacy		

Homeless Services

## **National Performance Measures**

## **Priority Area: Economic Opportunity**

## Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Seven of our AmeriCorps members will be placed with organizations working to alleviate long-term hunger.

## **Result: Output**

Result.

We will provide food, support, and referrals to individuals experiencing food insecurities.

Indicator: (NOW H11) O7: Individuals receiving services to alleviate hunger.

Target: We expect to serve 100 or more participants experiencing food insecurities.

Target Value: 100

Instruments: We will track the number of unduplicated participants receiving services from our members by using modified versions of the "Participant Output Summary Log" and "Session Attendance Form" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Pack."

PM Statement: We will provide food, support, and referrals to 100 or more individuals experiencing food insecurities.

#### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

We expect that participants, upon program completion, will have low er levels of food insecurities.

Indicator: Number of participants with improved levels of food security.

Target: We expect that 60% of participants will have lower levels of food insecurities.

Target Value: 60

Instruments: Members will survey participants after completion to determine levels of food security. Surveys will be conducted by phone or in person using a modified version of the Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM) and will include questions about perceived changes in levels of food security over the last year.

PM Statement: For participants completing the program, we expect that 60% will have improved levels of food security.

## **Priority Area: Education**

#### Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Members will work with at-risk K-12 students through the Leap Frog Tutoring Program, the Oxford Public Schools Homeless Children and Youth Tutoring Program, and the Oxford Boys and Girls Club. For students who complete an education program staffed or facilitated by our members, we expect that 80% will achieve on-time completion of the course most most closely associated with the tutoring received. Students will remain in the after-school tutoring program for at least 15 contact hours per student per semester. Approximately 200 K-12 students will be enrolled in after-school tutoring programs. We expect that 80% of these students will complete after-school tutoring

### programs.

### **Result: Output**

Result.

## **National Performance Measures**

Result.

Students will start in the tutoring program.

Indicator: ED1: Students who start in an AC ED program.

Target: 200 K-12 students will be enrolled in member-supported after-school tutoring programs.

Target Value: 200

Instruments: "Student Monthly Contact Log" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Packet."

PM Statement: We expect approximately 200 students to be enrolled in after-school tutoring programs facilitated by

AmeriCorps members.

#### Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

For students who complete an education program staffed or facilitated by our members, 80% will improve academic

performance.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED5: Students w/improved academic performance.

Target: 80% of students receiving tutoring will improve academic performance.

Target Value: 160

Instruments: Pre/Post DIBELS Assessment Instrument

PM Statement: For students who complete an education program staffed or facilitated by our members, we expect

that 80% will achieve improved scores on the DIBELS assessment instrument.

### **Result: Output**

Result.

80% of students who begin an after-school tutoring program staffed or facilitated by AmeriCorps members will

complete the program.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED2: Number of students who complete an AC ED program.

Target: 160 students will receive 15 hours or more of tutoring per semester.

Target Value: 160

Instruments: "Student Monthly Contact Log" found in AmeriCorps' "Output Instrument Packet."

PM Statement: We expect that 80% of students who begin an after-school tutoring program staffed or facilitated by

AmeriCorps members will complete the program by receiving 15 hours or more of tutoring per

semester.

# **Required Documents**

Document Name	<u>Status</u>
Evaluation	Not Applicable
Labor Union Concurrence	Not Applicable