

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

An Estimated 105 RSVP volunteers will Serve the at-risk seniors and disabled in Santa Rosa County, Florida. Some of their activities will include training community members in emergency preparedness, teaching the importance of preparing a disaster plan, and putting together a kit of supplies and/or making a family communication plan in the event of a disaster. RSVP volunteers will raise awareness of opportunities to become engaged with disaster agencies as volunteers. In an actual Presidential declared disaster RSVP volunteers will open and run a volunteer reception center, handle telephone lines at senior centers, volunteer in distribution warehouses, and volunteer at food panties. RSVP volunteers will provide unbiased information about healthcare options, deciphering health benefits related materials to insure at risk seniors can make appropriate decisions and use benefits materials accurately. Conduct intakes with at risk seniors, by researching, compiling and distributing educations materials, conducting community outreach at fairs and senior centers, and coordinating public awareness events. RSVP volunteers will volunteer at senior health expos and disaster expo events by attending meetings, designing and distributing flyers, contacting doctors and professional health care providers to become vendors, soliciting door prizes and donations, soliciting food donations., registering participants, and feeding seniors. RSVP volunteers will provide companionship to at risk seniors by accompanying them to senior centers, reading, filling out forms, and talking and listening to them. The primary focus is Healthy Futures and Disaster Services. At the end of the three year grant community members will increase their knowledge about disaster preparedness and apply disaster preparedness knowledge and resources by carrying out a family disaster kit and/or family communication plan. Elderly people that have been helped by RSVP volunteers will say the volunteer helped them solved their health related problems and seniors will increase their knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices. The CNCS federal investment of \$60,875.00 will be supplemented by \$ 46,800.00 of non federal resources.

## Strengthening Communities

Santa Rosa County is the second fastest growing county in Florida. It is predominately rural, spread over a large geographical area, extending from the Alabama state line to the Gulf of Mexico and is divided by three rivers. The northern rural county area includes small towns and communities such as Jay, Munson, Allentown, and Chumuckla. Several waterfront communities extending 80 miles south in the coastal areas of Navarre, Midway, and Gulf Breeze. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) serves the entire area.

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According to the United States Census Bureau (2008 -- 2012) estimated 161,091 people live in Santa Rosa County with 14 percent being 65 years old or more. For people reporting one race alone, 89 percent is White, 5 percent is Black or African American, 1 percent is American Indian and Alaska Native, 2 percent is Asian; less than 0.5 percent is Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander and 1 percent is some other race. The median income of households in Santa Rosa County is \$54,718. Eighty-one percent of households receive earnings and 26 percent receive retirement income other than Social Security. Twenty-nine percent of the households receive Social Security. The average income from Social Security is \$15,115. Citizens 65 and older, 11 percent are in poverty and 29% of seniors live alone in Santa Rosa County. (factfinder.census.gov)

Santa Rosa Community Services (SRCS) supports Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Together their mission is to support the elderly and adults with disabilities and enable them to live independently with dignity. RSVP identifies and addresses and supports the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities and offers a comprehensive array of community services. RSVP will focus on socialization, physical activity, and fall prevention. Having waterfront communities in coastal areas RSVP recognizes and addresses the critical need for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. RSVP will partner with local non-profits, government agencies, and local business which include but not limited to United Way of Santa Rosa County, Emergency Management, Santa Rosa Health Department, County Extension, City of Milton, Council on Aging, Elder Affairs of North West Florida. Socialization is still a key to healthy aging. Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) researchers found evidence that elderly people in the United States who have an active social life may have a slower rate of memory decline... In fact, memory decline among the most sociable was less than half the rate among the least sociable. Seniors living alone and low income seniors have a higher risk of isolation. Senior author Lisa Berkman, chair of the Department of Society, Human Development and Health, went on to say, "We know from previous studies that people with many social ties have lower mortality rates. We now have mounting evidence that strong social networks can help to prevent declines in memory. As our society ages and has more and more older people, it will be important to promote their engagement in social and community life to maintain their well-being." Thirty-seven percent of the more than 3,000 seniors age 60 and over interviewed for United States of Aging survey said social isolation also affects seniors -- 30 percent of socially isolated seniors expect their quality of life to worsen over the next decade while 51 percent of socially isolated seniors didnt set a health goal in the past year. 29% of seniors live alone and 11% are below poverty level in Santa Rosa County. These two factors make for high risk with isolation.

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RSVP volunteers are a good resource to meet the need because they know firsthand how important it is to have social ties in order to live independently. RSVP volunteers will provide social ties with the elderly and the disabled by providing senior activities and transportation to senior centers. RSVP volunteers will work with the elderly to set health goals. Services provided Monday through Friday throughout the year. Benefactors include elderly and disabled that will be surveyed in person or interview via telephone communication.

A recent survey by American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) found that nine out of ten older households express a desire to stay in their home as long as possible, but many lack access to transportation services needed to ensure this outcome. Administration on Aging (AoA) states in rural and frontier areas, and smaller towns and cities, increasing demographic strains as baby boomers age is present in transportation challenges. Nationwide, 23% of all older adults live in rural areas. Forty percent of rural residents nationwide live in counties with no public transportation services of any kind. Those who live in rural areas face the same transportation needs as other older adults as they age and are increasingly unable to drive, but there are fewer transportation options in rural areas. Santa Rosa County is predominately rural, spread over a large geographical area with 14 per cent of the population being people 65 years and older and 11 percent is at poverty level. Santa Rosa County only has one transportation system in place which has only 4 locations for pick up and has long waiting period for returns. RSVP volunteers use their personal automobiles to provide one-on-one, arm-through-arm transportation for people age 65 or older who can no longer drive safely and visually impaired people of any age. There are no restrictions on the trip's purpose; it can be for medical appointments, shopping, social visits, or any other purpose. In additions to driving the clients, the RSVP volunteers assist the clients in completing medical forms and picking up their medications. The number of low-income elderly and individuals with disabilities will stay in their home longer and will have social support. Specialized Provide-A-Ride computer software program that tracks volunteer assignments and service hours, unduplicated clients served and rides provided will be used. RSVP volunteers are a good resource to meet the need because of their caring compassion for their peers. Reported by AoA say the numbers of elderly with poor health are projected to increase sharply from 1990 to 2030. Providing the opportunities and supports for older persons to live independent, meaningful, productive, dignified lives and maintain close family and communities ties. A study at Hebrew University Medical Center and Hebrew University Medical School reported that seniors who do any amount of exercise appear to live longer and have a lower risk of disability. In addition, the benefits associated with physical activity were seen not only in individuals who maintained an existing

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level of physical activity, but also in those who began exercising between ages 70 and 85. To meet the diverse needs of the growing numbers of older persons. RSVP volunteers will promote physical fitness for adults age 65 and older, including adults with disabilities, through Senior Centers, Faith-Based organizations and other health-promotion activities. RSVP volunteers will provide outreach and education by passing out flyers, speaking engagements and providing rides to senior centers and other locations for older adults and disabled people. Maintaining physical activities will allow older adults and adults with disabilities to live longer in their home and have a lower risk of disability. A Senior Corps Performance Measure survey will be used for data collection and measurement. RSVP volunteers are a good resource because they know firsthand the benefits of that physical fitness. Florida Department of Health reported unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury death among Florida residents ages 65 years and older and the fourth leading cause of injury death overall. Additionally, falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injury related hospital admissions in Florida. In 2012, 2,475 residents were fatally injured in a fall; there were an additional 62,541 residents hospitalized for non-fatal injuries. Nearly three-quarters of these injuries were among residents ages 65 years and older.

For every older adult fall prevented, the following costs can be saved; the median admission charge for non-fatal fall injury hospitalizations was \$46,067; total charges exceeds \$3.64 billion. The median length of stay was four days.

In addition to deaths and injuries, as well as the costs associated with them, falls can have many negative consequences for older adults, including fear of falling, forced relocation from the home, loss of independence, and stress in the family.

By reducing their chance of a fall, older adults can stay independent and have an increased quality of life. RSVP volunteers will educate about older adult fall risk factors and prevention strategies for older adults, families, and caregivers. Information can be communicated on an individual, one-on-one basis, or in a group setting. Exercise that can be offered through group classes or individually. Exercise programs can be offered in a community setting, at home with supervision, or in a program that combines group classes or one-on-one training with home-based exercise. Client survey will be used to calculate and measure data. RSVP volunteers are a good resource because of their compassion for other seniors.

In the past decade, Santa Rosa County has been impacted by tornadoes, wildfires, flooding, and two major hurricanes. When Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Dennis hit in 2004/2005 RSVP managed affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers, partnered with AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Volunteer in Service to

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America (VISTA), National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), Volunteer Florida Foundation, Christian Contractors, and other Inter-faith disaster relief organizations and local non-profits. The response effects lasted three weeks completing 13,494 work assessments, 364 blue tarp roof repairs, RSVP volunteers helped 1,869 hurricane victims with casework, distributed 3,500 tarps, and registered 15,428 elderly and disabled residents for disaster assistance. RSVP reported a total of 23,845 volunteer hours, saving Santa Rosa County residents \$418,486.00.

On April 28, 2014 Santa Rosa County experienced a Presidential declared flood. In Santa Rosa County Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reported 2117 people impacted by the flood and 204 citizens reported damage through the volunteer reception centers. Total damage estimate by FEMA for the claims were \$6,608,339.02, and total payouts for the same claims were \$5,370,900.92. A major obstacle to overcome in preparing our citizens for emergencies is the lack of education, public awareness and information on how to personally prepare for and cope with a disaster. Ensuring that citizens are knowledgeable and prepared is a priority of Santa Rosa County Emergency Management, American Red Cross, Santa Rosa County Health department and local municipalities.

Before, during and after a disaster, our community has preparation and awareness issues, spontaneous volunteer management issues and needs for pre-affiliated and trained volunteer resources. A report from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs stated, many seniors and persons with special needs have limited or no knowledge of how and what to prepare, where to go, limited options for evacuation due to lack of transportation and mobility issues and there is need for improved planning and coordination. Ensuring citizens have the information, tools and skills to be prepared for any hazard is a community responsibility. Various methods are utilized to ensure citizens take measures prior to a disaster to be able to prepare for, respond to and survive an event. RSVP volunteers will be engaged to enhance public outreach efforts to further develop a culture of preparedness in Santa Rosa County.

When disaster strikes, emergency management and voluntary agencies automatically mobilize. Each has a specific role to help ensure a community's successful response to and recovery from disaster's devastation. One element within the present system continues to challenge this process: the volunteers. Following an emergency or disaster, spontaneous or unaffiliated volunteers arrive unsolicited at the scene, may or may not possess skills necessary to respond and are not associated with any part of the emergency management response system and can overwhelm emergency responder's and impede their ability to do their job. Santa Rosa County Emergency Management, Santa Rosa County Health Department, American Red Cross rely upon trained volunteers to fit

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specific

predetermined roles in disaster. Utilization of volunteers is critical to meet the needs of citizens after a disaster or terrorism and to ensure these agencies are equipped with human resources to accomplish their missions. Volunteers have an important role to play in strengthening the capacity of Santa Rosa County to respond to the impact of a disaster.

Before, during, and following a disaster, trained volunteers are needed by the public and nonprofit relief and response agencies to staff shelters, assist with County Points of Distribution for providing citizens with needed food, water and tarps, assist to operate a Volunteer Reception Centers and Mobilization Center, assist with canteen operations, and train to respond to emergency situations in their communities by learning skills can save and sustain lives after a disaster strikes.

RSVP volunteers will train community members in emergency preparedness, and response, and recovery are the importance of preparing a disaster plan, and readying a kit of supplies in the event of an disaster. RSVP volunteers will raise awareness of the opportunities to become engaged with disaster agencies as volunteers.

RSVP volunteers along with United Way of Santa Rosa and United Ministries of Navarre will become case managers and case workers for 2,231 citizens of Santa Rosa County that have been impacted by the 2014 flood. RSVP volunteers will have one-on-one communications, by phone or in person with flood victims. RSVP volunteers will research information, and file reports. RSVP volunteers will communicate all information to the RSVP Director. All case work will go in front of a panel to be approved for help. A case management survey will be use to collect and measure data. Case management work will allow flood victims back in a safe home so they can restore their lives back to some kind of normalize. RSVP volunteers are a good resource because of their own experience with disasters (Hurricane Ivan and Dennis 2004/2005)

RSVP Certified Emergency Response Team (CERT) is one good example of how RSVP volunteers mobilize community resources. After Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Dennis, CERT went door to door in neighborhoods assessing damage to peoples property. Information was collected and given to RSVP volunteers that collected and evaluated information. Information was given to out of town volunteers and local volunteers to help restore the victim's property damage.

RSVP has great partnerships with other local non-profits. RSVP work together with a transportation program. RSVP volunteers take Council on Aging (COA) clients to and from doctor and hospital visits. The City of Milton, Northwest Florida Area on Aging partnering together with Fall Prevention exercise program for senior age 65 and older. Also RSVP partners with Northwest Florida Area on Aging with

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their Fall Prevention Program. RSVP, United Way of Santa Rosa County, Emergency Operations Center, Interfaith organizations such as United Methodist Church and others come together to help victims of disasters.

RSVP raise awareness through social media, newsletters, radio, local television channels, and local newspaper. We speak to club, businesses, government and other non-profits about the programs we work together on.

### Recruitment and Development

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program recognizes the importance of making critical matches between the volunteer position and the volunteer. RSVP continues to seek volunteer opportunities to enhance the volunteer experience. This process includes supporting station staff, educating staff members about volunteerism, developing needs assessments, designing meaningful job descriptions and quickly following up with prospective volunteer applicants. Well skilled and trained RSVP volunteers are placed in leadership roles. Many RSVP volunteers have the experience, abilities, and skills to train others, help their community in time of disaster and improve lives of other seniors. RSVP director visits with the potential RSVP volunteer and fills out a RSVP applicant form. The RSVP director ask questions like how you ever volunteered if so where have they volunteered, what are their interest and what have their skills and experience been over the year.

For instance: Mr. Shame has been a radio operator for more than 20 years. He is teaching new volunteers to become licensed ham radio operators. He instructs a class once a month that has yielded 10 licensed RSVP volunteer ham radio operators to date. These volunteer radio operators will work with RSVP when a disaster strikes our community.

RSVP also has an RSVP Certified Emergency Response team (CERT) that holds monthly training for new volunteer members. CERT volunteers also respond to disaster situations by assessing damaged homes, clear debri, help Firefighters with emergency response calls.

Another RSVP volunteer with over 10 years experience teaches yoga twice a week to any senior who wants to learn. Yoga improves senior lives by lowering blood pressure and slow the heart rate. A slower heart rate can benefit people with high blood pressure or heart disease, and people who've had a stroke. Yoga usually involves paying attention to your breath, which can help you relax and make people stronger and more flexible which improves posture.

RSVP volunteers are recruited by word of mouth and also by using the internet via our website and FaceBook postings. The RSVP website contains an E-Newsletter that allows volunteers to tell their story (and receive praise). RSVP has over 300 followers on FaceBook and is also a member of the

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Santa Rosa County Chamber and Stay Alert for Emergency Response (Safer) organization which has E-Newsletter which is used to recruit Baby Boomers. RSVP also has two YouTube videos that share the experience of volunteer service to others in time of Presidential-declared disasters as well as via helping solve health related problems that seniors face.

One of the ways RSVP recruits new volunteers with diverse backgrounds is by creating projects through "Days of Service". RSVP annually supports the Martin Luther King "days of service" project, thus drawing African Americans to volunteer for projects. We also create 911 projects which draw veterans and their families to volunteer for that project. Over the years, RSVP has partnered with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, the Disabled Veterans and interfaith groups to work on projects throughout the year.

RSVP volunteers recruit other volunteers to assist different non-profits. For example: RSVP partners with Emergency Operation Center, Santa Rosa Medical Center and other health related organizations to help place volunteers in disaster and health care related job assignments. These organizations provide training and technical assistance to volunteers, RSVP staff, and community groups.

A strong RSVP volunteer corps builds and strengthens through good volunteer management practices. Prospective applicants receive prompt follow up through interviews, references and criminal background information records verification. We place volunteers in positions that meet their individual need to make a difference. Once volunteers are placed and enrolled in RSVP, they receive a welcome letter, a copy of their job description, and the volunteer policies and procedures handbook which includes information about RSVP and Santa Rosa Community Services (SRCS).

The Project Director attends the Annual National Volunteer Service conference and other programs as they become available in order to update and maintain her skill levels. Volunteer stations supervisors receive technical assistance and support for the project director. Technical assistance and training may include training staff to utilize monthly timesheets, providing guidance with job design, training volunteers in managing volunteer reception centers and local community leaders on the importance of volunteerism and how volunteers play an important role in our community. Training and technical assistance for volunteers, project staff, and station staff is essential for volunteer retention and overall success of the project. Individual programs offer initial and ongoing training for their volunteer staff, ranging from 4 to 60 hours of classroom instructions.

RSVP volunteers receive ongoing recognition on their birthdays, holidays, and during National Volunteer Week. Thank you cards are given to volunteers who complete a special project. This is followed up with a telephone call thanking them for a job well done. RSVP recognizes volunteers at



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two annual banquets per year and provides volunteer insurance while on assignment. RSVP communicates with its volunteers about program outcomes and client surveys results via email, telephone calls, and volunteer newsletters. The RSVP volunteer turn around averages out to be only 1% per year. A 99% volunteer retention rate is something to be proud of.

RSVP has received approximately 300 letters telling the community the importance of keeping the RSVP program in Santa Rosa County. RSVP has a huge support system from its volunteers and community leaders. RSVP has 5 RSVP Ambassadors who speak at various events such as County Commission, other non-profit and club meetings. They also write news reports to the public on the value of RSVP and on the roles RSVP volunteers play in helping the community at large.

Ongoing volunteer training and support are given to RSVP volunteer before they are placed in their assign volunteer job by the RSVP station coordinator. RSVP director provide pre-service orientation and volunteer stations train volunteers onsite for the actual activities they will undertake. Training takes place both before and during service. Volunteers have structured opportunities for reflection and team support. RSVP praise volunteers through social media, newsletters, radio, local television channels, and local newspaper. We speak to clubs, businesses, government and other non-profits about RSVP.

### **Program Management**

An example of how RSVP develops and manages volunteer stations and assignments to address community needs and provide meaningful placement for volunteers is the successful disaster operations that took place when Hurricane's Ivan and Dennis hit in 2004/2005. RSVP managed affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers, partnered with AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps\*Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), National Civilian Community Corps NCCC, Volunteer Florida Foundation, Christian Contractors, and other Inter-Faith Disaster Relief organizations and local non profits. The Response effects lasted three weeks completing 13,494 work assessments, 364 ROE's, 1,869 work case management, distributed 3,500 blue tarps and registered 15,428 elderly and disabled residents for disaster assistance. We reported a total of 23,845 volunteer hours, saving Santa Rosa County \$418,486.00. Based on this data, RSVP has expanded its disaster operations program by establishing five volunteer reception centers and has increased the number of volunteers engaged in this meaningful service.

Ongoing communications with supervisors and site visits remain critical to managing the success of these stations and volunteers. RSVP has also operated a health expo for low income seniors for 9

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years and has established partnerships with 15 non profits, 34 businesses and government entities and has served over 5,600 senior residents with free health screening.

In order to ensure compliance and meet performance measures, RSVP conducts annual surveys of program recipients, volunteer stations, volunteers, and community partners. The surveys measure the quality of service provided. Committee volunteers and staff members follow up if there are any questions or concerns voiced in the surveys.

The RSVP Director meets regularly with the accounting firm of John Ducker and Company, to review the grant budget and manage both financial and in-kind resources. Santa Rosa Community Services (SRCS) prominent position in the community enhances RSVP's ability to receive in-kind donations of space and in-kind support that are tracked according to RSVP program standards. Over the past 9 years SRCS has successfully raised approximately \$245,000.00 from Santa Rosa Medical Center and other businesses to help fund the RSVP program. RSVP also seeks opportunities to maximize its budget and reduce costs where possible.

### **Organizational Capability**

RSVP director makes one-on-one contact with RSVP station leader or coordinator on a regular basis and keeps good relationships high. RSVP stations receive a needs assessment per year. Results from the survey were 95% satisfaction rate. Survey used was a numbering system. RSVP stations are aligned the RSVP program. Example is United Way of Santa Rosa and Safer Santa Rosa are the two stations we work with in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Another example would be Council on Aging of Santa Rosa County (COA) with RSVP transportation program. RSVP helps COA clients to get to and from doctor and hospital visits. RSVP director and/or staff keeps in contact with RSVP stations on a monthly basis updating stations needs. RSVP director and staff visits stations leaders and/or coordinator once a year. RSVP is a member and attends monthly meeting with Santa Rosa County Chamber and uses the chamber as a recruitment tool. RSVP and RSVP volunteers hold annual events such as disaster preparedness expo and senior health fair and recruits RSVP stations to attend. Last year 45 non-profits attended these events. These events are held annual for the last 15 years. Ongoing volunteer training and support are given to RSVP volunteer before they are placed in their assign volunteer job by the RSVP station coordinator. RSVP director provide pre-service orientation and volunteer stations train volunteers onsite for the actual activities they will undertake. Training takes place both before and during service. Volunteers have structured opportunities for

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reflection and team support. Volunteers are able to call on appropriate staff to address questions and challenges? The RSVP Director is also available for any questions or concerns the volunteer may have. Since 1996 Santa Rosa Community Service (SRCS) has sponsored and managed volunteer programs. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) being the largest program. Santa Rosa County Services is made up of a board of director which includes the President that conducts monthly meeting, a secretary which takes the minutes, a treasurer that oversees the accounting. A treasury committee conducts yearly audits of the books. The bookkeeping system that is used is called Bookkeeping Solutions and is handled and track monthly by an accounting firm called Ducker & Company Accounting firm. Ducker and Company has contracts with many non-profits organizations. If the accounting firm feels there is discrepancy in the bookkeeping then they are required to bring it to the attention of the board of directors. The RSVP director and the President of the Board meeting regularly with Ducker & Company to review the grant budget and manage both financial and in-kind resources. SRCS prominent position in the community enhances RSVP's ability to receive in-kind support of space and in-kind support that are tracked according to the RSVP program standards. Over the past 7 years SRCS has successfully raised approximately \$245,000.00 from Santa Rosa Medical Center and other businesses to help fund the RSVP program. RSVP board also seeks opportunities to maximize its budget and reduce costs where possible.

In the past decade, Santa Rosa County has been impacted by tornadoes, wildfires, flooding, and two major hurricanes. When Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Dennis hit in 2004/2005, RSVP managed affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers, partnered with AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, National Civilian Community Corps, (NCCC) Volunteer Florida Foundation, Christian Contractors, and other Inter-faith disaster relief organizations and local non-profits. The response effects lasted three weeks completing 13,494 work assessments, 364 blue tarp roof repairs, RSVP volunteers helped 1,869 hurricane victims with casework, distributed 3,500 tarps, and registered 15,428 elderly and disabled residents for disaster assistance. RSVP reported a total of 23,845 volunteer hours, saving Santa Rosa County residents \$418,486.00. With this past experience of hurricane Ivan and Dennis RSVP has become a stronger program that meets the needs of the community. This information was tracked by Volunteer Reporter which is a database for tracking volunteer time, station accomplishments, and Microsoft Excel was used in tracking clients. Information collected was tracked by sign in and sign out sheets that were coordinated by volunteers on site. The response time was 3 weeks. This information was used to provide funding from Santa Rosa County Commission. Ms. Brenda Roland has served as RSVP director for 17+ years. She has been certified in Federal Emergency

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Management Agency (FEMA), National Incident Management System (NIMS), and Donations Management and is know state and FEMA certified in Volunteer Reception Center known as VRC. She has served as vice Chair on Escambia county and Santa Rosa County Volunteers Active in Disaster (VOAD) committee. She served in the AmeriCorps Vista program from 1996 to 1998. She was awarded a grant called Bridging the Digital Divide and received \$150,000.00 to help build a computer lab at East Milton Elementary School. She partnered with Pensacola Junior College under a college work study program. The year project was to have college student's tutor and mentor children from kindergarten through 3rd grade in reading under the America Reads program. Brenda as the RSVP director also challenged Whiting Field Naval cadets. Fifteen naval cadets took the challenge and still volunteering with the program. She led Santa Rosa County volunteer long term recovery committee after Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Dennis in 2004/2005. At that time is managed 38 workforce employees to work case management clients from the two hurricanes. In 2009 she was appointed by the county commission to coordinate a new organization called Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD). She also is participating in the Senior Corps Think Tank with a dedicated group of 12 RSVP Directors around the Country. They will work to strengthen the training and technical assistance and resource development for RSVP projects focused on disaster. The goals are to develop TTA resources (toolkit for how RSVP can engage following disasters) and develop case studies on RSVP engaged in disaster response/recovery.

Written job descriptions for the director and staff are on file. The director's job description is dealing with the day-to day operations of RSVP program, managing volunteer stations, recruiting and recognizing volunteers. The Board of directors oversees the director's performance with monthly meeting and telephone calls.

RSVP is marketed in several ways. RSVP is a member of Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce and place advertisements in their Newsletter five times a year. RSVP director keeps brochures in the Chambers building. We use the local newspaper when recognizing volunteer of the year and when scheduling RSVP events. We are in the process of designing a new website, making it more useful for RSVP volunteers and using it as a recruitment tool for seniors that are looking for something to do. RSVP has a Facebook page and is updated on a daily basis. RSVP has over 200 followers on Facebook. RSVP recruits volunteers on our Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) webpage. RSVP has a volunteer that gives information out about RSVP through his over 3,000 email accounts that go out monthly. These emails accounts go out to all 146 faith- based organizations. We advertise

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on local radio stations several times a year and have been on local television channel called BLAB. RSVP has a senior center and also used as a recruitment tool for seniors.

SRCS is committed to providing quality programs for elders who receive health services, as well as service opportunities for healthy active older adults by SRCS employs a senior level RSVP director for quality improvement, who oversees continuous improvement and conducts annual customer satisfaction surveys to measure the quality of services including senior health improvements, transportation for the elderly and disabled, disaster case management and case work and service activities which include exercise, and fall prevention. Clients and volunteers are surveyed by telephone, email, and regular mail. Satisfaction surveys are entered into Volunteer Reporter. Client satisfaction remains high. For example 95% of clients surveyed say they have changed the lifestyle and improved their overall well being. In the most recent survey 91% of volunteers stated volunteering made good use of their skills and experience. The Volunteer Reporter database also tracks performance measures for all the work plans and for reporting on Progress Reports. RSVP establishes close relationships with other non-profits that are involved in Disaster preparedness, responds, and recovery. These organizations help provide more opportunities for volunteers. For example, United Way of Santa Rosa along with United Methodist Church, and (Safer) created case management and case work from the 2014 flood that over 2100 citizens have been affected. RSVP volunteers create opportunities by forming disaster expo committees, and senior health fairs which gives volunteers leadership roles. Also volunteer leadership roles are formed through the volunteer reception centers were out of town and local volunteers go to help the committee after a major declared disaster. Volunteers write articles to recruit and support these critical community needs. RSVP volunteers are recognized by their organization they serve by banquets, luncheon and local outings.

### **Other**

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and volunteers will recognize Martin Luther King's (MLK) Day of Service in January 2015 from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m. RSVP will design a float that will be in the MLK day parade to help bring awareness. After the parade 10 RSVP volunteers will read and hand out books to at-risk children ages 5 years to 12 years old. The service location will be at the Mary Street Park in Milton Florida. Mary Street Park is considered a high crime area in the county.

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

RSVP has no PNS amendment