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Executive Summary

Habitat for Humanity International proposes to have 350 AmeriCorps members who will engage volunteers to build new homes, repair existing homes, and revitalize neighborhoods, with 95 affiliates in 25 states in the U.S. At the end of the first program year, AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing 4,800 economically disadvantaged individuals with housing services, 2,100 of whom will transition into safe, healthy, and affordable housing. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 102,000 of volunteers who will be engaged in providing housing services for these 4,800 individuals.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Economic Opportunity. The CNCS investment of \$4,655,000 will be matched by \$5 million in program fees from participating Habitat affiliates and in-kind from Habitat International headquarters.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

Habitat International's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Since 1976 Habitat for Humanity has helped 6.8 million people find strength, stability, and independence through safe, decent and affordable shelter. In 2015, Habitat built or rehabbed homes for more than 18,000 individuals in the U.S.; Habitat AmeriCorps members served more than 4,500 of these. This need remains urgent: 46.7 million people in the U.S. are living in poverty-the largest number the census has measured. The Enterprise Foundation reports that nearly 19 million families spend more than half of their income on housing, routinely forced to choose between paying rent or buying groceries or going to the doctor.

It is expensive to be poor. The average American spends 22 percent of his/her gross income on housing (Consumer Expenditure Survey.) For people living in poverty the costs are 30 to 50 percent (Paycheck to Paycheck, Center of Housing Policy.) Stable housing provides more than just a roof over someone's head-it affects all aspects of life. Several landmark studies show that housing provides a sense of dignity and pride, health, physical safety and security, and increased education and job prospects. Johns Hopkins researchers determined that poor children who live in areas with more affordable housing are healthier and behave better (Harkness and Newman). The effect of homeownership is even more dramatic. Renters stay in their homes for an average of 2.5 years compared to 13 for homeowners, resulting in higher education attainment and lower rates of teen

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pregnancy (Green and White) in addition to increased family assets (Galster). Habitat AmeriCorps's intervention is to provide families a decent, safe and affordable place to live. Here is a sample of the evidence of the impact of this model:

1) Homeownership helps generate wealth building and a pathway out of poverty.

-The Federal Reserve's 2014 Survey of Consumer Finances reports that renters have a net worth that is 36 times less than that of the average homeowner.

-"For most buyers, homeownership leads to wealth creation," stated a report in the Journal of Housing Studies. "As home equity increases, some homeowners may decide that they have the financial resources to secure additional education for themselves or their children."

-The Wilder Foundation's report on Minnesota Habitat homeowners found that 53 percent said they have more money since moving into their Habitat home and almost 40 percent said they pay less in housing costs.

-A 2014 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston of homes with a student about to enter college found that a modest increase in home value for homeowners led to an increase in the child's earnings later in life, while an increase in a property's value for renters led to a decrease in the child's earnings.

2) Homeownership leads to greater educational achievements.

-Children in homeownership families outperform children in renting families in both math and reading achievement tests, even when other factors are the same. These children will have fewer behavioral problems, higher educational attainment and greater future earnings, according to a study by an Ohio State University economist.

-The graduation rate for children of homeowners is 19 percent higher than for renters, and they are twice as likely to acquire some postsecondary education, according to a study in a journal published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

3) Homeownership provides better security and safety.

-Multiple studies show that homeownership lowers crime rates in communities (Rossi and Weber, 1996; DiPasquale and Glaeser, 1999; Blum and Kingston, 1984; Austin and Baba, 1990.)

- The University of Southern Indiana Habitat study found that 84 percent felt safe in their neighborhoods.

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Habitat AmeriCorps creates homes and homeownership, which results in layers of life improvements. Adriana Resendez was 8 years old when her family moved out of a garage into a Habitat house. Resendez said, "You have a home and you're able to have an education. You have a life where you can dream, you can actually achieve." Now she works for the Pan American Development Foundation, promoting social progress and economic equity in Latin America and the Caribbean. "When you struggle as a family ... Habitat...allows you to see the light at the end of the tunnel. It just motivates you to keep working hard, because you know that good things can come to you, if you just keep at it, just keep trying."

For more than 20 years, Habitat has partnered with CNCS to place members in communities throughout the U.S. This partnership has engaged 9,025 individuals as AmeriCorps members, serving more than 24,000 families and engaging more than 3.3 million volunteers. Habitat AmeriCorps members respond to the need for safe, decent, and affordable housing and serve in more than 123 communities across the nation. Space considerations prevent us from demonstrating local need in all jurisdictions. Here are examples:

-Charlotte, North Carolina: The Charlotte Observer reported that 32,128 people filled out Section 8 applications, three times the number who applied in 2007. Public housing addresses the smallest portion of the problem; there are 3,285 units, and no more than 400 vouchers come open each year. Last year Habitat AmeriCorps members built 35 new homes in Charlotte and completed additional construction projects benefitting 90 families.

-Washington, D.C.: Nearly 20 percent of families are living in poverty in the District and half of D.C. households are considered "housing insecure." The City Paper reports minimum wage earners in the District must work 132 hours a week to afford a two-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent of \$1,421. Last year, Habitat AmeriCorps members completed three new homes in the District, meeting a need the market cannot; the average sales price of a home this year in D.C. is \$769,800.

-Sacramento, California: There are 42,669 households earning between 30-50 percent of annual median income (AMI). Approximately 76.6 percent of these households experience housing problems; 86.7 percent spent more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing. US Census data indicate that there are over 32,000 poor households in Sacramento County who are living in either substandard or overcrowded conditions. Sacramento Habitat for Humanity is the only urban builder of affordable

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housing in Sacramento County. During 2014-15 AmeriCorps members built 21 new homes in Sacramento.

-New Orleans, Louisiana: According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 27.2 percent of New Orleanians live in poverty, nearly twice the national average. In New Orleans 34.6 percent of homeowners and 62.9 percent of renters pay more than 30 percent of their household income on housing. The damage from Hurricane Katrina is still being felt by the city, with nearly one in four housing units considered unlivable. In 2014-15 AmeriCorps members with New Orleans Area Habitat completed 14 new homes. In addition to these homes, members and alumni from around the nation built 10 homes in 10 days for the 2015 AmeriCorps Build-a-Thon.

THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL: Intervention design:

AmeriCorps members will build the capacity of Habitat affiliates and help more than 4,800 economically disadvantaged people secure and maintain affordable housing. AmeriCorps members make it possible for affiliates to 1) build and rehab more homes that are purchased by the family, 2) sustain homeownership through critical home repair and weatherization, and 3) revitalize entire neighborhoods. Habitat AmeriCorps employs a unique model, with an intense dosage, from counseling families towards homeownership readiness through the construction of the home. The duration of the intervention may be 6 months or less, but the impacts, safe and secure affordable housing and all of the benefits that derive from it, can last a lifetime. The instant a homeowner is given the keys to the house, Habitat AmeriCorps realizes a long-term outcome, and a family's quality of life is dramatically improved.

While new home construction continues to play a vital role in Habitat's work, so do critical home repair, rehabs and weatherization. Through another element, Neighborhood Revitalization, AmeriCorps members serve with affiliates to extend a hand up to entire communities. Since 2010, Neighborhood Revitalization has enabled Habitat to serve more families in the U.S. than ever before. Residents drive Neighborhood Revitalization so work can entail building playgrounds or ball fields, forming neighborhood watches, or constructing community centers or gardens.

Target population: Habitat AmeriCorps members serve in rural and urban communities and target those communities' most vulnerable populations. Primary criteria for the selection of the beneficiary families include: low-income (30 to 60 percent of AMI) and high percentage of income to housing

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costs ratio and/or overcrowding, the ability to pay a mortgage, and a demonstrated willingness to partner with Habitat by volunteering between 300 to 500 hours to help construct their home, known as sweat equity.

Member roles: Habitat AmeriCorps' four member roles synthesize the specific tasks, responsibilities, and impact areas to provide housing services to 4,800 people, 2,100 of whom will transition into decent, safe and affordable places to live:

- Construction Crew Leadership: Lead crews of skilled and unskilled volunteers and partner families in construction tasks.
- Family Services Coordination: Recruit and support partner families for traditional homeownership opportunities or critical home repair. Conduct applicant orientations and homeowner education, and build alongside partner families as they complete their sweat equity requirements.
- Volunteer Services Coordination: Recruit, train, coordinate, recognize, and support volunteers.
- Community Outreach Coordination: Help raise community awareness of what can be done to improve neighborhoods. Map community assets, conduct focus groups, cultivate partnerships with community organizations, and act as liaisons between the affiliate and partners.

Habitat AmeriCorps aspires to be the most effective national service program in the nation. Proof of the Habitat AmeriCorps Theory of Change and evidence of members' impact is presented in the following section.

EVIDENCE BASE: There is strong evidence that 1)Habitat AmeriCorps members increase Habitat affiliates' capacity to serve more individuals and families through new home construction and existing home rehabilitation and 2)that individuals and families experience a quality of life benefit as a result of simple, decent, and affordable housing.

Study 1: Habitat AmeriCorps builds capacity at Habitat affiliates and supports Habitat's strategic plan to serve more families. For 2013-16, Habitat AmeriCorps engaged independent and external entities Daniel Cooper, PhD, Bradley Olson, PhD, and Judah Viola, PhD to conduct an impact evaluation of its AmeriCorps programs. The evaluators measured the extent to which Habitat AmeriCorps members increase affiliate capacity and addressed research questions

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-Do AmeriCorps members increase Habitat's capacity and allow affiliates to serve more families? Engage more volunteers? Expand the array of housing services offered?

The evaluation began in September 2014 and was completed in December 2015 and included data from service years 2013-15.

Evaluators used a quasi-experimental matched-pair research design (matched-QED), collecting pre-post data from Habitat affiliates to examine the difference between affiliates that utilize AmeriCorps members and those that do not (hosting vs. non-hosting). Pre- and post-surveys were sent to all U.S. affiliates with a response rate of 30 percent. Hosting affiliates were randomly matched with similar non-hosting affiliates using their annual expense budget. The statistical analysis used Habitat affiliate-level data and included a 2 X 2 Mixed Factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with changes in the numbers of homes built as one variable and host versus non-host as the other. In addition, a series of one-tailed t-tests were run to explore differences between the number of homes built, rehabbed and volunteers mobilized between host and non-host pairs.

Evaluators report that AmeriCorps members increase Habitat affiliates' capacity to serve more families through new home construction, the rehabilitation of existing homes, and by engaging more volunteers.

-Across 2013-15, host affiliates built 44 percent more homes ($m=30.32$) compared to the random, matched pair control group ($m=21.11$).

-Host affiliates also rehabbed nearly three times more homes ($m=41.24$) than similar sized non-hosts ($m=15.54$). This last finding is particularly significant: AmeriCorps gives affiliates the capacity to serve more homeowners in more ways.

-The data reflected that AmeriCorps members increase Habitat affiliates' capacity to serve more families by engaging more volunteers. The results indicate that hosting affiliates engage a much larger number of volunteers ($m=1,867$) compared to the non-host group average ($m=1,112$).

Study 2: "Impacts of Habitat for Humanity Homeownership-Connections to Quality of Life," is a Wilder Research report, authored by Madeleine Hansen and Paul Mattessich, and published in February 2015. The study includes interviews with 402 Habitat homeowners in Minnesota who moved into their Habitat homes between 1989 and 2014. Findings include:

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- Over 90 percent of homeowners feel safe in their Habitat homes and about 80 percent feel safer than when they were in their previous home.
- Of homeowners with respiratory illnesses, 57 percent said they improved after moving into their Habitat home.
- Over half of homeowners with children say their children's grades improved after moving into their Habitat home, and nearly two-thirds said their study habits improved.
- Overall, 92 percent of homeowners said their lives were better since moving into their Habitat home, and 89 percent attributed the change to Habitat.

The Wilder report quantifies the impact on homeowners in many areas, including community connectedness (50 percent increase) and employment (80 percent reporting improvement).

NOTICE PRIORITY: Habitat AmeriCorps has chosen Economic Opportunity as its priority area. Habitat AmeriCorps members increase economic opportunities for communities by providing housing services for low-income individuals and families.

MEMBER TRAINING: High quality member development is at the core of our goal to mobilize AmeriCorps members to be the Hearts, Hands and Voices for the cause of adequate affordable housing. Habitat AmeriCorps members build new homes and rehab, repair, and weatherize existing homes with skilled and unskilled volunteers, providing on-site training, and maintain a safe and efficient construction site. For these responsibilities, it is necessary to provide them with both the technical skills to build and the leadership skills to mobilize, motivate, and manage.

To ensure impact, Habitat AmeriCorps members must be well prepared for their year of service, supported with necessary resources throughout, and equipped for life after AmeriCorps. A three-year commitment from the Argosy Foundation has allowed Habitat AmeriCorps to concentrate efforts and become a leadership incubator. With this financial support, we have created a member/alumni continuum that launches a leadership development program that invests in AmeriCorps members through their terms of service and follows them into their life after AmeriCorps, encouraging alumni to pay the investment forward, remaining committed in their communities, dedicated to the cause of affordable housing, and supportive of Habitat and AmeriCorps.

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Habitat AmeriCorps welcomes members with webinars that present the history of Habitat and CNCS and the partnership that makes Habitat AmeriCorps possible. These webinars explain the federated model under which Habitat operates, with Habitat International acting as the legal sponsor of the Habitat AmeriCorps program placing members at more than 123 host sites across the U.S. Members are introduced to the AmeriCorps commitment via the pledge and receive an overview of member benefits.

Each AmeriCorps member receives an orientation at his local service site, which provides basic knowledge about how non-profits, specifically Habitat, function. Orientation introduces them to the need in the local community and the homeownership model and housing products and programs offered through the local Habitat affiliate. Members also review the following as a part of the orientation: prohibited activities including non-duplication, displacement, and supplantation, the member agreement, requirements under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, suspension and termination from service, grievance procedures, sexual harassment and other non-discrimination issues, and other topics as necessary. Habitat AmeriCorps closely monitors all host sites and members through our Host Site Monitoring Plan to ensure adherence to all program guidance.

Habitat AmeriCorps members are called upon to lead as well as build. Early in the term of service we bring together the corps of 400+ AmeriCorps National and VISTA members at the National Service Leadership Conference. The conference develops leadership in members so they may shape community change. Members attend workshops on volunteer management, conflict mitigation, influence without authority, asset-based community development, mentorship skills, and many other topics. The conference provides both personal and professional development and creates esprit de corps.

During the spring months, Habitat AmeriCorps members and alumni attend the annual AmeriCorps Build-a-Thon. In 2015 the AmeriCorps Build-a-Thon helped to "Rebuild America," with concentration in the New Orleans East neighborhood on America Street. The event celebrated the 20th anniversary of AmeriCorps and kicked-off the local commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Katrina. This transformational service experience provided an opportunity for members to step away reflect on their larger personal journey.

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"The AmeriCorps experience is worth \$5 or \$50,000 depending on how you invest in it," reports Amanda Kay Johnson, a Habitat AmeriCorps alumna. AmeriCorps members set their own professional development goals for the service year and, with the help of their managers, identify paths forward to reach them. These might include professional accreditation or certification. Members might increase their knowledge of community development or urban planning and non-profit management. Habitat provides members valuable skills to lead them into life after AmeriCorps but the journey with Habitat AmeriCorps doesn't end with their term. The Habitat AmeriCorps Alumni Association engages 9,000 members and alumni through networking and relationship building, personal and professional development, special partnerships, and a lifetime of service opportunities.

MEMBER SUPERVISION: With 1,400 affiliates, Habitat can conduct a competitive host site selection process. Affiliates submit to Habitat International a narrative to demonstrate the organization's ability to provide a high-quality member service experience by presenting plans for supervision, training, and development via the Host Site Application annually. For the 2015-16 service year, 167 affiliates requested 509 AmeriCorps National members and 162 VISTA members. We awarded 315 AmeriCorps National members to 86 host sites, indicating the demand is great.

It is the responsibility of these host sites to manage our most precious resource: Habitat AmeriCorps members and volunteers. Jennifer Knoeber, Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity, "There's no way around the time commitment to make sure your members have a great experience-which absolutely will reflect in the service they provide you. Those AmeriCorps members are Habitat to anyone outside the walls of your building. When you invest the time in your members' service, you will have happier partner families, happier volunteers (and donors), better systems, and more capacity because those members will really want to produce for you."

Habitat AmeriCorps provides awarded host sites with program guidelines for member recruitment, support, enrollment, supervision, health and safety, travel reimbursements, prohibited activities and all required trainings. The host site identifies an appropriate and qualified AmeriCorps manager. The manager attends Habitat AmeriCorps' Host Site Meeting to prepare to support AmeriCorps members during the service year. At this meeting, managers attend workshops on effective member management, recognition and retention of members, successful evaluation strategies for members,

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and fostering a lifetime of service.

Habitat AmeriCorps utilizes the Host Site Support Model to build positive relationships with host sites to support the AmeriCorps program. The plan includes check in calls, self-assessments, desk reviews and site visits with host sites and members to gauge progress towards project goals, assess the host site's compliance with applicable program requirements, and identify and address support needs. Habitat AmeriCorps also provides the ongoing training and technical assistance, oversight, and support to the manager and members throughout the program year.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE: Habitat AmeriCorps aspires to provide service experiences that transform the lives of those who serve and those who are served. Habitat AmeriCorps members not only raise walls, but also gain a deeper understanding of housing as a critical foundation for breaking the cycle of poverty, preparing them for to be powerful ambassadors for the cause of affordable housing.

Via the member/alumni continuum, we identify relevant training, resources, and opportunities for the service year and in support of life after AmeriCorps. We connect members and alumni to each other and provide opportunities for alumni and 2nd plus year AmeriCorps members to share their knowledge and experiences with new members. This peer-to-peer learning enhances the member experience and expands members' professional networks. Upon completion of their terms of service, members are enrolled in the Habitat AmeriCorps Alumni Association. This continued involvement we believe is a testament to the success of the Habitat AmeriCorps experience.

The recently completed evaluation of Habitat AmeriCorps by Cooper et al. demonstrates that members benefit from a term of service by gaining transferable skills. Survey results indicated:

- 78 percent of Habitat AmeriCorps alumni reported gaining homebuilding experience, 65 percent gained leadership skills, and 60 percent gained project management experience.
- 62 percent of alumni reported gaining knowledge of service, engagement, and sense of responsibility.
- At the conclusion of their service year, 72 percent of members reported that their AmeriCorps experience would help their chances of finding a job. Eighty percent felt that their AmeriCorps experience would improve their performance at a future job. Fifty-nine percent felt it would improve their chances of getting a promotion, and 63 percent felt it would help them make a career change.

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-Additionally, each year more than 34 percent of Habitat AmeriCorps members gain employment at Habitat affiliates following their terms of service. Sites are prohibited from hiring active members away from service.

DIVERSE CORPS: Habitat AmeriCorps continually strives for a diverse corps. This year, just over 30 percent of our members identify as persons of color. Sixteen percent of members are veterans or from military families. We have taken steps to increase the diversity and gather input from newly enrolled AmeriCorps members through a diversity survey, helping us to identify areas for growth.

To further our efforts for a diverse corps, Habitat AmeriCorps is laying the foundation necessary for targeted recruitment of members from amongst residents of Habitat neighborhoods. This benefits the community by increasing resident engagement and empowerment and Habitat affiliates benefit by building their capacity to engage and invest in target communities. In 2015-16, ten members either grew up in Habitat homes or are Habitat homeowners, and 22 others live in neighborhoods where Habitat has built or rehabbed at least ten homes.

COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION: The Habitat AmeriCorps program name reflects the synergy of two of America's greatest forces for good in communities. Habitat AmeriCorps is often the first program named when people discuss what AmeriCorps does. Here is how AmeriCorps pride permeates all aspects of our work:

-Culturally, we know AmeriCorps represents a national tradition of service. Our signed agreement insists that our sites identify as an AmeriCorps host site in many ways. We provide our host sites with communication tools and trainings through the year to make it easy for them to help us share the Habitat AmeriCorps story. Affiliation with AmeriCorps is one of the strongest sources of motivation for Habitat AmeriCorps members.

-The Habitat AmeriCorps program identity extends from our web presence to member gear. Very few programs invest as much in AmeriCorps gear as Habitat.

-We are honored whenever we can bring attention to AmeriCorps with thought leaders, public officials and the media. The 2015 AmeriCorps Build-A-Thon featured a home with a 15-foot AmeriCorps logo painted on the ground floor. Several Corporation staff helped to build this house on America Street in New Orleans.

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Organizational Capability

Habitat International embodies the best elements of faith-based and national service by engaging people who seek to serve God, their nation and their community. Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope. In 2015 was named the 15th largest homebuilder in the nation and the number one nonprofit builder by Builder magazine.

More than half of the staff of the Habitat AmeriCorps program are AmeriCorps alumni and have an average of 8 years of AmeriCorps program management experience. Director Peter Rumsey and Associate Director Alice Sosinsky lead the program. In his 15 years with Habitat AmeriCorps, Mr. Rumsey integrated isolated service programs and streamlined the grant management structure. He directs a staff of 17 people supporting the placement of 315 AmeriCorps National and 110 VISTA members. Ms. Sosinsky has devoted 11 years to managing Habitat AmeriCorps. Prior to this, she served as a VISTA Leader and Executive Director of a Habitat affiliate.

Experience with AmeriCorps and other federal grants: Habitat was one of the organizations approached by CNCS in 1994 to host the first AmeriCorps members. Since 1994 Habitat AmeriCorps has increased from 26 sites to over 123 host sites in 2015. Throughout our partnership with AmeriCorps, Habitat has received the highest marks for financial and program management from CNCS, the Office of the Inspector General and state commissions. Our adherence to AmeriCorps regulations is unrivalled; in our history, no CNCS report or independent audit has returned any major findings against the Habitat AmeriCorps program.

Habitat AmeriCorps benefits from access to state-of-the art professional systems. Mesfin Amanew manages Habitat's Grants/Finance Department. He has more than 28 years' experience managing in the field. Habitat is the largest recipient of the HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program funding, having received more than \$210.6 million since our first award in 1996 and has raised \$1.2 billion in leveraged non-federal funds to date. The Office of Management and Budget consistently give Habitat its highest rating for a federal program. Jeff Brock leads Habitat's Talent Acquisition department and has 22 years of experience in TA. His department is responsible for member recruitment and enrollment, background checks, benefits, and member relations, all aligned in order to meet programmatic, state and federal compliance with U.S. governmental grant requirements.

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Community engagement: Habitat's 1,400 local affiliates in the U.S. are independent, locally run, grassroots non-profit organizations. Habitat International is an intermediary acting on behalf of Habitat affiliates which have their own board of directors that are representative of the community and serve with communal support.

Habitat AmeriCorps blends the time-tested model of new home construction with local solutions to neighborhood revitalization. Habitat AmeriCorps uses three means to engage community partners to plan and implement the program. 1) Use our impact data to manage the direction of the AmeriCorps members. We know from our evaluation that affiliates with AmeriCorps members conduct 166 percent more housing rehabs than affiliates outside the program. With increased capacity, local organizations determine how to best serve families in need of affordable housing. 2) We use the host site selection process to cultivate local solutions to the affordable housing shortages in local communities. For instance, Habitat Chesapeake focuses on rebuilding existing townhouse structures in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood in Baltimore, MD, recently the site of civil unrest. This block-by-block revitalization strategy is part of a much larger collective impact effort to transform that community. 3) We directly engage community partners in conversations about the direction of Habitat, from Habitat's Strategic Plan to host site monitoring calls and site visits.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: Habitat AmeriCorps complies with and maintains exceptional accountability to AmeriCorps regulations, procedures, and terms and conditions. Habitat has a history of administering diverse programs reliably and with excellence. During its first 15 years, Habitat International received grants for multiple AmeriCorps State, VISTA cluster, and National Direct programs. The guidelines for each of these grants differed in member recruitment procedures, member development, allowable member service assignments, and progress reporting requirements. In 2009, Habitat centralized the administration of its AmeriCorps programs to increase the efficiency, expand opportunities for growth, and establish consistent quality standards across programs. Centralized administration allows Habitat AmeriCorps to continue to demonstrate excellence in program delivery and grants compliance.

Habitat AmeriCorps has in place quality assurance measures and operating procedures. Habitat AmeriCorps' Host Site Support Model provides the guiding framework that Habitat AmeriCorps uses to support host sites in AmeriCorps project and member management so that project goals are

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realized, members are provided a meaningful service year, and the program successfully meets the terms of CNCS. This model structures the partnership between Habitat AmeriCorps and host sites to build competencies, promote best practices, and address challenges in the management of AmeriCorps projects and members. Components of the support model include:

-The Host Site Participation Agreement serves as the cornerstone of the support model and informs the host sites of their programmatic and financial responsibilities. The binding agreement includes guidelines for the recruitment and enrollment of members, prohibited activities including non-duplication, displacement, and supplantation, responsibilities for the administration of the program, and required trainings including safety. The host site also agrees to identify a manager to serve as the point of contact between the host site and Habitat AmeriCorps, with this single point of contact serving as a strong foundation for effective communications and monitoring.

-The Host Site Monitoring Plan provides a structure through which Habitat AmeriCorps assesses the host sites' progress towards meeting project goals, accountability with applicable program requirements, and identifies and addresses training and technical assistance needs. If instances of risk or noncompliance are identified, Habitat AmeriCorps and the host sites work together to ameliorate the situation.

-The Host Site Accountability Process provides guidance to address host site non-compliance issues. The process includes provisions to escalate compliance issues based on assessment of severity and responsiveness. It also guides Habitat AmeriCorps and host sites through the steps to resolve and bring to close any issues detected.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

Habitat AmeriCorps is an economic engine. The average cost to build a modest home in the U.S. is \$124,000. In FY2015 Habitat AmeriCorps members built and rehabbed 294 homes, at a cost of \$11,526 per home in taxpayer dollars. Put another way, with AmeriCorps members, Habitat affiliates build a house for less than the average cost of a semester of college or the cost of a modest used car. Each new Habitat home increases the local tax base and reduces costs of public assistance. For instance, Wilder Research surveyed 401 Habitat homeowners in Minnesota, finding that use of welfare assistance dropped from 29 percent to five. Sixty-six percent of Habitat applicants received food assistance, a number that fell to 30 percent after they moved into their home.

Habitat International receives financial support in the form of contributions from individuals,

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corporations, government assistance, foundations and other organizations. Our revenue in FY2015 was \$260.6 million, with \$26.2 million of this in government grants. Habitat AmeriCorps was one of the first AmeriCorps programs to qualify for a Fixed Price Grant. We estimates our total program cost for the AmeriCorps National program at almost \$10 million. The \$4.6 million request from CNCS is matched by \$5 million. Additionally, Habitat AmeriCorps secured a three-year investment of \$400,000 from the Argosy Foundation to advance leadership skill building throughout the Habitat AmeriCorps member/alumni continuum.

Habitat for Humanity operates under a federated model with the Habitat International serving as the headquarters providing centralized governance with independent, community-level, Habitat for Humanity affiliates that leverage local partnerships with a broad range of community stakeholders such as faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher learning, for-profit organizations and other non-profit organizations to create sponsors, strategic partners, volunteers, and donors. Habitat affiliates hosting Habitat AmeriCorps members obtain additional in-kind and cash support through individuals and community foundations and from Habitat ReStores.

BUDGET ADEQUACY: With our request of \$4,655,000, Habitat AmeriCorps is committed to providing the best return on investment to CNCS of any program in the AmeriCorps National portfolio. Habitat AmeriCorps requests an increase in members to 350 and cost per member to \$13,300 in this competition.

The rationale for the increase is twofold: 1)an incremental investment in AmeriCorps increases site capacity to build more homes, and each new home creates wealth and saves tax-payers money. 2)costs for construction-based programs increase at a rate well above those of other programs. Habitat estimates the real cost per member for 2016-17 is \$29,500, an increase of \$3,000 from 2012. Habitat has been diligent in streamlining costs. Nonetheless, workers comp has risen from \$1,882 to \$2,544 per member between 2012 and 2015; in the same period, member health care costs increased from \$1,529 per member to \$2,195. In FY16, Habitat received level funding from CNCS while incurring \$285,705 in additional program costs. For FY17, Habitat AmeriCorps anticipates maintaining the grantee share at 52 percent.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

THEORY OF CHANGE: AmeriCorps members will build the capacity of Habitat affiliates and help

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more than 4,800 economically disadvantaged people secure and maintain affordable housing. AmeriCorps members make it possible for affiliates to 1) build and rehab more homes that are purchased by the family, 2) sustain homeownership through critical home repair and weatherization, and 3) revitalize entire neighborhoods.

AmeriCorps members are critical to Habitat's strategic plan to do more, do it faster, and do it with more impact. Our 2013-16 external evaluation tells us that AmeriCorps members increase Habitat affiliates' capacity to serve more families by building more new homes, rehabbing more existing homes, and by engaging more volunteers.

OUTCOMES OF INTEREST: 350 Habitat AmeriCorps members serving as Construction Crew Leaders, Family Service Coordinators, Volunteer Service Coordinators, and Community Resource Coordinators will build 265 new homes, rehab 202 existing homes, and repair and weatherize 440 owner-occupied homes. They will provide housing services to 4,800 individuals. They will do this with the help of 102,000 volunteers and will put to good use the 163,450 hours of Habitat partner family sweat equity.

We believe that the 2016-19 external evaluation will prove that:

- Increases in capacity of hosting affiliates are largely attributable to AmeriCorps members leveraging and managing a broader set of outside volunteers. This expansion in volunteerism mediates the impact of AmeriCorps on the number of new builds and repairs.
- Residents in geographic communities impacted by host affiliates will show greater levels of satisfaction, sense of safety, and quality of life than areas impacted by non-hosting affiliates.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE STUDY: Our external evaluation will attempt to answer the following questions:

- Do Habitat partner families experience quality of life benefits as a result of Habitat homeownership?
- Do Habitat AmeriCorps members expand the reach of housing services beyond the traditional new home construction to include repair, rehab, and weatherization?
- How are communities transformed by Habitat AmeriCorps?
- Are Habitat AmeriCorps members workforce developed and do they become the hearts, hands, and

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voices for the cause of affordable housing?

-What is the cost benefit of using Habitat AmeriCorps members?

STUDY COMPONENTS:

Design and rationale: The evaluation design will be determined in collaboration with the external evaluators. Habitat AmeriCorps will engage an evaluator with the start of the 2016-17 service year in order to gather historical, baseline, and pre-data for analysis over the three years and into the 2018-19 service year. The evaluators will gain access to data already collected by Habitat AmeriCorps and Habitat International that supports the evaluation design determined to be the best fit for this project.

The proposed research design will aim to expand on the existing baseline and cross sectional data. To the extent possible, the study will build on the existing matched, quasi experimental design. As seen in the prior best practices evaluation, the longitudinal impact of national service hosting can be better tracked over a longer period of time to more clearly examine the extent to which AmeriCorps program success sustains itself over time.

Data collection: The following currently existing data will be available to the external evaluator

-Host Site impact report - Habitat AmeriCorps collects output data from affiliates participating as AmeriCorps host sites on a quarterly basis.

-Net Promoter Score data - The Net Promoter Score is an index that measures the willingness of customers (AmeriCorps members and host sites), to recommend a company's products or services (Habitat AmeriCorps), to others. It is used as a proxy for gauging the customer's overall satisfaction with a company's product or service and the customer's loyalty to the brand.

-Host Site capacity over time - Habitat AmeriCorps has six years of historical data that is allowing us to identify that house production is trending up over time with the usage of AmeriCorps members.

We anticipate the evaluator will use partner family surveys and interviews and gain access to community-level data. If we maintain our current external evaluation partnership, they have already conducted baseline and phase II data collection to establish changes in communities as a result of Habitat's intervention. The sampling methods and data collection procedures will be both quantitative and qualitative and consistent with past external evaluations. Many, but not all of the measurement tools, will remain the same to build on the existing baseline quasi-experimental design data; though

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new items will be included to examine deeper areas of interest.

Analysis: We place great confidence in our external evaluator or evaluation team to design the evaluation, data collection methods, and analysis plans. Our current evaluators, Daniel Cooper, PhD, Bradley Olson, PhD, and Judah Viola, PhD prefer a highly collaborative and communicative relationship with their clients, where all parties share in the growth and decision-making, and mutually take active roles in the process, and maintain active lines of communication so that Habitat AmeriCorps is fully involved in the design, under their leadership, of the evaluation. They recommend future analysis to focus on hierarchical linear modelling, a statistical technique which will allow for an examination of multi-level data (e.g., different types of affiliates across the country, such as those that host and do not host) along with outcome variables examined longitudinally, across multiple waves.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVALUATOR: We will launch an RFP per our procurement process to identify our 2016-19 evaluator(s) in the summer months 2016. We anticipate seeking similar qualifications to those of our current evaluations which can be found below.

Dr. Judah Viola is Dean of the College of Professional Studies and Advancement and an Associate Professor of Psychology at National Louis University. He received his Ph.D. from DePaul University in Community Psychology. He then held a research associate position in the office of Institutional Planning and Research at DePaul, where he routinely conducted program evaluations using large longitudinal datasets. In addition, in this position he gathered data for the executive administrators and board of trustees to support strategic planning of the university. In his current role as Dean and Associate Professor, he teaches program evaluation, consultation and qualitative research methods. His expertise outside of community psychology is in program evaluation and consultation in the non-profit sector, where he has worked with a broad range of community-based organizations and schools most often using mixed-method approaches and combining formative and summative approaches. Consistent with the National Service Program, Judah has conducted quantitative research on volunteerism and motivation for public service based on organizational and community climate.

Dr. Brad Olson is also an Associate Professor of Psychology and Co-Director of the Community Psychology Program at National Louis University. Dr. Olson earned his Ph.D. in Personality and Social Psychology from the University of Iowa, and worked for over six years at DePaul University as

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project director on multiple federally funded (NIH) community-based quantitative (including randomized and quasi-experimental design-based) research projects. Much of his work focuses on NIH-funded Oxford Houses, resident-run substance abuse recovery homes, of which there are over 1,000 in the US, Canada, Australia, England, and Africa. From 2006-2009, he worked as research faculty at the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University. In his current role at National Louis University, Brad teaches and provides training in community development, advanced statistics, and community psychology. Consistent with the HFH National Service Program, Brad has conducted mixed (quantitative and qualitative), longitudinal research on public service motivation, generativity, and civic engagement. In the 90s, he served as an Americorps volunteer. Brad is the currently president of Psychologists for Social Responsibility an independent, non-profit organization that applies psychological knowledge and expertise to promote peace, social justice, human rights, and sustainability.

Dr. Daniel Cooper is currently co-Executive Director for the Institute on Social Exclusion at Adler University. He previously held the position of Assistant Director of the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice at Adler. He earned his Ph.D. in Community Research and Action from Vanderbilt University. He also holds as Master of Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. From 2007-2010 he worked as the Director of Evaluation at Bethel New Life, one of Chicago's largest community development corporations (CDCs). He was responsible for evaluating all of the organization's programs, which included measuring the impact of volunteer efforts. During this time he also conducted research on civic engagement and homeownership in neighborhoods hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis in Chicago. His main interests involve building the capacity of organizations to mobilize neighborhood residents around efforts such as youth violence prevention and community development. In his current role at the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice, he is working with community-based organizations to evaluate citywide prisoner re-entry efforts, neighborhood violence prevention efforts, and youth restorative justice efforts.

BUDGET: We have budgeted \$40,000 - \$60,000.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

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A1.2.3.

No adjustments required at this time.

B1.

Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps shares the Corporation's commitment to increasing both the impact and efficiency of national service funding. Over the course of our 20 year partnership, Habitat has worked to provide one of the highest return on investment in the national service portfolio. Habitat AmeriCorps is an economic engine for communities. In addition to the building, rehabbing and repairing of 697 homes, last year Habitat AmeriCorps members generated volunteer labor valued at more than \$29 million. Each year Habitat AmeriCorps members multiply the federal investment into our programs 7.5 times-- not including the value of the homes themselves, or their value to the economy.

As the HFHI share of the cost per member has increased by 11 percent over the past three years, we have maintained a level cost per MSY and achieved utmost program compliance and quality. This past grant cycle, workers comp and healthcare costs increased by \$1,338 per member. This alone translates into a \$468,300 overall budget increase. While we are not in a position to lower the cost per MSY in the application, Habitat AmeriCorps is confident that our cost per MSY is as efficient as any in the nation.

The Habitat AmeriCorps 2013-16 External Evaluation, a quasi-experimental matched-pair design, showed that by hosting AmeriCorps National members, host sites built and rehabbed more homes compared to the "random, matched pair control group". On average, host affiliates can be expected to build approximately 9 more homes per year than a comparable non-host affiliate. What's more, from 2014 to 2015 host affiliates saw an increase in builds while equivalent-sized non-host affiliates, on average, saw decreases during the same time period. Additionally, host sites engaged a much larger number of volunteers compared to the non-host affiliates. On average, the mean number of total volunteers engaged during the fiscal year by host affiliates was nearly 70% higher than non-host affiliates. These increases, in turn, contributed to the housing stability of community members throughout the US.

C. N/A

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D.1. HFHI policies require that rehabs, repairs and the building of homes must meet the minimum ENERGY STAR and healthy indoor air quality standard. Additionally, host sites build to minimum durability standards that address local geographic, climatic and disaster issues. To that end, many of the housing services provided to economically disadvantaged individuals include weatherization activities, but is not the primary intent of the services provided. An example of this would be replacing windows, caulking and weather-stripping in a home, as part of a larger repair project, which provides housing services to economically disadvantaged individuals, but would also improve the energy efficiency/weatherization of a home.

D. 2. In alignment with the USDA, individuals that HFHI host sites serve must also meet gross and net income tests. From HFH's U.S. AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS POLICY HANDBOOK: Policy 11: Homeowner Partner Selection: "Affiliates must make all reasonable efforts to serve families whose incomes do not exceed 60 percent of the area median income (AMI), as defined for the affiliate's service area by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and in no cases are permitted to select households with incomes above 80 percent of AMI . Affiliates should strive to always serve the families who fall within the lowest AMI range possible. Habitat affiliates shall perform appropriate due diligence in determining the ability to pay and credit worthiness of their homebuyers. Such due diligence must include, and is not limited to: income verification, credit reporting and assessment of all other household debt; projected utility costs, homeowner association dues (if any), special assessments and other costs directly associated with the ownership of their home."

D. 3. HFHI ensures that individuals are not double counted by instructing host sites to report only volunteer instances during that reporting period and not cumulative, and asking host sites what percentage of total volunteers leveraged are new. Individuals served are not double-counted by way of ensuring that household members are assigned to a housing unit in the system, and though related member service activity on those housing units is reported quarterly, the tally of housing units is ensures that non-duplicated units are reported as part of the documented procedure in Excel in the data aggregation process.

E. N/A

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F. N/A

Continuation Changes

Grant Characteristics