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Executive Summary

Up2Us Sports, through our nationally renowned AmeriCorps Up2Us Sports Coaches (aka Coach Across America (U2UC) Program), proposes to have 24 AmeriCorps members, identified from their local communities, serve as coach-mentors to provide sports-based youth development mentoring in Greater New Orleans area. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will ensure that 1,400 youth have been engaged in physical activity to reduce obesity and avoid negative behaviors like violence. In addition, the Members will leverage an additional 20 volunteers who will be engaged in events like MLK Day. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of Healthy Futures by using physical activity to prevent childhood obesity and Engaging Veterans by recruiting returning military veterans to be AmeriCorps members. The CNCS investment of \$160,205 will be matched with \$172,902, \$0 in public funding and \$172,902 in private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

B1. PROBLEM/NEED. The AmeriCorps Up2Us Sports Coaches Program (U2UC) builds upon our highly successful National Direct AmeriCorps model to address some of the most pervasive epidemics facing youth in New Orleans: childhood obesity, violence and other negative social behaviors. Our evidence-based model, called sports-based youth development (SBYD) specifically focuses on using sports as 1) a vehicle for increasing physical activity and 2) a platform for mentoring youth to make more positive life decisions. In addition, we identify young adults from the local community to be AmeriCorps members who use their love of sports to be "credible messengers" to other at-risk youth. As credible messengers, these AmeriCorps coaches conduct recreational activities that provide youth at least 60-90 minutes of physical activity (leading to Healthy Futures) as well as group and one-on-one mentoring, helping these young people develop non-cognitive skills such as resiliency, discipline and future focus (leading to Safer Communities). Additionally, veterans returning to their communities will engage in service that will positively impact the lives of kids and develop skills that lead to can long-term careers in recreation/youth development.

It is estimated that 15,000 youth aged 16-24 are disconnected from formal education/workforce (Scott Cowen Institute) resulting in many youth without mentors/positive peer networks. Youth in these target neighborhoods have a tremendous need for recreation and mentorship programs. The support of Volunteer Louisiana enhances our ability to confront citywide challenges of childhood obesity, juvenile crime, and disconnection from formal education/workforce. With an average childhood poverty rate of 43.8%, it is estimated that more than one in three children live in poverty in

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NOLA (NOLA Data Center). Youth growing up in deep poverty face dual health issues: higher than average rates of childhood obesity in part because of the lack of structured recreational programming led by trained coaches; and higher than average rates of negative social indicators like youth violence, crime, and academic disconnection. The socioeconomic factors contributing to these citywide challenges make it difficult for youth to live healthy lives.

The disparities can be isolated by zip code in the City of New Orleans. Hot spot neighborhoods with the greatest risk to youth well-being like Central City, Seventh Ward, and the Treme have an average life expectancy that is 25 years lower than in communities with less disparities like the Garden District (Orleans: Place Matters, 2012). Central City exemplifies the need for the national service initiative. Nearly 44% of Central City residents live in poverty compared to the 27% average of the city (New Orleans Advocate, 2015). Central City, like many high poverty areas, experience high levels of violence, averaging 42 individuals shot per year, and the highest per capita rating for gun violence (New Orleans Advocate, 2015). Community members echo the fearfulness that comes from living in high crime neighborhoods impact youth's ability to play outdoors (Orleans: Place Matters, 2012). Decreased access to safe spaces to play and out-of-school activities negatively impact a community's ability to stay healthy. Louisiana ranks 6th in the nation for high levels of childhood obesity. In New Orleans, it is estimated that 34% of the city's high school youth are overweight or obese compared to the national average of 27%. Demonstrated in a 2007 study in New Orleans, the introduction of an adult presence is a change agent in reducing childhood obesity. A 2014 study by the After School Alliance in communities across the US found that 11.3 million children were without supervision between 3 and 6pm. Demonstrated by a 2011 study conducted in New Orleans, adding adult supervision to a playground in an under-resourced community during afterschool caused an 84% increase in the number of youth engaging in outdoor activity compared to a similar community without the supervision factor (RWJF). Increasing access to safe spaces for play also assist the city in juvenile crime prevention. Research shows that crime perpetrated by and/or against youth tend to take place during afterschool hours. Specifically, in NOLA, incidents of crime committed by youth is rising. From 2013-2015, 2980 juvenile offenders were arrested, 42% were under the age of 10. The NOPD believes disconnection from school begins with truancy and escalates to crimes (Fox8, 2016). With 39% of youth living in single-parent homes, Superintendent Harrison of NOPD contributes the increase in crimes to a lack of mentors guiding youth to make positive decisions.

B2. Up2Us Sports will focus on increasing youth's well-being and life expectancy in underserved communities by placing AmeriCorps members to serve as mentors in hot spot neighborhoods of New

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Orleans. AmeriCorps members will address obesity by serving as coaches who provide youth in these neighborhoods with regular physical activity through sports programs that otherwise would not be available to them. The impact of this intervention on increasing physical fitness was recently proven through an external evaluation of the program completed in September 2016 (see Evidence Base); CNCS recently contacted Up2Us Sports to highlight the program in an upcoming progress report for the First Lady's Office's Childhood Obesity Taskforce Report. The report will recommend continued funding for interscholastic sports as part of the national effort to end childhood obesity.

The specific communities and subsites targeted for this grant are: Firstline Schools Charter Management Organization operating Joseph S. Clark High School, Langston Hughes Academy, Samuel J. Green Charter, Arthur Ashe Charter School, New Orleans College Prep operating Lawrence D. Crocker College Prep. Additionally, Up2Us Sports anticipates transitioning current partners to the AmeriCorps model that includes: Youth Run NOLA, Girls On The Run, ReNew Schools, Einstein Charter Schools, and KIPP Schools operating (KIPP McDonogh 15). Up2Us Sports has begun preliminary partnership assets with the following subsites: Choice Charter Management Organization operating Lafayette Academy, Esperanza Charter, and McDonogh 42. Through this collaboration, Up2Us Sports will place coaches in the Central City, Gert town, Fairgrounds, Freret, Filmore, Midcity, Milan, Plum Orchard, Seventh ward, and Treme neighborhoods of Orleans Parish; and Kenner of Jefferson Parish. While some of the subsites listed above have other AmeriCorps funded programs like Playworks and ReNew, members allocated to Up2Us Sports will be serving in a different capacity. Our members will oversee and/or assist with physical education and afterschool sports programming in school. Specifically related to Playworks, Up2Us Sports has a history of serving several of the same schools as Playworks because of their dedication to recess specific programming. Up2Us Sports and Playworks models complement one other because we operate in different physical activity settings. AmeriCorps members will address positive decision-making by integrating one-on-one and group mentoring activities into the sports setting. Our external evaluation found that youth with trained U2U coaches reported statistically significant increases in positive decision-making, like resisting peer pressure. Additional studies on the impact of our SBYD approach provides further evidence of its effectiveness in addressing the needs outlined above. Rosewater (2010) found that SBYD coaches stimulate socio-emotional learning that leads to better decision-making. Fraser-Thomas, Cote, & Deakin (2005) found that the presence of a trained coach in a sports setting directly leads to more positive peer relationships, and Gano-Overway et al. (2009) found that sports and mentoring led to an increase in pro-social behavior.

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Additional evidence demonstrates youth in low-income communities who participate in sports perform better than those who do not. Romo et al (2013) found that youth athletes demonstrated decreases in school fighting, violent behavior, and the carrying of weapons. Coid et al (2013) found that physically active youth in sports demonstrated less gang activity. Tomporowski et al. (2008) found that youth active in sports demonstrated stronger executive function skills that are associated with greater academic performance. Ratey and Hagerman (2008) found that these youth experienced less anxiety and depression, which are correlated with decreases in substance abuse and teen suicide. Recently, the New Orleans Health Department's FitNOLA initiative, contracted us to conduct trauma sensitive training for 200 school based coaches and physical educators. Our partnership reaffirms the pressing needs for trained U2UC coaches in the target neighborhoods because of ongoing challenges youth face in maintaining their health.

B3. THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL. The U2UC theory of change is simple: trained sports coaches can be the most effective role models for teaching young people healthy behaviors that lead to increases in physical activity and more positive decision-making. With Volunteer Louisiana, we will expand our existing workforce of trained coaches to serve an additional 1,400 at-risk youth. In order to achieve our theory of change, our logic model focuses on four key areas: (1) selecting community-based organizations as "subsites" for AmeriCorps members through a Call for Partnerships process that screens subsites for mission and values alignment with Up2Us Sports and AmeriCorps; (2) recruiting adults from the local community (including veterans) as AmeriCorps coach-mentors; (3) training these coach-mentors and their subsite supervisors in SBYD and volunteer engagement; and, (4) conducting SBYD activities like: leading afterschool specific sports programming, as well as, enhancing physical education classes through introduction of youth development into physical education instruction and improving the adult per student ratio all leading to healthier behaviors among youth and an ethic of service among coaches across the school year. Members will engage youth for approximately 8 months for 20 to 30 hours a week in SBYD activities.

- Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). U2UC starts by engaging CBOs that need AmeriCorps members to increase their impact and scope of services but that otherwise do not have the management and financial capacity to oversee an AC grant. The CBOs chosen for this program participated in a planning process with us in which they shared program strategies and agreed to engage in ongoing communications and bimonthly meetings to provide continuous feedback and direction for the program. Other criteria used for selecting the participating programs included: adequate staff to supervise member recruitment and placement; mission alignment with achieving

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our selected program measures; willingness to participate in an evaluation of program outcomes; ability to comply with all AmeriCorps rules and regulations; and, belief in the value of national and community service. The anticipated CBOs are: Firstline Schools (confirmed), New Orleans College Prep (confirmed), Youth Run NOLA, Girls On The Run, ReNew Schools, Einstein Charter Schools, and KIPP Schools operating (KIPP McDonogh 15), and Choice Charter Management Organization operating Lafayette Academy, Esparanza Charter, and McDonogh 42.

- Local Coach Mentors. The next phase of our logic model entails identifying local adults to be AC members who serve as coach-mentors at their respective subsites. Because these subsites know the communities best, we use them to recruit coaches from within the target neighborhoods. U2UC staff assist subsites in developing position descriptions, and in advertising, interviewing, and screening of all applicants. Of the 24 coaches selected as members, the majority will be African-American and Hispanic from the communities they serve, ages 18-25, and at least 40% will be women.

- Coach and Subsite Supervisor Training. The next phase of our model is training our AmeriCorps members to be SBYD coach mentors. SBYD combines best practices from the field of mentoring with recent scientific data that proves that regular physical activity through sports not only addresses obesity prevention but mitigates the effects of trauma by stimulating neurological functioning that helps young people manage stress and make better life choices. Accordingly, our model addresses Performance Measure H5 (reducing childhood obesity) and our applicant-determined measure, HIA (healthy decision-making skills).

Because SBYD is a variation of the typical sports model, we require that subsite supervisors (HSS) of AmeriCorps members participate in training alongside of our coach-mentors. The initial training (described further in Section B6 involves 32 hours of instruction on developing SBYD lesson plans and conducting SBYD program activities. Initial training is followed up with 8 additional hours of booster training, 8 hours of one-on-one professional development by the U2UC Program Manager, 2 hours of online training, and training-by-text (a platform through which Up2Us Sports shares SBYD coaching tips throughout the year).

- Yearlong SBYD Activities. Once trained, coaches will be in charge of teams of youth based on the program model of their subsite. Teams will either encompass single or multiple sports/activities. Programs are classified as low intensity (where teams meet for at least 12 weeks) and high intensity (where teams meet for at least 30 weeks) Coaches will lead each team in a minimum of 4-10 hours per week of SBYD activities and 2-4 hours per week of additional group or one-on-one mentoring. Mentoring activities include more than 50 team-building exercises designed by Up2Us Sports to

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promote internal attributes (e.g., discipline, social confidence, and future focus) that are associated with positive decision-making. For each sports/recreation team, coaches will also be responsible for developing weekly lesson plans (monitored by their supervisors and their assigned U2UC Program Manager). In total, coaches are expected to engage 70 youth with 550 hours of moderate-to-vigorous physical activities; 175 hours of mentoring activities; and 25 hours of service-learning (through community service projects and citywide days of service). An additional 150 hours of their service year are reserved for training, professional development, team-building, evaluation, and administrative/program support at their subsites.

Coaches will participate in all activities required by the U2UC Program Manager. These will include: required National Days of Service; 4-6 hours per month of social or small group activities; and one-on-one check-ins/site observations which will provide them feedback and opportunities to reflect on their roles in national service. These activities will be reinforced by on-line reflection logs using the AmeriCorps-approved America Learns system (monitored and commented on weekly by U2UC staff). Based on our track record with our National Direct funding, we expect that the vast majority of youth in the program will have a positive experience with sports, build a positive relationship with their AmeriCorps coach, and form positive relationships with their peers. Further, the youth will report feeling physically and emotionally safe and will attend their programs consistently throughout the year during afterschool hours when juvenile crime peaks.

Up2Us Sports will use the following metrics to measure success:

- 60% of youth will improve on the PACER test (a valid and reliable tool for measuring children's physical fitness).
- 80% of youth, 3rd grade and above, will demonstrate a gain in positive-internal attributes as measured through High Impact Attributes (HIA) survey.
- Four months after attending training, at least 80% of coaches will pass the SBYD best practices knowledge check by getting 80% or more answers correct.

We anticipate that the longer-term outcomes from this program will be:

- Increased physical activity habits among participants resulting in reduced rates of childhood obesity and adult morbidity through obesity related illnesses.
- More positive decision-making leading to reductions in violence and other negative social behaviors as well as safer communities.
- Lower poverty rates in target communities due to more job training and job placement support provided to members serving as coaches.

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Lastly, we anticipate that the program will impact service, itself, by creating a unique model for engaging coaches into the national service movement. Up2Us Sports has found that the SBYD coaching philosophy that AmeriCorps members deliver to their subsites leads to more engaged youth and community volunteers, thereby contributing to these program's effectiveness and sustainability. AmeriCorps coaches also demonstrate the potential role of youth sports playing a role in larger collective impact efforts aimed at health and violence prevention.

B4. EVIDENCE BASE. The U2UC program qualifies as "strong" under the CNCS evidence-based framework. We base this conclusion on having conducted 2 quasi-experimental external evaluations on the program. The first study was done nationally (titled "Evaluation of the Coach Across America Sports-Based Youth Development Program"). This study compared youth who participated in high and low intensity programs and included a large sampling of host sites and urban communities between July 2013 and July 2014. The study found a statistically significant increase in physical activity frequency ($p < .001$) and a statistically significant increase in 2 HIAs: plan B thinking ($p = .008$) and pro-social connections ($p = .001$). These results were even more pronounced among youth who participated in high intensity programs; youth also demonstrated statistical significant improvement in their ability to resist peer pressure ($p < .001$) and a steeper improvement in physical activity (increase of 0.13 compared to 0.07 in low intensity programs).

The second study (Up2Us Sports Evaluation Report: Coach Across America Programming in the New Orleans Area) was done in New Orleans from August 2015 to September 2016 and included a comparison group of youth not involved in U2UC programming but with similar demographics and from the same communities. The study found that youth who participate in the program had a statistically significant improvement in physical fitness ($p < .05$) while youth in the comparison group had a statistically significant decline in physical fitness ($p < .05$). Youth who worked with Up2Us Sports coaches who scored higher on a coach skill measure experienced the largest improvements in their physical fitness ($p < .05$). Similarly, youth in programs that offered more hours with the coach experienced larger improvements in physical fitness compared to youth in programs with fewer hours ($p < .05$). Older participants (6th to 12th graders) working with Up2Us Sports coaches had significantly higher future focus/plan B thinking scores at endline than youth in the comparison group ($p < .05$). For older participants, participating in a program that offered more hours with the coach was associated with higher HIA scores ($p < .05$). Younger participants (3rd to 5th graders) working with Up2Us Sports coaches had a statistically significant increase in a measure of overall well-being during program participation ($p < .05$) while youth in the comparison group had no significant change. Youth

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in both the Up2Us Sports group and the comparison group had a statistically significant increase in discipline ($p < .01$ and $p < .05$, respectively).

B5. NOTICE PRIORITY. U2UC addresses the following Volunteer Louisiana funding priorities:

- Safer Communities: The theory of change and geographic focus of this U2UC program are designed to address violence prevention and to mitigate unrest among youth (NPM H-HIA). The U2UC program, which has also been funded to reduce violence by the Dept. of Justice, furthers the mission of the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, which includes New Orleans as a target city. The U2UC program has been featured in the Forum's reports in Chicago and Philadelphia (both of which receive AmeriCorps State Commission grants).

- Veterans and Military Families: Based on our success in engaging veterans as coaches, Up2Us Sports will recruit veterans to serve as coach-mentors for at least 4 member positions (PM: V2); We will be recruiting veteran's interested in serving in AmeriCorps as a first step towards reintegrating into civilian life. Veterans returning to their communities will engage in service that will develop skills that can lead to long-term careers in recreation/youth development. They will receive our extensive member training and certification in SBYD in addition to other professional development opportunities during their term of service.

B6. MEMBER TRAINING. Member training is critical to the success for the U2UC program. Up2Us Sports has a staff of 14 full-time and part-time trainers who execute what is considered the nation's most comprehensive SBYD training. All members will undergo: a 4 day residential orientation/training that begins in early August prior to direct service with youth; 8 hours of additional booster training to take place in January which is generally the half way through point for service; 8 hours of one-on-one professional development that includes ¿The Role of Reflection in Personal Growth¿, ¿Professional Communication¿, ¿What Come Next: Preparing for Life after Up2Us Sports¿, and ¿Financial Literacy¿; and, at least 2 hours of online support.

U2UC training focuses on our evidence-based approach for inspiring physical and mental health through SBYD. Training workshops include modules on: developing positive relationships among team members; creating positive team cultures that build self-confidence and resiliency; developing one-on-one mentoring relationships with youth; maximizing the impact of physical activity on child/adolescent brain development; conflict resolution; integrating life skills into sports and other activities; and, gender in sport. All coaches are educated on mandated reporter laws; they also receive First Aid, CPR and AED certification by the American Red Cross.

Members are also trained on how to collect data on the youth they serve and the impact of their

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activities. They are trained to log their activities and reflections on the America Learns online community, and they receive ongoing professional development workshops to help tie their year of service to skills that contribute to their long-term employment.

An essential part of member training is educating members about the history and purpose of CNCS. We will assist members in understanding their connection to the larger national mission of the AmeriCorps Service year through AmeriCorps 101 tutorial. Additionally, we will help members adhere to the rules of AmeriCorps including understanding the prohibited activities. AmeriCorps rules and regulations are written in member contracts, reviewed during their initial in-person orientation, reviewed again with their Subsite Supervisor, included in required online training, and monitored throughout the year at site visits by the U2UC Program Manager.

B7. MEMBER SUPERVISION. U2UC members receive dual levels of supervision from both their Host Subsite Supervisor (HSS) and their U2UC Program Manager (PM). To prepare the HSS for their supervisory role, Up2Us Sports requires that they attend the 4-day training alongside of their coaches. They also are required to attend a separate HSS orientation and at least one additional training that specifically reviews AmeriCorps rules and regulations including non-displacement, duplication and supplanting policies and AC member prohibitive activities; programs goals and objectives; onboarding and exiting procedures; electronic timekeeping procedures; expectations for reporting, data collecting, and evaluation; volunteer management; and other required service activities (including National Days of Service). The PM also makes at least 2 formal site visits as well as informal check-ins to meet with the HSS to ensure that rules and regulations are adhered to and to address any interim challenges, ongoing training needs, and shared best practices.

Up2Us Sports uses "Home Court", an online community for HSS's to communicate with each other; share best practices; download U2UC contracts, timesheets and other resources; communicate any challenges and concerns with their PM; and, learn about upcoming activities and deadlines.

Any breaches of the member's U2UC service agreement are addressed jointly by a meeting with the HSS and PM. A severe breach or second breach is also addressed in writing. Repeated offenses, including violations of AmeriCorps prohibited activities may result in the termination of the coach and/or subsite. The actions of the PM are reviewed by the Senior PM and subject to further review by the National AmeriCorps Director at Up2Us Sports. Additional staff in the Up2Us Sports HR and Finance departments regularly conduct internal audits and monitor contracts, timesheets and other paperwork to ensure that they are accurate.

B8. MEMBER EXPERIENCE. The majority of AmeriCorps members will be recruited from the same

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community where their program operates. For this reason, U2UC staff members take particular interest in ensuring that these first-time AmeriCorps members have a positive experience. Coaches are expected to live by Up2Us Sports' organizational values that include "developing the coach in everyone", "fostering positive relationships" and, of course, the unwritten value of "having fun". Coaches are also assigned a peer-mentor whom they are responsible for checking in with to ensure each other's mental wellbeing throughout the service term. This is especially important as working with highly traumatized youth can induce stress on coaches. U2UC staff also act as mentors to the coaches by guiding them throughout the program year and helping them to translate learned skills (teamwork, leadership, diversity and inclusion) into stepping stones towards future career success. U2UC staff also organize teambuilding activities, social events and professional development workshops that both strengthen the bonds among coaches; allow them to check in with their peer mentors; encourage networking with other professionals; and provide them essential skill sets to be more effective service providers. Through partnerships with corporate donors (Mercedes-Benz USA, Humana, Nike), U2UC arranges career-building workshops on specific skills like resume writing, interviewing, and financial planning. Through partnerships with professional teams, U2UC organizes social outings that include recognition for their service at games and halftime events. U2UC staff also engage members in the wider service movement by requiring they participate in National Days of Service and other key activities. Lastly, coaches are encouraged to share their service experiences through community events, other youth activities, and social media. Social opportunities and community events will be an opportunity to build connections to other AmeriCorps grantee programs like City Year and Playworks.

B9. COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION. Up2Us Sports has created a unique avenue for engaging sports into the national service movement. Accordingly, our staff members take great pride in recognizing AmeriCorps in all aspects of the U2UC program design. At the start of the program, each coach is provided four AmeriCorps uniforms that they are required to wear during their service activities and all major tournaments and events. U2UC also prominently displays AmeriCorps banners at all trainings, community activities, service learning projects and major sporting events. Members will be asked to recite the AmeriCorps pledge at the start and end of meetings and special events, including service days. U2UC also requires that subsites recognize AmeriCorps on their websites, and whenever possible include the AC logo in written materials.

Organizational Capability

C1. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING. Up2Us Sports has significant experience

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managing federal and state funds, including management of: AmeriCorps National Direct (7 yrs), AmeriCorps VISTA (7 yrs), AmeriCorps VISTA Louisiana (3 yrs), OJJDP (3 yrs), Serve Illinois (3 yrs), PennSERVE (1 yr), Volunteer Florida (1 yr), Volunteer Management (1 yr) and YSO (for initial capacity building). We have also raised significant funding from private donors, including Mercedes-Benz USA (in partnership with the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation), Nike Inc., Humana, Gatorade, and Target. Up2Us Sports manages these public-private sources of financial support in strict accordance with the rules and regulations set forth by AmeriCorps, and uses AmeriCorps as the operational, administrative, financial and programmatic standard by which all Up2Us Sports departments are organized. This includes: federal, state and sex offender background checks, completed and filed in a timely manner; timekeeping systems maintained and coordinated with payroll; and HR benefits that meet government standards.

The Up2Us Sports national staff oversees governance and compliance procedures which are executed by regional staff who conduct programs in their market in strict accordance to national specifications. Privately funded coaches are subject to the same onboarding/exiting procedures, background checks, timesheets, host-site support and evaluations as coaches funded by AmeriCorps.

New Orleans is a regional hub for Up2Us Sports. New Orleans staff oversees all aspects of program execution, including subsite management, the coach experience, training, and evaluation/reporting. The New Orleans Program Managers and Subsite Supervisors participate in dual oversight of U2UC coaches, supervised by a Regional Director. In addition, the Finance Director, Training Director and HR Officer oversee quality control and compliance. The following key staff oversee the program: National Management Team. Paul Caccamo, CEO and Founder, (BS, Georgetown/MPP, Harvard) has spent 25 years in the nonprofit sector focused on youth development. He has launched and/or managed several national nonprofit organizations (America SCORES, Kaboom!, the Children's Aid Society and the Mt. Sinai Adolescent Health Center). A national founder of the SBYD movement, he routinely writes and lectures on the impact of SBYD. Megan Bartlett, Chief Program Officer, (BA, Wesleyan/MA, Tufts) oversees more than 30 program and training staff nationwide. She has assembled an advisory group of youth development and academic experts who continuously oversee and update the program design, training, evaluation and compliance systems for the organization. Isabel Pradas, Dir. of AmeriCorps & Government Partnerships, (BA, Manhattan College/MPP, The New School) has 20 years of experience in the non-profit sector with Bronx Institute's GEAR UP and Aspira of New York, and three years experience overseeing AmeriCorps as U2UC Director. Amber Killberg, Director of U2UC Program, (BA, Eastern Nazarene College) has spent 10 years developing

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eLearning at State Street Bank & Trust after serving as an AmeriCorps*NCCC member in Denver and manages the compliance, placement, and strategy of U2UC.

U2UC Program Management Staff-New Orleans. The U2UC program is led by a New Orleans based team that includes a Regional Director, 2 Program Managers, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, and 1 SBYD Trainers. Luella Williams (B.A., Knox College, MSc, Queen Margaret University), serves as Regional Director in New Orleans. Since the regional operation was launched in 2013, she has overseen the placement of more than 120 coaches. She is assisted by Karl Tear, Program Manager.

Karl Tear (MA, U. of New Orleans) is an alumna of AmeriCorps and U2UC.

U2UC Training Staff. Caitlin Barrett (BA, Pomona/MPA, NYU), Dir. of Training, oversees a national training team that consists of twelve SBYD trainers, one of whom are placed in New Orleans. Ms. Barrett worked at both City Year and America SCORES prior to joining the Up2Us Sports team in 2011. Nate LeJeune is a NOLA-based Trainer for Up2Us Sports who served as a former Up2Us Sports coach and was the AmeriCorps Program Manager for two years in New Orleans.

U2UC Finance/HR Management. The U2UC program will be fiscally managed by the Up2Us Sports financial team, which is led by Colin Mohamed (BBA, Pace/MBA, Pace) who has twenty years accounting/finance experience with nonprofits with pwc LLP. Leslie Rich (BA, SUNY Oswego), Federal Grants Mgr., has 9 years of experience overseeing government funding for international and national nonprofits and oversees the accounting and reporting of all Up2Us Sports government funding. Michael Muldoon (BS, Springfield/MA, Virginia Commonwealth), Asst. Dir. of U2UC, oversees all compliance procedures of the national/regional U2UC programs. Ms. Ruiz (BA, Robinson College), Operations Mgr., oversees HR systems, timekeeping and internal HR auditing.

U2UC Evaluation. Lauren Kinderknecht, Dir. of Monitoring & Evaluation, will ensure that the U2UC program collects data to inform all outlined performance measures. Ms. Kinderknecht (BS, Wake Forest/MPH, Tufts) has previously led research and evaluation at Edgework Consulting and for Tufts University School of Medicine. Rocco Palin (MPH, Tulane/BA, Dartmouth), Monitoring & Evaluation Manager, is based in New Orleans and served as a coach within U2UC before joining the staff.

As part of the planning process for this U2UC submission, Up2Us Sports staff have participated in meetings, site visits, and planning calls with the leadership of the proposed subsites. We have conducted internal assessments to ensure that they are capable of supervising AmeriCorps member(s) and collecting data on their impact; in addition, we have surveyed them on local community needs and demographics to determine the extent to which a coach placement will help these programs expand their scope and quality of services. Subsite Supervisors have also provided feedback on all

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aspects of the U2UC program design, including coach recruitment, coach and supervisor training, additional community challenges faced by youth in their neighborhoods, and suggestions for other community partners that can serve as resources for coaches. Sites will provide letters of commitment prior to the commencement of the grant period.

C2. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY. Up2Us Sports has undergone audits by CNCS and fully understands the level of scrutiny that is necessary to achieve all compliance and accountability standards. Up2Us Sports trains all program, finance and HR staff on its internal systems for preventing, detecting and/or reporting incidents of noncompliance. AmeriCorps rules and regulations are clearly outlined on all Subsite and member contracts and are reviewed at program orientations and trainings. All contracts include termination clauses and grievance procedures. Up2Us Sports also screens subsites to ensure that AmeriCorps placements do not duplicate, displace, or supplant volunteers, staff and interns. Subsites must demonstrate how AmeriCorps members will expand services that otherwise would not have been possible without the AmeriCorps member's presence. To further ensure compliance, U2UC staff developed a Compliance Monitoring Tool (CMT) for their National Direct grant. This tool will be fully implemented in the U2UC program and will be overseen by the Up2Us Sports Compliance Officer. The first phase of the CMT has already been completed in preparation for this grant, involving a comprehensive assessment of potential host-sites to ensure that staff and leadership understand U2UC program goals rules and regulations; CNCS rules and regulations; HR and financial reporting requirements; and required supervision of AmeriCorps members. Additional phases include: performing quarterly site visits; using mid-year surveys to review compliance with CNCS and Volunteer Louisiana requirements; monitoring timesheets and data collection; and surveying member performance and member satisfaction with host-sites on a continuous basis. Based on the CMT, the U2UC Program Manager will assess programs as being fully compliant, "medium risk" (at least 80% compliance level), and "high risk" (60% compliance level and below). Host-sites identified as "medium risk" will be given additional support and will undergo additional monitoring to ensure that they are able to comply with CNCS, Volunteer Louisiana, and U2UC requirements. Host-sites that are identified as "high risk" will be given 30 days in a written warning to devise a corrective action plan to submit to the Sr. Program Manager (subject to review by the U2UC Director). Any "high risk" program that does not correct noncompliance within 60 days of submitting a corrective action plan will have their members reassigned to another subsite and will be ineligible to host members in possible subsequent grant years.

U2UC has over an 80% completion rate (and growing each year) for their National Direct

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AmeriCorps members, a population that has been traditionally under-represented in national service. Part of this success stems from our ability to communicate rules, regulations and prohibited activities clearly throughout terms of service. Per these systems, any noncompliant activity performed by a coach receives a verbal and/or written warning at an in-person meeting with both the Subsite Supervisor and U2UC Program Manager. Repeated noncompliant behavior and/or more severe issues of noncompliance results in a written warning that will require a corrective action plan to be filed in that coach's personnel file. If the corrective action is not undertaken according to specified timelines, the coach will be subject to early termination. Internally, Up2Us Sports staff have also implemented a monthly spot check system by which member files are randomly reviewed to ensure that they meet Up2Us Sports and CNCS standards. The Finance and HR team notify the Chief Program Officer and U2UC Director if any breaches in financial reporting or HR management are discovered.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

D1. COST EFFECTIVENESS. The total budget for the program is \$330,492, based on a total grant of \$160,205 from Volunteer Louisiana, matched by \$170,287 in private funding. We have secured \$9,600 matching funds from Nike. An additional \$96,000 funds have been committed by the subsites as our model requires that subsites pay a 52% match of the coach stipend/member support costs. Additional in-kind support is provided by Nike and National Staff.

The cost per MSY for the program is \$13,352. The cost per participant for this program is \$236.00. Analysis of the target population for this grant suggests that U2UC can yield up to a \$29 Social Return on Investment (SROI) for every dollar spent on hiring a coach. This SROI is derived by analyzing the average costs of incarceration and treatment for obesity-related illnesses of the youth targeted by this program had they not experienced the impacts of this program on their physical and mental health.

D2. BUDGET ADEQUACY. U2UC draws upon 7 years' experience developing and managing AmeriCorps budgets for both CNCS and State commissions to ensure this budget's accuracy. The total budget of \$330,492 provides sufficient resources for Up2Us Sports to provide a quality and enriching experience to AmeriCorps members, is in compliance with budget instructions and has been submitted without errors. Program operating costs totaling \$117,886 ensure a highly-qualified, experienced staff to oversee program implementation, management and evaluation; robust training for AmeriCorps members; and travel, supplies, contractual services, and other operating costs. Member costs totaling \$203,077 will support costs of living at \$7,770 per member for 24 HT members and covers member support costs. Administrative costs totaling \$9,5290 ensure efficient and effective program administration across all sites.

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Evaluation Summary or Plan

The evaluation outlined below is designed to measure the effectiveness of the AmeriCorps Up2Us Sports Coach (U2UC) program. This process and outcome evaluation will use a quasi-experimental design and will be implemented August 2018 to August 2019. The goal of the evaluation will be to provide information on the extent to which the U2UC program is contributing to positive changes in the lives of youth, specifically in the development of positive attributes and physical fitness.

The U2UC theory of change is simple: trained sports coaches can be the most effective role models for teaching young people healthy behaviors that lead to increases in physical activity and positive decision-making. CBOs are selected as “Host Sites.” Next, we identify local adults to be AmeriCorps coach-mentors at their respective host sites. These members are trained on how to implement SBYD best practices, and then they implement SBYD activities at their host sites. These members will engage youth in sports and mentoring activities designed to increase physical fitness and help youth develop positive attributes that contribute to good decision-making.

This evaluation is intended to measure the following outcomes: fitness of youth participants, internal attributes/decision-making skills of youth, and SBYD best practices knowledge and skills of coach mentors. This evaluation will be a quasi-experimental impact evaluation comparing outcomes of the U2UC program to outcomes of a comparison group. It is not feasible to randomize to an intervention or comparison group, thus the quasi-experimental design represents the most rigorous evaluation method available. The CBOs that serve as host sites have existing models and expand their model into new communities with the support of AmeriCorps members. Communities in which members are placed is a strategic decision made by the CBO based on factors such as existing networks and connections, the need of the community, and other factors determined by the individual host sites. Within these communities, the CBOs handle recruitment and enrollment of youth participants. Randomly assigning youth to either the comparison group or the intervention group would disrupt program activities and leave youth who would otherwise receive programming without the opportunity to participate. In the absence of random selection, U2UC will ensure the comparison group is a good match for the intervention group by recruiting schools in the same communities that our programs serve to be the comparison group.

Data collection tools

PACER: The Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run (PACER) is the recommended aerobic fitness test included in the Fitnessgram program. The PACER is a 20-meter multi-stage run that gets progressively more difficult as the activity progresses. Each youth’s score is calculated by the

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number of laps he/she completes (more laps indicates a higher fitness level). Members administer the PACER test at the beginning of the program year to establish a baseline level of physical fitness for the youth that they work with. This baseline measure is then compared to their end of program (endline) PACER score to see improvement. The end of the program varies by student. Students enrolled in an afterschool sports will have an end date that is reflective of the sport season. Students engaged in a physical education setting may have an end date that is based on trimester, semester or the end of the school year. Individual scores are compared to see the number of laps that youth are able to complete at endline compared to baseline.

HIA survey: Research has revealed a group of attributes that is connected to sport participation and also to positive decision-making in youth and positive outcomes related to health, education, and risk prevention. The High Impact Attributes (HIAs) include self-awareness, positive identity, situational awareness, plan B thinking, future focus, discipline, social confidence, and pro-social connections. In 2015, Up2Us Sports worked with an external consultant to validate a survey tool to measure the HIAs in the population of youth served by the CAA program. The final HIA survey has a separate scale for 7 attributes (with future focus and plan B thinking combined into one scale) for older youth (grades 6-12) and a scale for 4 attributes for younger youth (grades 3-5). Each scale measures a score from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates low competence and 5 indicates high competence. The final scales selected for inclusion in the survey had high reliability and validity. Members give youth they work with the HIA survey at the beginning and end of program activities. Each youth's score in each attribute is calculated, and baseline attribute scores are compared to endline attribute scores.

Coach knowledge checks: U2UC members will complete a series of knowledge checks as part of the SBYD certification process. Four months after they participate in National Training Institute, members are given a ten-question quiz that was developed by the Up2Us Sports Director of Training. These questions are meant to measure content covered during training, and each question is marked as either correct or incorrect.

Coach observation: In 2015, U2UC piloted an observation tool for U2UC Program Managers to complete during site visits to host sites. Each coach is observed implementing programming at least twice during their service term, and formal observation is done to record the extent to which coaches are using specific skills and strategies they are taught at Up2Us Sports training institute.

Sampling Methods

We will determine an appropriate sample size for the intervention and comparison groups. The comparison group will be the same demographic, age, and gender distribution as the intervention

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group. The comparison group youth will be in schools recruited to participate from the same communities where our programs operate but without U2UC programming. Comparison group schools will be offered incentives to participate such as sporting gear and trainings for staff.

Data Collection Procedures

The U2UC M&E (monitoring & evaluation) team designs processes and chooses data collection tools for the U2UC program. Host sites are trained on how to implement data collection. Each member receives a data collection plan document at the beginning of the member's service term, which outlines exactly when data should be collected from each group of youth the member works with. U2UC Program Managers use these plans to support programs and ensure compliance. Youth participation in program activities and demographic information is tracked on rosters and attendance trackers completed by members.

The Up2Us Sports M&E team handles all data management, entry, and cleaning. Sites send paper survey forms and PACER score sheets to the an Up2Us Sports office, where the data is stored in a locked filing cabinet before and after being entered into an electronic database. Once data is compiled into a database, ID codes are assigned to youth and coaches and names are removed. Up2Us Sports uses best practices for reviewing and cleaning data to ensure quality. The Director of Monitoring & Evaluation oversees this process.

We will work with an external evaluator for data analysis. The external evaluator will be selected based on their experience working in community based settings and skill in statistical analysis. Once identified, they will help us identify the most appropriate statistical models. Based on previous projects, we expect this statistical analysis to include both a within subjects and between subjects analysis and techniques such as hierarchical linear modeling to account for clustering of youth within host sites. Baseline and sensitivity analyses will be done to ensure the comparison and intervention groups are appropriate for comparison. Additional analysis will focus on stratifying results by gender, age, program dosage, and reported relationship to coach. For coach data, descriptive statistics will be done. The results of this evaluation will be used to inform internal learning, external reporting, and contribute to best practices for the field of sport-based youth development. Results will be reviewed internally with staff from U2UC to gain further insight into the interpretation of the results. Staff will look for any potential adjustments that need to be made to programming based on results. Results will also be reported to Volunteer Louisiana as part of our evidence base and in compliance with the requirements of our grant. If positive results are found, these findings will provide a valuable contribution to the field of sports-based youth development.

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We estimate that this project will require a total budget of \$20,000. This is in addition to dedicating internal staff time to implementation of the evaluation project.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Clarification Round 1, 3/24/2017 :

Member positions for this request are not being duplicated in any other CNCS application under review. The slots that we have requested through National Direct and other State Commissions are in addition to the request we made through Volunteer Louisiana. Our Volunteer Louisiana AmeriCorps members will enable us to serve a different population of subsites and community partner organizations to offer programs and services to more low-income, underserved youth than they would otherwise be able to serve. Additionally the members and sites will be managed by staff dedicated to Volunteer Louisiana.

Resolution Round 1, 5/15/2017:

1. Budget resolution items caused minor changes to budget figures reflected. The executive summary was updated to reflect the changes.
2. Language in our performance measures has been updated to reflect needed clarification resulting from a Volunteer Louisiana assessment conducted with our program. We have also made adjustments to our targets as a result of the recommendation made by Volunteer Louisiana during the assessment. The logic model has been updated as well to align with changes.
3. Based on performance measure assessment conducted, Up2Us Sports has pro-actively changed language regarding interventions, dosage, and active participation to bring clarity to our program model. Changes in language is also reflected in the performance measure section.

Clarification re: Performance Interventions

Our theory of change is simple: trained sports coaches can be the most effective role models for

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teaching young people healthy behaviors that lead to increases in physical activity and more positive decision-making. Utilizing our comprehensive sports-based youth development (SBYD) training curriculum we will:

Train members to recognize and understand the impact that poverty-related trauma has on healthy brain development, as well as, the benefits of consistent physical activity have on the learning process

Expand trauma-informed physical activity during in-school and out-of-school time through the placement of the newly trained AmeriCorps members

We do this by providing 50 hours of training in foundations of SBYD, behavior management, trauma-sensitive coaching, community context and culture to ensure the success of coaches. Through a research-based approach, we shaped SBYD training to foster HIA development in youth participants. Referred to as "core competencies" or "evidence-based skills" by researchers, HIAs are validated characteristics correlated with increased healthy decision-making, health seeking behaviors and reduced risky behavior in adolescents. In a recent external evaluation, youth working with our coaches demonstrated statistically significant improvement in decision-making and positive relationships. We seek to bolster HIAs in youth to increase the likelihood of making healthy decisions and navigating challenges.

Clarification re: Dosage

The length of program activities can vary depending on the host site and the type of program being offered (after-school versus PE) but programs typically run either for a semester or for the whole school year. Up2Us Sports requires that programming be offered to youth for a minimum of 25 total hours, but most programming in New Orleans is significantly longer. When reporting youth outcomes, we are increasing the minimum standard for how many hours youth must participate in from 10 hours to 20 hours. Increasing by any more would require us to decrease our youth targets, as they were based on the 10 hour minimum standard originally approved, and would contradict the program requirements we have communicated to our host sites. Outcome data collection captures the full length of the program (in most cases over 20 hours) and this minimum is only used to exclude youth who do not attend the program consistently but still participate in both pre and post data

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collection.

Clarification re: Selection Rules/Performance Measure Instructions

Up2Us Sports partners with local community based organizations and schools to place our AmeriCorps members. We ensure that our members do not duplicate pre-existing services being offered by an organization. Up2Us Sports ensures youth development occurs during the coaching session of the sport. Often times, organizations separate physical activity/recreation and youth development because they do not have the knowledge to ensure it happens simultaneously. As demonstrated by our external evaluation, our trained members offer a unique experience that coach untrained in youth development are not able to offer youth participants. Additionally, Up2Us Sports allows more youth to be served by respective organizations, as well as expanding opportunities for unique populations such as girls or new sports programs to be offered

For example, through the placement of an AmeriCorps Member, New Orleans College Preparatory was able to develop sports programming for girls. Another example includes our partnership with Boys & Girls Club. Placement of an Up2Us Sports AmeriCorps member allows the club to provide flag football, basketball, and soccer that would otherwise not be made available to youth participants.

Clarification re: Data Collection Instruments

High Impact Attributes (HIA) survey

Youth will complete this survey once at the beginning of program activities (baseline) and once at the end of program activities (endline), so that we can measure their development over the time in the program. A minimum of Twenty hours of participation is required in order for a youth's pre/post data to be included in the outcome results. Post testing is done at the end of the full season/program and only those youth who are very infrequent in participation will be excluded (fewer than 20 hours actual participation throughout the entire program). An improvement by any amount on the 5 point scale will be counted as an improvement, and youth who improve in one or more attributes will be counted in this outcome.

*Research states surveying kids in 2nd grade and below is not appropriate

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methodology and our evaluation tools are not validated for these particular grade levels. Youth in this age range participate in the PACER test and roster/participation tracking and are only excluded from the pre/post survey. Our target has been adjusted to account for this group of youth being excluded from the survey tool.

PACER Test

Members administer the PACER test at the beginning of the program year to establish a baseline level of physical fitness for the youth that they work with. This baseline measure is then compared to their end of program (endline) PACER score to see improvement. A minimum of twenty hours of participation is required in order for a youth's pre/post data to be included in the outcome results. Post testing is done at the end of the full season/program and only those youth who are very infrequent in participation will be excluded (fewer than 20 hours actual participation throughout the entire program). Individual scores are compared to see the number of laps that youth are able to complete at endline compared to baseline.

Clarification re: Targets

Active Participation

Community Based Organizations & After-school Programs

Up2Us Sports gathers rosters of all youth participating in an after-school sport and/or community based organization setting. AmeriCorps members take attendance for every session offered. Therefore signing in at a front desk would not be included in the active participation numbers. In-school based programming active participation is tracked differently as outlined below.

In-school Programming

Active participation tracking is dependent by school policy. Some schools take attendance at the start of the day only while others take attendance throughout the day. Up2Us Sports works with the school to obtain attendance records for every participant. However, there is an assumption made that if the student is present at the start of the school day and/or class period in which attendance is taken then

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the student is present for the session offered by the AmeriCorps member.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics