

**APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design**

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

<b>Legal Applicant:</b> <b>Hopland Band of Pomo Indians, Education Enhancement for Hopland Band of Pomo Indians</b>	<b>Application ID:</b> <b>11TN125965</b>
<b>Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.</b>	
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b> The applicant effectively provides evidence that identifies the problem that exists in the targeted community.</p> <p>The applicant successfully provides a detailed description on the outcome of the program and the measurable impact. The applicant provides a breakdown based on each service that is to be provided and includes the outcomes and how the impact will be measured. For instance for the provision of tutoring services, the tribe will track and document the number of tribal youth who receive tutoring and the number of hours of tutoring each youth receives each month. The end result expected is that at least 75% of tribal member youth who participate in the tutoring program on a weekly basis will improve to current grade level academic standards in Language Arts and Math. The proposal puts forward that each member will receive a training calendar tailored to their programmatic placement for services, but limited details or examples of this particular training calendar were evident.</p> <p>Examples of some of the trainings to affirm a powerful service experience were lacking. The applicant adequately describes a programmatic pre-service training for members based on their placement. The applicant describes an adequate orientation training that is four days in length. However, the applicant does not adequately make a case of how engaging AmeriCorps members is highly effective to solving the identified problem. In addition, it is unclear how using AmeriCorps members was determined to be the best solution to the problem. All in all, it is unclear why using AmeriCorps members is the best solution versus some other type of service or entity.</p>	
<p><b>COMMENTS:</b> The compelling need of the project is well defined and documented. The applicant has presented a clear plan for recruitment and selection which begins with persons in the targeted community and then extended to other tribal communities. This is a plan designed to instill tribal ownership. The activities are clearly outlined and designed to make a positive impact on the community. Resource persons are well selected and measurement tools with timelines well addressed. The application fails to offer a clear plan for members continued civic participation.</p>	

**COMMENTS:** The applicant clearly describes the community needs to be addressed and the severity to support need for the project. Additionally, tribal youth face a variety of educational related challenges including transportation problems and an academic achievement gaps. Proposed activities clearly address the compelling needs of enhancing the learning experiences of low-income children and the applicant provides a rationale with data to support using AmeriCorps members to deliver the service. The plan for recruiting volunteers is clear and strong. The training plan seems effective, and conducive to appropriate member development; however, the applicant does not clearly describe why AmeriCorps will be used to solve the identified problem. Training for the Tribal community is not described.

**COMMENTS:** The applicant clearly identifies that youth in the tribe have poor academic achievement, high truancy, and tardiness. The applicant has taken these community needs and they have developed a strong plan to engage AmeriCorps Members as mentors and tutors for the youth in an effort to improve the proficiency scores of tribal youth. One of the other issues stated by the applicant is that middle and high school youth have two hours of transit time each school day and this could be time that youth could be spending on homework or in after-school activities. The applicant failed to provide the linkage as to how the students who commute would be able to participate in after-school activities offered through this AmeriCorps program because of the transportation issue. The applicant presents a strong plan to recruit AmeriCorps members that will be positive role models for the youth in the tribe. The applicant will recruit members through various means including website and direct mail in hopes of recruiting a diverse group of members who have the skills and experience to succeed. The applicant clearly describes the tutoring and mentoring that will be completed by the AmeriCorps members that will directly benefit the needs of youth in the community. Success will be measured by an increase in academic scores of the youth as well as a decrease in truancy and other related behavioral problems. Overall, this is a strong application that should lead to successfully working on increasing the academic performance of youth in the community.

**COMMENTS:** The applicant persuasively describes significant levels of poverty within the targeted community. Dates and sources for the data however are not provided. The applicant's need for more trained, dedicated adults to inspire Tribal youth and support them in achieving school success is compelling and clearly supported by the applicant's plan for recruitment, training and a detailed assignment of individual activities. The supervision plan is well-developed and combines both internal and external experts, along with detailed plans and topics for training, feedback from members for problem-solving and continuous improvement. The applicant presents an extensive and highly-detailed description of AmeriCorps activities that are specifically related to the compelling need with highly specific outcome measures. Monthly and quarterly meetings, along with retreats are clearly designed to link these activities with a lifelong commitment to service. The applicant provides exceptional linkage between all areas of program design, including evidence of: specific and compelling Tribal problems that are directly linked to detailed AmeriCorps activities, highly-focused recruitment and training plans that are well-supervised and provide for continuous improvement, and extensive outcome measures specifically linked to the problem areas defined and to Tribal goals.