



**ENGAGING**

A program of Operation REACH, Inc.

GulfSouth Youth Action Corps  
National Demonstration Project

[www.thegyac.org](http://www.thegyac.org)

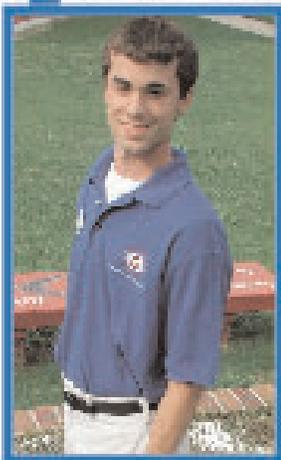
Partnership Application  
2007-2008

**EMPOWERING**

An AmeriCorps Program



**INSPIRING**



Letters of Intent Due by Close of Business December 7, 2007

## Overview of the Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps National Demonstration

The Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005—Katrina, Rita and Wilma—ravaged Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, Alabama and Texas, leaving mass destruction in their wake. As a result, many publicly funded services for youth have been limited due to severe economic conditions. Parks and recreation facilities were not spared from this wrath. According to a report released by the National Recreation and Park Association, the state, county and local parks, sports fields, hiking and biking trails, waterways, historical and cultural sites and recreational facilities affected by these natural disasters are facing major restoration, reconstruction, or replacement as communities continue to assess damage and face the challenges of reconstruction while also attempting to meet the ongoing needs of their communities. As a local organizational response to Katrina, Operation REACH, Inc. launched the *Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps* (GYAC; [www.thegyac.org](http://www.thegyac.org)) which assumed a leadership role in helping the local incapacitated recreation department reestablish free summer camps immediately after the devastation caused by the hurricanes. Thus, the *Gulfsouth Youth Action Camps* were formed whereby Operation REACH mobilized local and national support and provided much needed summer programming for hundreds of youth (distributed across three service sites) and families in a city that did not have the capacity to service its youth.

Operation REACH has received start-up funds from the Corporation of National Service Americorp, to facilitate expansion of GYA. This National Demonstration of GYAC endeavors to expand the organization's reach to provide those youth residing in the southern Gulf Coast region with outlets that will help school-age youth mitigate the educational, recreational, mental and social challenges that they currently face. By utilizing GYAC Corps members to engage, empower and inspire youth during summer months and throughout the school year, the Corps' interventions with youth are intended to help reduce the incidences of youth delinquency, school truancy, crime, catastrophic stress-related symptoms, and insufficient or inadequate outlets for youth to be engaged in safe and exciting formal and informal learning experiences.

The national implementation of GYAC across Gulf Coast states will focus on two service delivery strategies partnering with: (1) municipal parks and recreation departments (2) local school-based enrichment programs; and, (3) community-based and faith based initiatives. Drawing on its national network of colleges and university partnerships, Operation REACH, Inc. mobilizes a quarter-time (serving a minimum of 450 hours) summer service corps that is fundamental to the replication of the Gulfsouth Youth Action Camp for the summer of 2009. While a year-round team of full-time service members (serving a minimum of 1700 hours) will be recruited as early as the fall of 2008.

To facilitate the expansion of GYAC, particularly in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and other states in the region impacted directly by the storms or by the large displacement of its residents, Operation REACH, Inc. (the parent organization) is requesting proposals for multi-year (3) funding for partner sites in affected states. One hundred and thirty-eight full-time Corps members will be recruited to serve on a year-round basis (beginning in the fall of 2007) and an additional 241 quarter-time members will be recruited during summer months for the "Summer of Service" to assist with the *Gulfsouth Youth Action Camps* at partner sites by the summer of 2009.

From the devastation of 2005, we have learned that having an organized national service-corps with a regional focus to respond to future disruptions in services for youth will only enhance the current inadequacies revealed of the nation's domestic response to catastrophes. Hence, expansion of GYAC will help meet the needs of young citizens in times like these and will add to the nation's homeland security infrastructure.

## **GYAC Program Components**

The overarching purpose of GYAC is to get young people involved in the long-term recovery of the Gulf Coast region. Our mission is to engage, inspire and empower youth leadership to initiate positive community actions and become responsible for making their communities more vibrant places where youth can live, learn, lead, thrive and grow. To do this, the *Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps* has three distinctive inter-linking program components:

*Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps*-GYAC members are youthful college-age (minimum age requirement is 17-years-old) volunteers who are highly motivated and recruited for the sole purpose of engaging, inspiring and empowering local youth through fun and service-learning. Corps members are recruited locally and nationally to commit to a rigorous summer of service or a year of service through AmeriCorps. These volunteers bring passion, brilliance and energy to youth work while providing additional capacity to local youth-serving organizations striving to achieve high quality programming. GYAC member volunteers are provided with a cost of living stipend and full health benefits while they serve community youth.

*The Junior Corps* of the *Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps* is intended to engage an at-risk population of recent high school graduates and or GED recipients (17-19) who find themselves in transition without vocational direction. In this transition, youth are at-risk for not making necessary life decisions to take the next steps to enter the workforce. By engaging this population in community service through GYAC, Junior Corps members will be provided valuable training and transformative service-learning experiences that will provide them with insights and skills that will empower and inspire them to pursue entry-level jobs into third sector organizations (non-profits) as youth workers, program coordinators, recreational professionals, community development and philanthropy professionals, educators and/or social entrepreneurs.

*Gulfsouth Youth Action Camp*-Specialty service-learning summer camps that provides a unique format of recreational activities and community service projects that inspires youth to do something good in their communities. The *Gulfsouth Youth Action Camp* is dubbed "a seriously fun camp that is intellectually stimulating." The camp targets middle-school age youth (rising 6th and 8th graders). Highly motivated and idealistic college students from local and national universities spend a "Summer of Service" in the "Action Camp" as camp counselors and mentors. The *Gulfsouth Youth Action Camp's* curriculum and activities are developed in concert with college students and education and recreation experts to provide a powerful service-learning experience. Traditional disciplines are transformed into intriguing, highly-interactive, real-world, project-based learning experiences that are age-appropriate. The curriculum promotes analytic reasoning, self-expression and social consciousness through these activities. Reading, writing and analytic reasoning are infused into all course offerings. Additionally, campers are exposed to an array of thematic field trips and meaningful community service projects.

*Gulfsouth Youth Action Fund*-A youth philanthropy initiative that partners with local foundations to promote youth leadership. The youth fund shines the light on worthwhile "youth-led" initiatives that further the recovery of the Gulf Coast region—particularly related to creating healthier, more vibrant communities for youth and their peers to thrive and grow. The fund provides mini-grants to youth-serving organizations and youth-led projects. Local foundation executives form "Mentor Circles" to teach youth the altruistic values of giving of one's time, talent and treasure for the common good.

To implement this full model, we rely on community partnerships with those relevant institutions, government agencies, parks and recreation officials and community-based organizations that are committed to providing high-quality opportunities for youth and creating safe communities where youth can live, learn, lead, thrive and grow. We encourage partnerships with the following:

- Local parks and recreation departments
- Colleges and Universities
- U.S. Attorney's Offices and other local law enforcement agencies
- Community and corporate foundations
- Youth-serving Community Based Organization's (CBO) and Faith Based Organization's (FBO)
- Workforce development programs focused on youth employment

We call the establishment of this partnership model the "*Blue Ribbon Youth Champion's Advisory Committee*."

### **Blue Ribbon Youth Champion's Advisory Committee**

Partnering agencies must establish a local advisory committee. Members of the Blue Ribbon Youth Champion's Advisory Committee are those local community leaders who are positive forces and loud voices who champion the needs of the community's youth. The GYAC advisory groups shall be comprised of not less than 11 members, but no more than 25. The advisory group will consist of a culturally, professionally and geographically diverse team—representative of the community demographics. The advisory group will help to conduct a community needs assessment focused on youth and prioritize meaningful projects for the GYAC member team's activities. Additionally, the advisory group will work towards sustainability of GYAC by cultivating corporate and foundation sponsorships and other needed in-kinds. Technical assistance will be provided by GYAC National Office to support the ongoing engagement of the local advisory group.

### **Required Qualifications**

All applicant organizations will demonstrate:

1. Their status as a non-profit or governmental entity.
2. A track record of providing programs for youth for a minimum of five consecutive years; however, new programs that are off-springs of a longstanding entity are eligible.
3. Written mission, program goals and objectives.
4. An organizational budget of at least \$500,000 sustained for at least three years. Preference will be given to entities with budgets of \$1 million or more.
5. Adequate infrastructure and staff to support the initiative. An individual staff person that will be identified to champion the development and replication of the model. Organizations should budget 20%-40% of staff time towards the implementation of this project.
6. Experience managing federal grants.
7. Demonstrated ability to build strong partnerships between local, state, federal and private agencies.
8. Support from their board, commission/council or mayor to engage fully in the GYAC National Demonstration project.

## **Selection Preferences**

Organizations that demonstrate the following qualifications will be considered competitive:

1. A history of innovative programming that reaches low-income, underserved youth.
2. A strong knowledge of the target needs and willingness to align those needs with innovative programs and services.
3. Strong partnerships that can be leveraged for full implementation of the three GYAC components and sustained over time.
4. Organizations that can commit 15% or greater in non-federal matching funds and 33% as in-kind contributions (e.g. facilities, staff time, etc.)
5. Demonstrated support from local elected officials, particularly mayors.
6. Parks and recreation agencies in the high-impacted Gulf Coast region—defined as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia and Florida—apply as the lead agency for this project.
7. Organizations with the capacity and demonstrated community needs to place 20-30 corps members for a "Summer of Service" and 10-20 members for year-round service placements.
8. Commitment to continuous improvements of program models, services and outcomes.

## **Proposal Rating Criteria**

- Lead organization capacity and infrastructure (30 maximum points)
- Demonstrated need and use of corps members (25 maximum points)
- Strength and quality of partnerships (20 maximum points)
- Match of financial and in-kind resources (25 maximum points)

## **Partner Selection**

Selection of partner cities/organizations to participate in the GYAC National Demonstration will be determined by a national panel of youth development experts and recreation leaders. After a rigorous review of proposal submissions, four partner sites will be selected and resourced to participate in this demonstration project.

Interested organizations should send a **letter of intent** to apply. In not more than two pages, the letter of intent should briefly provide an overview of the lead agency and convey the agency's eligibility to apply (see required qualifications section) and describe prospective partners for the application. E-mail letters of intent to [mlopez@theyyac.org](mailto:mlopez@theyyac.org) by close of business (Central Standard Time) on Friday, December 7, 2007.

After a staff review of the letters of intent, a full-proposal will be requested by Operation REACH, Inc. from those organizations that provide compelling evidence that they fit the partnership requirements. Requests for full proposals are by invitation only. Agencies invited to submit a full proposal will be notified by Friday, December 14, 2007. Full proposals will be due January 4, 2008 and must be received by the close of business.

A technical assistance conference call will be convened with all agencies invited to submit a full proposal.

Site visits will be conducted for semi-finalists. During the site visit, Operation REACH staff will meet with prospective partners for a final assessment of the application.

*Notification of awards will begin in June 2008.*

**What Operation REACH, Inc. will provide:**

- Multi-Year Funding (three years)
- Partnership Development
- Technical Assistance
- Training
- Program Evaluation
- Strategic Fundraising and Sustainability Initiatives
- Program Enhancements
- Recruitment & Screening Assistance
- National Visibility

**A completed proposal consists of:**

- Narrative response to Section B through E of the partner sub-grant application
- List of advisory members with contact and affiliation information
- Letter of support and/or Memoranda of Understanding from partners
- Budget
- Attachments
  - o 501-c-3 IRS Letter of Determination
  - o Most recent financial audit

*Submit three unbound copies of the proposal, including one original (clearly marked) to:*

Operation REACH, Inc.

*Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps* National Demonstration Project

201 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 2560

New Orleans, Louisiana 70170

Packages must be received in office by the close of business (Central Standard Time) on the announced submission date. Late proposals will not be reviewed.



- 3a. What is your staff size? Please list numbers of full and part-time employees. If you are a government agency, list only staff for the division or department applying for the partnership.
- 3b. Outline the personnel or departmental structure of your organization. Feel free to draw or attach an organizational chart. Show who the key players are and what their roles are. Also, briefly describe the communications network between all players (i.e., weekly staff meetings, staff bulletin boards, weekly memos, etc.)
4. What is your organization's annual budget and what are the sources of these funds (i.e. private, appropriations, government grants, etc.)? Attach your agency's most recent financial statement or audit report. If you are a government agency, indicate the annual budget for the entire agency and for your specific division as well.

### **C. Volunteer History**

1. Explain your organization's history with volunteers. (Refer to your answer for Question 2a) Specify the numbers of volunteers currently involved in your programs; types of services provided by the volunteers; successes and/or problems with volunteer recruitment, retention and supervision; and your budget for current volunteer efforts.

### **D. Partnership Request**

1. We would like a partnership with *Gulfsouth Youth Action Corps* in order to:

- Expand and/or upgrade an existing volunteer program
- Create a new volunteer program
- Replicate GYAC program components
- Add capacity to existing local youth initiatives
- Enhance program quality of existing youth programs
- Access national partnership networks

2. Outline your partnership proposal by specifying A through E below:

- A. The need in the community or in your client population your volunteer program will address, and how this need was assessed/ determined. Be sure to describe the state of youth programs and activities post-Katrina and Rita. What are some compelling needs for volunteer support in the community? How can GYAC address these community needs?
- B. The number of volunteers needed for this effort—please be as specific as possible, taking into account your agency’s capacity to support volunteers;
- C. How the volunteers will be utilized during the agency’s operating hours to maximize service time (specify the types of direct service activities the volunteers will perform);
- D. A 10-month timeline for program development and implementation;
- E. Please specify the expected results and measurable outcomes of this volunteer program. Specify how clients will benefit from the work of the volunteers. (For example, the expected and measurable outcomes of our volunteer tutoring programs show that the reading levels of 15 students will increase by one half of a grade level by the end of the year.)

**E. Community Partnerships**

- 1. Based on the GYAC partnership model, describe how your local partnerships will be developed and sustained and what roles partners will play in the launch of this National Demonstration Project.
  
- 2. Specifically, which community partners would be likely supporters of having additional volunteer support available to their respective organizations (i.e. government officials, foundations, corporations, etc.)?

## **GYAC National Demonstration Project Budget Instructions**

### **F. Preparing Your Budget**

Your proposed budget will be reviewed for adequacy to ensure that the funds requested are sufficient enough to allow you to perform the tasks described in your proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section as evidence of your cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy.

As you prepare your budget, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Follow the budget instructions outlined below and use the attached Budget Worksheet as a guide to prepare your detailed budget.
- Structure your budget based on three budget sections: I. Program Costs, II. Member Support Costs and III. Administrative/Indirect Costs.
- Define all amounts requested for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency or other undefined budget amounts.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, (i.e., entertainment costs, food and beverage costs, etc.) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- On the Source Match chart of the Budget Worksheet, enter the total amount of cash and in-kind matches under columns for Private, State and/or Local, and Federal in the Source of Match box. Then, for each amount entered, identify the source of the matching funds or in-kind contributions by entering text under Sources. Define any acronyms the first time they are used.
- Please refer to the relevant federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars on allowable costs for further guidance. The OMB circulars are online at [www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars](http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars)
  - o A-21 - Cost Principles for Educational Institutions
  - o A-87 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments
  - o A-122 - Cost Principles for Non Profit Organizations

The following are components to include in each budget section:

#### **I. Program Costs:**

Program costs are specific expenses of the overall program operation of the project, not general administrative costs. During this grant period, for Sections I and III, grantees are limited to requesting not more than 5% of the total Section II amount actually expended.

In calculating Sections I and III of your budget:

- You must first calculate Section II.
- Multiply 0.05 of your total Section II amount to determine your maximum Section I and III amount.
- For example, if your total Section II amount equals \$200,000, then your maximum Section I and III should equal \$10,000 combined ( $\$200,000 \times 0.05$ ).
- Therefore, your total budget request (Sections I + II + III) will equal \$210,000.

For this grant period, Program Costs may include:

**A. Equipment**

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit (including accessories, attachments and modifications). Include items that do not meet this definition in the **Supplies** section below. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment.

**B. Supplies**

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies, materials and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more.

The total of Section I must be matched with in-kind contributions or cash at a minimum of 33%. For example, if Section I totals \$5,000, then \$1,650 of the total \$5,000 must be contributed by the grantee. The remaining maximum 67% (\$3,350) will be contributed from the grant. Please keep in mind that the totals of Sections I and III must not exceed 5% of the amount actually expended in Section II.

All other programmatic expenses (i.e., staff/member training; program evaluation; consultants and contractual services; background checks of members and grant-funded staff who have recurring access to vulnerable populations i.e., children, the elderly, disabled, etc.; recognition costs for members; etc.) will be administered by Operation REACH.

**II. Member Support Costs:**

Consistent with the laws of your state, members must be provided with the benefits described below. The grantee match for this budget category must be cash at a minimum of 15% of the requested amount, and its source must be state, local, or private sector funds, except for health care. In addition, any non-federal share (matching) of costs budgeted above the 15% minimum can be matched with other federal funds, subject to the other federal agency’s approval.

- Living Allowance. When preparing your budget, you must request Member Service Years (MSYs) for each full-time corps member requested based on the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550 and the predetermined maximum costs per MSY for AmeriCorps grant programs. For your reference, the living allowance rates for AmeriCorps members are detailed in the following chart:

Term of Service	Minimum # of hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance	MSY	Education Award
<i>Full time (year-round)</i>	1700	\$11,100	\$22,200	1.0	\$4,725.00
<i>Quarter time (summer)</i>	450	\$1,200	\$1,600	0.25	\$1,250.00

For example, if you are requesting 20 full-time members for year-round service and 10 quarter-time members for summer service, your MSY will be 22.5 (20 + 10 divided by 4 quarters = 22.5). Therefore, a request of 22.5 MSYs would equal a maximum total Section II amount of \$249,750 for living allowances of which 15% must be matched in cash by the grantee.

At the end of each member term, members who successfully meet the minimum required hours of service will be in receipt of a federally funded Education Award to be used toward educational expenses at an approved education institution. Education Awards will be administered directly from AmeriCorps, not through Operation REACH.

Although grantees are required to budget for other member support costs (FICA, Worker's Compensation, Health Care and Unemployment Insurances), these items will be centralized and allocated from the Operation REACH national office.

- **FICA.** Unless exempted by the IRS with accompanying documentation (note in the narrative and provide documentation with application), all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance. Calculate the FICA at 7.65% of the total amount of the living allowance.
- **Worker's Compensation.** Some states require worker's compensation for AmeriCorps members. You must check with your State Department of Labor to determine if you are required to pay worker's compensation and at what level. If you are not required to pay worker's compensation, you must budget for Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment coverage for members to cover in-service injury or incidents. In this case, please verify with the funding agency the pre-determined rates for your state.
- **Health Care.** Full-time members not otherwise covered by a health care policy at the time of enrollment into the AmeriCorps program must be provided a health care policy or those members who lose coverage during their term of service as a result of participating in the program or through no deliberate act of their own.. Please refer to the funding agency for rates of current health care premiums when preparing the Member Support Costs section of your budget. The grant will not cover health care costs for family members or for less than full-time members.
- **Unemployment Insurance and Other Member Support Costs.** Include any other required member support costs here. Some states require unemployment coverage for their AmeriCorps members. You may not charge the cost of unemployment insurance taxes to the grant unless mandated by state law. Programs are responsible for determining the requirements of state law by consulting their state commission, legal counsel or the applicable state agency.

Other member support costs must also be matched in cash at a minimum of 15% by the grantee.

### **III. Administrative/Indirect Costs**

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives grant funds and does not include particular project costs. During this grant period, grantees are limited to requesting not more than 5% of the total amount **actually expended** under the grant.

In calculating Sections I and III of your budget:

- Multiply 0.05 of your total Section II amount to determine your maximum Section I and III amount.
- For example, if your total Section II amount equals \$200,000, then your maximum Section I and III amounts should equal \$10,000 ( $\$200,000 \times 0.05$ ).
- Therefore, your total budget request (Sections I + II + III) will equal \$210,000.

Administrative costs include:

1. Costs for financial, accounting, auditing, contracting or general legal services, except in unusual cases where they are specifically approved in writing by Operation REACH as project costs.
2. Costs for internal evaluation, including overall organization's management improvement costs (except for independent and internal evaluations of the project evaluations that are specifically related to creative methods of quality improvement).
3. Costs for general liability insurance that protects the organization's that are responsible for operating a project, other than insurance costs solely attributable to the project.
4. Costs of space, base utilities, and communication (telephone, fax, and internet) that support administrative personnel.
5. Administrative costs may also include that portion of salaries and benefits of the project's director and other administrative staff not attributable to the time spent in support of a specific project.

Administrative costs do not include the following allowable expenses directly related to a project (including their operations and objectives), such as:

1. Allowable direct charges for members, including living allowances, insurance payments made on behalf of members, training, and travel.
2. Costs for staff (including salary, benefits, training, and travel) who recruit, train, place, or supervise members or who develop materials used in such activities, if the purpose is for a specific project objective.
3. Costs for independent evaluations and any internal evaluations of the project that are related specifically to quality improvement.
4. Costs, excluding those already covered in an organization's indirect cost rate, attributable to staff that work in a direct project support, operational or oversight capacity, including, but not limited to: support staff whose functions directly support project activities; staff who coordinate and facilitate single or multi-site project activities; and staff who review, disseminate and implement Operation REACH's guidance and policies directly relating to a project.
5. Space, facility and communications costs allocated specifically to AmeriCorps project operations, excluding those costs that are already covered by an organization's indirect costs rate.
6. Other allowable costs, excluding those costs that are already covered by an organization's indirect cost rate, specifically approved by Operation REACH as directly attributable to a project.

Payment for services will be made by AmeriCorps and Operation REACH, Inc. through the National Corporation for Community Service (AmeriCorps) on a monthly cost reimbursement basis with an approved budget. Reimbursements will only be made with proof or documentation of the allowable expenses.



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