

Original

## Cover Sheet – Social Service Activity

AGENCY NAME: Center for New Americans  
AGENCY ADDRESS: 42 Gothic Street, Northampton, MA 01060  
AGENCY PHONE NO: 413-587-0084 CONTACT PERSON: Laurie Millman  
CONTACT PERSON EMAIL: laurie@cnam.org  
2012 CDBG REQUEST: \$30,000

1. Project Name: *Language and Literacy for Immigrants*
2. Project Description (1-2 sentences): *Center for New Americans offers a comprehensive adult education program designed to help immigrants achieve economic self-sufficiency and integration into the community. CNA's program includes English language and technology classes, family literacy, and employment counseling.*
3. Project Location: *Downtown Amherst, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Bangs Community Center*
4. Budget Request: *\$30,000*
5. Type of Activity (check one):
  - Homelessness and sheltering
  - Youth development and afterschool care
  - Adult education and job training
  - Emergency & preventive services: emergency rental assistance, emergency fuel assistance, emergency food and emergency shelter services that can include case management and coordination.
  - Other – please explain
6. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy: *The Town's Community Development Strategy seeks to encourage and support the town's diversity. CNA is a valuable partner to the town in this endeavor because CNA assists immigrants from widely diverse backgrounds to acquire skills necessary for integration into the Amherst community. The Amherst Master Plan directly acknowledges this need: "Amherst is becoming an increasingly diverse community in terms of ethnicity, age, income, education, physical ability, and in many other ways. Amherst's services and facilities must keep pace with the population's changing needs ..."*

*Amherst's social service priorities this year include **adult education and job training**. CNA's comprehensive program is built on a foundation of English language and technology instruction for immigrant adults. Employment counseling is layered onto that foundation in order to give newcomers the tools, the confidence, and the cultural understanding to research available jobs, to apply for jobs online or at in-store computer kiosks, as necessary, to interview effectively, and to retain employment. The ultimate goal is to help the town's newcomers to acquire the skills which will enable them to attain economic independence and self-sufficiency.*

7. Describe how you will ensure that participants meet low/moderate income requirements:

*Center for New Americans has an intake process which documents income and family size.*

8. National Objective

Benefit to low- and moderate-income persons

Estimate the number of low- and moderate-income persons to benefit from the Project:

Total number of individuals served

Total Low/Mod individuals served: *200 in Amherst of which 120 are Amherst residents*

**Please submit responses to the following questions:**

**A. Please describe in full the project for which you are requesting funding:**

Include information on the number of individuals or families to be served and who they are, i.e. disabled, low-income, homeless, etc.

Center for New Americans (CNA) is a community-based, non-profit adult education and resource center that provides the under-served immigrant, refugee and migrant communities of the Pioneer Valley with education and resources to learn English, become involved members of their communities, and obtain tools necessary to maintain economic independence and stability.

Center for New Americans requests funding to support its comprehensive adult education program in Amherst. CNA is seeking support for its English language and technology classes, family literacy, and employment counseling services for immigrants.

The classes, family literacy, and employment counseling program components are like the three legs of a stool which together provide for stability. The classes enable communication and make access to community resources possible. The family literacy helps parents and children prepare for success in school and facilitates participation. The employment counseling lays the groundwork for economic independence.

Thanks to support from Amherst CDBG last year and a landmark grant from the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, CNA reprised an effective partnership with the Amherst Public Schools to provide early childhood education to the children of immigrant parents. Without significant renewed funding, CNA will not be able to continue this model of family literacy programming. However, CNA is committed to continuing outreach and literacy activities with Amherst immigrant parents and children with an eye toward enhancing school readiness.

Details of CNA's program components are as follows:

- *Classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)* - CNA offers four levels of classes in Amherst. They range from Beginning (*Student Proficiency Level* or SPL of 0-2) to Advanced (SPL 6+). The ESOL classes help limited English speakers to acquire speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in English. CNA's educational philosophy dictates that all classroom content is based on needs, interests, and goals identified by learners. Classes meet seven hours per week over the course of 38 weeks.

*Technology classes* - CNA's technology program incorporates technology instruction into the language classes, and offers additional support in the technology lab. Immigrants receive flexible one-on-one instruction in basic computer skills, such as word-processing, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, email, and the internet. The focus of the internet instruction is on information about finding jobs, accessing community resources such as the library, and maintaining family connections.

- *Family Literacy* – As indicated earlier, CNA’s traditional model of family literacy, which enables parents who are studying English and have young children to receive early childhood education for their children and parenting support for themselves, is not feasible given current funding levels. However, CNA is committed to continuing family literacy programming albeit with a less intensive model. CNA proposes to take advantage of the strong relationship it has with its adult students as well as with the Amherst Regional Public Schools to provide outreach and workshops that will help immigrant parents anticipate school expectations while supporting public school staff to anticipate immigrant families’ needs.
- *Employment counseling* – CNA’s wrap around services include one-on-one employment counseling with respect to writing a resume, filling out applications, interviewing strategically, and networking. In addition, CNA is generally recognized as a leader in helping immigrants to develop industry sector specific skills. CNA has been funded on several occasions by the Mass. Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) and Massachusetts Commonwealth Corporation to develop contextualized ESOL classes in such industry sectors as healthcare and manufacturing which introduce vocabulary, industry expectations, and guidelines with respect to safety, productivity, and quality.

Center for New Americans serves about 200 immigrants annually through its Amherst program site. Most CNA students (about 84%) are low or very low income, as determined by guidelines established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Many work in low-wage service sector jobs with little job security, no benefits, and little opportunity for advancement.

## **B. What is the community’s need for the proposed project/program?**

Define the need or problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Explain why the project is important. Provide evidence of the severity of the need or problem. Who the affected population and why is this population presently underserved or not served?

Amherst’s 2010 Master Plan indicates that approximately 20% of Amherst residents over the age of 5 speak a language other than English at home, a percentage which is greater than the national average of 18%. The plan also indicates that 13% of Amherst residents are foreign born, higher than the national average of 11%. The plan continues, “Amherst is becoming an increasingly diverse community in terms of ethnicity, age, income, education ... Amherst’s services and facilities must keep pace with the population’s changing needs ...” The plan also notes that “Amherst values its economic and cultural diversity.”

Thus, the Master Plan states that Amherst puts a priority on encouraging population diversity, and supporting people from diverse backgrounds so that their needs are met.

CNA’s students are representative of the town’s diversity. CNA serves individuals and families who originate from as many as fifty countries and speak more than thirty-five different languages. CNA’s Amherst classes include immigrants from Tibet, Cambodia, Vietnam, El Salvador, Brazil,

Cape Verde, Ecuador, Russia, Mexico and China. These newcomers arrive at CNA with widely varying academic backgrounds. While the majority of Amherst students have elementary, secondary, or even higher education, CNA serves a growing number of students who have less than five years of formal education. CNA is recognized by peer agencies as especially skilled in serving these students who face many learning challenges.

Although this population is currently under-served largely due to budget cuts at the state level, Center for New Americans is not the only program in Amherst which serves immigrants. The Jones Library ESL program, which collaborates closely with CNA, provides one-on-one volunteer tutoring for immigrants. The Literacy Project offers classes for adult learners who wish to attain a GED or pursue other basic literacy education beyond learning English, some of whom have begun their education at CNA. CNA is unique, though, in its ability to provide ESOL education to immigrants in a classroom setting and to offer comprehensive wrap-around services. In addition, CNA focuses its services on immigrants who have moved to Amherst on a long-term basis as opposed to temporary residents associated with the university.

### **C. Community Involvement**

What process was used to select this particular project? How was the process responsive to expressed community need?

Define the process that will be used to maintain involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project.

Each of CNA's program components (ESOL classes and technology instruction, family literacy, employment assistance) has been developed in direct response to the needs of CNA students and the larger immigrant community. CNA convenes focus groups on a regular basis to assess its service delivery vis-à-vis immigrants' needs. The fact that there is usually a waiting list for CNA classes indicates that they fill an ongoing need.

In addition, CNA's governance structure directly engages community members and former students in setting policy and direction for the agency by including them as members of its Board of Directors. CNA's Board includes three former students, two CNA volunteer tutors, and counts four immigrants. On a macro level, Center for New Americans staff participate in coalition meetings, such as the Amherst Human Services Network through which providers discuss and address resident needs.

With respect to maintaining the involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project, CNA's participatory learning model requires student involvement. That is, CNA students make learning requests every week which inform the teachers' curriculum development. For example, students might indicate that they would like to learn how to open a bank account. In addition, students keep learning logs and fill out class evaluations.

## **Project Feasibility**

The project impact will be evaluated upon the extent to which the response meets the following criteria:

1. *Evidence that the community at large or beneficiaries will use the program* - Currently there are 28 individuals on the waiting list for classes at the Amherst site. Twenty-two of these individuals are Amherst residents. These newcomers, who are overwhelmingly low- income, have each taken part in an initial intake and placement test, but must wait before they can begin class due to limited availability of classroom slots. Also indicative of community need, data tracked by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education shows that CNA students have consistently higher attendance than students at most other ABE programs statewide.

2. *Availability and source of matching or other funds* – Center for New Americans receives annual funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) which helps to complete the project. In addition, the Hampshire County United Way has just welcomed CNA as a partner agency. Verizon funded CNA for the first time last year and has indicated a willingness to consider a proposal for renewed support.

3. *Roles and responsibilities of personnel in addition to internal controls* -. Center for New Americans programs are implemented by a veteran staff many of whom have been with the organization for over 10 years. CNA's Amherst team includes ESOL Program Coordinator Nicole Graves, who has thirty years experience in the classroom and holds a Masters Degree and Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Education and ESOL language acquisition. She has been with CNA for sixteen years. Nicole teaches Amherst's beginning level class as well as a literacy class and she supervises the other ESOL teachers. Computer classes are taught by Jairo L. Rizo, who was a computer instructor in his home country of Nicaragua and began his association with CNA as a student. Intermediate and Advanced level ESOL classes are taught by Peshia Black and Daniela Cazacu respectively both of whom were experienced teachers before joining CNA.

Internal controls are overseen by Center for New Americans Board of Directors and an independent auditor. CNA's board treasurer is Sheryl Sadler-Twyon, a Vice President at Florence Savings Bank who serves as the Bank's Chief Compliance Officer.

4 *Past accomplishments, expertise, successful completion of past activities* - Center for New Americans has served the W. Mass immigrant community since 1992. A strong educational philosophy, experienced, committed teachers, responsive management and creative programming have all allowed the agency to develop a strong reputation, locally, regionally and within the Commonwealth. Based on an aggregate total of performance points earned over the current six-year finding cycle, CNA ranks 9th out of 88 programs funded by the Mass. Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) across the state. This performance metric includes data related to learning gains, participation, retention and goal achievement. The service offerings proposed within this application are areas in which CNA has significant experience and a proven

track record. CNA's curriculum is widely disseminated including its recent contextualized healthcare-in-ESOL and manufacturing-in-ESOL materials.

CNA is fortunate to count on the assistance of over 60 volunteers who remain engaged year after year because of their commitment to CNA's program. Their investment of time translates to valuable individual attention for CNA's immigrant students.

Finally, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services is considering opening an office in W. Mass and is seriously considering co-locating in CNA's Northampton office in recognition of CNA's favorable stature in the immigrant community.

*5. Please submit a program budget that includes all sources of revenue and all expenses.*

#### **D. Impact**

Describe the impact the activity will have on the specifically identified needs. What measurable improvements will result from the activity? How much of the need will be addressed? Define the direct and indirect outcomes that will result from the project. Identify quantitative and qualitative measures determine that the outcomes are achieved.

1. *Language gains* – Learners will make measurable and significant gains in their understanding and use of the English language, including gains in the areas of speaking/listening, reading/writing, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Progress will be gauged using the BEST Plus assessment test, administered three times per year.
2. *Employability* – Participants will improve their employability by gaining new language and computer skills needed in the workplace, and by gaining a better understanding of resources, systems and processes related to gaining and maintaining employment (measured through follow-up data through the Massachusetts SMARTT system / NRS system and through self-reported data from participants).
3. *Connection* – Learners will report a decreased sense of social and linguistic isolation in their lives and in relation to the larger Amherst community (self-reported through student learning logs and surveys)
4. *Civic Involvement* - Participants will report a greater awareness of and use of community and public resources (documented through learner logs, surveys and counseling records).
5. *Parent Involvement* – Participating parents will gain skills and confidence to participate actively in their children's learning processes (self-reported through learner logs and surveys).

#### **E. Evaluation**

Goals & Assessments: Please explain your short-term goals and long-term goals. Describe the changes in the target population that indicate the program's success. How will these changes be measured? Will anticipated changes affect the municipality's responsibility to this target population? How will the impact of this service on individual clients be tracked over time? Will there be additional beneficiaries? Will this service enable clients to become self-sufficient? How is this service linked to other human/social service programs in the community?

Center for New Americans' short-term goals are for immigrants to attain proficiency in the English language and in technology so that they can communicate productively and confidently in the community. This includes being able to initiate as well as answer phone calls, ask questions of a doctor and converse with a child's teacher.

CNA's long-term goals are for immigrants to attain self-sufficiency, which we define as securing stable housing, employment at a living wage, and personal independence. To the degree that immigrants are self-sufficient, they require less of the Town of Amherst. In fact, data cited in the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's Community Economic Development Strategy indicate that although immigrants are initially low-income, after they have been in the country for a few years, they have a poverty rate that is 2.4% lower than the population as a whole, indicating that they are motivated to become self-sufficient and that investments in their skill attainment are well-placed.

In terms of tracking the service's impact on clients over time, CNA tracks the number of individuals receiving services. CNA also tracks their language learning progress, using the BEST Plus language assessment. CNA relies on a skills checklist to track progress in the computer program. CNA also monitors students' individual goal achievement. Much of this outcome data is reported to DESE as well.

CNA's establishment of an Alumni Association last year also seeks to track students' progress long-term by encouraging them to report their goal achievement milestones. In terms of CNA's impact on additional beneficiaries, there is no doubt that the CNA's program has an exponential effect. Often, one member of a family will participate in CNA's classes, and then will invite a spouse, a sibling, a parent. In addition, there is a clear impact on the children of CNA's adult students. As the adults become more confident and more adept at navigating town services, they become better able to support their children.

In terms of linkages to other human/social service programs in the community, Center for New Americans staff are regularly in touch with staff from the Amherst Survival Center, the Amherst Family Center, Every Woman's Center, the Amherst Regional Public Schools, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and others.



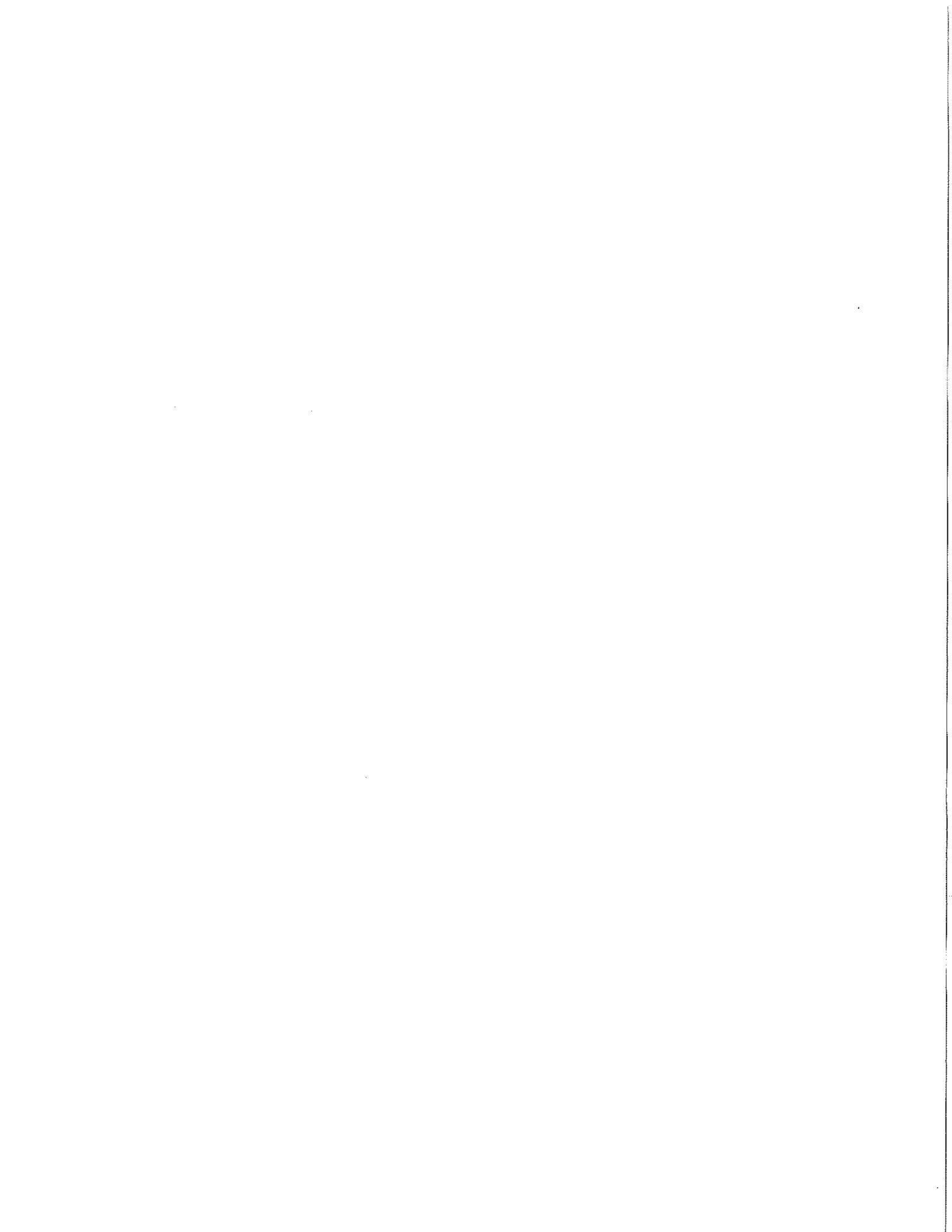
### **E. Agency Information**

Please provide an overview of your organization, including length of time in existence, experience in successfully conducting activities for which funding is being sought, and skills and current services that reflect capacity for success.

Center for New Americans (CNA) is a community-based, non-profit adult education and resource center that provides the under-served immigrant, refugee and migrant communities of Massachusetts' Pioneer Valley with education and resources to learn English, become involved members of their communities, and obtain tools necessary to maintain economic independence and stability.

As indicated earlier, Center for New Americans was founded in 1992 as the English Language component of the Amherst-based Tibetan Resettlement Program. In this capacity, it served 15 students. Today, nineteen years later, Center for New Americans has program sites in Amherst, Northampton, and Greenfield, and serves students who come from those communities, as well as from Holyoke, Chicopee, Easthampton, Turners Falls, and Sunderland. CNA annually serves over 450 students from 50 countries who together speak over 35 different languages. CNA is widely recognized by funders as well as partner organizations for its successful participatory learning model and for the strength of its relationships with its immigrant students.

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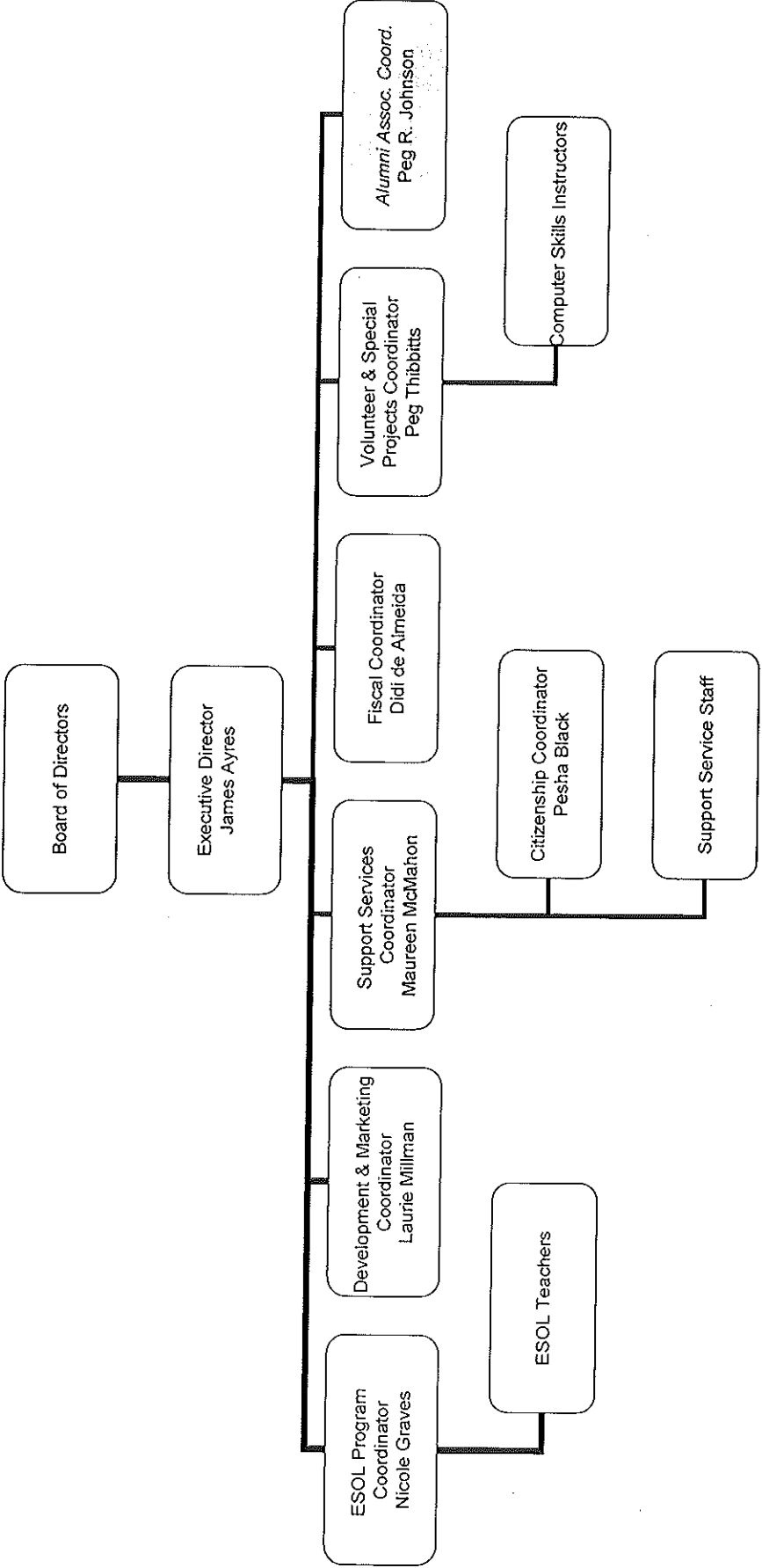
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Center for New Americans  
Organizational Chart, FY-2011



## Center for New Americans Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Plan

Center for New Americans maintains and promotes a system-wide policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, gender, marital status, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. All advertisements and employment notices shall contain the phrase "An Equal Opportunity Employer." The ADA officer will assure that all sites for CNA services are handicapped-accessible as required by local, state, and federal law.

Center for New Americans takes the following actions to implement Affirmative Action:

- CNA's letterhead includes a statement of non-discrimination.
- CNA posts and distributes statements of our Public Accommodations Policy and Complaint Procedures that address non-discrimination with regard to disabilities.
- CNA's employee policies and procedures include a statement of non-discrimination.
- CNA sends job postings to a list of organizations that represent a variety of minority groups.
- CNA's job postings include "EEO/AA" which indicate that CNA promotes Equal Employment Opportunities/Affirmative Action.
- CNA's job postings are carefully written to describe the essential duties and responsibilities of the position.
- CNA's interview procedures adhere to fair and legal employment questions.
- CNA offers employment to the best qualified candidates.

## ATTACHMENT-E

PROJECT BUDGET FORM						
Program Name: <u>Center for New Americans</u>						
Program Period: <b>12 Months</b>						
July 2012 through June 2013						
PERSONNEL Position	Hourly Rate	Hours Per Week	# Weeks	Total Program Cost	CDBG Cost	Non-CDBG Cost
ESOL Teachers	\$ 18.55	58	40	\$ 43,036	\$ 4,000	\$ 39,036
Support Services Coordinator	\$ 15.75	8	52	\$ 6,552	\$ 2,500	\$ 4,052
Support Services Assistant	\$12.75	12	40	\$ 15,912	\$ 5,500	\$ 10,412
Computer Instructor	\$ 12.75	12	40	\$ 6,120	\$ 2,100	\$ 4,020
Volunteer Coordinator	\$ 15.25	5	52	\$ 3,965		\$ 3,965
Executive Director	\$ 32.75	10	52	\$ 17,030	\$ 1,100	\$ 15,930
Fiscal Coordinator	\$ 19.50	6	52	\$ 6,084		\$ 6,084
ESOL Coordinator	\$ 19.55	10	52	\$ 10,166		\$ 10,166
Planning and Development	\$ 23.00	8	52	\$ 9,568		\$ 9,568
<b>TOTAL SALARY</b>				\$ 118,433	\$ 15,200	\$103,233
Benefits at 15%				\$ 17,765	\$ 1,748	\$ 16,017
Taxes at 13.5%				\$ 15,988	\$ 2,052	\$ 13,936
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL</b>				\$ 152,186	\$ 19,000	\$133,186
<b>Non-Personnel</b>						
Rent, utilities, security				\$ 15,600	\$ 5,200	\$ 15,600
Telephone				\$ 1,480		\$ 1,480
Insurance				\$ 1,610		\$ 1,610
Postage				\$ 800		\$ 800
Supplies and Matierals				\$ 2,880	\$ 300	\$ 2,580
Travel/Mileage				\$ 1,110		\$ 1,110
Contractual - Early Childhood				\$ 24,800	\$ 5,500	\$ 20,800
Accounting				\$ 1,800		\$ 1,800
Reproduction/printing				\$ 860		\$ 860
Advertising				\$ 200		\$ 200
Community Events				\$ 180		\$ 180
Fees Subscriptions				\$ 95		\$ 95
other: child care reimb.				\$ -		\$ -
other: transportation reimb.				\$ 220		\$ 220
other:						
other:						
other:						
<b>TOTAL ADMINSTRATIVE</b>				\$ 51,635	\$ 11,000	\$ 40,635
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS</b>				\$ 203,821	\$ 30,000	\$173,821

**Center for New Americans  
Amherst Program Site Revenue**

DESE	\$	168,421
Misc. Contributions	\$	2,400
Small Foundations	\$	3,000
Non-CDBG	\$	173,821
CDBG	\$	30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>203,821</b>