

## A. Executive Summary

*Provide a brief narrative of your proposed AmeriCorps\*VISTA project, including population to be served, issue areas, history of your organization's activities in these issue areas, and the type of service activities you expect the AmeriCorps\*VISTA members to accomplish.*

Incorporated in 1970, United Indian Health Services, Inc. (UIHS) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit tribal health consortium that provides culturally sensitive and comprehensive health care services to over 12,000 registered clients which includes American Indians and their families located in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. The consortium is comprised of nine federally recognized tribes of Yurok, Wiyot, and Tolowa ancestry including the Table Bluff Reservation - Wiyot Tribe, Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, the Blue Lake Rancheria, the Trinidad Rancheria, Big Lagoon Rancheria, Yurok Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Smith River Rancheria and Elk Valley Rancheria. UIHS also serves members of other federally recognized American Indian Tribes that live within the service area.

Operating out of a series of remote clinics and offices for thirty years, in 2001 UIHS consolidated many of its services into a 44,000 square foot central clinical facility known as the Potawot Health Village located on 40-acres in Arcata, California. The five satellite clinics continue to serve UIHS's remote clientele. As a result of developing the Potawot Health Village, UIHS realized the need to formulate the Traditional Resources Program which is responsible for the promotion/demonstration of art, culture, and environment as it relates to preventative health programming at UIHS. The Traditional Resources Program is governed by the Traditional Resources Advisory Committee (TRAC) and was established in 2001. The program has grown significantly faster than anticipated and is now in a position to make the next step towards growth and development. The UIHS Traditional Resources Program is currently in the process of evaluating the future vision and development of this program and has realized the urgency of developing a strategic plan specifically for the Traditional Resources Program to be included in the overall UIHS Strategic Plan currently being developed. The AmeriCorps\*VISTA member would assist UIHS with further development of this program as well as specifically building capacity of programs surrounding sustainability programming and policy development for efforts surrounding waste reduction, alternative energy, Environmentally Preferred Purchasing, and other sustainable practices. In addition, the member would support fundraising efforts to further expand the capacity of the program and build upon educational components that compliment sustainable practices as they relate to native values.

## B. Needs and Activities

1. *State in measurable and quantifiable terms the **specific poverty-related need(s)** identified by the community(ies) that the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project will address, including the number of low-income people directly affected by the problem(s).*

The poverty status of American Indians in California's Redwood Coast Region\* is estimated at 13,157<sup>1</sup> out of a total American Indian population of 25,772<sup>2</sup>. The total estimated American Indian/Alaska Native person below poverty level in the Redwood Coast Region is 3,863 at 29.4%<sup>1</sup>. The programs developed by the VISTA member will target the American Indian community and will demonstrate sustainability efforts that are applicable to low income households and provide education on ways to create healthy environments of which they live. Many of the projects implemented by the UIHS Traditional Resources Program are developed to provide job training skills to the American Indian community in the areas of land stewardship, sustainable practices, and food security. With the understanding that employment in the areas of sustainability will provide better health and living conditions for the community, UIHS would like the VISTA member to focus on building the capacities and opportunities for supporting such programming.

## UNITED INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

Less than 100 firms or businesses are owned by American Indian/Alaska Natives in Humboldt County with Del Norte County listed as Suppressed; doesn't meet publication standards<sup>3</sup>. Humboldt County is 3,572 square miles with only 35.4 persons per square mile and Del Norte County is 1,007 square miles with 27.3 persons per square mile<sup>1</sup>.

*Source: <sup>1</sup>California Center for Rural Policy. All numbers are estimates from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.*

*<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census Bureau 2007.*

*<sup>3</sup>U.S. Census Bureau 2002.*

*\*Redwood Coast Region includes Trinity, Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte Counties.*

### C. Strengthening Communities

1. *Describe how the new infrastructure or organizational capacity created by your project will bring individuals and, ultimately, the community out of poverty.*

The development of the Traditional Resources Program is focused on developing opportunities for the American Indian community that build skill capacity and pride in their community and culture. The youth programs offered by the Traditional Resources Program such as the La Chomp Chay (meaning "little Frog" in the Yurok language) Kids Club are geared to empower youth to make positive choices in life and expose them to opportunities for success in their community. Programs targeting young adults to adults are designed to develop leadership skills and provide exposure to opportunities that reflect positive changes in their community while tying them to traditional values. Programs are aimed to develop greater confidence, community interactions, pride, and specific job related skills. Through this, individual American Indian participants will increase their standard of living and pass their successes on to future generations. In addition, behavior modifications demonstrated will move families away from exposure to substance abuse, health issues, and unemployment. The development of community leaders will empower the tribes/communities to economic opportunities that reflect traditional values.

2. *How will you involve the community to ensure the sustainability of the proposed project?*

The American Indian community will be involved in the project through the entire process of planning and development. As a team player of the Traditional Resources Program, all work developed by VISTA members will be reviewed and approved by TRAC, which is a governance committee comprised of UIHS Board Members and community members. Any program or policy development would be approved and adopted by the UIHS Board of Directors as permanent ongoing business activities. The members would work closely with staff and appropriate community members to develop ownership and culturally competent deliverables which compliment the vision, guiding principles, and goals of the organization.

3. *How, if at all, will you collaborate with other national service programs (AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, RSVP, NCC) in order to support the proposed project?*

UIHS collaborates with many national service programs for service learning activities on a periodic basis throughout the year. We host a number of service learning events such the Day of Caring and Cesar Chavez Service Learning Day where volunteers work in the community food garden and restoration area. We also have hosted events and solicit volunteers from the RSVP's Volunteer Center of the Redwoods. UIHS would be pleased to collaborate further with national service programs with further volunteer recruitment support.

### D. VISTA Assignment Description

1. **List** the tasks and activities AmeriCorps\*VISTA member(s) must perform to implement the strategies described in the project plan(s). These tasks and activities should logically relate to the overall project goals

and activities you propose in your VISTA Assignment Description. This section will include more detail on the actual service activities.

**The Member tasks and activities for Year 1 will include:**

1. Producing specific Traditional Resources Program outreach materials in association with cultural values;
2. Working with various committees and UIHS sections (departments) to integrate new policies and sustainable activities;
3. Recruitment and tracking of volunteers;
4. Assisting in policy development related to sustainability efforts;
5. Working with local tribal community organizations to provide outreach efforts about sustainability efforts;
6. Researching and developing funding resources to ensure project sustainability.
7. Ability to present materials and obtain approval from the UIHS Board of Directors and other governance committees.

2. **List** the recommended skills and qualifications that an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member should have to successfully complete the project plan.

**Recommended skills and qualifications include:**

1. An interest in working program planning and development activities such as assisting with policy development that require purchasing of Environmentally Preferred Purchasing, Fair Trade- organic coffee, incorporation of sustainable efforts into the UIHS Guiding Principles;
2. Excellent writing skills;
3. Experience coordinating a project or group of volunteers;
4. An educator, counselor, or individual who has experience with youth programs is desirable; and,
5. Computer skills in Microsoft Office (word, excel, PowerPoint, etc.) and ability to operate or willingness to learn Adobe programs (Illustrator, Photoshop, Acrobat, In Design)

**E. Project Management**

1. *Describe plans for daily supervision of AmeriCorps\*VISTA members. Specify who will supervisor and if supervision will be their full-time or part-time responsibility.*

The VISTA members will have regular supervision provided by the UIHS Traditional Land Management Specialist and the Traditional Resources Specialist. The member will have regular weekly scheduled check in meetings with Traditional Resources Program staff, monthly guidance and reporting to the Traditional Resources Advisory Committee, and will be able to access support from the supervisors on a regular basis.

2. *Are 51 percent or more of the persons on your board of directors' members of the low-income community? If not, please describe how your agency has developed, or will develop, an advisory council for the AmeriCorps\*VISTA project that consists of members or representatives of the low-income community served by the proposed project.*

UIHS does not mean their Board of Directors, although, the board is made up of American Indian community members of which a significant percentage is considered low income or below the poverty level as described in Needs and Activities section above. UIHS Board of Directors fall into this census category of low income and therefore it is safe to presume that more than 51% of the Board of Directors are members of the low income community.

**F. Organizational Capacity**

## UNITED INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

1. *What in-kind resources will you provide to ensure the success of the proposed project?*

Office space, computer, internet access, phone, travel reimbursement, additional resources on as needed basis.

2. *Describe current activities your organization and other organizations are undertaking to address the problems identified in your need statement. Describe how the proposed project will complement this work.*

Although UIHS periodically offers programs related to addressing the problems stated above, there is no formalized program/s offered on a regular ongoing basis. UIHS offers a number of programs that address the needs of the community surrounding sustainability such as workshops on solar energy, youth programs involving waste reduction efforts, and outreach efforts that involve various aspects of sustainability. UIHS would like to formalize its efforts to provide outreach educational opportunities for the community regarding sustainability and programs that incorporate environment and culture as it relates to community wellness. We do have some of the sustainability infrastructure in place (i.e. solar, recycling, etc.), but there is plenty of room for growth in these areas.

3. *Describe the accessibility of services provided to members of the community with disabilities. Is your organization able to accommodate AmeriCorps\*VISTA members with disabilities?*

The services provided would be accessible to members of the community with disabilities. Potawot Health Village was built to ADA standards and would allow for accommodations to those members with disabilities.