

BUILD IT

*a community-engagement initiative at the University of Richmond
coordinated by the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement*

Action Group > Guidelines 2008-2009

Program Overview

Build It develops long-term reciprocal partnerships that create experiential-learning opportunities for students while helping to fulfill unmet needs in the community. These real-world experiences can deepen students' academic learning and invest them with a sense of social responsibility. For the past three years, Build It has focused its efforts on the Northside of Richmond, especially the Highland Park neighborhood, working closely with Overby-Sheppard Elementary School, Chandler Middle School, the Hotchkiss Field Community Center, Reach Out and Read, and Boaz & Ruth. The Youth Life Foundation will become Build It's latest partner with the opening of its Highland Park Learning Center in September 2008. Build It volunteers participate in ongoing weekly service at the partner sites, educational programs about social issues, and community-building events that respond to partner-identified needs. The Build It initiative, as its name implies, will continue building collaborative, sustained partnerships in the Northside in 2008-2009.

Program Structure

Participation in Build It provides volunteers an opportunity to interact with different people on campus and in the community and steers the University toward more substantive engagement with the city and some challenging social issues. Cassie Price, the community initiatives and program manager for the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement (CCE), coordinates Build It activities in conjunction with the Action Group composed of a dedicated core group of Build It volunteers. The Action Group is selected at the beginning of the fall semester through a competitive application process. Expectations for Action Group members are detailed below; the application form follows.

Action Group

Expectations: Action Group members must be committed to learning about social issues in the Richmond community and to working for social change through the ongoing, mutually beneficial campus-community partnerships that lie at the heart of the Build It model. Thus, Action Group members must work at least one hour per week with a Build It community partner agency starting the week of September 8-12. At least one Action Group member will serve at each of the six community partner organizations and will be designated as a liaison between that organization and the Build It volunteers serving there. Action Group members will also organize and publicize Build It educational programs, develop and implement occasional and ongoing projects that support the work of community partners, act as campus ambassadors and lead volunteers at each of the sites, and help recruit other volunteers.

In addition to their individual weekly service, Action Group members will meet twice a month for approximately an hour and a half with program manager Cassie Price to reflect on their community experiences and plan Build It events and educational programs. Finally, Action Group members must attend a fall retreat and a spring retreat with the Advisory Group (comprising representatives from the University's faculty and staff and from the community

partner organizations) and lead at least one reflective session per semester for students volunteering at the partner organization for which they are the liaison.

Benefits: The benefits of participation in the Build It initiative range from affiliation with faculty, staff, and students interested in social change to the development of practical skills of tremendous value to any future career. Action Group members have the opportunity to take a leadership role in the University's largest community initiative; work closely with community organizations and local residents; and plan programs that combine learning, civic action, and reflection. Through these activities, Action Group members also have the chance to effect positive change in our community.

If you have any questions about Build It or the expectations for the Action Group, please contact Cassie Price at the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement at 484-1609 or cprice@richmond.edu. More information about the Build It community-engagement initiative is available at <http://buildit.richmond.edu>.

Build It Action Group > Application 2008-2009

The deadline for applications to the Build It Action Group is 12:00 noon, Monday, Sept. 1. Please return applications directly to the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement (Tyler Haynes Commons 201) or via email at cprice@richmond.edu.

Name _____ Email _____
Cell Phone _____ Local Mailing Address _____
Major _____ Minor _____ Cumulative GPA _____
Class of 09 10 11 12 Have you participated in Build It in past years? Yes No
If yes, how were you involved? _____

Please rank the Build It partner organizations in the order of where you prefer to work.

Boaz & Ruth Chandler MS Hotchkiss Community Center Overby-Sheppard ES
 Reach Out and Read Youth Life Foundation Learning Center

Please provide detailed answers to the following questions. You may attach additional pages.

- 1) Why do you want to play a leadership role in the Build It community-engagement initiative?

- 2) What relevant skills, interests, academic, and/or practical experience do you bring to this project?

- 3) What do you see as key issues facing low-income communities in Richmond? What social issues are you passionate about?

- 4) What do you believe are key ingredients for success in an ongoing, reciprocal campus-community partnership?

- 5) What are some of your ideas for Build It educational programs and/or community projects?

- 6) What do you hope to learn or what skills do you hope to gain through your participation?

- 7) What academic and extracurricular commitments have you made for the 2008-2009 school year? Are you willing to make Build It a top priority?

Interviews: Interviews for Action Group candidates will be held the first week in September and will last about 30 minutes. Please note the times you are available on the following two days:

Wednesday, Sept. 3 _____

Thursday, Sept. 4 _____

If you are selected for an interview, we will email you to schedule a time.

Thank you for your interest in Build It!