



Boaz
& Ruth

Empowering Rebuilding Connecting



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Empowering through Employment

A healthy community is dependent on a healthy economy and healthy people. Neighborhoods struggling with crime and poverty are often affected by unemployment and a lack of commercial development. Such is the case with Highland Park, where high rates of returning offenders are also impacting the health of the community. Jobs and job training are essential to the long-term well-being of both individuals and the community. **The establishment of positive commercial activity in Highland Park is needed to provide jobs and to draw resources from across the metropolitan area.**

At the heart of the Boaz & Ruth vision are dynamic business enterprises that provide on-the-job training and work readiness skills for individuals needing a second chance. As participants encounter new or challenging scenarios at work, they are able to discuss those situations in classes designed to strengthen the emotional competencies needed to obtain and maintain a job. **Employment in the five training businesses not only helps participants build skills, but also establishes a foundation of positive work history.**

- ◆ Currently Boaz & Ruth provides approximately 60 paid positions for employees, program participants and AmeriCorps service volunteers.
- ◆ Between 2002-2010 \$6,000,000 flowed back into the community as trainee stipends and an additional \$2,000,000 in payroll to staff, many of whom live in Highland Park.

As trainees near completion of the program, they are assisted in identifying the next step. For some, it is continued education at a trade school or college, but for most it is obtaining a full-time job. Through our network of supporters and business owners, the Transition and Jobs Connection Teams work one-on-one to establish connections between graduates and potential employers.



64% of graduates obtained a job after graduation; of those, **75%** maintained a job for at least a year



"Tough times don't last forever, tough people do. I have been in business 34 years. I have seen the community fluctuate between good and bad. Boaz and

Ruth came in and brought a lot of positives to Highland Park... It is wonderful to see the healthy steps [program participants] have taken and how they are putting their gifts to use to build our community."

- Michael Simpson, Owner, Simpson's Market, pictured above with B&R CEO Martha Rollins.

Harvest Thrift Furniture

Firehouse Cafe & Catering

Mountain Movers

Sunny Days Thrift Clothing

Estate Sale Services

Empowering Economic Opportunity

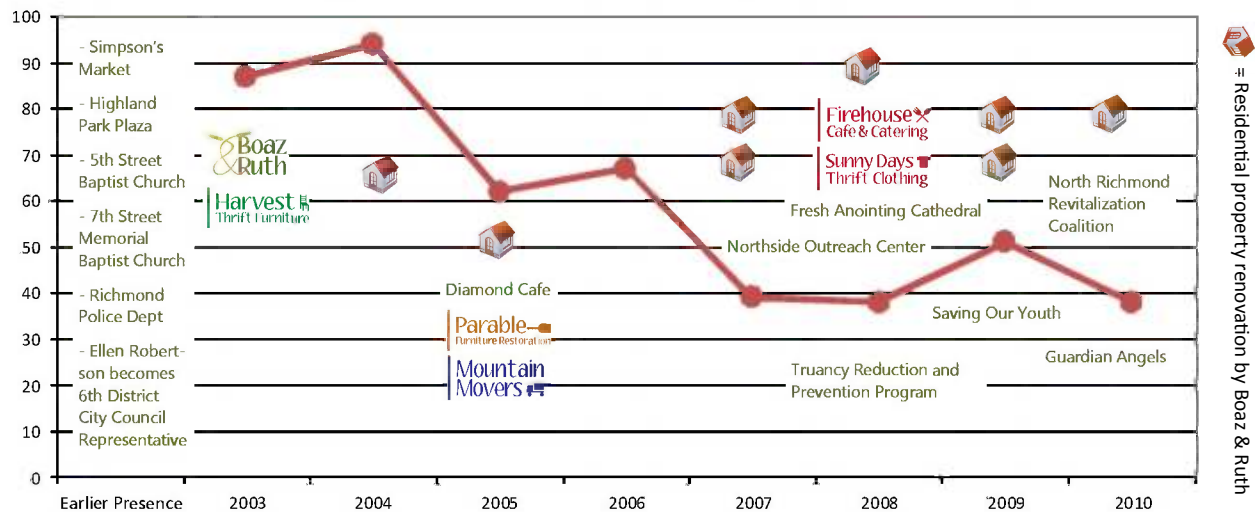
Before Boaz & Ruth opened in December 2002, over half the buildings in the surrounding area were empty, creating urban blight and fostering crime. Since then, Boaz & Ruth has renovated a dozen commercial and residential buildings in the Highland Park neighborhood. **For struggling neighbors, the reclamation of neglected properties is a powerful metaphor for the restoration of broken lives and a depressed community.**

With renovation comes much-needed commercial revitalization. Beginning with the purchase and reclamation of a run-down, non-productive property in the heart of Highland Park, Boaz & Ruth now anchors a four-block area with renovated buildings including the main retail and training facility, a mixed-use building, a clothing thrift store, seven neighboring houses and Fire House 15 Café. Significantly, the commercial presence has encouraged other entrepreneurs to open businesses in the area. In addition, two youth-focused nonprofit organizations have opened space in Highland Park and have begun providing services in the area.



- B&R Residential Property
- Priority to Purchase
- B&R Commercial Property
- Community Partnership Renovation

Making Highland Park Safer Through Positive Presence



● Incidents of Violent Crime Have Decreased Over 50% Since 2003

Empowering through Safety

In our first two years of presence in Highland Park (2003-04), there were nine murders in Highland Park, including one in front of B&R's Harvest Store that took the life of a 15 year old. Still, Boaz & Ruth chose to remain and fill the emptiness with a positive presence. By 2006, neighbors were beginning to see a change. One woman reported, "I have owned my house 11 years and have not felt safe enough to sit on my porch until this summer. It is because of Boaz & Ruth— the nice men who live in your house look out for me."

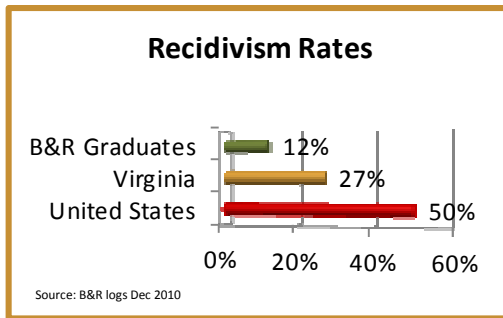
By 2009 (and through 2010), overall crime in Highland Park was down 61%. That year, Boaz & Ruth, the Richmond Police Department and the Richmond City Sheriff's Office were honored with a national MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Award for extraordinary achievements in improving safety and spurring economic development in the Highland Park community.

Restoration by the Numbers

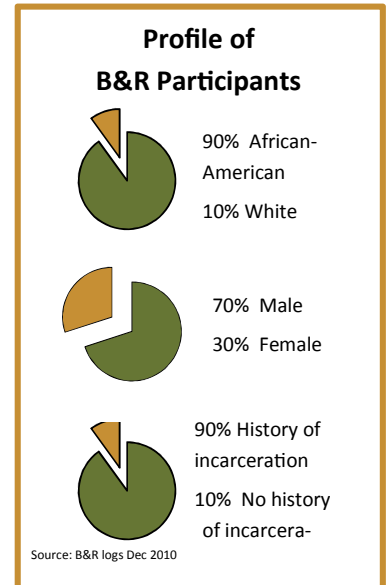
- 12 properties restored to date within historic district guidelines (8 houses + 4 commercial)
- 38 people living affordably in B&R rental houses
- \$1,150,000 spent on property acquisition
- \$2,350,000 spent on property rehab (75% of work done by B&R trainees, community members or minority contractors)
- \$50,000 paid in annual taxes (property, sales)

Rebuilding Stability

The needs of individuals reflect – and in many cases stem from – the needs of the communities in which they live. According to Census data, Boaz & Ruth is in the middle of six of the seven census tracts in Richmond with the highest numbers of returned prisoners. In this neighborhood, jobs, housing and healthy relationships are difficult to come by.



The first step to restoring a life broken by incarceration is addressing basic needs, answering, “How and where do I eat and sleep?” Without a consistent and secure answer to this question, many will choose to return to the relative safety of prison. **Nearly 30% of ex-offenders in the state of Virginia and 50% nationwide return to prison. But at Boaz & Ruth, less than 12% of program graduates have returned to prison.**



A key component to their success is acceptance into a community where they gain instruction and purpose derived from meaningful service or employment. Trainees earn stipends for the work they perform in the five training businesses operated by Boaz & Ruth. This approach empowers trainees to devote themselves full-time to their restoration while still having money for food and housing. Equally significant, this approach allows trainees to establish a record of positive employment to build upon when they graduate.

If participants do not have a place to live (the majority arrive at Boaz & Ruth homeless) they have the option to stay in one of Boaz & Ruth’s eight rental houses. Restored by Boaz & Ruth trainees, these once abandoned or dilapidated houses now provide safe, affordable housing for nearly 40 men and women. And just as with employment, the housing addresses an immediate need while also establishing a foundation of positive rental history to build upon later.

A New Way of Life: Lindell Sykes



On October 6, 2008, after living a life which included lying about my age to join the Army at 16, going to jail on over 30 occasions, serving prison time in three states, and being homeless on more occasions than I can accurately say, emotionally and spiritually bankrupt I went into a detox unit where the long walk back into my own life began. What now?

After talking with people I trusted, I came to Boaz and Ruth to serve on the construction team and earn a living stipend. I came to believe that service here would encourage my own spiritual growth, allow me to meet my financial obligations, continue my education, and provide a place among people to whom service is a way of life. All of these things have proven to be true.

Since then I have obtained a Career Studies Certificate in substance abuse counseling, a drivers’ license for the first time in 28 years, a vehicle, a new apartment, became a Certified Recovery Coach, and attended a week-long seminar at Duke University’s Center for Reconciliation. This is what is being made possible through Boaz & Ruth for those of us who have come to a turning point in our lives, made a decision, and validated that decision with action.

Rebuilding Emotional & Relational Well-Being

People whose lives have been affected by incarceration have unique relational challenges. **Detachment from family, friends and society as a whole is a key reason that many ex-offenders return to jail or prison.** And unfortunately, the cycle of incarceration can extend to the next generation. Without effective intervention, 70% of children of formerly incarcerated people are likely to follow their mother or father to jail or prison. Healthy families can stop that cycle, but often families have inadequate emotional and relational skills and are quickly broken under the stress of joblessness.

Boaz & Ruth helps individuals develop the relational skills, behaviors, understanding and attitudes that are needed to sustain healthy relationships. When entering the training program, each participant is coached in the writing of a personal development plan which includes a series of milestones in seven life areas - recovery from alcohol and substance abuse, basic life needs (food, housing, health care), legal issues, personal finance, family and community relations, education and self-development, and work readiness. Personal development in these areas is achieved through classes, on-the-job training and one-on-one, family, and group counseling sessions.

To develop and support individuals who are rebuilding their lives, Boaz & Ruth mobilizes a wide variety of paid and volunteer staff, consultants, post graduates, mentors and tutors who become like a family for trainees. The intensely relational character of the program is essential in achieving the ultimate goal of personal empowerment, not merely provision of services.

Feeling Grounded: Donna's Story

When Donna eventually graduated from Boaz & Ruth, it was on her third determined try in the program. In a year's time she remained in recovery from substance abuse, received her driver's license, purchased a car and had her voting rights restored in time for the 2008 Presidential election.

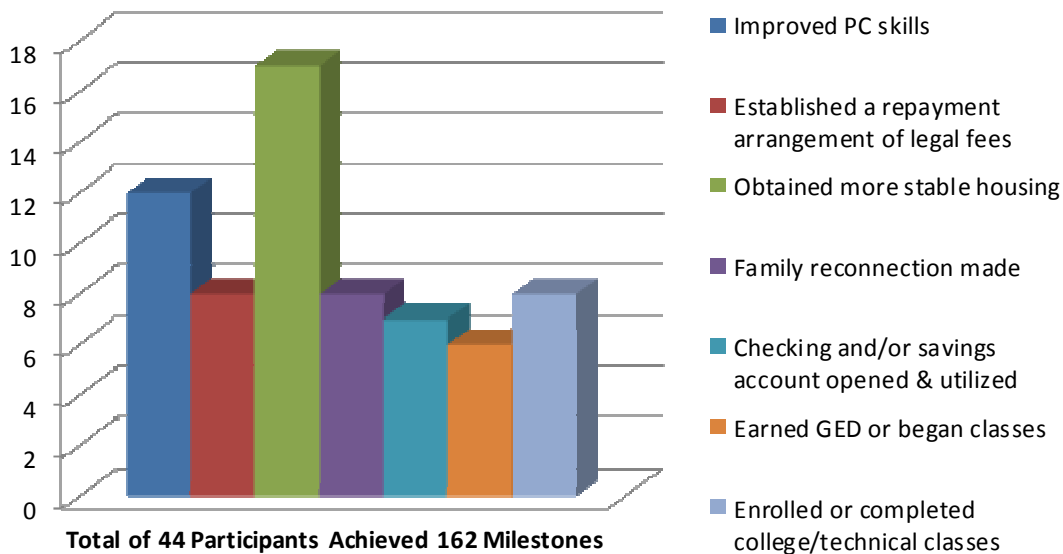
When asked why she thought she succeeded at Boaz & Ruth on the third try, she explained, "I've learned resilience, not to give up. My return was never as I imagined, but I was always welcomed back with love and hopefulness. They really wanted me to succeed."



Donna was richly rewarded at her graduation: the daughter she hadn't seen in 11 years was in attendance... and she brought grandchildren who Donna met for the first time. She said, "This program goes far beyond job training. It is about reconnecting with family."

Donna currently leads Boaz & Ruth's Harvest Thrift store and is taking courses in Human Services at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College.

Selection of Participant Achievements - 2010



Source: B&R logs Dec 2010



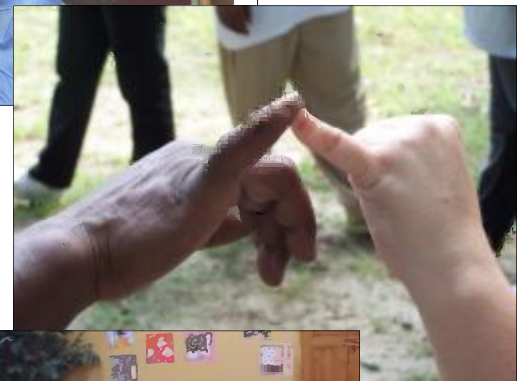
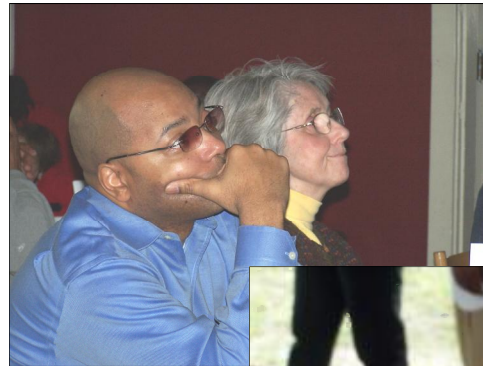
CONNECTING ACROSS RICHMOND

Changing Mindsets and Culture

In metropolitan Richmond, significant social and economic disparities exist between different areas of the city. Differences are often barriers to connecting to “other” people.

Through both large events and intimate gatherings, Boaz & Ruth provides opportunities to bring different communities together. These connecting events are helping to transform our community’s mindset and culture by putting a human face on “other” people, including formerly incarcerated men and women. In each event, Boaz & Ruth offers a safe opportunity to reach out to a person not in our circle of comfort. We recognize that bridges across social, economic and cultural divides can be powerful catalysts for change. That is why we say that the most important word in our name is the ‘and.’

In 2010, Boaz & Ruth sponsored over two dozen social and educational events that drew together people from around Richmond. In addition to the 8,000 shoppers attracted to Boaz & Ruth’s businesses last year (more than half from outside the Northside), an additional 1,300 attended events such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, Juneteenth, Long Walk to Freedom, and Beyond Dialogue, a series that uses film to stimulate honest and open dialogue around racial issues.



West End and Northside Demographics

West End - 23229	Source: www.city-data.com	Northside - 23222
95% Caucasian	Race	95% African-American
16.8%	Highest education—high school diploma	32.5%
30.7%	Highest education—Bachelor’s degree	8.7%
12.1%	Highest education—Master’s degree	3.3%
\$68,069	Median income	\$34,309
\$289,969	Median home value	\$133,483

“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.”

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Calling Attention to Reentry Needs

At Boaz & Ruth, we understand that an individual is not made free by exiting the walls of a prison. Rather, he or she must make a journey to freedom that includes securing food, housing and jobs as well as re-connecting with family and friends. Our desire is to educate the Richmond community and beyond about the challenges facing ex-offenders – challenges that not only impact the released prisoners, but ultimately affect the health and safety of our whole community.



Currently, we are calling attention to reentry needs in three ways:

- ***The Long Walk to Freedom*** Held annually each fall, this community event is designed to raise awareness of the challenges facing released prisoners and raise funds for programs that provide solutions to these challenges. By the end of the walk, participants have been led to ask, “How can our community help individuals with a history of incarceration rebuild their lives to ensure that they don’t return to jail or prison?” Together, walkers learn that the journey to freedom both involves and impacts our community as a whole.
- **Governor’s Council on Reentry** Currently representatives of Boaz & Ruth actively participate in two subcommittees of this council: the Subcommittee on Women’s Issues and the Subcommittee on Housing.
- **Sharing the Boaz & Ruth mission and vision** in forums aimed at alleviating challenges associated with poverty, crime and reentry. In 2010, Boaz & Ruth staff and volunteers presented at the Out4Life Reentry Conference, the North Carolina Reentry Action Project, University of Richmond, Duke Law School, and Civic Ventures.

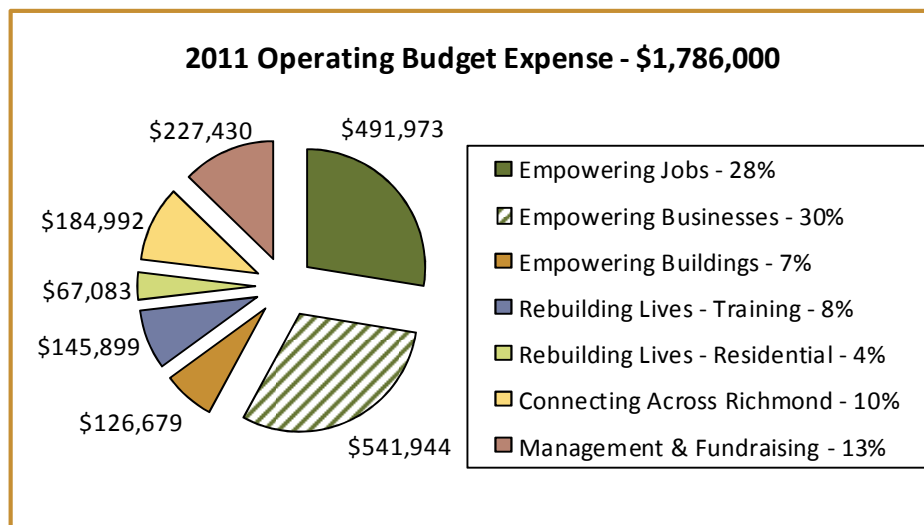
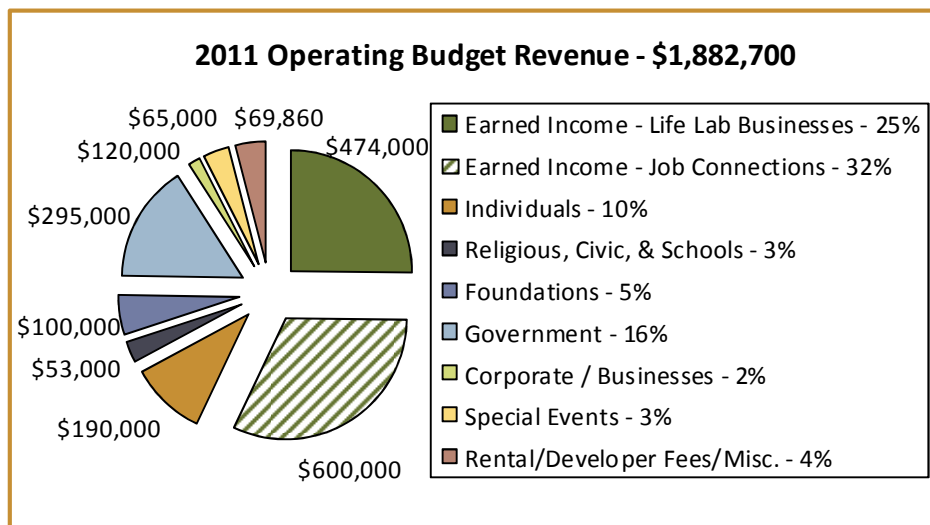




FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

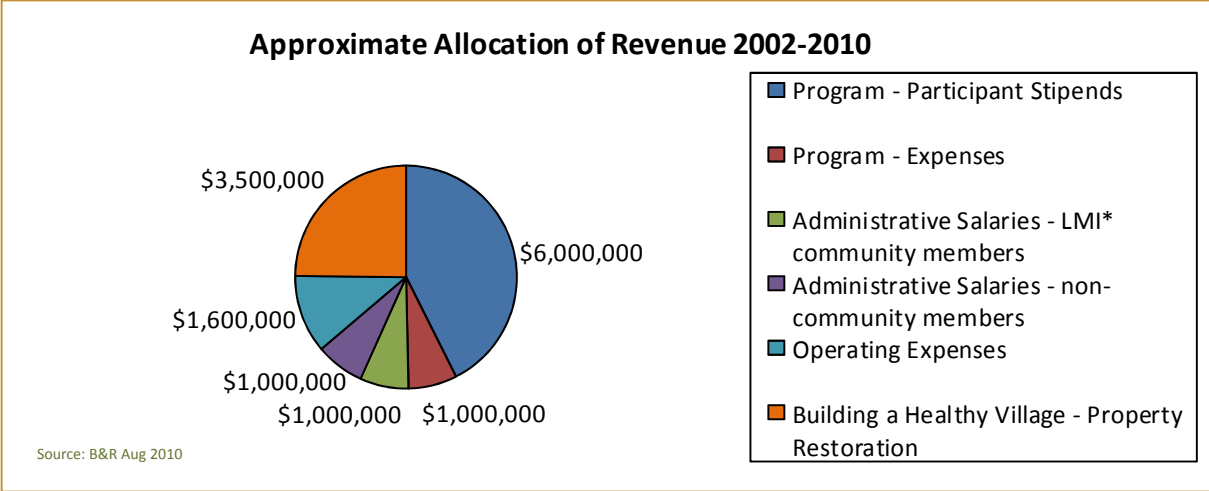
Boaz & Ruth is supported by diverse sources of funding, including revenues from B&R businesses which contribute about a quarter of the organization's revenue. Over the past four years, Boaz & Ruth received significant support from the federal AmeriCorps program which provided partial funding for trainee stipends. In summer 2011, the Board of Directors made the difficult decision not to renew the AmeriCorps contract. This change will allow the *Rebuilding Lives* program to strengthen workforce readiness training as well as involve all participants in community revitalization efforts. We believe community involvement is a critical component of encouraging men and women to persevere in their personal change.

Support from individuals is steadily increasing thanks in part to our ability to offer Virginia state tax credits to donors through the Neighborhood Assistance Program. In addition, earned revenue from our businesses is also increasing as the community becomes more aware of Boaz & Ruth's commitment to the restoration of individual lives and the revitalization of healthy communities.



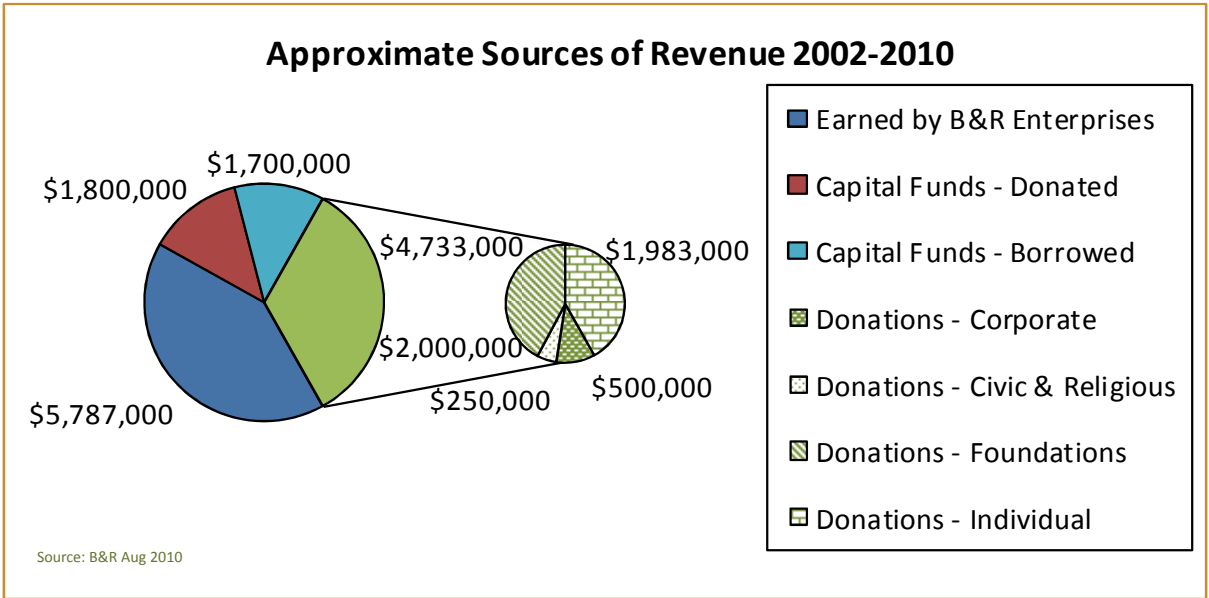
Boaz & Ruth's financial statements are audited annually and are available at www.boazandruth.com or on request.

Boaz & Ruth Has Leveraged Approximately \$14 Million for Highland Park (2002-2010)



*LMI = low-to-moderate income

Since opening in Highland Park in 2002, Boaz & Ruth has leveraged an estimated \$14 million for the community. Over \$5 million has been earned through the Boaz & Ruth training businesses. An additional \$4.75 million has come from unrestricted donations to Boaz & Ruth and \$3.5 million has been secured for the acquisition and renovation of abandoned or blighted properties in Highland Park. Combined, these dollars have funded the opening of five training businesses, the renovation of eight houses and the restoration of individual lives and a community challenged by crime and unemployment.



Because we achieve measurable results

- ◆ B&R was 1 of 100 nonprofits *in the country* recognized by President Obama for “succeeding where others have failed; getting real, measurable results; changing the way we think about some of our toughest problems.” (July 2009)

- ◆ **Less than 12% of B&R graduates with a history of incarceration have been re-incarcerated. The Virginia state rate of recidivism is nearly 30%. Nationally 50% of ex-offenders return to prison.**

- ◆ Between 2005-2010, B&R Trainees have restored 12 blighted buildings in the Highland Park neighborhood.

- ◆ **B&R has contributed to a 61% decrease in the neighborhood crime rate in the last six years.**

- ◆ Our partnership with the Richmond Police Department received a national award from the MetLife Foundation for extraordinary achievements in improving safety and spurring economic development in Highland Park. (May 2009)

Because it makes financial sense

Boaz & Ruth is a great investment in our community's future. With earned revenue from our businesses covering one-third of the cost per participant, just \$40/day is needed to fully fund employment, training and case management for one participant for a year. **This is half the cost of re-incarceration (approximately \$80/day), with proven results that are twice as effective at breaking the cycle of recidivism.**



A formerly condemned house is now home to 5 people restoring their lives.





We believe that everybody is a Boaz with gifts and everybody is a Ruth with needs. When we share our gifts across economic, racial and geographic lines we impact our whole community.

- Martha Rollins, Founder

Choosing Your Impact

Boaz & Ruth is poised to go to the next level. We have experienced success with our unique model in our first eight years. Now we need targeted investments both to improve and to increase the impact of our program. Specifically, a 2010 organizational assessment conducted by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) recommended several focus areas, including business development, program improvement and technology upgrades.

An investment of unrestricted funds allows us to address these greatest needs most efficiently. These three building blocks will strengthen Boaz & Ruth's empowerment of the Highland Park community by helping individuals rebuild their lives and filling the void of opportunity with positive businesses, safe residences and sustainable jobs.



I tell you that out of these stones, God can raise up children for Abraham.

~ Matthew 3:9



The mission of Boaz & Ruth is to rebuild lives and communities through relationships, training, transitional jobs and economic revitalization.

Please join us for an informational lunch and tour on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of every month.

Boaz & Ruth

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