



AmeriCorps Monthly Report

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Organization Name: Boaz and Ruth, Inc.

Program Name:

Name & Title of Reportee: Veronica Kerns, Site Administrator

Reporting Period: October, 2008

Date this report completed: November 16, 2008 at 8:52 AM

Approved By: Steve Whitman

Outputs: Briefly describe activities during the reporting period relative to your program's Performance Measures. Clearly state how and/or why the particular activity relates to the performance measure.

Needs and Services: In the month of October, 2008 AmeriCorps members: Alton Mitchell, Kenneth Jones, Terence Dickerson, Ruben Murphy and Luther Jewel were on the construction team and had the opportunity to work on the development of new class room space created in the 3030 Meadowbridge Road Boaz & Ruth site. The size of the new classroom is 27" x 17. Team Leader James Brown instructed them. Mr. Brown had construction experience when he started working for the Boaz & Ruth program. Members were exposed the listed skills below:

FRAMING: building up the basic structure of the walls, learning how many inches apart are the beams when making a frame structure, which is 16 inches a part.

SHEET ROCK: sheet rock is put up on one side of the frame work.

INSTALLING INSULATION: between the frame work and sheet rock.

ELECTRICAL WIRING: is installed through out the walls.

FRECH DOORS: were constructed and installed.

TRIMMING: cutting and smoothing all the rough edges.

PANNELLING: was installed to encase the walls.

Thus, the out side of the class room looks like paneling you would see in a home.

In addition the AmeriCorps members ran the duct work for the Air conditioning and Heating system. The members where instructed on how to cut the duct to size and wrap it with aluminum insulation. The new class room addition should be finished by the end of the second week in November, 2008.

In addition Ruben Murphy and Luther Jewel worked on the small building adjacent to the Old Historic Fire Station. The Fire Station in now a functioning Mini Mall. The two AmeriCorps members created and constructed mantel / shelf space in the small building.

AmeriCorps members also constructed new dressing rooms in the Sunny Days clothing Store located in the 10,000 square ft. garage.

The service work being done by the apprentices is surely contributing to the rebuilding of the economic corridor of the Highland Park community.

They are helping to expand the services provided by Boaz & Ruth and in that vain members are consistently being made aware that volunteerism can bring inner gratification and produce material substance that will be beneficial to the community and the program.

Member Development: Many of the Boaz & Ruth AmeriCorps members have health issues when they enter the program. Some have sought medical treatment and many have not. To receive information that can help to make you healthy and help to restore health is a valuable service.

During the month of October, 2008 The ZETA Chapter which is a Retired Nurses Sorority, taught a PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE CLASS. Material was passed out from the American Heart Association on (HOW CAN I MAKE MY LIFESTYLE HEALTHIER)? Members were first taught how to make a heart healthy by:

- Don't smoke.
- Improving your eating habits.
- Being more active.
- Take your medicine to control your blood pressure.

AmeriCorps members were educated in the areas of:

- Nutrition
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Dental Hygiene
- Stress Management

To learn how to become healthy and stay healthy is a notable occasion and all of the members at Boaz & Ruth were afforded the opportunity.

In addition AmeriCorps members are now participating in what Boaz & Ruth call mini classes comprised of:

Basic PC Literacy: AmeriCorps members who attend are: Shawn Walters, Deborah Covington, Vance Parnell, Roger Whitney, Katrina Hollomon, Luther Jewel, Alton Mitchell, Antone Harris, Wendell Randolph, Rochan Johnson, Donna Scaturro and Larry Riddick.

Reading: AmeriCorps member who attend are: Jason Junious, Crawley Patterson, Carlton Dickerson and Kenneth Jones.

Creative Writing: AmeriCorps member who attend are: Alicia Jones, Brenda Watson, Carmen Johnson, Hakeem Ali, Melvin Palmer and Victor Evans.

The mini classes are a part of each member's personal development process.

Strengthening Communities: The City of Richmond's Police Truant Office has established an office in the Highland Park Community in one of Boaz & Ruth's restored properties. Staff from the Truant office have been working with Boaz & Ruth and have been involved in community outreach events and services. This partnership is good for the community and for Boaz & Ruth and its members.

Staff from the Truancy Office attend Boaz & Ruth staff meetings to stay informed about upcoming events that will be taking place in the community. Boaz & Ruth providing space for the Truancy Office is a win-win situation. Community member's benefit from the many services provided by their office being located in Highland Park. A close eye is on children in the community who try to play hooky from school. The name of the truancy project is TRAP,

(Truancy Reduction and Prevention Program.

Sustainability: Describe your program's efforts during this reporting period toward sustainability (defined in terms of media and marketing, volunteer/leader development, collaboration, fundraising/resource development or other areas that may assist the program toward self-sufficiency).

During the month of October 2008 Boaz & Ruth's Parable Furniture Restoration Shop took in a great deal of business. Customers are in some cases buying antique furniture from Boaz & Ruth Harvest Stores and taking it to the Parable Restoration Shop to be restored.

It was reported that customers are bring large jobs (several pieces) at a time to be restored. Mike Fox is a master at restoring furniture and his quality results motivate people to come back and recommend the services to their friends and family.

Parable Restoration is now a major contributor toward bring Boaz & Ruth a little closer to becoming self sustaining.

Challenges: Describe any challenges your program currently faces.

To guarantee that Boaz & Ruth is a drug free environment and make sure it stays that way.

What strategy will you employ to address these challenges?

Modify the drug testing policies and do more random drug testing.

Assistance: Our program needs the following assistance from the Office on Volunteerism and Service (please be specific).

No information reported

Special Events: Describe a special event that your program has organized or participated in. Examples include service projects, community planning meetings, recognition events, etc.

On October 11, 2008 at 6:00 in the morning Boaz & Ruth was at the Richmond City Jail setting up for its annual Long Walk To Freedom. The Long Walk To Freedom event was established to make the public aware of the many obstacles an ex-offender has to face after being release from jail.

There is more than one way to deprive a person of their civil liberties. The Long Walk To Freedom is also a chance for individuals to network with people who have been incarcerated. The event provides people with an opportunity to see that many ex-offenders are simply human, not all are a menace to society.

Ex-offenders are human beings who have made mistakes and need a chance to be accepted back into society without being stereo typed and labeled. Council Woman Ellen Robertson gave a wonderful speech regarding fathers who have been released from jail. She encouraged them to be strong, be responsible and hold on to hope. Fathers must be there for their children and that they should never give up trying. The Richmond City Sheriff presented a speech and in the process he looked upon the crowd and expressed how great it was to behold so many men and women who were not in jail and are still free.

A woman gave a speech telling what it was like when a person is released from jail with no were to go, only possessing the clothes on her back. She said " with a positive out look, trust in God, determination to be self reliant, and with help from Freedom House, Offenders Aid Restoration (OAR), and Boaz & Ruth she has not been a statistic of recidivism. However; The Long Walk To Freedom still continues because many doors are closed to ex-offenders. Most people do not know that they stereo type and label ex-offenders. People possess an inner fear,

lack of trust and a sense of self preservation creating a wall between them and ex-offenders. This attitude leaves many ex-offenders in a position where they cannot make a living to provide for their self and family.

The Long Walk To Freedom was truly a success, almost 300 people attended. Doctors, lawyers, police officers, counselors, teachers, accountants and many concerned citizens were there. The atmosphere was charged with camaraderie, fellowship, determination and there were so many people there who wanted to help. Phone numbers were exchanged and many friendships and partnerships were forged.

Member Highlight: Provide a brief description of one member's role in your program, along with a two or three sentence response from the member.

AmeriCorps member Wendell Randolph came to Boaz & Ruth because he needed a job. Wendell had just gotten out of prison and could not find a job. He stated, "using drugs was the cause of him making bad choices. After being accepted into the program Wendell stated, "At first I did not think B&R could help. However, as time went on and I began attending the CORE BELIEF and CONFLICT RESOLUTION classes and receiving spiritual advice my attitude began to change. I was in a constructive atmosphere and it changed me slowly. I realized it was not a job there was more to Boaz & Ruth than just being on a job. I was in training, doing service work, learning skills and techniques I could use later on in life.

When asked to describe a typical day at Boaz & Ruth Wendell stated:

a. "I really get a lot out of the morning classes, Core Belief and Conflict Resolution. By attending the classes I now have a goal and B&R is providing me with the opportunity to reach that goal. I now have a strong purpose for waking up every day and I understand the difference from being on a job and doing service work. After classes I go to my life lab/ Mountain Movers. In my life/lab, I am afforded the opportunity to be a representative of the program, helping where I can, being of service to others and gaining job readiness skills, which will be useful to me when I move on.

b. Learning a lot about my self. Most important, the path that I was on I couldn't continue on. I would have if I did not become a Boaz & Ruth AmeriCorps member.

c. I have stepped off the road that leads to destruction and onto the path that leads to life. I have learned what structure is, I have learned how to control my attitude and temperament by attending the Conflict Resolution and Core Belief classes. I really needed Conflict Resolution because I had a bad attitude problem. Before the classes when I didn't like something I just went to work. (GOT ANGRY AND LOST MY SELF CONTROL). Now I do just the opposite.

d. I would recommend anybody to this program, not just ex-offenders. I know that anybody could benefit from being in the B&R program. It would bring about a life changing experience. It would be a self examination journey for anybody. OBAMA could come here and learn something.

Notes: Please list any additional information that you believe the Office on Volunteerism and Service needs to have.

No information reported

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1 Comments

[Steve Whitman](#) said on 11/18/08 at 09:43 AM
Veronica/Lloyd:

The October monthly report is very good. I have saved as Approved.

Thanks!
Steve

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