



CONTACT

Jennifer Shropshire, Rebuilding Together Philadelphia
215.280.0059
jpshrop4@aol.com

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia Announces 2010 Volunteer Awards

17 Individuals and Groups Recognized for their Extraordinary Contributions

Philadelphia, PA —The Board of Directors of Rebuilding Together Philadelphia (RTP) awards volunteers and partners who have gone “above and beyond” the call of duty to help RTP advance its mission of bringing volunteers and communities together to improve the lives and homes of homeowners in need. RTP served 74 homeowners and 4 community-based agencies in the past twelve months.

Jennifer Shropshire, President of RTP’s Board of Directors, expresses great appreciation saying, “While every one of the 900 volunteers who participated in RTP this year is critical to our mission, these 17 individual and groups have stood out in 2009-2010. Each has made a unique contribution to preserving affordable homeownership and to revitalizing low-income communities. Their energy and skills are key reasons that RTP is such a high impact organization.”

INDIVIDUALS

Phil Allen: Lifetime Contribution

- Phil started volunteering with Rebuilding Together Philadelphia when he was eleven years old and his father was a Wharton student. He has been with RTP ever since. We used to count on Phil as a perennial spring volunteer. For the HGTV project for veterans in 2009, however, Phil volunteered several times a week. Although he recently started a new job, Phil still volunteers for several days on every project – making repairs and advocating for homeowners.

Laura Crist: Outstanding Leadership

- Laura leads Rebuilding Together Philadelphia’s ever growing group of occupational therapists in making home modifications for older adults and homeowners with physical disabilities. In addition organizing the OTs, this spring Laura coordinated the other skilled volunteers and materials delivery for all the OT projects, led teams of volunteers on eight work days, and expanded the number of homeowners helped. Laura remains invested in helping RTP to streamline the process of coordinating OT work with general repairs.

Jean DelFerro: Outstanding Skilled Volunteer

- Jean first stood out as a Rebuilding Together Philadelphia volunteer at a fall 2009 project when she stayed after all the others had gone home, cleaning and placing furniture for another two hours. Jean is integral to RTP’s partnership with occupational therapists. She facilitated and personally completed a majority of OT related projects this spring. Jean has agreed to work with RTP over the summer to improve OT operations and to restock OT-related supplies and materials.

Bob Gross: Above and Beyond

- Bob has been on call for Rebuilding Together Philadelphia for about 18 months (though it seems as if he’s always been part of the RTP family), volunteering several days a month, sometimes several days a week. From his meticulously laid tiled shower walls and floors to his artfully crafted stairs and custom doors, Bob always does jobs for RTP homeowners as if they were for his own home. Bob also facilitates difficult projects and tricky repairs with general volunteers.

Jerry Hoff: Outstanding Skilled Volunteer

- Jerry’s carpentry skills were invaluable to the Gung Ho! house management team, which chose a moderate homeowner project, but got a heavy one. Jerry’s good humor allowed two Rebuilding Together Philadelphia volunteer teams to share his skills; led him to stay to the end of each Rebuilding Day to be sure everything was completed; and inspired him to fill his truck with all the debris from the project and take it to the dumpster.

Robert Hughes: Outstanding Service

- As a Board Member of Rebuilding Together Philadelphia, Bob works behind-the-scenes setting policy. On Rebuilding Days, Bob becomes a master juggler in a quiet and unassuming, but extremely effective way. On several work days this spring, Bob handled anything and everything that was thrown at him, and made it all look easy! Simultaneously handling logistics, project management, hospitality and actually making repairs, Bob managed to do it all with a smile on his face.

Emily Bellwoar, Cloe Bellwoar, Megan Moscony, and Jackie McClellan: Above and Beyond

- Emily, Cloe, Megan, and Jackie are a delight. They volunteered for Rebuilding Together Philadelphia’s spring Block Build for two Saturdays (no small feat for teenagers with busy schedules). They worked hard – no slacking or taking breaks. When they finished a chore, they took it on themselves to find another. They even showed up the day after their prom. With bleary eyes and hair still sticky with hairspray, they brought their usual cheerfulness and sense of humor.

Pat Rossley: Lifetime Contribution

- Although a “retired” House Captain for the Keystone Mercy Health Plan team, Pat will be remembered for her years of leadership in that role. Now, Rebuilding Together Philadelphia recruits her to be a “ghost House Captain” for new volunteer groups. She evaluates and plans repairs; coordinates skilled volunteers; instills a “can-do” attitude among volunteers, and ensures execution that will meet homeowners’ needs. Pat is at the top of the list of “go to” volunteer leaders.

Justin Seweryn: Outstanding Service

- Justin put his global experience in renewable energy and sustainable building to work for Rebuilding Together Philadelphia big time this spring. Justin helped find the target block for the Popular Mechanics special “Go Green” Block Build. He conducted house evaluations and identified appropriate homes for upgrades. He took full leadership of the installation of the solar hot water heater, researching products, system requirements, and rebates; vetting contractors; soliciting in-kind donations; and helping to complete the installation.

Peter Seweryn: Outstanding Leadership

- Pete captured the gratitude of two occupational therapists (OTs) as well as Rebuilding Together Philadelphia as a whole this spring. He was “recruited” by the OTs working on another house down the block. Having volunteered with RTP since he was a child, Pete knows the drill. He didn’t hesitate to lend his experienced hand, helping to install home modifications, supplying tools, reassuring homeowners, and letting the volunteers know he was only a phone call away.

Chris Stock: Goodwill Ambassador

- Chris has been a wealth of information and expertise, helping Rebuilding Together Philadelphia integrate more sustainable practices into our operations. He sends industry updates, contacts, and in-kind donation alerts several times a week. As owner of The Stock Group, an environmentally-friendly construction company, Chris talks RTP up wherever he goes. He has recruited other skilled volunteers and connected RTP to vendors – we have found sizeable donations of materials waiting to be utilized, thanks to Chris.

GROUPS

The Enterprise Center CDC: Outstanding Community-based Partner

- Led by Imanni Wilkes, The Enterprise Center CDC (TECDC) was a natural partner for Rebuilding Together Philadelphia’s Block Build in Walnut Hill, West Philadelphia. RTP’s home repair work complements the CDC’s Neighborhood Plan, ensuring that RTP’s efforts have an even greater impact. In addition to hosting various RTP meetings, TECDC galvanized the community through its 10-person Street Team. Among other activities, the Street Team recruited community volunteers, organized community meetings, and communicated with homeowners.

LEADERSHIP Philadelphia Junto 9: Outstanding House Management Team

- Led by Jessica Moore, Junto 9 of the 2010 Class of LEADERSHIP Philadelphia embraced the role of House Management Team and raised sponsorship dollars for Rebuilding Together Philadelphia. Jessica coordinated every aspect of the extensive repairs for a West Philadelphia homeowner, recruiting several contractors to donate their time and skills. But, she'll be the first to tell you that it was a team effort; each Junto 9 member brought something special and significant to the project.

PREIT/Portfolio Marketing Group: Goodwill Ambassador

- Led by John Costo, the Portfolio team used its expertise in marketing PREIT to Rebuilding Together Philadelphia's great advantage. From developing a volunteer recruitment flyer, general brochure, a unique fund-raising appeal, and a series of flyers to creating PSAs that helped RTP win the HGTV American Heroes campaign; the team provided an extraordinary amount and quality of services. They also used their contacts to attract significant in-kind support for printing and voice overs.

ABOUT REBUILDING TOGETHER PHILADELPHIA

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia is a local, independent affiliate of a national network focused on preserving affordable homeownership using volunteer resources. RTP concentrates much of its work in West Philadelphia, Germantown, and North Philadelphia. Through its critical home repair projects, including energy efficiency upgrades, as well as its safe and healthy home projects, RTP has helped nearly 950 low-income homeowners and nearly 40 community agencies since its founding in 1988.

For details, visit www.rebuildingphilly.org. Follow us on Facebook via "RT Philadelphia."

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