

America Rows in Cleveland

Program Description

I. Mission and Goals

America Rows Mission Statement:

The mission of America Rows in Cleveland is to engage greater Cleveland's high school youth in an inclusive rowing and mentoring program that cultivates self-discipline, fitness, and confidence, team-building and personal growth while striving to prepare them for opportunities to pursue college scholarships.

Program Goals:

- Goal 1: To recruit and sustain a summer rowing program consisting of approximately 30 youth from the Cleveland Community. An emphasis will be placed to recruit urban youth to increase diversity and inclusion within the rowing community and sport.
- Goal 2: To establish a working partnership between US Rowing and the Cleveland Rowing Foundation that will provide support to expand diversity among the rowing population.
- Goal 3: To provide rowing instruction, swim test and water training, and physical training, aimed at building physical fitness and wellness.
- Goal 4: To create an environmental awareness among Cleveland's youth regarding the history of the Cuyahoga River and its effect on modern EPA regulations thus creating modern stewards of the river.
- Goal 5: To provide support to youth in setting and achieving post-secondary education goals and provide them with practical life skills.

Explanation of Goals:

America Rows in Cleveland is designed as an approved Pilot program through the US Rowing Association to develop and deliver a safe, sustainable urban youth outreach program in Cleveland. Cleveland Rowing Foundation (CRF) aims to promote the benefits of rowing to a diverse population. This program will integrate thirty youth from middle to upper class with those traditionally underrepresented who are currently underserved by CRF. This integration is modeled after the First Tee golf program.

For the first year, CRF will actively recruit 15 high school students from surrounding schools including St. Martin de Pores, John Rhodes, and Max Hay to participate in the summer program. Schools were chosen based on the demographics of the neighborhoods along with realistic transportation accessibility. CRF anticipates that half of the members of the initial program will contribute towards the cost of the program through this integration. Full scholarship awards will be granted using the eligibility standards of the national school lunch program.

US Rowing will serve as a resource for programming for the Cleveland Rowing Foundation. As recently announced by US Rowing: “The creation of the America Rows campaign is the first in a series of critical steps to make rowing more accessible and identifiable to the American public,” said USRowing CEO Glenn Merry. “These first steps in reaching today's youth will allow new generations to enjoy a sport so many of us love and participate in daily.”

CRF will collaborate with agencies such as Friends of the Crooked River and the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan to emphasize the environmental history and impact that the Cuyahoga River has endured. Granting youth residents access to the river will increase their awareness thus creating a stewardship for a precious natural resource.

America Rows will be held for both male and female youth. If athletes wish to continue in the program in the fall, CRF will work with the Cleveland Scholastic Rowing Association to seek funding to continue support for disadvantaged youth. For the first program year, enrollment is open to all youth, regardless of their academic standing, with a focus on freshman, sophomores and juniors to maximize numbers and build a sustainable membership. Every participant must maintain his/her membership by attending practices regularly and demonstrating his/her dedication to skill development along with volunteer requirement.

Rowing is considered the ultimate team sport that demands discipline and commitment, both valuable life skills. CRF will work to host guest speakers and seek opportunities to encourage youth in long term goals including post-secondary education.

II. The Rowing Program

Potential candidates will be allowed to participate in US Rowing National Learn to Row Day hosted in Cleveland on Saturday, June 5th without any further obligation. The day will include an orientation, safety briefing and introduction to the sport of rowing.

Interested youth can then attend a summer orientation to learn more about the full summer program with their parents on Tuesday, June 8th. The summer program will run from June 21 to August 12, 2010 (8 weeks), Monday through Thursday from 3:30-5:30pm. July 5th will be considered a holiday.

Quality coaches will plan the detailed workouts and schedule with measurable outcomes. At least 80% of youth will develop rowing and teambuilding skills, improved self esteem and goal-setting capability, as measured in evaluations by coaches and students throughout the year. America Rows aims to have at least 80% of crew members develop the rowing skills necessary to continue rowing in the fall and potentially compete in regattas.

Programming will include:

- Swim Test and water training during week one
- Erg Sessions (indoor rowing machine)
- Rowing Practice (on water training)
- Biweekly guest speakers
- Volunteer opportunities

Guest Speakers &/or Discussion Topics

- Service-Learning – The Value of Giving Back To Your Community
- Nutrition and Wellness – Supporting an athlete’s nutrition
- Diversity & Cultures – Understanding and Appreciating Our Differences
- A Hero for Daisy – a documentary about the Yale women’s crew protest initiating title IX. <http://row2k.com/features/features.cfm?action=read&ID=93>
- Conflict Resolution – How to Resolve Problems
- Cuyahoga River – history and stewardship
- Finances – Making Smart Financial Choices
- College Life – panel of local college rowers

All program participants will be required to volunteer at least 4 hours to the Cleveland Rowing Foundation. Athletes who are under scholarship will volunteer 1 hour for every \$50 that they received in scholarship. This additional service can be done at CRF or through other community venues. CRF operates primarily on a volunteer basis. All rowers are required to volunteer throughout the year. Creating an atmosphere and understanding to “give back” to the community through service is a priority.

Participants will also each receive a reusable water bottle to encourage reduction in plastic water bottles and emphasis on the nutritional value of water.

To uphold the highest safety standards and since rowing shells can only accommodate a specific number of athletes at one time, the program will be limited to 30 youth with two coaches. Additional volunteer coaches may be utilized during the season. The program will be expanded in the future.

Please see the budget and coaching job descriptions for more details.