



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Amy Kapp, Public Relations Coordinator  
YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School  
(215) 284-1648  
[akapp@youthbuildphilly.org](mailto:akapp@youthbuildphilly.org)

### **Martin Luther King Day of Service Projects**

PHILADELPHIA, January 2009 – More than 200 students and staff members of YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School will join 65,000 volunteers throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware on Monday, Jan. 19, 2009 for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service. YouthBuild will provide volunteer services for various individuals and organizations at locations around Philadelphia between 8 a.m. and noon. The major projects are as follows:

#### **Green Playground Construction Project**

At Greater Philadelphia's signature MLK Day service site at Temple University's Liacouras Center (1776 North Broad St.), YouthBuild students and staff will lead community volunteers in the construction of a green playground structure and picnic tables, using recycled materials and lumber from sustainable woodlands. Once completed, the playground structure and tables will be donated to Winchester Recreation Center. This project is sponsored by HOPE *worldwide*.

#### **Vanguard Mentoring Project**

Also at the Liacouras Center, nine volunteers from Vanguard will kick off a long-term mentoring project with YouthBuild (that will emphasize post-secondary preparation) by facilitating a skills training day. Vanguard volunteers will lead students in four workshops, including resume writing, mock interviews, basic presentation skills, and a group discussion about how education and career training are related to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream of equality for all citizens.

#### **Shelter Painting Project**

YouthBuild students and staff will be joining volunteers from fellow programs currently housed in the Philadelphia OIC Office Building (in North Philadelphia) in order to clean and paint 20,000 square feet of the RHD Ridge Avenue Shelter (1360 Ridge Ave.). Collaborative Partners include Youth Empowerment Services (YES), North Philadelphia E3 Center, Philadelphia OIC, MOCS – Mayor's Office of Community Services and National Student Partnerships.

#### **Weatherizing Homes for the Elderly**

YouthBuild students and staff will provide weatherization services for roughly fifteen low-

income, elderly homeowners in the West Oak Lane area of Philadelphia. The volunteer service includes applying plastic sheeting to windows in order to seal in warm air and reduce the influx of cold air from outside. This project is in conjunction with PennSERVE: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service.

YouthBuild Philadelphia is dedicated to helping out-of-school youth rebuild their lives and escape the cycle of urban poverty. More than 1,500 young adults have completed the program, 86% of whom earned their high school diplomas. In addition to transitioning successfully to post-secondary programs, apprenticeships, and meaningful employment opportunities, students have: rehabilitated more than 65 houses for low-income families; refurbished more than 2,500 computers to donate to community organizations and schools; provided more than 4,000 hours of care to individuals in long-term care facilities; and, provided thousands of hours of community service, annually.

###

**YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School** is a not-for-profit organization that provides out-of-school youth in Philadelphia the broadest range of tools, supports and opportunities available to become self-sufficient, responsible and productive citizens. YouthBuild Philadelphia offers an innovative program, which blends a rigorous diploma-based curriculum with 900 hours of community service and on-the-job training in construction, technology or nursing.

Students at YouthBuild Philadelphia can earn their high school diplomas and make successful transitions to full-time jobs and post-secondary educational programs. For more information, visit [www.youthbuildphilly.org](http://www.youthbuildphilly.org).