

GREEN THE BLOCK

National Service Day Toolkit and Resource Guide

(11 September 2009)

Green the Block is a campaign of Green For All and The Hip Hop Caucus



WELCOME TO GREEN THE BLOCK

Dear Green The Block Event Organizer,

Thank you for joining with us on September 11, 2009 for a national day of service to **Green the Block!** President Barack Obama has called on all Americans to use this day as an opportunity to give back to our communities through acts of service. Through our partnership with the President's **United We Serve Campaign**, we will use this day to actively participate in the recovery of our nation. We will show that the renewal of our economy means renewing the strength of our communities and our environment.

The September 11 National Service Day will kick off **Green the Block**, an ongoing campaign from the Hip Hop Caucus and Green For All. **Green the Block** is a campaign to ensure that low-income communities and communities of color have the resources and platforms needed to access the benefits and opportunities of the growing clean energy economy.

Use this toolkit for tips and resources that can help get you started on planning your **Green the Block** service project.

Thank you,

The **Green the Block** Team

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PLANNING YOUR EVENT

What are the strengths of your community? What do you want to change? The service project you plan should resonate with your community, and address local economic or environmental issues. Whether you plan on doing a neighborhood clean up or a roundtable discussion on green jobs, make sure it is relevant, positive and takes a step towards lasting change for your block.

Do not be afraid to think outside of the box when planning your event. No idea is too big or too small. Every act of service can have an impact, and there are lots of people out there ready to get involved.

Here are 11 steps for making sure your Green The Block service project is successful... and *dope*.

1. Find out if there are other Events in your Area

Visit <http://Service.GreenTheBlock.Net/> and click on “Find an Event”. Type in your zip code or state and see if anyone has already started planning an event in your area. If so, think about joining forces. You could have a bigger impact working together.

2. Choose an Action and a Location

What kind of service project do you want in your community? You could clean up your neighborhood, plant a garden, host a block party to educate neighbors about energy efficiency, and more. View the next section of this toolkit for more ideas.

Consider your target audience and participants. Who do you want to engage in your event? Who do you want to pay attention to your message? Is it youth, the Mayor, your neighbors, all of them? Hold your event in a location that is visible and familiar to the people you want to engage. You could clean up of the main avenue in your city or arrange a service project in front of City Hall.

3. Register Your Event Online

Go to <http://Service.GreenTheBlock.Net/> and click on “Host an event.” There you can put in all your information about your event, including how participants can contact you. If you do not have all the details, don’t worry; you can add and edit your information anytime by clicking on “manage your event”

4. Spread the Word and Get Your Community Involved

Recruit your community to participate! Reach out to local organizations and invite them to join. See who might be interested helping you plan, manage, and execute your event. Set a goal for how many people you want to engage – then shoot for twice as many to make sure you meet it.

You can spread the word in a variety of ways:

Online: After you post your event you can press the “share” button to send it out via e-mail, Facebook, Myspace, or whatever way you connect to people online. Add the event to your blog or website, if you have one.

Phone, e-mail, and word of mouth: The best way to get people involved is to actually talk to them. Connect with your community over the phone, and in your neighborhood. *Visibility:* Print posters, fliers, and other materials to hang up and hand out.

Posters and print materials coming soon on GreenTheBlock.Net

5. Figure Out Logistics

Do you need materials like work gloves or a sound system for your event? Where will you get them? Will you provide food or water to participants? How will people get to your service project? Do you need to reserve space or secure a permit? Start taking care of these logistics as soon as possible – they make take longer than you think.

6. Reach Out to the Media

Getting media attention is key to making sure the impact of Green the Block extends far and wide. As September 11 approaches, think about how to make your event media worthy, and what message you want to send.

Invite local media outlets to cover your event by sending them a media advisory three days beforehand.

Media guide and samples coming soon on GreenTheBlock.Net

7. Invite Elected Officials and Other Leaders

We want September 11 to be as powerful as possible, and your service event is an opportunity to influence and build relationships with elected officials. Invite your members of Congress, along with state and local elected officials.

Visit <http://www.congressmerge.com/onlinedb/index.htm> to find the contact information for your local Congressional district office. Call the office and ask to speak to the scheduler to make arrangements.

8. Have Fun!

During your service project, don't forget to have fun! Remember that your project is all about engaging your neighbors and strengthening your community. That will only happen if you all have a good time. Consider planning an event where people can dance, eat, and laugh together. Or just bring the right attitude. At the end of the day, everyone should feel good about each other and the work you accomplished together.

9. Gather Petitions

The national service day is not the end of the campaign to Green The Block, it is the beginning. Be sure to capture all the names and contact information of those who participated, so that you can stay in touch with them as you mobilize and engage your community.

Use our *Green The Block* petition: <http://www.greenforall.org/green-the-block/green-the-block-signup/download>

After your service project, send the petitions to us. We'll deliver them directly to Congress, as a sign of your support for an inclusive green economy.

10. Take Pictures and Video

Be sure you capture good videos and photos, so that you can tell the story of your service project long after September 11. These photos will be useful to show your impact to members of your community, the media, elected officials, and more. Take a group photo with signs, and get action shots of people serving their community. Put someone in charge of taking photos and/or video.

11. Report Back

As soon as your event is over, upload your best photos and video clips and a description of your event to GreentheBlock.net. With photos and videos from all of the events compiled on one web site, we can show the nation what thousands of dedicated people are doing to Green The Block.

EVENT IDEAS

Having a hard time thinking of ideas? Here are some fun and creative **Green The Block** service projects and event ideas that may work for your community.

Community Giveaway

Have neighbors donate clothes, furniture, and food to those who may want and need them. You can partner with thrift stores, food banks and other service organizations to have them pick up goods from neighborhoods, or have everyone set up yard-sale style around your block.

Clean the Block

Pick up trash from your neighborhood, and recycle plastic and paper.

Community Art Projects

Paint a mural as a community, or make recycled art projects. You can partner with local artists to lead projects.

BBQ

After you clean, paint, and more, get together for a BBQ and party. Celebrate your hard work, and each other. You can use this opportunity to educate and engage folks in your local work to **Green The Block**.

Retrofit the Block

Making simple changes to the homes in your neighborhood can make a huge difference! Go door-to-door to switch out old light bulbs with compact fluorescents (you know, the spiral bulbs). This will lower energy usage and energy bills for your community. You can also educate residents about affordable ways to make their homes energy efficient, and let them know about programs like the Weatherization Assistance Program for low-income homeowners.

Harvest Day

Volunteer with a local community garden or urban farm to help them harvest their fruits and vegetables. Or plant a community garden. Showcase the importance of urban gardening and healthy foods in your community.

Green Roundtable

Organize a community discussion on the green movement and what it means locally. Feature local activists, policymakers, performers, local business that are hiring, job training programs and educational opportunities for participants.

Host an Eco-Tour

What does green mean to your city? Host an environmentally focused tour in your city to identify issues and focus on the solutions and changes being made to green your city and strengthen your local economy.

Get Healthy Day

Going green is also about public health. Get communities and universities together for community testing and education on diseases like lead poisoning, asthma, autism, breast cancer, diabetes, and respiratory illnesses. Provide and discuss healthy food.

Hold a Rally that shows the importance of Greening the Block

You can get the attention of elected officials and community members by holding a large rally or event on a local issue. Think about how others will perceive your action, and how it will help your campaign.

Letter Writing Campaign

Have people write letters calling for action to **Green The Block**. This can often be an effective way of drawing attention to a particular issue in your community that is connected to need for a clean energy economy, such as job loss or that nasty power plant in your hood.

RESOURCES GUIDE

Policy

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Resources from Green For All:

<http://www.greenforall.org/recovery>

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act:

<http://www.recovery.gov/?q=content/act>

American Clean Energy and Security Act 2009:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-2454>

Energy Efficiency

Energy Star Yardstick:

Find out how to reduce the energy costs of a home, small business or church.

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=HOME_ENERGY_YARDSTICK.showGetStarted

Federal Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency:

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index

Let's Raise A Million:

<http://www.letsraiseamillion.org>

Tips on Saving Money and Energy at Home from the Department of Energy:

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/>

Green Jobs and Green Grants

Green Jobs Resources

<http://www.greenforall.org/resources/green-collar-jobs-resources>

Energy Efficiency Grants

<http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/>

Renewable Energy Grants

<http://www.energy.gov/news2009/7726.htm>

Urban Farming/ Community Gardens

Urbanfarming.org:

<http://urbanfarming.org>

American Community Garden Association:

<http://www.communitygarden.org>

National Thrift Stores

Goodwill:

<http://locator.goodwill.org/>

Volunteers of America:

<http://voa.org/Services/CommunityEnhancement/ThriftStores/tabid/5189/Default.aspx>

Salvation Army:

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/>

Out of the Closet:

<http://www.outofthecloset.org/>

Public Health Links

Lead Testing:

<http://epa.gov/lead>

Tips on Combating Air Pollution:

http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=jump.jump_youcando