

The Flotsam Project

This project will be the first youth program at PortSide New York. We will clean Red Hook's beaches of the large flotsam that lands here and make benches from the collected pilings. Benches will be placed in public locations in Red Hook and later be sold commercially.

The program will teach carpentry skills, community service, and ecological stewardship via beach clean up and tours with the Army Corps and DEP who have agreed to take kids out on the boats that collect harbor litter. The teens will also learn small business skills once we produce benches for commercial sale and maintain a website to sell those benches.

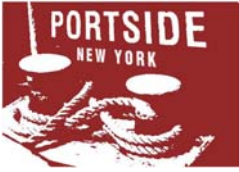


The Army Corps is also willing to consider giving us Flotsam that they collect if we begin to run out of locally collected stuff. We target 12-15 year olds for this program.

- **Gary Baum** will be the lead carpenter *The Flotsam Project*. He is a native New Yorker. His landscape carpentry business City Beautiful Carpentry and home have been in Red Hook for thirteen years. He participates extensively in community activities. He has started community gardens, outdoor film festivals and he volunteers regularly at music events.
- **Victor Alicea** will be the second carpenter *on The Flotsam Project*. He is a licensed general contractor, skilled welder and beloved neighborhood character. Because he was a runaway teen who pulled his life together, and because he lives in the Red Hook housing projects to this day, Victor is particularly sensitive to the disadvantages and pressures suffered by youths growing up in the projects. His background, street cred, and charisma make him a special asset to the PortSide New York team. Victor is also the father of two teenage boys and a twenty-nine year old daughter.

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The Flotsam Project is a good transition program for the kids and for PortSide—the next step being creating the boat building “build n row program” below:

- The same tools and shop would be used for Flotsam Project and the “build n row” so the investment in Flotsam Project will help grow the “build n row” project.
- Benches are an easy built and teach basic carpentry and provide the immediate satisfaction of seeing a finished product fast. They can then step up to the more complicated skills and slower turn-around time of boat building.
- Benches are used in the community in a way boats are not. Bench use will thus instill community service and pride in the kids. The public presence of the benches will also raise awareness of the program which will get more kids involved, help raise funds, and help sell more benches.

Build-n-Row Program

Rowing is the fast growing sport in the USA and a great way for kids in a waterfront neighborhood to stay fit, stay out of trouble get fresh air, and pick up waterfront skills. These waterfront skills can then be advanced via our partner the Historic Tug Pegasus that will provide basic tug deckhand training.



Building a boat together teaches teamwork, patience and a craft. All in all, it's a great way to build a work ethic and keep kids out of trouble. The appeal of similar boating programs has been proven in other locations in the city, and we expect similar success.

An instructor from another NYC youth project is ready to start the build-n-row program in Red Hook for us.

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