

Weekend Workcamps Program at the Friends Neighborhood Guild

An opportunity to connect, learn, serve and be transformed

Since 2006, the Friends Weekend Workcamp Program has had a new life, now based at the Friends Neighborhood Guild in North Philadelphia, and supported in part by a generous contribution from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The Friends Neighborhood Guild is a Quaker-founded social service agency in its 127th year of operation, headquartered at 8th and Fairmount.

With change comes opportunity. Fairhill Burial Ground and Fairhill Friends Ministry, also in North Philadelphia, works with the Guild to offer weekend service learning programs for the wider Quaker community. Many of us who have cared about the workcamp program over the years, and valued the legacy of David Richie and Judy and Michael Van Hoy, have a sense of excitement about the possibilities for new life in this work.



Here are exciting new possibilities of working together with local community members on issues of common concern.

What?

Weekend Workcamps at the Guild bring youth and adults from Friends Schools and Quaker Meetings together with youth leaders and adults at the Guild for workshops and service projects in the neighborhood themed around topics like community arts, oral histories and urban environmentalism. During the workcamp, we usually go out for dinner together, see a play or other cultural event, sleep over at the Guild's community center, and make time for yoga class or sports and games. Workcamps are typically Friday night–Sunday noon, with about 6-12 people from each group. We ask visiting groups to contribute \$55 per participant or other in-kind resources to cover the weekend's food and activity costs—and we love to improvise to meet visiting groups' needs. **Weekend Workcamps offer opportunities for learning about the community, service, reflection, play, community building and worship in North Philadelphia.**

Who?

- ✓ Quaker youth
- ✓ **Friends School** groups
- ✓ Other youth groups.
- ✓ Members of monthly and quarterly meetings in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
- ✓ Groups of Quaker families

Workcamps can be for **groups of young people** (6-12 middle school or high school-aged youth and 2 chaperones), **young adults**, and **intergenerational groups**.

Why?

The workcamp program has a powerful history, as it invites Quakers and non-Quakers to a spiritually-based experience in low-income communities. It is essential to our spiritual well-being as Quakers to know personally what it means to stand with the poor and the oppressed. Never have we needed a sense of connection and understanding across barriers of class and race in this country more. **The Weekend Workcamps Program offers an opportunity to increase awareness of economic, racial and cultural differences and inequalities as well as discover similarities, seeking to recognize “that of God” in everyone.** Countless participants have told of how workcamps have changed their lives.

Where?

The workcamps are housed at the **Friends Neighborhood Guild, 701 North 8th Street**, on the corner of **8th and Fairmount in lower North Philadelphia**. Workcampers will be involved in projects with the Guild and other Quaker-related groups in the area, such as Fairhill Burial Ground and Fairhill Friends Ministry.

When?

Year-round! Planning a workcamp takes about a month’s worth of advance planning, so contact the Workcamps Coordinator today.

How?

Contact Laura Owens Smoot, Coordinator, Weekend Workcamps Program
guild.workcamps@gmail.com or 856-287-0729