

Sara Holbrook



COMMUNITY
CENTER

April 19, 2011

Mayor Bob Kiss
City Hall
Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Bob,

I am writing in hopes that the City of Burlington, through the board of Finance's "Special Projects Fund", will be able to provide \$4,000 to underwrite personnel expenses for "Summer World Academy", a project designed jointly by the Sara Holbrook Community Center, Burlington Parks and Recreation and the Burlington School District. As you know, the Sara Holbrook Community Center (SHCC) has a 74 year history of providing summer recreational activities to the children of Burlington. Because of space and funding constraints, the Center has had to limit access to summer camp; until 4 years ago, we have only provided 36 one-half day child care slots for a 6 week period during the summer.

In November of 2006, staff from Sara Holbrook, Burlington Parks & Rec., Lawrence Barnes Elementary, and the Burlington School District began to meet to develop a strategy to expand both the number of child care slots and the hours of service. Jointly we designed a program - *Barnes Summer World Academy*, which provided a safe and fun alternative for 60 elementary school-aged neighborhood children in 2007 by using the space at Lawrence Barnes Elementary. Burlington Parks & Recreation and SHCC staff partnered to successfully fundraise for this project. Parks and Recreation will again provide staff training and some transportation and supplies, and 1 employee; the SHCC will provide family outreach for registration and will provide the remaining 6 staff required for day-to-day operations. Low-income families will have the peace of mind that comes with knowing their children are safely cared for in a quality program that provides recreation, community outings and enrichment activities.

We are excited that the program will again provide children positive social interactions and learning opportunities to become better stewards of their environment, neighborhood, and each other. Many of the families accessing this program are in severe financial crisis; opportunities to participate in programs like the World Academy provide a modicum of relief and respite in this tough economy. We will be integrating a literacy and a math component into the program, to help thwart the "summer slip" noted in out-of-school time.

Thank you for considering this request. Please feel free to contact me if you need more information.

Sincerely,


Leisa A. Pollander
Executive Director

United Way of
Chittenden County



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www.saraholbrookcc.org

for FY12 Special Projects
request
to Finance Board
MJ 5/2/11