



RECYCLE BICYCLE HARRISBURG REVIEW

DECEMBER 2023

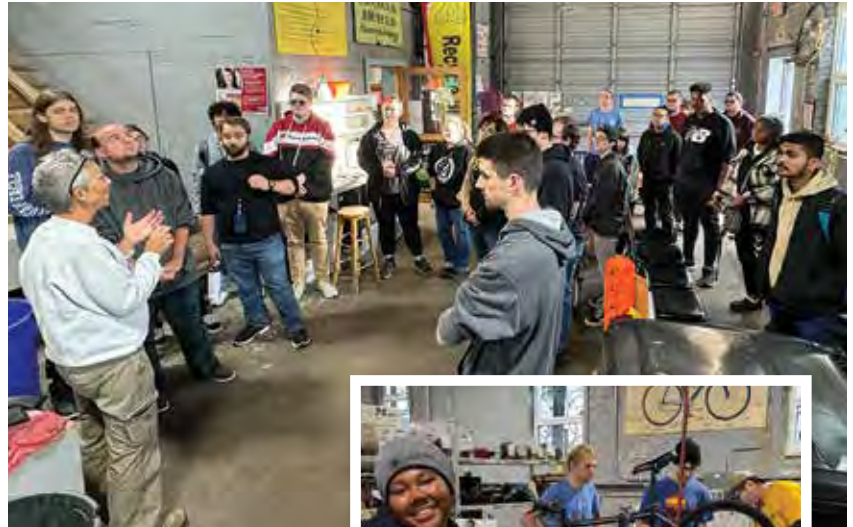
The Harrisburg University Partnership

Earlier this year Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg (RBH) was approached by Harrisburg University (HU), with leadership by A.J. Merlino, to develop a partnership. We enthusiastically entered this partnership knowing that each of us will benefit in multiple ways.

RBH will assist students who want bicycles, engage them in bicycle mechanics, teach bicycle safety, promote advocacy, and offer repairs when necessary. The HU students in turn will volunteer with us, increase RBH's community exposure, explore opportunities for school projects, and pursue internships.

The RBH volunteers already assisted around 40 students, who received bicycles to use as their main form of transportation in Harrisburg. Since the HU Campus is located downtown, while the market and other food stores are in midtown, a bicycle is a convenient way to shop for groceries or run necessary errands.

We rely on young minds, like the HU students, to continue our mission. RBH hopes to expand our Youth Mechanic Program and serve as a resource for meeting and advocating the nonmotorized transportation needs of our community. With HU, we are excited about the future of bicycling in our area.



A Bicycle Brings Joy

By Kelly S. - Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg Volunteer

One of the challenges of being a mom of 5, especially a mom of a 3-year-old autistic, non-verbal, little ball of sunshine, is that I can't find time to volunteer at conventional times or in conventional ways. But my experience in riding bikes with kids spans two decades and includes nearly every permutation of kid-hauler solution you could imagine.

I was at an event sponsored by Andrews' Gift, a charity that provides iPads to people with autism to increase learning and



Our family biking specialist, Kelly S., with 2 of her 5 kiddos in 2018.

communication, I met a single mother from Romania, Elena, whose son David was just a little younger than my daughter. As we talked more, I learned that English was her THIRD language. While overseas, she had a European driver's license, but she had never gotten one in the United States.

I asked Elena if she had a bicycle. She told me she didn't. She wanted one, but had no idea how to ride with her little boy. I suggested a bike trailer, since toddlers (especially autistic toddlers), can be unpredictable and cause mischief on a rear baby seat. For Elena, cost was an issue.

Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg to the rescue! We exchanged information, I got her height and bike preferences, and I went to the RBH shop to get a bike and trailer. The bike was easy - there was a ladies mountain bike ready to go, but the trailer was missing a part. A volunteer at the shop helped find me the part and some pieces of hardware to make it functional (a "MacGyver-like" skill possessed by many volunteers).

I dropped off the rig along with a little helmet at her home the next day and Elena loved it! Elena is looking forward to many rides with David to parks, stores, and bike paths near their home. The gift of a bike and trailer will expand their world, allowing them to do more social activities, all of which is therapeutic for David.

Thanks to all who volunteer and donate to make moments like this possible!

RBH Around the Community

Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg is always ready to help a neighbor. This year we had many opportunities to promote bicycling, bicycle safety, and advocacy. In addition to our annual events, such as parking bicycles at Riverfront Park for various festivals and participating in the city parades, we worked with the South Side Boys and Girls Club teaching bicycle mechanics and safe riding to kids. We attended Sunday Fundays at The Bridge Eco Village. We hosted employees from local companies such as PSECU and Faulkner Subaru to come help us fix bicycles. We helped lobby at the Capitol for safer streets across Pennsylvania. And we attended many smaller events where we could promote bicycling.

Here are a few pictures of our year of outreach.



Thank You to Our Donors

RBH has felt the following challenges:

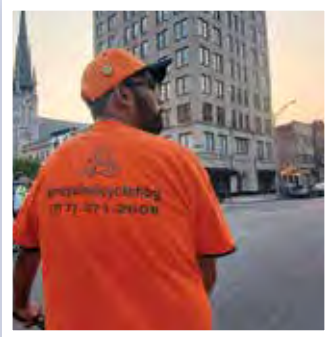
- the number of people in need of bicycles
- repairs of the bikes already carrying people to and from work or around town
- the number of families looking for bicycles to foster outdoor time together
- an increase in bicycle thefts

Throughout 2023, RBH has done their best to satisfy the needs for the people who come through our doors to receive a bike. The above challenges could not have been met without the financial and in-kind donations of our donors. You have helped us continue our mission and we are very grateful. As we grow and become a familiar and welcoming space for people, we would like to give tribute to our donors and THANK YOU.



We love our volunteers!

RBH is 100% volunteer with skilled mechanics, trainees, and individuals of all trades. SPOILER ALERT! The majority of our volunteers also love riding bicycles... surprise! Check out the photos our fabulous volunteers provided when they were asked to share their bicycling adventures this past year.





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RBH Welcomes Three New Board Members

Scott Bates is a network engineer in the hospital & healthcare industry. He is dedicated to seeing a project through from the beginning to the very end. Scott enjoys problem solving and tackling the challenges that come with maintaining stable operations of all infrastructures.

A.J. Merlino currently serves dual roles at Harrisburg University, as the Associate Vice President of Student Professional Development & Experiential Learning and is the Associate Professor of Business & Live Entertainment. Leadership development, experience with grant writing and strategic planning are a few of A.J.'s areas of expertise.

Rickey Morton is employed by RAM Industrial Services, LLC and has more than 12 years of volunteer experience at Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg (RBH). Rickey is skilled in multiple talents, has a great personality and has filled many roles at RBH, including a bicycle mechanic, outreach volunteer and recently started a Youth Mechanic Program with the Boys and Girls Club of South Side Harrisburg.



SCOTT BATES






RICKEY MORTON



A. J. MERLINO



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Three Easy Ways to Donate Now

- 1 Donate on our Facebook page, Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg
- 2 Donate on our website, RBHburg.org
- 3 Donate by mailing a check made payable to: Recycle Bicycle Harrisburg, PO Box 5264, Harrisburg, PA 17110