

CHICAGO FREEDOM SCHOOL

2012 Freedom Fellowship

July 2012 - December 2012

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The **Chicago Freedom School (CFS)** provides a space for young people and adult allies to exchange ideas, build new coalitions, study the work of past movements and deepen their understanding of current social problems. We support new generations of critical and independent thinking young people who use their unique experiences and power to create a just world. In the spirit of the original freedom schools in Mississippi in the 1960s, our vision is that CFS will become a place where young people from communities across Chicago can discover their own power to make change – not only for themselves, but also for their communities and the world.

At CFS we seek to:

- Create a space where youth from across the city can grow as leaders and advocates for social justice.
- Educate youth and adults about the history of social justice movements and apply lessons to today.
- Build the capacity of adult allies to understand and support youth-led social change.



THE FREEDOM FELLOWSHIP

The **Freedom Fellowship** is the flagship youth leadership and activism initiative of CFS. This six-month program features community organizing, activism trainings, and support for the development of an action goal plan. This year, 20 youth ages 14-17 will be selected as 2012 Freedom Fellows. The Freedom Fellowship program is held in our location on 719 S. State Street, Suite 3N.

Freedom Fellowship Leadership Institute: July 9 – August 3, 2012

The Freedom Fellowship will consist of leadership and activism training and an overnight retreat July 26 – 27, 2012. Freedom Fellows will participate in wellness seminars, leadership workshops, anti-oppression training, and community-building workshops. Every Wednesday (July 11, 18, 25 and August 1) youth will participate in a policy and issue-based campaign training on one of two issue areas.

Please read carefully and indicate a preference in your application.

CAMPAIGN ISSUES

Fair and Just Schools- This campaign will focus on creating or changing policies that improve schools to benefit everyone. By the end of the summer, students will become experts on a specific issue related to this topic and create a group action plan around a policy they wish to change. Campaign issues may include: zero tolerance policies, homophobia in schools, education reform, public school course requirements, school hiring practices and policies, school-to-prison pipeline.

Healthy Communities - This campaign (now in its second year) will focus on increasing access to healthy, affordable food in community corner stores. Instructors will ensure youth have developed skills in community organizing and are prepared to expand their “Better Options, Bright Moods” campaign to various community corner stores.

Retreat- July 26-27, 2012

The third week of the summer institute consists of a 2-day overnight retreat outside the Chicago city limits. During this retreat, youth have an opportunity to look back at what they have learned about themselves since the start of the summer and continue growing together as a team. The retreat offers youth a chance to both reflect and plan ahead in a tranquil physical environment. Past fellows have returned home rejuvenated and focused.

Monthly Activism Trainings- September-December 2012

The institute will be followed by six-months of structured mentoring and training during which Fellows will continue to explore social justice issues and develop activism skills such as; public speaking, media relations, writing op-editorials etc. The activism trainings will also aim to increase the Fellows skills and knowledge in leadership, current issues, and movement building strategy.

Weekly Activism Meetings – September – December 2012

The Fellows are required to meet with their action team three times a month in order to create and implement an Activism Goal Plan aimed at addressing an injustice in their issue area. Their goal will be to attempt one or more actions to create or change a policy that affects their lives by December 2012.



PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ELIGIBILITY

Youth applicants must be ages 14 – 17 as of June 1, 2012. Students must be 8th grade graduates. However, youth are *not* required to be enrolled in high school. Youth must be able to commit to all the summer components, *which means if they are in summer school they cannot participate in the program.*

COMMITMENT

Fellows must commit to **six months** of participation with the Chicago Freedom School. During this time, youth will be required to complete the following components:



1. **Group Mission Statement** – the group mission statement connects what the youth have learned about their own identities, passions and interest and how the group may use these to make a change in a community.
2. **Action Goal** – each group must set a single goal to address the injustice(s) related to their issue.
3. **Strategies and Tactics** – each group creates a set of at least three strategies each with multiple tactics that can be used to attain their action goal.
4. **Action and Presentation** – the group must pursue one of the strategies for reaching their action goal and commit to presenting their work to the public.
5. **Reflection** – Fellows will reflect on their activism experience in writing.

STIPEND

Youth participating in the 2012 **Freedom Fellowship** will receive a total stipend of **\$500** for their participation. They will receive \$200 at the completion of the four-week Summer Leadership Institute. Upon completion of their action, youth will receive the second stipend of \$300 in December 2012. Public transportation costs will be provided to and from the Chicago Freedom School.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Youth interested in applying must submit a completed written application by **Friday, May 4**. Applications will be reviewed by the selection committee, comprised of CFS staff, Youth Leadership Board and alumni. Applicants may then be selected to participate in a group activity that will assess youth's fit for the program. The selection committee will then select youth to receive a formal interview. Notifications regarding acceptance or non-acceptance into the Freedom Fellowship program will be sent by June 8, 2012.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS



Youth interested in applying to be 2012 Freedom Fellows should submit:

- 1) Completed application form.
- 2) Completed responses to the essay questions.
- 3) The name and contact information of one adult (ages 21 or over) who is not a member of the applicant's family to act as a reference.

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

Chicago Freedom School
ATTN: Tony Alvarado-Rivera
719 South State Street, Suite 3N
Chicago, IL 60605
Fax: 312.435.1203
Email: applications@chicagofreedomschool.org

QUESTIONS?

Please call 312.435.1201 and ask for Tony or email Tony@ChicagoFreedomSchool.org

****DEADLINE: Friday, May 4, 2012****

Please keep the first page of this application for your reference.

APPLICATION FORM

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT)

Full Name _____ Preferred Name _____

School (if applicable) _____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____

(The 2012 Freedom Fellowship Program is open to youth ages 14 – 17 as of June 1, 2012)

Email Address _____

Neighborhood/Area of Chicago in which you live: _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone number _____ Cell (or other) _____

How did you hear about the Chicago Freedom School?

Have you attended any Chicago Freedom School events? If so, which one(s)?

The **Freedom Fellowship Summer Institute** is between July 9- August 3, 2012. The institute will be in session from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Participants are expected to attend the full summer institute and all of the monthly activism trainings and meetings from September 2012 – December 2012. Please check below that you can commit.

I can commit to attending 4 weeks of the Summer Leadership Institute.

I can commit to developing and taking an action with a group.

I can commit to attending 10 hours a month of activism meetings from September-December.

Please rank which Policy and Issue-based campaign training you wish to attend. (1 being your first choice, 2 being your second choice.) Please note, while we will work hard to place you in your first choice, we cannot guarantee your choice.

___ **Fair and Just Schools**

___ **Healthy Communities**

PERSONAL INFORMATION

The Chicago Freedom School seeks a diverse group of people—youth who represent different ethnicities, abilities, sexual orientations, language skills, and socio-economic backgrounds. We ask for (but do not require) your demographic information to get a better understanding of who will be participating our program. We seek the participation of those traditionally marginalized, including women, people of color, people who are LBGTQ (lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and questioning), and people with disabilities.

Race/Ethnicity _____ Gender Identity _____

Language(s) Spoken _____ Learning or Physical Disability _____

Sexual Orientation _____ Family income less than \$30,000/year : Yes or No

Other Qualities _____

ESSAY QUESTIONS

*Please type or print your responses on a separate sheet of paper and attach to the application form. We ask that you try to write 1 – 2 paragraphs in response to EACH question. If you are applying for **Fair and Just Schools** respond to question 2A. If you are applying to **Healthy Communities** respond to question 2B.*

1. Why do you want to be involved in the Chicago Freedom School?

2A. Describe an issue in your school that is unfair to students. Why should this issue be addressed? What have you done OR could you do to contribute to the solution?

2B. Describe a health issue in your school, neighborhood, or community. How has this issue affected your community? (Community can mean family, neighborhood, school, race/ethnic group, sexual orientation, etc.) What have you done or could do to contribute to the solution?

3. What do you wish to gain by December 2012 after 6 months with the Chicago Freedom School?

4. Please feel free to add any other information you would like for us to know.

REFERENCES

Please list the contact information of at least **one** person. Your references should be adults ages 21 or over who are **not** members of your family.

Name _____ Phone number _____

Email Address _____ Relationship _____