



## Call for IDEA Organizers

Application Deadline is July 15th

The fun begins September 1st

IDEA is actively requesting proposals from individuals who are currently organizing or can effectively organize educators, youth, youth workers, parents, school administrators, and other policy makers on a local, regional, or national basis.

We recognize a significant gap in communication between youth, parents, educators, activists, and policy makers. With poor communication also comes little coherent action. Community organizing is a time tested model that we think can be well utilized, along with digital organizing, to generate a powerful catalytic effect in the lives of folks most directly experiencing challenges and wanting change.

IDEA's mission is to ensure that all young people can engage meaningfully in their education and gain the tools to build a just, democratic, and sustainable world.

We are focused on building the critical connections needed to spur transformative change in the U.S. educational system. And we know this big task won't be done by any one organization, one march, or one policy change.

Rather than having 1 or 2 full-time organizers, we want to build the capacity for organizations and key people who share common values to connect and support each other across organizations, geography, and issue areas.

### Here is how it works:

- Starting September 1, 2011, you make a 5-7 hour per week commitment to focus on organizing and/or cross-connecting with IDEA and working towards the shared goals we've set together. Your commitment ends May 28, 2012.
- In the fall, you attend IDEA Camp in Portland, OR (or Puerto Rico). This is where we build the relationships, do the learning, and lay out the plans and strategies for the coming nine months. We will pay attention to learning about transformative organizing, mapping and making meaning of the larger educational landscape, sharing stories and learning with each other and building relationships.
- You make time for one-on-one mentoring calls for 30 minutes every week.
- Once a month, you make time to participate in a one-hour call to cross connect with the other organizers and IDEA staff.
- You receive two \$1000 stipends, one at the beginning of

Being an IDEA organizer can bring extra money, support, strategies, and tools to you and/or your organization.



the year and one at the end upon completion of your stint as an IDEA Organizer.

- We cover travel, food, housing and registration costs for you to participate in one IDEA Innovation Tour throughout the year. We anticipate tours happening in NYC, OR, Puerto Rico, Vermont, and Jackson, Mississippi in 2011-2012.
- You will be provided with a portable video camera to support digital storytelling and documentation. A Flip Cam (or something like it) will be provided to support your digital story-telling and documentation of key organization efforts and events.
- You will be asked to develop and execute a clear plan with goals, deadlines, and expectations that connect local and regional needs to IDEA's overall mission, values, and strategies.
- You will be asked to share stories and what you are learning with other organizers, staff, and on IDEA's website and Facebook page.
- You will be asked to make critical connections and share contacts with other organizers and IDEA to maximize our collaborative capacity.

**Note: This commitment is not for everyone. If it were, it wouldn't be worth much.**

#### What we are looking for:

- People who are brilliant, charismatic, on a mission, moving fast, filled with passion and empathy, share our values, and want to do something worth doing. It's fine with us if you don't know how to do something, but you must have a strong desire to learn what you don't know.
- You have to be both nice *and* smart.
- Great references will make a difference.
- We don't care a bit about how old you are or particularly what your background is. We care a lot about what you've done, and even better, how you've done it.
- We want organizers of all ages, but we get really excited about supporting emerging youth leaders.
- IDEA uses 2.0 technology to work across the U.S. Organizers must be comfortable with technology and be able to learn and contribute from any location.

#### Additional information you might appreciate:

- We will be selecting a total of 15 people to be IDEA organizers for 2011-2012.
- Organizers are independently contracted with IDEA and are welcome to have other sources of income or employment.

#### Already have a job as an organizer?

Great! Apply to be an IDEA organizer as well, and we'll both be better for it:

**Bryant Muldrew** organizes with the Baltimore Algebra Project to end the School to Prison Pipeline. He was also an IDEA Organizer in 2010.

#### Are you a principal who wants to show up to your school as an organizer?

That works too:

**Jen Benkovitz** is an elementary school principal in North Carolina committed to solving equity challenges and spurring innovation. She was also an IDEA Organizer in 2010.

#### Are you an emerging young leader who sees what needs to happen but needs some support?

We are your people: **Joel Organista** helped lead the National Student Bill of Rights Movement while in his first year of college at the University of Utah. He was also an IDEA Organizer in 2010.



## Goals of IDEA's Organizing Platform

### Background

There are thousands of organizations, activists, teachers, youth, principals, and policy makers working on educational reform that gives youth more power and moves us closer to a more just and democratic society.

However, too much of that work happens in silos with folks competing rather than collaborating. IDEA seeks to fuel the small fires that already exist to generate a larger, more credible, and more potent capacity to make real and substantial change.

### IDEA Organizers will:

1. Build relationships, online and in person, between youth, educators, youth workers, parents, school administrators, and policy makers.
2. Discover the needs and interests of each constituency and support the communication of those needs and interests.
3. Support people to take action on their interests (both individual and shared) and mobilize local, regional, and national resources towards meeting those needs in alignment with IDEA's mission and values.

We imagine that this opportunity would be very valuable to:

- community organizers
- parents
- student council leaders
- youth leaders who would never go near student councils
- change agents within state, regional, or national education organizations
- foundations that employ organizers and want to help connect the dots
- community-based organizations and/or school districts that want to build capacity
- national, regional, and local networks that want to connect and collaborate more strategically

## Ready to respond to the call?

Here are the next steps:

1. **Do your homework.** Read up on our site, check our strategic plan, and make sure we are a good fit for you or your organization.
2. **Prepare a proposal answering these questions:**
  - What do you do now? Why do you do it?
  - What are you hoping to learn from being an IDEA Organizer?
  - What can you make happen as an IDEA Organizer? Share a few specifics about actions you would anticipate taking.
  - Tell a true story about making a change in the world.
  - What questions do you have about being an IDEA Organizer?
  - Describe your digital footprint.
  - What else should we know?
3. **Prepare a resume, LinkedIn account, or brief summary of your life/work experience.**
4. **Contact your two best references.** Make sure they know about this opportunity and are ready to talk frankly with us about your capacity to be an IDEA organizer.
5. **Submit everything digitally.** Send to Jeanette Miller at [admin@democraticeducation.org](mailto:admin@democraticeducation.org) by Friday, July 15, 2011.
  - Include your proposal, resume/LinkedIn/summary, and two references



**Best way to have a secret advantage when you apply**

#1: In your application, provide insight as to how many other people you told about this opportunity and how many other great people you persuaded to apply.

Your ability to organize, your willingness to share (even if it doesn't help your odds) and your kindness in spreading the word are exactly the sort of things we're looking for.

#2: Bonus points for having a strong digital footprint and the capacity to use online tools to generate offline action.