

Share an Oar

Share the Shore

Friends of Detroit Rowing



Friends of Detroit Rowing (FODR, est. 1972) is dedicated to the education and promotion of rowing in the Detroit Metropolitan community and the sponsor of the Detroit Boat Club Crew, a nationally ranked crew and one of the oldest (est. 1839) rowing programs in North America. FODR trains thousands of people of all ages and abilities to row, instills in them the finest qualities of teamwork and leadership, provides athletes opportunities to compete around the globe, and helps our youth find pathways to higher education.

According to the NCAA, educational outcomes for high school rowers who compete in college are significantly higher than the national average of 7% for nearly all other sports. In Rowing, nearly 17% of women and 10% of men go on to compete in college. These rates are even higher for Detroit Boat Club Crew athletes with more than 90% moving on to compete in college since 2001 - many with scholarships, sports-related financial aid, or admission assistance.



Despite these impressive numbers, Detroit residents are chronically underrepresented due to a lack of experience with water sports. According to the Detroit YMCA, 7 out of 10 Detroit children do not know how to swim. FODR is actively seeking to strategically recruit and fund Detroit middle and high school students to participate in a wide range of year-round rowing activities as well as access to exceptional college readiness, recruitment opportunities and swim programs.

We provide competitive and recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities - from beginner Learn to Row classes, to Veterans and adaptive rowing programs, to Competitive Racing programs in which participants, from Juniors to Masters, travel across the United States, and internationally, to compete. Students also have the opportunity to participate in a USRowing sponsored STEM rowing class aligning rowing principles with kinesiology and physics.

We collaborate with the Detroit Public Schools, Detroit organizations that provide after school activities; and the YMCA of Metro Detroit's Detroit Swims program. Other partners are Communities First, Inc., Detroit Community Sailing, Downtown Boxing Gym, Eagle Sports, Embrace Sportz, Freedom Rows, STEM to Stern, University of Detroit, USRowing, VA Medical Center, and Wayne State University.

Through its lease agreement with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), FODR made use of the historic Belle Isle Boathouse and invested in building repairs and improvements. Unfortunately, when a ceiling collapsed the DNR closed the Boathouse for safety reasons.



To continue its programs and keep us on the Detroit River, FODR is constructing a new training facility on the grounds of the existing Boathouse. We are without a home, yet we are rowing, training, competing, and winning at an elite level.

FODR is working to activate the Northern Shoreline of Belle Isle as a hub of activity for watersports and recreation from the bridge to the beach, transforming public access to the Detroit River while increasing access to rowing programs for Detroiters

of all ages. FODR is reimagining how people get onto and into the water in Detroit. Despite being the city's most visited park with nearly 5 million annual visitors, Belle Isle offers few opportunities for people to directly access the river. By redeveloping the park's northern shoreline, we can create a hub of activity providing increased access to the Detroit River for everyone.

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FODR is seeking \$4,800,000 to substantially increase access to rowing and to the Detroit River for youth and adults, of all abilities, in Detroit. Learn more and contribute: <https://detroitboatclubcrew.org/support/a-new-home/>

Facilities: \$3,500,000

- Construct a facility for indoor training, workouts, boat storage and repair.
- Purchase shells and oars, a barge, launches, and motors.
- Provide interim facilities to keep us rowing. FODR has already invested \$150,000 in a temporary tent and other training facilities.

Programs and Capacity: \$1,300,000

- Add marketing and sports administration talent to serve our Detroit community partners and youth.
- Provide needed financial assistance for our Detroit middle and high school students for learning, training, and transportation; and competition and travel.
- Hire more coaches for all our activities for people of all ages and abilities.



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Friends of Detroit Rowing
A Non-Profit 501 (c)(3) Organization



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