

THE RENEGADES GIVE BACK

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to learn, teach and play rugby; to forge new friendships and celebrate others' differences; and to give back to our supportive communities through charitable and educational activities.

We are committed to the ethics of inclusion, mutual respect and consideration, fair and safe play on the field and providing a harassment-free sporting environment.

TO LEARN, TEACH AND PLAY RUGBY

First and foremost, the Washington Renegades are dedicated to learning, teaching and playing rugby. Established on October 24, 1998, in Washington, D.C., by Mark Hertzog, the Washington Renegades was the first men's rugby club in the United States to actively recruit gay men.

In October 1999, the club played its first 15s match against the Roanoke Rugby Football Club. In July 2000, the team competed in a sevens tournament held in London, England against teams from London and Manchester. In May 2001, the club held the inaugural International Gay Rugby Invitational, which included teams from San Francisco, Manchester, England and Buenos Aires. Also attending were individual players from Chicago, London and Melbourne. Since 2002 the club has participated in the IGR Mark Bingham Cup, named for former UC Berkley and SF Fog rugby player Mark Bingham, who died on Sept. 11, 2001 on United Flight 93.

Since forming, the Renegades have maintained a twice-a-week practice schedule and played a competitive match schedule each spring, summer and fall. The club always welcomes new players to the sport by offering formal and informal instruction on an ongoing basis.

TO FORGE FRIENDSHIPS AND CELEBRATE OTHERS' DIFFERENCES

As is common throughout the sport of rugby, the team emphasizes building camaraderie and friendships on and off the pitch. By seeking diversity among team members across age, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation, the Washington Renegades are dedicated to building bridges among communities while increasing the visibility of rugby. Off the pitch, the team regularly hosts a wide variety of social gatherings.

TO GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY

The Washington Renegades are committed to giving back to our community through charitable and educational activities. Starting in 2000, the Renegades have had a strong volunteering relationship with Food & Friends, a nonprofit organization that packages and delivers meals and groceries to nearly 1,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and other life-challenging illnesses such as breast, lung and colon cancer throughout Washington, D.C. and 14 counties of Maryland and Virginia, including the preparation of Thanksgiving and holiday meals. Some other volunteering highlights include, AIDSRide, when six Renegades participated and rode 330 miles over 4 days to raise funds for the Whitman Walker Clinic and Food & Friends. Team members have also held fundraisers for the FDNY Ladder 11/Engine 28 and annually participate in Team DC's Christmas Toy Drive. The Renegades have hosted after school rugby clinics for District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), including running a rugby introductory course for children at three elementary schools (Neval Thomas, Charles Drew and Charles Houston) in Ward 7 in Northeast DC for their after school programs. The Renegades practice at Cardozo High School. As part of our ongoing community support, the Renegades purchased 25 Nook E-readers for the high school to add to their electronic resources library. We also purchase the back-to-school faculty breakfast for the school.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Your participation in our community service program is most welcome! If you would like to volunteer for an event, or suggest an organization for which we can volunteer, please contact our club secretary.

Secretary/Director: Steve Schwarzer / secretary.renegades@gmail.com

RENEGADES GIVE BACK TO THE DCPS COMMUNITY

In May and June the Renegades hosted after school rugby clinics for District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). The Renegades have been running a rugby introductory course for kids at three elementary schools (Neval Thomas, Charles Drew and Charles Houston) in Ward 7 in Northeast DC for their after school programs

CARDOZO HIGH SCHOOL

The Renegades practice at Cardozo High School. As part of our ongoing community support, the Renegades purchased 25 Nook E-readers for the high school to add to their electronic resources library. We also purchased the back-to-school faculty breakfast for Cardozo in 2013.

RENEGADES HONOR FLIGHT 93

In 2006 and 2007 members of the Washington Renegades RFC traveled to Shanksville, Pa., to participate in a cleanup and improvement effort at the United Airlines Flight 93 Memorial.

On September 11, 2001 Flight 93 crashed into a field near Shanksville as those aboard attempted to take control of the aircraft from the hijackers. All 40 passengers and crew were killed. If it were not for their actions many experts believe that the plane may have been crashed into the U.S. Capitol building or the White House.

One of the heroes of Flight 93, Mark Bingham, was a fellow rugby player with whom the Renegades feel a special connection. Mark had played in a tournament the Renegades hosted in Washington, D.C. and proved to be a tough competitor. Since Sept. 11, the Renegades have participated in an international rugby tournament named in memory of Mark. That tournament will be held again this Memorial Day weekend in New York City, and the Renegades will be competing. While playing in that tournament honors Mark as a rugby player, through this service project the Renegades seek to honor Mark and the passengers and crew of Flight 93 for their courage and sacrifice.

The Renegades partnered with Donna Glessner, one of the 40 Flight 93 "Ambassadors" who volunteer their time and effort to maintain the temporary memorial. Along with Boy Scout Troop 151, the Renegades hauled, spread and smoothed over 20 tons of crushed limestone in order to make the memorial area wheelchair accessible.

FOOD & FRIENDS

Since 2000, the Washington Renegades Rugby Football Club has provided support at FOOD & FRIENDS. FOOD & FRIENDS prepares, packages and delivers meals and groceries to more than 1,100 people living with HIV/AIDS and other life-challenging illnesses such as breast, lung and colon cancer throughout Washington, D.C. and 14 counties of Maryland and Virginia. Every year, a team of Renegades volunteer to help Food & Friends prepare Thanksgiving meals.

CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE

Every years since 2002, Team DC, led by the Washington Renegades Rugby Football Club, holds a Toy Drive in December to benefit local charities and missions, including Pediatric AIDS, Whitman Walker Clinic and Joseph's and Miriam's Houses.

GOOD NEIGHBORS OF CAPITOL HILL (GNOCH)

Good Neighbors Capitol Hill is a coalition of 8 Capitol Hill congregations and unaffiliated friends working together since 2016 to support refugee families in Prince George's County. Most of the families are SIV interpreters and their families from Afghanistan along with a few families fleeing violence from Central America. The GNOCH team has established 65 apartments with donations of furnishings, monies and volunteers from Capitol Hill and nearby Maryland community of Cheverly.

The Renegades partnered with Good Neighbors of Capitol Hill to help move furniture and pack vans of donations to help aid in housing refugees in the DMV area since 2022.

D.C. FOOD PROJECT

DC Food Project was launched in 2018 to help school children and their families get additional food during the school day and over the weekends when school meals are not available to them. We created our 501(c)(3) to fill what we refer to as "the gap" -- what happens when lunch is over? This gap has an impact on tens of thousands of students, with 1 in 5 children struggling with hunger in DC alone. Our Share Table Program consistently rescues over 60lbs of food per school, per day, allowing children greater access to nutritious food throughout the school week. Our Weekend Bag Program has provided hundreds of additional meals to children who need that extra help over the weekend.

A group of Renegades volunteer bi-monthly to unload trucks of food, package/sort food to various locations where the food is then distributed and deliver to their final destination.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Thousands of volunteers are expected to help remove the more than 245,000 wreaths placed Dec. 14 by approximately 35,000 volunteers.

This is a special day where the wreaths placed at these hallowed grounds during the holiday season in remembrance and honor of our nation's fallen service members and their families will be respectfully removed by volunteers.

A group of Renegades volunteer annually to take part in the removal of these wreaths in a tradition held by the team since 2010. It is a true honor that brings the team both together as a family as with our community.