



BLACK ROCK RIVERSIDE ALLIANCE FOUNDER RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Longtime Alliance Volunteers Recognized by the White House

February 22, 2022 – BRRAlliance, Inc, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that serves greater northwest Buffalo, is honored to announce that three longtime volunteers received Volunteer Service Awards from President Biden for their service to Greater Northwest Buffalo. Black Rock Riverside Alliance (BRR) founder and past-President Dr. Mary Ann Kedron received the Lifetime Achievement Award while BRR President Deneb Pirrone and longtime volunteer Marsha Huard received bronze awards for their service.

“The Black Rock Riverside Alliance has always been a volunteer run organization, rooted in our underserved communities and driven by our volunteers’ commitment to advancing Northwest Buffalo,” said Anne McCooey, Executive Director of the BRR. “I am so pleased that the Alliance was able to secure these recognitions from the White House for Mary Ann, Marsha, and Deneb.”

Dr. Mary Ann Kedron founded the BRR in 2011, served as its President from 2011 through 2020, and continues her service as Past President and board member. All the Alliances’ achievements are the direct result or trace their roots back to Mary Ann’s vision and hard work. These accomplishments include but are not limited to registering the City of Buffalo as a certified wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation, securing the permanent charter for the Black Rock Historical Society, and the establishment of four community green spaces in Northwest Buffalo. Over the years, Mary Ann has served the Alliance in so many capacities including her roles of Founding President and former Chair of the Executive Committee, while serving on the Executive, Planning, Board Recruitment, Building, and Bylaws committees. In addition to her work with the BRR, Mary Ann serves on the boards of the Black Rock Historical Society and the Buffalo Niagara River Land Trust as well as previously serving on the board of People, Inc. among many other acts of service throughout her distinguished career. Remarkably, the Lifetime Achievement award recognizes the more than 5,000 hours of volunteer service she contributed to the BRR since its founding.

“I am inspired every day by the commitment of our team,” observed Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Dr. Mary Ann Kedron. “While I am very honored by this award, as a lifelong Northwest Buffalo resident I am even more grateful for the opportunity to work alongside my friends and neighbors to advocate for the underserved communities of Black Rock, Riverside, Grant-Amherst, and West Hertel.”

Longtime volunteer Marsha Huard received two bronze level Volunteer Service Awards for her work in the BRR’s community gardens in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Marsha was described by Alliance leadership as personifying the Dearborn Community Garden, having completed hundreds of hours of volunteer service there over the years. Collectively the three gardens run by the Alliance last year, with the assistance of dedicated volunteers like Marsha, distributed over 800 pounds of fresh produce into the local community, which is classified as a food desert.

President and board member Deneb Pirrone received the bronze level Volunteer Service Award for completing over 175 hours of volunteer work through the Alliance in 2021. Deneb, who has deep maternal roots in the West Hertel neighborhood, first joined the Alliance board in 2016. Over the years he served in a variety of capacities including as Chair of the Executive and Finance committees and previously as the Corporate Secretary and Chair of the Planning, Building, and Board Recruitment committees.

Established in 2003 as part of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, the Volunteer Service Awards recognize the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity. The awards are issued by the President of the United States on behalf of a partnership between Americorps and Points of Light. To be eligible for the base level of the award, adults over the age of 25 are required to perform at least 150 hours of volunteer service in a 12 month period. The Lifetime Achievement Award requires at least 4,000 hours of volunteer service over a lifetime, which is the equivalent of two years of fulltime work.

Incorporated in 2011 as a 501(c)(3) organization, BRRAlliance, Inc. has a mission focused on improving the quality of life for the people who live and work in the Buffalo communities of Black Rock, Riverside, West Hertel and Grant-Amherst. More information on the BRRAlliance can be found at www.brralliance.org.

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