

FITNESSWARRIORS

RECRUIT PROGRAM SYLLABUS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

To increase physical activity opportunities in communities where residents are most at risk for chronic disease, the Fitness Warriors training will give fitness-minded community members skills in the foundations of group exercise instruction and experience in community leadership. Through the training, Warriors will learn to support safe exercise habits for a range of populations, to design, adapt, and deliver group exercise routines, and to improve and catalyze the health of individuals across the region.

Effective Dates: January 2026 –June 2026

CONTACT

INFORMATION

Administrators/

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TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE 1 | Build Phase: During this time we focus on learning, skill development, and building a strong foundation

Dates	Times	Locations
January– Phase 1 Begins		
Saturday 1/10	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Sports Backers Active Living Hub 4921 Lakeside Ave Henrico
Saturday 1/24	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
February		
Saturday 2/7	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
Saturday 2/21 CPR	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Sports Backers Active Living Hub 4921 Lakeside Ave Henrico

PHASE 2 | Test Phase : During this phase you will apply what you've learned and get evaluated so you can begin leading your own weekly fitness class.

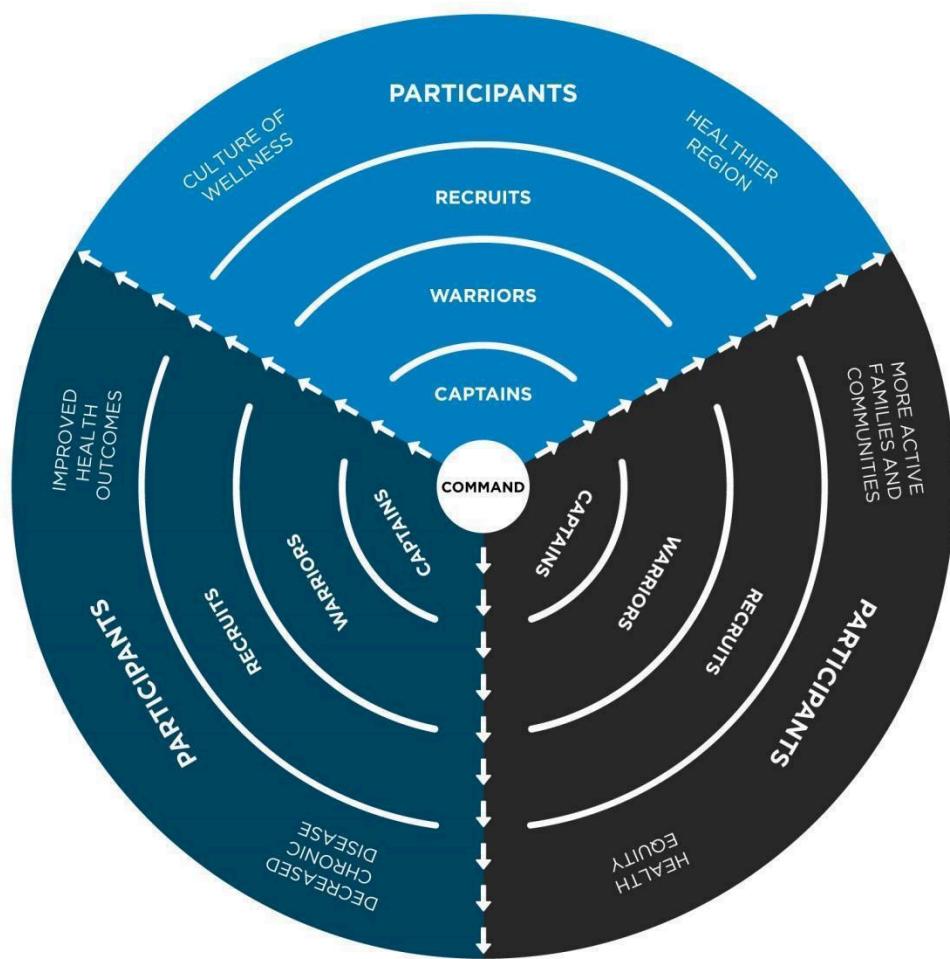
Dates	Times	Locations
March		
Saturday 3/7	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
Saturday 3/21 Teach Backs	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Sports Backers Active Living Hub 4921 Lakeside Avenue RVA

PHASE 3 | Solidify Phase: During this phase you will refine your skills, build confidence, and prepare for graduation.

Dates	Times	Locations
April- Phase 2 Begins		
Saturday 4/19	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
May		
Saturday 5/3	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
Saturday 5/17	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Location TBD
June		
Saturday 6/14	10:00 AM – 5:00 PM <i>Training Day / Graduation</i>	Location TBD

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The “Warrior Nation,” as it has come to be known, is comprised of all Class Participants, Recruits, Warriors, Captains, and the Program Command.



Together we are making an impact on the health and wellness of our community.

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PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The impact of the Fitness Warriors program is two-fold: we impact the lives and leadership of the Warriors themselves and we impact the health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities across the region. Specific outcomes we expect to see include:

Warrior Recruit Outcomes:

- Establish themselves as leaders in health and fitness.
- Create a network of resources and colleagues in the industry.
- Gain the knowledge and ability to plan and execute group fitness classes for a range of abilities.
- Build experience in coaching, training, and community organizing.
- Master the professional skills of group fitness leadership including administrative excellence, partnership cultivation, and effective community recruitment.

Community Outcomes:

- Greater health equity across the region.
- Increased opportunities for fitness in communities that need it the most.
- Increased percentage of individuals meeting CDC's recommended 150-300 minutes of physical activity each week.
- Reduced incidence of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.
- Participants improve strength, flexibility, endurance, and agility, as well as experience weight loss and reduction in medications.
- Renewed culture of fitness and health.

TRAINING FORMAT

The Fitness Warriors Recruit training will run from **January 2026-June 2026**. Upon completion of the program, all Warriors continue to serve the community and become eligible for resources and opportunities to deepen their leadership. The curriculum is divided into three phases and is a mix of classroom style training, supportive coaching, hands-on teaching, in-service practice, and community volunteering.

Throughout the program, Recruits will take part in five types of training modules:

1. Warrior Recruit Training Days

The current class of Warrior Recruits will gather for teaching, training, and coaching regularly. These are in-person training days, facilitated by the Warrior Command, which all Warrior Recruits are required to attend. A complete schedule of training days for each phase is provided on Page 2 of this document. Warrior Recruit Training Days will also often include opportunities for Warrior Recruits to collaborate with one another, compare notes, and talk about their experiences.

2. Break It Down Sessions

Warrior Recruits will be assigned to Crews, primarily based on area of service, which will be led by Warrior Captains. Captains will schedule Break It Down sessions to review topics learned in Warrior Recruit Training Days, introduce new topics, and provide practical learning opportunities through demonstration, practice of learned skills, and provision of

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constructive criticism. These sessions will be scheduled by the Crew's Warrior Captain and will typically be held immediately before or after the Captain's community fitness class. Warriors will be given opportunities to begin practicing learned skills during the Captain's class. Break It Down sessions will be held weekly during Phase 1 & 2 and monthly during Phase 3 of the program. (*Warriors are expected to attend 100% of Break It Down sessions and to arrive on time. ONE absence per phase will be permitted IF extenuating circumstances occur. Warriors are expected to communicate with Warrior Captains to coordinate any absences. More than one absence per phase may disqualify Warrior Recruits from continuing in the program, pending program administrators' judgment.*)

3. Group Exercise Classes

Beginning in Phase 3, each Warrior Recruit will lead free group exercise classes in the community. These classes will be scheduled in conjunction with the Recruit's assigned host site and in consideration of the Squad's scheduled weekly classes. Starting at the end of March, Recruits should convene and lead group classes at least once a week with intermittent oversight and assistance from Captains.

4. Community Events

Warrior Recruits will attend and assist at Community Events throughout the training program to build their experience, skills and spread the word about the program. These will often be demos or outreach opportunities in our target communities at events around the Richmond region. Warrior Recruits should participate and lead at least two community events prior to completion of the program.

5. Warrior Fam Training Days

The entire Warrior family, including both Warriors and Recruits, are provided additional learning opportunities throughout and upon completion of the program. Warrior Fam Training Days will cover specific content areas, such as HIIT, dance based fitness routines, partner work, and other modalities and community resources.

SUPPORTIVE TRAINING RESOURCES

To complement the oversight and expertise provided by the Warrior Command, Recruits will make use of supportive resources to guide their development and training. Those include:

Crews

Each Recruit is assigned to a Crew of fellow Warrior Recruits, which will receive leadership and guidance from their assigned Warrior Captain. Crews function as a wraparound support for one another as well as support for their community. In order to provide such support, it is imperative that Crews schedule their weekly classes in a way that distributes their collective resources throughout each week. During Break It Down Sessions, Crews will meet to dialogue, plan, and troubleshoot. Outside of program assigned meeting opportunities, Crew members should be active and available to each other to provide advice and feedback.

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Warrior Family & Squads

As a Warrior Recruit, you are now a part of the larger Warrior Family. Warrior Recruits and Warriors that serve in the same community form Squads. Warriors have valuable experience as community fitness leaders and serve in an informal mentoring capacity to Recruits within the same squad. Warrior Recruits should become familiar with the classes offered by other Warriors in their Squad in order to refer participants to additional, nearby classes. Warriors and Recruits within a Squad are working together to create culture change and improve health outcomes for their community.

Warrior Captains

Captains are experienced community fitness leaders that are committed to the mission of the program and dedicate time to support Warrior Recruits. Each Crew will be assigned one Warrior Captain, who will lead the Break It Down Sessions. Recruits are expected to utilize the Captain's time and talents to their best benefit. The deeper the relationship a Recruit nurtures with a Captain, the more the Recruit will benefit. Captains will participate in evaluation of Recruits' performance throughout the program but first and foremost are available for support and coaching.

Materials Portal

At any time, Recruits will be able to remotely access an online portal of program materials and resources via the below url. Within this site, the Program Command will house all of the documents Recruits will need for their weekly classes, all the study materials utilized throughout the curriculum, syllabus and routine packets, as well as relevant promotional materials.

<http://www.sportsbackers.org/warriors-materials/>



PHASE ONE & TWO | January- March 2026

OBJECTIVE

Build skills in the fundamentals of teaching and leading group exercise in preparation to begin teaching free classes in the community. Increase understanding of the importance of safety, strength, flexibility, and endurance. Learn the full exercise routine to be taught in Warrior Recruits' community fitness classes and core skills to recruit and build a group in target communities.

Sub Objectives:

- Attain CPR & First Aid Certification
- Learn the five components of fitness and how to design fitness class routines which incorporate all five components
- Learn how to lead an effective warm up, main body of a workout, and cool down
- Learn how to introduce modifications, utilize cues, and successfully transition as an instructor
- Lay the groundwork to kickoff free weekly exercise classes in the community
- Introduce safety protocol for mandated reporting and injuries

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- Learn how to evaluate a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q)
- Review the mission of the program and become familiar with the health inequities that exist in the Richmond region
- Become familiar with program structure and documentation
- Build rapport with Squad members and Warrior Captain
- Establish relationship with host site, schedule weekly fitness class, and get host site agreement signed
- Become familiar with basic principles of community organizing and begin recruitment for weekly classes

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Warrior Recruits are invited to begin seeking out opportunities to schedule Community Events through their networks. Warrior Recruits should coordinate with Warrior Captains prior to committing to a Community Event. In addition, Program Command may identify event opportunities in collaboration with community partners and will notify the Warrior class as events are scheduled. ***(Reminder: all Warrior Recruits must participate in at least two community events in order to complete the program.)***

WARRIOR RECRUIT TRAINING DAYS

Warrior Recruits should be ON TIME to all training days. Water and light refreshments will be provided. Please bring materials for taking notes, a healthy snack, and a towel to each training day. Dress to be active.

(Attendance reminder: Warrior Recruits are expected to attend 100% of training days and arrive on time.)

- **Saturday January 10, 2026. 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.**
- **Saturday January 24, 2026. 10:00 am – 5:00 pm**
- **Saturday February 7, 2026. 10:00 am–5:00 pm.-**
- **Saturday, February 21, 2026. 10:00am–5:00pm.- CPR***
- **Saturday March 7, 2026. 10:00am – 5:00 pm- Mock Teachbacks**
- **Saturday March 21, 2026. 10:00am – 5:00 pm- Teachbacks**

****CPR Certification Options:*** CPR Certification is *required of each Recruit*. If you are already certified, you will need to provide proof to program administrators. In order to become certified, Recruits pick and should register for one of the CPR class options list to be provided (cost covered by Sports Backers) OR schedule your own certification class (cost covered by the Recruit). If you are unable to attend one of the sessions above, you must schedule your own certification class, which must be approved by the Warrior Command and completed by the end of February.

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TEACH BACK EVALUATION

At the conclusion of Phase 1, Warrior Recruits must show complete retention of the group fitness toolbox and display the ability to effectively lead a group in the community. In order to move on from Phase 2 and begin Phase 3, Recruits must receive a favorable recommendation from their Warrior Captain and must receive a passing score on their teach back. Evaluation at teach back sessions will be conducted by a panel of Warrior Command and Captains who will assess Warriors based on the below criteria.

To pass your teach back, Warrior Recruits must score a total of at least 15 out of 20 and must not receive a rating of 1 in any of the 5 categories. Warrior Recruits that do not pass the teach back must retake and pass a second teach back before they can move on to Phase 2 and begin teaching in the community.

TEACH BACK CRITERIA	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Exceptional
Retention of movements: Warrior Recruits must demonstrate a full understanding of the toolbox exercises, including the complete progression of each sequence and the correct form and posture for every movement	Unable to demonstrate the full progression of each exercise, along with proper form and posture for each movement.	Struggles to demonstrate the full progression of each exercise, as well as proper form and/or posture for each movement.	Consistently demonstrates the full progression of each exercise, with correct form and posture for each movement.	Consistently demonstrates the full progression of each exercise, with correct form and posture, in a fun and engaging way.
Cueing: Warrior Recruits must demonstrate appropriate cues for each movement at the appropriate time.	Unable to demonstrate appropriate cues for each movement at the appropriate time.	Struggles to consistently demonstrate appropriate cues for each movement at the appropriate time.	Consistently demonstrates appropriate cues for each movement at the appropriate time.	Consistently demonstrates appropriate cues at the appropriate time & offers cues related to ADLs for movements when necessary.
Safety tips: Warrior Recruits must provide appropriate safety tips and monitor participants to ensure safe execution of movements.	Unable to provide appropriate safety tips and does not monitor participants to ensure safe execution of movements.	Struggles to consistently provide safety tips and/or monitor participants to ensure safe execution of movements.	Consistently provides appropriate safety tips & monitors participants to ensure safe execution of movements.	Consistently provides appropriate safety tips with seamless transitions between movements while engaging all participants.
Modification (Regressions/Progressions) implementation: Warrior Recruits must provide and demonstrate appropriate modifications for movements.	Unable to provide or demonstrate appropriate modifications for movements.	Struggles to consistently demonstrate appropriate modifications for movements.	Consistently demonstrates appropriate modifications for movements.	Consistently demonstrates inclusive modifications and suggests innovative alternatives when appropriate.
Instructional Charisma: Warrior Recruits must show their personal style as instructors, connect with and motivate participants.	Unable to apply their personal style as instructors, connect with & motivate participants.	Struggles to consistently demonstrate personal style as an instructor, connects with & motivates participants.	Consistently demonstrates personal style as an instructor, connects with & motivates participants.	Consistently demonstrates personal style & exudes confidence as an instructor, connects with & motivates participants.

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Teach Back Session Options

Warrior Recruits will complete teach backs in small groups. Each Warrior Recruit will be a part of ONE of the teach back session options below. *Warrior Recruits are expected to stay and participate in fellow Warrior Recruits' teach backs, even after you have performed yours.*

- Saturday March 21, 2026. 10:00am-1:00pm- TBD
- Saturday March 21, 2026 2:00pm- 5:00pm- TBD

GROUP EXERCISE CLASSES

During Phase 1, Warrior Recruits will begin preparing to teach in the community by:

- Attending ongoing Warrior Captain classes to observe fitness leaders in action.
- Practice leading certain sections of the toolbox by coordinating with their Warrior Captain.
- Meeting with leaders around their host site's community to build relationships and better understand the specific dynamics where they will be teaching.
- Scheduling their weekly class in coordination with the host site, squad members, and Warrior Captain.
- Getting the Host Site Agreement signed by Host Site staff and submitted to Program Command.
- Visiting the location and reviewing the logistics of the room, area, and setting.
- Beginning to promote the class through marketing, outreach, and networking.

Warrior Recruits will be ready to begin teaching their group exercise classes with their community groups as soon as they have:

- Received a favorable recommendation from their Warrior Captain based on successful mastery of content presented in Break It Down sessions and effective demonstration of learned skills
- Passed their teach backs at the conclusion of Phase 1
- Completed a class design worksheet approved by their Warrior Captain.

PHASE TWO |April 2026– June 2026

OBJECTIVE

Increase knowledge base of exercises, movements, and fitness education. Grow fitness classes and establish yourself as a leader for health equity in the community.

Sub Objectives:

- Learn new exercise movements and aerobic dance choreography as well as incorporate them into routines with community groups.
- Sustain and grow group exercise classes in the community.
- Study continuing education materials from American Council on Exercise (ACE)
- Increase understanding of important group fitness concepts, such as participant learning styles, motivation and adherence, music, working with special populations, and kinesiology.
- Identify areas of strengths and weaknesses as a new instructor through ongoing evaluation and

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personalized improvement coaching

COMMUNITY EVENTS

By the end of Phase 2, Warrior Recruits should have participated in or led at least 2 Community Events each. Community Events are essential to building the profile of the Warrior program, recruiting for Warriors' free weekly classes, and reaching audiences that need the Warriors' leadership.

- Warrior Recruits will participate in a mandatory community event. Once the event has been chosen this will be communicated to you.
- During Phase 2, Warrior Recruits are expected to seek out opportunities to schedule Community Events through their networks. Warrior Recruits should coordinate with Program Command prior to committing to a date.
- Additional events will be announced during the course of training.

WARRIOR RECRUIT TRAINING DAYS

Warrior Recruits should be ON TIME to all training days. Water and light refreshments will be provided. Please bring materials for taking notes, a healthy snack, and a towel to each training day. Dress to be active.

**Attendance reminder: Warrior Recruits are expected to attend 100% of training days and to arrive on time.*

- **Saturday April 11, 2026. 10:00am-5:00pm- Location TBD**
- **Saturday May 9, 2026 10:00am-5:00pm- Location TBD**
- **Saturday June 13, 2026 10:00am-5:00pm Location TBD**
 - (Graduation and lunch in honor of Warrior Recruits completion of the program.)

GROUP EXERCISE CLASSES

ALL Warrior Recruits should have their weekly classes underway by **Early April**, and should be recruiting new participants and building a relationship with their community as a fitness leader.

Throughout this Phase, expectations for Warrior Recruits' weekly classes include:

- Recruiting and growing the class size. Warrior Recruits are expected to play the lead role in coordinating and cultivating a robust class size. Host site partners may be helpful but the Warrior's work cultivating their classes is the essential ingredient to make a weekly class successful.
- Ongoing thorough administration of paperwork. This includes participant waivers, physical activity readiness questionnaires (PAR-Q's), and submission of digital headcounts. Warrior Recruits are expected to submit all required class paperwork on a quarterly basis, as outlined on the administrative checklist.
- Cultivating an effective Host Site partnership. Warrior Recruits serve as the face of the program in the community, most notably with their participants and with their host site's staff and leaders. Recruits should take time to develop a collaborative relationship with all relevant

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representatives of the host site and should ensure that they've familiarized themselves thoroughly with the site's safety/emergency protocols and operational systems.

- Social media submissions. Warrior Recruits should take photos and share the stories of their participants' fitness journeys with Warrior Captains and Program Administrators. Some Warrior Recruits will choose to manage their own social media pages in addition, but ALL Warrior Recruits should share their stories with the Program Command at a minimum.
- Inclusion of New Modalities and Modifications: Each Warrior Recruit's class participants will have unique needs, preferences, and abilities. The Warrior fitness toolbox provides a foundation of essential exercises and techniques, from which Recruits will create their own tailored workouts. This approach allows Recruits to craft routines that introduce participants to fresh, challenging, and enjoyable modalities while offering appropriate modifications to meet the diverse demographics of their group.

During Phase 3 Training Days, Recruits will explore new techniques, equipment, and skills to expand their toolbox and enhance their classes. Additionally, Warrior Recruits are encouraged to attend Squad members' classes to gain inspiration and gather ideas on how to modify and enrich their own workouts.

- Support individual participants' health and fitness goals. Warrior Recruits should work to develop a relationship with each and every participant and play a supportive role in their journey to better health. In this way, the Warrior Recruit should steadily become a greater and greater resource to the community, as a whole, improving the culture and celebrating the improvements in the lives of community members.

NOTE ON CLASS CONSISTENCY

Increasing physical activity and improving health in the region requires dedication from Fitness Warriors as primary leaders for health equity. Both Recruits and Warriors will go out of their way to ensure they lead their community class *every week*. This consistency builds trust not only with our community partners but with the class participants themselves.

In the event a Recruit or Warrior needs to miss their weekly group exercise class, they are expected to secure a sub (a fellow Recruit, Warrior, or a Warrior Captain) to teach the class in their place. If a sub cannot be identified, the Warrior Recruit should notify the following individuals in a timely, professional manner:

- Program Command and Warrior Captain
- Class participants
- Host site partner representatives

(Missing more than 1 weekly class in Phase 3 without securing a sub may prevent a Warrior Recruit from graduating from the program. Warrior Recruits who consistently require a sub and do not lead these classes themselves also may not graduate from the program.)

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EVALUATION IN PHASE 3

During Phase 2, there will be different evaluation tools used to update you on your progression in the program.

1. Mid-point Progress Review: Each Recruit will receive a mid-point review email that discusses their progress in the program thus far. The team will utilize the BID session capture sheets listed below along with community outreach participation, training day attendance and effective execution of training tools.
2. Break It Down Session Capture Sheets: Warrior Captains will utilize the capture sheets to keep track of the topics covered during each break it down session. Additionally, these sheets will be used to track attendance at break it down sessions, assess each Recruits skills and strengths, as well as set priorities for Recruits future skill development.
3. Captain Feedback Forms: Warrior Recruits will be evaluated by their Warrior Captains on proficiency in leading group exercise classes. Captains will use a performance checklist to determine proficiency and provide constructive feedback to Warrior Recruits to help improve their skills, highlight strengths, and support the effectiveness of the weekly class.

GRADUATION AND LUNCHEON

A graduation and luncheon will be held at the end of the Warrior Recruits final Phase 3 training day. This ceremony is for Warrior Recruits that have successfully completed goals as outlined at the midpoint evaluation and have completed all the requirements of the program:

- Consistently teaching free weekly classes in the community (not missing more than 1 without a sub) and successfully recruiting and retaining a group of participants to improve their health and fitness.
- Attendance and timely arrival at all training days and Break It Down Sessions (not missing more than 1, at most) and strong, positive contributions to the program and to fellow Warriors.
- Timely submission of all paperwork and documentation.
- Participation in at least 2 Community Events.

As a culmination of these efforts and in celebration of the Warriors Recruits' accomplishments, the Graduation will mark a new chapter in Warriors' leadership for health equity across the region.

TRANSITION TO BEING A WARRIOR

Upon completion from the program, all Warriors continue to serve the community and become eligible for resources and opportunities to deepen their leadership. Resources and opportunities available to Warriors include:

- Liability insurance to teach free fitness classes in the community.
- Ability to apply for mini-grant funds to cover expenses related to supporting community fitness.
- Ability to apply for scholarships for the ACE Group Fitness certification program and other certifications.

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- Access to a network of public health and fitness professionals as colleagues for future career moves, collaborations, and initiatives to improve health equity.
- Paid opportunities to lead fitness demos and classes through program partners.
- Opportunity to mentor future Fitness Warriors and shape the future of community-based fitness in the Richmond region.
- Volunteer opportunities, socials, and reunions with fellow Warriors.

WARRIOR NATION CELEBRATION

The success of the Warriors program is dependent on the dedication of Warrior Recruits, Warriors, Captains, host site partners, funding partners, class participants, and program supporters. To celebrate the collective impact that we are making in the community, the Warrior Nation will gather annually to share stories of success, recognize the Recruits who have recently completed the program, report out on program results, honor one Warrior with the Raymond D. Patterson award, and cheer one another on as we share our goals for the next program year. Warriors are encouraged to invite their immediate family members, closest supporters, and group exercise class participants to the celebration. You will receive an invitation with details for yourself and a guest. Save the date: January 31, 2026