

May 2010 Edition

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MAMHS Students Award JOY Grants

Madison Area Memorial High School Jobs for Maine's Graduates would like to congratulate the two non-profit organizations that it chose to receive \$500 JOY grants. The recipients of the 2010 JOY grants are the Autism Society of Maine and the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter.

The grant money is furnished by the Unity Foundation, which has partnered with JMG statewide to teach JMG students the value of philanthropy. Each JMG site throughout the state has \$1,000 and a goal to find a local non-profit organization that works to somehow improve the lives of local youth.

Late last year, MAMHS JMG students began the process of learning about philanthropy, grant-making and non-profit organizations. Students were tasked to find local non-profits that worked to somehow improve the lives of local youth, either directly or indirectly. Students then sent our RFPs (Request for Proposal) to a number of these organizations. Once the organizations returned the RFPs, the students then set out to learn as much as possible about each potential recipient. Finally, students voted to select the winner.

Ultimately, the two organizations above tied in the voting and the students of MAMHS JMG decided to split the award between each organization.

Madison Area Memorial High School JMG students would like to thank all those groups that responded to the RFPs and hope that each of these groups participates once more next year. The students would also like to thank Mike Marston, of the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter and Deb Crump, of Autism Society of Maine for attending the assembly on Friday, May 21 to receive their awards.



Voice of the students

Sixteen-year-old Angela Bechard, daughter of Debbie Bechard, JMG's Mentoring and Financial Literacy Manager, was recently confirmed as a student representative to the State Board of Education.

A sophomore at Monmouth Academy, Angie plays soccer, basketball and softball, and is also a member of the Key Club. She is an honors student whose favorite subjects include Writing Lab, Biology and Fine Arts. Angie plans to attend college and earn a degree in journalism.

Angie will be one of only two student representatives on the State Board of Education. She sat in on her first meeting on April 14 and will attend regular meetings with the board until she graduates. She heard about the open student representative spot when her principal distributed the application materials. From there, Angie had to obtain three teacher recommendations and notes of support from her principal and guidance counselor. When Angie was selected as a finalist, she had to sit down for an interview with the board chairman, vice chairman, and the student she would be replacing. She received Governor Baldacci's nomination in March, and her principal, Scott Bell, testified on her behalf before the Legislature's Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs in a confirmation hearing.



Angie and Deb Bechard

"I'm really happy I get the opportunity to [serve on the committee], says Angie. "I get to see up close how big decisions are made about kids' education."

Madison JMG performs roadside service



Madison Area Memorial High School JMG Specialist Matt Friedman and his students held a Community Service Day on April 16, which involved roadside clean up.

Twenty-four of Mr. Friedman's JMG students picked up trash on the first mile of Route 201A from the Madison town line toward Norridgewock. In three hours, the hard-working group collected 25 contractor-size bags of garbage, 10 tires, two full-size chairs, and the grill of a late model Chevy truck.

Mr. Friedman says he is "very proud of my kids for this effort."

JMG Success Story

Sean Locke - 2009 JMG Graduate South Portland High School

Never give in. Never give up. Those are words to live by, certainly. To Sean Locke, a 2009 graduate of Randy Inosencio's South Portland High School JMG class, those words were the slogan for his senior year of high school.

"I still wear the bracelet Mr. Inosencio gave me with [that] slogan," Locke says. "It's a reminder to me of all that I have accomplished, especially my graduation in 2009."

JMG caught up with Locke recently at its Urban Adventure event in Portland. Urban Adventure is an event put on by Unum for 8th graders in JMG's Project Reach program. Locke was a DJ for the dance that was part of the evening activities at Urban Adventure. For him, it was a labor of love.

"I especially like giving back to programs that I have been involved in," he says. "If the kids see me being involved in the community, it shows them that they can do it, too. And you can have fun at it, like DJing is for me."

Locke spent his senior year in Mr. Inosencio's JMG class. "Mr. Inosencio was a positive role model," says Locke. "He helped me get through my senior year of high school by believing in me and teaching me to believe in myself. His classroom was a comfortable place I could go to. I always felt welcome."

During that year, Locke made good use of his time in JMG. He was elected Vice President of his Career Association, and he attended the Career Association's Initiation and Installation Ceremony in November, where "my parents, brother and sisters all came to see me get my JMG officer pin and certificate." Locke also participated in "Walking in Their Shoes," an art exhibit to promote Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and he attended JMG's Career Development Conference, where he helped his school win 2nd place in their region in the Job Application Packet competition.

"Sean was always thinking of creative ways to raise money for our Career Association," says Inosencio. "Although Sean was usually very busy trying to get all of his school work done, I rarely can remember a time that he did not have a big smile on his face. I think most of the students will always remember Sean for the music that he brought to all of our school events. I have enjoyed getting to know Sean over these past couple of years, and look forward to seeing where the future takes him."

Now out on his own, Locke has his own business as a part-time DJ (his company is called Lockey's DJ Service) and also works 40 hours a week for M&T's Landscaping in South Portland, a job he started last April. "I've been busy," he says, "but I feel very lucky to have landed a job right after high school... I've had a good year."

