

May 2010 Edition

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JMG students at Mountain View Youth Development Center award their first JOY grant!

After a lengthy selection process that involved much discussion, debate, and eventual consensus, the JMG Youth Advisory Committee selected the Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers as their first recipient of the Jumpstart Our Youth (JOY) grant. Sixteen RFPs were sent out and eight charitable organizations responded with grant proposals. The committee interviewed four finalists here at the Center. All four gave heartfelt presentations and final voting was very close, but in the end it was MCH that received unanimous approval. The award, in the amount of \$1,000, will be used by MCH to support its CAST Program, a high school based suicide prevention program targeting youth 14 to 19 years of age. Sharon Abrams, Executive Director, and Steve Mayberry, Development Director of MCH, thanked the JMG Youth Advisory Committee at MUYDC for making it possible for MCH to "fulfill our mission to build and strengthen families and their children, instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life through our programs."

JMG Experiential Learning Program spring start up...

Spring has sprung here in Northwestern Maine... and that means seasonal work opportunities have begun! As part of JMG's Experiential Learning Program (ELP), Olmsted's Orchard selected a JMG student worker for its springtime apple orchard preparation. He received training in pruning trees, chipping mulch, cutting brush, taking inventory, and many other duties associated with orchard work. Four other JMG student workers will be heading to Tate's Strawberry Farm to assist in cultivating, weeding, watering, and harvesting this season's strawberry crop. JMG student workers will receive a stipend for their work, a work reference, and work experience that can be applied to their resumes. In addition, they learn valuable employment and social skills they can then apply to real world situations when they reintegrate into their communities. The employers involved in our Experiential Learning Program gain quality work at reduced cost, which can then be passed on as savings to customers, and a chance to make a difference in a young person's life. This is the Program's second year at MUYDC.

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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."

