

Youth Venture – New England

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

With Liberty and Recess for All



Framingham, MA— January 15, 2009 – Congratulations to Max Shepherd, Elizabeth Duross, Samantha Vaccaro, Ashley Desko and Sherley Pagan, fifth grade students and members of the newly launched United Way of Tri-County Youth Venture Team, called **Recess for All**. These fifth graders, along with the rest of their class, surveyed their peers to learn how to improve recess. After much thought, the Recess for All Team decided to create a business plan that will provide new recess equipment for their school, Marlborough Intermediate Elementary School.

Recess is a valuable time for most elementary students; however, not all schools have sufficient equipment. Marlboro Intermediate is one of those schools. “Kids just sit around and wait for other kids to finish using equipment. We really think this idea is going to get kids more active.” said Sam Vaccaro, one of Venture Team leaders. The little equipment they have is old, in poor condition, and was purchased with teachers’ own money. Emily Murphy, one of the selection panel members and the assistant principal at Marlborough Intermediate School, commented that “When students are active they are healthier and there are fewer disciplinary challenges.”

Recess for All plans to purchase new basketballs, soccer balls, kickballs, Frisbees, jump ropes and a ball pump, along with other equipment. They also intend to fundraise selling healthy snacks they make at home to help pay for future equipment and repairs.

The Team formally presented their idea before a Selection Panel of community leaders. The Panelists included Sue Leeber, President and CEO of Marlborough Chamber of Commerce; Karen Kisty, executive aide to the Mayor of Marlborough; and Emily Murphy, assistant principal at Marlborough Intermediate School. After reviewing the project, the panelists unanimously decided to award the youth a \$1,000 Youth Venture grant. “We are so proud of these young people. I’m not surprised that they are so thoughtful and precise in their efforts to help themselves and their peers. The class has a terrific

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teacher, Trish O'Malley, and with her help and the support of the administration, we hope more students will consider starting youth-led social change initiatives." said Robyn McLaughlin, the United Way of Tri-County's Youth Venture partner. **Recess for All** is the first team to come out of Youth Venture's partnership with United Way of Tri-County in Framingham, MA.

Criteria to start a United Way Venture Team: must be a new club, service, or organization; provide a positive, lasting community benefit; be created, run, and managed by youth ages 12-20; have clear goals, a committed team, a realistic budget; and, have a non-controlling adult mentor. Each Team receives up to \$1,000 in Venture seed funding.

About United Way Youth Venture Partnership

In July 2008, United Way of Tri County and Ashoka's Youth Venture began a partnership to empower youth in our service area to make social change in their community. For more information about the partnership, participating as a panelist, or to become involved and support **Recess For All**, please contact Robyn McLaughlin 508-872-3291 ext 58 or visit our website www.uwotc.org

About Youth Venture

Ashoka's Youth Venture® is a global movement of young changemakers. Youth Venture inspires and invests in teams of young people to start their own sustainable social Ventures and connects them into a powerful global network. Collectively, these young changemakers are redefining the youth years as a time of initiative and positive change. For more information, please visit www.GenV.net

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