

New Beginnings News

NEWBEGINMAINE.ORG • 134 COLLEGE ST., LEWISTON, ME 04240 • 207-795-4077

Autumn 2015



New Lewiston Youth Drop-In Center Open

On May 1, 2015—thanks to the generous support of many of our business, foundation, and community partners—New Beginnings officially opened our expanded Drop-In Center at 134 College Street in Lewiston. The Center serves more than 400 youth ages 14-21 each year who are at risk of homelessness in Lewiston-Auburn.



The new Drop-In is located on the basement level of the Ann Geiger Center building, with a dedicated entrance at the end of the driveway. The new site is nearly 3 times as large as the previous storefront that was at 245 Lisbon Street for the past 18 years. Youth can now utilize art and music rooms, large recreation area with pool tables, TV, phone, computers, and plenty of spaces for groups and 1-on-1 conversations.

Best of all, the program finally has a large commercial-quality kitchen where staff, youth, and volunteers prepare daily snacks and meals.

"The youth and staff are excited to have such a great space," said Outreach Director Marc Madore. "We now have enough room to serve even more kids." Staff continue daily street outreach in downtown Lewiston neighborhoods, giving out emergency hygiene supplies, referrals, and connecting with teens and adults. Any youth who are at risk of homelessness are encouraged to come check out the center any time, especially during the Nov. 11 Sock Giveaway Party (see insert). Providers are invited to come visit & learn more today! Call 795-6831 for information.

Inside this Issue:

PROGRAM

Drop-In Open 1

YOUTH

Alumna Speaks 1

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Atlantic Charitable 2

SPECIAL INSERT

Runaway & Homeless Youth Month

CAN YOU HELP?

Holiday Drive 3

AGENCY NEWS

Rowe to Retire 3

LOOK ONLINE FOR 2014

Annual Report 4

Former Homeless Youth speaks at US Senate

In April of this year, U.S. Senator Susan Collins hosted a hearing about youth homelessness on Capitol Hill and invited Brittany Dixon, a former resident of New Beginnings' Transitional Living Program (TLP) to share her story.

Senator Collins opened the hearing by noting the severity of youth homelessness in America: the HUD 2014 homeless point-in-time count found that nearly 1/3 of all homeless people were

children, and the 45,205 unaccompanied children and youth equaled nearly 8% of the total homeless population in the US.

Brittany Dixon, now an aspiring kindergarten teacher living in Auburn, told the hearing about becoming homeless at age 18, stating that "Nothing can prepare a teenager for the overwhelming and frightening feelings of being alone with nowhere to go or no one to turn to." Brittany described how finding

New Beginnings made a difference in her life, saying, "New Beginnings provided many resources I could use to succeed... and helped me to develop critical life skills and to become self-sufficient." Brittany went on to talk about how the year and a half she spent at the TLP allowed her to gain self-esteem, improve her communication skills, and pursue her education. "Programs that support homeless youth are important to so many young



continued on page 2

Donor Spotlight: Atlantic Charitable Fund offers \$10K match

Atlantic Charitable Fund is a small, Maine-based foundation which has been a New Beginnings supporter for the past several years. The Fund's current giving priority is Maine nonprofits that address homelessness, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

In 2014, the foundation made a significant grant to the *Campaign for a New Beginning* for the new Drop-In Center's heating system upgrade.

"New Beginnings has been a well-run organization doing good work for many years, but more important to our foundation, is highlighting the agency's focus on a very vulnerable part of the homeless population—teens," said Fund President Alan Pethick.

"We give because New Beginnings works to help disconnected and abused youth develop direction and become productive adult citizens."

This fall, the foundation has offered a matching challenge: the first \$10,000 in major gifts or pledges for the building campaign made by December 31 will be matched by Atlantic Charitable Fund.

"The success-to-date of New Beginnings' first-ever capital campaign is a testament to the agency's hard work and the generosity of its supporters," said Pethick. "We decided to offer this major gift match

now, both to recognize the importance of this center for homeless teens in Lewiston, and to inspire others to give the funds New Beginnings needs to complete their campaign this year." Thank you, Atlantic Charitable Fund!

Interested in learning more about the project or match? Contact New Beginnings Development Director Rachel Spencer-Reed at 795-4077 or rachel@newbeginmaine.org.

Does this dance look familiar?



A New Years' Eve ball at the Lewiston JCC.

In partnership with New Beginnings, Bates College religious studies student Melissa Carp will be conducting community-based research in 2016 about the history of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish community.

Melissa will focus on the role and history of the Jewish Community Center (JCC) formerly located at 134 College Street, in part to help New Beginnings honor the building's legacy as a place where youth and

families met to build community together. The building, now known as the Ann Geiger Center for New Beginnings, is where our administrative offices, education program, and Youth Drop-In Center re-located this year.

If you or someone you know once utilized the JCC and would like to get involved in the project, please email Melissa at mcarp@bates.edu or call 795-4077. New Beginnings will also be hosting a tour and reception for JCC alumni this winter; email rachel@newbeginmaine.org for an invitation.

New Beginnings' Board would like to thank our **2015 Annual Dinner Sponsors** for making the April 35th Anniversary Celebration & Building Dedication a success!

EVENT SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS: **Varney Agency** **Androscoggin Bank**

Thank you for giving back to your community to help homeless youth!

Former Youth, *cont. from page 1*

people like me. It gives them the chance to have a safe place to stay while they get their footing and figure out what they want to do in their lives," said Brittany. "It is important for every youth who faces homelessness to have funding for programs that help them learn, be supported and have a safe place to stay."

Brittany concluded her testimony by saying, "I didn't need to be supported forever, only until I could move to the next level for myself. Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience and for supporting programs like these."

During the hearing, Senator Collins highlighted the importance of federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funding in Maine to help meet the needs of homeless youth. This October, Senators Collins and King congratulated New Beginnings on being awarded RHYA funds (see news briefs on page 3).

"The work done by New Beginnings has a direct impact on ... the lives of youth and families," said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement. "It has been truly inspiring to learn about that wonderful work, and it is a model for organizations across the country on how to successfully reach out to young people who find themselves homeless."

Links to photos & video of the April hearing and Brittany' Dixon's full testimony can be found online at www.newbeginmaine.org.



Executive Director Bob Rowe to Retire

After nearly 28 years of service, New Beginnings Executive Director Bob Rowe announced this fall that he plans to step down from the helm of New Beginnings by February 2016.

“Working here has been a transformative experience for me,” said Rowe. “I have had the unusual opportunity and great privilege to have been let into the lives of homeless young people and adults during times of great adversity and trauma.”

“The youth we serve, along with our gifted staff, have deepened my faith in humankind, and in the triumph of the human spirit. I’m grateful for the many years that I’ve had the chance to help this organization grow.”

An executive transition committee convened by the Board of Directors has already been hard at work on the planning and assessment needed to conduct a successful search. Members include longtime supporters, current and

former Board members, and Mary Ruchinkas, New Beginnings’ Director of Community Services who will assist with the search.

“While the Board is sad to see Bob go, we’re confident that with support from the dedicated staff, we can look forward to a thoughtful and thorough transition leading to exciting opportunities for New Beginnings,” said Board President Chris Ferguson. The Board plans to honor Bob this January; look for details on our website and Facebook!

Agency News Briefs:

May Match Success This spring Peter Geiger offered a \$20K one-month match challenge, which was met by our generous donors! Special thanks to Kents Hill High School, Mechanics Savings Bank, Carolyn Burke, New Gloucester First Cong. Church, Electricity ME, and Peter for helping us get \$40K closer to our building project goal!

Mental Health New Beginnings became licensed by the State of Maine to provide mental health services in April 2015. Expanding these services for the youth and families we serve has been a goal for several years; stay tuned for updates as we add programming!

Federal Grant New Beginnings was excited to receive a 3-year grant from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act [RHYA] this September. Funds from this highly competitive federal award will support the ongoing operations of our Emergency Shelter, Maine’s only licensed 24-hr youth shelter.

Staff Research New Beginnings will be presenting findings from a pilot project using the “Power Source” curriculum at the national RHYA conference in New Orleans in November. Over 18 months, 200 youth participated to gain mindfulness and emotional literacy skills.

Maine Youth Summit Outright Lewiston-Auburn will host a day-long conference for LGBTQ youth at the University of Southern ME, L-A College on Nov. 14, 2015. Register online at outrightla.org.



Save the Date: Candlelight Vigil

FOR NATIONAL HOMELESS PERSON’S MEMORIAL DAY

Monday December 21, 2015

The first day of winter. The longest night of the year.

Location TBA in Lewiston

Sponsored by Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless

You Can Help make the Holidays brighter for Homeless Youth!

Thanks to supporters like you, each December New Beginnings is able to distribute holiday gifts to youth in our programs in Lewiston, Augusta, and Farmington.

We need your help to give 70 young people a holiday “care package” this year with a new clothing item, art journal, gift card, and more!

We’re also seeking hygiene kits, new backpacks, and other essential items that youth in our programs need throughout the year.

If you can help, please call us at 207-795-4077 to sign up, or email info@newbeginmaine.org. Thank you for sharing the spirit of the season!



A big “Thank You” to the TD Bank employees who generously support the holiday drive each year!

The 2015 holiday drive wish list can be found online at newbeginmaine.org.

AGENCY MAILING ADDRESS:

NEW BEGINNINGS, INC.
436 MAIN STREET
LEWISTON, ME 04240

Save a tree and get this newsletter via email! Visit newbeginmaine.org and click [Subscribe to Newsletter](#).



NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
LEWISTON, ME
PERMIT No. 80



November is Runaway & Homeless Youth Month

You can make a difference!



Please share the insert page inside of this newsletter with your friends, family, and colleagues to raise awareness about how to prevent youth homelessness.

Replace your porch light with a green light bulb or put green holiday lights in your window during November to show your support. More details inside, and online at www.1800runaway.org

I never had people in my life that cared about me.
New Beginnings gives me hope...
I have a good future ahead of me now.

2014 Annual Report
Now Available Online
WWW.NEWBEGINMAINE.ORG

November is Runaway and Homeless Youth Month

What Can You Do to Raise Awareness?

Each November, New Beginnings joins National Runaway Safeline, National Network for Youth, and hundreds of other organizations across the county in raising awareness about the issues faced by runaway and homeless youth (RHY) during National Runaway Prevention Month. You can, too!

5 easy things anyone can do this November:

1. Turn on a green light.

Put a green light bulb in your porch light, or green holiday lights in your home or business window to raise awareness and show your support for runaway and homeless youth!



2. Speak out online.

Post a picture of yourself as a teenager online for #TBT Throwback Thursday with a special RHY prevention message on Nov. 5th, or join the Nov. 26th Give Thanks Thunderclap online. Find more social media awareness ideas at 1800runaway.org!

3. Create or attend an event.

Join the national runaway vigil online on November 19th or host your own. Drop off food or other items for our Sock Giveaway party for homeless youth on November 11th at our Youth Drop-In Center (134 College Street in Lewiston).

4. Wear green.

Wear or post a photo of yourself wearing green on Thursday November 12th (or any time this month!) and tell people why you support RHY and ending youth homelessness.

5. Give.

Donate \$ or in-kind goods during November in honor of RHY Month. Turkeys, holiday foods, and holiday gifts for youth are always appreciated this time of year! New Beginnings holiday gift wish list for youth is also online at NEWBEGINMAINE.ORG



New Beginnings

Do you know a Maine youth at risk for homelessness or a family in conflict?

New Beginnings can help.

Youth Shelter

24 hour Phone Referrals
and Family Mediation

795-4070

Drop-In Center

Food, clothing, activities,
housing referrals, & more

795-6831



Nationwide phone support 24 hours a day:

1-800-RUNAWAY

or online at WWW.1800RUNAWAY.ORG

SOCK GIVEAWAY PARTY

for Lewiston-Auburn Youth ages 12-21



1:00 TO 4 PM

November 11, 2015

New Beginnings
Youth Outreach Drop-In Center
134 College Street in Lewiston

Call **795-6831** for info or to donate socks!

New Beginnings Expanded Youth Drop-In Center: from Dream to Reality



1997: First Drop In Center Opens at 245 Lisbon Street in downtown Lewiston.

2004: New Beginnings involves youth in planning for an expanded Drop-In center and begin to search for new space.

2011: **New Beginnings purchases former JCC at 134 College Street and receives first grant to support the project.**

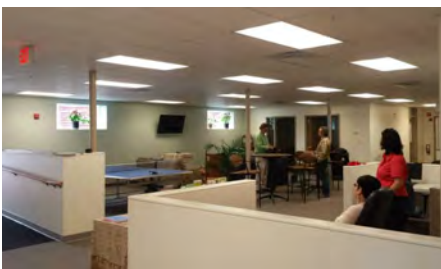
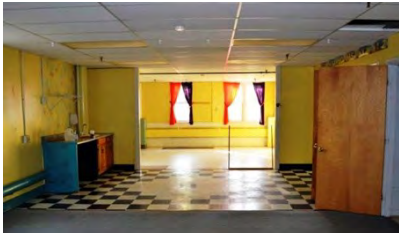
2012: Planning to fund renovation begins.

2013: 100% Staff and Board participation launches \$1.25 million building campaign; fundraising volunteers begin approaching individuals and businesses for support.

2014: Campaign goes public and support increases; \$500K gift from Next Generation Foundation of Maine allows renovation to begin. By year-end, New Beginnings has raised 1 million dollars!

2015: Fundraising continues. Symbolic “ground breaking” ceremony for Drop-In Center is held where New Beginnings announces naming gift from Geiger family leaving \$100K left to raise.

April: The Ann Geiger Center for New Beginnings is dedicated at Annual Dinner; Drop-in Center construction completed.



May: New Drop-In Center Opens at 134 College St. with expanded kitchen, recreation, counseling, and arts spaces

June: New Beginnings’ administrative offices relocate to the top floor. Senator Susan Collins and HUD Secretary Julian Castro visit New Beginnings and talk with youth and the press at the new center.

September: New Beginnings’ Educational Support Program moves into new learning lab and classroom on building’s first floor.

October 2015: New Beginnings needs to raise final \$25,000 to complete the \$1.25 million campaign by December 31, 2015.

