

We partner with youth to create lasting change so all youth have a safe place to live and opportunities to grow.

Celebrating Voices of Youth

On May 24, 2023, the rainy weather didn't stop New Beginnings' supporters, sponsors, staff, and Youth Action Board (YAB) members from gathering at the beautiful Maine Wedding Barn in Minot. After years of virtual events, it was wonderful to see 100+ people come together in person to celebrate our mission. The evening featured welcome from our Board of Directors, updates from Executive Director Chris Bicknell, 2023 Service Award given to Lauren Bustard (see page 3), and an outstanding "Voices of Youth" panel of young people (ranging from age 19-33) who were either NB alumni or current YAB members. The YAB worked ahead of time with panel moderator and Development Director Rachel Spencer-Reed to develop questions that allowed panelists to share the impact NB has had from their own unique perspectives.

1. How has participating with NB or YAB supported your goals? Bev shared that she wants to be a "confident and educated leader for the next generation of young people." She currently serves on New Beginnings' Board and the YAB and feels both support her passion for ending youth homelessness and connect her to others who care about the same things. Matt said that in addition to "shelter, safety, and sustenance," NB offered opportunities to feel uplifted and supported as a teenager with a troubled home life.

2. Can you share an example of what work or project you are most proud of that you've worked on in your life? Maddie said, "At my high school vocational center I got my EMT license at age 18 ... if someone goes down, I know what to do." Bev was most proud of building the YAB's recent

Authentic Youth Engagement Training for educators. Matt volunteers weekly at Auburn's Pleasant Street Drop-In Center to offer unhoused adults some of the same welcome, compassion, and respect that he found at NB.

3. What are some of your goals or dreams for the future, now? Matt shared that he's about to become a father, "I would like that child to live in a world where people experiencing poverty and homelessness are not looked down upon" and are seen as worthy of the opportunity to live meaningful lives. Maddie hopes to own land and horses, and work with animals. Julia shared that one of her dreams is to work in the medical field. As a young mom of 4 kids (including an 11-month-old), she's looking forward to training to become a lactation consultant to help other moms like herself.

4. What was most helpful to you when you were struggling in the past? Matt said that other people who were kind, patient, and compassionate were the most helpful, "Without them I wouldn't

"For the Next Generation"



be who I am today. We can only do so much alone; we can do a lot more together." Julia shared that the YAB was there for her when she was struggling and made her feel she wasn't alone in experiencing homelessness as a teen. "The YAB taught me that youth need to have a voice and helped encourage me

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Supporter Spotlight

MELISSA FARINAS, TREASURER

Androscoggin Bank

Melissa is an avid supporter and engaged member of our Board of Directors. She is persistent in being available whenever needed for events or



projects. When Melissa was asked to speak in our Annual Celebration about why she serves on the Board, she did not hesitate: “When I was asked to join the board I was really honored. I live and work in this community. I’ve seen the tremendous need for services NB provides. My reason is also very personal. We have three wonderful children. When my daughter came out to us in elementary school her life got a bit harder than her siblings. There were things in her life she’d have to deal with that they didn’t have to face. My ask of you all is to think about ways you can help, that aren’t just monetary. We have other things in our lives that we can do to support New Beginnings besides money.”

AGENCY NEWS BRIEFS

GRANT GRATITUDE

Since the start of 2023 New Beginnings has received grants from several community businesses and foundations serving Maine and New England, including Androscoggin Bank, United Way of Androscoggin County, John T. Gorman Foundation, Elimina B. Sewall Foundation, Maine Community Foundation, City of Lewiston Home-ARP and CBDG, and the Glickman Family Foundation.

JOIN OUR TEAM!

You can make a difference in the lives of youth! We are hiring with openings in outreach, shelter, TLP, and administration and we offer excellent benefits. Visit newbeginmaine.org/jobs to learn more!



Thank you to our Board of Directors for their dedication and service. Pictured left to right: Chelsea Amaio, Beverly H., Nancy Grenier, Molly Shukie, Melissa Hue, Steven McDermott, Melissa Farinas, and Peggy McRae

Interested in learning more about serving on New Beginnings Board of Directors or as an advisor?
Contact Nancy Grenier at: board@newbeginmaine.org

IN THE COMMUNITY

New Beginnings has been present at several events in Lewiston-Auburn, surrounding towns, and in rural neighborhoods in Maine. We have had the opportunity to march at PRIDE L/A, make new connections at the Auburn Housing and Employment Symposium, greet community members in Bath and Farmington, and hand out supplies at Community Concepts Community Block Party.



Kelly Colbath answering questions at Lost Valley during Androscoggin Banks' Community Day.



NB youth, supporters, and staff at Pride L/A on June 10, 2023

Voices of Youth

Continued from Page 1

to help other youth with lived experiences to ... stand up for themselves, advocate for themselves ... Be BIG.”

5. What is one thing that adults can do to help youth succeed and reach their goals? Julia said, “Just listen to them.” Bev wants adults to create dialogue, establish safe spaces, and connect youth with proper resources. Maddie suggested giving youth as many options as possible, supporting the youth in deciding what’s good for them, and then sticking with them the whole way (even if they backtrack). “Practice does not make perfect, I believe practice makes better, because nothing is perfect here.”

The panel concluded with audience questions and a standing ovation. NB helped each panelist on a small step of their journey, and we’re grateful to all of them for sharing their wisdom. Bev said it best when she emphasized that all youth need opportunities to learn skills to survive, but that “Everybody in this room deserves to succeed, and not just survive.”

You can view all event photos at: www.newbeginmaine.org/ac23

Drop-In Open 7 Days a Week



Jarrod Warren and Jason Lamontagne heading out on foot to distribute goods and resources to street youth.

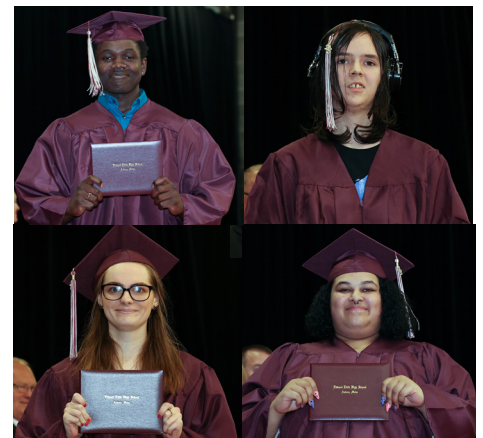
The Street Outreach Program is proud to announce that the Lewiston Drop-In Center is now open 7 days per week from 10:00AM-5:00PM, serving both breakfast and lunch daily!

If you would like to learn more about our Drop-In Center at 134 College Street in Lewiston or our Street Outreach Program be sure to visit our website at: www.newbeginmaine.org/programs/outreach-services/

Graduation 2023

Since collaborating with Auburn Adult Education, the Education and Employment program has been able to provide more opportunities for New Beginnings youth to access educational resources than ever. This year the program saw 11 individuals graduate from high school this spring, with 2 more on track to graduate in the fall. Students that were once disconnected from school have been able to reconnect and thrive in an environment that is conducive to each person's needs.

Congratulations
Class of 2023!



Service Award

In 2015 New Beginning's Board of Directors established a service award to be given at the annual dinner to "honor a person or organization who has shown dedication and service to New Beginnings, or who has made a significant contribution in the areas of youth development, child welfare, or homelessness through advocacy and strong commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable young people in Maine." This year's award was presented to Lauren Bustard, for her efforts to support and promote the work of the Youth Action Board on a system level for 5 years.



Pictured left to right: Dan Brennan Director of MaineHousing, Lauren Bustard, Senior Director of Programs, Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and award recipient, and Chris Bicknell Executive Director New Beginnings



134 College Street
Lewiston, ME 04240

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ANNUAL CELEBRATION
5/24/2023

Thank you to the staff, youth, and supporters who joined us for our return to an in-person Annual Celebration

NEWBEGINMAINE.ORG/AC23



WISH LIST

- Shoes- new/good condition
- Bug Spray
- Tents
- Towels
- Hair Brushes
- New Underwear: all sizes and styles

DETAILS ONLINE:
newbeginmaine.org/wish-list

MAKE AN IMPACT:

Is your business, church, or group interested in hosting a wish list fundraiser?

Please contact Nicole Pollock for details:

207-795-4077.