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Kennebec Savings Bank Announces 2024 Catalyst Grant Recipients

Kennebec Savings Bank awards \$30,000 Catalyst Grants to local nonprofits

Augusta, ME – Kennebec Savings Bank is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024 Catalyst Grant. After careful consideration, the Catalyst Grant Committee has selected three deserving organizations—Maine Arts Academy, Foundation for Portland Public Schools (FPPS), and the Alford Youth & Community Center (AYCC)—to receive funding for transformative community projects. Each organization will be awarded \$30,000 over three years, for a total of \$90,000 in grant funding.

Maine Arts Academy (Augusta)

Maine Arts Academy, a public high school emphasizing visual and performing arts, will use the Catalyst Grant to purchase approximately 100 portable, theater-style seats. This investment will create a versatile performance space, enabling students to host community events and collaborate with groups like the Augusta Colonial Theatre's Senior Players. By fostering intergenerational learning and enhancing community arts access, this project will enrich cultural engagement in Augusta. Heather King, Head of School, shared: "This generous support will help fund the purchase of new seating in our auditorium space and enable a collaborative production with the Augusta Colonial Theatre that will bring theater to rural areas. We are truly grateful to Kennebec Savings for providing this opportunity to enhance our students' experience and contribute to the vibrant community in Maine."



MEAA Dance Team

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Students in Portland will receive free exams

Foundation for Portland Public Schools (Portland)

Serving Maine's most diverse student body, FPPS will launch the "Healthcare Access" program with the Catalyst Grant. This initiative includes a mobile vision van offering eye exams and glasses to students, as well as free personal care products in middle and high schools. By addressing essential health needs, the program aims to reduce absenteeism and ensure students are ready to learn. Andrea Weisman Summers, Executive Director, expressed: "The Foundation for Portland Public Schools has a mission to be a catalyst for

increased educational opportunities, achievement, and equity for all Portland Public Schools students and staff. We believe that every child deserves a good foundation. When we learned that many Portland students are facing healthcare challenges that interfere with their learning, we knew we needed to respond. This grant will allow us to provide free eye exams, glasses, and personal care supplies to students, helping hundreds be present in class and engage more fully in learning."

Alfond Youth & Community Center (Waterville)

The AYCC, a combined Boys & Girls Club and YMCA, will establish a Behavioral Support System in its afterschool program using the Catalyst Grant. This initiative will provide mental health support through staff training, "calm-down" spaces, and mobile calm-down carts, creating a nurturing environment for children. These enhancements will enable AYCC to provide crucial social-emotional support, promoting positive youth development. DJ Adams, After School Programs Director, shared: "This grant has



AYCC Youth

opened up new possibilities for supporting the youth in our community. With increasing mental health needs, these funds will provide staff with training and tools to better assist youth, enhance services to meet their needs, and create a safe space for navigating challenges."

The mission of the Catalyst Grant program is to spark creativity and add capacity within local nonprofit organizations, leading to the betterment of the programs and services offered in Kennebec Savings Bank's service area. Grant recipients are chosen through a competitive application process by an



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internal selection committee comprised of employees representing different areas of the bank. Since its inception in 2016, the Catalyst Grant program has awarded over \$440,000 to over a dozen projects.

For more information, please contact Marketing and Communications Officer Amanda Cooley at 207-622-5801 or ACooley@KennebecSavings.Bank.

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Kennebec Savings Bank is a \$1.7 billion state-chartered community bank, part of a mutual organization, with a team of over 200 employees and offices in Augusta, Farmingdale, Freeport, Portland, Waterville, and Winthrop, as well as “KSB Anytime” 24-hour electronic banking centers in Augusta, Farmingdale, Freeport and Manchester. The Bank is proud that its involvement in the community as an employer, a business and as a contributor has led to many other successes besides its own. Member FDIC, Equal Housing Lender.