

Kennebec Savings Bank

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Kennebec Savings Bank Awards Two \$30,000 Catalyst Grants to Local Nonprofits

Augusta, ME – Kennebec Savings Bank recently named Snow Pond Center for the Arts and Maine GearShare as the recipients of its Catalyst Grants. The two \$30,000 gifts are designed to support creative concepts that might otherwise not be possible for the nonprofit organizations.

[Snow Pond Center for the Arts](#)



From left to right: Amanda Cooley and Jean Conway, Kennebec Savings Bank; Christine Little, Christa Johnson, and Christine Durgin, Snow Pond Center for the Arts; Andrew Silsby and Mark Stebbins, Kennebec Savings Bank; and Ingrid Stanchfield, Boys and Girls Clubs of Kennebec Valley

[Snow Pond Center for the Arts](#), based out of Sidney, Maine, is an arts educational institution, tourism attraction, and community center that provides equal access to innovative, high-quality arts education, programming, and cultural events. Within Kennebec County, a region in which 60% of residents are of low-to-moderate income and over 10% of children live in poverty, Snow Pond serves younger children and teens through its Community Arts Outreach Programs. These programs focus on providing low- to moderate-income teens with experiences that include expressive arts; arts as academic support; learning to own; and music club. Catalyst Grant funds will be used to expand the program to the Gardiner community through a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Kennebec Valley. The Community Arts Outreach program has been successfully introduced in the Waterville and Augusta communities, and with these funds, the

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organization will be able to reach up to 120 teens that participate in Boys and Girls Clubs of Kennebec Valley activities.

"Thanks to Kennebec Savings Banks' dedication to the betterment of our community, Snow Pond's teaching artists will now be able to work with teens at The Boys & Girls Clubs of Kennebec Valley's Gardiner location to provide arts education in a way that will make a positive impact for generations to come," noted Christa Johnson, Snow Pond's Director of Development.

[Maine GearShare](#)

[Maine GearShare](#), based out of Brunswick, Maine, works to promote equitable access to outdoor recreation by acquiring, maintaining, and lending gear to trip leaders and nature-based educators. Maine GearShare launched its pilot program in May 2022 after three years of conversation, research, and design among outdoor-focused organizations, funders, retailers, and makers. During this pilot season, they are partnering with 10 Maine-based trip leading organizations, equipping over 300 individuals on 30 unique trips. Catalyst Grant funds will allow the organization to expand through the purchase of more inventory, the development of an inventory database, new equipment for their facility, and boosted outreach. These expansions will allow for more groups to be able to access gear, as well as existing member organizations to continue to rely on Maine GearShare as a resource.



Pictured Left to Right are Mark Stebbins, Kennebec Savings Bank; Jackson Hall, Maine GearShare; Jean Conway, Kennebec Savings Bank; Alicia Heyburn, Board of Directors, Maine GearShare; Liv Johanson Berg and Emily Mackeown, Maine GearShare; and Amanda Cooley and Christina Moen, Kennebec Savings Bank.

"The Catalyst Grant will support Maine GearShare's new and expanded programming in 2023. Building upon the success of our pilot season, we plan to partner with more trip leading organizations to meet their gear needs and boost their capacity to get more people outside in



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Maine's beautiful wilderness. We are so grateful to Kennebec Savings Bank for its support as we test, adapt, and grow," said Liv Johanson Berg, Maine GearShare's Interim Executive Director.

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 internal selection committee comprised of employees representing different areas of the Bank. Since its inception in 2016, the Catalyst Grant program has awarded over \$300,000 to over a dozen projects.

"We are pleased to provide this funding to two nonprofits that are dedicated to serving even more people through these innovative projects, and we are proud to be the catalyst to make them possible," said Kennebec Savings Bank President & CEO Andrew Silsby.

For more information, contact Vice President & Marketing and Communications Officer Amanda Cooley at ACooley@KennebecSavings.Bank.

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Kennebec Savings Bank is a \$1.6 billion state-chartered community bank, part of a mutual organization, with a team of 200 employees and offices in Augusta, Farmingdale, Freeport, Waterville, Winthrop and coming soon in Portland, 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.