

MetroWest Youth in Philanthropy

Creating a Philanthropist

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Philanthropy. Every person thinks of it differently. Some might think of large foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, lifting impoverished people out of hunger and sickness through large personal and public donations; while others might think of it as participating in a fundraising walk like the Jimmy Fund Walk, supporting cancer research and patient care. No matter what you believe philanthropy is, you can be a philanthropist and chances are that you already are!

This January, I applied and was accepted into the Foundation for MetroWest's Youth in Philanthropy (YIP) program in Sudbury. The Foundation for MetroWest works tirelessly to connect donors, nonprofits and areas with demonstrated need to enrich and improve the lives of all citizens in the MetroWest area. Part of their mission is to increase and educate people about philanthropy by sponsored networking, trainings and collaboration opportunities at their Center for Philanthropy

Education. One of their most groundbreaking achievements was founding the YIP program in 1997. Since its inception, over 1,100 students have gone through the program and have awarded over \$1,000,000 to local youth-serving non-profits. The program empowers middle and high school students to get involved in the community, initiate outreach and receive education about the impact of philanthropy.

Heart Score. On my first day as part of YIP, I learned that philanthropy is different for everybody. It is the giving of your time, talent and/or treasure for the benefit of others. What you choose to help also depends on your interest, or as we call it in YIP, your "heart score." Your heart score might cause you to be passionate about different initiatives, such as education, health care, environmental preservation, arts/culture, animal issues or human services. Every person's heart score is unique to them, their background and experiences. Additionally, we learned about different types of

civic service, fundraising strategies, and the structure of a non-profit. Then came the hard part.

The Grant Review Process. We started to review grant proposals and decide which nonprofit to award our \$10,000 grant to. Although reading grants is a long, arduous process, it was interesting to discover all of the amazing projects happening in the area and discuss their value. We considered the project description, needs of the target population, impact on youth, the organization's ability to implement and continue the project, plan of evaluation, overall proposal quality, and even the budget (which trust me, was a learning exercise)! During this process, we also elected board members to lead our YIP group, and I was honored to become the public relations chair. Once we picked our top four candidates for the grant, we conducted site visits. The passion and rigor people had for their projects was eye-opening, and it was an interesting process balancing our hearts and brains while making decisions. Now, we are amidst a difficult final decision



Spring 2017 Youth in Philanthropy Sudbury participants and GWArc CEO (L-R) Lucas Koskinen, Adam Winkelman, Roslynn Rubin, Safura Mohammed, Ashwini Vytheswaran, Alyssa Winn, Eesha Yadav and Neha Shabeer. Not shown: Brooke Maxwell, Lukas Muzila, Liam Brandwein, Alec Bornstein, Griffin Palefsky, Connor Cumming and Marissa Massey. (Photo/supplied)

and preparation for our grant defense presentation for the board members of the Foundation for MetroWest. After all of our hard work, we will finally reach the momentous day of handing our 'big check' to a deserving nonprofit at the giving ceremony!

Throughout this experience, I have gained so many powerful leadership and life skills, including collaboration and public speaking, while making like-minded friends. The YIP program truly inspires a life-long love for giving back proven by the over 80 percent of alumni who are actively

involved in nonprofits. A huge thanks to Renee Quinn, the Senior Philanthropy Officer for the Foundation for MetroWest and my incredibly enthusiastic and intelligent YIP instructor, for making this experience so memorable and galvanizing!

I encourage all students and adults to learn more about philanthropy and to find a personal way to impact this community; it quite possibly could change your or someone else's life. For more about the world through my eyes, keep reading my monthly column :)

Register Now for AYF Fightin' Irish Football



Hopkinton-Ashland American Youth Football (AYF) invites you to take part in the Fightin' Irish Football Program's sixth year!

Athletes from Hopkinton and Ashland going into 1st through 8th Grade are invited to register now for the fall season.



PROGRAM FACTS:

- ♣ American Youth Football is the largest youth football program in the US. Team placement by grade (no older lighters) building self-esteem and grade level "esprit de corp"
- ♣ Focus on playing the game safely with new equipment and extensive training of coaches and players
- ♣ Part of the Tri-Valley Conference this year, play many of the same teams as the High School minimizing travel (Holliston, Medway, Dover/Sherborn, etc.)
- ♣ AYF offers tackle for athletes entering 2nd-8th grade and flag for athletes entering 1st – 4th grade
- ♣ Practices start August 7th for tackle and late August for flag

Through the instruction and participation in football, the goal is to promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, accountability, team competition, and above all, to have fun!



For more information go to www.hopkintonashlandayf.org and to join a program with a winning tradition register at www.playAYFnow.org