

## October 2009 Edition

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## Youth Leaders Converge on Pine Tree Camp

The weather was chilly but the foliage around the lake was beautiful at Pine Tree Camp this year for JMG's annual Leadership Education Conference (LEC), held September 29 through October 2. Forty-nine JMG programs attended the conference in three groups. Each group stayed for an overnight and a following day of training.

All schools in attendance competed in the cardboard boat challenge, completed team building initiatives, and were able to learn leadership and communication skills from businesses professionals from companies such as Bank of America, Unum, Cianbro, Bath Iron Works, and the Maine Marine Trades Association. Project Reach schools each scripted and filmed a public service announcement, while the high school programs traded ideas for service learning projects, fund-raisers, and philanthropic ventures for the year ahead.

**At right, Houlton High School displays the "French Fry Express" they constructed for the cardboard boat challenge.**



## Goodwill Industries/Summer Youth Jobs Program

This summer, JMG students at the Long Creek Youth Development Center in South Portland participated in a special summer pilot collaboration with Goodwill Industries of Northern New England. Through funds made available by the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, paid positions were subsidized for both on-grounds facility maintenance crew and three off-site employers in the greater Portland area. This opportunity allowed eight youth in the corrections program to receive hands-on work experience, direct supervision, and job-coaching. Goodwill staff also provided weekly work-readiness and support workshops for these youth. The Goodwill team commented on how well-mannered and mature the students were throughout the program.

The project will be expanding at Long Creek in the fall and will be serving up to 10 youth transitioning to their communities in Cumberland and York counties. New employer relationships, which will help garner an extension of support services for adjudicated youth, are also being established as a result of this successful collaboration.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Jobs Academy

Over the summer, JMG partnered with the Muskie School of Public Service, the Jim Casey Foundation, the Department of Health and Human Services and southern Maine businesses in a youth employment project.

27 youth-in-care received intensive pre-employment job-readiness/life skills training and financial literacy instruction by JMG staff for three weeks in May. In June through September, these youth were placed at paid, part-time seasonal positions with Hannaford, Cabela's, the City of Portland and the University of Southern Maine, where they received on-site mentoring.

Many of these youth also became eligible and enrolled in JMG's Opportunity Passport™ Program, which provides a match savings 'IDA' account of up to \$1,000 per year toward an approved asset purchase such as an education-related expense, vehicle, or housing deposit. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> year of partnering with the 1<sup>st</sup> Jobs Academy, JMG has been able to serve more youth outside of our core programs by delivering interactive money management training to these youth.

## JMG Welcomes New Sites, Faces

**New Sites opening in Fall 2009:** Thanks to a Community Development Block grant, JMG kicked off Fall 2009 by opening four new sites in Somerset County. These sites are at Carrabec High School in North Anson, Madison Area Memorial High School, Maine Central Institute (MCI) in Pittsfield, and Skowhegan Area High School. New sites mean new Specialists, of course, so JMG welcomed Cory Paquette to Carrabec, Matt Friedman to Madison, Greg Fortier to MCI, and Richard Gordon to Skowhegan.

**New faces:** In addition to the four new sites opening this year, JMG welcomed some new faces to already established sites. New hires for the 2009-2010 school year are: Rebecca Cima-Bardosy at Greenville Middle and High School, Maggie Savage at SeDoMoCha Middle School, Caitlin Downey for the Mt. Desert Island schools, Rob Schmidt at Lewiston Regional Technical Center for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program, Matt Gilley at Waterville Sr. High School for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program, Sarah Lawler at Belfast Area High School, Sarah White at Brewer High School, Doug Lakin at Warsaw Middle School, Dave Pasquarello at Biddeford High School for the senior program, and Daniel Cheung at Sacopee Valley High School.

**Promotions:** With the addition of four new sites in one geographic area, JMG decided to add a 5<sup>th</sup> Region and therefore a 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Manager position. Keith Piehler was promoted from the position of Project Reach Specialist at Warsaw Middle School to North Central Region Manager. The other regions are South (Katy Foley), South Central (Rob Schulz), Central (Sherrye Haney), and North (Tom Hart). Other staff changes are: Carlo Bufano, who had been the Opportunity Passport Manager, has accepted a position as the new Development Manager; Debbie Bechard, who was the Financial Literacy & Mentoring Coordinator, has been promoted to Mentoring & Financial Literacy Manager; and Chris Poulin, who was the Job Specialist at Carrabec High School, is now the JMG Plus Manager.

**Congratulations to all and welcome to JMG!**

## Tuskegee Airman Lands at Long Creek

Master Sergeant James Sheppard, one of America's few remaining Tuskegee Airmen, stopped in at Long Creek Youth Development Center in South Portland on September 28 to give a PowerPoint presentation. At the event, hosted by Long Creek and Jobs for Maine's Graduates, Sheppard held residents and staff spellbound for an hour with his talk on Black Aviators in World War II.

Eighty-five-year-old Sheppard is one of the original 14,000 black pilots, navigators, engineers and mechanics who fought in World War II. After his talk, Sheppard spoke individually with residents and staff, and had his picture taken with all who asked. He still travels around the country, speaking to various groups, and has also traveled to Iraq on a morale-boosting visit to American troops. After the war, Sheppard made his career in aviation, including years as a Federal Aviation Administration Inspector in Portland, ME.

Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (TAI) is a non-profit organization with 53 chapters nationwide dedicated to honoring the accomplishments and perpetuating the history of African-Americans who participated in air crew, ground crew and operations support training in the Army Air Corps during WWII, introducing young people to the world of aviation and science through local and national programs, and providing annual scholarships and awards to deserving individuals, groups and corporations whose deeds lend support to TAI's goals. TAI also gives awards to deserving cadets in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps.



**At left:  
Long Creek Youth Development  
Center Program Coordinator  
Bill Linnell and Master Sergeant  
James Sheppard**



**Master Sergeant James Sheppard in WWII**

## School to Workready in One Summer

This summer, nine JMG staff from Piscataquis, Penobscot, and Hancock counties guided area youth through the Tri-County Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. During the eight-week program, the nine staffers conducted weekly job site visits and ran regular workshops, reaching over 130 youth spread amongst 65 job sites.

The goal of SYEP was to provide eligible youth ages 16-24 with the opportunity to earn money, gain up to 30 hours a week of practical, on-the-job experience, and to ultimately receive a Workready Certificate. Participants had to meet economic guidelines and at least one of seven barriers, including pregnant or parenting, homeless, runaway or foster youth, and school drop-out. The participants walked away at the end of the program with an understanding of what employers consider to be important skills, work habits, and behaviors for the workplace.

Employers participating in the program included the University of Maine, Eastern Maine Community College, Husson University, the Bangor YMCA, WERU radio, Maine Coast Memorial Hospital and Ellsworth City Hall.

JMG wants to give a big thank you to the  
Davis Family Foundation  
and Skowhegan Savings Bank



for their support of  
JMG's Financial Literacy Program!

## JMG "Sticks Its Neck Out" for Maine Kids

The Maine Children's Alliance (MCA) announced that JMG had been chosen as a 2009 recipient of the Giraffe Award. MCA's mission is to advocate for a better life for children, youth and families throughout Maine. MCA created the Giraffe Awards to honor individuals, businesses and nonprofits that go above and beyond (or "stick out their necks") in their efforts to make life better for Maine children.

JMG was nominated for the Giraffe Award by Senator Carol Weston, who said in her recommendation letter, "As a state senator...I have the pleasure of working with many organizations that better the lives of Mainers. I am particularly proud to be a supporter and advocate for Jobs for Maine's Graduates. For 16 years, JMG has demonstrated through accountability and research that they are an invaluable resource for Maine school aged students."



JMG received its Giraffe Award on October 7 at the Freeport Garden Hilton during the MCA's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Champions for Children event.

## JMG Success Story



**Magen Merrill**  
**2004 JMG Graduate**  
**Carrabec High School**

Magen participated in a full-time internship at Cianbro the summer after she graduated from high school and says the company offered her a job on the spot. That fall she began her first semester at the University of Maine at Orono. Juggling both work and school proved to be too difficult, however, so during her second semester she scaled school back to part time. In January she will begin taking classes at Kennebec Valley Community College to obtain a certificate in CADD art drafting and design.

Although she started at Cianbro as an intern, Magen quickly rose through the ranks, applying for new positions within the company as her interests changed. Today she is a Document Control Manager, which means she manages all of the documents relating to contracts.

Thanks to Cianbro, Magen is being reimbursed for her current classes, and because she was working while she was going to school, she has paid off all her original student loans.

Magen credits JMG with preparing her for both work and school. "Everything JMG taught me," she says, "the leadership skills, how to act, how to dress, how to fill out a college application, how to research schools - all provides a solid foundation for anyone looking for success in college or the workforce."

Magen says she is excited about the partnership between Cianbro and JMG. "I have had such a great experience with Cianbro, and Cianbro looks for employees who are taught what JMG is teaching students."