

Student philanthropists ready to start giving again

UNITY — National Philanthropy Day was observed in November around the country by state and regional chapters of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. In Maine, this month signals that more than 3,300 teens are ready to launch their fourth year of local grant making through the Maine-grown Jumpstart Our Youth, or JOY, program. Nonprofits serving both statewide needs such as Ronald McDonald House to those narrowly focused on school needs such as Milo's Blessings in a Backpack are preparing to submit online funding applications to the 63 [Jobs for Maine's Graduates](#) sites across the state where the JOY program is part of the school cur-

riculum.

Created by the Unity Foundation and co-funded by the Maine Community Foundation and UniTel Inc., the JOY program teaches students how to support their local communities with "smart" donations — \$1,000 grants — and to lend the "sweat equity" that so many nonprofits depend on to feed the hungry, prevent domestic abuse, care for sick children and collect toys for needy families during the holidays.

During the 2010-11 school year, JOY granted \$63,200 across Maine to 110 organizations in 51 Maine towns. Students contributed 21,000 hours of volunteer time. Since the launch of JOY three years ago, students have

donated nearly \$172,000 and volunteered more than 54,000 hours. The budding philanthropists learn how difficult it is to choose worthy grant recipients, allocate limited financial support and track how the grant funds are used. And many of JMG students are more than familiar with the local services and support organizations requesting funds; their families and friends may have benefited from local programs.

Nonprofits in communities whose middle and-or high schools host a JMG program may contact the local program at jmg.org/schools for grant application details.

