



2016 MIAA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD FINALISTS- CLUB/ORGANIZATION **CATEGORY**

Billerica Memorial High School – “Us Against Cancer”

Six Billerica Memorial High School students, Kelsey, Caitlin, Isabel, Spandana, Shae, and Jenna, all had a vision to raise awareness about the dreadful disease that affects so many of our friends and family. With this vision, the girls started the “Us Against Cancer” campaign, using their passion and desire to help others. They started with a kick-off rally in the gymnasium at Billerica Memorial High School, where they invited the entire school to join them for a lemon challenge for childhood cancer awareness. The event was a huge success and allowed them to gain the support of their peers, teachers, and administrators. Following their success, the girls planned monthly events to further pursue their vision: October- 5K Road Race, BMHS PINK out, “Dig Pink” volleyball game; November- No Shave November, Great American Smoke-out, Bertucci’s Fundraiser; December- BMHS vs. Chelmsford faculty volleyball game, “Orlene” Benefit Concert; January- Cells out, Cancer Awareness Hockey Game; February- Box Out Cancer Basketball Game. In total, the girls raised over \$5,000 to donate to The Dana Farber Foundation.

Franklin High School - Franklin High School Peer Leaders

The Franklin High School Peer Leaders are a group of compassionate and responsible students who fulfill important roles throughout their school and community. Every year over the holidays, the Franklin High School Peer Leaders work with the Santa Foundation to help raise money and gather gifts for their “Light up a Life” project. They organize classroom donations, help count and account for all collections and deposits, and buy and wrap gifts. Over the last five years, the peers have been able to raise over \$10,000 each year to purchase gifts and essential items for over 40 local families in need and for 25 teens that live at the Wetzel Center in Worcester, MA. Other commendable events the Franklin Peer Leaders participate in are: “Peace Takes Practice” regional conference, “It’s Not Worth It” PSA video conference to support abstinence of substance use, organizing and running a blood drive for the Red Cross, and collecting money to donate to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Lenox Memorial Middle and High School - Lenox Crew Team

The Lenox Crew team is made up of students from Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, Monument Mt. High School and one student from Pittsfield High School. Each fall, there is an event called the “Josh Billings Run-A Ground,” which is the area’s largest triathlon, attracting about 350 teams. It is a 25 mile bike

ride through the Berkshires, 5K canoe/kayak/paddleboard on Stockbridge Bowl and then a 5K run to the end at Tanglewood. The Lenox Crew team has volunteered for the past 6+ years at this event. During the event, the team breaks up into three groups to man three different areas. At one site, they help the bikers hand off to the paddlers, run the boats down to the water with the competitors and launch them. At the second site, they are in the water, catching the boats for the iron man or tin man or stabilizing them after they are off, so they can continue on to the next site. At the third site, they assist all competitors with taking their boats out of the water, and walking them up the hill to the parking lots. Once the water portion is over, they all meet up at the end to help wherever they are needed.

Lowell High School - Lowell High School Educational Athletics Program

Many teams within the Lowell High School Educational Athletics Program took part in their own projects to help better their surrounding community. The Field Hockey team participated in the Juvenile Diabetes Walk, raising over \$6,000 for the cause. The Girls Cross Country team raced in pink uniforms during October to raise awareness of the fight against breast cancer. The Girls Soccer team held their annual "Pink Out" game to support the fight against breast cancer, raising over \$500 to donate to Lowell General Hospital. The Girls Swim and Dive team participated in Michael's Run, a charity race in the name of a deceased faculty member with proceeds to benefit his foundation. The Girls Volleyball Team hosted their annual "Pink Out" game to support the fight against breast cancer. The Girls Basketball team spent time at the Lowell Senior Center working with and visiting senior citizens. The Ice Hockey team held their first annual "Fight T1D" game to raise awareness and financial support (over \$4,000) for the fight against Type 1 diabetes. In addition, during the fall season, Lowell High School's teams (football, boys soccer, girls soccer, field hockey, and cheerleading) came together and attended the Reilly Elementary School's Scholar Day. Each group demonstrated and helped elementary school students with sports skills, and spoke to them about the characteristics that help make people successful.

Milford High School - Milford High School Athletic Department

Within the town of Milford, there is a consistent rise for help within the elderly community during the winter season. Many of the elderly can no longer adequately shovel snow themselves and this becomes dangerous. When "Project Snowstorm" was proposed to Milford High School, almost 70 student-athletes jumped on the idea to volunteer. This project paired a student athlete with someone within the elderly or veteran community based on their geographical location and from there every time a snow storm hit, the student-athletes were on their way to go shovel them to safety. This selfless act of a little extra snow shoveling impacted the immediate elderly and veteran community members. Their efforts increased the safety and the well-being of those they were striving to help.

South Hadley High School

Bag the Community, is an annual community-wide food drive that was initiated six years ago, and is now conducted every year during the MLK weekend. The success of this project comes from the work done by the Alternative Education students, and the critical contributions made by the high school sports teams,

staff and community members, and all other students, including those from MESMS. The original idea and purpose of this project derived from South Hadley High School's Alternative Education students and the staff's desire to help open a food pantry in South Hadley. It started inside the high school, with donations of non-perishable food items to kick-off the drive that encompassed all town residents. This year, the students incorporated a school-wide event called the "Clash of Cans," to raise awareness and get everyone involved. They held a contest, for which class could donate the most cans and everyone provided a great effort. In the end, South Hadley High School collected, boxed, and delivered more than 40,000 pounds of non-perishable items, which has been the largest donation yet! This was all accomplished over the course of two days, by the willing hands of 300 volunteers.

Stoughton High School - Stoughton High School Fall Sports Teams

During the fall of the 2015-2016 academic year, Stoughton High School's fall athletic teams organized and participated in three community service projects. On September 26th, over 125 players, friends, and family members of Stoughton Athletic teams conducted an American Cancer Fundraiser Walk entitled "\$5 For the Cure." During the week of October 19th, many of the Stoughton sports teams held "Pink/Cancer Awareness" matches in conjunction with Sharon High School, as part of their regular season match-ups. The final event was a volleyball match at Sharon High entitled "Dig Fore the Cure," held on Friday, October 23rd. During the pre-match ceremonies for each team, freshmen through varsity players and coaches announced cancer victims or survivors who they would be playing in honor of during the game. At the conclusion of the varsity match, presentations of raised funds were made to both the American Cancer Society and the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. Lastly, during the final week of their sports seasons, the Stoughton High School athletic teams conducted a week-long food drive to support the Stoughton Food Pantry. The drive was entitled "Athletes Against Hunger." In the end they were able to donate 1482 items to the Stoughton Food Pantry.