

# Kennebec Savings Bank

150 State Street, PO Box 50, Augusta, Maine 04332 | Telephone: (207) 622-5801 FAX: (207) 626-2858

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Contact: Amanda Cooley, Vice President & Marketing and Communications Officer

[ACooley@KennebecSavings.Bank](mailto:ACooley@KennebecSavings.Bank) | 207-622-5801

## **Kennebec Savings Bank Awards Three \$30,000 Catalyst Grants to Local Nonprofits**

Augusta, ME – Kennebec Savings Bank recently named the Waterville Area Soup Kitchen (WASK), the Mitchell Institute, and the Augusta Teen Center as the recipients of its Catalyst Grants. The three \$30,000 gifts are designed to support creative concepts that might otherwise not be possible for the nonprofit organizations.

### **Waterville Area Soup Kitchen**



*From left to right: Gordon Cheesman, Waterville Area Soup Kitchen; Andrew Silsby, Seth Sherwood, and Mark Stebbins, Kennebec Savings Bank; Carla Caron, Waterville Area Soup Kitchen; Beth Poulin and Sara Fifield, Kennebec Savings Bank; Aline Poulin, Waterville Area Soup Kitchen; Gary LaPierre and Amanda Cooley, Kennebec Savings Bank; and Dean Dolham, Waterville Area Soup Kitchen.*

WASK serves low-income people of all ages who are seeking nutritious food, clothing, supplies, and a warm place to find support in a non-judgmental environment. They serve hot sit-down

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meals five days a week from The Lighthouse, their facility located in downtown Waterville. Since opening in May 2022, WASK has seen a 600% increase in meal preparations. Catalyst Grant funds will be used to expand their kitchen facility so they can better meet the increasing need.

“We are honored to have been selected as this year's recipient of the KSB Catalyst Grant Award,” said Carla Caron, WASK’s board chair. “The funds will enable us to increase our cooking capacity from 300 to 500 meals per day by purchasing a new stove, an industrial potato peeler, and an industrial food processor. The soup kitchen has seen an increase in the demand for meals and has gone from serving 50-100 meals per day to 250-300 meals per day. Unfortunately, we do not see that number going down any time soon. We peel 100-120 pounds of potatoes for any given meal. This will decrease prep time and ease the burden on our volunteers.”

## **Mitchell Institute**



*From left to right: Beth Poulin, Aline Taylor, Sara Fjfield, Andrew Silsby, and Michael Melendy, Kennebec Savings Bank; Jared Cash, Mitchell Institute; Mark Stebbins, Kennebec Savings Bank; Brittney Nickerson, Mitchell Scholar Alumna; Amanda Cooley, Kennebec Savings Bank; Andrea Mitchell, Mitchell Institute; and Gary LaPierre, Kennebec Savings Bank.*

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The mission of the Mitchell Institute is to increase the likelihood that young people from every community in Maine will aspire to, pursue, and achieve a college education. The Institute is headquartered in Portland, and a strong contingency of Mitchell Scholars attend school in Kennebec Savings Bank's service area. Recently, the Institute has seen an increase in the number of Mitchell Scholars who self-report they are coping with mental health issues. Catalyst Grant funds will be used to create a new program to help connect Mitchell Scholars with effective mental health counseling in a timely way.

"Nationally, mental health challenges are straining degree completion rates. College students are raising their hands for support but struggling to access therapy. We are deeply grateful to Kennebec Savings Bank for making possible a new program for Mitchell Scholars that will provide timely and effective online mental health counseling," said Mitchell Institute President and CEO Jared Cash.

## **Augusta Teen Center**



*From left to right: Amanda Cooley, Kennebec Savings Bank; Susan McLean and Ashley Healey, Augusta Teen Center; Mark Stebbins, Kennebec Savings Bank; Lizzy Schneider, Augusta Teen Center; Aline Poulin, Kennebec Savings Bank; Christopher Maloney, Augusta Teen Center; Michael Melendy, Beth Poulin, Gary LaPierre, and Sara Fifield, Kennebec Savings Bank.*

The Augusta Teen Center, located on Water Street, serves at-risk, low-income, and low-performing teenagers grades 7-12 in the greater Augusta area. With Catalyst Grant funds, they



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will create a community maker's space to equip their teens with the tools and supplies to complete carpentry projects needed by the ATC and in the broader community. The project is designed to provide additional mentorship, collaboration, and job training opportunities.

"We are so excited to partner with Kennebec Savings Bank in building a makerspace for Augusta's teens! The teens thrive in a group setting with a physical challenge to brainstorm and complete. We use team building and a consensus model to help create the best of possible outcomes. Our first project will be the creation of family-style tables to eat at together, because our teens are all about building family. We are already reaching out to other non-profits to build connections and offer our support for their own projects," said Christopher Maloney, the executive director of the Augusta Teen Center.

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 \$400,000 to over a dozen projects.

"We are pleased to provide this funding to three 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](mailto:ACooley@KennebecSavings.Bank).

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**Kennebec Savings Bank** is a \$1.7 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.