

KIDS CONSORTIUM RECEIVES 2006 HARRIS WOFFORD AWARD

Lewiston-based group recognized for service and civic involvement



From (left to right) Kathy Payne, Assistant Director of Corporate Communications and External Relations, State Farm Insurance Companies, Senator Harris Wofford, KIDS Founder and Board President, Marvin Rosenblum and Steve Culbertson, President and CEO of Youth Service America

LEWISTON– KIDS Consortium of Lewiston, Maine is one of three recipients of the fifth annual Harris Wofford Award by Youth Service America (YSA), a national non-profit resource center based in Washington, D.C. The award was presented on

Friday, March 24 at the 17th annual National Service-Learning Conference at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA.

KIDS (Kids Involved Doing Service) Consortium is being recognized for its work with school districts and community organizations across New England to make service-learning an integral part of academic life for K-12 students. Service-learning is a hands-on teaching strategy that challenges students to identify, research and solve problems in their communities as part of their academic courses.

“This award is a culmination of a lot of hard work by many dedicated individuals who are working to change the lives of children by connecting and utilizing what they learn in the classroom to benefit their communities,” said Marvin Rosenblum, Founder and President of KIDS Consortium. “When we started 15 years ago, we were just a small group of true believers, but we quickly found ourselves at the head of the national service learning movement. This award is a great honor and a tremendous recognition of our efforts.”

Since its inception, more than 200,000 students have participated in KIDS projects, including Maine school districts in Portland, Westbrook, York, Orono, Lewiston, Winthrop, Mount Desert Island, Millinocket, and Madison and others around New England such as Barnstable, MA, Coventry, RI, and Montpelier, VT.

The Harris Wofford Award is named for the former US Senator from Pennsylvania and CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Celebrating his 80th birthday this year, Wofford is a pioneer of the modern service movement in the United States, having set an example through his work in the civil rights movement, helping to launch the Peace Corps, and solidifying AmeriCorps’ permanent role in the domestic landscape. The former senator also serves on the boards of the Points of Light Foundation, America’s Promise, and Youth Service America.

“During the last 60 years, Harris Wofford has been a driving force in the power of people, particularly youth, to change the world for the better,” said Steve Culbertson, president and CEO of Youth Service America. “This award recognizes both a demonstrated record towards this vision, and the potential to bring more young people to the tables of community leadership.”

KIDS Consortium began around 1990 as part of a state-level program requiring all of Maine's cities and towns to prepare plans for the future on a wide range of civic issues, including capital improvements, protection of natural resources, transportation policies, and affordable housing needs. *KIDS* was created as a process to involve young people in the development and implementation of these plans. By using the "town as text," and engaging students in local planning efforts, education grew beyond the confines of the classroom.

KIDS Consortium received a plaque commemorating their achievements during the State Farm Awards Luncheon at the 2006 National Service-Learning Conference. Youth Service America created the Harris Wofford Awards in 2001, underwritten by the State Farm Companies Foundation, as a recognition program to honor the life work of Harris Wofford in making service and service-learning "the common expectation and common experience of every young person in America."

Youth Service America is a national nonprofit resource center that partners with thousands of organizations committed to increasing the quality and quantity of volunteer opportunities for young people, ages 5-25, to serve locally, nationally, and globally. Founded in 1986, Youth Service America's mission is to expand the impact of the youth service movement with communities, schools, corporations, and governments. Youth Service America envisions a global culture of engaged youth who are committed to a lifetime of service, learning, leadership and achievement.

In addition to National & Global Youth Service Day, which takes place concurrently each April, YSA also hosts SERVENet (www.SERVENet.org), providing the largest database of volunteer opportunities in America. For more information, please go to www.YSA.org.

KIDS Consortium is on the web at www.kidsconsortium.org.

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