

**EXPLORE the world.
HELP those close to home.**

Please join Hurley Travel Experts and Coldwell Banker Cares, Inc., for an unforgettable evening in support of Maine's children and families!

Thursday, MARCH 25, 2004
5:30PM at HOLIDAY INN BY THE BAY

One of southern Maine's favorite traditions, **PASSPORT TO OUR FUTURE** combines cuisines from the area's finest restaurants; live music and entertainment; and thrilling auctions of local and exotic travel packages, handcrafted items, and local goods and services.

Don't forget to enter the 50/50 RAFFLE DRAWING!
All proceeds from **PASSPORT TO OUR FUTURE** directly benefit YA's work with children and families.

Keep up on the latest auction catalogues, participating restaurants and sponsors at www.youthalternatives.org/passport/.

To purchase raffle tickets or reserve your place for the evening's festivities, please call 207 874 1175 x 170.

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ya ink

a journal for friends of — YOUTH ALTERNATIVES, INC.

PROFILES IN GIVING: THE BOSTON RED SOX

Turning a second chance into the CHANCE OF A LIFETIME for Ryan Thomas and other YA residents



photo: Kane Loukas

Before the Ceremonial First Pitch, Ryan Thomas (R) poses for a photo with Maine Sen. Susan Collins (C) and his grandmother Florice (L)

that I had to do the one thing that I hated most: *stay sober*. It was clear that if I could not learn how to live without drugs and alcohol now, I probably never would."

What a difference a dream makes. On September 14, 2003, Ryan stepped up on the pitcher's mound in a **Boston Red Sox** jersey before a sellout crowd at Fenway Park and faced Brian Brown's catcher's mitt. It was Maine Day at Fenway, and Ryan shared the mound with **Gov. John Baldacci** and his son, **Jack**. Looking on from the field were **Sen. Susan Collins** and former **Sen. George Mitchell**—and Ryan's grandmother, **Florice**, a Red Sox fan from back when she was Ryan's age. She was bursting with pride, excitement and apprehension as Ryan prepared to throw out the Ceremonial First Pitch.

How did Ryan, and the thirteen other boys in YA programs who received VIP treatment at Fenway that day, get a place on this field of dreams? Through the incredible generosity of the **Boston Red Sox**.

When Red Sox President and CEO **Larry Lucchino**, partner **Les Otten** and their staff came to Portland's Monument Square for a Maine Day rally on July 28, 2003, they ate lunch afterwards at **YA ROADS** Group Home with boys in long-term YA treatment.

They presented YA president **Michael J. Tarpinian** with a \$10,000 check in support of YA's work. They also gave each boy a Red Sox travel bag, filled with a Nomar No. 5 jersey, a cap, a ball, a keychain, a bobble-head doll and a brand-new Wilson glove. When the boys organized an impromptu game of catch, one glove was missing—Ryan's.

Mr. Otten promised to send Ryan another glove, but he promised him something even *more* thrilling—the chance to throw out the first pitch at the Maine Day Game. "At that moment in time I realized that I was being given the opportunity of a lifetime," Ryan recalled. "This was something I would never get the chance to do again. I had the motivation I needed to stay sober."

The Boston Red Sox unrolled a red carpet for the YA boys and their guests. For most, it was their first trip to Fenway. For several, it was their first trip to Boston. For everyone, it was an unforgettable and inspiring day. The fun began as soon as they got off the chartered bus from Portland. There was a tour of the stadium from the new Green Monster seats to the Players Club; a reception in the bowling alley for Maine Day; a chance to talk

"This experience really has changed my life ... the people of the Boston Red Sox made it possible."
—Ryan Thomas, age 17

>>> BOSTON RED SOX profile is continued on

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INSIDE YAink >>> *The Boston Red Sox give YA group home residents the chance of a lifetime ... Passport to Our Future tickets on sale for March 25, 2004 ... DON'T FORGET TO RESERVE YOUR SEADOGS WELCOME BACK TIX FOR APRIL 6, 2004 ... YA Holiday Giving wrap-up ... Advocacy call to action for YA Family Mediation ... and so much more!*

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ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! STAND UP FOR FAMILIES

Don't let Augusta cut services to Maine's children and families AGAIN

Once again, our advocacy efforts are focused on the disproportionate cuts to children and families that are being proposed in Fiscal Year 2005 (July 1, 2004—June 30, 2005). These cuts include many community-based programs that Youth Alternatives provides or depends on to deliver comprehensive services to Maine's families.

YA Family Mediation, a vital resource for thousands of Maine's families over the past thirteen years, is targeted for elimination. To learn more about how this innovative program and how much it helps families in conflict, call 207 874 1175 and request a free brochure, or visit www.youthalternatives.org/programs/family_mediation/. Many other services throughout the community will suffer, dismantling the continuum of services we all rely on to live our mission of "advancing safe, healthy, happy childhoods and positive family relationships."

We need your help! There is no way we can turn around these cuts without the help and support of the community. Legislators need to know you are watching, that you care, and that you do NOT support any more cuts to services to children and families. **Enough is enough!**

Here is how you can help:

Join our advocacy network. E-mail or call with your name, address, and phone number and we will tell you who your legislators are, and give you simple and effective information about the proposed budget cuts. We can also alert you when it is time to call to say **Enough is enough!**

Tell your friends, family and colleagues. Make sure your work and social networks know how outrageous and damaging these cuts are to children and families, and ask them to join you in saying **Enough is enough!**

Believe that your call counts. One or two 30-second calls at key times can turn around the budget debate. Often you will only be leaving a voice mail—legislators are in Augusta so much, most of them will not be able to talk to you in person. But they will hear and register your protest. **Enough is enough!**

Tell your own story! If you or a family member have benefited from a service in the community, tell us your story, or call or write your legislator and tell them directly that **Enough is enough!**

YA Advocacy & Prevention Services makes getting involved easy and effective. We provide information at key times; tell you who to call, and what the issues are. To learn more, e-mail our team at advocacy@youthalternatives.org or call us at 207 874 1175.

Do you know someone who stands up for children?

The YA Cumberland County Child Abuse & Neglect Council recognizes several individuals, groups and/or organizations every year for their contributions towards keeping Maine's children and families safe. Past recipients of the **YA PREVENTION AWARD** have included teachers building trust and communication in the classroom; community members mentoring youth; businesses raising awareness of abuse and prevention issues; and volunteers dedicating time to causes that benefit children and families. The Council urges everyone to reflect on people in your life making differences for children, and to take the time to nominate them for this special recognition. Phone, fax or e-mail your nominations to the Council by **March 15, 2004!**

CALL 207 874 1175 | FAX 207 874 1181 | E-MAIL council@youthalternatives.org

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PROFILES IN GIVING: THE BOSTON RED SOX, cont. from page 1 >>

to players, ask questions and get autographs; and of course, the long walk across the field in front of over 34,000 fans.

In the midst of a brief but *torrential* downpour, Ryan fired a clean, low fastball across the plate to the cheers of the entire stadium and the high-fives of his fellow housemates. "My dream had come true," he remembered.

Now preparing to graduate both from high school and YA Bass House, Ryan sees that pitch as a turning point. "When I first started getting sober I dreaded it, I thought it was impossible to have fun without drinking and drugs," he explained. "I know now this isn't true. The people of the Red Sox made it possible. They realized that us kids were going through some rough patches in our lives and went out of their way to make our day ...

it showed me no matter how bad things get I need to stay on the right track, because I never know when dreams will come true."

The Boston Red Sox understand the importance of safer, healthier, happier children and families. Their appearance in Monument Square generated enthusiasm and ticket sales, but their lunch at YA ROADS Group Home changed lives.

>> to keep up with the Boston Red Sox, visit www.redsox.com; for more information on ways to support Youth Alternatives, visit www.youthalternatives.org/giving/



DICK SPROUL (RIGHT) OF COLDWELL BANKER CARES DELIVERS GIFTS TO LAURIE BRAGG (RIGHT), YA DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, FOR DISTRIBUTION

ANOTHER WONDERFUL YEAR OF HOLIDAY GIVING

Each year YA children and families benefit from the generosity of our community during the holiday season, and this year marked a major milestone—we received over 700 gifts from local companies, organizations and individuals!

500 of those gifts came from the ten generous southern Maine offices of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, organized and delivered by Dick Sproul. Lisa Pelton, Concierge Manager for Coldwell, spent an afternoon labeling, recording and wrapping gifts. Aetna Healthcare, the Cathedral Parish Church in Portland and

Vital Basics focused their giving on families in YA Family Intervention Services, donating a range of gifts from bikes to heating oil. Clark Associates and Windham Unity Church Youth Group made generous cash donations to purchase gifts for teens and families. The Greater Portland Mothers (& Dads) Group donated gift certificates and a new Sony PlayStation for YA ROADS Group Home; MaineBiz pitched in for the girls at YA Heritage House; and Maine Medical Center staff donated gifts to the children at YA Perry's Place. Dr. Gloria Westerman and her staff remembered the youth in YA Homeless Youth Services.

NEWSWORTHY AT YA

Coldwell Banker Cares Golf Tournament to Benefit Youth Alternatives will be held June 15, 2004 at the Purpooodock Club in Cape Elizabeth >> Save the date! Get ready to hit the links for a good cause this spring. To learn more about donating, volunteering or participating in the Tournament, please contact tournament co-chairs Marianne Mosesso (tel. 207-282-5988 X 120) or Heather Dallas (tel. 207-799-8551 X111).

YA staff had everyone talking at the 10th National Workshop on Adult and Juvenile Offenders held at the Holiday Inn By The Bay September 6 – 10, 2003 >> Susan J. Levine, Director of YA Heritage House and Darren Cooke, Program Coordinator, helped to lead a panel discussion with national experts Lyn Mike Brown and Meda Chesney-Lind, exploring the issue of girls and fighting. In addition, Levine and Lucky Hollander, Vice President, YA Advocacy & Prevention Services, participated in a panel focused on Maine's continuum of care for girls in the juvenile justice system.

In October 2003, the YA Girls Transitional Home welcomed the community to an art show and open house >> The

young residents' artwork, photography, and poetry impressed visitors with its honesty and creativity. YA President Michael J. Tarpinian thanked Susan Schweppe, YA President's Council member, and Laurie Bragg, YA Development Coordinator, for curating the show. To read a recent Portland Press Herald article about this vital safe haven for girls, please visit www.youthalternatives.org/programs/girls_transitional/.

As YA grows, we are guided by short- and long-term goals >> YA Board of Trustees and staff are always planning for the future. After many internal and external interviews and questionnaires, the Board of Trustees approved new Strategic Imperatives 2004-2006 for the agency. You can view the Imperatives at www.youthalternatives.org/about_us/.

YA Training & Symposium Series 2003/2004 invites the community to Resiliency in Action: How to Help Yourself and Others Bounce Back, on Friday, May 21, 2004 at Keeley The Katerer in Portland from 8:30am to 4:00pm >> This full-day training will provide a motivational boost for anyone

dealing with stress, crisis, grief and trauma; or anyone helping others address these problems. Explore the human capacity to overcome and transcend adversity and gather information from the latest psychological research with Nan Henderson, MSW of Resiliency in Action, Inc., an internationally recognized presenter and author on this important topic. To learn more, visit www.youthalternatives.org/training/series/. To register, please send an email to registration@youthalternatives.org, or call 207 874 1175 x 120 and request a free brochure.

Coldwell Banker Cares, Inc., gives \$1000 to YA residential programs to fund recreational activities >> Coldwell Banker Cares, Inc., has given YA children and youth something to look forward to with warmer weather—a generous donation to fund outdoor activities and recreational opportunities. Youth at YA Bass House will have the chance to go on wilderness trips and day camps, join gyms and more, helping them have a safe, healthy, happy Maine summer.

YA Girls Shelter is now the YA Girls Transitional Home

YA's newest program has an even newer name! Formerly the Fair Harbor Emergency Shelter for Girls, the YA Girls Transitional Home is the only emergency safe haven exclusively for girls in southern Maine. Learn more at www.youthalternatives.org/girls_transitional/