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New York Life Foundation Awards \$100,000 Grant to My Place Teen Center and Intercultural Community Center in Westbrook to Support Out-of-School-Time Programs to Help Middle School Students Transition to 9th Grade

Award is one of 26 Aim High Grants Nationally, Totaling \$1.35M

(Westbrook, Maine) – My Place Teen Center (MPTC), a greater Portland organization whose mission is to provide a safe haven for youth ages 10-18, sustaining them with comfort, meals, resources, and hope; and Intercultural Community Center (ICC), whose mission is to improve the lives of immigrants by providing health, social and educational opportunities, announced today they were awarded a \$100,000 grant from the New York Life Foundation to support middle school youth during the out-of-school time (OST) hours.

The New York Life Foundation in partnership with the Afterschool Alliance today announced this grant, one of 26 grants to be awarded to youth development organizations across the country. Twenty-six OST programs won new grants, and 16 organizations received continuing grants first announced in 2018. These programs serve underserved youth in 18 states. The grants mark the third year of awards made under the Foundation's Aim High education initiative, and this year's grants bring the total awarded under the program to \$3.45 million.

Aim High is part of the New York Life Foundation's ongoing investment in OST programs to help 8th graders reach the 9th grade on time and prepared for high school level work. Afterschool, summer and expanded learning programs nationwide are selected for grants through a competitive application process managed in collaboration with the Afterschool Alliance.

"The support from the New York Life Foundation will have a profound impact on the children in our community. The support will enable us to continue the year-round goal of providing comprehensive programming during a critical time when some youth face the prospect of having nothing to do and lack safe, stable choices," says MPTC CEO and president, Donna Dwyer. "We're beyond grateful and look forward to putting the generous support to good use serving local youth and families."

"Both My Place Teen Center and the Intercultural Community Center do vital work in their communities. Middle school is a vulnerable time for students, and without these programs children and youth would be without a safe, productive and enriching place to go after school or during the summer," said Marlyn Torres, senior program officer, New York Life Foundation. "The New York Life Foundation supports OST programs like My Place Teen Center and ICC that help children develop social, emotional and academic skills, which are essential for the transition to high school. We value the Afterschool Alliance's expertise

and vast network of OST providers and youth development experts in helping us administer the Aim High program.”

Research has shown that for underserved students, additional learning time in the form of high-quality afterschool, expanded day and summer programs leads to greater academic achievement, better school attendance and more engaged students. Further, a successful transition from 8th to 9th grade – middle school to high school in most cases – is particularly critical to student success.

About My Place Teen Center: MPTC is a year-round, free, after-school program for children between the ages of 10-18. Specializing in homeless, food insecure, cognitively-delayed, low-income, immigrant, and refugee teens and pre-teens, MPTC offers a multi-purpose, academically enriching, hunger-relieving youth development program that has been a focal point for greater Portland and York county kids since its inception in 1998. 467 kids were served by MPTC’s diverse offerings this past fiscal year, 9,100 meals were served, figures sure to be surpassed this year. To learn more, visit www.myplaceteencenter.org.

About Intercultural Community Center: ICC supports and improves the lives of immigrants by providing health, social and educational opportunities. ICC seeks to empower communities, families and individuals so they can become self-sufficient and contributing members of society. Learn more at www.iccmaine.org.

About the Afterschool Alliance: The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.AfterschoolAlliance.org.

About the New York Life Foundation: Inspired by New York Life’s tradition of service and humanity, the New York Life Foundation has, since its founding in 1979, provided nearly \$280 million in charitable contributions to national and local nonprofit organizations. The Foundation supports programs that benefit young people, particularly in the areas of educational enhancement and childhood bereavement. The Foundation also encourages and facilitates the community involvement of employees and agents of New York Life through its Volunteers for Good program and Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative. To learn more, please visit www.newyorklifefoundation.org.

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