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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Selected News Releases

UMaine Youth Program Earns Another National Award

ORONO, Maine -- The National Youth Sports Program at the University of Maine has been named one of the best in the country for the fourth time in its nine-year history. In announcing the 2001 Meritorious Program award winners, National Youth Sports Corporation President Edward Thiebe recognized the UMaine program for outstanding leadership and performance, service to children and community involvement.

The UMaine NYSP, one of 192 sites in the country, received a first-year commendation award in 1993 and earned meritorious program awards in 1994 and 1999. Thiebe's announcement particularly acknowledges the consistent leadership of UMaine Education Professor Stephen Butterfield as project administrator, and former Lincoln teacher Lynn Haynes as activity director. Tim McCluskey, a teacher at Old Town High School, filled the important role of community liaison.

NYSP is a partnership between the U.S. Government and participating universities and communities, with oversight by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, to provide a free summer program of skills development and educational activities to children ages 10-16. Ninety percent of the participants must come from families who meet federal low-income guidelines. In addition to daily swimming instruction, campers develop skills in a variety of other sports and participate in hands-on educational experiences in math, science and nutrition.

This past summer, a daily average of 230 youngsters attended the UMaine program, coming from approximately 45 communities in a geographical area spanning from Millinocket to Unity and from Dover-Foxcroft to Ellsworth. Bus transportation to and from the day camp is provided.

While the bulk of the funding comes from a federal grant, in-kind contributions from UMaine and donations of goods and services are crucial to the exceptional success of the program. Overall, the free program represents a \$1,000 value per child.

Butterfield credits the program's award-winning performance in rigorous national evaluations to a superb staff and community involvement. "We have been blessed with good staff and caring communities who philosophically buy in to what the program is all about -- helping kids," he says.

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