

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Compass Project Starts Composites Program at Maine Advanced Technology Center

PORTLAND, MAINE— The Compass Project, based in Portland, Maine, is opening a satellite boat building program in Brunswick for its Youth Apprentices Program. The goal of the satellite program is to teach at-risk youth the latest composite technology being used in the boat building industry. The program is a collaboration between the Compass Project, Jobs for Maine Graduates and the Maine Advanced Technology Center, a new Southern Maine Community College campus in Brunswick. Students from Morse H.S. in Bath will attend the 16-week program at MATC beginning January 26, 2009.

The Youth Apprentices Program offers Morse H.S. juniors and seniors the opportunity to learn and use composite infusion techniques in order to build a small dinghy. In addition, they will build a 15-foot wooden rowing skiff which has been commissioned by a Freeport resident. Clint Chase, Program Manager of the Compass Projects says, "When students see the real thing on field trips to Hodgdon Yachts and other local boat yards, it opens their eyes to what they can do with their new skills and knowledge."

The Youth Apprentices Program is unique in providing a hands-on experience to learn the latest boat building techniques from professional boat builders. Students also have job training opportunities to job shadow and apprentice at a boat yard. Work in the boat shop is augmented by classroom work that focuses on the reading and writing skills needed on the job: resume writing, filling out application forms and following directions.

The Compass Project is in its seventh year of working with at-risk youth in the greater Portland area. Since 2002, more than 900 youth from Greater Portland elementary, middle and high schools have benefited from Compass Project programs. Teachers, school social workers and principals cite the compass Project for its effectiveness in helping disadvantaged and underserved youth. "The patience it takes for students to learn to build this boat translates into increased ability to stay on task and do work in the classroom," says Tyler Thompson, Lead Teacher of the Westbrook Alternative Learning Program. Compass Project boat building classes are a powerful teaching tool that helps students discover new abilities and interests, opening their eyes to future school and work opportunities.

For more information visit www.compassproject.org or call Pat Ryan at 774-0682. ###

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