

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATELINE: March 17, 2016

CONTACT:

Sarah Carlyle
Unify Representative, Robert Charles Photography
sc@robertcharlesphoto.com 413-525-4263 x103

Unify Against Bullying Awards First Round of Grants

EAST LONGMEADOW, MA – Three western Massachusetts high school students, a guidance counselor and an educator were the recipients of the First Annual Unify Against Bullying grants. The grants were awarded on Monday, March 14 at Center Square Grill in East Longmeadow.

Mitchell Knowles, a guidance counselor at Paul R. Baird Middle School in Ludlow, is developing a pro-social program to help prevent bullying in the school and in the community. He received a \$1,000 grant to purchase educational materials for the program, which will teach students about the effects of bullying.

Matt Walting, a sophomore at Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham, received a \$1,000 grant to fund the production of a feature film about a student who is a victim of extreme abuse in school and outside of the classroom. Walting's production company, Walting Entertainment, is currently casting and raising money for the film, titled *Just Say Goodbye*.

A \$1,000 grant was also awarded to Patrick Ireland of Longmeadow. Ireland received the funding for classes he teaches through his non-profit, Neutral Corner, Inc. The classes focus on building self-esteem, educational success and kindness by developing non-contact self defense skills.

Taylor White, a Westfield High School senior, was so moved by her experience in the Unify Fashion Show last April, that she began work on an anti-bullying awareness program for her school. She received a \$250 grant.

A \$250 grant was also awarded to Justin Comtois, a junior from Agawam High School, who is studying fashion. Comtois, who hopes to have some of his designs modeled in this year's Unify Against Bullying Fashion Show on April 8, plans to use his grant to help fund an emotional and moving short film as part of the video club at school. The film will focus on the negative effects of bullying and the positive outcomes that can happen when bullying is stopped.

The funds for these programs were raised by an annual fashion show held by Robert Charles Photography. 100% of the proceeds from the event benefit Unify Against Bullying, a newly established 501(c)3 non-profit which distributes grants to adults and children who want to bring an end to bullying. The 2016 fashion show is scheduled to take place on 4/8/16 at the Log Cabin. To purchase tickets and learn more, visit www.rcpUNIFY.com