

North Shore **&** Children Families

FREE!

IN THIS ISSUE

Happy Valentine's Day!

Coming in March:

**Our 8th Annual Summer
Camps & Programs
Showcase Series Kicks Off!**

To advertise - see page 12!

Help Reaching Goals

**Ask Dr. Kate Q&A:
Dealing with Your
Child's Pain**

Healthy Winter Greens

**National Children's
Dental Health Month**

Aaron's Presents:

**Spotlight on Annette's
Hair Bows Project**

**Children's Book Review:
Penguin and Pinecone**

Education Feature:

St. Mary's School

Community Calendar

The largest distribution parenting publication on the North Shore – since 2007!



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FEBRUARY 2015

Raising Compassionate Children



Teaching Kids to Give Brings Happiness, Healing and Purpose

Spotlight on Aaron's Presents Grant Recipient: Annette, 7th grader from Andover

Project: Cute & Girly Hair Bows: By Annette



by Leah Okimoto

Annette first heard about Aaron's Presents when I presented to her middle school's music ensemble groups in September. She loves to learn how to make all sorts of crafts and mainly teaches herself through instructional YouTube videos. She had just learned how to make hair bows and thought that maybe she could use that skill to raise money to benefit others. As she wrote in her application, "This project is important to me because I love making hair bows and I am very glad that I am able to use my talent for a good cause."

Annette's project embodies the idea of "giving of ourselves" that is so central to Aaron's Present's mission. It means taking the unique blend of qualities that make us who we are – our personality, skills, interests, background, personal challenges and so on – and drawing on them to

contribute positively to the world around us, at any age. Annette was able to ask herself a simple but inspiring question: "Now that I can make hair bows, what can I give?"

She put together her application, complete with a plan and budget, and then we met to talk about all of the details. She was clearly passionate about her project and put such thought and care into every detail! After we purchased her materials, she then set to work and sent me pictures of the bows and the beautiful packaging she had designed. She also had to set her prices, make posters for her display tables and then send donations to her selected organizations.

Annette created over 100 handmade, original hair bows and packaged them to be sold at a fundraiser for PEER Servants, a micro-financing organization that helps people living in

poverty around the world start businesses, and at her school craft fair to benefit Bundles of Love, a program of AMG International that sends school supplies to children in Guatemala. Her efforts raised about \$75 for PEER Servants and \$220 for Bundles of Love.

After completing her project, she wrote this note to our supporters: "Thank you so much for making my project possible! This, for me, was an opportunity of a lifetime. I will never forget the joy you have given me by being able to help others through my talent... your money is greatly helping kids, like me, gain confidence in themselves and learn their true potential."

We could not be prouder of Annette and know that she will build on this experience in the years to come, helping who knows how many others in her community and around the world!

Annette's project received a grant which was made possible by The Dr.

Alan Metwally Presents Fund, a fund started by Dr. Metwally's loved ones to continue his legacy of generosity and love towards children. 100% of Presents Funds contributions are used solely for project expenses.

Please visit www.aaronspresents.org to learn more about how a child you know can apply for a grant or to support our work in some way. We hope that Annette's story will inspire other kids to think of ways they can give of themselves!

Leah Okimoto is the Founder and Executive Director of Aaron's Presents, a grants program for children in 8th grade and below to dream up and carry out positive projects that benefit others. She is also a North Shore mother who lives with her husband and 6 year old daughter. Her son, Aaron, lives on in her heart and through her work with the amazing Aaron's Presents grant recipients who bring her and others joy and inspiration every day.

North Shore Christian School

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grades pre-k to 8

Beverly Campus
35 Conant St.
Beverly, MA
grades pre-k to 5

Marblehead Campus
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This is North Shore Christian School.

OPEN HOUSE:
Wednesday, February 4th, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
at our Lynn & Beverly campuses.