

Needham Youth Services

February 2017 RAY of Hope Recipient

Alexander Cuddy



Left to right: Liz Loveless, Clinician at Youth Services, February RAY of Hope Alex Cuddy, Needham Business Representative, Kristel Boardman from Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital–Needham

February 2017 Recipient – Alexander Cuddy

Alex is a senior at Needham High School. He was nominated by Renee Vasquez a teacher at Needham High school. "He has made a range of volunteer contributions to the community including working at Needham Town meetings, leading school clubs, and refereeing Needham Soccer Club games. However, Alex shines in his community because of his devotion to his bicycle service work. After noticing a large amount of bikes being discarded at the dump, he became intent on finding a solution to save these bikes from the landfill and find them each a deserving home," explains Renee.

Alex founded the Needham Chapter of "Bikes for Bombs" in the fall of his junior year. So far he has organized 2 bicycle donation drives and enlisted 10+ volunteers to staff the events. They have successfully kept 160 bikes from ending up in the Needham Transfer Station scrap metal pile. The training he provided the volunteers allowed them to make the minor repairs needed for these bikes to be donated to needy families in the greater Boston area and Guatemala. "It has been extremely fulfilling to collect the used bikes and know that they will be given to new homes where they will be cherished and ridden. Bikes are my passion and I find it very satisfying to be able to use my skills and resources to let people who are less fortunate experience the thrill of riding," expresses Alex.

Alexander has been actively involved in many town activities and school clubs such as the Entrepreneur Club and DECA, to explore his interest in business and now he leads other students in hands-on educational experiences. He has also enjoys being on the high school Sailing and Soccer teams.

In addition to Needham High school, for the past four years, Alex has attended the New England Conservatory Jazz Preparatory Program in Boston. He studies jazz history, ear training, and theory, and studies drums privately with an instructor and plays in the jazz ensemble.

Beyond Needham, Alex traveled to Vietnam last summer and volunteered in a rural village for one month, building houses and repairing bicycles for needy families.

Watch the ceremony honoring Alex at: <https://youtu.be/9wDNM-ZvMSI>

For more information please visit www.needhamma.gov/youth/ray