

Metta Students Foundation awards \$1,000 to Chariho High School Student



Press Release-3/4/15 - Mother Nature has certainly packed a one, two and three punch to start off 2015, so when the Metta Students Foundation learned about the teen who created the "Shovel Brigade" they knew they had discovered their twenty second winner, sixteen year old Libby Walker of Hopkinton, RI. The Shovel Brigade involves students from Charlestown, Richmond, and Hopkinton, and their mission is to shovel out the elderly and handicapped residents of Chariho who have no other way of getting the job done.

A ceremony will be held **Wednesday March 4, 2015 at 1pm** at the Chariho Highschool located at 453 Switch Road, Wood River Junction. Members of the media are welcome. With this latest winner, the Metta Students Foundation has awarded twenty-two thousand dollars to students who have done acts of kindness and continue to share metta.



"I started the Shovel Brigade because one winter night, it occurred to me that once I had gone off to college, my parents wouldn't have anybody to shovel for them, and they would either have to do it themselves, or find somebody else to shovel," says Walker, "I knew that as time went on, it would become harder and harder for them to complete this task. Then I started to think about people currently in this situation. I wondered what they did in heavy snow storms. It was then that I decided I needed to create a volunteer program that would come to the aid of these elderly and handicapped Chariho residents."

The Shovel Brigade is a free volunteer service, with the help of fifteen student volunteers and several parent drivers, the Shovel Brigade has helped more than thirty-six individuals over the past four years on numerous occasions during winter storms.

"It is important for me to give back because I am able to. I have the capacity to help those who need it, and I don't want that ability to go to waste," states Walker.

"Libby Walker is an exceptional young lady. Not only is she a top academic student, Libby understands the importance of giving back to the community," says Barry Ricci the Superintendent of Schools at the Chariho Regional School District. "While Libby has been involved in other service activities, her Shovel Brigade project is unique in that Libby initiated, planned, and supported a group activity to assist members of our community unable to shovel their drives and walks. This successful endeavor sets her apart in that she has set a high bar for other students who are interested in giving back to their community.

Norm Kelly, founder of Software Quality Associates in Providence, created the Metta Students Foundation in October of 2012 after learning of one teen's kind act of kindness towards another teen. Each month, during the school year, the non-profit foundation awards one thousand dollars to a student who shares metta.

"Metta means love and kindness," states Norm Kelly, "and we are proud to be able to give recognition to all of those bright lights who give back, not because they have to, but because they are truly good hearted and want to make a positive difference."

"I feel honored, humbled, and grateful for being chosen as a scholarship winner by an organization whose mission is to encourage kindness and compassion, the very qualities that strengthen individuals and create stronger communities," says Walker. It is for all of these reasons the Metta Students is proud to award Libby one thousand dollars. To see video of how the Metta Students foundation began or for more information about the foundation log onto www.mettastudents.org