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**MCW ANNOUNCES YOUTH LEADERS FROM KYRGYZSTAN
AND MAINE AS RECIPIENTS OF 2014 ALUMNI
VENTURES FUND GRANT**

**Grant Provides Up to \$5,000 and a Year of Mentorship for Alumni of MCW's
Annual International Youth Leadership Retreat**

NEW YORK, N.Y., June 9, 2014 — MCW, a New York-based non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth to become positive agents of change in their communities, has named Meerim Baktybekova, 24, of Kyrgyzstan and Dylan Howard, 24, of Maine as the 2014 Alumni Ventures Fund (AVF) grant recipients. Each individual will receive a grant up to \$5,000 and a year of mentorship to turn their ideas for change in their communities into concrete projects, drawing on their experience of drafting a “vision plan” for social change at MCW’s annual Youth Leadership Retreat program.

Peter Klein, President of The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation, announced the 2014 recipients at MCW’s 10th annual gala at New York University on April 7. “This program strikes at the heart of MCW’s mission: to provide leadership training and opportunities to young people around the world to help them up their individual social responsibility game,” he said. “I am going to make some news here today. We are going to augment our support for MCW and sustain the Alumni Ventures Fund. We want to do more for it because we believe in it.”

Dylan Howard will use the award to turn a piece of property on the Maine coast into a space for the arts known as the “Caterpillar Hill Initiative.” Upon receiving the award at the 2014 gala, he said, “I went to my first retreat in 2011 and it was inspiring to be around people my own age, who felt compelled to do something profound with their own communities. We get a lot of negativity as young people growing up with talk of all these potential calamities that we’re going to face collectively. It is inspiring to be with people who make you feel like you’re part of a team building solutions.”

Meerim will use the award to organize a festival where children from orphanages, boarding schools and disadvantaged communities in Kyrgyzstan can showcase their talents in a safe and open environment. In an email correspondence, she wrote, “I feel incredibly blessed, happy and inspired to receive the award this year. It offers an amazing opportunity to realize my vision and implement the Children’s Festival project to benefit my community and empower local disadvantaged youth. This type of project will be the first one in Kyrgyzstan and it will motivate and inspire many children.”

Since establishing the Alumni Ventures Fund in 2009, MCW has awarded four grants to graduates of the MCW Youth Leadership Retreat. Preparations are now underway for MCW’s 17th Leadership Retreat, to be held from July 10 to July 17 at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont and New York University in New York. Applications can be found on the website at www.mcwglobal.org.

About MCW

MCW is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 with the vision “Local Change through Global Exchange®.” Our mission is to empower youth to become positive agents of change in their

communities. Based in New York, with partner organizations in Africa (i.e., Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia), MCW offers the following programs: Global Youth Development, Community Development and Oral Health Care, as well as Partner Initiatives (e.g. Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa). MCW's core values include integrity, compassion, accountability, responsibility and excellence. www.mcwglobal.org.

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(From top left) Peter Klein, President of The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation, announces the recipients of the 2014 Alumni Ventures Fund at MCW's 10th annual gala at NYU on April 7. Dylan Howard receives 2014 MCW Alumni Ventures Fund award at MCW 10th annual gala on April 7 at New York University; Meerim Baktybekova at the 2013 Youth Leadership Retreat in Vermont.