

Press Release from the Maine Sea Coast Mission
May 26, 2008 – For Immediate Release
Contact: Steve Richards at 288-5097 or srichards@seacoastmission.org

**Maine Sea Coast Mission Awarded 21st Century Grant
For EdGE After-School Programs**

The Maine Sea Coast Mission has received a 21st Century Community Learning Center award in partnership with three school systems (SAD 37, Union 96, and Union 103) for its EdGE after-school and summer program for children in grades four through twelve. The grant is for \$300,000 a year for three years with an additional \$225,000 for year four and \$180,000 for year five based upon satisfactory performance in the first three years of the grant. The total amount of the grant over the full five years is \$1,305,000. This is the second 21st Century grant that the Maine Sea Coast Mission has received for its EdGE program.

The 21st Century grant will enable the Maine Sea Coast Mission to expand its EdGE after-school and summer programs from the six communities where it is currently being run (Addison, Cherryfield, Columbia Falls, Harrington, Milbridge, and Steuben) to an additional three communities (Sullivan, Winter Harbor, and Jonesport/Beals). In addition, the EdGE will be expanding its programs in Narraguagus High School.

The 21st Century grant is only for a maximum of five years and is not sufficient to cover all of the costs of the EdGE program for those five years so the Mission will continue to seek additional funds for the program through its annual fundraising campaigns, its capital campaign to raise endowment for the EdGE to help ensure its sustainability, and through foundation grants.

Gary A. DeLong, Executive Director of the Maine Sea Coast Mission, stated: “We are gratified by the confidence shown in our EdGE program by the decision to provide us with a second 21st Century grant. We believe that this program is having a profound impact upon the children it has been serving over the past five years of its existence. We are committed to doing all possible to ensure the long term sustainability of the EdGE for future generations of children.” He noted that the Maine After School Alliance recognized EdGE as being the most outstanding after-school program out of 37 programs in Maine receiving any federal or state funding. He also observed that the success of the EdGE is due to its excellent leadership and the strong support it receives from the teachers as well as the school and district administrators. Parents and community members also play an integral role in supporting the EdGE.

The Maine Sea Coast Mission, founded in Bar Harbor on July 11, 1905, provides a broad range of services to residents of coastal and island communities in Downeast Maine. These services include, in addition to the EdGE program, scholarships, health services to island residents, spiritual support for island residents through four partner churches and a minister who serves five other islands, food pantries, a thrift shop, emergency financial assistance, essential home repairs, and a Christmas program that distributes 15,000 presents each Christmas season to those who would otherwise have a bleak Christmas.

###