



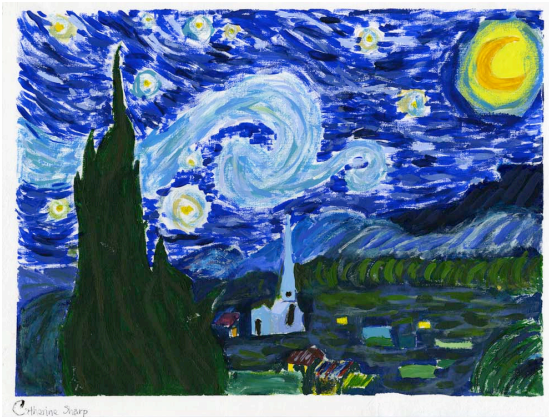
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STARLIT COMMUNITIES RECEIVES GRANT

Tremont, Maine -The Maine Community Foundation (MCF) recently awarded \$3,500 to the Island Astronomy Institute's (IAI) **Starlit Communities Project** to support its collaboration with Acadia National Park's (ANP) Night Sky Initiative. "This grant will



help us document the threat to our star-filled sky and demonstrate what can be done to protect it," explained IAI Executive Director **Peter W. Lord**. "When people learn how fast we are losing our starlit communities, and just how simple this is to prevent, we believe they will want to take action."

The MCF grant completes the Institute's \$5,000 pledge to the National Park Service's Challenge Cost Share Program. When this is combined with \$15,000 from Friends of Acadia, the partners hope to secure an

additional \$20,000 from the National Park Service for ANP's Night Sky Initiative. The team is focused on measuring the extent of light pollution in the region. "Our number one goal is to bring world-class measurements to our towns and villages, so that communities can make informed decisions about the amount of starlight in their back yards." stated **Mr. Lord**

IAI's application to the MCF's Hancock County Community Building Program was supported by letters from ANP, Pemetic Elementary School, and the Hancock County Planning Commission. With the ultimate goal of fostering broad-based support for municipal lighting ordinances, the grant will be used to help municipalities seeking to protect the region's dark skies. To showcase lighting designs that save energy and improve safety, the Institute will promote community demonstration projects such as the remodeled Pat's Pizza in Ellsworth.

At Pemetic Elementary School in Southwest Harbor, **Mr. Lord** will work with teachers on a service-learning project to measure light pollution levels with economical hand-held light meters. A borrowed STARLAB planetarium will be employed to demonstrate how to use the light meters to measure the difference between effective and obsolete lighting designs.

The Institute still needs to raise \$13,000 to purchase the hardware for Maine's first full-sky light pollution measurement system. To learn more about the IAI and the Starlit Communities Project, visit. www.islandastro.org

“Starry Night” Impression by Caroline Sharp, Mount Desert Elementary School