

GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

12 Littleville Road Huntington, MA 01050

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Wendy V. Long, Public Relations ☒
(413) 685-1003

WRITTEN BY: Kilee Holmes, Sr. Intern

Photo Caption: (left to right) Sierra Russell and Victoria Kot, alumni of the 2017 Project 351, keep serving community and P351

Sophomores stay committed to Project 351

Huntington – In a gentle way we can all shake the world, and sophomores Victoria Kot and Sierra Russell are leaving behind ripples of change! Two years ago, Kot and Russell joined hundreds of Massachusetts 8th graders united through the prospect of youth service and leadership for Project 351, a Boston based non-profit organization. Project 351 thrives upon the motto, “today’s ambassadors, tomorrow’s leaders”, a saying the two young women have thoroughly embraced.

Due to the location of the program, many donations and service projects P351 runs revolve around the Boston area. Kot and Russell have stayed involved since their stint as student ambassadors in 2017, have returned to the annual Launch Day as volunteers twice, and continued taking part in Boston and regionally. In 2018, Kot and Russell applied to the Richard Martins Foundation—a fund which grants \$500 to 30 previous P351 ambassadors for their own regional project to serve their area. Kot and Russell used their grant to purchase bracelets from Pura Vida, which they sold in previous months during high school lunch and plan to sell again as Valentine's Day approaches. Proceeds from the bracelets will be given to Hilltown Safety at Home, a local domestic violence agency.

Besides their project for Hilltown Safety at Home, Kot and Russell are members of the Regional Unity Corps (RUC) Project 351 organizes. RUC help members join other students in their region to tackle projects specifically for their part of the state. Last fall, Kot and Russell conducted a regional food drive and found themselves leading a project making care packages for soldiers. Leading an entire project can be a daunting task, but the girls were able to successfully conduct the drive. As alumni who've remained involved with Project 351, the two have also returned to the statewide launch event each year as volunteers.

Project 351 only started in 2011, but has already affected over half a million people. It's clear that the initiative has inspired a sense of leadership and community amongst its ambassadors and, for students like Victoria Kot and Sierra Russell, making a difference has only just begun.

###

