



**2022 Recipient ~ Melina Silvestro
Mamaroneck High School, Class of 2023**

Over the past three years at Mamaroneck High School, I have been very fortunate to continue my volunteer work at various local organizations and be able to give back to the community. Whenever I have the opportunity to help others, I feel so lucky to be in this position of helping those around me.

Currently, I volunteer at Mamaroneck Avenue School, which is a local elementary school where I'm a production assistant and help out the students with their theater rehearsals 7.5 hours a week, which is such an incredible experience. When the students recite their lines, and practice their choreography, I see their faces light up with joy and excitement as they share what they've been working on. I have loved working with elementary school children for as long as I can remember, and am so excited to continue working with and learning about them. I've learned how to manage large groups of elementary school students by getting their attention quickly, giving clear directions, motivating them, and earning their trust.

Since 2019, I have been a transport and book cart volunteer at White Plains Hospital, where I sort through and recommend books and magazines to hospital patients in hopes of making their stay more comfortable. During my time as a transport volunteer, I discharged patients directly from their room to their cars, where I ensured their safety and had conversations with them, making sure their last impression of WPH was a positive one. This experience taught me how to converse with people of all ages, how to have respectful conversations and be empathetic towards them and their families, in light of their possible recovery ahead.

I applied and was selected to Peer Leaders, which is a program at Mamaroneck High School, where 11th and 12th grade students visit our local middle school and speak to 7th graders about various important issues such as social media, popularity, peer pressure, and preparing them for high school. We discuss these topics in an organic, confidential manner, which enables students to feel comfortable to open up and share their thoughts and experiences with us. During our past few visits, the students have become increasingly more comfortable sharing their feelings and thoughts about these personal topics with

us and their classmates. I have enjoyed facilitating meaningful conversations and activities with the seventh graders, and learned a lot about lesson planning. By planning lessons before our monthly visits to the middle school, I am able to use my organizational skills to prepare interesting and engaging lessons for the students.

I am honored to be nominated for this award, in recognition of the time and effort I dedicate to volunteering. Since I was young, community service has been important to me, and being able to help others in my community is incredibly rewarding. It is an amazing feeling to make someone's day better and experience first-hand how my work and service has impacted those in my community for the better.