



**2023 Recipient ~ Benjamin Mayer  
Rye High School, Class of 2023**

Community service has always been an important part of my life. When I was younger, every Christmas day my family and I would go to our local synagogue, make and pack food then deliver and visit with the elderly who were not able to get food on Christmas.

Although this was the beginning of my community service, I really began doing a lot of service right before my Bar Mitzvah. As a part of my Bar Mitzvah I was required to participate in some form of community service known as a "Mitzvah" project. In 7th grade I started volunteering at Backyard Sports. Backyard Sports is an organization where special needs kids participate and play sports. This occurs every Sunday with two groups of kids and we participate in all different types of sports. I am paired one-on-one with one of the athletes as their coach and help them learn different sports. It is definitely pretty challenging to get the athletes to listen and stay on task but it is very rewarding to see them succeed with a little bit of support.

Additionally, I have continued to volunteer at my synagogue participating in midnight runs and helping out in the community whenever they need me. Also, beginning high school I became a member of J-Teen Leadership. This is a group of local Jews in New York and we plan local events for the community. We also learn about other organizations in our community and their missions. J-Teen is really about learning how to advocate for yourself and applying this knowledge to help others and the community.

Through my community service I believe that I have demonstrated and adhered to St. Vincent's mission in respect and compassion for others, excellence in service, the dignity of human life and commitment to my community. Although I have done a lot of community service, I know there is and will always be more opportunities to continue to serve my community and show compassion for others who are less fortunate.