

2020 St. Vincent's Youth Award Winner

Angelique Wheeler

Convent of the Sacred Heart Greenwich, Class of 2022

I have loved music since I was very little, and playing many instruments has always been very important to me. When I began looking for ways to volunteer in my community, it was only natural to look for a music program to work with. My sister and I had planned to start our own introductory music program, but since we were too young (she was in seventh grade and I was in eighth grade at the time), we were not immediately able to do so. When we found Songcatchers in New Rochelle, the directors welcomed us as helper teachers and then as teachers the next few summers. With my years taking private music lessons, and attending the county center music camp, I was able to teach violin and flute. The camp is predominantly attended by Black and Latino children who live in New Rochelle. In the summer of 2018, my sister and I were able to start our own music program, Noteworthy, which we run at the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Westchester. We volunteer there both in the summer and during the school year, with the goal of introducing children to music at an early age, so that they can reap the benefits that playing an instrument has on one's education. While the elementary-school age children can sometimes be a bit harder to work with, they generally enjoy learning the instruments and I hope that they continue to learn music in their middle schools.

This is my second year as a member of the Northern Westchester Hospital President's Junior Leadership Council. The council is composed of approximately fifty students from Northern Westchester high school districts. We meet twice monthly. During the one and a half hour meetings, we plan and then launch public health campaigns dealing with topics such as vaping and technological well-being. These campaigns target our peers. We have a main campaign, but also work on other health issues. Last summer, we created a PSA against vaping, and are currently working on a PSA regarding COVID-19. We partner with our school communities to spread awareness of our public health campaigns. As a member of the council, I have also had the opportunity to volunteer for annual events run by the hospital, such as the Teddy Bear Clinic, the 3 Kings Day party and Medical Career Day.