

2020 St. Vincent's Youth Award Winner

Owen Robertson Rye Neck High School, Class of 2020

Since May of 2019, Jonathan Marcuse, Dylan Spencer, Sonia Finkenberg and Owen Robertson have worked to create, run, and expand ASAP Scraps Compost Pickup, a community compost pickup service. We realized that our village's composting system was under-utilized because it required homeowners to bring their compost to the recycling center, which effectively discouraged people from composting. We launched ASAP Scraps Compost Pickup to eliminate this inconvenience. It started out as a very personal business, essentially a favor to friends and family, but we decided to expand our service to our broader community for greater environmental impact.

In order to operate within our town, we obtained an official designation as an approved community service project from the Village of Mamaroneck. We have created a website, established a \$10 monthly service fee with online payments, arranged for all profits to be donated, and organized our business data into spreadsheets using Google Drive. We have a real operating eco-business in our village; the number of subscribing households continues to grow (currently at 63); and we have donated hundreds of dollars to environmental charities with our profits.

To walk through our process: we start by acquiring sign ups in a multitude of ways. We are included on blast emails to the Village, we make Facebook posts, and advertise door-to-door. Once we have someone interested, we send them a sign up email with detailed instructions on how to get started as well as an invoice, billed using Square.com. Once the customer has paid the fee we add them to our pickup spreadsheet, and organize them into the list based on their location so we know which order to do pickups in. Then each Saturday between 7 am and 12 pm we use a volunteer's vehicle to go house to house and empty individual compost bins into our larger collection bins. Once we have done all of our pickups we drive to the Village Recycling Center and unload all the compost into the municipal collection bins.

Currently, we are working on filing as a 501c3 charitable service, and saving some of our profits to go towards general liability and commercial auto liability insurance. Additionally, we are looking into potential expansion in neighboring towns, and are making our service well known in a larger area by attending environmental committee conferences and reaching out through email. We look forward to the future of ASAP Scraps, and are excited to continue working to ensure its success and increased sustainability of our community.