

## **2020 St. Vincent's Youth Award Honoree**

### **Samantha Geni Maria Regina High School – Class of 2021**

Hello, I am Samantha Geni, a junior from Maria Regina High School. My most prominent service achievement is creating and constantly running my non-profit fundraising organization, We CareFundraiser. I am currently the co-founder and head of media. This requires me to lead our events, brainstorm ideas, manage our social media platform and website and communicate with superiors or fellow charity supporters. This organization is managed by a group of peers with a common goal to support other charitable organizations by spreading their causes and raising money.

It all began when I was approached by the founder of WeCareFundraiser, Simone Brady, who wanted to create an organization to help the community. I decided to join in this dream because of my love to help others and wanted to be involved with something bigger than myself. Uncertain of what this would bring, I said yes. Simone and I built the organization from the ground up – setting up a website, email and Instagram accounts. We also formed an advisory board.

WeCareFundraiser has been around for about a year accomplishing many goals and achievements. For example, we have held fundraising events including those for The Salvation Army and Save the Children. For the Salvation Army, we raised over \$1,100 by promoting the event, held bake sales and participated in a 5k run. For Save the Children, we participated in the Bridge Challenge raising more than \$800 in which I coordinated and took part in a presentation at a youth group to inform youth about those less fortunate. Here I was able to learn about the challenges girls all around the world face such as malnutrition, education deprivation and much needed protection.

These fundraisers have helped me grow as a member of the community. My communication skills have matured and I have become more responsible. Although we are not sure how far our reach has stretched, we are sure that we have helped and impacted many lives.

Currently with WeCareFundraiser we are beginning a new project for the ASPCA. Animals are a gift from God, they deserve to be treated well and not abused. To raise money, we have many ideas that include more bake sales, a 5K run and presentations. Additionally, we are proposing apparel, a yard sale and dress down day at our school.

The use of my leadership skills and work ethic has also helped me to be a part of another community need - Crutches 4 Kids. We set up the fundraiser online and made announcements at our school asking for donations of crutches. As the school united, we reached beyond our goal.

I also participate in extracurricular activities at my school. Cross Country and the Track Team give me the achievement of being able to accomplish challenges and have shaped me into a leader. I am a leader in my Guitar Club. Despite still learning myself, I make it my responsibility to organize meetings and decide on songs to learn.

While on paper, my involvement in service and extracurricular activities can look tiresome, I am sure to give 100% effort. My passions in life are being a hard worker and being my best

self. Knowing that I am making a difference is a constant reliever and a push factor to do what I have to, all for the good of others and myself.

I am so grateful for what I have accomplished in and outside of my service work. From personal experience, when you do service you never give yourself enough credit. However, knowing that I am part of something bigger, doing good and impacting lives is extremely valuable to me; that is all I wish to do. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express what I do and who I am. Evaluating all I have done inspires me to do more for the community and to continue challenging myself and our society to do better.