

2023 Spellman Humanitarian Award Winners



West Chester Area Education Association



Patty Agustin

"I learned that I have a passion for teaching young girls about their growth. I saw myself in the girls that I coached, and wanted to continue this legacy of empowerment."



WC East High School



Saanvi Bhatia

“Ultimately, I want to create policy solutions that help address the systemic inequalities that make places like the Melton Center necessary. But my time at the Center has taught me that to meaningfully address a community’s needs, I must be part of the community or be listening to someone who is. Policymaking in a faraway realm isn’t enough; grassroots effort is crucial to developing successful solutions.”



WC East High School



Daniel Cheng

"I'll never forget the moment when we counted up the money after the 2023 House of Hope Concert. House of Hope truly showed me the power of bringing people together for a common cause, and the results we produced after all our hard work was truly incredible [\$13,000]."



WC East High School



Anna Harootunian

“[Through my role on the Teen Advisory Board,] I speak for others who may not be able to voice their needs.”



WC East High School



Erica Martin

“Being able to help people while doing something I am passionate about was one of the most rewarding experiences of my community service. I realized that I can play an active role in helping those in need and that I don't have to wait around for others to make a change.”



WC East High School



Malavika Menon

“Volunteering at Dementia Centers alongside my sister gave me the opportunity to bridge the gap between my fascination in medicine and Indian classical dance ...The opportunity to serve an often-forgotten community has been one of the greatest joys of my high school career and it has been profoundly satisfying.”



WC East High School



Norah Plummer

“Having worked with these various programs and clubs, I have gained a love of volunteering and giving back to my community... my new goal in my life from these experiences has been to have a positive effect on someone else’s life.”



WC East High School



Grace Rudderow

“The Melton Center has given me the chance to grow, become grateful for the things and opportunities I have, and allowed me to have an active role in supporting and helping the kids in West Chester get the resources and support they need to be successful.”



WC East High School



Patrick Tran

"I was always motivated to give back to the community that I grew up in, and found an opportunity with my interest in medicine. As such, it has led me down a path as a volunteer EMT in which I'm able to provide pre-hospital care to patients in need."



WC East High School



Jada Yard

By working with students in YMWIC, Jada has "...the ability to use my education and fortune to guide students in formulating writing skills, scientific approaches, and foundational skills for learning in the belief that they will accomplish powerful things with the resources they are provided, in the same way I have."



WC East High School



Emily Brockson

After posting a personal video, Emily shared, “from this, it started my journey of being open, loving, understanding, and even more patient. This has helped me to bond and be able to understand my friends in the life skills classroom.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Jenaea Davenport

“Ever since a young age, I have been taught the value of service and serving others. It has become a habit and so now I don’t see it as volunteering, I see it as contributing to society and my community.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Caleb Fernandes

"I was inspired by the opportunity volunteering creates. It allows me to experience a new workplace and break the monotony of my day in a way that furthers my community. Furthermore, it offers new challenges that I can learn from and introduces new people into my life with whom I have made uplifting friendships."



B. Reed Henderson High School

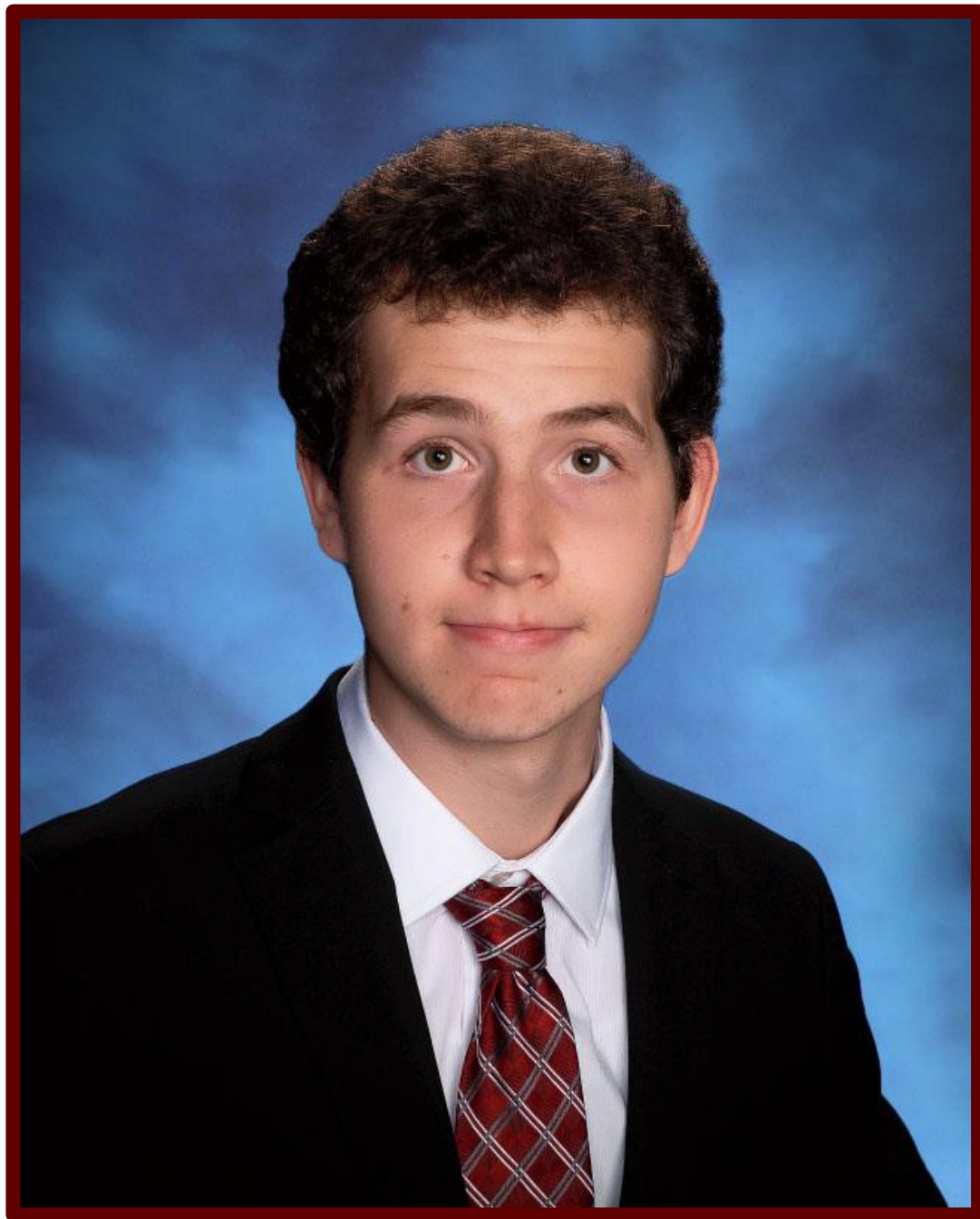


Nishita Jakkam

“As a firm believer that people and experiences add to our endless journey of learning, I wanted to find passions that combined my love for learning and giving back to the community... my time at [Chester County Hospital taught me that service was the exciting stories, endless advice, the rewarding thank you's, and the toothy smiles that filled each shift, also known as the inspiration and reasoning behind why I volunteer.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Maximilian Moak

“The community created here in Chester County and WCASD is exceptional, these advantageous benefits bestowed to me inspire me to assist the people who have provided me with so much. It is through the spirit of volunteerism and the principle of giving back to this community where improvement of the lives of the needy and of ourselves can be found.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Anjana Pramod

“...we spread kindness through spirit days, activities, and events to instantly brighten someone’s day at school. I am also passionate about creating equity. But, this work made me aware of how much more there is to be done. So I got more involved in our community, being part of more local organizations so I could make a bigger impact.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Meet Shah

“As I became more involved in my community and the people around it, I learned many things about myself and what more I could do to become a better person. Helping the community has led me to understand the world and the harsh realities better, especially during my time volunteering at the hospital. It reminded me of the opportunity I have to make the world better starting with the community in which I grew up.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Simeon Shappell-Smith

Simeon is committed to service, both locally and on long-distance service trips, through his work with GoodWorks, YouthWorks, and Web Dance.



B. Reed Henderson High School



Aryan Sharma

“A simple warm blanket or an iced cup of water could brighten someone’s day and play an impact in the treatment. Even when it was the smallest thing I could do for a person, not only did the patient but also I got the satisfaction of helping my society through my interest in pursuing medicine.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Christopher Simms

“Being an emergency medical technician (EMT) can be a rewarding and fulfilling career, as it involves helping people in critical situations and potentially saving lives. My interest in EMT work, and medicine in general, grew as I helped families and communities around me...This was the best way to help my community in a way I knew I would make a difference.”



B. Reed Henderson High School



Corinne Atwell

"I have quickly found that volunteer work gives me a sense of purpose, knowing that my seemingly small contributions can make an immense difference in someone else's life... I have grown a love for helping those around me."



Bayard Rustin High School



Nora Jiang

Nora has been involved in artistic swimming for a decade and has even volunteered her time to sit on the national rules board for artistic swimming, “through the Figures Subcommittee, I aided in changing the figures for Novice through Intermediate swimmers. These changes directly affect swimmers, coaches, and judges for the next four years.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Sehaj Kaur

“The core objective of our organization is to organize funds and provide resources to people who lack them. No matter what they’ve gone through when they come up to the table, it’s our goal to comfort them in any way we can. The Comfy Corner is a space that celebrates the power of empathy.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Connor Orkin

“The most rewarding and memorable part of volunteering was seeing all the kids faces light up while they were engaged in the story we were sharing with them. I saw myself as one of those kids which made me want to try even harder to make the stories memorable.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Nicholas Piccone

“Through my Eagle Scout Project, my confidence as a speaker and leader grew. I became more comfortable talking to large groups of people ... and I’ve been able to use this new skill to improve my leadership, and I know it will help me in my future career and in volunteer projects to come.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Bobby Ristine

“Throughout my many years of service, many of which I will never forget, remind me as to why I continue to serve the community.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Gavin Snyder

"I interact with people of all ages, who have different life experiences to share, advice to give, and come from all walks of life. I've learned that forming relationships with others can help you in many other aspects in life and can also help the individuals I interact with each day."



Bayard Rustin High School



Hudson Sunderlin

"I have learned that giving back to the community helps us grow together and that helping others is one of my main goals in life... I will always want to give back to my community and surround myself with many great people."



Bayard Rustin High School



Spencer Upton

“The death care industry is very underfunded and needs all the help it can get from volunteers. During the project itself, I was very worried about the actual execution of cleaning, photographing, and uploading the headstones. But my worries were quickly subdued when I realized the people ... were in fact there to support me.”



Bayard Rustin High School



Gayatri Venkatesan

“An educated vote can make all the difference. Being a founding member [of Pennsylvania Youth Vote], seeing the growth of the organization affirms my confidence in my ability to uplift others. Bettering communities has become an integral part of my identity. I feel a sense of determination as to what more can be done.”



Bayard Rustin High School