Needham Youth Services

September RAY of Hope Recipient

Marissa Birne

Left to right: Needham Business Representative, Peter Cullen, Gladly Do,
Marissa Birne, September RAY Recipient and Katy Colthart, Youth Services Clinician

September 2014 Recipient – Marissa Birne

Marissa is a senior at the Rivers School in Weston; she was nominated by her advisor, Ben Leeming, for all of her volunteering throughout Needham. Marissa is the founder of Art to Heal, which offers free student-led art workshops at various locations, including Kindred Avery Crossing and North Hill Senior Living Community. She is also the founder and leader of the Needham Do-Something Club, which is a group of Needham teens working to make a difference through volunteer activities and service projects. Projects of the club include collecting used jeans for homeless youth, creating fleece blankets for youth at the Italian Home for Children, and carving pumpkins to decorate Needham nursing homes in October.

At the Rivers School, Marissa is the co-leader of ENCORE, a group of student musicians who share their music with the community through concerts at venues including hospitals and assisted living facilities. She is co-leader of the Heated Lions club and a board member of the non–profit organization, which offers Special Olympics-style sports practices for youth who have intellectual disabilities. The club at Rivers enables students to volunteer with disabled Heated Lions athletes at practices each week. Marissa also is Lieutenant Governor of the Northeast State of Junior State of America and a member of her school's chapter of the debate organization, studies voice through the Rivers School Conservatory Program, and writes for her school newspaper, The Edge.

Watch the ceremony honoring Marissa at: http://youtu.be/5_LPV6bzqtY

For more information please visit www.needhamma.gov/youth/ray

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