



## Marblehead's Post Graduate VOICE Program

Michael Simmons  
Reporter

Marblehead VOICE (Vocational Opportunities, Independence, and Continuing Education) post-graduate program is for students 18-22, who have either graduated or received a certificate of attendance from the high school Bridges program. VOICE focuses on community, life skills, vocational experiences, internships, and exercise. It is also about gaining and practicing interview skills and preparing for a job in the future.

I have enjoyed my internships at the Salem CVS and the Marblehead Sport Shop. During my time in VOICE, I was a member of the Best Buddies club, Headlight, and the Speech and Social Skills group, which helps to promote social, emotional, and self advocacy skills to get ready for the outside world workplace. Other important skills I learned include: travel training, basic computer, cooking and set-up/clean-up, and laundry.

I am very proud of myself for accomplishing a lot in the VOICE program. I worked hard during my three summers in the program and I hope to succeed in the future. I would like to thank the faculty and students of VOICE for letting me be part of the program and for their friendliness, kindness, and their positive energy and attitudes.

Interview Questions for Dr. Sarah McCabe Hicks, school psychologist at MHS:

1. *What have you heard about the Marblehead VOICE Program?*

I have heard a lot about the program! Students in the program work hard with teachers and staff on developing important life skills and job skills so they can be more independent as adults. Students have lots of exciting opportunities to try out different internships to practice their skills in the community.

2. *Do you think it can be hard for students to transition from high school to the Marblehead VOICE program?*

I think that for some students it could be challenging to get used to a new building, new staff and teachers, and a new routine. I think that the staff work really hard with students and families to help them prepare for the transition so they feel comfortable and know what to expect.

3. *Would you recommend the VOICE program for other students? Why?*

If staff/teachers, family, and a student all agree that the student would benefit from learning more job and life skills so they can be more independent as an adult in the community, then I think the VOICE program is the perfect place to do that!

Interview Questions for Dr. Gasparini, school psychologist at MHS:

1. *What have you heard about the Marblehead VOICE program?*

I work at the Marblehead VOICE program leading a social skills group and providing individual counseling services. The program helps students increase independence, provides hands-on vocational opportunities, and develops social-emotional skills in preparation for life after school.

2. *Do you think it is hard for students to transition from high school to the Marblehead VOICE program?*

I think any time of change can be difficult for most people to navigate, but the staff at the VOICE program is amazing and does a great job getting to know and supporting students through this transition.

3. *Would you recommend the VOICE program for other students? Why?*

Absolutely! The program is a very nurturing environment where students develop not only valuable skill sets, but also the confidence needed for self-advocacy and community participation.

## "Trump's Comments are Hurtful, But I Know Who I am"

Sophie Mae Berman, Senior  
Editor-in-Chief



Referring to Haiti and Africa as "sh-thole countries," President Trump's ignorance was derogatory and offensive, but did not undermine the intelligence and tenacity of people who better our country each day in their dedicated work. This weekend I sat down to speak with Luna, a health care worker, who emigrated from Haiti and has been a U.S. citizen for almost twenty years, yet still carries her passport with her "just in case." Luna's family is one of achievement in all fields, with her brother an engineer, one of her cousins a lawyer, another a nurse practitioner at Mass General, and her son who works in computer science. Luna conveyed the anger of her family and friends when the President insulted their country. Yet she calmly expressed, "His words were hurtful but I don't let them bother me because I know who I am." She was more concerned about the impact of Trump's decision to end Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in eighteen months. TPS has allowed 59,000 Haitians to work and live in the United States. Luna spoke about her friend who has been working and paying taxes under TPS for five years and is now in need of life dependent dialysis, has no medical coverage. Many of Luna's other friends were forced out of work after their TPS could not be renewed and are struggling to support their families while they feel torn away from the United States, a country that they are fundamentally a part of. She noted that Chicago was founded and settled by Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable, a Haitian explorer and entrepreneur.

Luna described Trump's statements as desecrating the identity of the United States, a country of immigrants. She said, "The President does not have the knowledge or experience for the job" – that his actions are comparable to the mindset of a dictator. Luna communicated that the President believes himself to be higher, above and distant from others. She advises Trump, "We are all humans, treat us equally!"

Photo courtesy of Getty Images via Miami Herald

## National Art Honor Society Fundraiser

The National Art Honor Society is hosting a movie fundraiser at **The Warwick Place Cinema** on **Wed., Feb. 7th, at 6:00 P.M.** Please join NAHS for a screening of the Oscar-nominated "Loving Vincent," the world's first fully painted film. All proceeds will go to NAHS scholarships and art community service initiatives. **Tickets are \$15.** Please see a NAHS member for more info!

## Poem of the Month

*February*

by John Updike

The sun rides higher  
Every trip.  
The sidewalk shows.  
Icicles drip.

A snowstorm comes,  
And cars are stuck,  
Though road salt flies  
From the old town truck.

The chickadees  
Grow plump on seed  
That Mother pours  
Where they can feed,

And snipping, snipping  
Scissors run  
To cut out hearts  
For everyone.

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