The Young Activist Grant of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island was created to allow middle and high school students in Nassau County to develop projects for peace, humanitarian efforts, the environment, disaster relief, or disadvantaged groups. The student conceives of the project, creates a budget, and applies for the grant. The grant, up to $500, provides seed money for the student to carry out his or her plans. The annual grant is awarded to the student whose project best reflects our ideals of creating a more just, caring, and humane world. For more information, go to www.ehsli.org and look under the “social action” tab.

2015
Winner: Matthew Berman
School: Roslyn High School
Title of project: MED Rx (Medication Education Disposal and Prescription Bottle Repurposing)

Matthew collected empty pill bottles to be recycled/repurposed to the country of Malawi, where medicine bottles are scarce. He expected to collect about 1000 bottles; he collected about 3500.

A note from Matt Berman: “I am so beyond grateful for this opportunity that the Society has presented me with to turn this plan on paper into a successful and functioning reality, and I cannot thank you, Dr. Pratt, and everyone else involved enough for your support and help! Thank you again so very much.”
Winners: Nick Monaco, Nicasia Beebe-Wang, Marielle Ray, Olivia Percoco
School: Westhampton Beach High School
Title of project: Spring Baskets

The students and members of the National Honor Society made baskets for children and teens residing in homeless shelters in Riverhead and Hampton Bays.

A note from NHS advisor Amy Demchak: “I am so happy that you have made it possible for my students to initiate such a wonderful community service project. In addition, there will be dozens of young children who will be overjoyed with their spring basket gifts!”

“One person can make a difference, and everyone should try.”
— John F. Kennedy.
2012

Winners: Michael Garcia, Michaela Beck, Jennifer Gentile
School: South Side High School, Rockville Centre, NY.
Title of project: "Drinking is Not a MINOR Problem."

Social action campaign to educate adults about NY’s social hosts laws, with signs in liquor store windows and stickers on pizza boxes. Their work inspired Rockville Centre to add banners to their library and police department. The video segment about the project is on the RVC police department website, mentioning EHSLI. A story also appeared on WABC television news!

A note from Michael Garcia: “Thanks so much for everything— you guys have been incredible!”
2012

Winners: Lydia Frenzel-Sulyok, Augusta Greenbaum (NHS president), Carolyn Prill and Michael Polan and National Honor Society members
School: Westhampton Beach High School
Title of project: Playground Creation

A homeless shelter of Community Housing Initiatives had no outdoor play equipment for the children residents. The students created a children's outdoor play area with sports equipment at a Hampton Bays homeless shelter. Their work inspired their teachers to create their own fundraising drive to add a basketball hoop.

A note from Amy Demchak, teacher advisor: It was a great experience. The shelter staff was so thankful. Thanks again for this amazing opportunity. I'm sure that this will stand out as one of my students greatest high school memories.
2011

Winners: Austin Borel and Alexa Rinaudo
Schools: Jericho High School (Austin) and Mepham High School (Alexa)
Title of project: Bowl-a-thon for Habitat for Humanity.

The event had 88 participants and raised over $1400. Habitat requires that each volunteer donate $100. This fundraising effort not only contributed $1400 to Habitat, but covered the sponsor fee for 14 volunteers.

A note from student advisor Theone Rinaudo: “Thank You for all you do to support student leaders!”
2010
Winner: Yana Cherepashenskaya
School: Valley Stream South High School
Title of project: Angels of Hope

Yana and her friends in the National Art Honor Society made pins and ornaments that they sold at school sporting events to support Hewlett House, a nonprofit cancer resource center for patients and their families. Money from the sale of the pins was donated to Hewlett House.

A note from Yana 5 years later: "I recently graduated college with a dual degree in Graphic Design and Business. I will never forget how much The Ethical Humanist Society helped me make a difference to the people of Hewlett House. I am always grateful for the start you gave me and your belief in my work. It led me to pursue my passions and gave me a solid foundation for college."