

Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf Provides Students with Summer Hands-on Learning

The students of Mill Neck's Deaf Education Center (DEC) experience hands-on learning at its finest this summer. From touring the Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park in Oyster Bay to volunteering at Sunrise of Glen Cove Assisted Living Facility to meeting the Stony Brook University football team, students have the opportunity to discover their interests while engaging in experiential learning.

New York State has approved a new graduating credential for special education students. The Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential is a certificate that is intended to indicate a student's readiness for entry-level jobs. Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf has created a comprehensive summer program where students have the opportunity to participate in work-based learning experiences, including job coaching, shadowing, community service, internships and more.

Taking trips all over the island, DEC students have enjoyed learning about possible future career paths. A tour of the Planting Fields Arboretum was given by Director Vincent Simeone, who welcomed the students as neighbors from a fellow Gold Coast Estate and explained the various jobs and responsibilities. Students toured the green houses, grounds and sensory garden, where they planted seeds that will grow in the fall. The students were very encouraged to hear that the Planting Fields has already employed a past student of Mill Neck. After the tour, they enjoyed a picnic on the grounds.



On Mondays and Wednesdays, the DEC students volunteer their time at Sunrise of Glen Cove



Assisted Living Facility. The residents' faces lit up as they saw the students walk through the doors. Some students stayed on the ground floor, where they set up a nail painting station for the women of the facility to enjoy a nice manicure. Others went to a different floor to engage the residents diagnosed with dementia, where they played games and danced Zumba.

“It’s so great for our residents here to have young kids come and volunteer their time,” says Diana Blacharski, Life Enrichment Manager at Sunrise. “They really enjoy it.”



The students also took a trip to Stony Brook University to meet players on the Seawolves football team: they have been studying American Sign Language as a Foreign Language. The students and players communicated with each other, throwing footballs and high fives.