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October 8, 2011

Marianne Larned
Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative
Stone Soup Leadership Institute
P.O. Box 4551
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

Dear Marianne:

It is a pleasure to work with you again with the Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative's College Prep and Field Trip Program. When I participated in the Institute's first training on Martha's Vineyard in 1999, I could see the passion you had for what you were doing. Your enthusiasm for helping students has not wavered a bit. You work tirelessly for all of the programs that you have given your life to promote.

The Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative is near and dear to my heart. It gives students that thought that college was for them, not just someone else. You have shown them that they too can have a higher education. You have shown them there is a lot of work that goes into it – from SATs, to college applications, to scholarships. When we first met, I was the School to Career Coordinator for the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School for five years. I worked with students to find their voice and path to their future. I sponsored job fairs with the students and local businesses help; took the students to shadow the fields they were interested in and fostered the entrepreneurship that is in all of us. We worked on resume writing, interviewing techniques and how to dress for success. My fondest memory was the students participating in a business plan competition. One of my students was chosen as a finalist. We were invited to North Carolina to participate in the national competition. To see the look on my student's face as she watched and heard the stories of all of these young entrepreneurs was priceless.

Marianne, you have given me that same feeling again, watching your students get excited about MVYLI College Field Trips to colleges in Massachusetts. Hearing about the students that 'graduated' from MVYLI, received scholarships and are now off in college preparing for their life's work. I see the joy on your face and in your voice. You have truly been true to yourself and your belief that you can make a difference in a child's life. You have proven that over and over again. I am proud to be able to work with you and the students on a one on one basis. So many of the students just need that little extra push to open their eyes and have the light come on in their head that they, too, can go to college. That is what you are doing. I've been impressed to see how you have made the students and their families invested wholeheartedly in their careers, their future and the future of our island.

There is a lot of work to do. I am excited about helping you achieve the goals of these Martha's Vineyard youth.

Sincerely yours,
Doris L. Clark

Doris L. Clark