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SL 497: Independent Study SL  
Professor Burke  
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· What did you do today that made you feel you made a difference? Why?

Each approach to service learning is as though it was the last time. Each day I try and make a change or have an impact on one of the kids. I've noticed that some kids do not really talk or tend to be a little more shy. What I do to make a difference is listen to the kids and try and talk about their interest.

#### Entre 1.

- The day was calm, perhaps because I arrived a little earlier. There was not that many students that had arrived yet. I walked around and came across a student who was playing video games in one of the rooms. I had previously talked to her and knew her a little. We began to talk, about her day and how she was doing. I noticed that she was playing a fighting game which she was really good at. During the time I was there a couple of of students challenged her to play including myself. As expected I knew I was going to lose, but that to me did really matter. What matter was having the ability to talk to "Maria" and how she started to play. Many times there is a stigma that videogames are for boys, which is completely false.



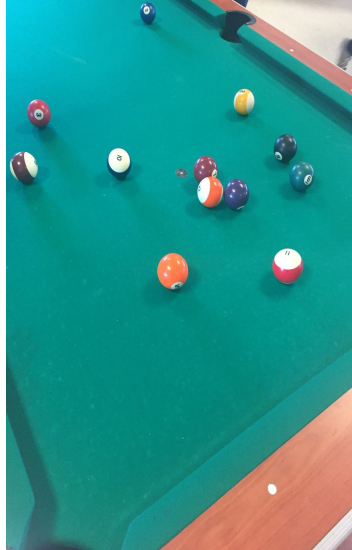
## Entre 2.

One of the favorite days for many of the kids had arrived. A day in which one can dress up and be anyone you want and eat a lot of candy. This day in particular was fun because of the different activities I was able to participate with the students. There was a lot of activities that occurred such as bowling, tossing the ring, best costume, and many other games. For a second, I went back in time and felt a kid again. I felt part of my childhood and how the holiday use to be.



### Entre 3.

- I did a little bit of everything and played different activities with the students. The day overall was calm and mostly interactions.



### · Did anything happen that made you feel uncomfortable? If so, what and why do you think it made you feel this way?

- Nothing truly made me feel uncomfortable. Everything is calm for most part students do not misbehave. Previously I felt a little uncomfortable when the kids hugged me but I was able to turn hugs into high fives or a handshake.



### · What did you do that seemed to be effective or ineffective in service to others? What can you learn from this?'

- As mentioned before what I found effective was learning the students names. After a few times of assisting the site some of the kids felt more comfortable saying hello and having a conversation.

· How do you tell friends and family about your experience in the community and in this class? What kinds of responses do you get? How do you feel about their reactions?

- It can be difficult to explain service learning sometimes. The reason it can be difficult is to try and explain that service learning is more than just being there. Service learning has many components and so many things one can learn about and apply them to our daily lives. Service learning is a time when one enters a different area where we feel can be uncomfortable at first to meet different people or not sure how to approach others.

· What was the most positive thing that happened this week at your site? What can you learn from this?

### Entre 1

One of the most positive things from this week was having a conversation with “Sam” and talking why he was sad. I usually play basketball with him and that day he was not all that well. It turned out he had not done so good on exam and was sad about it. I was able to cheer him up and talk to him as to why he thought he failed. The main reason turned out that he had not slept well the night before his test and was not fully concentrated. After talking for a bit he cheered and we began to play basketball. For me that means a lot, sometimes things are going all that well, and it can be difficult to overcome certain things.



## Entre 2

Another positive moment I felt from which I learned was talking to “Maria” about her experience playing video games. I knew my skills for the game were not as good as hers, however I was able to compete and give her a little fight. At the end she was beyond excited that she won. I was happy that I was able to play, for me it did not matter to win or lose.

## Entre 3

During the halloween parade I noticed a teen that was dressed in a interesting way. I decided to ask what was he dressed as, his response was “Captain Gay”. My response was, wow that is super awesome I like the creativity. I noticed a smile and joy as soon as I told that to the student. I felt good that I asked and I was able to see he felt well that someone asked about his custome. What I learn goes back to the idea that sometimes the kids just want to be asked what something, they want to be known or acknowledged.

### · What was most difficult? What can you learn from this?

- As mentioned the most difficult part for me was learning people's names. As I visited the site I was able to learn their names and something new about them every time. For example, every day I had a different question which I would use to start a conversation.

### · Is there a person you find particularly interesting at your site? Why?

- The person I found a particular interest was Kathy, one of the workers at the teen center. I felt that many times she goes unnoticed but has a big responsibility. I had a conversation about how was it that the teen center started and how has it developed since its origin of time. Mrs Kathy is a great and easy to talk person she also shows and cares for the students as for the place.

### · Were you disappointed at your site this week? If so, why? What can you learn from this?

- I do not think I have been disappointed at the site, everyday is different and unique.

### · Is there any situation or problem you want to discuss with someone at your site? with your classmates? with your supervisor? with your professor?

- There has not really been any problem to discuss with someone at the site.

### · Describe an average day at your site for people who use the services, for the staff, for yourself.

- The average day consist with the children arriving after school. There is a large variation of activities at the Teen Center and many kids have been going to the teen center for years. The kids show up and can choose to do homework or play games or activities. The

staff also makes sure to have food for them to eat from. My goal there is talk and hang out with the teens and help around with their homework or make sure that they are engaging with each other and respecting each other.

· Which of your goals for your service learning experience are you accomplishing? Which are still not accomplished? How can you reach all your goals? Do any goals need to be revised?

- As mentioned before my biggest goal is to get to know different people as well as getting to know them better.
- Every time I visit, I try and set different goals and do different activities and not be with the same students all the time.

· Which parts of your service work come naturally to you? Which are uncomfortable?

- Overall most of the interactions with the kids come naturally. My lower division service learning was extremely helpful. I was able to use my past experience with kids to my advantage to help out here at the teen center. I also have younger brothers which helps having conversations with the teens a bit easier. The more uncomfortable parts are telling the teens what to do or at times handling the confrontation of the youth. I dislike conflict and find it difficult to approach certain situations with the teens.

· What challenges are you encountering at your site? Use analogies to think creatively: "Working with \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization or specific person) is like \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

- Working with Teen center is like trying to hit the lottery because any number can appear.

· How does your service work relate to your career plans? If you don't see a direct relationship (e.g. tutoring elementary school children for liberal studies majors), try to find an indirect relationship (e.g. tutoring elementary school children and developing strong listening skills will help any major).

- One of my career goals is to teach or learn more about other cultures and how people behave. I am not sure if I specifically want to work with teens when I am older but I am thinking of being teacher and this definitely helps with getting to work with a diverse group of teenagers.

· What do you now know? What do you still want to know? What have you learned?

- One thing I wish to continue learning is how is it that the teens think and how is it that they view life. I want to have an understanding as to why they think the way they do,

understand their background and how is it they behave. Every time I visit I learn something new about the students.

What?

· What did you do, see, hear, feel, think, smell?

Coldness, sugar, colors, energy, happiness, gloomy, dark, sunny, running, jumping, laughter, noisy, calm, rushed, hot, jumping, running, yelling, calm

· What were your most vivid first impressions? Describe (or draw!) your site in as much detail as possible. Describe the people in as much physical detail as possible.

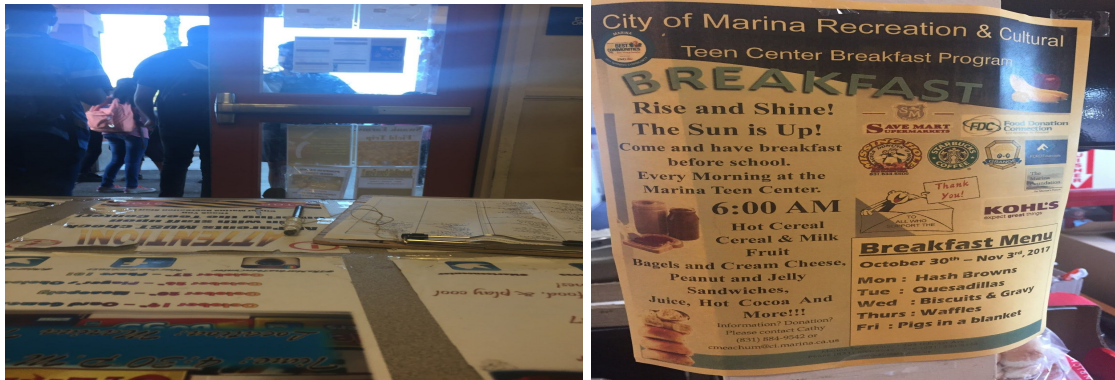


· What does the agency do? How do they do it?

- One of the main purpose of the agency is to keep the children off the streets. Most of the children understand how things work and follow the cycle. The agency has many activities for the children such as; basketball, pool, chess, skating, video games, internet access for different purpose, instrument access. Most of the kids find this as way to do something than just being home, other kids tend to stay because their parents work and for them it is a way to be somewhere safe until they are picked up.

· What happened at the site while you were there? What interactions took place? Describe them. Describe your own participation.

- There is so much that happens at the site. The site also organizes different events throughout the week for the teen to participate such as going to the movies, trips to Great America, Big Sur, halloween parade, the corn maze, laser tag and much more. Aside the different activities that occur at the teen center such as pool, video games, internet access, basketball, air hockey and much more I learned that they have the opportunity to do much more. Having these types of opportunities is beyond wonderful because going to some of the places where they promote field trips can be expensive let alone some kids do not have the a way to get there. All these trip for most part are free for them.



Now What

I truly enjoy attending my service site, at first I was a little uncertain how the students would responded. However each time they slowly feel more comfortable interacting with me and talking about their day. Part of what I still want to do is help and guide the students with what I can. I continue to look forward to the rest of my visits.