Detroit Service Trip Reflections

March 10, 2015- Told by Phoebe

This week has been amazing. Today we worked at Experience, leveling and labeling books, reading with kindergarteners and third graders. I ate lunch with my third grade friend, Fred and talked about his favorite movie Mr. Peabody and the Sherman and read a bit from the book he chose from the library- Star Trek. With my kindergarten friend, we read Winnie the Pooh books (it was her first time meeting Winnie and Piglet!!) I was amazed at how trusting and caring she was- holding my hand, sitting on my lap. She was so excited to read, which is a feeling I miss and want to feel again. All the students I encountered at Experience were so engaged and eager to learn. They inspire me.

We went to Detroit Institute of Art. A tour guide explained the significance of the industry murals by Diego Rivera. We spent some time at our elementary school and the PITC after school program. We did an activity in which each kid drew a rainbow (in honor of St. Patty’s Day) and wrote things they put lucky to have. I worked with Quenton. I struggled some. He had trouble focusing and was quick to give up. I think he needs more people telling him that he’s capable and worthy of success.

I love Detroit and love what we’re doing here. I was tutoring a student on Tuesday with Carolyn. He was asking questions about our group. He asked us where we were staying. We said in a house and he responded “that’s not a group, that’s a family.”

I am so thankful for this experience and all of you. You are a family to me.

March 11, 2015- Told by Carolyn

Today was a wonderful day with all of you. First we went to the greenhouse and worked with the little lettuce leaves. That was a cool experience for me because I don’t think I’ve ever really done that before. I had to be very delicate with the lettuce and that was a good thing for me to be able to focus on. It was cool to see such passionate farmers in their element. Once we ate lunch and were ready to go, I felt really proud of the 129 trays of lettuce we had re-planted.

After that, we went to the aquponics place. Learning about that whole process was out of this world cool. Even though I don’t fully understand all of it, I know that it is a wonderful thing and that it should keep growing. My one downer about being at the aquaponics place was I was extremely exhausted and was not as productive as I could have been and we didn’t really get anything done which was a downer. I’m sure were going to do much better tomorrow.

Finally, my group (group b) went to Gleaner’s and helped people “shop” for their food. That was an amazing experience and I truly love working face to face with the people I am helping. It was really fun and it was a great experience. It was also just a great bonding experience for me, Emily G, Emily S, Phoebe, Saahil, Ingrid, and Chuck. In between helping the shoppers we got to stand with each other and chat. We were all just happy and giddy and tired and it was fun. We had a nice dinner of stir-fry tonight and a nice reflection time. We also just found out that were don’t have to leave the house till 9:05am tomorrow! WOOO!!! Sleep!

I love you all and this trip is incredible and I can’t wait for the rest! Detroit Forever- Carolyn.

Detroit- Tuesday

Today we were at Experience. Our day started out with some book leveling and stacking the books on the shelves so that the library was fuller. These kids were so passionate about reading and learning and it broke my heart to see that they had barely any books.

It was so much fun to read with the kids because they were so excited to pick books of the shelves. Some of these kids didn’t have any book at home or anyone to read to them and that really broke my heart. It makes me realize how privileged that I am because of house many books I had and my parents read to me all the time.

My favorite part of the day was seeing the hydroponic gardens in Experiences sixth grade class. They were so excited about how their cucumbers and tomatoes were doing and they also just wanted to explain how it worked. I love hearing about it because hydroponics are so fascinating to me!

I was funny to hear them talk about being in college and also to see how excited they were for it. Their enthusiasm made me more passionate about my own learning and I can’t wait to bring that back to campus.

-Meg Moran

Thursday

Today is full of fun. In the afternoon, we went back to CDC again and worked on the project we did yesterday. Since yesterday, our team is less efficient and everyone got……. Today we did a good job in cooperation. We were divided into different small groups, some cut the boards first, and some measure the heights and width. In total, we finished three sides of walls in the basement, which is nice work! I asked people who worked in this ecosystem project that if this system can make money, the answer is yes. But the costs and wages are still larger in other words, in the short run, this ecosystem cannot make profit. However, we can imagine that in the long run, this ecosystem can make profit and also be able to be an example which presents given, clear industry.

Then, we went to KGD again to work on the baby broccoli. I really enjoyed work in the plants where makes me feel more close to nature. KGD is a program let people have chance to grow their own food in their gardens. The slogan sounds like “produce food in Detroit for Detroit”

Here I can feel like transported spread to all over the city. All these seeds and baby plants will be food available for family in the future.

During the reflection part, we tried to discuss on topics like “where I see faith in this trip, how your own faith influences this trip” For me, I can relate my previous experience before I came to Dickinson. As international student, I came from China. In my motherland, gap between the poor and rich is huge. And education, poor are big problems in country side. What can I do to make my hometown better? I used to co-find a GNO to give city tour for foreign visitor. Now I am thinking to work with more other charitable organizations to let more people care about issues around them. Moreover, when I back to Carlisle, I will eager to see, what I can do for the local community and Carlisle community. There are problems all over the world and it is time for us to repair. To make it better, through this trip, I also try to think deep about my faith. I consider myself close to Buddhism and right now I try to practice ideas of Buddhism during the trip. I saw faith in people’s heart and helped them. So for myself, I started to think of the meaning of my life, my duty, and my wish.

I appreciate that I have chance to join this trip and I am so glad that I made this choice. This experience help me understand world and myself better.

3/13/15- Sahil

Today was somewhat of an emotional rollercoaster. Started out as usual, me being the last to wake up and all. And now, I’m starting to pack my stuff up. Therefore, Imma keep this one conceit.

In short, I feel like the blond that have been forged. Btw, us all how been solicited. I hope that we can maintain these bonds for long other the service trip ends.