

May 22, 2018

Bere: Wow we are finally here. So far it has been so eventful. I was incredibly pleased to see how similar and different the Navajo Nation is from what I originally thought. It's similar to my home of Albuquerque in terms of weather and the scenery, as well as having some recognizable things (green chile!) but very different from what I envisioned the reservation to look like. I imagined the worst of what people had described. A real third world country, a miserable place. But I was so surprised by the resiliency and community. The work that Alvin is doing here and the work/organization of Rez Refuge was an amazing reminder of what I want to do in my life. I don't want big paychecks or anything like that. I have always wanted something deeper for my community, which is why I wanted to become an educator. Because children and teenagers are impressionable and their educational achievement and quality is what determines their success in life. The emphasis of taking care of one's community is not new to me because I did a lot of community service in high school. Although my last year I focused on the women of color community and the Latino community, the trip made me remember the importance of non profit organizations and their impact on youth, which is why I would love to more in one in the future. My reflection is not that strong because I am exhausted but I promise my next one will be better!

Amelia: Today has been great! The morning on the road felt daunting at first, but it turned out to be the perfect opportunity to rest up. I was so happy to settle into our rooms at the mission. I was very eager to start work at Rez Refuge – getting into the swing of things helps me to adjust to new situations. Working in the garden felt familiar- all the shoveling of dirt and manure reminded me of my work on a farm. I felt like I was in my element and contributing to the group. Things got more challenging as the kids arrived for the after school program. There were so many volunteers for so few kids that I felt redundant and often found myself with nothing to do. Once we headed outside, however, it became easier to interact through participating in sports. Dinner at the mission was delicious and I enjoyed having Sedona's thoughts on life on the rez. It still felt odd to hear my peers ask such big questions, like about quality of education, to such a young person. I really enjoyed Frisbee – it was such a wonderful way to casually interact with members of the community.

May 23, 2018

Sadie: Today I think we all felt more rested and like we were connecting more with those around us. This morning half of us went to Rez Refuge and half stayed to help wrap soap. I was on the soap wrapping group with Kiernan, Beth, Amara, Bere, and Amelia. We made an assembly line and as Kiernan said later in reflections it felt good to be a part of something. Next we went on a hike at Window Rock. Alvin led us all. He told us about the plants, soil, and nature around us as we walked. Alvin is a really impressive guy. Many people of the group have mentioned how meaningful their conversations with him are and how much we are learning from him. He is so gracious and open in sharing about his culture. After the hike we went to the Navajo Nation museum to walk around and learn more. There was mention of the Carlisle Indian School in the information boards as well as information about the history of the nation and its people. There was jewelry, sculptures, and art. One painting I remember as particularly stirring: on the outside of the frame was the American Flag then in a torn space in the center of the flag were a group of Navajo people. Their faces were pained. Hands protruding from the stripes of the flag held barbed wire in front. A smoke stack rose from a small building on the bottom left. A bulldozer shovel protruded from the top center. I don't mean to go on and on, but it was a very powerful

image. Many of the art pieces were full of color and beautiful. Next we went to Rez Refuge to help with the kids. I think we are connecting more with the kids and they are more comfortable around us. In separate groups we played capture the flag, made flowers from plates, gardened by watering and spreading woodchips, and read. At the end we played a game called "Honey I love you would you please smile." That was a lot of fun! Then for dinner Rayvon and her mom brought us food. We had blue corn mush with cedar ash, soup with corn and lamb, fried bread and bread baked on coals, all with Navajo tea. It was delicious! She talked to us more about Miss Navajo competition. As we waited to eat, Dee told us about being a DPS officer and just in general about her life experiences. It was very kind of her to share so much. To wrap up the night we talked during reflections. I think our conversation grew deeper tonight. We talked about what was meaningful in our day. We also talked about similarities and differences we notice about Navajo culture in comparison to our own. Tomorrow we head to Dine College. Today was a really good day and I'm excited for what is to come.

Elif: Today was full of running around from one place to another but it was fun. In the morning we split into two groups soap cutting and woodchips. I was in the woodchips group and we went to Rez Refuge. After that we went climbing and it was simply amazing. I don't usually go climbing but the sights that we saw took all the stress and pain away. The museum was also an eye opening experience. I didn't really realize the extent of US actions until I went to the museum. The value that was placed on education. It's very inspiring to see how out of struggle they relied and put emphasis on higher education to create a better future for their children.

May 24, 2018

Ralph: We went to the Navajo Times around 8:00am. The Navajo Times focuses on telling/reporting news regarding the Navajo community. Rayvon was kind enough to give us a mini tour! On average they sell 15,000 copies a week (I believe). The idea of change is pretty transparent here. The community uses/reads the newspaper but, as time changes, customers want more of on-demand, therefore, technology is a factor here as well as the age differences. (Don't know if this made sense, oh well!). We then did a ton of hiking, so Canyon de Chelly and Buffalo Pass, this place is really beautiful. I mean, some of the geological structure and formation is amazing. These formations happened years and years ago, and our action/decision create such an impact. We also spent time at the Hubble Trading Post, which some white dude named Hubble started. The lady who was giving us a tour was very hmmm...I don't know how to explain but her description of the boarding school was very dandy. Overall, it was a great day. As a service trip leader it is emotionally and socially draining. But I am enjoying my day.

May 25, 2018

Kiernan: Today, I got to spend a lot of time working with people from the Land Grant office and Water Usage project. We did a variety of tasks, such as planting potatoes and moving heavy objects around the campus so that new fences and pipes can be established. It was hard physical work, but I really enjoyed it. It was work that created something tangible to succeed at, and I loved feeling like I was part of a team working towards that success. Even when the tasks seemed daunting, the high morale of the group I was working with kept me moving forward. Something very special that I took from today was the commitment and hard work I saw from the farmers and people at the LGO and Water Usage. They are a group of incredibly dedicated people who are bettering their community one day at a time They are additionally incredibly

motivated towards achieving the goals that they established this year and are stopping at nothing to meet them. It was incredibly inspiring and I wish them nothing but the best. From today I want to take the importance of working with a purpose. These guys and girls are incredibly proud of what they are and care about what they are trying to achieve. As a rising college senior, that's something I want to try and emulate as I try to find a career path that makes a difference and also makes me feel like I have a purpose. I wish I could thank them in person for the lesson they taught me about purpose today.

Maya: Today was our long work day. My group did sheep shearing all day. What an interesting time. Sheep shearing is hard! What a workout today was. It took me a long time to get the hang of it. But once I did, it was kind of fun. If the heat and the dirt wasn't a factor, I think I could have done it all day. The Land Grant workers were so good at it, and so hard working I was amazed. They do this for days, maybe weeks, on end. It's crazy how much work that is. It was really cool seeing our work pay off as we did each sheep. It was also really inspiring listening to the elders tell us their life stories as we sheared their sheep. The first couple had been doing it or years, but were getting old and needed help with it. The woman moved back to the place she grew up and raised sheep like her family did, only they had nearly 300 sheep back then. The second elder was a woman who was a teacher, and then decided she wanted to come back and raise sheep like her family had. She made a change of life decision to do this not because she wanted a new career to make more money, which it would not, but because she felt it was important to her, she wants to raise the sheep, weave blankets, and learn to sew. She was really just so down to earth and humbling, I'm so glad we met her and got to help her. I'm really liking the trip so far. I had no idea what to expect with this, but I think everything so far has been meaningful and eye-opening for me in different ways. I feel like I am kind of the odd one out in this group personality wise, but I'm really enjoying getting to know everyone and just laugh and be with them. The Rez Refuge people are adding so much to this trip. The kids are just so fun and I really like getting to know them more each day. Alvin is amazing. Possibly one of the top 10 most amazing people I've ever met. Let's see what the next half of the trip brings!

Amara: Everyday it keeps getting better and better. I am learning more about myself, this community, and the type of person I want to be. I have never done active, strenuous work and I was honestly worried about that portion of the trip. But surprisingly it turned out to be my favorite. The people had an amazing energy which made the day even more fruitful. My favorite part of the day was sitting down next to the river and talking to Amelia and Alvin. The water, the landscape, and the way of life is so peaceful. LA is very superficial and materialistic and I feel that is not something I left or experienced differently in Carlisle. It is great to be somewhere where people actually value and care for the community. And not only care for the community but the community beyond their own. That is a quality many people don't consider, and I am so grateful to experience it.

May 26, 2018

Shantel: I'm currently sitting at the dining table. I'm the only one sitting here right now. I'm drinking a herbal tea – chamomile and mint. I'm trying to recall what I have done all day and all I think of is sheep hair and the scissors. Shearing sheep has been an experience – *second day* in a row. Yesterday I also did (my group Tieron, Malakai, Ralph, Kody, Siena, Maya, Bere, and Elif) sheep shearing. *Second day* that we all smelled like sheep. *Second day* that when I hit the shower

as soon as I touch the water I can smell the sheep! Today was also the *second day* that I got to have full conversations with the kids from Rez Refuge. Those kids are just balls full of humor. Specifically, Tieron and Malakai making Bere and I forget about time. We will cut the sheep and dance and make jokes, funny how Malakai and I will justify our behaviors because we are geminis. Today's experience made me appreciate life and energy more. I couldn't believe how Taten who barely starts conversations decided to open up during lunchtime. It made me think of how and why I keep doing what I gotta do. Similarly, Taten and I sometimes when I was his age I couldn't go out in my neighborhood because of the violence (gang violence). Poor and low income communities have similar social issues. *OUR LIMITATIONS ARE NOT PROHIBITIONS* I know these kids are going to do awesome things in life. They just give me inspiration and a new motivation. The reciprocity of energy in this roup is really enjoyable and positive. I hope Taten and Tieron continue to be resilient like the rest of their peers. They're some awesome kids. It kinda lowkey breaks my heart the fact that we are leaving soon because I've gotten attached to these kids. Kody this morning asked me to brush and tie his hair. It reminded me of always brushing my sisters hair when it was tangled and didn't want my mom to tie it because she will pull and be "hard" with the brush. I brushed Kody's shoulder length, dark brownish hair gently like it was my sister's. Really happy these kids got comfortable with us but at the same time kinda sad because I don't know if I'm going to see these kids again. I've learned so much from them. Age doesn't matter and doesn't determine how wise you are.

Beth: Today the whole group worked together at the same site shearing sheep. Half the group had tried it already the day before and it was nice to see how the experienced people helped out us new people. It was a huge team effort between our whole group and Alvin and the Rez Refuge kids and the Land Grant workers and interns. Although at the beginning of the day we all kind of grouped with ourselves because that's who we knew, by the end of the day we were all spread out working in groups mixed with the Land Grant people and the Rez Refuge group. It was really amazing to see all those people connect like that. I had a really fun few hours with a man from Land Grant named Brian working on some very large sheep with the electric shears, which were reserved for the experienced workers. At the beginning I really just held down the sheep while he sheared, and we got to talk a lot. A little later on he asked if I wanted to try the electric shears which really surprised me but also made me feel good because we had only talked for an hour or two at that point and he already trusted me. Throughout the day he was really patient with all my questions and mess ups and he was reassuring when I was afraid to move the big sheep in and out of the pen. It was a really positive experience for me that I had such a good time with a complete stranger from a different culture and that we still connected so well. At the end of the day I thanked him for working with me and he out of the blue hugged me and that will definitely be one of my highlights of the trip.

May 28, 2018

Amelia: I didn't realize how late in the trip it was until I checked my phone to write the date for this reflection. Today is the 28th, but I'll also be writing about the 27th because we don't have an entry for it. Also, we're in the van, so please excuse my handwriting. Sunday morning we all got to sleep in a bit. The day had a much more leisurely pace, especially after a week filled with work and hikes. I took the time to do some laundry (all my clothes smelled like sheep!) and attend the church service. Some of the group stayed behind and I understand why. Before I left for the trip, I was disgusted by the idea of staying in a missionary. I found the history of the

missionaries in this area to be repulsive. I was worried that staying at a missionary would feel like staying on a former plantation in the South. I definitely did not intend on going to church, given its history and me being Jewish. Ultimately, I decided that this service would be a once in a lifetime cultural experience. I also felt more comfortable when I realized that both pastors were women and one was Native. Seeing these people who would have never held these positions during the historical functioning of the missionary made me realize how Christianity had been reclaimed by the people in the area. I'm very glad that I attended the service. After, we went to a flea market and jewelry place. It was interesting to see all the things for sale, but I definitely felt more like a tourist and therefore more uncomfortable. We hiked with Alvin and Finn after. The hike was very close to the mission (and short!) but it had incredible views. I felt a little sad knowing that this would be my last hike on the reservation. We had a lock in that night! We danced, sang, and ate junk food with the Rez Refuge kids. Something caught fire in the vents but it was ok. We played truth or dare, and most of the Dickinson kids felt sick from lack of sleep the next day.

Bere: These past two days have been emotional and complicated. Sunday there was church service and I chose not to attend. I feel very awful for not attending because it sounds like the service was different to "regular" service. Instead of going, I did not reflecting on my own while washing clothes by hand. I was thinking about the whole church thing. I wrote down all my opinions on the church thing. For starters, I was wondering how you could worship and practice a religion that did awful things to your community/people. My other opinion was "well yeah the whole Christianity things was harmful, but they found ways to incorporate their culture into the religion." Not to mention they are happy this way, so who are we to talk and have an opinion on something that affects them. So whatever I believe, it doesn't mean anything, because if they want to they'll believe what they want. We should leave the religion debate to them and their people because they practice it and are affected by it. Also it would be hypocritical to talk crap about the colonizers' religion and how natives embraced it because Mexicans (who are descendents of natives) are Catholic, despite it being imposed on them. Majority of us also speak Spanish, so in sum, we can't say someone shouldn't embrace colonizer "culture" when I (and Mexicans) have to. I really enjoyed hearing the differing opinions at last night's reflection, but we should remember that no matter what we think, people who want to practice and are happy will continue to be Christian and we should accept it.

May 29, 2018

Kiernan: Today contained two great experiences for myself. The first was exploring Bandelier National Park, where indigenous people lived among caverns and large structures made of Earth and clay. It was incredible to me to visualize how the people lived, farming and conducting spiritual rituals in the caverns and kivas. I thought a lot about how my human experience in 2018 must be so different than that of those who lived 800-1,000 years before me. How are my priorities different today than those of Coronado and Bandolier? What was the human experience like back in those days? I can only imagine and wait for technology to advance so that better images of what life was like can finally reveal themselves. Lastly, it was very cool to see similar images in both Coronado and Bandolier, i.e. the Rattle Snake painting...and then to see an *actual* rattle snake! Following Bandolier, we went to Los Alamos to visit the science museum on the laboratory in Los Alamos and the nuclear bomb. This was very conflicting for me, as the museum glorified the use of the nuclear bomb by claiming it saved millions of lives. I felt angry

and frustrated, seeing so much disregard for the Native Americans and Japanese people damaged and killed by the bombs or radiation. It was propaganda, plain and simple, with no sympathy or empathy present at the museum. The book for voicing opinions on the use of nuclear weapons was also desecrated with inappropriate and rude remarks. It was hurtful to read and felt like the project (visiting project on the bomb) was not taken seriously, adding to my frustration. All in all, I could go on for hours on this subject, but I'll end with the fact that I enjoyed today's reflection more than previous ones thanks to the meaningful and open conversation. I appreciate all aspects, good and bad, of today and this trip overall.

Ralph: Today we went to Bandelier and Bradbury Science Museum. Bandelier was an amazing and beautiful place. What amazes me is the structure of the place. These individuals created structure that is integrated with nature – in a way “controlling” nature. This experience makes me want to learn more about the history of this place. I want to learn more about the first individuals who came to the Americas. After this experience, I gained a deeper interest in archaeology and history. Since I graduated, I do not have classes/courses that I need to take, that means my form of learning must be self motivated. Another place we went is the Bradbury Science Museum. This museum contains information regarding the creation of the atomic bomb and the usage of the weapon in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As a physics major I enjoyed the information of creating the atomic bomb – meaning the fission process and particles physics. What I did not enjoy was the glorification of the atomic bomb. Overall, it was a great day. The reflection was truly impactful/meaningful. I am excited to go home; however, I am going to miss the constant learning and growth that is occurring on this trip.

May 30, 2018

Sadie: We just had our last reflection. I'm at a writer's block. Being the last day there is so much to say and so many wonderful thoughts that the group had today. I'll try and do it justice. Well today we explored Santa Fe, the historic part of town. We all walked around in smaller groups to explore and to see shops, the cathedral, the Georgial O'Keefe Museum, or the New Mexico Museum of Art. One group go into the Georgia O'Keefe Museum for free! I guess someone they met in Starbucks with a red convertible gave them a free pass. Next we drove to Albuquerque. We checked into the hotel and had some down time before going into Old Town. We all walked around. I particularly enjoyed listening to a band in the park at the center of old town. It was a large band with guitarists, singers, harp players, and other instruments all combining. We ate dinner together then back home at the hotel we had reflections. We talked about what we learned about the Navajo on this trip, what we learned about ourselves, and what we hope to take back with us after this trip. I think everyone had very unique and thoughtful answers. Beth brought up that as a group we learned about interacting and giving love to people knowing we were with them for a limited time. Amara talked about how she wants to encourage Dickinson to provide more scholarships for Native people. Amelia talked about how she felt the Navajo, especially Alvin, spoke with respect and intention. Bere talked about how she wants to bring the sense of community she saw on the reservation back to her community. Dee said that she wants to speak with President Ensign to stress the importance of service trips and the growth that comes from this experience. Ralph talked about how he learned to balance others emotions and making sure the group was okay while also assessing his emotions. Elif talked about how she felt like she talked about Turkey often because she saw similarities. Donna spoke about how she remembered how important this trip is and how she wants to include Rayvon more in the next ones. Maya

talked about how this trip made her more passionate about a future career in social work. Kiernan said he felt this trip made him really think about how he could take a future job that impacts people that really need support. Shantel said she had wanted to learn more about how her culture and people intersected with the Native Americans and she felt that she did learn more about the connections. I hope I did everyone's thoughts justice here. These were some of the points and thoughts I remembered as I wrote this, and I wanted to write them to remember the awesome things our group shared. It was a wonderful and truly inspiring trip and experience. I feel so thankful to have been a part of this, thankful for all the work that made this trip a reality, and thankful for all of those who were a part of this trip. I feel so lucky to have gotten to know you all, and so grateful to have shared this experience with you all.

Elif: Today was the last day of reflections and basically the last day we all hung out together. It was bittersweet. All the memories we share and all the jokes we made and all the hard work we contributed to came to an end at this last reflection. It made me realize how long of a way my group and I came and how much we all changed. We all learned from each other and even gained power and encouragement from each other. The end of this trip has made me realize how glad I was to actually apply for this unique experience. This was my first service trip and it was just amazing. The trip has definitely pushed me to expand my limits and be more active within the community. Service trips have made me realize how even a small helping hand can create such a difference in communities. I am really considering to be involved within CS3 or even joining something in my neighborhood.