

HUSV 1101: Social Change and Human Services

Service-Learning Reflections

How has service-learning impacted my previous thinking and what can I take away from these experiences?





Pine Street Inn
Ending Homelessness



BOSTON HEALTH CARE *for*
the HOMELESS PROGRAM





Student Testimonies:

"One of the biggest lessons I am taking away... is the importance of giving immigrant communities access the tools that they need so that they may have the personal agency to move forward. It is very easy to support vulnerable communities in a way that may depict them to be weak or helpless, but I admire that IFSI acknowledges the strength and resilience of immigrant families and aims to empower these families in their own right by increasing access to necessary tools."

- Student serving with the Immigrant Family Services Institute

"After my time at the organization, I have come to understand that community creation and support can be focused on education as well - those two ideas can coexist within the same organization. The program connects kids from the neighborhood together while also providing equitable and focused learning and homework help for students. It is wonderful to see an organization tackle two social issues (collective efficacy and education) at once to provide the best possible resources for community members"

- Student serving with Castle Square Tenants Organization





Student Testimonies:

"Overall, everybody deserves the right to an education. It is incredibly unjust that different regions (some within just a few miles of each other) receive an overwhelming amount of resources, while others are struggling through budget plans, deciding if they have enough money to buy paper and pencils for their students. I hope and pray for the day where education is equal for all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion"

- Student serving with 826 Boston

"My time volunteering at Castle Square gave me the chance to consider my own prejudices and privilege. I have lived in a predominantly white, wealthy neighborhood my entire life, so by volunteering at Castle Square, it allowed me to immerse myself in such a diverse community. My experience has left me with the desire to keep immersing myself in communities around the city and work on being a better neighbor to all of Boston"

- Student serving with Castle Square
Tenants Organization

"It was one of those moments where I realized I can usually do more than I think I can if I am willing to push myself out of my comfort zone. I think I really grew from that."

- Student serving with Boston Healthcare
for the Homeless Program



Student Testimonies:

I was paired with a young man who had absolutely zero interest in writing his college essay...He was overwhelmed with the college process, and deeper than that, he didn't feel as though he had a story worth sharing. I closed his computer and asked him to look at me. We took some breaths and then just talked for about forty minutes. It turns out he had an incredibly interesting story.... Finally, a lightbulb went off for him, and with about ten minutes left, he began furiously typing. I simply sat back and listened and he went between writing and talking about his essay idea, one that he was truly passionate about. He left happy and relieved, and I felt incredibly proud of both myself and him for what we had accomplished in that too-short hour".

- Student serving with 826 Boston

"I have never worked with individuals where there is a language barrier present, and my SL experience gave me the opportunity to do so... While almost all of them spoke English with us, it was very lovely to engage with them using the minimal Spanish I knew because I could tell that it brought them joy. It's a small act but I noticed that it deepened our rapport"

- Student serving with Little Brothers
- Friends of the Elderly

"I think that the simple understanding that we all live very different lives and all face certain challenges, yet are still able to find some connection or similarity with each other is important."

- Student serving with Immigrant
Family Services Institute



Student Testimonies:

"the most impactful experience for me was seeing MJ's progress throughout the sessions. MJ and I started off working with the multiplication problems and he had lots of trouble going through the problems quickly. I gave him a few tricks to deal with the 9's, 10's, 11's, and 12's and the next week he breezed through the flashcards. It was absolutely amazing to see the progress he had made in just a week. I was so enthusiastic about having first-hand experience in changing someone's academic path and helping someone find their passion in math subjects."

- Student serving with sySTEMic Flow LLC

"One of the most impactful experiences I had during my service-learning was being able to use Vietnamese, my first language, to help someone in their work development workshop. It was super cool to be able to use a skill that is second nature to me, that I didn't develop in any academic or professional environment, to help someone develop skills that they'll hopefully be able to use for a long time."

-Student serving with Pine Street Inn

"A takeaway I've gotten is that working with people from other cultures is always going to be a unique experience, no matter what. They experience something different from you simply by being from another place, or growing up in another environment entirely, and I think cultivating any sort of relationship because of that is an incredible thing"

- Student serving at Sociedad Latina

"As we worked I noticed the little ways he would check his work with me and I realized that even though to me our 2-3 year age difference didn't seem like much, to him, it was a lot. That was a very impactful experience because I had never considered myself to be someone that anyone would look up to or ask for guidance, and seeing this student trust helped me understand the ways I can become a role model. "

-Student serving with 826 Boston