Eliana Diaz Fall 2009

Throughout the fall semester of 2009 there have been many experiences that I will always remember as part of my senior year. However there is only one that has truly made me appreciate the value of learning much more than I ever have before. The intergenerational computing class has definitely left me with a very rewarding experience. I find that it is because it wasn’t simply a matter of going to class but it was the fact that you could have an effect on someone else’s life. For an hour I felt like I was making a difference in someone else’s life and I was providing him with a reassurance that age was not a limit on learning. I’m pretty sure I was able to pass on that confidence to Mr. Clark during my visits at UHGC.

            United Hebrew Geriatric Center that is where it all basically began.  At first going from school to New Rochelle in a rush in order to make it on time was not the highlight of my day. However after having met my student Mr. Richard Clark everything changed, rushing was no longer a hassle, I wanted to get there faster because I didn’t want Mr. Clark to wait for me too long. I remember the first time I shook Mr. Clark’s hand and introduced myself. There was hesitance in his approach towards me, yet I knew everything was going to be just fine, only because I always get along great with elderly males especially those around Mr. Clark’s age. Although I knew everything would work out fine I still felt nervous giving my first lesson. At first I thought that teaching Mr. Clark would take not only extreme amounts of patience but also much more time than just one semester, yet Mr. Clark would prove me wrong.

            Our day would start out with a warm hello and an eagerness to learn something new. After our first lesson which basically consisted on learning to log on and master the game of solitaire we began our task of exploring the world of the internet. Mr. Clark would always ask if he could search for his hometown of Indiana once he was in the internet. Looking at those pictures brought a smile to his face and I would enjoy listening to the stories he would tell me. We had much to learn about each other but I felt that even though I was in a teaching position I was learning more than what I had expected. As weeks progressed we would go over many basic things just to practice and not lose touch of anything learned. We advanced quite a bit, from first playing games, to logging into the internet, to searching for a specific page on the net through the browser, and trying to improve typing skills.

            Mr. Clark was always eager to learn something new each week, even though we had an assignment sheet I would always ask him what he wanted to learn each week or what he wanted to. Through the passage of weeks I realized that Mr. Clark surely because of age was not very good in memorizing things. He would tend to quickly forget most things, including my name. That I why in the booklet he brought to each class I would write down step by step of what he need to do when using a computer. This seemed to help him out a lot because I would always ask him what he practiced and he would flip to a page and show me what area he sought to improve in using the computer.

            I couldn’t be more proud of Mr. Clark by the end of the semester he had improved so much. This is an experience I will cherish forever; there is no doubt about that. This class has taught me things in a new way and I couldn’t have asked for more.