Gillian Buono

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Intergenerational Computing

Reflection paper

 This past semester we took an adventure into the land of Hallmark and many other older adult facilities. There we spent our time enhancing their knowledge on a device called the computer. To many that may sound silly, “a device called the computer,” but some of these older adults are baffled by this high tech machine and what it is capable of. I think my original thought on this class was to immerse myself in the work, get it done, and that be it, but a lot more happened. I appreciated both my older adults, but had a really special connection with one, Dinah. She is so free spirited, friendly, and willing to learn; she was a burst of energy. She was grateful for our time together, excited at each lesson, and really trying her hardest. I wanted her to adopt me as one of her grandchildren, that is how amazing she is! Don’t get me wrong my Grandmother is just as amazing, and she cooks some intense meatballs, but Dinah was right up there with her.

 I also worked with Kenneth, he was a character. I think he is a very sweet man, but he doesn’t really like the computers. I am not quite sure why he enrolled in the program. I would try everything; I showed him Pandora, Netflix, Itunes, Youtube, Facebook, Googe, sidereel, and 3,990,465 million other things and nothing really appealed to him. He would say, “Why would I watch TV or a movie on the computer? Why would I listen to music on the computer? WHY WHY WHY!!!” He thought all of these things were utterly pointless. “Why should I do any of that on my computer, when I can do it in my living room? Plus my speakers on the computer are horrible.” At first I felt defeated and frustrated, but then I came to a place where I understood why he was rejecting all the services I was showing him. A computer to him is not a necessity, it is not for fun. He did not grow up with this device, and it just doesn’t occupy that much of his time, and he doesn’t care for it too. “Why bother waste my time on this thing? I will email and be done.” “Oh Kenneth,” I would think. I tried! I really did! I think that he benefitted a little and I loosened him up just a tad, but that computer will not be his friend, just an acquaintance.

 Overall I think that this is a very positive experience, and I am glad that this is a graduation requirement, because otherwise I probably would have never taken the course. I have gathered more of an understanding for older adults, their work ethic, and their willing to engage themselves in today’s technologies and what they have to offer. Dinah really tried her absolute hardest, as Kenneth already carried an understanding for the computer. Dinah did not have any knowledge of how this device actually worked.

 We started from scratch, with just turning the machine on and off. Then we moved to more advanced things like changing the desk top background, she was amazed by all the colors and what this machine was capable of. Little did she know, this thing was just going to keep surprising her every step of the way. For a while we used just a regular desk top and she had a really hard time with the mouse, so eventually we moved towards Mr. Telikin. Telikin was magic for her, she never had to touch the mouse again, it was like it died, and she wasn’t sad at all. Ding Dong the mouse is dead! It was a very happy moment for the both of us. I did really minor things with her, because she was so new to the computer. We worked with this keyboard website, where you practiced where the keys were on the keyboard. She really enjoyed that, we looked up *Peter Pan* on Broadway on Youtube; her eyes glowed in amazement. Our second to last meeting with each other I signed her up with a gmail account. It was very confusing, but I think she go the gist. Since Dinah was so elementary to the computer, I think she would need a few more lessons to really master the email, and basic thing son the computer, but I believe that she could eventually grasp what it is this machine does.

Either way I had a splendid time with Dinah! I baked her a cake for her birthday, which she loved, and got her a card and some ribbons. We really did bond, and I loved every second of it!! Kenneth and I really did get along, I just think he won’t ever really get that interested in computers. He really doesn’t like them that much, which is fine and I completely understand. He is a great person, and I am glad I worked with him as well. This class was enlightening, helpful, and a joy to be a part of. I am glad my Dad made me sign up, it has been quite an experience. I love Dinah, Kenneth, and this class, I will definitely not forget this experience!