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Dr. Coppola

Intergenerational Computing

Reflection

Coming into this class I can honestly say that I was ignorant to the affects of aging and its relationship to technology. My life revolves around technology, and it is easy to forget that there is an entire generation of people who are computer illiterate. Technology is interconnected with almost all of my daily activities. So when I signed up for this class I assumed that everyone in this day has some basic knowledge when it comes to computers.

The weeks before we visited United Hebrew the class felt like it lacked in something. I was aware that we were going to have to work with the seniors, but my expectations were miscalculated. It was frustrating to think that I was going to have to commute to New Rochelle, and also work with another community partner for our term project. I thought to myself at the beginning of the course “what did I get myself into”? I was in a world that was completely unfamiliar to me, and felt worried about the course requirements. Dr. Coppola was very upbeat and encouraging, however my morale was low in the beginning. To say that this class has positively affected me would be an understatement.

For someone to grasp how this class has helped me, it is imperative that you know my personality. I have no problem pointing out my faults, and I can honestly say that I have selfish tendencies. I have a demanding job, go to school full time, competitively weight lift 6 days a week, in addition to studying to take the LSAT and GMAT. My days are full, and in order for me to accomplish these things I feel I need to be selfish. This class has taught me in a brief amount of time, that taking time to help someone other than myself is a good thing.

From the first class with the seniors, my prior worries and frustrations flew out the window. I genuinely enjoyed the company of all the people I worked with from the moment we commenced. I was nervous walking into the unknown, but once I stepped outside of my comfort zone I realized it was a good thing. By helping others, especially those dealing with problems that are hard for me to relate to helped me mature. I looked forward to coming in and donating my time and knowledge, and this surprised me, as I was not fond of the idea to donate my limited amount of time. I am honestly glad I did though, because for some reason I feel like I learned more from the course than the seniors we were teaching.

When it came to teaching the seniors I wanted to help them enjoy the benefits of computers. I would always ask what they wanted to learn, and I tried to get to know them so I could better identify what applications they would like. A lot of the time the seniors would really just want to have a conversation, and have someone listen to them. This was important to me, because I wanted them to feel that I was their friend, and not just a student coming in for a few weeks.

The term project was another part of the class that I really enjoyed. The challenges I was presented with worried me at first. I was ignorant to Cerebral Palsy, but once I began researching for the project I became inspired. These are people who daily do what others say is impossible. Their optimism about life, and their willingness to take on what people say is impossible is amazing. I feel that in so many ways these people should be helping me, and that I can learn so much from them. It has been my pleasure to work with CP, and would not mind continuing once the course is over.

Towards the end of the semester I was shocked at how quickly it all passed. I looked at the class in an entirely different light. I was taken back by the appreciation everybody had for us. They all seemed so grateful, and I am sure that they enjoyed the course. The graduation ceremony was sad, because it signified the end of our course. However, it was rewarding to see that the class was a success, especially when I was doubtful in the beginning. This was one of the most rewarding things I have done up to this point, and I was completely taken by surprise. To me this class was not only a service learning course for those we helped, but a valuable learning experience that I have never gotten from another course.