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Final Reflection

Service Learning

Social change is made by individuals who are willing to selflessly serve others. Throughout this class we have analyzed how social movements can be led to success and involved ourselves with a local social change movement. The Social Change Model lays out 7 group leadership skills and considerations that can help a movement be successful. Through the class discussions, readings, and speakers I have developed my group leadership values and skills, as well as grown in my community involvement and experience with social movements through my involvement with the Ready 2 Learn (R2L) Program at the YWCA.

When reading and applying the 7 C’s of the Social Change Model, I was drawn to the group values and sense of community more than the individual values since I had more room for growth in those areas. Community and Common Purpose were the two C’s that I feel I have developed an understanding of the most. Before this class, I had a very strong value of family and relationships with close friends. I found that these relationships were valued to me because my family is a group of people that share many experiences and we have a sense of belonging between all of us. This is the same with my close friends as well. The sense of community in both groups is what makes me happy to spend time with them and contribute. This sense of community is one that can greatly benefit my leadership situation when working in groups. In the last half of the semester, I have put more focus on building a sense of belonging and community in the groups and teams I am a part of. Before this class, I would have said that a common purpose is all that is needed for a group to be successful, but in order for group members to invest themselves into a group they must also feel like they belong.

I have seen how community and common purpose can affect a movement through my involvement with the R2L program coordinated through the YWCA. As a non-profit organization the YWCA relies on community involvement and the higher sense that the YWCA addresses issues that community members see affecting them the more willingness they will have to donate and contribute to the organization. In my service program, I worked as an in-home tutor for a New American Somali boy and prepared him for preschool. I felt this program address issues that I would encounter as an educator and I found myself dedicating hours to planning lessons, gathering supplies, and creating games that I probably would not have done if I did not feel as though they would make a difference to those that share my career path. At the mid-session meeting for the volunteers, I found myself surrounded by other education students with he same passion and involvement that I did and it was a true demonstration of what an organization can do when it attracts the right followers and contributors to their group that buy in to their purpose and mission.

My dedication to my service organization, projects, readings, and class discussions have helped develop my group values and contribute to class. My class participation and contribution to group projects is why I believe I have earned an A in this class. Discussions held with my group members for projects allowed me to develop my values as well as my peer’s. Class speakers allowed me to tie these values to how they are applied to social movements and group work. I feel prepared to utilize these skills in my current leadership experiences as a student and employee, as well as my future leadership position as a teacher.