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English 2020-013

Professor Petersen

17 December, 2014

Service Evaluation

For my community service project I volunteered at the Provo Bicycle Collective. Admittedly, I was not looking forward to making the time to do community service for this class at the beginning of the semester. However, after my first time volunteering at the Bicycle Collective I found that I enjoyed the experience. Each time I volunteered at the Collective I learned something new about bicycle maintenance. I had a great sense of pride and accomplishment every time I successfully restored a bicycle into working condition. After only a few days of volunteering I began to feel more confident in my abilities to repair bicycles and my understanding of the intricacies of the various systems on bicycles greatly increased. With each passing week my enthusiasm for the project improved. It was also very rewarding to know that because of my efforts, a few people will be able to buy a working bicycle for much cheaper than they would have otherwise been able to buy one for. Even though my service project is complete, I think I will still volunteer there every once in a while. Working at the bike shop proved to be not only enriching, but relaxing as well.

I think that volunteering at a non-profit bicycle shop made selecting a topic to write an argumentative research paper about much more difficult. It took me a long time to realize a conflict in the world of cycling that I could choose a side to argue for. While my service project made starting the research paper more difficult, that challenge provided for a more enhanced semester in the final English class of my academic career. I do feel as though the research for my paper was more interesting because I could directly relate it to an aspect of my life through the service project. I would suggest using the Provo Bicycle Collective as an agency for future students to conduct their service projects. This non-profit shop was a fun and rewarding outlet for volunteer work. I learned a lot about properly repairing bicycle components and my work made a positive impact on my community. Students interested in volunteering at the Bicycle Collective should be aware that the agency is not very well organized, and the only way to communicate with the agency is by going there and talking to a volunteer directly. The other limiting factor is the Provo Bicycle Collective is only open Friday evenings and for five hours on Saturdays. I gave up trying to go on Fridays because half of the time the shop was closed or had to close soon after my arriving. There are only about five or six active volunteers, and if no one is available to work either shift the shop cannot open.

Overall my community service project was a positive experience. One way that the experience could be improved is if more examples of service projects were presented that related to various majors. Finding a volunteer organization that relates to some majors such as criminal justice, philosophy, or nursing are inherently easier to discover than other majors. I would have preferred to have been able to do a service project relating to my major, but I could not find any service organizations nearby that had anything to do with computer science. The service organization I did volunteer for turned out to be an excellent avenue to enhance my knowledge of cycling. If I had to do the service project again, I would choose the same organization.