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English 2020-13

Dr. Petersen

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Service Proposal

I have recently taken up the hobby of bicycling. During my search to find an affordable bicycle my friend recommended that I look for one at a volunteer organization called the Bicycle Collective. This organization takes donated bicycles and refurbishes the bikes to be sold or donated to the community. The Collective also provides bicycle maintenance and safety instruction. They even have space set up in their shop for a person to bring in their bicycle and do their own repairs using the specialized bike tools on hand. The Bicycle Collective has three locations. Their main location is in Salt Lake City. There are also shops in Ogden and Provo. I visited the shop in Provo, and I hope to do my community service there.

The Bicycle Collective was formed in 2002 and has made a large impact on the communities it has served since its foundation. On their website there are some statistics for what they have accomplished for the community. In 2013 the Salt Lake City shop refurbished 1,989 bicycles and donated 559 bikes to low-income families. There were also 315 children that went through the “Earn-a-Bike” youth program. This program teaches kids how to be bike mechanics and is partnered with several youth organizations such as the “Boys and Girls Club” and “YouthCity”. At the completion of the program the child is able to take home a bicycle. The Bicycle Collective offers free maintenance classes on a weekly basis. As a non-profit organization, the Collective gives people the opportunity to purchase a bicycle at a much lower cost than a regular bicycle shop. This allows someone on a limited budget to pursue cycling as a hobby that normally would not be able to afford it. Part of the vision of the Bicycle Collective is to get more people to bike to work, which makes an impact on the environment and an individual’s health. These are some of the many ways this service organization impacts the community.

I chose to volunteer at the Bicycle Collective for several reasons. Having just purchased a bicycle, I would love to know how to properly maintain it. I am expecting to learn a lot about repairing bicycles. I have some mechanical experience from fixing my dirt bike and taking an automotive class while I was at community college, but I have never really worked on bicycles. I generally enjoy working on vehicles and I think it will be fun to refurbish bikes for the community. I also know very little about the world of bicycling and I am interested in learning all about my new-found hobby.

I have not yet heard back from the organization, but I have a general idea of what I will be doing to contribute to the community. Primarily, I will be working on refurbishing the bikes donated to the Collective. I imagine my supervisor will instruct me on how to repair certain parts of the bike and then I will be expected to repair those parts on other bikes. My supervisor will probably have a lot of experience repairing bicycles and I am excited to learn from him. Another task I will most likely help out with is organizing the donated bikes. I think this will be a great way to learn about the different kinds of bikes that are available.

I think that there are a lot of different aspects to cycling that would make great research topics. One possible topic for research that I could write about is the positive health effects of riding a bike. Another idea to research is what the environmental impact would be if more people rode bicycles to work instead of driving to work. There is also a lot that can be written about the cycling culture and different competitions and charity events that are involved in the cycling world. I am hoping that I am able to do my community service for the Bicycle Collective. The work would interest me and I could learn a lot. Also, it would make a positive impact on the community.