Annamaria Luna

Social Problems

Dr. Drury

5/4/25

Advocacy Reflection

1. Serving migrant and refugee families taught me so much. I was able to learn the importance of advocacy especially for those in need. Before being a part of this, I honestly didn’t even know refugee families existed and needed our help. A moment of growth within this experience for me was bringing in clothes to donate. I normally sell my clothes but chose to donate them this time instead which I felt like was a moment of growth for myself. In regards to education equity, this experience showed me what it’s like for someone to not have the opportunities they need to succeed. I’m glad we were able to help the cause and give back to the community that doesn’t have equal access to resources.
2. By collecting clothing, raising funds, and organizing community support with my classmates, my perspective on mutual aid and grassroots organization was definitely shifted. Through the grassroot initiatives and mutual aid, I was able to see how powerful the concept of community really is. Each time I received an update on the amount of clothes donated or money raised, I was always astonished. It’s crazy to think that a small group of people can make such a huge difference. The emotion that came into play for me while taking on the responsibility for meeting urgent needs was mainly hope. When collecting my clothes to donate, I was thinking about the families I would be helping and had hope for their futures.
3. Out of the three research studies, the one that resonated most with me was Study 1. Being a low income college student myself on the search for a new job, this study hit close to home. I personally know the struggles of being in college and having to worry about finances while also searching for a steady income. Through participation in this research project my view on the role of data in shaping public understanding and policy was definitely changed. Before participating in something like this, I didn’t know my contributions would make a difference but clearly I was wrong. I think it is amazing that data can help the public better understand the issues at hand and I’m glad to have been a part of that.
4. Before this experience, I don’t think I truly understood the power of community. Therefore I can confidently say that this experience definitely challenged my prior views on the power of community organizations in addressing complex issues. Like I said previously, each time I heard the amount of clothes donated or money raised I was always shocked. I used to think that I’m just me and there's not much of a difference I can make in the world. This experience showed me that my participation mattered because if we all had that mentality nothing would have changed. The strengths of this kind of work are definitely teamwork. Teamwork is what made this happen. Everyone's contributions, big or small, paid off in the end. The limitations could be lack of participation if some people choose not to participate. I’m not sure if that is the case but I’m sure that would be a limitation.
5. This experience for sure shaped my personal goals and sense of purpose. This experience made me feel like I was a part of something bigger than myself. It has for sure motivated me to want to continue to help others within my community. Advocacy is a skill I learned through this experience that I hope to carry forward. This has shown me that just by spreading the word about an issue, change can be made. I hope to keep supporting others by continuing participating in community donations. Bringing in my clothes knowing they were going to a good cause made me feel good and I’d love to continue things of that nature. Overall, It was a great experience that I was happy to be a part of.