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**Education Advocacy Research Assistant** *Reflection Questions*

1. What did serving migrant and refugee families teach you about trust, advocacy, and the barriers that families face when trying to access basic educational resources in Chicago? Reflect on specific moments of challenge or growth and consider how this experience shaped your understanding of educational equity.

**1.** For me ever since I was a kid I have loved making other people smile and be happy, I would always tell jokes and have fun trying to give off positive energy. Now being older, that needed feeling of helping others has never felt stronger, in my Social Problems class I really understood how people in my own community and society are struggling to have basic needs such as clothes and academic resources which we should never allow to continue. This experience made me realize how grateful and lucky I was as a kid to be given full access and materials to succeed and excel in schooling, I am now fully aware that’s not a common practice as many children have little to no access to education which leads to a harder life to be “successful” in. As I grew up with friends who weren’t given all the tools to succeed in schooling I am made more aware of that the older I have gotten.

1. How did your role in collecting and distributing clothing, raising funds, and organizing community support shift the way you understand mutual aid and grassroots organizing? What emotions or insights came up for you as you took on responsibility for meeting urgent needs in real time?

**2.** Once I saw how they were looking to collect slightly used clothes I knew I could give something up to somebody who needs it more. Every time we had to share a link I always took the survey myself first then sent it off to my friends and family to complete and help the research study. Knowing something so small as giving up some clothes I don’t wear or taking a couple minutes out of my day to take and share a survey made me feel very accomplished and helping people always makes me feel joyful.

1. Of the three research studies you contributed to, which one resonated most with your personal story or the stories of people you know? How did participating in this research project impact the way you view the role of data in shaping public understanding and policy?

**3.** During the semester we were given three research studies and for me personally the second one talking about college degrees felt the most personal to me. Not only am I in College working towards my personal degree, I have friends who come from all different backgrounds and they are striving to be the first member of their families to graduate from college and it's awesome to see from afar. Also just in terms of helping collect data and spreading these studies to all kinds of people is very important because it's able to get a range of opinions and backgrounds to collect the best research possible.

1. How did this experience challenge or confirm what you believed about the power of community organizations in addressing complex issues like job searching, educational access, and technology in daily life? What do you now see as the strengths and limitations of this kind of work?

**4.** Being involved and aware of this program only confirmed my understanding that people care about others and are able to listen and work together. These organizations are doing nothing but helping those who can’t always help themselves. The strengths is making those who are unaware aware and going out of their way to contribute and help those in need however the limitations is getting the program's name out there, before taking this social problems class I hadn’t yet heard of “ChiEAC” so just getting noticed by people is the only uncertainty when starting to create change in the city of Chicago.

1. Looking back at your time with ChiEAC, how do you think this experience shaped your personal goals, sense of purpose, or vision for the future? What skills or perspectives do you hope to carry forward—and how do you hope to keep supporting others?

**5.** My personal goal is always to be the best man, son, brother, friend I can be and my purpose in life for me is to be happy and make others happy so my experience helping ChiEAC with my fellow classmates has been a great experience. In terms of skills I am taking away from this experience would definitely be organization and holding myself and others accountable by making sure they looked over the links I had sent them. I will always strive to help others in all aspects of life such as making others aware of organizations like ChiEAC and just always being a positive energy and good person everyday.