**Project Reflection Questions**

1. Serving migrant and refugee families made me realize how neglected people can be all just because they weren't fortunate enough to have access to basic resources. It really opened my eyes to how broken the system is! like, why is it so hard just to enroll your kid in school? These families weren't asking for anything extra; they just wanted what everyone deserves in general. Even though I didn’t get to meet them directly, donating and helping from behind the scenes made me think deeply about how much people are struggling in silence. This experience taught me that educational equity means nothing if it doesn’t include the people who are usually left out, and it made me want to be the kind of person who helps those around me more! Especially when no one else is stepping up.
2. Raising over $2,000 and helping distribute more than 500 pounds of donated clothes showed me how powerful help from a community coming together is when it comes from the heart. I used to think helping people was all about big nonprofits programs, but this work taught me that real impact starts small, with people simply looking out for each other. Even though I didn’t directly interact with the families, just knowing that those donations helped meet someone’s basic needs made me feel so happy to be part of it. It gave me a deeper sense of responsibility, like, "If we have the ability to help even people in need even in small ways, who wouldn’t?" This made me see mutual aid not just as a charity, but as solidarity and shared humanity.
3. The study about how people view the value of a college degree hit home for me. Being a first-gen student, I know what it feels like to carry that pressure to succeed in college. Even when the people rooting for you don’t always understand what you're going through. Helping with that project made me realize how impactful it is to take something so personal and turn it into data that actually says, “Hey this is a real issue and it matters.” It made me see how research doesn’t always have to be boring! It can be emotional, realistic, and a voice for people who are often overlooked and don't get the chance to express themselves. It honestly made me feel seen in a way I didn’t expect it to.
4. This whole experience confirmed for me that community organizations like this one are where the real work happens. They may not have the biggest budgets or flashiest programs, but they know the people, the language, and the needs in a way no outside system ever could. At the same time I saw how limited they can be. There’s burnout, not enough resources, and so many problems to put out at once. But that’s also why they’re so powerful! They stay grounded in the community. I walked away with a deep appreciation for how these organizations hold things together when no one else will.
5. Even though I didn’t directly meet anyone in this experience, it still had a huge impact on me. I’m a really empathetic person so just knowing that I was able to help someone even in the smallest way; it made me feel like I was doing something good regardless of it not benefiting me. It made me want to keep supporting people who don’t always have a voice. I know I want to keep doing work that actually helps others and makes a difference in communities. This made me feel more sure of that but to actually pursue it.