



Reflections

Spring 2015

By SUNY Delhi



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Reflections: A Foreward</i>	ii
Editorial Board	iii
<i>Reflections Spring 2015 Contest Winners</i>	iii
SUNY Delhi Mission Statement	iv
SUNY Delhi Definition of Service-Learning	iv
 <i>Reflections—Student Essays on Service-Learning</i>	
Joey Manna	1
Kathleen Lennon	5
Rachel Barriel	7
Charles Leahy	9
Sezen Uslan	11
Ryan Bennett	17
Kimberley Eckerle	19
Abigail Kennedy	21
Alyssa Reillo	23
Kimberly Saleman	25
Melyssa Matter	29
Jason Marin	31
Kyle Brown	34
Kevin Link	36
Ti'Ana Trotman	37
Katherine Gross	41
Nicholas Nagrowski	44
Rebekah German	46
Jade Cox	48
Adriana del Carmen	51

Reflections: A Foreward

The purpose of this publication is a simple one—to share course-based student service experiences at SUNY Delhi with the broader campus, our communities, and anyone else interested in the important work SUNY Delhi students complete each and every semester.

SUNY Delhi's mission states, "Because the student is the most important member of the SUNY Delhi community, the college is committed to student success through academic achievement, civic engagement and experiential learning." Any service-learning activity directly addresses this mission. Service-learning provides students with the opportunity to link their academic lives with their personal and professional communities, engaging with these communities in meaningful ways that prompt learning through experience.

These learning experiences often end up being the most important experiences students have at the college, as prospective employers continually state a desire to recruit college graduates who already have experience doing "real" hands-on work outside of a traditional classroom. Importance can also be measured through the simple act of memory. Ten, 20, even 50 years from now, students will likely remember the work they did cleaning a cemetery, picking apples for a food bank, or walking dogs at an animal shelter. I'm not sure if they will remember anything about comma splices, quadratic equations, or the Franco-Prussian War.

More broadly, the mission of any college involves learning, and a key part of learning, especially service-learning, is reflection, the willingness and ability to meaningfully consider past experience for future progress. The essays that follow provide such important thinking, as students consider the lessons they learned through service, lessons that often relate to far more important matters than grade-related success or future employment.

This publication was compiled and edited by students in my two Spring 2015 ENGL 100: Freshman Composition classes. Students not only completed their own service-learning projects, each meeting a 10-hour service-learning requirement for the course, but also created advertising flyers and did much of the hard work involved in deciding not only what makes good writing, but what makes for the most impactful writing. Since reflection is a key component of the service-learning definition at SUNY Delhi, submissions were solicited from the entire campus.

As more and more SUNY Delhi courses receive the service-learning course designation, and as more and more instructors include service activities in courses without this designation, I envision this publication becoming far more representative of the work done throughout the campus. I will be working with my Freshman Composition courses each semester to create a new publication like this to appear on the O'Connor Center for Community Engagement's website, and maybe a few hard copies will be produced as well. Please consider sharing your learning experiences with the rest of us.

Regards,

Dr. Benjamin S. West

Editorial Board

Rachel Barriel
Ryan Bennett
Kyle Brown
Steve Caputo
Adriana del Carmen
William de Leon
Salvatore Diaz
Rebekah German
Alex Grant
Kathy Gross
Brooklyn Kasson
Abigail Kennedy
Charles Leahy
Thomas Leahy
William Leahy

Kevin Link
Danielle Maiorano
Melyssa Matter
Naishawn Minott
Nicholas Nagrowski
Naciar Odindo
Shantay Osbourne
Alyssa Reillo
Jesse Reynolds
Shamikie Saunders
Desmond Ware
Jason Warner
Erik Xique

Spring 2015 Contest Winners—Best Reflection Essay*

The following students received cash prizes based on rankings from their peers:

1st Prize—\$75—Nicholas Nagrowski

2nd Prize—\$50—Alyssa Reillo

3rd Prize—\$25—Sezen Uslan

*Award Winners were chosen using a blind review process. Submissions from the SUNY Delhi campus were solicited and ranked by students in Dr. West's Spring 2015 English 100: Freshman Composition courses.

Special thanks to Vincent Ferrara for designing the cover.

SUNY Delhi Mission Statement

Because the student is the most important member of the SUNY Delhi community, the college is committed to student success through academic achievement, civic engagement and experiential learning.

SUNY Delhi definition of Service-Learning

Service-learning engages students for life-long success, promotes academic excellence and builds strategic partnerships through civic engagement and experiential learning. Service-learning is a combination of classroom instruction and community service with a focus on critical, reflective thinking. Students are able to become active participants in the learning process by applying what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. SUNY Delhi defines service-learning as:

- a) An educational experience based within an academic, credit bearing course in which
- b) Students participate in an organized service activity that meets community needs as identified by our partners and is facilitated by the instructor to meet set learning goals and
- c) **Reflect** on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and
- d) Are able to become active participants in the learning process and gain an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

Joey Manna

In class this semester, we've spent a particularly long time defining and addressing the problems associated with rape culture. Rape culture can be defined as "a culture in which dominant cultural ideologies, media images, social practices, and societal institutions support and condone sexual abuse by normalizing, trivializing and eroticizing male violence against women and blaming victims for their own abuse" (*Huffington Post*). Rape culture can be as simple as a T.V. commercial or as complex as a rapist blaming the victim for "asking for it" and everything in between. Rape culture is something that effects everyone; not just women, but men too. I'm really glad that we were given the opportunity to spread the word throughout the community; I feel that one of the biggest reasons rape culture is such a big problem is that countless members of the public are uninformed on the issue. That being said, it was certainly a pleasant experience working with our classmates and the SAFE Against Violence program to help spread awareness to our community. My group consisted of myself, Karina and Sydney. It was funny because I didn't know either one of them, but after spending a little bit of time with them, I feel like we all learned a lot from each other. That was the beautiful thing about this service-learning project. Not only did it inform me on what exactly rape culture was, but it also allowed me to contribute my efforts in making a difference.

The aspect of rape culture that my group was responsible for covering and presenting was gender roles. Gender roles are both cultural and personal. They determine how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society. Learning plays a role in this process of shaping gender roles. These gender schemas are deeply embedded cognitive frameworks regarding what defines masculine and feminine. Being a male college athlete on this campus, I was very pleased to find out that I was in this group. Gender roles are something I've always struggled understanding; there are over 7 billion beautiful people on this planet and we generalize all of them into one of two categories: male or female. Besides constructing a poster that SAFE Against Violence displayed in the community, we also conducted a survey. We believed as a group that the most effective way to raise awareness about gender roles and rape culture was to be interactive within our own circle of people we knew and talked to on a daily basis. We took a different route with the survey. Being that it's 2015, we are in an age of Facebook, Twitter, Yik Yak, etc., so we figured the most effective way of reaching people would be through email and the internet. We built a 14 question survey on basic gender

role topics. The survey was sent to many of our friends, classmates, teammates, and even family members. Some of the survey questions included “Men/Women are happiest in careers when?”, “The most difficult emotion for a Woman/man to display is?”, “Men/Women are most likely to compete over?”, “As a man/woman, I was always taught to?”, “Women feel pressured on the job when?” and “Men/Women tend to get angry about.” Each question on the survey was gender specific; that way would we got to really see how the person we were surveying felt about gender roles, whether they knew it or not. Their survey answers would be directly emailed to us and they had the opinion of putting their name on the survey or not. At this point we could reflect on the individual’s responses and reply accordingly. For instance, something I ripped off one of the surveys was the question “The most difficult emotion for a man to display is?” One tester replied “that changes for everyman?” This, amongst many other replies from this individual, were written proof that they are fully aware of gender roles. Our job from here was to email them responses on how gender roles play an important role in rape culture. From there we can send this particular individual articles on the topic of rape culture and maybe even opportunities in our community on how they could make an impact to help inform the rest of the public on rape culture.

On the other hand, if someone was to answer these questions with a more general sense of gender roles, maybe even stereotyping men and/or women to an extreme, we could use this as a chance to help the individual to obtain a basic understanding on how gender roles work and how they affect our everyday lives. This was maybe my favorite part of the whole project because whether the person taking the survey was a hardcore feminist or an ignorant uneducated human being, there was some way for us as a group to have a direct impact on their views of gender roles and rape culture. I’ve always believed that the best way to educate someone regarding such topics as rape culture and gender roles is to attack the issues one on one. I feel this way is effective, because we’re all at different stages of learning. This stands true because every single person understands gender roles and rape culture differently. This kind of interactive survey is even extremely beneficial to those committed activists out there taking it, because it allows us as a group to inform them on opportunities within their own community to get involved and start making a difference. This a huge factor in making changes in our society because we feel that a lot of people out there are somewhat informed and want to make an alteration to the way we view gender roles, but have no idea where they would even start. My

role in the group was to create the survey. I spent a lot of time finding individuals that I felt would fall either into one end of the spectrum or the other, but I was surprised with the replies I received. Many people I thought would be uneducated on the matter had very decent un-generalized answers, and vice versa. I think I did make major contributions to our project as an individual because I not only designed the survey part and replied to all of the people who took the survey; I also presented our project and my ideas to our class. I believe I did a solid job on my portion of the project, however, I believe if I had started a few days earlier I might have been able to make an even bigger impact on the people I surveyed. I am indeed very pleased with my project. Karina and I spent a lot of time talking about how we wanted to influence more people on gender roles and rape culture. I think we did a pretty good job; this was a very fun project for us and it honestly didn't feel like a lot of work because we felt like we were somehow making a little bit of a difference in our community.

There were two things I learned from this project/presentation. The first thing I learned was the idea that men can actually get raped. I learned that 1 in every 6 men are sexual assaulted as children and 1 in every 33 men are raped as adults, which is something I never even really thought about before this project. Another thing I learned about gender roles is to not generalize people. Any time you make a generalization based on someone's gender, you are indeed contributing to rape culture. These generalizations include saying that men are typically more dominant than females or that women that dress promiscuously must be slutty. Oversimplifications like these contribute to rape culture as a whole and need to be toned down from individual to individual in order to strive for a better society, a society where judgment doesn't exist and you can be whoever you want to be. Rape culture is a vital issue because it is something that affects everyone, whether they know it or not. Rape culture is a part of our everyday society and is a giant problem amongst teenagers and college students because it supports ideas like "boys will be boys" and "slutty girls can't get raped."

As students who have been enlightened about these ideas, it is imperative that we make an effort to inform our fellow teenagers and college students of the topics, so that we can change social expectations among young men and women. I believe awareness is the first step to a utopian society and I feel that the biggest problem with rape culture is unawareness: the more unaware the general public is, the more they will contribute to rape culture and stereotyping. Because these beliefs are based off of the idea of equality, it will benefit everybody regardless of

race, sex, gender or orientation . I'm much more prepared to respond to rape culture or any type of unfair treatment than I ever was before. Before this class I never even knew what rape culture was, and I may have even made a few too many rape jokes and didn't realize how insensitive it was. After this class I know that I have been put into a position in our community to help spread a positive message. Now any time I hear someone making generalizations or stereotyping what a man or woman "should be like," I often say something that will hopefully influence that person's perspective and make them think differently about that particular topic. I think that at its simplest form, this is how someone can make a huge impact on our social expectations and rape culture or any oppressing issue. I think making people aware of their faults and stereotyping will lead to enlightenment of others.

Kathleen Lennon

The ability to listen and take notes was always well-respected throughout schooling, especially in a public education system; teachers in high school liked when we could recite information back to them with complete accuracy. A 100% on my test was a sign of my intelligence, as was a 65% on another test. If you went to a public high school, you understand what I am referring to and why it mattered; in high school, as long as I could memorize something, I would succeed. I just assumed that college would lead me down the same path as well. However, when I actually came to college and began taking classes that took learning outside of the four walls and bright overhead lighting of a classroom, I began to realize that the “learning” I experienced in high school is not comparable to what I would experience here at SUNY Delhi.

This semester, Spring 2015, I enrolled in a class that has given me the most hands-on life experience that I have been a part of: Hotel Banquet and Functions, or Banquet for short. What I did not know when I signed up for the Banquet class was that it was not only the perfect glimpse into the catering industry, but also a service-learning class as well. The dictionary definition of service-learning, as defined by Merriam-Webster, "is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection." A service-learning class incorporates aspects of classroom learning, like lectures, with more hands-on events, like labs, and even incorporates community service events into the mix. To me, service-learning classes teach students how to give back to the community that they are a part of and then reflect and grow from the events that occur.

For years, I was heavily involved in community service. In high school, I was even part of the Interact Club where I assisted Rotary and served countless hours of community service. Even into college, I wanted to continue helping the community as much as possible; however, with taking upward of 20 credits per semester and being part of so much on campus, I found it hard to serve the Delhi community as much as I would like. Taking Banquet seemed like a perfect solution; I could spend class time gaining valuable community service hours as well as learning a new trade. I knew that many of the local community members may not always see college students in the most positive light, but I aimed to change that with every club and organization that I became involved in on campus.

As we began hosting dinners and events, I felt more and more in touch with the Delhi campus, and the community as well. We hosted Honors Society induction dinners, fundraisers for the seniors of Delaware County, banquets for VIPs and much, much more. I had the opportunity to serve at the Kevin Zraly fundraiser dinner, which is by far one of the biggest events on campus in the spring semester; all of the proceeds that come from the dinner and the blind auction before the dinner go to student scholarships. My table consisted of lovely local professors, as well as a Master Chef and a well-known wine connoisseur. It was extremely nerve-wracking to serve a fine-dining, five-course meal to the big cats of the industry, but I can honestly say that serving the event taught me so much valuable knowledge about the hospitality industry that I do not necessarily believe I could have experienced elsewhere.

Going into Banquet, I did not know what exactly what was in store for me, but I am more than pleased to have chosen a class that has not only taught me so much, but has helped our community in many different ways. Working alongside Professor Redinger and Chef Margiotta, as well as my amazing two teaching assistants, Patrick and Kait, I have watched my class, and myself, grow and develop exponentially. Hotel Banquet and Functions is a service-learning class that I would recommend indefinitely to any hospitality student. The class has changed my opinion on learning and education by showing me that professors can incorporate learning into real life situations. Overall, service-learning, and Banquet specifically, have given me more experience in my field and with the Delhi community than any other class I have taken on campus.



Rachel Barriel

Service-learning is something that has always been close to my heart. I've done a little bit of everything, from soup kitchens to helping my church hold events to raise money for breast cancer, but something that I've never done was a walk for a cause. As soon as I found out there was a walk in support of all types of cancer, I knew this specific service-learning activity would be close to my heart. My grandfather was in the rough stages of fighting off cancer himself, and to support him and others going through the same thing meant a lot.

This was my first walk so I didn't know what to expect. As soon as we got to the Legion in Delhi I was overwhelmed with the amount of people who were there. About a fourth of SUNY Delhi's students and half the community were there setting up tents and stands. We quickly got to work to set up a sight to be remembered. We made glowing bags with names of people who were fighting the battle or who have even lost the battle to cancer. This showed remembrance and respect to the fighters and their families. With the smell of grill-cooked hamburgers and hot dogs in the air, and people playing football and frisbee, it felt like a huge family reunion.



With all the preparations of lighting the bags and setting up the food stands done, the walk was finally going to start. The first to walk before anyone were those who were the fighters of cancer. They walked side by side showing their strength, but what caught my eye was this little girl who looked no older than 3 with her mother holding her left hand and her father holding her right hand. This showed me how large an age group cancer really affects. When all the fighters finished their lap an uproar of claps filled the air as they crossed under a post wrapped in balloons.



It was then open for everyone to walk. A large crowd including myself took the field and started to walk around the lighted bags, but the sunny skies turned into clouds with a blink of an eye. Then the water started to slowly fall from the sky, but that didn't stop anyone. Everyone started to pull out their bright yellow rain jackets and umbrellas and kept walking. Even people who didn't have any rain protection started to grab garbage bags and make their own rain jackets. The once hard grass we were walking around rapidly turned into mud, but you could see that the rain wasn't going to stop us. That day there wasn't a dry spot on me from walking 8 hours in the rain even with my rain protection. The crowd slowly started to dissipate and there were only a few of us left walking at 3 in the morning surrounded by darkness that was lighting up by the bags. I couldn't have been happier that I was able to partake in this experience.



Charles Leahy

Although many students completed their service learning in their own community, I completed my service learning in a very different community in the Central American country Nicaragua, the second poorest Central American country. Before this semester, I made a commitment to take a twelve-day trip in February to Nicaragua with a group called Beyond Partnership. Our group would construct a large building, which would be a school, house, and a church for the Nicaraguans. My Nicaragua trip became my service-learning project for my English class. Although I anticipated simply going to help a poor community in Nicaragua, I received a valuable lesson.

To get to Nicaragua, the trip was twenty-two hours. Leaving very early from Oneonta, our group took a bus to Newark, New Jersey, where we flew to Houston, Texas, and from Houston to Managua, Nicaragua. Getting to Managua late, our group spent the night at a hotel there. There was about a one hundred degree temperature difference between Oneonta and Managua. The next morning we had a bus trip to the city of Matagalpa, a mountainous area in the northern region of Nicaragua where the job site and the hotel were located. I was shocked when I arrived there because of the city's great poverty. Compared to hotels in America, this hotel had extremely small rooms; some Americans have bigger closets than these hotel rooms. The rooms were just big enough to fit two very small beds and have enough room for the door to swing open. There was not a bathroom in each room so I had to share a bathroom with about eight other people.

The very next day after arriving in Matagalpa, our group headed to the job site to start the construction. The building would be built entirely out of concrete blocks and would have a tin roof. This building, unlike most of the Nicaraguan buildings, would actually have a concrete floor, not just a dirt floor. For the next seven days I would work at the job site for about eight hours each day constructing this building. On days one and two, we dug and poured the foundation. The digging was the worst part of the construction because the soil was clay with a lot of rocks, so a lot of tools broke. After digging the foundation, we laid the rebar in the foundation and poured in the concrete. The next four days were all very similar as we started laying the concrete blocks. Some people would be mixing the mortar, which we did on the ground, while others formed the bucket brigade (which was just as quick as the Union Fire Company) and carried the mortar to the block layers, who were mostly Nicaraguans, because you

actually had to think to do that job. We continued this monotonous process each day until the walls stood at the right height. The final workday at the job site was spent putting up the steel beams to which the tin would be attached. Everyone felt very satisfied when we completed the work and noticed how happy the Nicaraguans were with this new building.

After I returned home from this trip, I became aware of how much I actually have. Knowing that most of the Nicaraguan families lived in tiny, dirt-floor shacks and did not know when their next meal might be really showed me how fortunate I am to have what I have. I have never worried about having enough food. Surprisingly, however, the Nicaraguans were happy with their homes and were satisfied if they had a little food to eat! As a privileged American, I do not believe that I could be happy if I only had what they have. I left on this trip only anticipating that I would be helping Nicaraguans in a very poor community, but I returned home knowing that I should be more content with what I already have.

Sezen Uslan

Throughout the service learning project, I have learned about many important aspects of rape culture. My specific portion of the project revolved around the idea of women in social media. We dug deeper and hit many important subunits within this topic, such as the beauty standard and the double standard, and we took a look back over the past 20 years, which also proved that these ideas existed way back. This subject has raised my awareness on not only women and how they get depicted through social media, but also femininity in rape culture as a whole.

Within the topic of rape culture, there were many interesting ideas we discussed as a team. The way we presented these ideas was through a tri-fold board. Also, by conducting a survey we collected real data from individuals on campus. My portion of the work was finding images of women representing the idea of the double standard of beauty. For example, I found an image of a thin, tall and attractive young model and labeled her as "show-off", "asking for it", "slut". Then, I searched up another image of a woman who was slightly overweight, average and not as appealing to the average man, and labeled her as "un-rapable", "ugly", and "fat". This was a prime example that was expressed on the tri-fold that I contributed to. This was the idea of the double standard of women in social media and rape culture. It's showing that basically women of all types never win. If you are skinny, tall and pretty you get torn up by it. If you aren't, you still get attacked for not being the way society wants you to be. This was shown strongly on the poster and took up a good portion of the tri-fold. Another portion of work I contributed to was physically meeting up with another team member and brainstorming new ideas on the making of the poster. After spending almost two hours on the poster, Jenny and I both were able to make an overall appealing representation of our topic through research and vivid images that supported our ideas. Through research, finding images, and brainstorming ideas on the visual aspect of the project, I was able to put forth effort that made the project not only enjoyable, but gave me a great deal of insight on a topic that not many are aware of.

Besides the visual aspect of the work that was done, I also did a few other things. I worked to put the Project Proposal/Guest Speaker Reflection together. The way I did this was by collecting each team member's portion of the proposal. Each team member worked on a bullet point or two that was listed to answer. Once everyone answered a portion of the proposal, I took everyone's portion of writing and organized it in a way where it would flow as one whole paper.

I edited and revised word choice, checked for grammar and punctuation mistakes, and ensured that the proposal as a whole flowed as if one person wrote it. Not only was that one of my main goals in the Project Proposal, but also it was to ensure that our project was mapped out and organized in a way where not only the team members would be prepared to represent our topic, but also to show the professor what our project initiatives were in a clear manner.

One way our group reached out to the community was by constructing a survey that consisted of several personal, yet powerful questions. An example of one of the questions that was used in the survey was, "Have you ever been personally victimized on social media? If so, did you know the person?" This simple question that was answered by 20 individuals on campus showed that many people suffer from social media issues. Many answered, "Yes" and some of the people actually knew the individual they were being victimized by, while others did not. This was an example of how personal the questions asked were. By collecting all this data it allowed the class and ourselves to conclude that many individuals are affected by this idea of women in social media. Another question that stuck out to me was "Has social media changed the way you look at yourself?" This to me was a question that almost all of the girls I asked to do the survey answered, "Yes". Although this survey was only taken by a small number of individuals on a college campus, it still does its job by raising awareness on this topic of how women are depicted by social media.

One observation I made was through a small discussion on this question with a friend I know. I asked her specifically if social media affected the way she looked at herself. We are of course very close, which is why I felt like I wanted to know her personal opinion on the topic. She simply answered, "No" in confidence and for a second I felt like that was really amazing that she isn't being affected by something that we are all surrounded by. Then I looked into how she acts on a day-to-day basis. The fact that she has many social media accounts, and is exposed to this idea of an "ideal image" of the perfect woman made me think differently about her confident answer. She is always explaining how she wants to shed a few pounds and complains about other features on her body almost every day. This proves to me that we women are unconsciously being affected by this idea that we all have to appear a certain way to the world in the society we live in. We unwillingly are being brainwashed to think that we must stay thin and be perfect in order to be accepted, and by seeing it first hand, it raised my awareness on this topic even higher.

After doing this service-learning project and running into specific experiences like the one in the previous paragraph, I have learned that many people are unaware of feminism and rape culture in general. We lack that on college campuses, which is an issue that will continue to grow until we college students get educated on this topic. Having a awareness on such a controversial topic like rape culture is just as important as buying textbooks while in college. Without it, you won't do very well and you more than likely will not have the knowledge that all students should have. This topic is so essential to know because we live in a society where we are surrounded by the idea that women are likely to get raped at some point in their lives. This should never be the case, but in this era it is something that all women and men should be highly knowledgeable on. In Delaware County especially there are high rates of molestation, which is especially important to learn about because of our location here at Delhi. Raising awareness on this topic will only benefit college campuses because then all of us will know what to expect and what to be ready for in the area and atmosphere we live in. Being aware is essential for all college students and this will be helpful in tragic situations that some unfortunate students undergo. It is important that, by being aware of rape culture at a college level, we will ensure that there will always be someone out there that the victim could reach out to and/or to get further help from. I personally know that I can now be better prepared to respond to rape culture after doing this service project which is something not every college student can say.

This service learning project has made me knowledgeable on topics that not many individuals are aware of. Being able to do research and look into specific aspects of rape culture has opened my mind in ways I wouldn't have been able to do without the completion of this project. The work I did on my behalf also gave me more insight on the topic itself, whether it was through research or personal discussions with individuals on campus. I'm content with the way this project turned out as a whole. I think our group did well on splitting up the workload and we all put forth our opinions and ideas. By working together as a group, I was able to learn new ideas which opened up my mind on a whole new streak I never thought of before.

One thing I could have done differently would be to have spoken more while presenting the project to the class. Although I am outgoing and love talking to others and hearing their insight, I lack public speaking skills. Another tweak I would have made reflecting back as a group was that we could have prepared better for the presentation. As a group we did not rehearse for the presentation and in fact never were all together at once at any point. We were

split up due to schedule barriers, but we still managed to work around it. We also never went over what we were going to say, or who was going to present certain parts. This made me feel like I was caught off guard when the group volunteered to present first. This is something that we all could have worked on more and contributed in during the presentation aspect on the project. Despite that, through contributing to this project, I'm able to conclude that I did a substantial amount of work that not only was required, but also was out of my interest in the topic, which made this project an enjoyable academic learning experience for me. Also, I worked very well with my team members.

Ryan Bennett

As a fraternity we did a canned food drive in front of Cugino's Pizzeria for the food bank in Delaware County. This was not required, but we do it in the fraternity to help out. We don't want all the people who live in the town to think that all we do is party. We also like to give back to the community and help them out. We live here, and not just on campus; our house is in the Town of Delhi.

The canned food drive was to help those living in poverty in Delaware County. Some of these people do not have jobs or aren't able to provide for themselves. We collected cans from anyone who wanted to donate. All food that was given to us was passed on to Delaware Opportunities. We do this to show them that we're not only about partying, and that we would like to give back any possible way we can. We did it right before Easter so that we could at least give them an Easter dinner. The owner of Cugino's works at SUNY Delhi and he knows us as a fraternity and he was kind enough to let us do the food drive right in front of his establishment.

I learned that it is not always okay to care about yourself, but when you care about others and try to help them you will feel good about yourself. Also, being in a fraternity isn't just about partying, but it is about meeting people and doing things as a group to help other people. We have been doing this canned food drive every spring for over 5+ years now. We also do other stuff to help the community by other means of community service. We participate in Relay for Life, an Easter egg hunt, and also during the fall semester we rake leaves for older people around the area of our house.

During the canned food drive I also learned that the people of Delhi also care about those living in poverty because they donated the cans to us. If they didn't care they would have just kept walking and not donated. I learned that being polite and helping other people will get you somewhere in life, and it also makes you feel good about yourself. When you help people and don't just put yourself first people will think of you better; if you are just a self-centered person, people around you will look at you differently and think that you are selfish. The fact that we were in a group shows that we all care about everyone together. In the end, after helping people you feel good about yourself.

As a fraternity we all care about the people around us because we are in their town and they have lived here for years. People raise families here and when they have college kids partying all the time it's a bad impression for the kids. When you are out there as a group helping out, people that live in Delhi see that, and this can leave a positive impression on them and their families.

Kimberley Eckerle

During the Spring 2015 semester I had the opportunity to be involved in a service-learning project through SUNY Delhi's Animal Care II Class (VETS 204). In this class our goal was to enrich an animal through positive reinforcement clicker training. Although there were cats, dogs, cows, pigs, sheep, horses, rats, and monkeys to choose from, I chose to work with a horse named Slider. He had just been donated to SUNY Delhi in the Fall 2014 semester. Big, beautiful, and curious, he was a sight to behold. Throughout this semester I have spent many hours enriching Slider and achieving the goals the class had decided on. To start, I needed a plan of action to be approved by my instructor.

At the start of the class we learned about clicker training and different types of reinforcement. Then we got to pick our animal and our instructor. I was lucky enough to get Bill Sherman as my instructor and Slider as my enrichment animal. Next we needed to come up with a plan of action as to what our goals were for our animal. Since I had a horse my goals were slightly different than some students. As trainers we needed to pick goals that fit our animals and were reasonable. After making a plan we then got it approved by our enrichment instructor. In our plan we needed to include not only our goals, but when we planned on working with our animals. This class was going to require a lot of extra time outside of class. We would get out of the class what we put into it. Slider is a ten year old, 17.1 hands (each hand equals four inches), bay gelding. He was donated to the school because when he was younger he broke his back and neck and is now unable to be ridden without being in pain. Although he cannot be ridden he is perfectly healthy to just hang out in the pasture and be used in class. When I first met Slider I realized that he was very nervous being in a relatively new place, so that helped to shape my goals with him.

When it came to planning out what my goals would be I decided to figure out what he would need to do in the veterinary technology classes. If Slider was going to be useful he would need to be calm and easy to handle in class. My first course of action was to work on his nervousness. I started by just bringing him in the barn, which was not popular with him since he did not want to leave his friends. Each time that I brought him in he got better about leaving his friends. When entering the barn we would need to pass pigs, chickens, goats, and cows. Slider had never been acclimated to any of these animals before coming to SUNY Delhi, so that was a bit of a challenge. He was scared of the pigs and did not want to pass them at first. It took a lot of

coaxing and treats but he did eventually go past them willingly. Each time I brought Slider in I would put him in stall so he could hang out and just watch the daily activities and get used to the barn. At first he was very nervous and would move around the stall a lot. It took awhile, but soon he became a calm happy horse in the barn. I would give him time to settle down in the stall and then I would work with him. We worked on tying a lot so that he could safely be tied in the stall when he would be used in class. Grooming, being haltered, led, and having leg wraps placed were all things that he would need to be able to do for class. Each time I brought him in we worked on a few of these things and his confidence grew. Before I knew it Slider had gone from a nervous horse to a confident love bug. Since I was also in Farm Animal Nursing this semester I used him during my class.

In Farm Animal Nursing Slider would be required to do a couple more things such as a lameness exam and injections. The lameness exam just included him being able to walk and trot in hand, which was not a problem. The injections were something that I could not practice on my own, so when we got the opportunity to see how he would act I was very excited. I hoped that he would behave, but I had no idea how he would react to being stuck with a needle. Slider would need to behave for an intramuscular injection, subcutaneous injection, and a blood draw from his jugular vein. I held the lead rope and had him stand still while the instructor did the demonstration on him. Slider never reacted to being poked by a needle; it was as if it did not even happen! This was the best news I could have hoped for. Slider was a rock star and I could not have been more proud of him. Slider had exceeded my expectations in the best way. As the end of the semester nears I am very thankful that I was able to work with him.

The experience I gained from this service learning project is something that cannot be replicated. Although I was able to train Slider in a way, I feel like he was training me. Slider taught me that not everything happens overnight and the best things take time. He may have been nervous at first, but through our partnership he blossomed into a confident horse. It might have taken a lot of extra time, but it was all worth it in the end to see Slider grow so much. Through the enrichment that I gave him I was able to mold him into a great teacher for other students. This is something that I would highly recommend to other students because it was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Abigail Kennedy

Sitting on a bench with a Basset Hound Collie mix named Beau, tears started running down my face because of how sad his eyes looked. Beau has been in the Heart of the Catskills Humane Society where I did my service-learning hours for quite some time. When they brought Beau out, I wasn't expecting to feel so much pain. I didn't know his story and I prefer large dogs, so I didn't expect a bond to form between the two of us. All it took was one look into his eyes and I could feel my heart breaking. Beau and I spent quite a bit of time together while I was volunteering, and I walked him every time I was there. I also formed a huge connection with a brindle Pit Bull puppy named Zena. There wasn't a single day that I was there when I didn't cry because of how much my heart ached for these poor animals.

One of the days that I was walking Beau it started to downpour and we sought out a bench that had the most coverage from the trees. I sat down and gave him a pat on the head, and he instantly jumped right up onto the bench and laid his head across my lap. We sat like that for quite some time, me burying my face in his fur and crying for this poor dog that just wanted love, affection, and a home to call his own. The third time I walked Beau, they brought him out to me from the kennels and he immediately recognized me and ran up to lick my face like crazy. As a dog person, this didn't bother me one bit, and I knew it was something he didn't get to do often. I could deal with some dog slobber so he could show me all the love he has to give. We walked along the paths, him leading the way. It broke my heart that he was trained to sit, lay down, and walked perfectly on a leash; Beau had most likely had a loving family who had trained him and then left him in a shelter to live out his days in a cage. I was at the dentist during the time that I was volunteering, and my dental hygienist was telling me about her Basset Hound who was mourning the loss of the other dog that had been a part of their family. I told her all about Beau, and showed her pictures. She took the contact info, and is currently filling out paperwork to adopt Beau into her home to keep her other Basset Hound company. Although Beau made me cry from sadness, when I showed her his picture and saw her face light up, I cried tears of joy for Beau instead of tears of sadness.

I am now working on getting Zena a home; I was undergoing the adoption process myself for this four month old puppy, but sadly her personality didn't mix well with one of my other dogs. I have her picture posted on my Facebook page, and am sharing it and spreading the word about this amazing puppy. She was completely untrained, but within one walk she had learned

how to sit and not jump for the treats. Zena is such a brilliant little girl, and while trying to find her a home I am also working on changing people's opinions on Pit bulls by showing them how loving, sweet, and smart they really are. Zena taught me a lot; she made me laugh every time I saw her and her whole body would shake with happiness, just like any other typical pit bull.

I had volunteered at the humane society before, but had never had this kind of reaction to the dogs I walked. I think this is due to the fact that I walked these two dogs multiple times, and really got to know them and their personality. I was able to see how much is going on in a place like that, and how all of the volunteers and employees were trying so hard to make sure the animals all got a bit of love. I chose to continue volunteering on a weekly basis as long as my health is in check on those days. I realized that although I am only one person, I can give these animals so much love, and they give it right back.

Alyssa Reillo

For my service-learning, I didn't do what most people would expect. It wasn't typical service. I had gotten my hours by going to the Heart of the Catskill animal shelter and making and designing various fliers. Creating fliers doesn't seem like it would have been considered as a type of "community service," but I had donated my time, just in a different way than most. My experience taught me that there are more needs in my community and more ways that I can help out than I thought of before.

I learned a lot just from my short service-learning experience. I learned that I don't have to go to the usual soup kitchen or homeless shelter to do any type of community service. There are so many other ways people can help and be helped. But helping those in need doesn't just apply to people; it applies to animals too. I had never really thought about all the homeless animals in town and around the world. Pets have been known to help people and benefit families in return.

You don't have to actually adopt or rescue an animal to help out. That's something else I learned. The staff and volunteers at the shelters work hard maintaining the facilities every day, feeding the animals and cleaning for little to no profit. Yet there are even more hidden needs. For example, I helped out with socializing the cats and walking the dogs. After having walked some of the dogs, I could start to see past their hyper behavior. People may see them as hyper and crazy, but I could see how they were just happy to be out of the cages they were always stuck in. I saw how walking the dogs doesn't just help them release pent up energy so that they look better to adopters, but it also frees up the staff's time to be put to better use and gives the dogs socializing interactions with humans. Socializing with the cats was more important than it seemed. If a cat isn't friendly, it's harder to be adopted, sometimes impossible. For these reasons, I felt that all my help was important.

I was particularly surprised that I could help out from my dorm. Using my skills in Photoshop, I was able to help by creating adoption fliers for the animals there. I had fun making witty and attention grabbing advertisements. I had the flexibility of my own schedule and time. My classes conflicted with the hours of operation making it impossible to have helped otherwise. Sitting at my desk at three in the morning, I was still able to contribute. It might not seem important or necessary, but any form of free advertisement is welcomed, especially by non-profit organizations like the Heart of the Catskills.

I think more people would help out in their community if they knew all the different ways they can help. There is much more to it than showing up somewhere and cleaning or preparing food. There are flexible ways for most people to do their own thing.

Kimberly Saleman

I had the distinct pleasure of working along with Mike Aborah and Kaitlyn Perrone for the Rape Culture Service-Learning Project. Of the eight different topics—Consent, Gender Roles, Inadequate College Responses, Sexualized Media Depictions, Slut-Shaming, Social Media, Street Harassment and Victim Blaming—I feel truly fortunate to have received Consent as our project topic.

Mike Aborah was the team member responsible for the survey and reaching out to the campus community. This was extremely helpful since both Kaitlyn and I are commuters. Mike printed approximately 50 surveys asking individuals what their general knowledge was on consent and their personal opinions.

During our class presentation Mike shared his findings and the responses that he did not expect. There was a question on Mike's survey, "Who do you think gets taken advantage of more, Males or Females when it comes to consent?" The general consensus was that females get taken advantage of more. However, several responders stated that males get taken advantage of too. Mike seemed genuinely surprised by the response.

My contribution to the project was the artistic direction and creation of the poster. Our group set a date and time to meet at the library. Mike was unable to make the meeting. Kaitlyn was in charge of the research and discussed the categories she was focusing on so that I could create headlines for the poster. Kaitlyn and I used the time at the library to discuss the layout and color choices of the poster.

Kaitlyn suggested bright colors to pop on the black background. I mentioned that utilizing one central/bright color (along with white) would bring a cohesive look to our presentation. The choice was made to use aqua which is the color used to represent the Sexual Consent campaign that is observed every April.

Part of my responsibility was obtaining images or sayings that would encourage an individual to think about consent and enhance their knowledge about consent. Another part of my responsibility was taking the research that Kaitlyn provided me via e-mail and formatting it to fit under the headlines of our poster.

I have a funny story about my research on consent. I visited the Student Health Clinic hoping to obtain pamphlets on our topic. There was nothing readily available, even though there was a recent change in the SUNY school's policy on consent.

Leaving the clinic, I stopped at the ladies room before I walked back down into the village where I park my vehicle. While washing my hands I noticed a black colored poster with bright colorful bullets of information attached to the back of the bathroom door. The poster covered all different types of examples of improper consent (i.e. coercion to drugging) and how important it is to obtain proper consent (i.e. asking permission or asking if it feels good).

I whipped out my iPad from my backpack and took multiple pictures of this poster and its contents. As I exited the restroom the secretary looked at me with concern. I couldn't contain my excitement finding such a great piece of information regarding consent. I was under the strong impression that the receptionist wanted to schedule me an appointment for a counseling session – I tried to assure her I was alright.

Self Evaluation

I feel I made a significant contribution to our project. I found that everyone in our group has special talents. From our first meeting as a group, Kaitlyn felt extremely comfortable with research. Mike, our campus resident, knew where to leave surveys and felt comfortable speaking with others regarding their knowledge and beliefs on consent. Then there are individuals like me who enjoy creating and being artistic with the poster portion of the project. I put thought into what would catch a person's attention: utilizing large letters with a pop of color. I outlined the letters with coordinating glitter and utilized poster lights to draw one's focus on such an important matter.

I appreciated my fellow classmate's response when the poster was displayed. Overall, I am satisfied with how the poster turned out. Prior to the due date, I stopped by the County Health building on Main Street and also contacted the office of the ladies from the SAFE Against Violence team that spoke in our class. I was unable to locate pamphlets about consent. I also scanned the multitude of pamphlets in Deb Lumia's office to no avail. It was my original intention to attach a container of pamphlets to the poster so that if anyone wanted additional information it was available. In hindsight, if I was working solo, I would have probably used red as the accent color. When I think of consent, I almost think of it as a moment of pause. It is the time you take to make sure that you and your partner are in agreement.

I am thankful for the opportunity to address my classmates about the concerns I have for their generation and what they face when it comes to consent. I appreciated their laughter when I

was trying to be funny and I hope they could sense my heart truly goes out to them and what they deal with in this day and age.

Knowledge

As I mentioned during our class presentation, the thing that surprised me regarding preparing the research was when I read the *Sexual Assault and Prevention Tips* that Kaitlyn provided for the poster. It made me stop in my tracks. I panicked thinking I was going to have to start the research from scratch. It sounded so primitive or juvenile. Then it hit me that some of these individuals literally need to be taught that certain actions they use to initiate intercourse or sexual situations are NOT okay. For example:

- It is not acceptable to put drugs in people's drinks in order to control their behavior
- It is not acceptable to have intercourse with someone who is not awake
- Wearing a dress is not an open invitation to take sexual advantage of someone.

Awareness

It is my personal opinion that rape culture is such a significant issue because all eight categories that we have focused on have led us to a society where disrespect and mistreatment of others and their personal space, their private information, their beliefs and values is the daily norm. It is no longer shocking to see the rape culture treatment of others.

Awareness specifically affects teens and college students in a couple of ways. If a young adult does not have a solid foundation at home, a warm, loving and supportive family (it should not matter if it is a single parent, adoptive family, or mixed family home) that sets a good example and teaches them right from wrong, that young person can be exposed to the insensitive ways of others and think it is okay to violate someone else for their own pleasure. It is imperative that young people learn to have compassion for others. It is vital that vicious cycles be broken and that history not repeat itself.

It is important for us to continue to raise awareness on the SUNY Delhi campus because we are constantly having new students arriving on campus from numerous outlying areas with various backgrounds, beliefs and exposures. It is our opportunity to spread the message that sexual consent is the expected norm from everyone who attends SUNY Delhi and lives in our community. If we continue to draw awareness to consent (along with the other topics) we

educate those that might have come from negative or abusive backgrounds and make them realize it is not okay to treat anyone in such a manner.

Behavior

After learning the various types of topics when it comes to rape culture, I do believe I am better prepared to respond to situations on campus and within my community. Things that I can do to raise awareness and counter rape culture in my daily life would include: not laughing or participating in rape jokes, slut-shaming, street harassment, and victim blaming. I can limit my viewing of sexualized media depictions and not promote viewing of such materials to anyone else. I can help support those that have an inadequate college response and support the individual in any way that I can (i.e. by signing a petition or marching in a protest).

When I see inappropriate actions of others, such as a female that is incapacitated and/or alone with a group of males, I can help remove her from that situation so that it doesn't escalate into a situation she won't be able to control. I can also make sure that my fellow female classmates, family and friends are in situations that are safe, not being left behind/alone at a bar or walking home alone at any time. I always make myself available to anyone in time of need. It is better to be safe than sorry.

In order to raise awareness about and discouraging rape culture, I will continue to set an example for all those that I come in contact within my daily life. Having been a Girl Scout Leader and Church Youth Group Leader for years, I have been able to promote compassion for my gender and for individuals that may even be different from myself (whether due to physical appearance, disabilities, or medical conditions).

As a college student and youth leader I can find and promote uplifting activities such as *One Billion Rising*. I can seek out books and movies that address the various rape culture issues and create book groups and viewing parties so that individuals can feel open to address issues and seek help if needed.

Upon my graduation and eventual career as a Registered Nurse I will have ample opportunity to promote awareness appropriate behavior to women both young and old. I have even had the opportunity in my current job setting as a Unit Secretary and personal sitter with patients at the hospital that I work with. The opportunities are endless if we just open our eyes and ears to it.

Melyssa Matter

As a local, it wasn't very hard to find a service-learning activity. There were quite a few options, but I ended up doing my service-learning at a small, local business called Green Circle Accounting in Cooperstown. It is only about fifteen minutes from where I live. Although I eventually want to get into the nursing program to become a registered nurse and accounting has nothing to do with that, my service-learning activity was a great experience.

I started at Green Circle Accounting on the Friday before I had to return to school from winter break. As I said, the business is small, and on Fridays there is usually only one person working in the office. I walked into what seemed like a garage that was repurposed into an office. As I pushed open the old, heavy door I heard a jingle from the bell that was attached to the door knob. I no more than took a step in and I was in the middle of the office; four metal desks, each paired with a yoga ball, surrounded me. The name of the employee who worked alone on Fridays was Beth.

The first task that Beth gave to me was filing. I had never done it before, but it's a pretty easy concept. After asking Beth a few questions now and then it became a methodical task and I ended up finishing the huge stack of papers in no time. Swoosh, through my fingers the papers and receipts flew into the neatly labeled folders. After filing I learned how to use a program called QuickBooks which is used for bookkeeping. Beth showed me how to do some data entry in the program. She also explained account reconciliation to me and let me try it out on my own. It wasn't as easy as filing. At one point Beth had to re-reconcile a month of finances because no matter what I did, it didn't add up to what it should have. Account reconciliation is balancing a bank account on a computer program.

One thing that I learned about my community from this service-learning activity is that small businesses don't only provide necessary local services, but they can also be involved with giving back to the community as much as larger companies often do. Green Circle Accounting gives one percent of their profit to local organizations. Green Circle is also involved in the Earth Festival which is an information and vendor fair. I can safely say that although I didn't want to be an accountant before, I know for sure now that it's not what I want to do with my life. Accounting is too much of the same repetitive thing each day for me.

Even though I didn't think that this would have anything to do with me or my career, I gained a good bit of knowledge from this experience. When you think of an accountant, you

don't usually think of a nurse, but I found that there are a few similarities. As a nurse, I may not be the one doing the filing, but I will have to be familiar with it in order to look through a patient's charts and files. Also, being a twenty-three year old, you would think that I should already know how to balance a bank account, but I didn't. This service-learning activity turned out to be very useful in that aspect of my personal life.

Jason Marin

The service-learning project was a project aimed at educating many people on the impact of rape culture. It's a topic many people don't know about, or disrespect highly. With the effort we put into our poster boards and other activities on or off campus during our projects, we definitely made people take a different look at things and influenced their lives.

The group that I was a part of worked on the topic of Inadequate College Responses. Our group was designed to educate people on how serious college rape and sexual assault cases are and how lightly there are often taken. One major part of our project was taking part in an on campus activity to spread awareness on this topic. We wrote various facts about rape that people might be unaware of on the sidewalk right in front of the library. These facts were "most victims of rape or sexual assault are females younger than 24 years old", "most rapists are people you know", and "more than half of sexual crimes happen between 6pm and 8am". These facts are in a spot where everybody will see them and they'll definitely reach out to at least the people on campus.

Each member of our group had their own specific part to contribute to the project, and mine was the most descriptive. What I did was case studies on two articles to explain and prove that inadequate college responses really happen and they happen regularly. The two articles that I did were "Raped on Campus? Don't Trust Your College to Do the Right Thing" and "Columbia University Student will Drag Her Mattress around Campus until Her Rapist Is Gone." "Raped on Campus? Don't Trust Your College to Do the Right Thing" is about a girl who was gang raped by three male University of Oregon basketball players and how this case was held off long enough for the basketball players to finish their basketball season. During the case the University of Oregon was able to access the girls' records for their own defense. One of the most important parts of this case was that the university was able to access the females' records because of the legal claim of emotional distress asserted by the female, and according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Oregon was entitled to use her medical records against her. But later in the case evidence was found that the female did not assert any claim of malpractice against her therapist with the support of the rest of the department. It's definitely a problem that the basketball players were allowed to finish their season and the university was able to access the females' records as their defense, and these are some things that need to change. "Columbia University Student will Drag Her Mattress Around Campus Until Her Rapist Is Gone" is about a

girl who was anally raped on the first day of her sophomore year in college, Emma Sulkowicz. Also two other females came forward after Emma brought up her case saying they were assaulted by the same student, but all three victims believe their cases were mishandled, in part by mistake-riddled record-keeping on the part of the University authorities. After Emma's assault she committed herself to carrying around the same mattress she was raped on everywhere around campus until her rapist left or was expelled. She stated that after the incident happened she felt as if she "carried the weight of what happened since then" which is the main reason she decided to carry the mattress all around campus. Also, she and the other two females' alleged attacker was found responsible by the university and remains at the school. It is also a definite problem that this rape victim should have to do such a thing as carry around a mattress all over campus to get the right people's attention and the rapist should not still be able to be on campus, especially with the evidence that he committed the rape, which are also some things that need to change. What I also did to contribute to this project was help adjust my partners' information so that each font was the same and was able to fit on our poster perfectly. I also picked certain designs and fonts to look better for the poster. Finally, I helped cut and paste each piece of information on the poster.

Seeing how the project finally came out, I feel like my portion of the work contributed greatly. With all my information from the case studies I think I did a pretty good job and am not dissatisfied with anything. I am 100% satisfied because when we were first assigned this project and I chose to do the case study portion for my group I was confident since I knew I always did well on essays which is what a case study is; I just split it into pieces as it looks on the poster.

While completing this project, I definitely learned a few things myself. I learned that as a result of the University of Oregon rape case there are certain places that can keep your records confidential. These places and contact information are Safe Horizon's Domestic Violence, 800-621-HOPE (4673); Safe Horizon for Crime Victims, 866-689-HELP (4357); Safe Horizon for Rape, Sexual Assault and Incest, 212-227-3000; and National Sexual Assault, 800-656-4673. Not only will I have these numbers for myself or others in need for future reference, but it's good to know that there definitely is secure help out there. I also didn't know the information in any of the quotes we used for our project, but it is now good to know those certain things now. Each of the quotes, however, are a shame.

Rape culture is such an important issue, but people really don't seem to care enough to act on the situation. Every single day there are young women and even men that are sexually assaulted and nothing is done about it. These issues are just as serious as any murder, robbery, or normal assault case. It specifically effects teens and college students because these are the peak years for both men and women. People look different, act different, and you'll never suspect the person. I think it was specifically important to raise awareness at this campus because of how much these types of things are not talked about and I think this project will have significant positive impact. I think so because any time someone sees something for the first time it will affect them, especially if it's a topic like this.

If there is one thing I am now positive about after learning all of this new information is that I am definitely better prepared to respond to rape culture in any community. If there was one thing that I could do in my community to raise awareness about rape culture it would be to just simply advertise more and to just constantly spread the word so everybody will know, won't forget, and most importantly, will be aware.

In conclusion, the service-learning project was a project aimed at educating many people on the impact of rape culture. Being a topic that is often not acted upon, it remains one of the biggest problems anywhere. But with enough effort, anything can change.

Kyle Brown

When I heard ten hours of service-learning was required for the course, I wasn't overly excited about it, but I knew it wouldn't be too hard. Most people did something small in their community and helped out with whatever they could; however, I ended up going to an entirely different country to do my service. I was going on a mission trip with Main Street Baptist Church to Nicaragua and would use the services I did in Nicaragua for my service-learning. The major service I would be doing in Nicaragua was building a building that the people could use for anything they needed it for. The entire trip was a major learning experience for me, both mentally and physically.

Since I went on a mission trip in a different country, I think my experience was a lot different from the people who completed their activities locally. I was able to observe another culture and see how the people in Nicaragua live. I went to Nicaragua with a group of thirty people. Our goal was to complete the entire building, with a few Nicaraguans, in a week. The building we would be building was not like the ones in America. It would be completely made of cement and cinder blocks with a tin roof, because the normal materials used in America are too expensive for the people of Nicaragua.

The worksite was always full of activity, smells, sounds, and sights; nothing was ever at a standstill. There were always people mixing cement, laying cinder blocks, cooking, yelling, digging, or playing soccer with the local kids. Each day at the worksite I was able to observe how hardworking the Nicaraguans were, not only the grown-ups but the kids as well. Many of them had sandals on and were walking in the cement and on the rock, but even though they were constantly stepping on rocks they didn't complain. This made me think of people in America. Americans will find any excuse to complain or to not work. These people had so many reasons to complain, but they didn't. Watching the kids work made me think about how easy the kids in America have it and how snobbish and stuck-up they sometimes are.

In order to complete the building by the time we left, we had to work together, and everyone had to help in some way. There was always a group of people that were mixing cement, and another group that were laying the cinder blocks. When we had to carry the cement from where it was being mixed to where it needed to be poured, everyone would get in a long line, and we would pass buckets of cement down the line. With everyone working together and doing what was required of them. We were able to complete the building.

The idea of erecting an entire building in a week didn't really seem possible; however, with everyone working together and doing what they could, it went along fairly quickly, and we were able to complete our goal. This just shows how people can accomplish a lot in a short amount of time, as long as everyone does their part and works together. This experience changed the way I view our society in a way. People are always trying to get ahead of someone else and are always thinking of themselves. Maybe if people tried to help each other a little more, they could accomplish more with the help of others. They might also feel better about themselves, because not only did they help themselves, but they also helped someone else.

Kevin Link

I have been participating in community service for a majority of my life. Being in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, I had helped out a lot in my community, but it was nothing challenging, just raking leaves or picking up trash. Community service is very important to me, and it made me happy that I found out we were doing something like it in class. Some people will wonder why I like community service. The reason is pretty simple, and it is because I enjoy seeing the smiles it puts on people's faces. In class we called it service-learning which I just see as a fancier word for community service or volunteer work that involves learning.

For my service-learning project I chose to go to the animal shelter in Delhi and meet an animal to make a flier for. I had the choice to either choose a cat or dog, and I have both at home so wasn't sure what one to choose. As we arrived at the shelter we pulled up a long dirt driveway that led to a small building. We walked through the front door and all I heard were dogs barking, so I figured we were at the right place. I was really surprised at the amount of cats and dogs that this place had for adoption; there were definitely a lot more than I had expected. When we arrived I made the quick decision to meet some cats. I played with a few of them in different rooms. Some of the cats were awesome and very friendly and some were pretty vicious if you tried to pet them. There were a few things that I learned while doing this service-learning activity. First I learned that there are a lot more animals out for adoption that need help. The amount of cats and animals in the shelter really surprised me. It seemed as if there were more cats and dogs there than there are people in Delhi itself. I also learned that there are definitely not enough people who volunteer at the shelter even to just come in and play with the animals. Some of the cats I played with acted as if they never had been pet before, which could be the case. I would really like to see more people go and visit the shelter even just for 30 minutes. I had also re-taught myself how to use Microsoft Publisher, which is actually a good skill to know. There are companies out there that really enjoy graphics and fliers, and knowing how to use those programs I could be a great asset to them.

Overall, this service-learning experience was fun. I got to do something that I really enjoyed; I mean, who wouldn't like playing with cats or dogs for an hour. If it was up to me I definitely would go back and walk a dog or play with cats for a little bit. I could really tell that the people running the shelter greatly appreciated it. I'm sure they would love to have me back to work with more animals.

Ti'Ana Trotman

My group consisted of Jade Cox, Laurie Louis, and myself. The topic we discussed was Victim Blaming. Our tri-fold board consisted of the definition of victim blaming so people who view our board could have an understanding of what the topic is, pictures that depicted victim blaming and how people handle it, a summary of an article that we went over in class that shows how a young girl was victim blamed, and the anonymous responses to questions that we decided to ask students on campus about their opinion of victim blaming.

Our group reached out to the campus community to discuss the issue of victim blaming by asking a series of questions that depicted how they feel about victim blaming: have they ever experienced or knew someone who experienced victim blaming, how did their community treat the victim, how would they personally treat a person who was being victim blamed, and do they believe both guys and girls could be victim blamed. After speaking to each individual about victim blaming, I realized that even in this day in age, some people still believe that rape is the girl's fault. For example, one of the responses to the question "Why do you believe women get raped?" was "It depends on what the girl was wearing." This response disturbed me since in my opinion, it is never the victim's fault when they are raped, and the rapist is always at fault. I also learned that many people are against victim blaming, which is heartwarming.

For this project, I contributed by taking part in interviewing students around campus, I helped created the board by finding pictures online that explained victim blaming, and I also contributed by helping whoever views the board have a better understanding about the topic at hand by finding the definition of victim blaming. Lastly, I summarized the article about a case that took place in Texas.

I believe I contributed significantly to the project and I believed I did a good job on the portions that I did for the project. However, after viewing the other group's boards, I do believe that I could have been more creative. I did not let that discourage me, since I am satisfied with how my section of the project turned out. My sections got straight to the point and I tried to make sure whoever looked at the board had a clear understanding of what victim blaming is.

After our group's discussion, reading, and presentation, it helped me realize that victim blaming is still present today. It also made me open my eyes, meaning that I began to ask myself whether or not men get victim blamed, which is why my group and I decided to add in the question concerning victim blaming. I also learned some of the myths and realities about victim

blaming. For example, women rarely lie about getting sexually assaulted, women usually get sexually harassed by a person they know, and most assaults occur in a private home (Women Against Violence Against Women). Statistics that I found also surprised me. For example, 60% of assaults occur in a private home and 38% occur in the victim's home (Women Against Violence Against Women).

Rape culture is a significant issue because there are many facts that people do not know. A prime example is how many people we interviewed that did not know what victim blaming is. Out of the eight people we interviewed, we had to explain what victim blaming was to seven. I believe the media should advertise rape culture as well as how victim blaming and sexual assault could be eliminated.

Rape culture specifically affects teens and college students because it shows them that other women are going through the same things they are. It also helps them become aware of topics that fall under rape culture that they did not know about. For example, before the Women Studies class, I did not know what slut shaming was. If teens and college students did not know what victim blaming is and are easily influenced, society may make them believe that it is their fault if they are assaulted. Being aware of rape culture also affects teens and college students because it shows them how prevalent rape is in today's society. It will help them realize how the media is hammering in their mind, without actually saying it, that they need to be tall, skinny, and thin with long hair in order to be attractive in today's society.

It is important for us to raise awareness about this particular issue here on the Delhi campus because there have been certain situations in previous years that had to do with domestic violence that led to victim blaming. There was also a situation on campus where a girl was not abused. However, since she had scars on her face people automatically assumed her boyfriend hit her. Once the students assumed she was hit, they said comments such as, "Well she must have done something to deserve it." I believe if people on the Delhi campus were aware of rape culture, especially victim blaming, ignorant comments would no longer be made.

Awareness will have a positive effect on the college campus community because if any form of abuse happens on campus, the students will know how to handle it. They will understand that rape is not the victim's fault, therefore no blame will be put on the victim, and the college will punish the rapist or assaulter to the highest extent. If a student is abused, they will not be afraid to come forward and he or she will have a great support system.

After the service-learning project, I am better prepared to respond to rape culture on campus and even in a larger community. I believe that I am ready to explain to young women and men that it is possible for men and women to get raped and it is never the victim's fault, that everyone is beautiful in their own way and although the media constantly shows what the "ideal" man or woman is supposed to look like, it is okay if he or she does not. I will also inform people that street harassment is not acceptable. Most women view it as disrespectful and disgusting and there are many other ways to talk to women.

Gender roles would also be stressed. I would explain that although society expects men and women to have certain roles in life, it is okay to do whatever they would like. For example, society makes it seem as though men should not cry. I feel that men should be able to be in touch with their feelings and express them without the fear of being judged.

Simple ideas will be stressed as well. Society makes women feel as though if they are assertive, they will be considered a "bitch," along with other nasty words. I would inform women that it is perfectly fine for a woman to be strong willed, powerful, and assertive. It is okay to strive and work for what they want to achieve in life, and they do not need a man to validate who they are. Society believes that something is wrong with a woman who reaches a certain age and is not married with children, but has a successful job. They automatically assume that the woman is selfish. Women should know that they can choose the pace they want to live their life, and if they do not want to get married and have children, they do not need to.

Consent will also be one of the main topics discussed. One of the projects explained that some people believe that a woman or man can give consent while they are under the influence, which is not true. The speaker conducted an anonymous survey in one of the dining halls and a high number of students listed that they believe consent can be given while a person is intoxicated or on drugs. The slogan "Yes means yes," which I agree with, comes into play. I believed this topic should be stressed specifically on college campuses because students are constantly taking part in consuming alcohol or drugs. If a student is involved in a situation where "consent" is given at this time, they have a right to know that it is not acceptable for the other person to have sex with them.

As an individual or a group, it is important to raise awareness about and counter rape culture in our daily life by making speeches or visual aids that will help people become interested in it so they would like to know more. Advertisements could also be placed in the

media so the community could learn more about it on a wider scale. More schools should also have classes to inform students about these issues, not just in college. Middle schools should make students aware and teach them how to handle situations so they could be ready to take on situations that they or a friend might take on later on in life.

The service-learning projects helped my group, other students, and myself learn more about rape culture, which I believe every teen and college student should. The projects also showed us how to recognize abuse and handle situations if we come across it. Creating the trifold explaining each topic, which will be displayed to the community, will also inform the viewers about topics that they may not have learned about. The service-learning projects gave our Women's Studies class a chance to educate both ourselves and the community.

Katherine Gross

While doing this service-learning, I learned a lot about myself that I never knew before. When I first heard about the requirements of this assignment, I was kind of upset. I had no clue what I was going to do for service-learning for 10 hours so I kind of stressed out about it. But after finding out that I could do whatever I wanted as long as I was helping out somewhere, it kind of made things better. I've always loved animals for as long as I can remember. It's always been my passion. Helping out in the animal shelter really made me think so much differently, and I wish I could adopt all the animals there. They each have a different story to tell and they are all so different and unique in their own way.

After doing service work and helping out the animals, I learned that I could actually enjoy doing this for just fun and not because it's an assignment for one of my classes. Helping out really teaches you how to be responsible and encouraging to others. It makes you want to do more and continue and not just do it once. In my opinion, service-learning really did help me become a better person because I enjoyed my time there. I learned new things about this amazing dog named Trixie and how she's been in and out of shelters due to not being able to find a safe home. Trixie has to be the one of the sweetest dogs I've ever met; all the dogs in the shelter were really loud and scary, but Trixie was calm. My first impression of her was that she must've been a new dog at the shelter because she wasn't as loud as the rest of the dogs. But after finding out that she's hasn't been able to find a home, I realized that Trixie just isn't as happy as she once was.

There were a lot of animals at the shelter who were looking for owners and people to love them. I met another dog named Cali and she was missing a leg. Her story had to be the saddest because it was just so unfortunate how she lost her front leg. When she was a puppy and had been adopted by some people, there was a fire in the home and Cali happened to be there and ended up losing her front left leg. The saddest part about the story is that she was only a puppy, so imagine how terrified she must've been.

Going to the shelter had to be the best decision I made in my life. I learned a lot about so many different animals and it really just opened up my eyes about how animals truly suffer while being in the hands of the wrong owners. Just from this experience alone, I have better communication skills, a different view on my environment and on life itself. For professional use in my career it gave me a great idea. Since I'm a business major, I can create a safe place for

these animals to go in which they can get the attention they need, something better than a shelter. That can connect a possible owner with a dog and make a perfect match so that animals don't have to roam around. Animals have feelings too and to get it right the first time would be so much better than trying to get it right the second time.

Nicholas Nagrowski

It's been said that it takes a special kind of person to become a teacher. It certainly isn't something you pursue with aspirations of getting rich. From a young age my mother instilled that desire to teach, and to make a difference in people's lives through knowledge. Since I was born my mother has run a pre-school, so when I found out that we had to do some sort of service to benefit the community I knew exactly where I was going.

I have two younger siblings, and neither has the patience to deal with young kids, so my mom has always encouraged me to come around the pre-school whenever possible. When I told her I wanted to come to the school to work with the kids she was incredibly supportive. We came up with a makeshift lesson plan on shapes and patterns, and I went in the next day to teach the kids. It was right around St. Patrick's Day, so I kept my red beard and threw on a leprechaun hat to keep in the spirit.

After about an hour of playing with action figures with my newfound four-year-old friends, they all sat down for story time where I read them my shapes and patterns book. When the book was finished we discussed where they might find patterns in everyday life and how to establish one themselves. Now that they understood the concepts I let them design their own shamrocks and make patterns out of them. Everything went over even better than I could have imagined, and they all seemed to love it. Not only did they have fun learning, but I had fun teaching them.

The lesson I really took away from my teaching experience is the amount of gratification that comes from really being able to get through to someone. Even at such a young age, it was easy for me to see when things clicked for the kids. To me that's all I could ask for out of a volunteer project; to be able to pass on knowledge, and know that you personally are making a difference, even if it's miniscule, is such an incredible feeling, a feeling that I believe is lost on most people my age. So many people I know seem to be chasing a paycheck instead of trying to make a difference. While that's certainly their decision to make, I wish more people could understand the significance of molding young minds like that.

I may not be planning on pursuing teaching in the classroom, but I do plan on passing on my knowledge to others the best way I can think of. I can use what I've learned in my service-learning to help with coaching. It has been my dream every since I realized I wasn't talented

enough to be an MLB player to at least try to help young players reach that level. Service-learning reinforced the idea that this was something that I would love doing.

Even without being it being required, this project was something I thoroughly enjoyed, and probably would have done anyway. I learned a lot about myself, and how much I enjoy being able to help. It's certainly something I plan on doing again, and something that I'll be pursuing in the future.

Rebekah German

On February 12, at approximately 2:00 a.m., I departed with a group of thirty people to travel down to Matagalpa, Nicaragua. This was an ungodly hour to start off a day dedicated strictly to traveling, but after twenty-two hours of bus and plane rides, my group finally arrived to our destination. My experience with service-learning would come in the days after this long adventure to Nicaragua.

My work crew ventured down to Nicaragua on a mission to construct a building for the less fortunate people who occupied a little village in Matagalpa, Nicaragua. The building we wished to build for the community down there would be used for a few purposes. It would be used as a church for the town, as a school for the children, and as a house for one of the families. The first day on the worksite, I had to dig thirty-four centimeters deep along the perimeter of the building we were constructing, but to be honest I do not remember the exact measurement. We spent a total of seven days working on our project. Each day I would participate in doing various jobs around the worksite. I would usually skip around from job to job helping out each person on whatever task they needed to finish for the day, whereas most people had particular jobs they preferred to do, or that they were best at doing; however, everyone was asked to participate in our bucket and brick brigades. The bucket brigades were where everyone would form a line from our cement pile to the area where we were forming the walls. We would pass buckets back and forth until we ran out of cement. We would do these lines several times a day. The brick line was the same idea, only we were passing bricks to use for the walls.

The jobs we all had to complete, in order to finish our goal of assembling our building, were not necessarily the most delightful tasks, but my crew always managed to make them fun to do in one way or another. For instance, in the boiling sun, most people would not enjoy standing in line passing buckets back and forth for hours at a time, but the individuals I was working with were amazing, and held their tongues instead of complaining about every little thing that was irking them. No one was continually complaining about the work we needed to get done, and that made an immense difference on the attitudes of everyone who decided to chip in and help on the project.

Practically nobody in my group knew a lick of Spanish, which made it extremely difficult to communicate with the Nicaraguans. We tried to talk with them as best we could, and we would laugh with each other in our failures due to the language barrier. Some would find it

frustrating to not have the ability to communicate with ease, but my group had fun overcoming this obstacle, and we soon discovered that hand gestures can go a long way. Another glimpse at how we made the best of what we were doing is that for the bucket lines someone randomly started to shout “bucket” in Spanish going one way and shouted it in English going another way. Once a few people joined him, they began to start the line saying any Spanish words and passing the bucket along while saying the word in hope that everyone would join in, and say whatever word was uttered. This simple thing helped most of us learn some Spanish vocabulary, and it made the job significantly less boring. Quite a few people decided to join him in his enthusiasm, but not everyone would participate; however by the time we only had a few bucket brigades left, we managed to get everyone to join in the fun of our mindless entertainment. Since everyone working on the site had a positive attitude, the work environment was a pleasant one to be a part of, which caused our work project to run smoothly.

With everyone pitching in his best efforts, we managed to finish basically everything on the building before we had to leave, except for placing the roof on. It was a fantastic experience being given the opportunity to be able to not only work for the wonderful people in Matagalpa, but also to work with them and the awesome group of people I went down there with. I formed many new relationships with the people I was working with, both those I went to Nicaragua with, and those I was there to help. It was such a wonderful community to be a part of, and even though it was only for a short time, I enjoyed every minute of it. The Nicaraguan people were so great. Everyone down there wanted to help us build, and wanted to be a part of what we were doing. The people all had a servant’s heart, and were willing to help us even with the more menial tasks. The Nicaraguans really cared about their community, and it was great to be able to share that with them. On the 23rd of February, we were done with all our work, and headed home after another long day of traveling.

I enjoyed the experience I got out of my volunteer work. I got to be a part of a wonderful group of people who did their very best to construct a stable building for the Nicaraguans. I got to see firsthand how the power of one’s attitude can really make all the difference with their work ethic. The people I worked with chose not to complain, but instead to make the best of some of the more tedious jobs we had to do, and as a result everyone had a great time in each other’s company working for a good cause.

Jade Cox

I was part of the “Victim Blaming” group along with Ti’Ana Trotman and Laurie Louis. My role in the service-learning project about “Victim Blaming” was to help in the creation of the survey questions. Ti’Ana, Laurie and I got together and came up with a list of eight questions to ask people around campus. In addition to that I helped with typing up the survey questions and responses in the library with Laurie and Ti’Ana. I also helped with finding pictures, quotes and statistics for our board. After we got all our paperwork done and I finished coloring in a few drawings, Ti’Ana and I sat down and glued all the pictures on the board.

My group and I reached out to the campus community by having a select number of students and staff answer our survey questions. Ti’Ana and I asked people the questions and had the individuals record the answers themselves; we later typed everything up in the library along with Laurie.

To contribute to our project I went online to find appropriate pictures, statistics, facts and myths that corresponded with our topic of “Victim Blaming”. For all of the colorless pictures I had colored pencils I used to color them in to make our trifold more appealing to look at. I also typed a number of survey questions along with the responses I got from people on campus.

To be honest, I think I could have done more. I don’t think I did an insignificant amount of work, but I still could have done more. I had ideas that I wanted to try out but I didn't want to be the one making everybody do more work so I kept them to myself. In that way I feel like I could have done more in bettering the outcome of our trifold. As a whole I was truthfully unsatisfied with our board. I wanted to change our background color and use more images and colors that popped out more. I thought by doing that the board would stand out more for all the right reasons. I wanted it to be prettier and neater looking. Ti’Ana and I thought that everything we printed out deserved to be on the board, but in the end we couldn’t make it look very pretty because we ended up worrying about space. If I could redo it with Ti’Ana I would.

Through my group’s reading discussion and presentation I learned a lot about rape culture and victim blaming that I never would have even thought of as “bad”. For example “street harassment” was never a good or bad thing to me. It never even crossed my mind that street harassment was a problem. Personally, it doesn't change my day or mood when strangers talk to me, and I never think about it twice; however, if I’m touched in any way that’s when I have a problem. But for other people it’s degrading and can possibly ruin their whole day. I

also wasn't aware that rape victims in all aspects of life could be blamed for somebody else deciding to rape them. It's not bad enough that it happened to them, but they're made to look at fault for it occurring. Gender doesn't matter, and they still ask the same questions: "What were you wearing?", "Why were you there?", "What time were you out?", "Were you flirting?" and "Did you provoke them?" I can honestly say that before this I never would have thought that a man could be on the receiving end of "victim blaming" but they can, just like they can be raped. But I think the "How not to get raped kit" upset me the most. Why should a woman, or anybody for that matter, have to dress in a less desirable way to avoid getting raped? That's ridiculous! The kit includes "hairy stockings" which are supposed to make a woman less appealing, but was it taken into account that there are people all over the world with all different types of preferences. Maybe there's a rapist or two out there who have a thing for hairy legs. In a situation like that, going out of your way to look less appealing wouldn't help you any. But that's not all I learned by doing this project. I also learned a lot about what is considered consent. Before, I didn't think you needed your significant other's permission to have sex, let alone kiss. But it turns out you do. You need verbal consent from a person who isn't under the influence. Sleeping in a bed with your boyfriend doesn't mean you want to have sex in the morning when you wake up, and if he wants to have sex with you he needs your verbal permission. Being under the influence is a big part of it as well. I didn't think it was rape just because one party was drunk or on drugs; as long as they said yes I thought everything was alright. But if they're under the influence there is a chance that they're making decisions they'd normally refrain from making.

Rape culture is such a significant issue because people in all aspects of life all around the world are victims of rape, sexism, prejudice, discrimination and sexual harassment every day. In addition to that rape culture is portrayed through movies, music videos, song lyrics, posters, the sexualization of women and men, and much more. Rape culture specifically affects teens and college students because they live in a world where being drunk or on drugs is the norm. Because of this, many teens and college students don't know what it means to give consent or have consent given. They don't know it's not proper consent if the person is under the influence of anything; that includes popping pills, smoking weed and drinking. I think it was important for us to raise awareness on campus because too many people are oblivious to rape culture in general. There are a lot of students on campus who have no idea what it means to

give consent or have consent given, and that could potentially be a problem. But in addition to that there are students who don't think men can be raped and who believe that if a man puts his hands on a woman she must have done something to provoke him. Things like that disgust me—people need to be more aware of how life really is. It's smart to educate students about these issues so that some of the ignorance can go away. I'm truthfully not sure what the outcome of educating the college community will be. I can only hope that by doing this, more students realize what they can't do and what people can't do to them.

After all of these experiences and discussions of rape culture I can honestly say I don't feel better prepared to respond to rape culture. The only way I could see myself getting this information to anybody else is through an anonymous blog or by telling my few close friends and hoping they tell other people about it. I can't see myself making announcements with a small or large group of people or talking to people I'm not familiar with about rape culture at all. That's just me as an individual though—I'm not comfortable talking about rape or rape culture with people. It's a very private thing in my opinion, but if I wasn't this type of person, I think it would be nice to have a presentation/show/play for the campus that would explore all aspects of rape culture and thoroughly explain why it's bad. It would also be important for it to show how rape culture affects the everyday lives of people. A show/presentation/play once every two months should be a great way to inform the students about rape culture. And to assure students actually show up I'd want the sororities and fraternities to be the one to put on the plays/shows/presentations. To me I think that would be the best way to raise awareness on this campus, or any campus.

Adriana Del Carmen

Starting your first college experience in the spring semester can be a bit frightening. You are not as familiar with the campus and you are way behind in meeting friends because everyone else met in the fall. When my English professor said we had to do some type of service-learning to pass the class, I was kind of excited and nervous. I saw this as an opportunity to learn more about Delhi and the community. I've never done any service-learning that I could think of off the top of my head. Dr. West gave some examples of what his students had signed up for in the past. When he mentioned the animal shelter I quickly knew that was going to be a perfect fit for me. There was nothing I would enjoy more than helping out animals that are in need of a home. Other than going to Delhi's animal shelter, I also took the opportunity to donate blood for the first time. My service-learning experience in Delhi so far has been very eye-opening.

I was sitting in MacDonald Hall having lunch with my roommate when a cheery girl comes up to our table. She asked us if we would like to sign up to donate blood for the Red Cross. My roommate and I exchanged quick awkward glances for a while, unsure of how to respond. I found out that, like me, my roommate had never donated blood. We both decided to sign up and give it a try. The next day we went to Farrell, which was where the blood drive was happening. Before anything they made me answer many questions online. Then they took a sample of my blood to see if it's good to donate. After that you have to answer another survey. Donating blood for the first time was very nerve wracking. I didn't know what to expect, or how I was going to physically feel afterwards. It was like waiting to get on a roller coaster ride. When my turn was up I laid flat on a bed and they inserted a needle into one of my veins for what felt like 20 minutes until the bag was full. Donating blood taught me that accidents can happen anytime and you have to be prepared to lend a helping hand in any way you can. I was nervous at the beginning, but at the end I was glad I did it. Someone somewhere won't have to worry about not getting the blood they need to survive, or keep a loved one alive.

The next service-learning I did took place at Heart of Catskills Humane Society. As soon as you walk through the front door, you are caught off guard by a strong smell of dogs and cats. That smell is quickly forgotten once you see the cute baby kittens playing with each other inside cages. The kittens are so playful and friendly. They got up on their hind legs and tried to

fit their paws outside the cage to play with my hair. They all seemed to want to catch your attention, love and care. As great and memorable as going to the shelter was, it was also very sad noticing how many animals are in need of a home. I've never been to a shelter as big as the one here in Delhi. In the city the shelters don't look the same and aren't as big. I got the chance to walk an older dog named Grace. She was a very timid, shy dog. Three other classmates of mine and I got to walk around the outside of the shelter as well as feed the dogs. Once we were done with that we went back inside to play with the cats. These cats were older and kept more to themselves. I enjoyed my experience at the animal shelter. I was able to make a poster for a dog named Grace, post her picture and description for anyone that will be interested in her, and display it around campus. Being around animals makes me feel very comfortable and makes me feel good inside. That day when I left the shelter, I couldn't wait for my next visit.

My experience in the animal shelter was very different from donating blood, but you can say both made a big impact on someone else's life. The animal shelter reassured me of what I want to do in my future. I want to work alongside all types of animals and be a voice for them. Creating flyers for the animals in the shelter raised awareness for Delhi's shelter, giving an opportunity to the animals who are in need of a steady home. Service-learning can be very fun and easy when you're doing something you have an interest in or have not tried yet.