

Service learning project

[Education](#), [Learning](#)



Our group chose to volunteer at the Pier Aquarium for our service learning project. Our main task was to design the Aquarium's brochures, so that they become more competitive with the brochures, which other tourist places offer. In addition, we helped with setting up for the Fish Head Ball, which was a charity event held by the Aquarium to raise funds. I had an amazing experience, while doing the project, because I discovered that it can be very rewarding to volunteer, especially if you like the people you are working with.

The Service Learning Project was the first volunteer work that I have done in my life, so initially I was not really sure of what to expect from the experience. When my group members and I headed over to the Volunteer fair a couple of months ago, none of us knew what we wanted to do for sure. We were open for pretty much anything, but still it had to be something that would grab the interest of all of us. As we entered the crowded Fox Hall, we saw many stands cluttered next to each other, each with a person behind them hoping to recruit some volunteers.

We wandered around for a bit looking for something to catch our attention. We saw the Pier Aquarium stand where Karen (our future supervisor) was smiling at us and inviting us to learn more about the aquarium. I have always been interested in marine life and something was telling me that was the project that we would end up choosing. After speaking with Karen for a bit we walked around some more to see all the organizations, but my initial feeling was right. All of us agreed that we liked the Pier Aquarium the most and that is how we chose our project.

I would say that our project was effective in achieving the desired result- we managed to design brochures that the people at the Aquarium really liked. Our group was really pleased with that accomplishment. However, as it can be expected in a group project, not everything went smoothly along the way. Since our group members were all from different cultural backgrounds, we faced some challenges such as reaching an agreement on one thing and combining all of our ideas into the same piece of work.

That is why sometimes we would break up into groups of two people each so that we could work separately and discuss our progress with the rest of the group later. This method was more efficient in terms of time spent on reaching a consensus on design issues, and in this way it gave us more time to actually work on creating the layout of the brochures. Of course there were times when the whole group would try and work together and that was a great learning experience of how to work in a team.

Also, the time when our group was together was a lot of fun to me because it gave me chance to get to know new people and bond with them during the project. Another challenging part about my project was learning how to use Adobe Photoshop. Since I had never used that software before, I had to learn how to use it either by trial and error or by reading the help manual. Of course I preferred the trial and error method, which took me some time, but once I was familiar with the software it was very convenient to work with for the purpose of our project.

The rest of my group members also had to become familiar with the software, because no one had used it before. We had to make a lot of design

and implementation decisions in terms of how to structure the brochure, what kind of layout to have, etc. Our most difficult task was to fit all the text from the previous brochure on the new one. Since Karen had us given us the dimensions of the new brochure, we did not have much space to work with. Therefore, we had to decide how to deal with the issue of constrained space by experimenting with different fonts of varying sizes, as well as by trying to cut out some of the text.

As we progressed in our work we came up with some complete versions of the brochures. We emailed the product of our work to Karen for evaluation. She responded not long after saying that we needed to change some things in one of the brochures, and she liked the other one. However, we decided to do both of them over again, because we believed that our first creations were far from the best products of our work. This process was repeated several times before she approved of them entirely and before we were completely satisfied with what we had done.

As a whole the process of designing the brochure required a lot more effort than we initially thought, because of the multiple times that we had to revise our work. Another great experience for me and the rest of my group members was helping with setting up for the Fish Head Ball organized by the Pier Aquarium. This was a charity event whose purpose was to raise funds for the Aquarium (a non-profit organization). This was a different kind of learning experience, as I was working not only with the rest of my group members, but also with the other people that were there to help.

Therefore I was able to be a part of a bigger team that had to coordinate its efforts to achieve a common goal. This task required more physical work than the brochure design, as it required the moving of tables, setting tables up, etc. I really enjoyed helping out along with the rest of my group because it was something that I had not done before and the people from the Aquarium were very nice and pleasant to work with. We all try to find meaning in our lives, just because we need something to believe in, fight for and even live for.

The sole purpose of our existence is to search for a drive or passion that makes us who we are and helps us express our true identity. Even though the quest for such meaning can and most likely will last throughout our lifetime, we never cease to look for that special something that can make our life more valuable not only to ourselves, but to others as well. Ever since I was a little child, I have thought about what the meaning of life is and initially this question seemed frustrating as I could not find a definite answer. In fact, thinking about it was confusing me even more rather than providing a resolution.

It is not surprising that at the age of 10, I was going around in circles trying to answer questions that some of the greatest philosophers have not explained in their lifetime. Back then I thought that this was as far as I would ever get on my quest, and I was feeling insecure about that feeling of uncertainty- what is my life going to contribute to mankind- I wish I knew... As I grew older, the answers started gradually revealing themselves to me,

as if they had always been there, but only now was I able to see them. No, I do not think I have all of the answers...

I am not even close. However, I do feel that I am more aware now of where I stand in life and what is meaningful to me. I really appreciate my family because it gives me support and a sense of comfort, which I cannot find anywhere else. I also strive to grow as a person, and be the best I can be. The most recent thing I discovered through the service learning project is the gratification of giving back to the community. Giving can take many forms- one can give to other individuals, to organizations, or to the society as a whole.

The service learning project gave me a chance to volunteer for the first time and I was able to discover a new way of making my life more meaningful- by providing my services to the community. I realized that a community is like one's extended home so by providing our services at our own will we help making our home a better place to live. In addition, there is a sense of self-fulfillment that comes with volunteering in the community because knowing that the product of my work will benefit other people makes me feel like a better person.

Therefore, the Service Learning Project was an unforgettable experience that permanently changed my outlook, and helped me discover a new way to make my life more meaningful. I will definitely continue to provide my services to the community in the future, because I believe that this is essential for having a healthy and better society. The Service Learning Project was a true learning experience that not only taught me a lot about

how I can give back to the community, but also it helped me grow as a person.