

Community College of Philadelphia
Leadership Institute
2010 - 2011

CCP Alternative Spring Break

Aimee Hagedorn

Jeff Markovitz

Susan McAnany

Jason Popp

Overview of Project Proposal:

The service learning experience will enable our students to travel outside of the city of Philadelphia and experience life beyond their immediate neighborhoods and boundary lines. Part of the College's mission reads: "(the College) seeks to create a caring environment which is intellectually and culturally dynamic and encourages all students to achieve...Increased awareness and appreciation of a diverse world where all are interdependent." Given that the Community College of Philadelphia is one of the few Pennsylvania schools remaining that is not affiliated with Habitat for Humanity, the need for a service learning experience is apparent. The CCP service learning experience is the opportunity for students to encounter cultures completely different from their own, while at the same time emphasizing the responsibility one has to help those in need as an active member of the community.

This project directly supports the College's mission of self-fulfillment based on service to others, and the core values of diversity and respect. Engaging students beyond the classroom through service learning is yet another way of supporting student success through interaction with others and celebration of the uniqueness of the communities around us. CCP students often times do not travel outside of the city because of cost, fear of leaving home, or other obligations that prevent them from going. This trip is attainable for all. An affordable cost, closer proximity to home than international study abroad options, and opportunity to help others, make this an appealing and inviting experience.

Our program can improve and promote student success in several areas: leadership and team development, experience in taking direction and receiving feedback, travel, appreciation and respect for others, and exposure to different cultures. Through the application and interview process, students will learn firsthand what it is like to express their strong desire to be a part of something through writing and face-to-face question and answer session. This is excellent preparation for future career interviews, or other programs that require a formal application process.

During the trip students will work in teams taking direction, or at times, giving directions, to each other. Learning to work alongside others is critical in student success. To achieve a common goal is even more rewarding. We will provide journals for all participants so they will use their writing skills to reflect daily on their experiences. Using this healthy and effective way of expressing emotion is an invaluable take away for the students.

In addition to the volunteer work, at least one day will be dedicated to traveling in and around the local area to learn more about the history and origins of the site. Exposure to new and different cultures helps teach students appreciation for lifestyles different from their own. Having the versatility and ability to live outside of one's comfort zone is necessary for growth and success.

Upon returning students will continuously promote and share our experiences with the college. Through the Leadership Institute program, Professional Development Week and various outlets we can encourage members of the college to chaperone future trips. Students can assist in recruiting future participants in a number of different ways including sharing their journal entries, speaking with fellow students, and sharing their experiences in student-centered areas throughout the College.

Achieving the Dream:

The Alternative Spring Break was in part aimed directly at the concepts of “student persistence and success.” According to *Achieving the Dream*, one of the factors that influence retention and persistence is “academic experience.” Our group interpreted this construct to include both classroom and extra-curricular activity that provides students with an understanding for what it means to be a member of both the academic community and the city. Our goal was to provide students with an experience that would show them education is more than class work and that they have the power to positively influence the lives of others. This not only reflects ATD, but the College Mission as well. While participating in the Alternative Spring Break, students learned the importance of global citizenship, service, and teamwork. They have developed leadership skills and a sense of morale that has continued since their return to Philadelphia, which has, in turn, reaffirmed the importance of their formal education. Most of the students have continued to take initiatives in Philadelphia, since their return. They are active members of the Service Learning Club and have participated in events such as the Spring Philly Clean-Up.

Research Summary

According to Tinto's model of student persistence¹, social integration is a primary factor in students' success in college. Institutions that engage students outside of the classroom build stronger learning communities and promote greater levels of student persistence. A recent Noel-Levitz survey² showed that 84 percent of students at the Community College of Philadelphia do not hold a membership in any campus organization, leaving a large gap in

¹ Tinto, Vincent. (1998). Colleges as communities: Taking research on student persistence seriously. *The Review of Higher Education* 21(2), 167-177. Retrieved October 18, 2010, from Project MUSE database.

² 2010 National Student Satisfaction Survey (Iowa City, IA: Noel-Levitz, Inc., 2010), survey results, p. 1.

student development in need of remediation. Our program will attempt to build greater levels of institutional commitment, thus bolstering retention rates among students who seek personal growth and achievement through involvement in a college sponsored program.

The CCP Service Learning Experience will enable students to travel outside of the city of Philadelphia while working on a project that will help to improve the condition of a diverse community. Part of the College's mission reads: "(the College) seeks to create a caring environment which is intellectually and culturally dynamic and encourages all students to achieve...Increased awareness and appreciation of a diverse world where all are interdependent." One of the areas for service learning is community housing. Given that the Community College of Philadelphia is one of the few remaining colleges in Pennsylvania that is not affiliated with Habitat for Humanity or any other comparable service organization, the need for a service learning experience is apparent.

Outline of steps taken to complete the project:

1. Establish budget and secure funding resources.

-Drafted a mini-grant proposal, but did not submit after receiving a verbal agreement from the dean of students that the trip would be funded through Student Life.

2. Register with identified organization.

-Registered with Habitat for Humanity.
-Chose our destination of Sebring, Florida based on budget, dates of College's spring break, and space availability for students and chaperones.

3. Create marketing plan to educate and attract students to the alternative spring break.

-Using posters, flyers, and the College's e-mail system, we reached out to the student body during the beginning of the spring semester.

4. Create and carry out formal application process to choose students.

-We required a personal essay and two letters of recommendation from each applicant; students chosen to participate on the trip were asked to make a payment of \$200 to go towards their travel fees. Later the \$200 was refunded thanks to the generosity of the Student Government Association.

5. Work with project mentors and travel agency to complete airline reservations and transportation reservations in the local area.

6. Purchase supplies and create outline of daily schedule.

-List of supplies included work gloves and writing journals for all students; a planned day of rest was also part of the week's stay.

7. Create and distribute trip evaluation to all participants.

8. Report trip results to Leadership Institute and project mentors.

Short-term part of the project:

In the short-term for our project, we made the trip to Sebring, Florida during the college's spring break week and worked with Habitat for Humanity Collegiate Challenge. We were written up in the Communiqué' recently for our trip along with the Student Vanguard and Highlands Today which is a local paper in Florida. Also, during the Student Leadership Recognition Ceremony the Alternative Spring Break/Service Learning Club was awarded with 3 of the 8 awards of the evening: College Mission Award; Outstanding Leadership Award; Club of the Year Award.

In addition, the group was invited back to Sebring and received the below thank you from the program director in Sebring:

Just wanted to thank all of you for all that you did while you were here.

I know that you have all touched my life. I'll never be the same.

Again, thanks for all you have done. You have touched the lives of so many!

Many blessings to you all~

*Jennifer S. McGee
Volunteer Manager
Habitat for Humanity Highlands County
159 S. Commerce Ave.
Sebring, Florida 33870
(863) 402.2915 office
(863) 446-1046 cell*

Long-term part of the project:

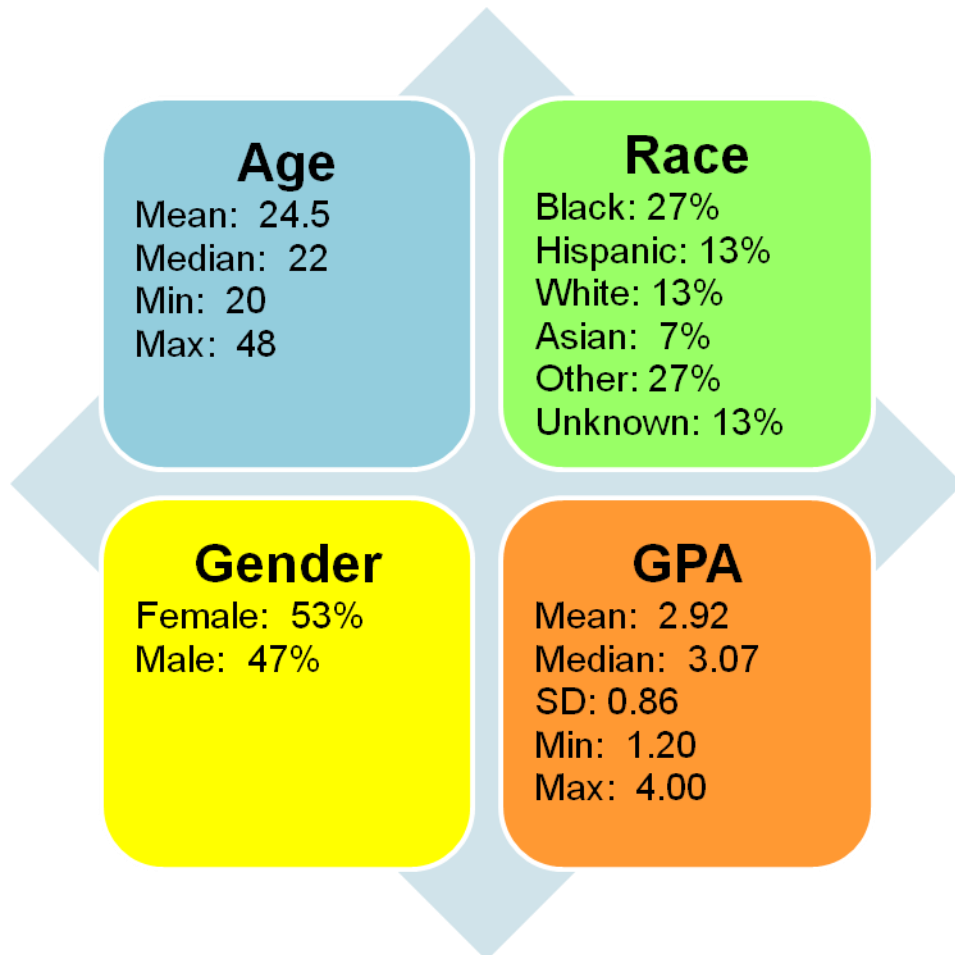
For the long term, our project will be picked up and funded through both the Student Life Center and through fund raising by our Student Government Association Service Learning Club. We are looking to begin fund raising for next year's trip this summer and have various fund raising events in mind. Many of the students who participated in the trip have already participated in events off campus as a group helping out with the Spring Garden Community Wide Clean-Up and many of the students are looking into becoming volunteers at the Welcome Center of Philadelphia.

Overview for Continuity:

CCP has been in need of a Service Learning Program for some time, and the Alternative Spring Break provided a construct for potential future endeavors that may follow a similar structure to the trip. The Office of Student Life has adopted the program and is currently planning, with the help of the chaperones and veteran students, a similar Spring Break trip for next year. In addition, the students who participated in the trip are now flagship members of the newly recognized Service Learning Club, for which the chaperones act as co-advisors. This club is spawning interest in the college community and has acquired non-Spring Break members. The objective of this club is to participate in activities throughout the city to strengthen the relationship of the college to service initiatives, improve the community through volunteerism, and empower students who participate. The club will also be part of the process for developing next year's Alternative Spring Break.

Project Assessment

Demographics of Student Participants³



Method

Upon their return to Philadelphia, a web survey was sent to the participants via an email invitation generated by Survey Monkey. Three invitations to participate in the survey were sent within a week of each other; the first was sent on March 16 and the last on March 29, 2011. Thirteen (13) of the 15 participants or 87 percent completed the survey.

³ Age as of March 6, 2011 and Cumulative Grade Point Average effective fall 2010.

Results

1. Based on the information you received prior to the trip, how well did this experience meet your expectations?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Far exceeded expectation	13	100.0

2. What did you like most about this experience? (Open-ended)

3. What did you like least about this experience? (Open-ended)

4. How satisfied were you with the planned activities (e.g. baseball game)?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Satisfied	13	100.0

5. How important to you was it that this trip was financially supported by the Student Government Association?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Important	11	84.6
Important	2	15.4
Total	13	100.0

6. How likely are you to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity again?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Likely	13	100.0

7. Within the next 12 months, how likely are you to volunteer your time with another nonprofit community organization?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Likely	12	92.3
Likely	1	7.7
Total	13	100.0

8. How likely are you to volunteer with a local non-profit community organization?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Likely	12	92.3
Likely	1	7.7
Total	13	100.0

9. How satisfied were you with the pre-departure sessions and preparation?

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very Satisfied	10	76.9
Somewhat Satisfied	2	15.4
No Opinion	1	7.7
Total	13	100.0

10. What did you learn about yourself that you did not know before this experience?
(Open-ended)

11. What did you learn about the community you served? (Open-ended)

12. Comments (Open-ended)

Discussion

All of the respondents were impressed with the quality of the experience with 100 percent of them agreeing that it far exceeded their expectations (see Question 1). Most of the students enjoyed the opportunity to form new friendships while working with Habitat for Humanity (Habitat) and representing CCP at the Collegiate Challenge (see Question 2). What they most disliked about their experience was returning home to Philadelphia – they wanted the experience to last longer (see Question 3).

Overall, 92 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the planning and preparation of the trip (see Question 9). In fact, all of the students enjoyed the pre-planned social activities and were thankful for the financial support provided by the Student Government Association (see Questions 4 and 5).

As an educational experience, students learned to appreciate diversity and gained self-confidence while working as a team to complete on a task or project. They also developed interpersonal skills which helped them to form new friendships that they did not anticipate (see Question 10). Through their affiliation with Habitat, students learned that there is a high demand for affordable housing throughout the United States. Furthermore, the home owners appreciated the students' work and thanked them for their labor (see Question 11).

Given their positive experience, all of the respondents indicated their willingness to volunteer for Habitat again (see Question 6). Their responses also show that they are willing to participate in future service projects involving other non-profits; including local community organizations (see Questions 7 and 8).

Please see the Appendix for full responses to Questions 2, 3, 10, and 11 as well as any students' comments.

Project Impact on Personal Leadership Development

A. Hagedorn

April 2011

Starting the Leadership Institute last September, I didn't think I had any expectations of the coming year aside from learning something new about myself and taking time out of the office once a month to work on a "project." I realized very quickly that I was wrong, and yes I did have expectations of both myself and the people I was assigned to work with. Finally being aware of this (by our third meeting!) helped immensely in dealing with the stress of a project like the alternative spring break...

To expand, the expectations that I have always put on myself fall under the umbrella of "everything must get done" followed quickly with "by me" since I am a perfectionist, and constantly strive for the best in anything that I work on whether it's by choice or being appointed. Within our group dynamics, I felt a similar expectation, or rather pressure, to be the person in charge and to make tough decisions when no one else seemed interested or had time to address. I was torn most of the year between giving in and taking on that role, and shunning the responsibility completely. It was part self-preservation, and part principle of the matter. Then it clicked in me: just because I CAN do something doesn't mean I HAVE to do it. There are three other very capable leaders of our group, and they can work through problems best they can. Does this mean I am not a participating member? Absolutely not. It means I am letting go of some of the control to focus better on issues that I want to focus on. Sometimes the results were positive and other times not so great with broken relationships and tense conversations. But I think I handled it best I could with people that I did not know extremely well at the time.

When I mention the expectations I have on others, this includes not just my team members but the assigned mentors too. From the beginning I expected that all participants in the leadership institute—who had applied, received letters of recommendation, and willfully accepted the commitment to the project—were gung ho, high-energy leaders in the making! Two months into it and I found that to be almost true based on our own group's inability to meet on a regular basis. How can a group, who can be so passionate in their communications via e-mail, not make

time to meet face-to-face to address these issues? I still don't have that answer. Turning to our mentors, they didn't seem to have the answers either. Ranging from ill-advising to non-existent, I believe the mentors for the alternative spring break were ineffective. The trip would still have happened without them, and probably with fewer roadblocks in our way. And that goes back to my expectations...once I discovered my expectations were off the mark, it made it easier to power through and stop feeling disappointed or let down. All I can do as a leader moving forward is to do my best.

I am very proud of what we accomplished in the alternative spring break, and I am grateful for the experience. It feels good to say that we completed the project, and can still respectfully disagree with each other at the end of the day.

Project Impact on Personal Leadership Development

J. Markovitz

April 2011

When I was a senior in college, I studied abroad in London; to this day, the experience has persisted in my mind as the exact moment when I realized the importance of education, travel, and experience. That long ago, I promised myself that if I ever became a teacher, I would try to provide students with the same enlightenment that my trip to London and English Professor provided me. The Alternative Spring Break was a very different experience than studying abroad (there was more sweating, to be sure) but the result was the same. I watched students experiencing the same joy of experience and comprehension of accomplishment that I felt all those years ago, and it ranks as one of my most central feelings of pride. Moreover, I learned much from my experience with the students and my co-chaperones. I learned when to step in, to be a figure of authority who takes control when necessary, and I learned when to step back, to let the gears of the process turn on their own. As a leader I learned to be a listener, a friend, at times a voice of reason, and an organizer. I also learned that I could not do things on my own. This may have been my dream, but it was accomplished through the diligent work and commitment of my Leadership Institute partners. It is often my goal to be self-reliant, to live on

my own power and put things into motion using the skills and aptitudes I possess without risking outside motivations and distractions. In this experience, I learned how to let certain things go, and allow others to include their own ideas and know-how into the project. Because of this, the project was much more a success than I could ever had constructed on my own. I learned that being a Leader is not a singular effort; what Leadership means to me is knowing how to come together with others to attempt to facilitate a common good. The Alternative Spring Break was successful because twenty people made it successful. Twenty people pulled their collective abilities together to make a memorable and wonderful experience positive and in complete accordance with our goals. All twenty people were leaders. It wasn't study abroad, it wasn't London, and I was not there to teach, but I sincerely believe that all twenty people learned a whole lot anyway.

Project Impact on Personal Leadership Development

S. McAnany

April 2011

I had asked the previous year to be able to do the Leadership Institute and was told I couldn't so when this session came along and I was able to apply and then be accepted, I was thrilled. I wanted the opportunity to learn more about the College and become more involved with other people and areas of the College.

The day we started I had such high expectations I was worried that the program would not live up to them – I am so happy to report that they exceeded all my expectations and this experience has been a life changer for me. I believe that my not being able to do last year's Leadership was the best thing that could have happened, even though at the time I was a little disappointed and jealous that someone else from my department was designated for it before me. Looking back I am forever grateful for the department making me wait an additional year.

When our group was formed I had many thoughts – some were confirmed in the beginning of our project and some never came to fruition, which I am grateful for. There were many challenges with personalities, scheduling and who was the boss and who were the followers. After many struggles and many interventions, we have come out with something that I am so proud of, I tell everyone in the College, my family and friends and anyone who will listen about the fantastic project the four of us managed to accomplish and the wonderful trip that and "family" that came out of our blood, sweat and tears. So many times I came close to quitting

this team and walking away from something that in the end has changed my life forever – I am so glad there were people who changed my mind, both on my team and off.

Our challenges were many as I said already, there were fingers pointed for not participating in the project and many e-mails that were not appropriate by people who were on a team and working toward the same end goal. Very little support from the people who were to mentor us was seen by most of the team and in the end I feel that those who we were to look to for help and guidance were only looking out for their own self interest in our endeavor.

I am very proud of our accomplishment. I have made friends for life through this project and I have learned that leading is something that I can do and want to do and I do not have to do it with an iron hand. While I am very organized and a perfectionist in my work, I found that my team members are also of the same thread. While each approaches things in a different way, the end result was perfection. I am not one to micro-manage and have to say I dislike being micro-managed very much. This project has helped me to be able to deal with the work styles, ethics and personalities of the people who I work with and I believe given me the ability to move into a position of leadership at the college. In the end, I will be forever grateful for the chance to have been a part of this project and this team.

Project Impact on Personal Leadership Development

J. Popp

April 2011

When I began this journey with three complete strangers from different areas of the College I did not know what to expect. I knew there would be challenges given the complexity of the group (e.g. different brain profiles) but I did not think they would affect our progress.

While I struggled to work with a diverse team, what I realized is that people may have differences but if they share a common goal and are committed to accomplishing it, then success is possible. At various points in our project, there were times when we thought we would fail. For a long time, we did not know where we were going; our destination was uncertain and our confidence was faltering because we doubted each other's commitment to the project.

We found success by trusting each other and leading in areas where we felt comfortable. My role in our project was planning and sharing a vision of what I believed would be a successful trip. I

imagined what the trip could be and how we might approach others in the College in search of support. Given my pursuit of success, I did not always consult my teammates when seeking resources or advice. I viewed our team as an equal partnership where everyone has a right to form relationships and enter into agreements for the sake of the project. Some of my teammates, however, did not share my views, which led to misunderstandings and negative repercussions. Although my work style may have contributed to some of our group's dysfunction, I believe a lack of quality communication underscored most of our problems, especially an over reliance on email as our primary form of communication in lieu of face-to-face meetings, which may have reduced our effectiveness and depersonalized our relationships.

Understanding how people think and feel is a valuable skill that any leader can master with time and patience. Unfortunately, time is a precious commodity and patience is a virtue that most of us leave by the wayside in the face of competing priorities and impending deadlines. I always felt a sense of urgency when I worked on our project. Having a deadline helps me to focus my energies on a task or project; I do not think that some of my teammates shared my focus until they knew the trip was going to happen. I imagined that the trip would be successful and my teammates helped make that vision a reality.

What I have learned through this project is that I do not have to be in control at all times. Our project was successful even though I was not present during every step of its development. I relied on my colleagues to fulfill their roles as active participants in the project. While I may have doubted their abilities at the beginning of the project, their later involvement proved to be the key to our success.

I am proud of my team's accomplishments. We helped to send fifteen students to Sebring, Florida to participate in Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge. This inaugural event commemorates the College's commitment to service learning and marks the advent of a new spirit of volunteerism that is likely to spread throughout the College. Our students formed new friendships and created life-long memories that they will attribute to their experience at CCP.

Appendix

2. What did you like most about this experience?

1. It is not only about helping people to build house and give back to the community, but also learns to know each other as well as open my mind to new things. I learn a lot from my friends during this trip, people who I'd never thought of making friends with. Like Rodney and Humphrey, if I met them prior to the trip, what I would think about them is "Man, these guys will gonna beat me up if I stare at them for one more second, it'd better stay away from them as far as possible" (off the record please ;). However, they turn out to be really nice guys and big brothers, sisters to me. All of them take care of me as I was their younger sister. This trip also helps me learn more about myself, what I want in my life and what kind of person I want to be.

2. Being able to work alongside other students and joining together to represent our college as a whole.

3. This was definitely a life changing experience. I enjoyed bonding with like-minded students and professors. I enjoyed giving my time to help other people. I cannot imagine a better way to spend a Spring Break. If I was not there I would have spent my break sleeping in and doing nothing around the house. Everyone keeps telling me how much they admire the fact that I gave up my break to do something for someone else but truly I feel like I gave nothing. I got so much out of this experience, every penny I spent out of pocket, every minute I spent digging a trench, painting a house or sawing wood was more than worth it. I have made lifelong friends and I got a chance to do what I want to do for the rest of my life.

4. What I liked most about this trip is the connection that the students made apart from habitat for humanity. Although we worked almost every day, we found ways to interact with each other and get along more than expected.

5. What I liked most was the close bond that we formed with each other while we worked and spent time together. Also, the fact that we got the chance to meet the homeowners was very touching, and made our efforts to help the community feel all the more real. I also enjoyed all the activities that we participated in, from going the Phillies game and out to dinner, to even the simpler things, like the rides we took together in the vans. I felt that our group meetings for reflection were an important part of the trip because we were able to express ourselves and take a deeper look at all that we had learned and experienced during our time there.

6. It gave me the opportunity to unselfishly serve a community in Florida. Also, there was a bonding which occurred between fellow students and the CCP staff. I discovered that all who attended this trip exhibited leadership skills. This trip enhanced our skill-set and provided a means to humbly help others.

7. The bonds that formed between me and my fellow students, and being able to see the positive impact on the people whose lives I was changing at the build site.

8. The thing I liked most about the experience was the bonding that happened between each participant. This was a close knit group that formed over the course of several days. The building of the houses and the helping of forming a new development was very exciting.

9. I love the friendships I've made during this trip. I've made life-long friends on this trip.

10. Each and every moment of the trip!

11. The team work experience was amazing and the fact that I didn't know most of the people from our own college before the trip made it even better in terms of creating strong connections with new people

12. There were so many highlights of the trip, but there were two things that stood out. The first is the volunteering experience. Being able to help build a home for someone, and even meeting one of the families receiving the homes we were working on. The other would be the friendship between everyone that went on this trip. We bonded together in ways I don't think any of us imagined before we went on this trip.

13. I enjoyed the opportunity to meet people I would not have met.

3. What did you like least about this experience?

1. I don't like the way we share the cleaning work among the group. For example: still see dirty trays left in the sink for couple days after the meal, just only one person handled cleaning bathroom. We should be more specific about these duties.

2. No complaints

3. I least liked coming back. It was very difficult to return to daily life. Once you get started doing things you love doing and you want to do for the rest of your life it's a real challenge to leave that experience even if it is only for a short amount of time. The whole group is already in the process of planning our next trip.

4. Honestly, there was nothing I disliked about this trip but us leaving and going back to Philadelphia :(.

5. The wait for the vans on the first day.

6. It ended too soon and it became difficult to return to Philadelphia.

7. Nothing comes to mind, any negative experiences were far outweighed by the good ones.

8. It should have lasted longer!

9. The only thing I could complain about is the plane ride but that's my own personal dislike the trip was absolutely great.

10. Nothing!

11. The fact that we had to fight the stereotypes about community college and inner city students... But I understand this has nothing to do with our side of things and it's just a general society thing that happens sometimes. There are good things about everything even the bad things, the fact that other people saw us with stereotyping eyes made our group more united and we ended up showing that our dedication and energy overcomes any ignorant ideas people has of minorities

12. There isn't anything that I really didn't like in particular about the trip.

10. What did you learn about yourself that you did not know before this experience?

1. I wasn't open-minded about new things and trapped myself into my own prejudice, kind of passive all the time. It's never too late to change and no pain, no gain. Like Susan said, "You can do anything you want to do and don't let anyone tell you that you can't do it". I begin to believe that I can do anything I want as long as I put effort into it.
 2. That I have the ability to continue to make lifelong friends
 3. I learned that I am able to make lifelong friends. I learned that money doesn't matter to me and if there is something I would like to do I should not count myself out for a lack of funds. I honestly believe that where there is a will there is a way. I learned that I have so much to learn about myself and I want to be open to new experiences and new opportunities. I want to spend the rest of my life giving my time and energy helping others.
 4. I learned that I didn't have to be around my friends to have fun. I was open to meeting new people and making new friends with complete strangers. It was awesome.
 5. I learned that even though I am only one person, I can help make a difference.
 6. As the oldest student who went, I was very needed and appreciated. I feared the age difference (gap) and was not sure how I would be received. This quickly disappeared when we sat around the table and had moments of reflection. Each student helped me to understand my value and theirs. I learned to appreciate (others differences) my input and difference i.e. age, race, music, belief system. Even when I wanted to sleep my fellow students made sure that stayed awake and literally forced me to participate.
 7. I believe this trip has made me a better person and for that I am thankful
 8. I learned that I can get along in groups with different personalities and backgrounds.
 9. I learned how to completely immerse myself into an activity. This trip was great in showing me the reward that comes from helping others. One of the things I learned about myself was that I hold back my own happiness and to win it back requires nothing but allowing myself to be happy.
 10. Each and every person in the trip was unique and gifted with talents. I learned something from each and every one of them.
 11. That I'm a good digger and an excellent cut man! Also that trips like this can get the best out of me and that I need them to succeed in my career goals.
 12. I have a lot of patience, and I'm not as shy as I used to be.
-

11. What did you learn about the community you served?

1. I'm surprised and amazed that our little work can make a significant difference in someone's lives.
 2. That they appreciated our labor no matter what we did. Whether we dug a hole or handed another worker some water.
-

-
3. I learned that the community is full of people with big hearts who deserve a home. I believe that everyone should have food, shelter, health care and quality education. Before I went on this trip I believed that and I'm glad I could be a part of providing someone with one of those things. In a world where those human rights are debated I am glad there are people who get past the words and get to the actions of providing people with the things they need. The community I served is no different from me. Many of the home owners we heard about are younger than me and I'm 24 years old. I could easily be in there position and it is my honor and privilege to serve them and lend a hand to a fellow human being.

 4. I learned that the community I served is very grateful for the work we did. They are a very committed people to the houses that were being built.

 5. I learned that the people getting these homes are regular people just like you would find anywhere across America. They include single mothers, and a grandmother raising her grandchildren. They are people who have endured hardships in their lives, and they truly deserve to have the homes that we have helped build. I am so happy to have been able to give my hand in helping them have a better life.

 6. This was a community much like any in the City of Philadelphia. Some were single parent families, senior citizens left to raise grandchildren, those who experienced overcrowded living conditions, etc. I watched the joy which filled the faces of those involved in the build and those who would become occupants. Even when I entered the nearby Wal-Mart, I actually met a cashier who knew the individual who was going to move into one of the completed houses. That individual is a (female) single parent of two teenage twin girls - she works two jobs (one Wal-Mart) just to secure a better future.

 7. I learned that the people who were going to move into these houses very deserving of it. They came from all sorts of backgrounds and circumstances.

 8. Sebring, Florida is a pretty interesting place. It allowed me to understand that the south is working hard to get over racism. Before I thought the south was some terribly racist place that is unsafe for minorities.

 9. They need us, the volunteers, and being able to help them was the most amazing feeling of my life. The people were very friendly and guided us perfectly.

 10. That even in the richest and most powerful country in earth poverty is present and a reality

 11. The Habitat community that we volunteered for was a unique community. They are attempting to build 60 homes with multiple park areas and a community business center, in a short amount of time. Attempting to do something that no other Habitat community has tried before.
-

12. Comments

1. I know that everyone already said that, but once again I want to say thank you to all the chaperons and sponsors in this trip who make this trip happen. It means a lot to me and I hope that more and more students could enjoy this valuable experience like we did.
-

-
2. I already said this but this trip was truly life changing. I want to get out there and get back into helping other people. I know that the education I am receiving from CCP, and that I plan to receive beyond will all serve to help me help others. I have planned to get my doctorate in Sociology before I stepped foot in CCP and this experience has made me that much more certain that I am on the right path. Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity.

 3. Alternative spring break has forever changed my life. It was hands down the most amazing experience I've ever had. I got to serve people that were less fortunate of me, meet new people and build lifelong friendships. I'll never forget it!

 4. This was by far one of the greatest trips that I have ever taken anywhere. After being on this trip I have gained so much pride in being a part of the CCP community. I will never forget all the laughs, the fun, and the growth that I experienced during this trip. And most of all, I will never forget the family that I made there.

 5. My hope is that CCP will seriously evaluate and continue this form of service learning. It would be beneficial that this opportunity be extended to (2) service times per year with (25-50) students per trip. The level of care and support provided from Susan, Jose, Amie, and Jeff (our chaperons) was beyond outstanding. They REALLY MADE THE TRIP!!!! Without them this would not have been effective. ; PLEASE CONSIDER THEIR INPUT IN PLANNING AND ATTENDING FUTURE EVENTS. We were the first Community College from anywhere in the nation would went to Sebring Florida. We represented CCP and the city of Philadelphia in a professional and outstanding manner. I will never forget this life changing moment. THANK YOU SO MUCH - Lafayette F. Gooding, III

 6. I had the time of my life on this trip and would not trade this experience for the world!

 7. PLEASE have the same Chaperons every year because without them nothing could have been possible!

 8. I hope this turns into an ongoing thing and that every year more and more students at CCP benefit from such a great life changing experience

 9. This trip will be a part of me for the rest of my life, in all positive ways.
-