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Personal Reflections from ePortfolio: AHRC New York City

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Tung Lee

My Biography: What I am Bringing to AHRC NYC

My name is Tung Lee, but I go by Jamie. I am a Junior transfer student from Clemson University majoring in Business Studies. I am originally from Myrtle Beach, SC. That is where I grew up and have lived for most of life. My family still resides there, and they are the most important people to me. Moving away to college was probably one of the most difficult things I've had to encounter in life. I am very close to my family and being away from them is hard for me. I realize that transferring to NYC would mean I would be even further away, but after studying abroad last semester, it made me realize that one day I would be living on my own and taking care of myself. I miss my family very much, but I will always think about them no matter where I am at.

I have previously done volunteer work through various clubs while in high school as well as my previous university. While in high school I volunteered at a retirement home, animal shelter, and many fundraising events that were held by my school as well as some that were not. At my previous university, I was a part of the ONE campaign Clemson chapter. The purpose of the organization was to raise money for countries around the world that are in need of it for certain aspects such as education, clean water, etc. ONE campaign was the one organization that I joined that allowed me to take part in volunteer events. I learned a lot about the world from the 2 years that I have spent with the organization. I never realized how hard some people's lives were around the world. They have to struggle each day to survive and support their family. I feel that volunteering is very important because it gives us an opportunity to give back to our community and the world. People like us who have the ability to make a difference should put forth the effort to do so. There are people out in the world who struggle to stay alive, so they do not have the same ability as us to give back like we can, but we can give to them to help them. I try to get involved when I can with school organizations that do community service, because this gives me an opportunity to do volunteer work.

My dream is to help the world become a better place, which I'm sure many people have the same dream. It is definitely not an unachievable dream. If we all put forth some effort we can make a difference in the world. I hope to take part in more community service locally as well as find volunteer opportunities abroad, because I know there are

lots of people who live in poverty around the world and in need of help. Travelling is one of my most favorite things to do, so being able to do that while helping others would be an opportunity of a lifetime for me.



My Friends in the Course at Pace



My Project at AHRC NYC

My individual Alex and I are putting together a powerpoint presentation to share about his life. We are very close to completing it. There is going to be a total of 15 slides with many pictures included. We are now in the process of putting together the short videos and getting some more pictures taken that will be a part of the powerpoint.

My Mid-Term Reflection Journal

"The real voyage of discovery consists of not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes" (DisabilityLand). We live in a world of more than three trillion people with more than 300 thousand that live with a disability. Many do not understand what the term disability means, because they merely take the term as someone who is not normal or like us. What I don't understand is what is considered the norm? Is what we pick out to be the norm really the norm? We all grow up to be different and have special talents or skills that others may not have. A person with a disability does not mean that they lack the special talent or skill because deep down they do have that special talent or skill. They are just like every one of us because they eat, sleep, and breathe just like us. I never understood why people look at them differently. The word disability is just a mere label for people who may have it, just like when I am called Chinese, it is just a label for me because of who I am. In a diverse world, we are all different in many ways, but the truth is we are all the same because we are all people.

Walking into this web design class, I would have never imagined in a million years that I would be working with people. The title of the course made me think that I would be working on a computer creating websites and such. However, I would much rather work with people than sit in front of a computer all day. I have really enjoyed thus far what I have experienced in this course. This course gave me a great opportunity to go out and interact with people, people who have a disability. When the professor told the class that we would be doing volunteer work, I was quite excited. I had no idea at first what we would be doing, but just the thought of doing volunteer work made me very excited. Once we were finally told what we would be doing over the course of the semester I was a little bit nervous. I know that working with people that have a disability can be challenging, and the only experience I've had was back in 2nd and 3rd grade when I worked with children my age that had a disability. Even though I was nervous, there was still this bit of curiosity inside of me. I was very curious to know this whole experience will be like, which made look forward to being partnered up and working with that specific individual.

The first day that I went to the AHRC facility I was assigned to, I was a bit anxious. There was this anxiety inside me of how I would approach these individuals and how to react to them. However, after meeting many of the faculty members and given the grand tour of the facility, I was much more comfortable. Then the time came for me

to finally meet my individual Alex. I was super nervous but excited all at once. Alex is one of the sweetest people I have ever met. He was very excited to meet me as well as my fellow classmates, and the whole time that I saw him he always had a smile across his face. This made me feel very relieved, and I was looking forward to working with him the remainder of the semester. Every week we meet up we work on our powerpoint project that we put together about Alex. He loves sharing his interests, which all revolve around sports. He is a huge fan of baseball and football, and he emphasizes on that every time we are chatting. It feels so great to work with him, and even though sometimes I encounter problems such as understanding what he says or getting him to focus on what we are doing, there is a lot of joy that comes out of the experience. Being a part of Alex's life has made me realize what life is all about. The biggest part of life is being happy, and Alex has showed me that. Without happiness life is meaningless. And this in part relates to what Alan Brightman states in his novel "DisabilityLand".

"DisabilityLand" was a wonderful novel, and I am glad that it was an assigned reading for the course. It grasps on the meaning of life, and it portrays the idea that no matter whom you are or what you may be, there will always be people to love and care for you. Even though in this world we have those ignorant people who feel the need to tease and pick on those different from them, there are still many people out there who have that caring heart and understand the true meaning of life. Brightman goes through a series of stories on people's life, those who live with a disability. They are all very inspirational and come to the conclusion that no matter what you lack you can still be what you want to be. Life can be unfair sometimes, but each and every person should look at the positives in life. "It is never too late to be what you might have been" is the exact quote that sums up what I believe to be the moral of life. I am sure Brightman was trying to express the same idea that life can be unpredictable, and no person should look down on themselves or be looked down on because they have a disability. People with a disability should live life like a normal person and fulfill their own dreams. Like it stated in the novel, many people have this image in their head of how a disabled person should appear to look like. What is a person with a disability suppose to look like? There are many people in the world who have a disability, but when you look at them they look like one of us. However, people still tend to discriminate against these people. Not only people are born with disabilities, but animals such as pets can also have a disability. There was a story about a boy named Jimmy who is deaf. His parents bought him a puppy that was deaf as well and ended up returning the puppy. Even with small innocent pets, people still discriminate against them because it had a disability. Growing up with a disability is not a choice, but people who have a disability should live life to the fullest. As Brightman states, "Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind" (DisabilityLand).

My Final Reflection Journal

My semester project for AHRC NYC pace project was a PowerPoint presentation. It was a simple gathering of information from my individual and presenting all of that information through slides. There were a lot of pictures incorporated into the presentation because visuals were an important aspect of my PowerPoint presentation. When my individual and I were putting together the PowerPoint, I realized that he responded better to images than words. Therefore, I decided images were going to be the vast majority of the presentation in order to fully allow my individual to grasp the feeling of presenting something he was familiar with. Having all words on the PowerPoint would have been great, but it would have made my individual feel overwhelmed because of his inability to read. The PowerPoint presentation ended up containing a total of 15 slides, which displayed the life story of my individual. Presenting the PowerPoint at the facility was very successful, and seeing how excited my individual was when it was his turn to present made me so happy. When I presented the same PowerPoint to my classmates, it was wonderful as well. However, it was not the same feeling of accomplishment because it was not presented by my individual but by me. Still it made me happy to have the chance to share to my fellow classmates the information on the life of my friend that I had made this semester.

The relationship that I built with my individual from AHRC grew closer and closer over time. From the start, it was kind of distant because we were both unfamiliar with each other and, we were just getting to know each other. As time progressed and we spent more time together from working on the project, we became more comfortable with one another. Soon it felt as though we had known each other for the longest time. We became really good friends, and I did not just create this bond with my individual, but also with the staff in charge of facilitating this program at the facility. It was a wonderful bond that my individual and I created and definitely an unforgettable one. This feeling of closeness with someone so special makes me feel extremely special. I never imagined creating such a bond with my individual. This relationship as well as the project has influenced me positively. It has helped me realize what the world really looks like far beyond from what I am aware of and the wonderful people that make up this mysterious world of ours is more diversified than I thought. There is so much for me to learn beyond the walls of any classroom that I sit in. Working with AHRC has helped me realize that and has opened my eyes to so many great things.

Working with my individual I learned that he is a very happy and enthusiastic person. Every day when I arrive at the AHRC facility, he is always smiling and looking forward to working on our project together. I do not think I have ever seen him unhappy during the weeks that we were together. It seems to amaze me how someone who gets looked down by the public can still have such a great personality. However, it makes me realize that his attitude perfectly exemplifies how no matter whom you are, you should love who you are. This correlates with what I

read in the novel "Disability land" because the author is trying to get across the message that even if you have a disability, you should not care what others think of you. Allowing me to be part of my individual's life has made me feel extremely special in the sense that he made me realize how truly remarkable life can be. No matter what obstacles someone will encounter, life will always be this special factor of you in which you grow with. This has been an unforgettable journey for me, and I have had such a great time this semester working with my individual. I do not think I will ever forget the wonderful time I have spent at the facility. It makes me feel so great inside knowing that I have made a difference in someone's life by helping him share and open up to others about whom he is. Hopefully there will be many other opportunities in the future for me to take part in an experience like this one.

My Certificate of Recognition of Service



My Semester of Service

This semester participating in this class and taking part with AHRC will probably be one of the biggest volunteer work that I do. Along with doing this, I have also taken part in the English Language Institute (ELI) to aid international students with speaking the English language. Basically I get paired with an international student that I meet once a week to have a conversation in English. It is a great way for me to make new friends and help a student in need.