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# Personal Reflections from ePortfolio: AHRC New York City

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**Hannah Moller**

### **My Biography: What I am Bringing to AHRC New York City**

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Pace University Freshman, Majoring in Business with a concentration in Arts and Entertainment Management. I am excited to take this course because I have worked with individuals with disabilities before and it is a great learning experience for both my partner and I. I have interacted in the classroom, Gengras center, and also with sports (volleyball, Softball), Conard High school, with individuals with disabilities.

### **Community Service**

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*Gengras center, Saint Joseph's University- Worked with individuals with disabilities*

*Summer Place Leadership Program- Camp counselor*

*Salvation Army Soup Kitchen- Kitchen services*

*Sunrise Assisted Living- Worked with the elderly*

*Gillette Stadium- Worked in kitchen services with Simmons Softball*

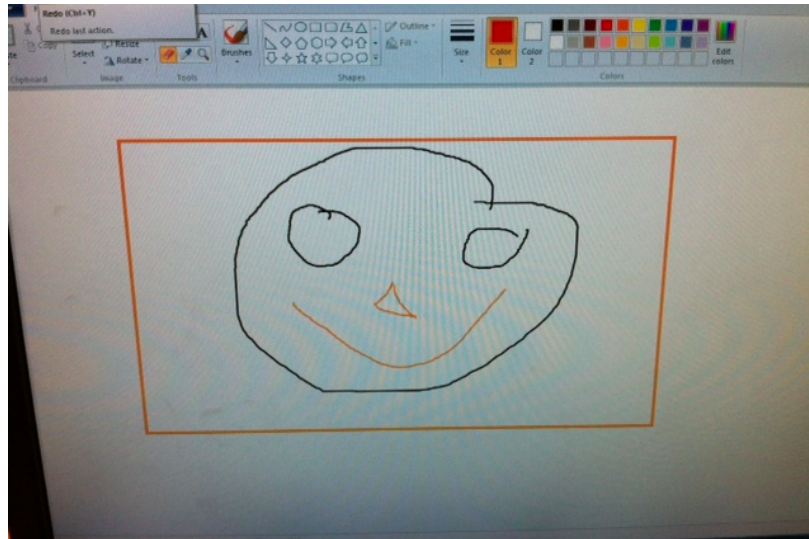
### **Me**

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## David using Paint

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## Using Microsoft Paint

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I knew that David liked to draw and I knew that we went to the art rooms last semester and drew there. I wanted to try something different to see if David would like it. So I showed him how to Microsoft Paint and showed him that he can also draw on the computer. David drew all different kinds of smiley faces (like the one pictured above) and Anton and I also showed him cool tricks in how to use the program. David enjoyed doing this because it was drawing but on the computer.

## Project

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### STAR WARS



David's favorite movies are  
all the Star Wars movies



## My Mid-Term Reflections Journal on DisabilityLand and Project

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To begin, I think that DisabilityLand was the perfect book to read while taking this class. I think that everything the book stands for is what we hope to accomplish in this class. The book stands for equality between everyone, no matter what disabilities people suffer from. I liked how this book looked at different perspectives from all different types of people.

This book opened my eyes to the different types of disabilities that there are. Before taking this class and during this class when I heard the term disability I automatically thought of someone who had some type of autism or down syndrome. This was because this is the stereotypical thought of a disability. But after reading this book I learned that a disability can be anything from being blind, in a wheelchair, handicapped, deaf, even having diabetes. One of my favorite parts from the book was when a man was hosting an exhibition of his photographs and wanted it to be accessible to everyone so he made many accommodations so that it could be accessible to every person. For example he put ramps in so that people in wheelchairs could get around. But then later that evening he encountered someone who could not drink anything at the bar and he asked what was wrong. The man responded by saying that he is a diabetic. This also showed me that no matter how hard you may try to accommodate everyone, it is nearly impossible. At first this sounded depressing to me because there seemed to be no hope, but after I thought about it for a while it made me want to try even harder to do my best to accommodate everyone.

Another aspect of the book that I enjoyed is that Alan Brightman made the point that there is not one solution for everyone with disabilities. Everyone has to take his or her own path. I found it interesting when he talked about someone asking him what the best software for a person with disabilities is. His answer is that you need to find the software that works best for the individual that is using it. You can have the "best" software out there but it may not be right for that specific person. I am guilty of doing this because when I first started this class I researched what the best programs would be to use to help my partner David. But after reading this book I learned that I have to work with David and find out what works best for him. A way that I found that works is that I will type on Microsoft Word and ask a loud question to David and he will type a response. I found out that David is an excellent typist and he also loves to do it. This is what works best for us so in my case basic Microsoft Word is an excellent software for us to use.

I enjoyed how the book was set up because the chapters outline my experience with David. The chapters of this book are Common Nonsense, Learning and Leaps. I think that David and I experienced all these categories. When I first started with class I was very nervous and did not know what to expect. I learned many things about individuals with disabilities that I had never learned before. I found out that some things that are common sense to some might not be so common to others. There were things that I thought I knew, but it turned out that I really did not understand completely. Then when I was finally able to meet David, we went through the learning process. I learned about him and he learned about me. This is what I found most interesting about this program. I thought that

I was going to be doing all the teaching, when in fact I believe that David taught me more than I was able to teach him. It took a little while for us to open up to each other, but when we did we learned so much! After we got to know each other and feel comfortable around each other we started making great progress, and leaps. I found out what interested him, what he wants to do in his future, and he found out about my hopes and goals in life. This made me realize that we are all not so different after all. This is another thing that the book DisabilityLand taught me. It taught me that in the inside we are all human and just want to be treated the same. I consider these things to be great leaps because we are able communicate and plan our futures and also have fun at the same time.

One short story from the book that made me think the most is the story on page 128 about James who got into a car accident that paralyzed him from the neck down. It then went on to say that James continued playing jazz by using his computer. The authors states this about James, "it was good jazz. Not good jazz for a disabled guy, but plain good jazz." This quote opened my eyes to the fact that everyone is good at something and you just have to find out what it is. Too many people think and say this is good for a person with disabilities. What they should be saying is that it is just plain good. It should not matter whether the person has disabilities or not. That should not define who they are. This quote made me think of David because he is good at many things. He is not good at things for a disabled individual he is just plain good. He can beat me any day in a game in basketball and he knows more about Star Wars than I will ever know. This class and program is all about being able to teach and learn from each other, no matter how we may differ from each other.

## **My Final Reflections Journal**

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Going into this class I was not sure what to expect. I knew it was a CIS class that had to do with community service, and that's about it. I was a little nervous because I did not know what to expect. It turns out that this class taught me more than I could have ever expected to learn from a CIS class. The experience that this class gave my partner and I is immense and one that I will never forget. Right when I met my partner David I knew that we were both going to learn a lot! I could tell that we were both nervous at first, but it was something that we got past quickly. David is a character. He never fails to make me laugh and is always very energetic.

I think that our project effected my partner and I greatly. Not only did David learn but I think I might have even learned more than he did. Not only did I learn about David but I think he even leaned more about himself. Every class Anton and I tried to explore David's interests and expand on them. We tried to find new things that might interest David and also expand interest that he already has. For example, we knew that David liked to draw so we tried to find other activities besides drawing that he may like. We showed David how to use Microsoft Paint and we drew on the white board with dry erase markers. This showed David how he can expand on what he already likes to do. We went on many walks and tried to find other things David may like. We found that he liked the Brooklyn Bridge and all the different types of buildings and architecture around City Hall. I think that David liked all the activities we

did and learned a lot. I felt as if we learned something new every class. While I was exploring David's interests I learned a great deal too. David likes to be outside and walk around so Anton, David and I went on many walks around the city. We went to places that I have never been before and I learned a lot about my surroundings.

My relationship with my partner taught me a lot this semester. I learned to be more accepting and to see everyone as equal because we are all humans. I have worked with younger children with disabilities in the past, but I never formed as strong a bond as I did this semester. Every Tuesday I looked forward to seeing David and working on our project. I consider everyone from this program to be a friend of mine and have built great connections that I will miss greatly!

Like I mentioned before, David was always in a good mood and energetic. Not once did I see him in a bad mood. This made me reflect on my life and it made me want to always look on the bright side of things and never let small problems bring me down. David taught me to be energetic and put my all into everything I do. David also taught me a lot of things about Star Wars. I have never seen any of the movies and knew nothing about Star Wars. David taught me all about his favorite characters and favorite scenes from the movies. I learned something that if it was not for David I would know nothing about.

Overall this is a great program that I am very proud to be a part of! Not only did David learn but I also learned a lot about myself. I will remember this experience for the rest of my life. I will take all the values and morals that I learned from this class everywhere I go. This class opened my eyes and has made an experience that I can never forget. I enjoyed this class so much and got so much out of it that I have recommended it to all of my friends. I will miss coming to this class every week and seeing all my new friends from the AHRC!

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## My Certificate of Recognition of Service

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