

Fall 2014

Personal Reflections from ePortfolio: AHRC New York City

Yekaterina Tsvetkova
Pace University

Recommended Citation

Tsvetkova, Yekaterina, "Personal Reflections from ePortfolio: AHRC New York City" (2014). *Community Action Forum: Seidenberg School*. Paper 29.
http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/forum_seidenberg/29

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Ivan G. Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems at DigitalCommons@Pace. It has been accepted for inclusion in Community Action Forum: Seidenberg School by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Pace. For more information, please contact rracelis@pace.edu.



by Yekaterina Tsvetkova

A little bit about me...

Hello everyone!

My name is Yekaterina Tsvetkova (pronounced yea-katerina) and I am originally from Russia. Here at Pace I am pursuing an International Management major with a minor in Translation Studies. I have volunteered at a local hospital where I worked with patients and staff. In addition I have experience in working with children ages 5-12 years. My hobbies include: photography, art (watercolors, oil) and traveling. On my e-portfolio page you can find various work that I have posted for my past classes throughout my career at Pace.





Critique (on Professor Questions) of 9/9/14

-Evaluate the feature functionality of 3 Web sites that advocate for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

www.autisticadvocacy.org is a website that advocate for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This website offers different options of font sizes that the user can choose from. The website also offers the user to choose a different language (Spanish) and see the Upcoming events. In addition the site is easy to follow, it has simple fonts, colorful backgrounds and a clear layout.

<http://www.autcom.org/> is a bit more primitive and I think that it does not scale to screens of different sizes which can be very tricky for an autistic person to use and navigate on. The website also has an interesting article about how people with autism should react to advice that is given to them by strangers. This article could most likely be very helpful for the users.

-Evaluate the feature functionality of 3 gaming applications (apps) on i-Pads that may be fun for teenagers with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

An app called proloquo2go could be a helpful app for teens, because it helps them put their feelings and concerns into pictographs that then spell out a sentence. This sentence could be sent as a text to their family and friends. This app, although not directly a game could be very functional. Although this app is around 200\$ it has 700 4 star reviews, which is really high.

Talking Tom, Talking Rex are also great apps. If the user says "hello" the animal will repeat it back in their voice. The animal imitates what the child says and this helps them to vocalize what they want to say. Repetition and practice are also very important, and this app offers both. (\$0.99)

Receptive by Function (a.k.a. Function) is the third app that I found. Each screenshot gives the user three different pictures (a purse, a cat and a book) and asks "Which one do you read?" After the person answers correctly the app will respond with "Yeah! Awesome!". This app is simple, clear and engaging. Choice making is the main focus of this creative app.

- Evaluate how Google Glass might be helpful to teenagers with both Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a Speech Disorder.

The application for Google Glass called SHORE that I found online was actually created for people with autism. Once the app is working the person wearing the glasses can see the age, gender and most importantly mood of the person they are communicating with. This is crucial for someone with autism because they are not very good with reading emotions of others. This app will hopefully help to do just that.

Blog (on Partner and Project) of 9/23/14

This week my group member Victor and I met our AHRC New York City Program student, Gabriel. Here is some information we learned about Gabriel when we chatted. He is 18 years old and lives in Brooklyn. Gabriel's mother is from Porto Rico and his father is from Honduras, but his parents are divorced and he lives with his mother. Between his birth and step siblings Gabriel has 4 brothers and 2 sisters.

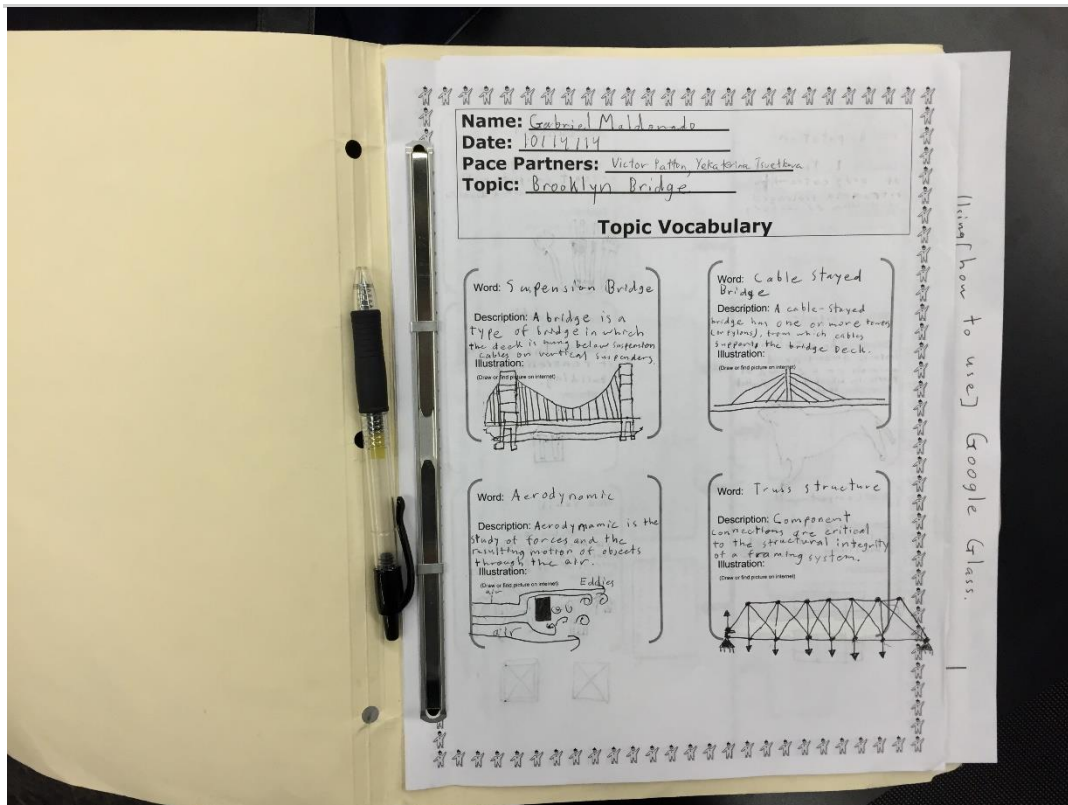
In school, Gabriel as I enjoys Social Studies and after school he likes to play basketball, work out at the gym or play games on his x-box. Gabriel also has a YouTube channel where he uploads videos of himself singing. He has traveled to Florida and Delaware, he has gone to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden (his favorite area there was the Japanese section) and enjoyed a trip to local water parks. I could tell that Gabriel is very excited about getting his driver's license later this year and he is very proud of himself for passing the theory portion of the test.

Overall Gabriel seems to be very kind, smart and advanced. He can hold a logical and meaningful conversation with me and picks up on jokes. Another trait that I noticed about Gabriel is the fact that he is friendly. He greeted us with "Hello, my name is Gabriel" and a handshake&smile, and when his friends were presenting he made sure to wish them "Good luck".

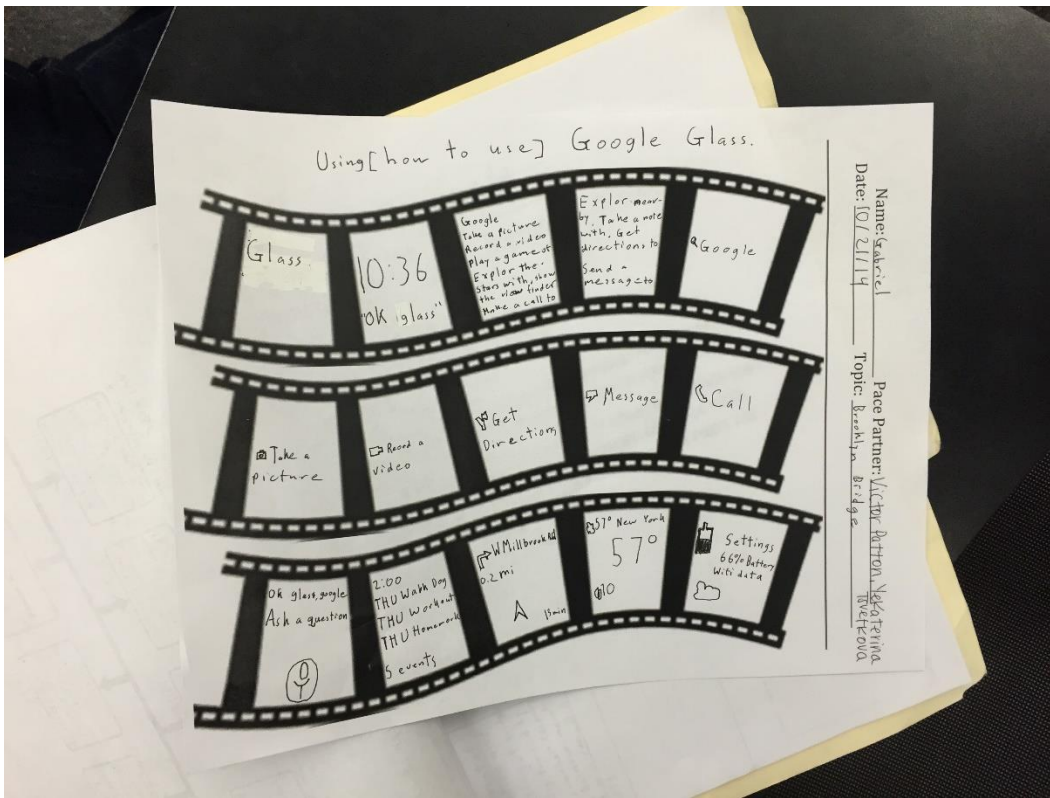
During this semester Victor, Gabriel and I will be exploring Downtown Manhattan with the use of Google glasses. We have already taught Gabriel how to turn the glasses on and off, how to talk to them and navigate an interesting app called "Explore the Stars" that lets the user see all of the stars around him at that exact location and moment.

Although Gabriel was a bit quite during our introduction presentation, he shared a lot about himself during the prior hours, which was very interesting. I think that he is very excited to work with us this semester and so are we!

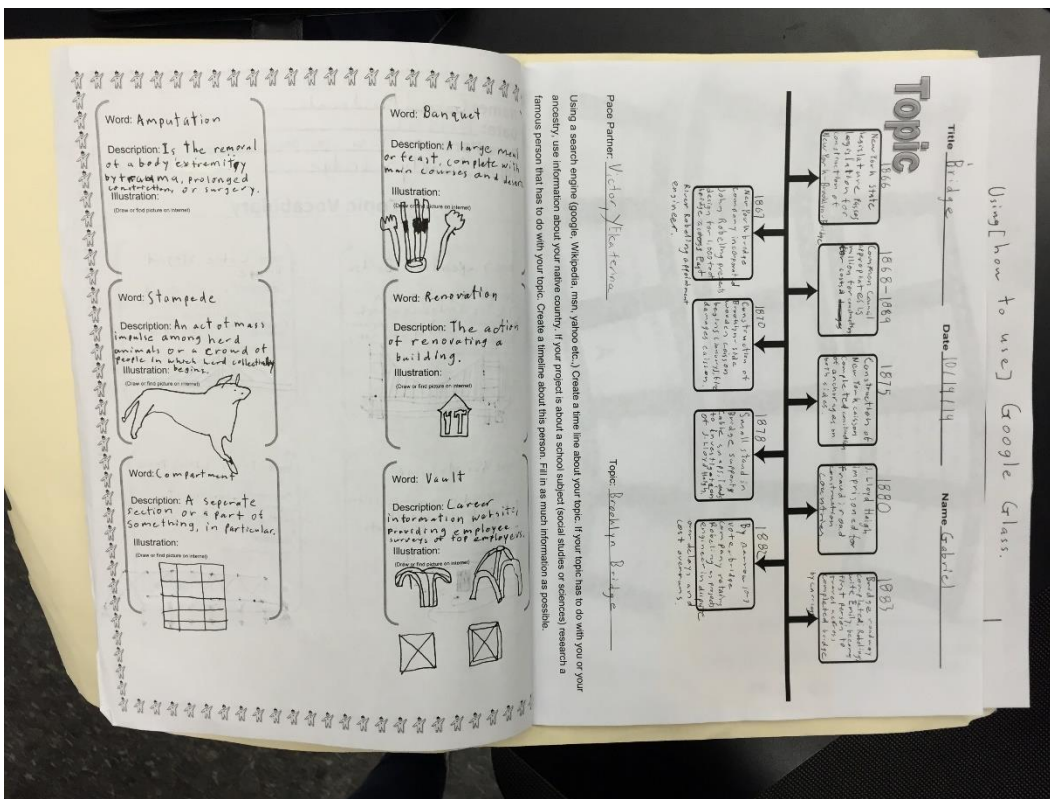
Gabriel's work: Google glass



Google glass screens drawn



More of Gabriel's assignments



Blog (on Partner and Project) of 9/23/14

This week my group member Victor and I met our AHRC New York City Program student, Gabriel. Here is some information we learned about Gabriel when we chatted. He is 18 years old and lives in Brooklyn. Gabriel's mother is from Porto Rico and his father is from Honduras, but his parents are divorced and he lives with his mother. Between his birth and step siblings Gabriel has 4 brothers and 2 sisters.

In school, Gabriel as I enjoys Social Studies and after school he likes to play basketball, work out at the gym or play games on his x-box. Gabriel also has a YouTube channel where he uploads videos of himself singing. He has traveled to Florida and Delaware, he has gone to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden (his favorite area there was the Japanese section) and enjoyed a trip to local water parks. I could tell that Gabriel is very excited about getting his driver's license later this year and he is very proud of himself for passing the theory portion of the test.

Overall Gabriel seems to be very kind, smart and advanced. He can hold a logical and meaningful conversation with me and picks up on jokes. Another trait that I noticed about Gabriel is the fact that he is friendly. He greeted us with "Hello, my name is Gabriel" and a handshake&smile, and when his friends were presenting he made sure to wish them "Good luck".

During this semester Victor, Gabriel and I will be exploring Downtown Manhattan with the use of Google glasses. We have already taught Gabriel how to turn the glasses on and off, how to talk to them and navigate an interesting app called "Explore the Stars" that lets the user see all of the stars around him at that exact location and moment.

Although Gabriel was a bit quite during our introduction presentation, he shared a lot about himself during the prior hours, which was very interesting. I think that he is very excited to work with us this semester and so are we!

Critique (on Professor News Story) of 9/23/14

I have noticed accessibility problems for individuals with disabilities in the public transportation system in NYC. I commute from NJ by taking the NJ Transit train that arrives to NY Penn Station. There were a few situations when I saw a blind person with a guide dog struggle while navigating through the station. During the morning and evening rush hours the station becomes very crowded and the escalators do not run the proper way. Similar issues arise with the subway in the city and the out of order elevators do not help. I was shocked to read that as of 2011 only 48 of the 482 stations of Amtrak serves were ADA compliant. The daily routine that we take for granted is actually very complex for someone with disabilities and I am glad that about \$100 million is going toward addressing this problem. Hopefully this money goes to improve accessibility problems at the Amtrack locations throughout the tri-state area.

Blog of 9/30/14

Due to transportation issues, this week Gabriel was not able to come, but this allowed us to work with Costas. Working with Costas helped us see that the two students have different personalities and have very different developmental levels.

Costas is 19 and he is much more comfortable with typing and reading text, rather than talking. He used his iPad and he spent a lot of time using the app iMovie. This app is a native app store app, that was not specifically designed for people with autism, however Costas was able to create his own short videos on it without a problem. He also typed in the names of the cast and directors from a sheet of paper he had. Those names were from the "Winnie the Pooh" cartoon, that he later watched.

Costas did not want to talk and answer questions, I think that he would rather be working on his videos instead After a question was asked, he would not say anything and if the question was rephrased he still wouldn't say a word. Once a few choices for possible answers were presented he would simply pick the first choice. I am not sure what developmental level he is at, but I did notice that he is

much more of a visual learner and responds best in text, rather than spoken words. Maybe if the questions were typed and he could answer them by typing it would be simpler and more fun for him. He also read a paragraph about his project's topic "New York City in the 1800's" and his reading level was pretty good.

Next week Victor and I will be working with Gabriel and will begin teaching him about google glasses. One of the women from the program actually told us that last time when Gabriel went back to his school he told *everyone* that he was able to wear and play with the glasses. That news made both Victor and I smile, because it confirmed Gabriel's excitement to the glasses that he showed in class and during the presentation. I am happy that starting next week Gabriel(who loves tech) will have an opportunity to start working with google glasses.

Blog of 10/7/14

Today's class flew by. Victor and I began to teach Gabriel how to use the Google glasses and surf the web. Gabriel chose a topic "Brooklyn bridge" and began to navigate. He commanded the glass by saying "ok, glass" and then he would say "google..." "google Brooklyn bridge historical facts" "google Brooklyn bridge current events" and so on. As the webpages were opening and the text was appearing in front of Gabriel's eyes he began to smile, which made me smile. He was navigating the webpages by talking to Google glasses, reading the information and copying it down on paper. One could even say that Gabriel was multitasking, which is very difficult for people with autism. One minor issue that we faced was the dimming of the screen. It is set to dim 15 seconds after the user touches, which made it a bit tricky to read and write, but Gabriel handled it well and was really happy to use the glass. As Gabriel, Victor and I spent more time together we learn more and more about each other and it is clear that Gabriel loves tech. Every time he wrote down something from reading it on glass he would say "perfect", "great" and smile. Right before we headed downstairs and Gabriel still had the glasses on, he told one of the staff from the program that he loves the glasses and thinks that they are much better than an ipad. After his comment I asked Gabriel, why he liked the glasses more than the ipad, to what he responded with "because the glasses are more useful and there is no Siri". He, just like any of us compared the two products and made a conclusion. Gabriel is very friendly and is always eager to work with Victor and I.

Critique of 10/7/14

1)I think that the incident mentioned in "Suit Accuses Papa John's of Violating ADA, Disability Scoop" by Heasley, Shaun (2014) probably does not happen frequently since the Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) states that "discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to employment is prohibited". I hope that this act protects people and that employers follow it. Situations such as the one mentioned in the article would happen much more if the ADA did not exist.

This act provides protection for individuals with disabilities and gives them fair terms such as: recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, pay, job assignment, leaves of absence, benefits, and social programs. The fact that Scott Bonn who successfully worked at Papa John's Pizza with an assistance of an independently employed job coach and was fired by an operating partner goes against Title 1 of the ADA Act. Papa John's Pizza was accused of violating the act, by failing to provide aid and firing Bonn.

2)These following two sections of ADA are the most applicable to our student and will make sure to provide him with security, equality and safety once he finishes his studies at the program.

Title 1 of the act focuses on employment: this section prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities (who have qualified) in the workplace or anything related to their employment. This act gives the individuals the same recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, pay and job assignment, leave of absence, benefits and social program. The requirement became effective on July 26, 1992 and for employees with 15 to 24 employees two years later.

This section of the act could help the students, such as Gabriel who will enter the “adult world” after they are out of the program. This will protect him as he finds a job and begins to work. This section ensures that Gabriel and other individuals with disabilities will be treated as other workers and given the same rights/benefits.

Title 2 mentions public accommodations, such as public transportation or any other events that are public. Discrimination against individuals with disabilities is prohibited in public places, events and related to public transportation. Since Gabriel’s program is located in New York, transportation such as the Subway, public bus system, taxis, libraries and public events are obviously open and can not discriminate toward individuals with disabilities. Once the students graduate from the program, and find a job, they will have to take the public transportation and this section of the act will protect them when they commute to work and back home. Although this might seem as a minor addition, it will make the student’s commute easier, safer and equal to what it is to others. Gabriel has told me that he travels to Coney Island and other boroughs, and I am glad to know that this section of the act protects him during his travels. When he has a job, this act will be there to help!

Critique of 10/14/14

Michael Fox who is a famous American actor was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in 1991 and disclosed the condition to the public seven years later. In 2000 Fox had to semi-retire from acting because the symptoms worsened, but since that time he became an advocate for research toward finding a cure. In 2010 Fox created the Michael J. Fox Foundation and has been very popular in the disabled world. In 2012 Fox announced the *The Michael J. Fox Show*, which is loosely based on his life. This show is about a reporter who re-enters the workforce and his struggles along the way. As far as other appearances, Fox has done voice overs for films while he was going through a hard time, however now he can be seen on TV. One show that I watch is called “*The Good Wife*” where Fox plays a disabled, wise and sneaky lawyer. Prior to doing some research I did not even know that this actor had a disability. His performance in “*The Good Wife*” is great and I am sure that his show will be very successful as well.

It is said that due to Fox’s popularity the disability community has high hopes that viewers will learn from this show and the fact that people with disabilities can be successful in the workplace will be accepted. This could really help the public know the success stories of disabled people in the workforce, since as of now there is a misimpression of what it is like.

In contrast I looked at the film “*I AM SAM*” where Sean Penn plays a father with a developmental disability. The character struggles to gain respect and be able to care for his daughter, however as she grows she develops more than her father and court cases are brought. The actor was able to portray the character really well and the movie was very touching. In the plot the character was struggling with job and I think a lot of real world problems that individuals with disabilities face were shown.

There have been other famous people with disabilities, such as Thomas Jefferson and George Washington who were dyslexic, Franklin Roosevelt who used a wheelchair, Stephen Hawking who suffers from ALS and Albert Einstein who possibly had autism spectrum. However Michael Fox and other actors with disabilities have the advantage of being on the television and constantly showing people that they are successful and strong. Just like *The Cosby Show* and Oprah chartered new territory for race relations, shows such as *Will and Grace*, *Modern Family* and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* shifted people’s views on the LGBT issues, *The Michael J. Fox Show* can bring awareness and change how people see disabled individuals in the workplace. What can Fox and his show help with? All the workplaces that do not hire individuals with disabilities will finally see that there is no reason they should discriminate. 70% of working-age Americans with disabilities do not have jobs, even though the majority of them want to work. While 28% of Americans without disabilities do not have jobs. The difference is clear. The fact that disabled individuals do not have jobs has resulted in high poverty, isolation and most importantly financial dependency. I don’t think that individuals with disabilities who are willing to work want others to feel sorry for them, all they want is a job and fair treatment. I hope that the Disability Act along with Fox’s new show and the support will help employers to realize that people with disabilities can do their job and can be successful and that they can and should be hired!

Critique of 11/11/14

The presentation last week about the OASIS program was very interesting. Pace University has it and so do several colleges in the area and the program provides help and support for high functioning individuals. College life is sometimes said to be “the best years” of your life and it is important that students like Gabriel experience that. Some independence, interesting courses, new material, while still having help with homework, projects, papers and friends. A student with disability can greatly benefit from this assistance and the powerful team that is always there to help.

Gabriel's parents might be upset that he can not go to a four year college, however they probably know that he is functioning to a point where he can take some classes and have a certificate. I hope that his parents are proud of Gabriel, because he is a hardworking student and a kind person. This certificate can land him a simple JOB in the future, which would be amazing! The individuals that fall into the gap face many obstacles, because they can not attend a regular college, but simple day care is too basic for them. Those who are in the gap are sometimes excluded from the mainstream society and it effects not only them, but their families as well. However others are able to hold jobs and tasks, which is why it is great that programs such as OASIS exist. They provide not only the individual, but his/her family with support, information and skills that are very much needed.

Blog of 11/25/14

Today Gabriel, Costas, Victor, myself and several other students took a field trip to the Discovery Times Square exhibit, titled “Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N.” Gabriel was really excited to see the exhibit and so was Costas. First we had to wait in lines and check in our backs and the students did that just fine. After that, we all received special cards that would be used by each of us to scan and use the interactive displays. There were several rooms and each one was designed for a specific avenger character. Since I did not know much about the film or the story, I was happy to listen to Gabriel as he explained all the details to me. Most of the students were really excited to use the interactive tools and displays and found them to be intriguing. There was also a very interesting toy where a person had to sit and pedal with his/her hands. Gabriel and Costas both tired out the machine and were very happy to receive a high score. In the rooms, when we were not playing and showing the students around, Victor and I watched the exhibits, to help the AHRC teacher and make sure no one was lost from our group. In addition I was happily surprised by the fact that the students were not afraid of the darkness and the flashing light everywhere. At the end of the tour we took some pictures (unfortunately Costas did not want to be photographed, but I will try to find a group shot where we got everybody). Overall this trip was interesting mainly because it gave us the opportunity to interact with the students in a different environment and see them in it.

Critique of 11/25/14

There is a character limit to 65,655 words and I can not post more text here (e-portfolio is not letting me). The Rest of my posts can be found below (under the green arrow).

Thanks

My Mid-Term Reflection Journal on [Book - Suskind]

I take the NJ Transit train from New Jersey to New York at least four times a day. During these trips, I am either reading, sleeping or studying, three things that all college students do. However, this trip was different. We had been riding for about 20 minutes from the stop where I got on to the train and I picked my usual spot, a two-seater. Content and sleepy, I was trying to get through a tough read when all of the sudden, a woman holding her baby jumped up and ran over to the seat in front of mine. The woman began to yell “Give him back the money! Give it back! Somebody help!” The man who she was yelling at responded with “What are you talking about? He is my friend.” The neighboring passengers also began to say things such as “I saw him take the money from the boy!” “This is not right!”

I still had no idea what was going on, until a conductor came over and the story unfolded. It turns out that a young guy about my age who had autism was riding the train and a man, aware of his disability sat next to him and asked to “borrow” money from the young guy. The boy ended up handing the man his cash and was about to get off at his stop, when this woman jumped in. The thief took advantage

of the disabled individual and began to scream that the boy was his friend, however he did not know his name or anything about him. In the end the money was given back to its owner and the situation was peacefully resolved. This was a regular commute for me, but for someone a quick one hour trip was a difficult, mysterious and dangerous adventure.

This semester I am working with a student from the AHRC New York City program, Gabriel. I was able to share personal experiences with someone who has autism. Gabriel is 18 years old and he lives in Brooklyn, New York. His mother is from Porto Rico and his father is from Honduras. Unfortunately, his parents are divorced and he lives with his mother. Although as we got to know each other through the weeks, he told me that he visits his father and his new family. I wonder if his parents' separation was partially due to Gabriel's disability. If so, that makes me very upset.

Gabriel told me that in school his favorite subject is Social Studies and after school he likes to play basketball, work out at the gym or play games on his x-box. Gabriel also has a YouTube channel where he uploads videos of himself singing and his work outs.

I was also glad to hear that Gabriel has traveled to Florida and Delaware, he has gone to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden (his favorite area there was the Japanese section) and enjoyed trips to the local water parks and basketball games. I could tell that Gabriel is very excited about getting his driver's license later this year and he is very proud of himself for passing the theory portion of the test. As you can see, Gabriel's hobbies, interests and pastimes do not differ from a teenager who does not have a disability.

I have also noticed that Gabriel is very developed and advanced compared to the other students in the program. He is always nice and polite and he is able to focus when working on projects. Since focusing is very difficult for individuals with autism I paid close attention to Gabriel as he worked in class. While he wore the glass (that he absolutely loves) he was able to navigate it and then write down whatever information he found on the web. The only thing is that sometimes he needed guidance and repetition of directions, but other than that he was very focused and attentive. My blogs on e-portfolio go in-depth with other specific class sessions that I had with Gabriel and it is where I talk about Gabriel and how he uses the Google glasses.

Gabriel is a quick learner, he is organized and a very positive guy! After reading the novel "Life, Animated: A story of sidekicks, heroes and autism" by Ron Suskind I was able to see the various extremes of the autism spectrum. The story talks about Owen, who is actually the author's son and the struggles that he and his family go through as Owen grows up with autism. Owen finds soles in Disney's works and later on uses the lyrics to bridge out to the people and him. The beginning chapters are written from the perspective of the father and the story of his son Owen. The father talks about other children and how his son runs just like them. But we quickly read about the beginning of changes that the parents go through as they find out that Owen has Autism. The mother begins to take Owen to therapists, and everyday life for the family changes. The parents adopt and change not just their daily routine, but their psyche. Owen is then put into two different schools at once, in order to experience one on one coaching and interactions with other children. He begins starts to listen to specific Disney song segments and repeat them. "As of fall of 1999 turns into winter of 2000, he isn't into just any Disney movie. He's deeply besotted with *Song of the South*." (Suskind, 78)

Owen's speech was still needs based or when he was really bothered by something he would communicate. The parents had to study his moves, facial expressions and create assumptions. Not being able to communicate with their child was probably very difficult. A positive milestone for Owen was when he began to announce his descent "I'll be in the basement if you need me." (Suskind, 94) Things such as this little move forward, made his parents very happy and proud of their son.

"At first we thought it was the noise-that it was just an issues of it being too loud in the theater: a matter of what autism specialists call overstimulation. In the coming years, we began to realize it ran deeper than that. These movies, our allies-providing a passage to our son-had an independent power over him. They were engaged with him in an elaborate dance..." (Suskind, 252) By 2010 the parents realized that Owen could absorb and contextualize the Disney stories. He showed this by trying to communicate the main points to his parents.

I wonder if Gabriel and his parents had trouble communicating together when he was younger. Is it possible that his father could not put up with the extensive learning and did not have the extra energy to give to Gabriel? Possibly... Either way, Gabriel has developed quite a lot for someone his age and the program that he attends defiantly helps him.

In addition around the same time that they boys (Owen and Gabriel) were born the Disability Act was passed, which protects and helps them to succeed in the real world.

Suskind, Ron. *Life, Animated: A Story of Sidekicks, heroes, and Autism*.

N.p.: Thorndike, 2014. Print.



Posts cont.

Critique for 11/25/14

According to my research about 70, 273 people were affected by the T-4 program from 1940-1945. The Nazis wanted to eliminate not only the Jewish population of Eastern Europe, but other groups, such as communists, gypsies, homosexuals and individuals with disabilities. Overall there was not much response to the T-4 program, mainly because the German population was experiencing economical troubles after WWI and this led to Hitler coming to power. Once the Nazi party was operating, the average German citizen agreed with the values and ideas, mainly because this would solve the economic issues and bring Germany to stability. But as we know it did not. The Nazis destroyed countries, cities and people's lives. The main reason that the German population did not respond was because they were focusing on their problems and not thinking about what is happening to other people. In addition, information did not travel fast like it does now, and many people simply did not know who was murdered at the camps and the other horrible details. For the longest time the world did not know what was happening, it was only after the fact, when the camps were being liberated when the records were found.

I think and certainly hope that the global society will be more responsive to any similar situation now, in 2014 and in the future. The main reason being that many have learned from the past and similar mistakes are not wanted. In addition, thanks to social media and other outlets the world has become very connected. This connection helps to unite us and let us share the good and (unfortunately) the bad that is happening in one place of the world or another. I also think that there would be more institutional safeguards in global society now. There are many non-profit and government organizations that focus on specific groups of people, on their safety and well being. Individuals with disabilities have several organizations like that in the US and in the world and it is wild to think that only about 75 years ago such organizations did not exist.

Blog for 12/02/14

Today Gabriel and I worked on the power point presentation. We included slides about Gabriel, his hobbies and interests. A few slides on our trip last week to the Marvel Avengers exhibit and his work with glass. Google glasses has been a great addition to our work. By using the glasses, Gabriel was able to gather information that he used to do his work. In addition Gabriel learned how to use a new medium. Overall Gabriel said that he enjoyed the time he spent with us and he will miss not having the glasses.

Blog (on Presentations) of 12/16/14

Today was the last class and also our presentation day. We presented at the AHRC where friends, staff and family members came to observe the work we did with our partners this semester. Gabriel's parents were not there, however Costas's father and mother came.

There presentations had a similar layout, but different topics and approaches. Students would start of introducing themselves and their Pace partners, then they would talk about their experience during this semester as well as their topic that they researched. I presented at the end, with Gabriel and Costas. The presentation went well and I was able to mention everything I wanted to. Victor then talked about google glasses after I talked about the students and their experiences. It was sweet how parents took photographs and videos of their children while they presented and received their certificates.

My Final Reflection Journal on Impacts of Semester

This semester has opened my eyes even wider on the issue of individuals with disabilities and disabilities in general. I also feel that I benefited the community by working with the students from AHRC and that they learned something from our class.

By working with the students I was able to share my skills and resources and teach them what I knew. This community service was rewarding and we all learned something about our partners. We had to be patient with the students and explain tasks multiple times. These techniques allowed us to work better with the students and for them to listen to us.

The trip to Marvel Avengers exhibit allowed us to see the students in a different environment and I learned that these students have interests and hobbies, just like any of us. It also allowed me to see how Gabriel bought something at the food shop. He wanted to order a holiday cupcake, and Gabriel said that he is allergic to nuts. The worker replied by saying that some of the food is made in the same place that uses nuts as ingredients, however Gabriel did not understand that. She was confused why he didn't understand her and he was also confused. I came over and explained everything to him and he ordered a hot chocolate. This situation showed me, how hard daily tasks and life in general can be for an individual with disabilities. We take many things for granted, and these students reminded me not to do that.

Gabriel is a kind, hardworking and friendly teenager. He has not become angry at others or the society. Instead he always greets his friends and participates in several fun activities. He is also very active on social media, facebook, instagram and youtube. He posts statuses such as "have a good day everyone" and " hope everyone has a good Monday, god bless". He is always positive and enjoys performing. His will and confidence allows him to make videos and upload them to youtube, in addition to his participation in school's talent shows.

Although there are limited possibilities for Gabriel as far as a future, but the following laws are here to protect people like Gabriel. Americans with Disabilities Act, Telecommunications Act, Fair Housing Act, Air Carrier Access Act, Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act, National Voter Registration Act, Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Rehabilitation Act, and Architectural Barriers Act.

*****My Certificate of Recognition will be emailed to me later this week*****