

Service & Leadership - YLDP Service Essay

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Each one of us is born with a set of skills and abilities that we can channel into various activities. While we each have different and unique sets, all of us can use our abilities for one very important thing: service. Ranging from raising funds for a cause to volunteering at a pet shelter, all service activities provide us with an opportunity to give back to our communities and leave our mark on the world. As a volunteer for Project CURE, the world's largest distributor of donated medical relief, I learned about the value of voluntary service and witnessed effective leadership in service areas.

At the Project CURE facility, I spent hours sorting medical supplies based on their type and expiration date and creating medical kits. Before starting, our leaders taught us about the extensive steps involved in preparing medical supplies for donation, and I was amazed at the level of dedication they demonstrated towards this activity. However, after they spoke of how these supplies were donated to over 100 nations, I understood why they did what they did. While the work itself was somewhat tiring after many hours, knowing that the supplies would go to hundreds of hospitals encouraged me to continue this meaningful work. In our meeting with Judge Sandhill, he noted the importance of striving to improve our communities; by volunteering with Project CURE and working to better the international health community, I could fully realize the value of this lesson. Additionally, volunteering with Project CURE enabled me to better understand leadership at various levels. According to the Harvard Business Review, an authentic leader not only achieves personal goals and leads but also empowers other individuals to become leaders. Our volunteer director, Ms. Janet Thomason, consistently demonstrated this -- Ms. Thomason educated interns about both completing various tasks as well as teaching others how to do these tasks. Next, the interns led groups of volunteers, teaching us how to do activities like sort medical supplies and package kits. Moreover, I found myself and other volunteers using this knowledge to aid newer volunteers. It was very inspiring to see firsthand how effective leaders like Ms. Thomason can set off a chain reaction of motivating their group members -- all at different levels in the organization -- to commit to being leaders in service!

Overall, my service volunteering with Project CURE taught me the value of endeavoring to improve communities and be an authentic leader. I can't wait to return and I continue my impact!



Sorted medical supplies at the Project CURE Houston Warehouse