

Community Outreach

Community service has always been a big part of my life. Since I was young I have always tried to give back to my community. Community service helps bring the community together and give people the opportunity to participate in stuff they would not normally. Many students participate in different community outreach programs even if they are not required. There are so many opportunities for people to find something that interests them and gives them a chance to give back to the community.

Since I have been at Longwood University I have participated in multiple community outreach projects. I have volunteered with two events through the Southside SPCA and I have volunteered with the annual town Halloween costume parade. The first event that I worked with the Southside SPCA was help building the Field of Dreams Memorial. This memorialized all the long-term residents of the Field of Dreams. The Field of Dreams is a facility that provides a home for various dogs that need long-term care. In this project we built a garden in the corner of the facility. For the majority of a Saturday we set up a fence and gate, planted flowers, created a pathway and placed a bench in the back. Afterwards we were able to pet a lot of the dogs and learn more about the facility. The second event that I volunteered at with the SPCA was the Fall Open House. At the Fall Open House we helped sell t-shirts and run the raffle for different gift baskets. During that time we were also to see all the animals (cats and dogs) that they had at their facility. The third event that I volunteered at was the annual town Halloween costume parade. This event occurred on the Friday before Halloween and I signed various kids into the costume contest. After helping set up the tables that different businesses were selling candy at, the kids would go on their parade and trick-or-treat. When they finished that, each of the volunteers were assigned a category and had to organize all that kids that were in that category into a line. When the category was called the volunteers had to lead them up onto the stage and make sure they receive their candy on the way out.

Due to the fact that I am in Honors Student Association, HSA, I have been presented with multiple community outreach opportunities. I chose to volunteer with the Southside SPCA because I have a passion for helping animals. My whole life I have taken every opportunity to help volunteer with animals. When I was presented with the opportunity to work with animals and help the SPCA raise money, I took the opportunity without a second thought. The experience

at both these SPCA events is one that I will never forget. Although it may not seem like I made a huge impact on the community, I helped benefit the SPCA in some small way. The Field of Dreams Memorial gives people a place to reminisce and cherish each of those dogs that are at the facility. The Fall Open House brought awareness to the SPCA and helped raise funds in order to provide for the animals at the main facility. It was great seeing all these different types of people come and donate money to the SPCA. These people took time out of their day to help support a local organization. I loved how I was able to witness the animal-lover community come together and help out the SPCA. I chose to help out with the Halloween Costume Parade because I wanted to meet people within the town and help them out in an interactive way. I love working with kids and I thought this would be a great opportunity to help give back to the community. I loved seeing families all dress up together and bring the community together. It really made me appreciate the small-town feel Farmville has.

After experiencing these different types of community outreach, I want to go out and help more. I am planning on volunteering with the Southside SPCA again in their future events and taking any opportunity that I can to volunteer with the town. I loved that feeling you get after you know you helped someone else out. Community service is important to the community because it helps bring everyone together. Farmville is lucky to have Longwood University right around the corner. There are so many students that want to help give back and show their appreciation for Farmville. Community service helps the people of Farmville know that the students of Longwood are not just here to grow academically but also grow with their appreciation of how a community should feel. I never understood how close a small town could be until I moved here and volunteered within the town. Community service is important to me because I love giving back. I always try and volunteer as much as I can because I know I have the capability to help people. I want to use that capability and various skills that I have to help benefit people. Even if it is just lining up kids for a costume contest, I know I made a difference in those children's lives. I had many of them come up and hug me afterwards and it brought such a great feeling to my heart. I cannot imagine not helping out again in other events.

During the entirety of the semester I have performed various community outreach projects. I have volunteered at two different Southside SPCA functions and I have volunteered with the town's annual Halloween costume parade. All of these events have showed me that

there are multiple ways you can volunteer within the community. Not every volunteer activity is boring and long. With all the volunteer opportunities that are presented, anyone can find something that suits their interest.