My Rewarding experience in Volunteering

“Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Volunteering has played a major role in my life and my own personal growth. In this essay, I want to share my own experience with those who are capable and have the desire of helping others. Over the four years I spent in high school, I was given many opportunities like participating in the public library, serving at Keep Midland Beautiful, and contributing in an ESL program. What I accomplished the most from these involvements was that it provided me a way to grow, improve myself and to make a small difference in the world that we live in today.

I spent my first volunteering experience working at Midland Need to Read. Which is an adult literacy and non-profit organization. This ESL program is for nonnative speakers providing a way for students not only to learn English, but also allowing them to participate in the cultural and social activities. My job there was to take inventory of what books and materials they used and I was in charge of recording and writing
down the ISBN of that publication. I played a small role in this program, but being more organized allowed the effectiveness of that business to go up which allowed them to reach more people.

The second place I had the privilege of volunteering at was at the Centennial Library. My job there was to check for damage, sort books accordingly and to replace them in the correct locations. This work allowed people to quickly and easily find that certain book they were looking for and this ultimately resulted in greater depth of knowledge for individuals. This also allowed for the library to function smoothly and to devote more of their time assisting others there.

Lastly, I was able to have the experience of serving with Keep Midland Beautiful. This program is also a non-profit organization which has administered the task of keeping the city of Midland clean. This system does a bi-annual community pick up where hundreds of citizens scour for waste and dispose of it accordingly. My job there was to assist in providing a hot, delectable meal for the workers. I, along with many other volunteers assisted with cooking 650 meals for those who came in after picking up trash the majority of that morning. Not only did this allow the hard workers to refill their stomachs, but it also made them more willing to return and to volunteer the next time it was held. Overall I enjoyed the experience of simply
learning what it was like to serve others and even how it changes your attitude towards the rest of the community.

Be the change you want to see in the world. Many have heard of this saying, but have they truly applied this to their lives and really considered what these wise words of encouragement mean? This all starts with the foundation of a person's thoughts. Which soon turn into actions, which change to habits, which become your character and finally, your destiny. Everyone in this world can better their community. We all have different gifts and talents. We all need to use our abilities faithfully in serving others; not just for our own personal enjoyment. Everyone has a talent whether they know it or not; many people simply take time to discover what they excel at. Even as you seek to discover your gift, if you see a need or opportunity for that matter, look to meet it. You may even find gifts in areas of yourself you might not have been aware of. I believe that this is what volunteering has shown me and I highly recommend others to take this opportunity. As Doctor King put it, everyone has the capability of helping others. The only thing required is compassion.

What I took away from this experience was that I actually found helping others and not being compensated financially truly rewarding. In a world today so revolved and obsessed with money, it was fulfilling having the knowledge and satisfaction that I
had done something to make a difference. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to help others and not to care about monetary rewards. As a result of not being motivated with money I began to take different perspective on the work that I did. From each activity, I have personally learned many valuable life lessons in helping others. I discovered that my ideas towards volunteering prior to my experiences were completely far from reality. I began to see the world briefly through a different set of lenses. I began to see the small ripples as a result of the effort and work that I had put in. It was an experience never to be gotten and soon to be repeated. Overall the work was far more rewarding knowing that I was serving others and one day soon i look forward to doing it again.