

MEANINGFUL
COMMUNITY
SERVICES

FINAL PROJECT

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Kennedy Krieger Institute

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL



TRAINEE ROLE
AT
MEANINGFUL
COMMUNITY
SERVICES

- As a trainee at Meaningful Community Services, I attended, created, and presented the Daily Professional Developments. During these presentations, interns learn about a variety of topics ranging from physical and mental health to safety in the community.
- In the community, I met with interns at locations such as shopping malls and cafes. We practiced job and personal development activities. This could mean making a resume, applying for a job, practicing how to order at a restaurant, and making change.
- During my admin time, I complete daily notes about the interns' progress each day. Each day, I may work with a different intern. The daily notes help to track their activities and progress.
- On Fridays, we meet as a community during lunch. During these sessions, all community members from Project SEARCH and CORE Foundations join a Zoom meeting to learn about different topics. We also work together in small groups in breakout rooms. As a trainee, I have led the entire group and the individual breakout rooms

ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEES

- Community Member - John Good
- John enjoys creating animation projects in his free time, producing music, and expressing himself through his YouTube channel.
- Meaningful Community Services Staff - Stephanie Skeen
- Stephanie enjoys stand up paddling and spending time with her dogs in her free time.



OVERARCHING THEMES

- Kennedy Krieger Institute has created *a sense of community* by forming lasting bonds and providing impactful education for both the Meaningful Community Services staff and interns.
- Interviewees valued *open and honest communication* within their community and base their values on kindness and positive attitudes.





OVERARCHING
THEMES

Sense of Community

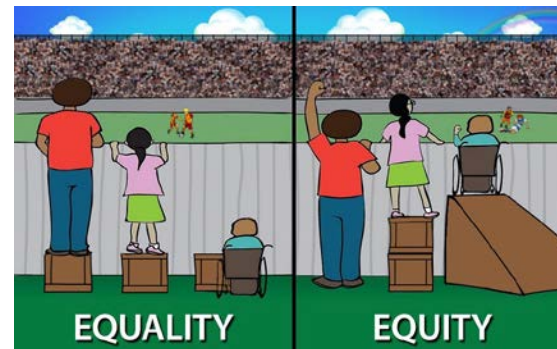
- Community member John has learned key health skills such as daily exercise habits and better dietary choices, and has become close friends with his peers since being a part of Meaningful Community Services.
- Stephanie, on the other hand, has become close enough to her co-workers that she is able to rely on them as friends, and can share the ups and downs of her days with those whom she works with.

Open and Honest Communication

- What Stephanie values in a career, she has found at Meaningful Community Services. This includes open communication and having a supportive team. Feedback is common practice, and helps the team collaborate on how they can actively better themselves.
- John has created a better picture of his values through meeting his peers and the encouraging staff at Meaningful Community Services.

INTERVIEW CONCLUSION AND TAKEAWAYS

- This internship has allowed me to delve into an experience I was previously uninformed in. I am taking away an understanding of the ethics and practices Kennedy Krieger holds high, and a personal connection to those I have worked alongside.
- From my conversations with community members, I have deepened my knowledge of the day-to-day challenges that are societally imposed while working alongside adults with developmental disabilities. I hope that my recent education aids in my continued advocacy for the equitable treatment of every individual and their needs.
- While it is a relatively new program, Meaningful Community Services has taught what I consider to be lifechanging lessons to both the staff and interns



LETTER TO FUTURE INTERN

Dear Future Intern,

Congratulations on being accepted into this internship! This is not a small success, and you deserve recognition for your hard work. But fear not, there is more hard work to come. As you may notice a recurring pattern in our letters, we are not shy to tell you that this internship is challenging at times. On the other hand, it is even more rewarding. You may find it challenging to balance your schedule, but I advise you to plan your week ahead of time. This internship turned me into the person who has to check their calendar before making any weekday plans, and you probably will too! Staying organized and having your schedule in your calendar, as well as having a to-do list for each day, are crucial to your success here.

If you are lucky enough to experience in-person services and coming on to campus, you are in for a fulfilling and exciting time at Kennedy Krieger. The staff who will support you are incredibly kind and understanding, even if you mess up as many times as I have – which brings me to another point... Don't be afraid to make mistakes, it is an honest part of any process, helps you grow, and strengthens your professional relationships. You will naturally feel nervous or unprepared, but after the first week or so, those feelings will dissolve into excitement and the workload will feel lighter as you gain more experience.

Be confident and enthusiastic in all that you do and make sure to ask as many questions as you need to, and you'll have an unforgettable experience here.

All the best,
Aisha