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Service Learning

For my service learning project I chose to feed the Homeless. It was not only an activity I already had wanted to do with my children but something I enjoy doing. To coordinate the event I simply Googled the information to the local shelter and found more than one shelter. I decided to go with Rescue Mission of Salt Lake 463 South 400 W Salt Lake City, UT 84101. I called and spoke with a young man who scheduled me for the evening of October the 17<sup>th</sup>. I filled out the volunteer form needed and waited for the day to come.

On the day we prepared for the evening by dressing in clothes we wouldn't be worried about getting dirty or ruined. We arrived at 6:45pm to help with Dinner. Upon arriving I could tell my youngest child was a little nervous. My oldest had already served the homeless before with other charity events we have done and she reassured him he was just fine.

We participated in several activities including serving dinner and cleaning. I personally enjoyed the serving part better it was more personal to interact with the people. The people we met there eating dinner were not the typical homeless person we see in our minds. We seem to stereo-type the homeless as drug addicts or mentally insane. This was not the case in the people there to eat that evening. We met a young man who just two years ago had a lucrative job and lifestyle. It was heart wrenching. I was so touched at the strength mentally this young man had after all the horrible things that occurred in such a short period of time. I did however have some people who did not want to talk to me and seemed more withdrawn or private. Which is totally understandable, I can see how it has an embarrassing aspect to it.

The number one thing that touched me was the way it affected my children. They felt so much more appreciative of what we have. It made them think of how nice it is to have a home and food and clothes and a family. I am very blessed to be a single mom with the drive to work and go to school and be able to provide and be okay. I feel extremely thankful for all I have and know it is important to always give back to continue to receive blessings. During this critical time in our country due to the financial crisis in this country we must think of our fellow Americans who are without anything and pitch in to help them. Honestly I felt just helping on this evening was nothing or nowhere near enough. Instead I still feel the need to do more. So do my children. So we are committed to continuing to do service work in the future.

Since we only were at the shelter only a couple hours I needed to do more hours to complete the assignment. My daughter was getting ready to graduate early from Murray High and had some U's to work off to qualify to graduate on October the 27<sup>th</sup>. She was planning to go to the Boys and Girls club on October 25<sup>th</sup>, so I joined her to complete my service learning hours. She was very excited to not have to be there alone.

I originally thought in my mind I would be working with children maybe helping with homework or games. When we arrived we met with a gentleman named Grant. He did not have us do any of that stuff instead he had us sit down and stuff envelopes. My thoughts of interacting with children were shut down. I did however have fun just hanging out with my teenage daughter, chatting away about how excited she was to be done with high school. I feel like I have only moments before she is gone to be on her own so it was quality time I needed. It felt like a service was done for me not for the community. Stuffing envelopes is stuffing envelopes. Not a lot more to say about it but it did help them with an activity they needed done.