

2010-2011 PARTICIPANTS

Megan Jones Lowell Elementary 5th, 6th, 9-12th

PROJECT DETAILS

College Confidential is focused on developing the relationships between high school mentors and the 5th and 6th grade English Language Learners at Lowell Elementary. All students will be involved in building a personal rapport with their partners and sharing knowledge of cultures, languages and values while focusing on developing and synthesizing a plan for life-long learning.

What impact did this project have on your community?

"Lowell students were introduced to the how and why of accessing educational opportunities after high school graduation. They met and formed relationships with students who were in the process of choosing colleges and universities to attend. Lowell students explored this phenomenon and shared their experience with peers on a weekly basis. Interestingly, I had requests from non-ELL students to get involved with the project and this is something I would explore were the project to continue."

What impact did this project have on your students?

"Lowell students gave a lot of positive feedback on the project. We had a 100% rate of attendance with absences occurring only in regards to sickness or previously scheduled appointments."

What impact did this project have on you?

"This project has made me want to cry with elation and scream with frustration. I have honestly been amazed and touched at the working relationships that developed between the students. I was barraged weekly by my students asking if we would have a session and if their mentor would come. Lowell students were sincerely excited to be involved and thrilled at working with their mentors. I also received feedback from mentor students reflecting on the experience as positive. Many mentors offered to do more for and with their Lowell student. I was especially moved each week as I looked out over a crowd of 32 students and observed groups of students concentrating intently on their learning tasks. These moments made me feel like the project was some of the best teaching I have ever done."

Do you have any advice to offer other teachers who are incorporating service-learning? Were there any lessons learned that you would like to share?

"For advice, I would suggest the following to teachers using service-learning: It almost goes without saying that the organization of people, time, projects and resources will be essential to the success of your program. Closely consider building support for the project. Service Learning demands substantial time and attention (as any valuable learning activity should) and your success will be depleted if you have to advocate for your program in addition to running it."

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