

November 2014

Greetings!

We have chosen for our fall newsletter a reflection written by one of our young volunteers.

My volunteer experience at Martins was very humbling and inspiring. As it was my first time volunteering at Martins I did not know what to expect or how things were done but I was ready to participate. I am passionate about helping people and having read Martin's website (www.martindeporres.org) I felt that Martins might be the perfect place to give back to the community.

I was really moved by Martin's mission statement, "To serve in a spirit of compassion, understanding and love". This resonated with me because although I have not experienced anything near what the guests at Martins have experienced, I have been through my own obstacles. And through these obstacles I have promised to live by the motto, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." We know nothing about a person except what they choose to tell us but even then, it is not the whole story. Our actions speak volumes and they may well make or break someone who is having a bad day.

In the down time between serving soup and clearing plates, I observed my surroundings to critically think about cultural humility. For those unfamiliar with the concept of cultural humility, it is essentially a lifelong process of critical thinking, acceptance and openness to learning.

We all have our prejudices, which unfortunately get the best of us sometimes. Often times, when our beliefs are different than others, we tend to forget to be open-minded. Our assumptions about a person become biased towards our own perspectives. As a result, we put up barriers to distance ourselves from each other. But at Martins the guests are treated with respect and accepted for who they are. As people mingle with others in this accepting environment a community of care and respect is created.

Happy Holidays from the Martin's Community