Pathways Journal

Service Learning Literary Magazine 2019
Alternative Spring Break
Volume VIII

Welcome

Welcome to Alternative Spring Break's literary magazine, Pathways. This year marks the 27th anniversary of ASB's founding at the University of Virginia. Originally part of Madison House, ASB is now an independent, completely student-run 501(c)(3) that has sent thousands of students on meaningful service trips all over the world. This journal has been dedicated to ASB's mission of service learning. Our service learning grant program challenges ASB participants to further pursue the mission of service learning by engaging with their site through the lens of their creative and research projects. The phenomenal outcomes from these projects demonstrate the wide range of approaches to interpreting service-learning with humility and depth.

ASB is a massive endeavor that requires the dedication and effort of so many outstanding individuals. I would like to thank our executive board, 60 site leaders, spring Fellows, community partners, University administrators, site contacts, fellow CIOs on grounds, and the hundreds of participants who chose to spend their spring break challenging themselves and exploring service learning.

Additionally, I'd like to thank Ms. Kathleen Baireuther, UVA Alumni Association, and Hannah Graham Fund for funding our grants and community outreach programs. To everyone involved: thank you so much.

This organization has a profound impact on so many people involved in the process. It has been such a joy to work with participants as they grapple with complex issues and produce projects that seek to communicate their new knowledge to others. With that, we are proud to share with you this year's Pathways!

ASBest,

Nathan Abraham

ASB Service Learning Chair 2018-2019

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Adopted From Full Paper

Introduction

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization that advocates for affordable and accessible housing. It should be noted that Habitat homes are not simply given away haphazardly. Habitat has a careful selection process through which it awards zero-interest, 20-year mortgages to the homeowners (Husock, 1995). Habitat "believes every man, woman and child should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live" (Gabriel, 2011). They promote sustainable community development and aim to create responsible, self-sufficient homeowners.

While the Habitat business model seems strong, the fortitude of their construction is sometimes questioned. For example, the Fairway Oaks development was built by Habitat in 2000. Since then, homeowners have complained about shoddy construction work and question the "blitz construction" (Leland, 2007). Habitat for Humanity often employs relatively inexperienced volunteers for short stints of time, such as collegiate spring break volunteer groups. The proficiency in construction work of the typical college student is definitely minimal. Fortunately, Habitat's construction leaders are trained to catch volunteers up to speed and to assign them low-risk tasks that generally do not affect the home's structural integrity. The construction leaders are often experts in their field or AmeriCorps volunteers who have gone through extensive training.

What they can't be prepared for, however, is having to adapt to donations of building materials. Sometimes, Habitat for Humanity receives donations of leftover building materials that are not exactly what they are used to working with, and they must adjust their construction plan accordingly. The materials that are left unused or are donated from outside parties typically end up in Habitat ReStores, which sell new and used building materials, furniture, and appliances. Habitat ReStores aim "to provide an environmentally and socially responsible way to keep good, reusable materials out of the waste stream while providing funding for Habitat's community improvement work" (Gabriel, 2011). The Habitat ReStore of Wake County believes that "with the growth of sustainability and being 'green', thrifty has taken on a whole new meaning". The donation of used or leftover building materials certainly helps Habitat for Humanity cut costs in constructing new houses and is certainly an environmentally friendly practice. The downside, however, is that construction might be slowed, for example, as a result of the volunteers and staff members taking time to figure out new methods for installing floor tiles.

The research question explored throughout my Alternative Spring Break experience is: how does the model of accepting and repurposing donations of used or leftover building materials affect Habitat for Humanity's success? I intend to look at "success" from a few different viewpoints, including economic, environmental, and quality of construction.

Donation Logistics

Habitat for Humanity is an international organization, so it is difficult for the common volunteer to understand the logistics of how the local affiliates fit into the bigger picture. The way I see it, Habitat affiliates are a little bit like franchises. Each local Habitat organization follows the same business model and mission, but they are relatively self-sufficient as a result of their individual, localized Board of Directors and staff. Local Habitat affiliates must also adapt to the culture and the needs of their surrounding population. For this reason, donations are handled differently at the national and the local level. Donations are an important part of the Habitat business model, as they allow Habitat to "stretch their cash donations further" (Tessendorf, 2019).

Economic Benefits

Direct monetary donations from individuals are essential to Habitat's success. Sometimes, however, donors provide restricted donations that are earmarked for a certain purpose or initiative. Because of these limitations, the revenue from Habitat ReStores is extremely beneficial. The ReStore provides unrestricted income to Habitat for Humanity affiliates, meaning that the income generated from the ReStore can be used to pay employee salaries, expenses for office space upkeep, and other things of that nature. Habitat ReStores are a standalone business unit, so there are overhead costs to be considered as well. At the Coastal Empire habitat for Humanity ReStore, the first $1600 per day that the ReStore generates covers this overhead, and anything above that is a surplus that goes towards Habitat funding and furthering their mission (Tessendorf, 2019). Aside from soliciting donations of used furniture from community members, Habitat for Humanity also accepts new and gently used building materials from local corporations. If the building materials cannot be used on a Habitat construction site, they are sold in the ReStore, generating funding for Habitat and furthering its mission. The Habitat ReStore is an extremely affordable way for Habitat homeowners and community members alike to shop for reasonably priced furniture while creating a source of unrestricted revenue for Habitat.

Environmental Effects

Habitat ReStores are also a big part of fulfilling the organization's environmentally friendly goals. Harold Tessendorf emphasized the importance of the ReStores in advocating for reusing and recycling household goods and directed me to a study done in Canada. It was estimated that every dollar made at a ReStore is equivalent to 1.3 pounds of waste that is kept out of a landfill (Dunson, 2007). In the grand scheme of things, this certainly adds up, as there are more than 400 ReStores in the United States and Canada (Dunsen, 2007). Although not typically thought of as central to Habitat's goal of providing affordable housing, the ReStores are a crucial part of their mission.

Quality of Construction

Habitat for Humanity is often placed under scrutiny regarding the quality of the construction. Because much of their workforce is made up of volunteers, it is understandable that some may question the workmanship. Habitat homes, however, are subjected to the same inspections and standards of any other home built by a commercial contractor. This means that shoddy construction and subpar building materials are not tolerated. Along the lines of donated building materials, I asked Kevin, the Construction Manager, if they accepted donations of used tools. He explained to me that accepting used tools would be unsafe. Instead, Habitat purchases

new tools (often at a reduced price) from reputable companies. If the tools break, Habitat affiliates can send them to a company in Minnesota that refurbishes old tools and returns them to a safe, usable state. This is another example of the care that Habitat takes to ensure safety and reliability in their construction.

Photo Contest Winner
Best Overall: New Orleans SBP, Abby Woods

The Power of a Home:
Addressing Substandard Housing in the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Rio Grande Valley: Ned Flanagan

Adopted From Full Paper

Background: Proyecto Azteca/Colonias

Proyecto Azteca is a non-profit self-help construction company located in San Juan, TX that serves low-income families in colonias and other rural areas in Hidalgo County. Hidalgo County is home to more than 1,200 colonias, housing a significant portion of the estimated 400,000 persons living in colonias throughout Texas8. Historically, many colonias have lacked decent housing, physical infrastructure such as access to potable water and sewers, and basic amenities such as electricity and paved roads. In 1991, the United Farmworkers of America, Texas Rural Legal Aid and the Texas Low Income Housing Information Service came together to respond to the housing crisis in Texas' Rio Grande Valley Colonias and developed Proyecto Azteca. In the first year, Proyecto Azteca organized self-help construction with just four families. Today, Proyecto Azteca is a nationally recognized, community-directed, self-help housing organization that has financed and trained more than 600 families in the construction and first-time ownership of their own homes in over 150 colonias and rural areas.

Current Housing Reality

In February of 2017, researchers who surveyed residents of the colonias of Hidalgo County found that the poor housing quality faced by an estimated 400,000 colonia residents is associated with increased social isolation, infectious and chronic disease, and mental health issues. Some notable findings from the same study include: 90% of respondents did not think that their home could withstand a natural disaster (such as a flood, storm, or hurricane), nearly half (46%) of families live in a severely overcrowded environment with more than 5 people living in small spaces such as 2-3 bedroom trailers and mobile homes, nearly all respondents (97%) reported having pest problems, and 92.9% of colonia residents who were surveyed felt that improving their housing conditions would improve their and their family's health.

Executive Director of Proyecto Azteca, Ann Cass, reinforced these statistics with personal anecdotes, describing the ubiquity of multiple generations of families living in one home. According to Cass, Proyecto Azteca considers these individuals "homeless" in a way; acknowledging that there aren't many individuals living on the street in the urban sense of the word, Cass described how severe overcrowding puts individuals, in many ways, at the same disadvantages as if they didn't have a home. In addition to overcrowding, Cass explained how simple lack of infrastructure in the colonias can have a severe impact on mental and physical health for colonia residents, particularly children. Since almost all colonias lack parks and streetlights, many children are compelled to remain sedentary inside. This phenomenon, whose effects are exacerbated by the fact that half of all children in colonias have been identified as food insecure in the past leads to unhealthy lifestyles and children consuming more calories taken from fat and sugar.

Proyecto Azteca's Programs

Despite the many obstacles faced by those living in colonias, community members alongside Proyecto Azteca have made many strides in gaining adequate housing and services for residents. Based off a pre- and post-housing survey conducted by Proyecto Azteca on families who've built new homes, the positive effects of new homes built through Proyecto Azteca are numerous. Aside from no longer worrying about the myriad sub-standard housing issues indicated above, children's performance in school improves and parents report having improved mental health in their new home.

In terms of services and infrastructure, Proyecto Azteca has also gained ground through their positive relationship with local and state officials. Cass described how the relationship between Proyecto Azteca and county commissioners/state officials has been built over time with Proyecto Azteca assuring to complete formal research and surveying before coming to elected officials with proposed changes. Additionally, Cass stressed the importance of alleviating the information problem that can sometimes hinder officials from acting on the service-needs in the colonias; Cass encourages officials to travel to the colonias to see the current reality for themselves, which she said can many times encourage the implementation of the changes they wish to see.

Background: The Haven

The Haven, aside from operating a multi-resource day shelter in downtown Charlottesville, offers housing assistance and rental support to its guests who are at-risk or are

already experiencing homelessness15. In 2005, UVA alumnus Tom Shadyac returned to Charlottesville to film the movie Evan Almighty and was shocked by the number of homeless people along the downtown mall. Director of Community Engagement for The Haven, Diana Boeke, explained how Tom "…knew that Charlottesville is a very wealthy town with a very wealthy university, but he couldn't understand why homelessness was happening here." Motivated by what he saw, Shadyac decided to take direct action to organize infrastructure and services to the homeless population he encountered. In January of 2010, The Haven opened its doors as a low-barrier day shelter and social resource center.

Current Housing Reality

According to the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH) "Point-in-Time-Count," the total homeless population in Charlottesville in 2016 was 261. Of this 261, 22 people were completely unsheltered, meanwhile 239 were housed in a combination of emergency shelters, transitional housing, or more permanent housing. As Diana stressed when speaking about some of the root causes for the rate of homelessness in Charlottesville, the availability of affordable housing, as well as the cost of housing in relation to income, are some primary obstacles to accessing adequate housing.

A Housing Affordability Index (HAI) provides an intuitive number for measuring housing affordability based on the percent of typical income needed to afford the typical housing unit; housing is considered affordable if it costs a household 30% or less of its total income. For a household earning 60% of average median income, the overall HAI index in Charlottesville for the third quarter of 2018 is 51.2%9. Well above the 30% threshold, it is clear that the HAI index indicates steep housing prices across the city. What's more, a worker earning a minimum wage of $7.25 an hour will make only one-third of the necessary rent for the average $1,088 two-bedroom apartment; they would need to work 115 hours a week—the equivalent of 2.9 full-time jobs—to pay their rent9. Using the 30% threshold of income spent on housing, 90.5% of residents in the [<$20,000] income range and 80.1% in the [$20,000-$34,999] range in 2014 were classified as cost burdened renters (spending more than 30% of household income on rent).

The Haven's Programs

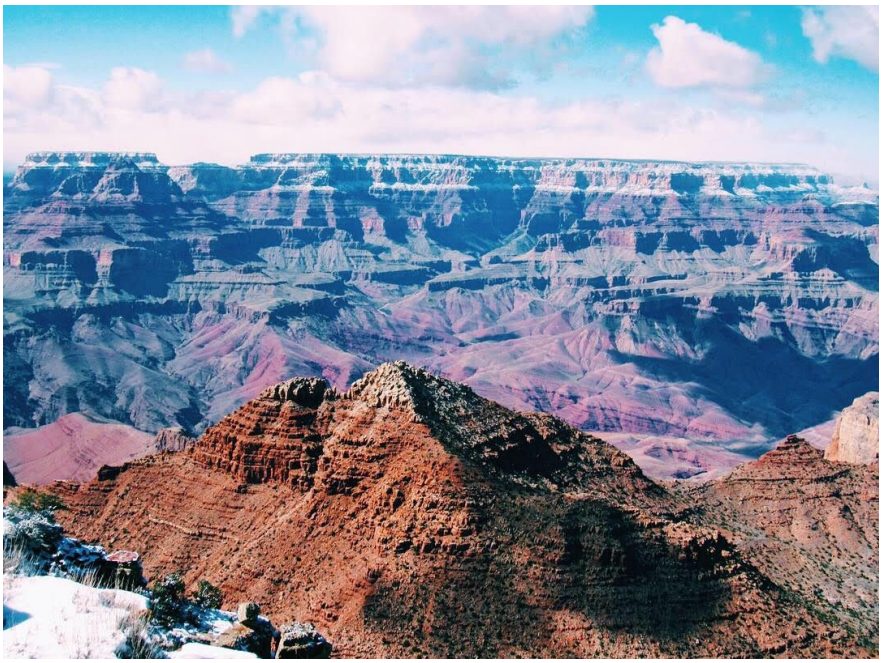
The Haven is an administrator of a couple programs run through the "housing first" initiative. The first, which helped Jess find stable housing, is called Rapid Re-Housing. As Diana explained, however, the process "isn't necessarily rapid for most people." The Haven receives public funding to house the most vulnerable members of the homeless population—people who meet specific criteria in terms of vulnerability and medical risk of a serious episode or death. Due to these criteria, the waiting list is not a traditional one—it fluctuates and changes based on people who enter and exit the homeless population with different situations.

Final Reflections/Discussion

Although housing issues on the surface seem to entail a mere lack of housing for individuals and families, it is clear that substandard housing and homelessness spawn an array of challenges for those struggling to attain stable, adequate housing. From social isolation, to increased risk of disease, to mental health problems, to performance in school for children, the

burden of substandard housing and homelessness weigh heavily on those struggling with the issue. Despite these negative effects, organizations like Proyecto Azteca and The Haven utilize strategies that fit their respective geographic and metropolitan settings in order to aid community members in attaining a safe and secure home in which to live in peace and dignity. Whether it be through self-help construction or Rapid Re-Housing, these two organizations loosen the myriad constraints caused by a substandard housing situation.

Photo Contest Winner
Best Landscape Shot: Grand Canyon, Jamie Plusch



An Overview of Ridge to Reef Farm, the Economy of USVI, and the Impact of Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma - Kristen Maggard

Adopted From Full Paper

Ridge to Reef and Its Role in St. Croix

Ridge to Reef, the seemingly hidden gem of the island serves a great purpose to the residents of St. Croix. When interviewing owner Nate Olive and researching further information about the farm online, I gained valuable insight to the goals of Ridge to Reef, what the farm's strategy is to accomplishing those, and what challenges they face. According to Ridge to Reef's website, the key goals of the farm are as follows: "To feed 1% of the Virgin Islands population healthy, local, organic food, share sustainable living and island heritage experiences to 4,000 local and off-island visitors annually, and to inspire action for a more healthy island and global community," ("Ridge to Reef"). Some challenges they face stem from issues related to the government and the economy, while others resulted from the impact of Hurricane Maria in

2017. Altogether, Ridge to Reef has persevered and remains a farm passionate about the wellbeing of the environment and the local and global community.

When considering Ridge to Reef's first goal, it is important to first note that the farm is the only USDA certified organic one on the island. One should also keep in mind that as of 2018, the population of the U.S. Virgin Islands was 106,977. Ridge to Reef grows a variety of produce, such as carrots, radishes, moringa, mustard greens, bananas, lettuce, and more. They raise goats, pigs, and sheep for meat, along with chickens for eggs. Nate Olive informed me that Ridge to Reef does not have a grocery store presence, but rather primarily serves 15 local schools through the Farm-To-School program. This is a national program whose key initiative is to connect local food producers with the school system to promote healthy living and community engagement. Prior to the hurricane, there were 30 schools Ridge to Reef delivered to. To give the number of students, initially they were serving 15,000, but now they reach 10,000 (Olive). Olive said that the hurricane left schools damaged to the point they do not have kitchens to prepare the fresh food, which is a primary reason they benefit from the food that is delivered. Olive's reports mirrored a study that had shown that within six months of the storm, many families were relocating to the mainland U.S. in order to complete their education in fully functioning schools (Veneema). Ridge to Reef's current efforts are pushing beyond the farm's own goals and contributing to a much deeper need on the island.

The Economy of the Virgin Islands

The USVI economy today is based on three main industries: agriculture, industry, and services. The first accounted for 2% of GDP in 2012, the second for 20%, and the third for 78% ("The World Factbook: The Virgin Islands). Of the 48,550 person labor force, as of 2016), 1% is in agriculture, 19% is in industry, and 80% is in services ("The World Factbook: The Virgin Islands). Because my Alternative Spring Break trip to St. Croix centered around agriculture, I was surprised at the small size of the agricultural industry. However, I learned that majority of the food on the islands is imported. This reinforced to me the importance of farms such as Ridge to Reef regarding the self-sufficiency of the island given how imports tend to lead to higher grocery store prices. Regarding the larger industry of services, much of it is related to tourism. It has been reported that prior to Hurricanes Irma and Maria, about 1.2 million cruise passengers and about 400,000 airplane passengers visited the U.S. Virgin Islands annually ("Economic and Fiscal Conditions in the U.S. Virgin Islands."). While tourism can be a successful part of an island economy, having it as the main form of industry in USVI proved to be more of a weakness when they were hit by Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma in 2017.

Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma's Impact on The U.S. Virgin Islands

Both Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Irma caused significant damages throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands, resulting in many economic losses and challenges. Recovery is not a quick, easy or inexpensive process, especially when the cost of rebuilding is twice that of one's GDP ($7.5 billion versus $3.372 billion) ("The World Factbook: Virgin Islands."). The initial impact of the hurricanes was heavy, with a 12% loss of total employment in USVI between August 2017 and November 2017, which is roughly 4,500 jobs (Bram and Tomas). The USVI economy is not incredibly diverse, and its base of tourism greatly increased challenges it faced as less travellers visited following the storm. There was a 57% decrease in tourists who travelled to the island by cruise, and tourists travelling by plane dropped from 208,000 annually to 53,000 (Bram and Thomas). The public revenues of USVI decreased by nearly 50% (Bram and Thomas). Nearly half of the total job loss stemmed from the leisure and hospitality sector (Bram and Thomas).

The hurricanes led to the closing of 40% of hotel accommodations as of the middle of 2018 (Bram and Thomas). The industry remained somewhat afloat thanks to relief workers visiting the island who made up for a great portion of what would have otherwise been more tourist related losses (Bram and Thomas). Not only was the tourism industry impacted, but also the healthcare sector. As Nate Olive touched on, many emergency rooms closed. Researchers reported that many healthcare professionals relocated to the mainland U.S. following the storms (Bram and Thomas). Through the U.S. Virgin Islands slow recovery from the hurricanes, many of the healthcare facilities are unable to provide necessary services due to remaining damages from the storms ("Economic and Fiscal Conditions in the U.S. Virgin Islands."). These are only a few of the prominent issues faced by USVI as a result of the hurricanes. More time will be needed for the islands to fully recover, but progress is being made.

Conclusion

While on my Alternative Spring Break trip I expected to learn primarily about sustainability, participating in this research and being immersed in the culture of the island drew me to a wider variety of topics that could be explored. The people I had the privilege of interacting with broadened my perspective and deepened my understanding of the world, and I realized that each place on the globe has far more depth than meets the eye. Ridge to Reef has proved persistent in the pursuit of its goals to impact the island, even through the striking of Hurricane Maria in 2017. While the USVI's tourism-based economy has suffered a downturn over the past year and a half, it was apparent to me that the islands remain enduring; my hope is that others will take note of this historic, vibrant, and friendly region so that it can fully recover and thrive.

Photo Contest Winner
Best Group Photo: Zion, Emma McPhail-Snyder

Homelessness in College Towns: A Closer Look at Austin, Texas - Samantha Hix

Adopted From Full Paper

Introduction

At the University of Virginia, it is not difficult to recognize the homeless population in Charlottesville. Students walk past the homeless every day on the "Corner" and around the downtown mall. In my personal experience, I have wondered how the University itself has affected homelessness and its causes. Figuring this could not be a phenomenon exclusive to Charlottesville, I wanted to explore the causes of homelessness in the ASB location I had served in before – Austin, TX. Austin differs from Charlottesville in a few ways. Although it does have a university, the University of Texas at Austin, it has a 51,525 student population total – obviously much larger than that at the University of Virginia (College Tuition Compare, n.d.). However, Austin is also the capital of Texas, and is home to a lot of growing industries and well-established industry giants (for example Google). Throughout this research, it will become apparent how these differences between Austin and Charlottesville affect the homeless while also considering university presence.

My research question going into our week of service in Austin was: How do universities affect homelessness? Additionally, I had questions in mind such as what are the best methods to combat homelessness that I was able to pick up on while on the trip as well. The following will include a short literature review to develop background for the research, along with the methods, findings, and conclusion.

Data Collection

According to research conducted by Elliott and Krivo, which provides baseline knowledge on the causes of homelessness (not focused around universities), many times homelessness is attributed to personal problems or behavioral reasons (1991). However, as they demonstrate in their research, there are many structural problems and issues that underlie homelessness that are not related to personal struggles (Elliott & Krivo, 1991). For example, in their research they carried out regression testing on data from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and found that a lack of housing availability and an abundance of low-level jobs (that often are accompanied by uncertainty) can be accredited with increasing homelessness (Elliott & Krivo, 1991). This is something, as will be explained in the findings section below, is a very real concern for towns like Austin.

Each of the organizations we worked with in Austin have their own approaches to how they combat homelessness, and therefore I conducted preliminary research before the trip on this facet of my project, in order to compare the methods during our service. The focus of one article specifically is that of a "housing first" approach – in which the author argues that just finding stable housing is the most crucial first step in ending homelessness (Tsemberis, 2011). This is a finding that will be echoed in one of the interviews below, and advocates for ownership and a group effort in order to keep the homeless off of the streets, which they add to by arguing for assistance from groups of people that are there to keep them on track and provide services (Tsemberis, 2011). However, the different approaches to combatting homelessness I found through serving during the trip definitely expand on this topic and fill in the gaps of other methods that are utilized in helping different types of homeless situations.

The last piece of background information to be discussed are the implications for universities and their relationship with homelessness (Harris, 2012). Even in an article written for USA Today, there is an observation of the tension between how the homeless make college students feel at their universities and a genuine concern for the homeless' wellbeing (Harris, 2012; Schulman, 2013). Research does exist on the relationships between universities and their surrounding areas, but can give off the feeling that it is more about bettering the student impression of the university than helping the homeless (Allahwala, 2013; Harris, 2012). However, one article in particular looks at how service learning can build sustainable relationships between universities and their communities – even in working with the homeless (Allahwala, 2013). The key, this article argues, is the fostering of "trust, and reciprocity," as well as continuity in the relationship between the two, which as will be seen below is a feasible plan for universities to encourage their students to care about the homeless, rather than having it be a project to improve the university's appeal to students (Allahwala, 2013, p. 52; Harris, 2012).

Conclusion

From the findings above, I believe there are discernable and real solutions and tactics that can be taken in Charlottesville's approach to homelessness. In comparison to the literature review, it was helpful to get the perspective of community organizations that were not necessarily partners with UT in any way, but instead were focused solely on helping the homeless population and putting their best interests first. However, from the interviews, I also believe there are conflicting opinions on if the presence of a university makes a town more susceptible to homelessness, or worsens the problem. From this, I believe it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the situation with universities is individual and also reliant upon other factors in each city. In some cities, universities may play a large role in how the socioeconomics function; in other towns, like appears to be the case in Austin, there may be other factors also at play in making homelessness a prevalent issue – for example giant companies moving into a city, or the rising popularity of a previously smaller town.

As for using this information towards the situation in Charlottesville, I believe there are a few universal takeaways that can be learned. The first is that UVa, on its own, is most likely not the driving factor in homelessness. However, as is also addressed in the literature review, it is important for the university to fulfill its role in its community by advocating for and caring about the issues and problems the homeless face – establishing the type of relationship described above by Allahwala (2013). From reading the literature and participating in service with the homeless myself, I believe UVa students have a vested interest in working with Charlottesville and its inhabitants for a more inclusive and supportive community – and that if the issue of homelessness was more widely discussed at UVa, more students would want to do what they could to help (Allahwala, 2013). From this, the most important aspect I believe UVa students can take away, inspired by the interview with Loly Thomas, is to become a voice for those who may not have one.

Photo Contest Winner
Best Service Shot: New Orleans SBP, Abby Wood

Defining and Analyzing Voluntourism from an Environmental and Humanitarian Lens - Monica Marciano

Adopted From Full Paper

As a participant in the University of Virginia's Alternative Spring Break program during my first year of college, I set off to New Orleans, Louisiana, eager to build houses damaged by Hurricane Katrina with the St. Bernard Project. As a bright-eyed and bushy-tailed first year, I had a wonderful experience. I had explored a city I had always wanted to see, made new friends, and even helped a man named Frank, whose house had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina years ago, get a step closer to moving back into his home. It was not until after the trip that I began to ponder the meaning of voluntourism in earnest, particularly as its definition applies differently to cases of voluntourism in ecological and environmental projects or to humanitarian-focused work. Throughout the course of this paper, I seek to define the term "voluntourism" within these two different contexts, pulling from my own experiences working with the Saint Bernard Project in New Orleans in 2017 and the National Park Service in the Grand Canyon in 2019.

In the Grand Canyon in particular, thousands of volunteers come each year to help the National Park Service further its mission of preserving one of America's most treasured landscapes. Todd Nelson, the park's Volunteer Resource Program Coordinator, noted in an interview with me that as many as 1733 volunteers came to the Grand Canyon in 2018 to serve either the park's Administration, General, Interpretation, Visitor & Resource Protection, or Facilities branches. These volunteers completed a number of tasks, including removing invasive species, picking up litter and micro-trash that harm wildlife and natural landscapes, promoting hiker safety within the Canyon, and collecting seeds of native species for vegetation restoration projects. Nelson defined voluntourism as an act that occurs "when volunteering is part of a

vacation," and noted that the volunteers' impact on the Grand Canyon was overwhelmingly positive, enabling the Park Service there to finish projects more quickly and to complete work that otherwise might not have been touched.

Many resources seem to confirm that funding and hiring are not challenges unique to Grand Canyon National Park alone. In 2017, President Trump's administration proposed a budget cut of 13% for the National Park Service. According to the National Parks Conservation Association, this decrease "would have represented the biggest cut to the agency's budget since World War II. The Park Service is already grappling with underfunding, staff shortages and an $11 billion repair backlog, despite a 19 percent increase in visitors over the last five years." Indeed, publications from The Revelator, an online news initiative of the Center for Biological Diversity, confirm that while the National Park Service completed more than $519 million in maintenance and repair work in 2017, factors like high visitation, aging infrastructure, and budgets have made some repairs too costly to complete.

In my opinion, voluntourism projects in national parks are extremely beneficial to both the preservation of natural landscapes and the National Park Service's ability to operate. Due to aforementioned budgeting constraints, help from volunteers may provide the labor necessary to complete infrastructure or maintenance projects that would otherwise be too cost prohibitive. Voluntourism within the National Park Service should be defined as traveling to a National Park both to engage in tourism and to provide much-needed manpower, completing projects that would not be finished otherwise, and often under some guidance from a trained professional.

However, voluntourism that engages with vulnerable or marginalized groups, particularly within the context of humanitarian crises, inherently assumes greater risks, and as a result, often yields lower net benefits. Of course, there may be some success stories of voluntourism in the aftermath of humanitarian crises. Following the 5.5 magnitude September 2018 earthquake in Indonesia, one farmer in Sigi, Indonesia, named Muhammad Ichsan, remarked on these benefits, noting, "We think the volunteers help us more because they don't go through a long government procedure. They go straight to the residents themselves." In this respect, Indonesia could be considered a success story for volunteers within the humanitarian aid system, demonstrating how volunteer work in a humanitarian context, just like within the National Park Service, may bypass bureaucracy to deliver services and aid more quickly. However, even still, many volunteers found it difficult to navigate the aid system or obtain all the necessary supplies to fuel their work.

Often, volunteers in humanitarian crises, particularly transitory voluntourists, lack the cultural sensitivity, training, and knowledge needed to deliver aid effectively and to avoid major blunders that contribute to worsened conditions for affected populations. First, inability to communicate with these populations in their native languages may render many voluntourists useless. For example, following Haiti's 2010 earthquake, the Red Cross was accused of misrepresenting the number of homes it had built. Red Cross statements suggested that the organization had built 130,000 homes, but only six of these were permanent, according to a ProPublica article. The piece pins the blame for this failure on Red Cross volunteers and foreigners, who could not speak French or Creole. Further, the ever-shifting cast of voluntourists cycling in and out of humanitarian response situations may eventually become psychologically damaging to populations involved, especially children. A study from the Human Sciences Research Council titled "AIDS orphan tourism: A threat to young children in residential care," demonstrates how short-term relationships between children and volunteers often led to developmental issues for these orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, humanitarian-focused voluntourism may further reinforce cultural stereotypes and perpetuate inequality within society.

What, then, does this mean for the future of Alternative Spring Break at UVA? While most ASB trips to not engage directly in issues of significant humanitarian crisis, lessons from voluntourism in both the National Park Service and humanitarian aid can directly apply to the volunteer work we do as students. While ASB's trips to National Parks remain largely unproblematic, students should take care to mitigate their environmental impact through preserving electricity and water and mitigating their trash production. For ASB trips focused on human services, students should either receive extensive training about how to be effective and respectful in their service, or should consider refraining from direct engagement with the populations they are serving. For example, during my first-year trip to New Orleans with the St. Bernard Project, we rarely saw the man whose house we were building. In my opinion, this separation created a healthy distance, wherein we were able to complete our work without needing excessive training or without making the affected families, who had tried for years to rebuild their homes, feel uncomfortable that we had spent hundreds to participate in one week of service. Therefore, the distinction between voluntourism in environmental and humanitarian realms is extremely important, as the presence of vulnerable populations in humanitarian work and human services projects necessitates greater training and awareness amongst voluntourists than in environmental work.

Photo Contest Winner
Funniest Photo: San Francisco, Peter Worcester

The Risks of Service - Adam Cooper

Adopted From Full Report

Background Information

Researching information about Pachacutec was not a simple task, as there is practically no information about this area online. Although, our coordinator described the population as upwards of 50,000 people, there is extremely limited international attention to this issue. In reading the Global Humanitarian Overview from UN OCHA this past year, there was not even a single mention of Pachacutec. As one of the 14 districts in the province of Ica in Peru, it is situated with breathtaking views over the ocean. Yet, as one proceeds further away from the ocean and enters the poverty-stricken areas, the beautiful views are suffocated by conditions that are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Our coordinator, who I questioned extensively throughout the trip, stated that, "people die in their homes every day. The government doesn't care." After talking with other participants and reflecting on other volunteering trips I had been on, I came to understand the following fundamental piece of knowledge that served as a basis for explanation of these circumstances.

During my time in Pachacutec though, I wanted to ask how could I make my volunteering experience actually effective? I asked questions like: What are the factors that make volunteering an ineffective, and ultimately harmful, part of developing underprivileged areas, and how should the idea of voluntourism be re-shaped within this framework?

Description of Research Methods

Utilizing observational research methods and cross comparing personal experiences with articles stated in my proposal and in-class texts with my Global Humanitarian Crises class with Professor Kristen Gelsdorf, I was able to isolate numerous variables that I deemed necessary in order to classify volunteering as effective.

1. Simplicity of Task- I deemed this factor as incredibly important to the volunteering experience for a plethora of reasons. First, if a task is too difficult (as was the case when we were asked to provide medical advice), a volunteer cannot perform that task in an adequate and substantive way, thus providing aid that is subpar, and ultimately ineffective. Furthermore, in training volunteers on complicated tasks, crucial resources (one of these being time) can be easily wasted. Furthermore, untrained volunteers could damage important equipment and if trusted with too complex of tasks, can actually do more damage to a product than good. Similar to how companies invest in their employee's education often only after commitment to a longer contract, volunteer organizations should not "waste" the human capital needed to train volunteers that will only work for a week or so.
2. Transitional Capacity of Task- Another critical factor in determining the efficacy of volunteer work is how easily the volunteers can be "plugged into" the greater mechanism doing the volunteer work. In this capacity, volunteers should be able a variable that is able to be added to any project, but just as easily taken away. In this manner, the volunteers will work to only increase efficiency. In Pachcutec, we could have been used in an organizational and educational capacity much more in order to uphold this factor. Both of these types of volunteer work do not require a long-term commitment (assuming

educational efforts are clearly delineated as a special occurrence for schools) and thus are able to be stopped and started easily with any type of volunteer.

3. Appropriateness of Task- This is slightly more theoretical factor, although just as important. No matter the efficacy of any volunteer work, maintaining respect for cultural values and norms must be a priority at all times. Any volunteer work, no matter how much tangible work it does, loses its effectiveness as soon as it is deemed disrespectful by the community. Indeed, this factor should never be undervalued, as it places the community before the individual volunteers.
4. Orientation to the Community- This is another theoretical factor, regarding the overall mindset of the volunteer work. Volunteers, should focus on how their work affects the community they are working with, not with how it affects themselves. This removal of the ego, orienting ourselves, as Rousseau would say, towards to community, is absolutely critical for framing the volunteer work. If this mindset prevails, many of the other factors will naturally follow, as volunteers will realize that volunteer work is not about making us feel better about ourselves, but rather about truly giving to those around us. During the trip, I focused my reflection activity on this notion and truly believe that it is imperative to any volunteer work. A proper mindset frames all the following action.

Conclusion

These factors do not exist in isolation and are inherently intertwined to each other, as their effectiveness rests on the interplay between them. Furthermore, there are numerous smaller factors that must be considered, such as social loafing and manual capacity of volunteers, that are critical when determining how to effectively contribute to aid efforts. Unfortunately, space constraints do not allow a longer analysis of these smaller factors, but understanding that they are important is still vital. Ultimately, volunteer work, especially the work I did on this trip, has ample room to improve, and I hope these suggestions offer tangible steps to do so.

Closing Thoughts

After providing both a personal and empirical analysis of Pachcutec, I offered various factors that must be considered to ensure that volunteer work maintains its effectiveness and sustainability. I hope that future ASB trips are able to synthesize these principles and deeply consider them as crucial to their volunteering experience. This paper has been the conglomeration of various thoughts compiled over many years and numerous volunteer trips. Although I often leave these trips quite frustrated, I do believe their value is still retained. Each year, ASB should strive to improve their programs, challenging participants to not only criticize their volunteer work, but actively work to change the circumstances that they find problematic. This active, growth mindset is necessary for this program to actually make tangible change. Furthermore, pre-trip preparatory work could be a useful time to discuss the broader concepts in order to fully engage participants in this learning experience. ASB, as an organization, should work towards a greater understanding of volunteer work in order to ultimately create leaders who are at the forefront of social action in the future. In improving the quality of the volunteer work that is completed, the participants will have a more holistic experience that translates to deep effects. ASB participants will leave their sites not only inspired, but actually ready to make tangible change to the problems that they witness around themselves. ASB has the potential to mold its participants and must take this responsibility very seriously. This responsibility is only

amplified due to the student-led categorization of ASB. Ideas can be turned to action and inspiration can be used to change the world.

Photo Contest
Honorable Mention: San Francisco, Peter Worcester

Before You Make Laws, Make The Journey:
Colonia Communities and Border Towns of Hidalgo County, Texas - Martha Gallagher

Adopted From Full Paper

San Juan, TX, self-titled "The Friendly City," is located in Hidalgo County, which sits on the U.S.-Mexico border, in the heart of the Rio Grande Valley (RGV). Hidalgo County also encompasses 20 other cities, including McAllen. According to the 2017 U.S. Census, the population in Hidalgo County totals 860,661 people, probably not accounting for the thousands of undocumented immigrants and asylum-seekers who enter the U.S. through Hidalgo County every year, fleeing mostly gang violence and political strife in their home countries. Of the residents counted in the census, only 62.4% of households have internet subscriptions, 17.8% hold a Bachelor's degree or higher, 29.5% of people live in poverty, 29.7% of people under the age of 65 do not have health insurance, and per capita income in 2017 was $15,883.

Immigration

Many of the cities within Hidalgo County are referred to as "border towns" by Americans and in the media because the existing physical fencing border runs through many of those cities. President Trump visited McAllen in January 2019, during the government shutdown, to assess the situation on the border. In a live interview during our trip, a border patrol agent shared that

although many border patrol agents who met Trump while he was in McAllen expressed support for a wall because they understood that any support from the president for their organization would be helpful, he also revealed that if you talk to border patrol agents individually or away from the president, many of them, like him, will tell you that they do not support building the proposed border wall because it will not keep people from crossing the border. In agreement with this sentiment is Ann Cass, Executive Director of Proyecto Azteca, as well as Jim Darling, the Mayor of McAllen, who "is not completely opposed to physical barriers along the US-Mexico border, but he doesn't see a wall as a realistic solution to the variety of issues the US faces in terms of immigration" (Haltiwanger).

Proyecto Azteca and the border patrol agent told us that 300 to 400 people attempting to cross into the United States illegally are detained in the RGV region of the border daily. While volunteering at the Catholic Charities RGV Respite Center, I had the opportunity to talk to men, women and children seeking asylum. They are sent to the Respite Center by the state after being detained and appearing in court for the first time to face their misdemeanor charge of entering the country illegally. I asked 10-year old Angelica from El Salvador, 30-year old Manuel from Guatemala, and 45-year old Maria from Honduras why they had left their countries and how they had reached the U.S. They shared stories with me about unimaginable gang violence in their neighborhoods and threats made to their children or families that forced them to pack what they could and leave in a day or less, without telling anybody, for fear of being killed. Respite centers like the RGV Center fill daily with hundreds of migrants seeking asylum. Not funded by the state or local governments, they are sustained by donations and volunteers from the Catholic Church. They tirelessly provide asylum-seekers with their first meals and showers on the heels of a long journey, as well as clean clothes. Important, too, is the one phone call the center makes possible for asylum-seekers, so they can connect with their potential American sponsors and create a travel plan to reach them; in the state of Texas, asylum-seekers are allowed to leave the state before the next court date to finalize asylum status.

In addition to the presence of respite centers in their neighborhoods, immigration policy also directly affects the border towns because of the constant presence of ICE and Border Patrol agents in the cities, as well as the increased burden placed on people who frequently cross the border for leisure. Since it is very common for multiple generations to live under one roof in Latinx communities in Southern Texas, mixed-status households, or households with family members of different citizenship statuses, are very common. With the increasing presence of ICE and Border Patrol in Hidalgo County, people are terrified to go certain places, and kids have reported to Proyecto Azteca that they don't want to go to school in the morning for fear that their parents will not be there when they get home, or that they will be deported to places where "the bad guys will kill [them]." The adults are also scared, which became evident 10 years ago when the county conducted a practice hurricane evacuation and had ICE agents checking identification at the doors of evacuation buses. Many people were too afraid to board the buses. If the situation had been a real mandatory evacuation, the people who did not board buses would have been seen by the state as unwilling to evacuate, which means they would not have been able to receive any emergency services. Additionally, many people living in border towns have family members in Mexican border towns who they used to be able to visit frequently, sometimes crossing the border multiple times a day. As travel becomes more difficult, they see their families less; should the border close, they will not be able to see their families at all, or conduct regular errands in Mexico like they used to enjoy doing.

Colonias

The word “colonia” means neighborhood or community in Spanish but has a different meaning in the United States. As defined by the Texas Secretary of State, “ ‘colonias’ are residential areas along the border that may lack some of the most basic living necessities: potable water, sewer systems, electricity, paved roads, and safe and sanitary housing.” These communities have been developed in isolated, unincorporated areas of Texas counties over the last 50 years.

In Hidalgo County colonias, there is currently no garbage collection and due to a lack of other necessities, people tend to dispose of their solid waste in drainage canals or on the streets. These communities are attractive to low-income residents because of the inexpensive cost of housing and their inability to qualify for conventional loans. Many have purchased small plots of land and constructed their own homes, using available materials, including political campaign signs in some cases.

Proyecto Azteca is the non-profit self-help construction company that was our community partner for the week, and at the center of Proyecto Azteca's work is its Self-Help New Construction Program, which works to build dependable, affordable, sustainable housing with the future homeowners and teaches them valuable skills about home ownership and civic engagement. Although substandard housing is a big problem in the colonias, education, health and transportation issues also affect the communities. Unlike most counties around the country that try to take kids out of ESOL classes by the 3rd grade, Hidalgo County schools offer dual-language programs where K-12 classes are taught in both Spanish and English, helping many kids living in the colonias become bilingual to foster important language skills for future career and life success. As a result, larger percentages of graduating classes are now going to college. According to Proyecto Azteca, however, only two of out every ten Kindergarteners will end up graduating high school. Additionally, 59% of the children in the colonias are morbidly obese due to a lack of safe, available places to exercise. Transportation is another issue in the colonias because, due to the lack of paved roads, school buses are not able to pass through in certain weather conditions. The children end up having to walk a long way to the bus stop, or if they’re lucky, one bus will come through the colonias, which also means only one bus comes back, denying many of them access to after-school activities like sports, tutoring, and arts programs. The majority of the colonias today also do not have street lights, making it unsafe for children to walk to the bus stop in the morning.

So, what makes us so similar?

The circumstances with which many of us are familiar are drastically different from the circumstances of the people we served in Hidalgo County. But, as was evident in the reflection I led, every participant on our trip connected with the people we met along the way much more than expected. The two ladies who ran the soup kitchen at the Basilica, Orelia and Mona, reminded me of my grandmother who is as particular about her German dumplings as they were about their rice. Their willingness to help for so many years inspired us to continue to be passionate about the things we care about. The children at the respite center whose faces beamed and who took off running when we replaced the shoelaces that the Border Patrol had taken out of their sneakers when they were detained, reminded us of the enjoyable times with friends in our childhood – under far less stressful conditions -- that we took for granted. But, it also reminded me of the importance of at least some life control and how even being able to make little choices, like between blue or white shoelaces, can improve someone’s entire

perspective and happiness. The mother of three, with all her kids attached to her hip, repeating "Si Dios quiere" to me as she explained to me that the trip was worth it for her kids, made me think of the unconditional love my parents have for me and left me to believe that my parents would do the exact same thing if it meant my siblings and I could be safe from harm in our own neighborhood and have an opportunity for a better future.

It is difficult for people living in the bubble of Washington, D.C. to imagine the circumstances that force loving parents to take their kids away from their homes on a risky journey during which many before them have died. Our human family is much more similar than we think, although it may not seem like that at first glance, which is helpful to understand when considering the implications of local, state, and national policies. It is easy to enforce laws on someone whose circumstances you cannot relate to or do not understand, but it is important to search for human connections and learn from one another, especially in the field of public policy where your decisions will have lifelong effects on the people you represent.

The people of Hidalgo County face daily challenges with immigration and substandard housing. However, they also enjoy unusual advantages such as an extraordinary sense of comradery in the community and bilingual programs in their public schools. But more importantly, the people within Hidalgo County, Border Patrol agents and asylum- seekers alike, share many of the same qualities that we see in ourselves, our friends, and our families. Policymakers need to get off the Hill and go to the border to see both the Americans and refugees whose lives are shaped by legislation. They'll learn how different allocations of funds would truly help the border patrol agents do their job more effectively. They'll feel the fear and desperation of parents. They'll see the resilience and potential of the colonia children. They'll find inspiration in the hope and support provided by the community and church. Most importantly, they'll have a more comprehensive view of the populations who live the daily effects of their decision-making, which will help them understand the root cause of immigration issues and address those more directly. Hopefully they will feel anger at the way things are and find the courage to make sure that today's reality changes for the better.

Point Reyes National Seashore: Constantly Changing - Benjamin Trombetta

Adopted From Full Paper

Situated on the Pacific coast in Northern California and not far from major cities like San Francisco, Point Reyes is a Nationally Protected Seashore, a division of the National Park Service. Many national parks, including Point Reyes, are staffed with a knowledgeable crew, consisting of various departments like roads, safety, and trails; all of the park rangers accept periodic help from small volunteer groups like Alternative Spring Break (ASB) to aid with environmental cleanup, trail restoration, and other conservation efforts. Point Reyes also acts as an educational center, providing visitors with information about the land's rich history; the stories of the native Coast Miwok tribe, who first settled the peninsula over 6,000 years ago, are embedded in the very trails that tourists explore today. Despite many constants, Point Reyes has subtly changed through the years, as evident through the contemporary struggles of the Coast Miwok people, shifts in climate patterns, and migration and reintroduction of various animal species in the region, such as the endemic tule elk and elephant seals. I explore these essential topics through the methods of online research, my experience on ASB Point Reyes, and insight gained from in-person interviews.

The National Seashore also works tirelessly to preserve the land's past histories, especially those of the indigenous people who occupied Point Reyes for many years. The native

Coast Miwok tribe were some of the first to settle Point Reyes over six-thousand years ago, inhabiting modern-day Marin and southern Sonoma counties. Hunter-gatherers who lived in ever-changing villages of fifty to a couple hundred people, the Coast Miwok relied extensively on the ocean surrounding Point Reyes as a primary source of food and a vehicle for commerce. From this valuable aquatic resource, they obtained salmon, clams, and abalone, depending on the season. In an effort to reduce waste, they then used the shells to make ceremonial items and beads, which were traded extensively throughout a network of other native people in Northern California. A common trade was a set of Miwokan clam shell beads in exchange for some obsidian blanks, which in turn were made into tools like knives, arrowheads, and axes. The Miwok were quite intelligent, having a vast knowledge of the plants they gathered for food and health purposes; they often crafted medicines from the flowers, leaves, and roots they found. They also used fire to their advantage, clearing out brush via burning methods when necessary. The Coast Miwok lived in kindred groups, often separated by natural drainage patterns; though the villages dotted the hills and valleys of Point Reyes, the tribe lived quite peacefully with their neighbors, instead facing opposition from Spanish colonizers and Mexican Ranchos, who often used the Miwok as a source of forced slave labor. The Spanish, who sailed to Point Reyes on their large galleons, saw the area as a "wild frontier in need of taming," with the Coast Miwok acting as "people in need of religious salvation and Spanish protection." These Spanish padres coerced many Coast Miwok people to join them, so long as they contributed their labor for free – another source of Miwokan slavery. While it seemed like a good option to some Miwok at the time, the Spanish invasion ultimately disrupted their native way of life, causing many to become "lost and without a voice in their homeland." Many Coast Miwok died of disease and starvation, and those who survived were left with broken spirits, shattered families, and demolished traditions.

In an effort to spread this history to as many people as possible, Point Reyes National Seashore led an effort to recreate a Miwok village. Gathering volunteers of all ages and backgrounds, Point Reyes designed "Kule Loklo," meaning Bear Valley, which stands today as a look back at what a Miwokan village might have looked like a couple thousand years ago. The volunteers used traditional tools to construct the village, relying primarily on archaeological evidence received from the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin, which provided the Point Reyes crew with expert advice and data regarding Miwokan history. Having seen it first hand, Kule Loklo is a beautifully-crafted, excellent interpretation of a possible village, and the park service does a great job explaining what each aspect of the town is through marked signage. For example, a kotca, "the place where real people live," is a house made from various materials. Each living structure was made out of tule grass and redwood bark, two abundant resources in the area. Extended families of four or five may have occupied each kotca. Nearby lies an umpa, Miwokan for "acorns." This structure is a form of granary where acorns were stored after being gathered each fall. Acorns were a staple food of the Coast Miwok, and these granaries protected them from insects and other animal threats. Kule Loklo is an excellent exhibit that describes the Miwokan past; but what about the tribe's future?

Towards the end of the trail that leads to Kule Loklo lies a sign which reads "we are still here," followed by a 1993 quote from Kathleen Smith, a Bodega Miwok: "My people have lived on the coast for at least 8,000 years. To live in spiritual and physical balance in the same small area for thousands of years without feeling the need to go somewhere else requires restraint, respect, knowledge, and assurance of one's place in the world." The Miwok embodied all of these qualities, thus allowing for their continued success in the Point Reyes area for many years. Point Reyes does a fantastic job at preserving the history of the Coast Miwok people, but not much is said about the contemporary lives of the Indians, or the various issues that the tribe faces. The

Coast Miwok exhibit in the Bear Valley Visitor Center explains very little about the modern tribe, essentially that "they work to preserve their traditions, language, and dreams for future generations." This vague, somewhat undetailed statement is miniscule in comparison to the extensive information provided about the Miwok's history. Indian groups are often looked at as figures of the past, but they are still very much alive.

Today, the Coast Miwok are combined with the Southern Pomo tribes to form the FIGR, or Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a "sovereign nation with a democratically elected government" that works to preserve Miwokan traditions, languages, and dreams for future generations. The tribe faces many contemporary issues, largely revolving around land ownership, language remembrance and study, and finances. The contemporary issue of language study and remembrance is especially interesting, as it provides the Indians with a way to connect to the past. The Coast Miwok are part of a larger Miwok group, which includes the Central Sierra, Plains, Lake Miwok, and more. All those in the group speak a general, shared "Miwokan" language, and through continued study, the modern Miwok hope to preserve the language for future generations.

The shifting climate is another aspect of change in Point Reyes that threatens both the local cultural resources and the natural landscape: the rising sea levels due to melting polar icecaps and glaciers will likely alter the seashore's environment. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, rising seas may erode beaches and coastlines, submerge wetlands, and damage Coast Miwokan cultural artifacts. Point Reyes has about 120 known sites that serve as evidence of the Coast Miwok's history, but the rising ocean levels place these elements in deep danger. Once the coast is swallowed up, so is the plentiful history that Point Reyes holds. Additionally, climate change may increase erosion on beaches, and rising temperatures could make the area uninhabitable for many species of plants and animals. Hotter weather may also lead to greater visitation to the National Seashore, which puts massive strain on the park's limited resources and staff. In light of all these threats, the park is doing its part to limit the impact of climate change, focusing on innovative energy technologies and reducing its carbon footprint. All new constructions in the park are built with green technologies in mind, and solar panels on 23 structures give the park approximately 50% of its energy. The park has also implemented a "no idling" program, and employs seven hybrid and six electric vehicles for use by staff. By being environmentally conscious, the park hopes to help prevent climate change from affecting the natural beauty of Point Reyes.

Despite all the changes in terms of climate, animal presence, and issues faced by contemporary Coast Miwok people, the legacy of Point Reyes remains constant, along with the consistent care established by the park service. My trip out to Point Reyes was not only educational, but experiential as well; I enjoyed a first-hand experience with service learning, allowing me to transcend boundaries and explore cultures different than my own, all while helping communities and learning more about myself and the people around me through reflection. Service learning is important for ASB because it allows participants to explore why they choose to help others. Service learning also ensures that ASB is not a simple "voluntourism" trip that appears meaningful on the surface but is not in reality; it inspires us to not only better enjoy our ASB trips, but to continue serving back in Charlottesville and beyond college, as there are many service opportunities around the world. Though our trip out to Point Reyes was only a week long, the valuable insight my group members and I gained will be remembered for years to come, and I am so grateful for this experience.

Creative Grants

Service Learning Collage from Little Talbot Island - Shannon Hunter

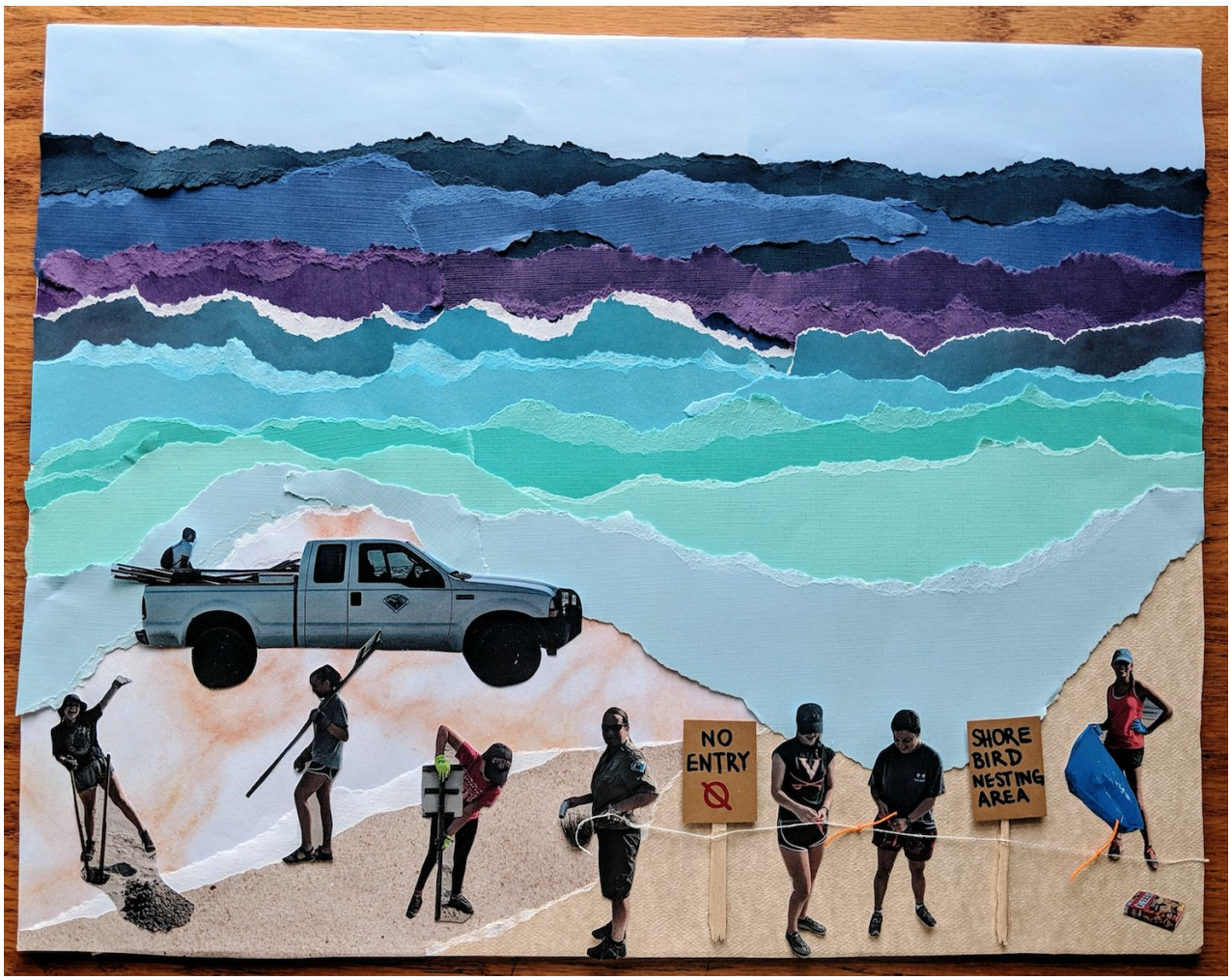


Photo Series from Hilton Head - Sarah Zube

Palo Duro Canyon Video Blog - Jiajia Liang

Little Talbot Island: The Movie - Maelee Hearington

Humans of Zion - Jack MacLeod

JACK MACLEOD - FIRST YEAR - UNDECLARED - VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

"I think about the concept of home a lot - especially since coming to UVA - and I guess the implications of this are twofold. First, thinking about where I grew up

Poetry Inspired by Anza Borrego - Brynna Gaffney

Poem 1

I don't know much about the stars.

Other than I used to wish on them.

Yet I feel like I know them here-

They sound like giggles beneath marshmallow clouds.

Sit around a campfire built by girls' hands

One that permeates our braids,

warms our hands,

dances in the wind.

Covered in sunscreen yet sunburnt.

If they had a daughter they would have named her Willow.

They share a name with their grandmother.

In a lemonade waterfall;

my peanut butter sandwich;

the flowers that grew in the desert.

I don't know much about the stars, no.

Other than I still wish on them now.

Poem 2

Isn't it funny how the sun flirts with the moon

The sun so coy

Shriveling, sinking

hiding beneath the horizon

Afraid to let the moon just

touch her

The moon so fickle

Waxing, waning

chasing the sun's daylight

So eager yet so

unsure

She loves me she loves me not &

Love notes abandoned in orbit &

Fantasies of an impossible eclipse &

We are underneath it all.

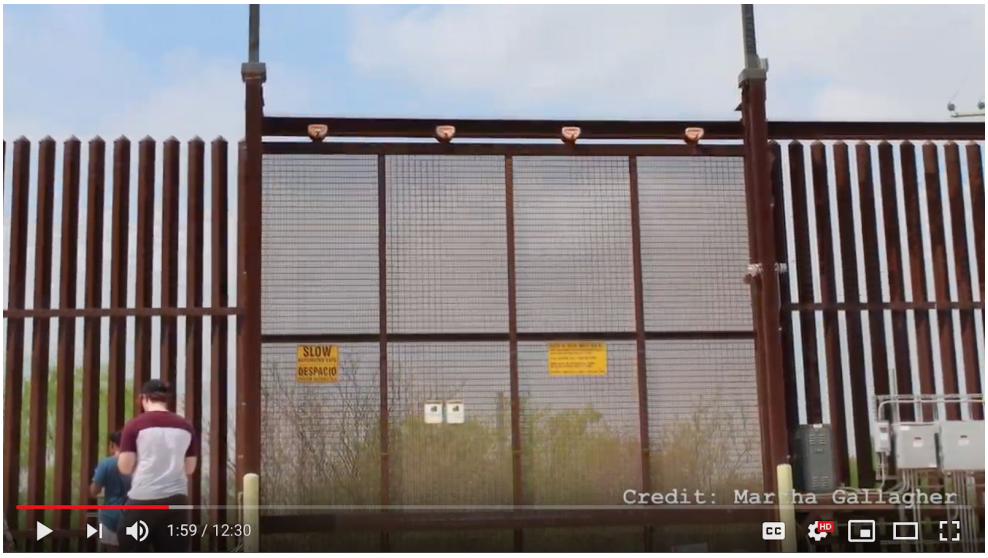
Amongst the petals thrown to the stratosphere,

Picking the lint off of the desert's sweater,

Watching love dance across the sky and

Isn't that funny

San Juan and the U.S./Mexico Border: A Video - Tehmeena Salahin



2018-2019 Trips, Executive Board, Fourth Years

Site Leaders & Trips:

Samantha Hix & Logan Tyree - Austin, TX

Kate Holland & Page Dabney - Congaree, SC

Emma Neukrug & Rachel Walet - Denver, CO

Grace Sailer & Makenzie Scanlon - Grand Canyon, AZ

Erin Plant & Emily Hooker - Hilton Head, SC

Catherine Nguyen & Abby Wood - New Orleans, LA (SBP)

Sydney Cubbage & Anna Basile - Pensacola, FL

Paige O'Brien & Sarah Snow - Portland, OR

Sami Clayton & Caitleen Copeland - Nashville, TN

Chandler Collins & Nathan Abraham - San Juan, TX

Torun Carlson & Trish Reese - St. Croix, Virgin Islands

Sara Inglis & Komal Sanghavi - Palo Duro State Canyon, TX

Allie Kendrick & Shannon Hunter - Little Talbot Island, FL

Riley Mazariegos & Melissa Nelson - Guadalupe Mtn, TX

Madeleine Megargee & Conner Caruso - Biscayne, FL

Jackson Negus & Rachel Pearson - Death Valley, CA

Julie Gawrylowicz & Garrett Lukens - Eagle Butte, SD

Maddie Conroy & Claire Golladay - Moab, UT

Mackenzie Dorsey & Shelby Davis - John's Island, SC

Griffin Perry & Sarah Winston Nathan - Lima, Peru

Seneca Tsang & Ryan Thomas - Point Reyes, CA

Kaitlyn Bryan & Katie Carlson - Saguaro NP, AZ

Annie Dodd & Peter Worcester - San Francisco, CA

Meredith Hughes & Taylor Harvey - Savannah, GA

Austin Brown & Emma McPhail-Snyder - Zion, UT

Erica Schumann & Sarah Smith - Winston-Salem, NC

Aurora Bays-Muchmore & Eliza Fisher - Joshua Tree, CA

Rachel Thoms & Grayson Rost - Anza-Borrego, CA

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THANK YOU!!!