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Background of LightHouse Charities

• **Purpose**: To assist refugees and at-risk families in becoming self-reliant.

• **History**: Lighthouse Charities was established in 2014 by president, "Cindy Trussel".

• **Community Service Paradigms**:
  1) Charity - All clothes donations, monetary donations, or community service are always welcomed!!!
  2) Project - The Charities provides ESL class, Job Skills Program called “the Rejesha Project and Nafasi Designs”, and these programs are going along with community partners (Nevada Division of Welfare and Venetian Hotel and Casino).
  3) Social Change - All of the Lighthouse Charities’ programs and its’ volunteers' efforts are advocating for social change (solving refugee issues).

Social Issue Research

• **Social Issue**: The social issue that LightHouse Charities address is the issues of refugees' and at-risk families’ resettlement.

• **Current State of Refugee Issue**: "Every year approximately 1,800 refugees from around a dozen countries come to the Las Vegas Valley" / In Las Vegas, there is local affiliate office for refugee assistance program. "Voluntary Agency Affiliates provide the full range of resettlement services, including referrals for short-term Cash and Medical Assistance, job development and English as a Foreign Language services, and other programs".

• **Ideal State of Refugee Issue**: The vice president of the charities, “Charity Nelson”, said, if the issues with refugees was solved, a lot of suffering, hatred, and discrimination would be disappeared. The only thing we can do (the LightHouse Charities) assists the refugees, who come to Nevada, to become self-reliant through the several programs. The site coordinator thinks the world (state) where the refugees can settle and live their life comfortable and happy is the "ideal" world.

• **Service Site Approach to Issue**: To assist refugees' resettlement, the Lighthouse Charities provide food, clothing, household items, school supplies, ESL classes, cultural mentoring, and employment assistance.

• **My Approach to Issue**: I volunteered 3 times (days) in this semester, and I mainly served at warehouse and ESL class.

• **Reference**:

Service Learning Experience & Making a Difference

• **Service to Community**: I taught English to refugees in ESL class. Also, I served at warehouse. I organized and sorted the donations (items) and accessories which are made by refugees.

• **Semester Reflection**: This was my first volunteer in the U.S. as an international student. I felt so rewarded that I could assist refugees to learn English and organize donations with other volunteers.

• **My Expectations**: I was looking forward that the service-learning at LightHouse Charities become a great start of my volunteer life in the U.S. Also, I expected that my service-learning can positively impact on the refugees.

• **Difference in My Own Views**: I realized that how many people (volunteers) are interested in refugee’s resettlement, and they volunteer regularly at LightHouse Charities to assist refugees to live their life comfortable and safe in the U.S.

• **Difference I Made for this Site**: I think I made a different at this site. Especially, through my ESL class teaching, I could see that the refugees’ English knowledge is improving.

• **Personal/ Professional Learning**: Personally, I’ve never met refugees in my life. Also, I did not know well about refugee issues. It’s so meaningful that I can communicate and help many refugees through this service-learning. Professionally, this service learning was a great opportunity to communicate a lot of refugees from diverse countries, and I believe that it will be helpful to my future career.

• **Future Change, Effort, and Outcomes**: Even though the COE 202 class ended, I want to continue volunteer at this site. Also, I hope that through my efforts and the Charities’ assistance programs, many refugees can resettle in Las Vegas valley safely and comfortably.