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Service Learning Project: Three Square

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Introduction

a. History & Purpose of Serving Site
Three Square’s mission is to provide wholesome food to the hungry, while passionately pursuing a hunger-free community. They work with a service network of more than 1,600 community partners and many more have joined their fight including, the Clark County School District, the gaming industry, local businesses, food distributors, and non-profit agencies. This year makes this organization’s 10 year anniversary of working together to end hunger. Three Square is a very hands on volunteer organization whether its going in to help pack boxed meals or just simply donating. They are fighting hunger in Southern Nevada just one meal at a time.

b. Community Service Paradigm
The community service paradigm that this organization falls under is social change. Together, they are focusing on the issue of food insecurity and working to solve it.

Social Issue Research

a. Social Issue Addressed
The social issue that Three Square addresses is food insecurity. Currently, more than 279,000 men, women, children, and seniors don’t always know where their next meal is coming from. Three Square works to help reduce this problem and to this. They do this by accepting donations and letting the public volunteer by coming in and putting together meals.

b. Current & Ideal State of Social Issue
Although Three Square is able to feed thousands everyday, they wouldn’t consider themselves quit where they want to be yet. They are only able to provide one meal to the hungry everyday, leaving a “meal gap.” They would like to ideally feed the community three wholesome meals a day, but they just aren’t there yet. Three Square is working to close the “meal gap” in Southern Nevada. By doing this they are hoping to give access to food no matter what zip code they may reside in. This year Three Square will provide more than 45 million pounds through existing operations. Although, if hunger were eradicated, Three Square would still need to exist in case of another economic downturn.

c. Service Site Approach to the Issue
Three Square’s approach to the issue is accepting donations and helping to provide wholesome food to the hungry. Thousands of people everyday, don’t always know where there next meal is coming from so they try to assist with that. Everyday food is packed to make meals to serve one meal a day to those who need it. This includes kids, adults, and seniors. They are able to pack these thousands of meals by the volunteers that they have come in everyday.

d. My Approach to the Issue
I personally would take the same approach as Three Square. This organization is very well put together. They have a very sufficient way of doing things and it works very well for them. I do know that they would like to up their game and be able to serve the hungry three square meals a day instead of one. My approach to that would just be more donations and more help from the public to help them reach their desired goal.

e. References

Service Learning

Experience & Making a Difference

a. Service to Community
This semester I volunteered at Three Square. To conduct my service hours I helped pack food into boxes for hungry children and I also helped pack apples. Both times I went, everything was done sufficiently where we all had a job to get the process done. Everything was very hands on and I felt very involved during my time spent with this organization.

b. Semester Reflection
At first I found it hard to set aside time to volunteer, but once I went the first time it felt so rewarding that it was easy to go back. I made it a routine to go and get my hours done. In the beginning of the semester, students might feel that volunteering is unnecessary, but I’m glad I had the opportunity to take this class. This class pushed me to do something that I’ve been wanting to do for awhile, but always made excuses for.

c. Expectations
Volunteering at Three Square has made me feel greater than I expected to feel going into this. Packing lunches and bagging apples seems like something so simple, but the difference being made just by volunteering a few hours is truly amazing. Seeing the amount of containers we filled with boxed lunches and how many bags of apples we filled at the end of my hours was truly jaw dropping.

d. Differences In My Own Views
Getting to volunteer this semester has been an amazing experience. Personally, I never really understood what volunteering consisted of and how much of an issue hunger was. Knowing that this issue exists and that I was able to help out through volunteering at Three Square has really opened my eyes and made me enjoy my time being there.

e. Difference I Made For The Site
Just by volunteering a few hours at a time, I feel like I made a difference and helped out this organization. When packing lunches, each container was filled with 25 boxes, adding up to thousands of boxed lunches going out to feed children in the end. When packing apples, in one hour we packed 75,000 pounds worth of apples. Being able to see the difference we made felt really rewarding and I hope to continue to volunteer at the end of the semester.

f. Personal/Professional Learning
Personally volunteering with Three Square has really opened my eyes and made me realize the issues that people struggle with. Hunger was never something I never had to deal with so I didn’t think to wonder that this was actually a problem in todays world. Three Square has taught me to be thankful for what I have and the importance of giving back.

g. Future Change, Effort, & Outcomes
In the future, I plan to continue to volunteer at Three Square. I really want to volunteer to help pass out the food to the hungry because I feel like that would be a very moving experience.