



Cafecitos y Libros

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Service

SUMMARY

This past summer, I had the opportunity to work with MAS for the Masses. The mission of MAS for the Masses is to teach those in the community (primarily the Westside of San Antonio) about the history of Mexican Americans tied back to other cultures as well. This summer we decided to focus on the younger population by providing story time sessions with an activity following it called "Cafecitos y Libros," (held at Barrio Barista, a local coffee shop) of course it all relating to Mexican American culture. We did this to offer an opportunity for preschool and early elementary school children to be exposed to Mexican American culture. With these story time sessions, we enhanced bilingual vocabulary recognition. We provided inclusivity in both the story and activity; we built a community. One of our main purposes this summer, was to foster creativity among the children and caregivers through relevant craft projects. With this experience I aspired to really get out of my comfort zone, to be more confident, and make a small difference in the community I have grown up in.



SPICES

During my time with MAS for the masses, I helped plan our "Cafecitos y Libros" sessions. I also designed some zines as take home activities for the kids each session. I assisted in making the PowerPoints we would project in the sessions so the kids could easily follow along with the book. During the sessions I read to the kids, interacted with them and facilitated the activities, such as making piñatas, playing loteria, & mini embossing activity.

HERBS

I always strived to be kind and benevolent to those who I worked with. I strived to enforce inclusivity and made all the kids who attended our sessions feel a part of the community we formed. I really struggled with speaking in front of the kids at first, but with the support and encouraging words from those involved I was able to get out of my shell and read books to the children without a problem by our 2nd session.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Creative Courage:** I helped design these small activity/coloring book zines for kids. This is an aspect I never get to do in my major, so it has been great to put my other strengths that I enjoy into action to provide a deliverable product for kids.
- **Team/Independent Learning & Decision Making:** We all have different experiences working in teams and different styles of how we get things done. But we've had to realize our differences and use them to our advantage. We learned how to communicate effectively with one another, despite of our different communication styles to effectively plan our Cafecitos y Libros sessions & deliver them successfully.
- **Self-Reflection & Awareness:** I have always been nervous to speak in front of others, even though I knew I had to do it eventually I never made myself do it until now. I have had the chance to read to the kids at our sessions, which was hard for me to do at first but now I can do it without a problem and get the kids engaged. It feels amazing to see my improvement in this aspect.



IMPACT

This has honestly impacted what I want to do with my life. I have come to realize that I enjoy working with kids, I enjoy planning, facilitating, and organizing stuff, so this makes me want to find a way to incorporate this into my major. Even if I can't do this, I would love to continue to volunteer in places like these after I graduate college.

Even though we haven't really had a high number of kids show up to our Cafecitos y Libros sessions I feel like those that did attend will remember and cherish them. I took my little sister to one and she loved it and still can't stop talking about it.

To the organization, I feel like we left them with the idea of pushing students harder because we didn't feel like we were providing much.

This is a great organization that has inspired me to put myself out there, to not be afraid to speak up, to be more confident, embrace my creativity, learn more about my cultural background.

ADVICE

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and do something out of your comfort zone. Doing things like this not only serve as great experiences but also as forever memories. Be open minded and willing to learn more about yourself and others as well.