

## Habitat for Humanity Pod 2 Project Executive Summary

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Day One Leadership Program, SLCE 1002

### **PROJECT EXECUTIVE ITEM 1: Realized Project Summary and Benefit**

After working with Habitat for Humanity throughout this semester, it has been amazing to see the incredible progress on the house that we have been working to help build. When we began volunteering, there was only a foundation, the start of a framework, and a nearly completed shed. Now, however, there are two completed sheds, and the exterior of the house is completely finished along with paint. The interior of the house is the only portion that is currently being worked on, although this is expected to be completed very soon as well (most likely by mid-November).

Not only did we plan to volunteer for at least our required twenty hours each, but we have aspired to go above and beyond by volunteering for more than twenty hours. Also, instead of completing only one service project, we decided to plan and complete two projects. For our first project, we brainstormed and organized with the other Manatee Pod to landscape the Habitat for Humanity neighborhood sign and install a solar panel light for the sign. For our second project, we wanted to create something for the two women, Lena and Lashay, who are moving into the Habitat for Humanity house that we have helped build. With this goal in mind, our individual pod designed and created a vertical garden for them to enjoy.

For all of the goals that we aspired to complete, we are thrilled to have successfully completed most of them. Majority of our pod members completed twenty hours, and a few of us completed more than twenty. As for our landscaping project, we successfully landscaped the

Habitat sign, and it looks great. However, the installment of the solar light proved to be too complicated for us to install, so we were not able to complete that goal. For our individual project, our pod followed out our plan to successfully create a vertical garden. We were pleasantly surprised by how simple and straightforward this project was; it turned out even better than we had hoped.

As we worked throughout the semester on our various projects, each task we completed served to motivate us further to complete our remaining tasks. Now that we have completed all of our projects, we feel a great sense of satisfaction and pride from our accomplishments. We are also able to take great pride in how well we have served our community partner, who has greatly benefitted from our hard work. Clearly, Habitat for Humanity benefitted from our help on the house, landscape, and vertical garden, but our pod participated and helped foster a friendly and accepting community at the Habitat site. We do so by having a positive attitude each time we volunteered as well as chatting and really getting to know the other volunteers and the site managers, such as Paul and John, who helped us.

Our group has completed a total of almost 150 service hours helping construct our house for Habitat for Humanity. We worked in four hour shifts, either 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. The site is roughly 12 miles off campus. We began logging service hours in the month of August, and the house is expected to be completed in mid-to late November.

### **PROJECT EXECUTIVE ITEM 2: Leadership Lessons Learned**

In addition to our overall feelings of success by accomplishing our goals of volunteering more than twenty hours each as well as completing our goals of landscaping and creating a

vertical garden, we have also gained a lot of new experiences and knowledge from our work and the challenges we have overcome. As a group, coordinating our efforts as a team to overcome challenges has sometimes been a struggle. We often have problems such as scheduling proper times to complete our work, staying focused on the task at hand, and completing objectives in a given time frame.

However, our group is doing better at minimizing our shortcomings, and has been more than compensating, because we have overcome many obstacles and emerged stronger from it all. Through Day One, our group has improved upon our communication and coordination skills, and we are better at working and applying our knowledge to complete the work set before us. We are becoming more efficient and constantly improving upon our capabilities to reach the goals set out for us and dividing the work among each other. By doing our very best, we have become better team members and leaders.

As several members of the Manatee Pod expected, leadership was a major part of our project. We have learned several aspects of leadership not only from completing the project but in all that we have done so far this semester. Some aspects such as responsibility, accountability, and effectivity were expected to be conquered as we worked. However, some components of effective leadership we expected to be covered, such as collaboration and confidence, brought about pleasant surprises. While we worked on communicating with various members at our CP, collaboration and confidence began to take an entirely new meaning. We grew as a team until we were no longer working as individuals, and it is mainly due to effective leadership.

Branching outside of our comfort zone was a challenge that the group had to overcome while working together and with other volunteers at Habitat for Humanity. Early on, we had to grow accustomed to working with each other, since we had just met one another. After a short

period of time, our group meshed together and learned how to work cohesively as a unit.

Whenever we volunteered at Habitat, we had to adapt to working alongside different people. We worked with volunteers from various school organizations and people of different age groups. It is important for us to be comfortable being outside our comfort zone because we will have to do so when we are part of the workforce. For example, an employer might ask one of us to work with someone he or she has never met before. This person could also be several years older and have a lot more knowledge, but it is important to make the partnership work, so the task can be accomplished efficiently and effectively.

Another experience we had that applies to our futures is adjusting to different environments. Whenever we went to Habitat, our group had to grow accustomed to hammering nails properly and roofing. No one in our group had ever done either of these things before, so we had to adjust to doing those tasks so the house would turn out okay. This applies to our future because learning how to adapt to changes is another important skill to have in the workplace. It is vital to be good at adjusting one's schedule to make things work well and keep our superiors happy.

Overall, our group has set many goals and accomplished many tasks throughout the semester, including regularly volunteering to help build the house, landscape the Habitat for Humanity sign, and create a vertical garden. Although our group faced many challenges, we developed new strategies to overcome these challenges in order to work effectively as a group. Along with these team work strategies, we also learned countless life skills that we will be able to apply to the future as well as many skills that helped us grow as leaders.