

T.K. Martin Center Project Executive Summary

Arlie Strider, Ashley Hannah, Tasia Young, Maurice Moses, Candace Smith, Robyn Cullen, Tiarra Gipson

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During our time with the T.K. Martin Center, we have advanced in many ways through leadership, responsibility, and accountability. We were able to accomplish our goal of successfully being in the classroom as well as our main goal, which was assisting the T.K. Martin Center “Fun Run.” Although we faced many obstacles during this time, we all found a way to overcome them as a group. The greatest challenges our team faced for our project was making sure we managed our time correctly, and making sure that we were actually helping the teachers and not just getting in the way. For our class, a challenge was getting things approved for our project, and setting things up for our presentation. When volunteering, the first couple days were challenging for us because we had to adjust to the environment and learn how to properly work with the children.

As a team, we overcame these challenges by checking our deadlines, and keeping each other accountable. We also asked the teachers what they needed us to do before acting on anything. We created a project proposal that included everything we had concerns or questions about. We presented this to Mrs. Toni at the T.K. Martin Center as a way for her to address our concerns, answer any questions, and approve or disapprove things. Volunteering consistently at the T.K. Martin Center helped us to become better helpers with the children and the teachers.

Our group has had such an amazing time working with the T.K. Martin Center. Through our service we have been able to embrace better leadership qualities and grow as a team. One of our leadership lessons that we had the privilege of learning was understanding how to fully utilize leadership through service and how to help everyone on the team benefit from that

service. At the T.K. Martin Center, our main objective is to play with the children and assist the teachers in their classroom activities. Due to the nature of our service, we learned how to become better leaders through how we contribute in the classroom. Diving right into the classroom atmosphere and understanding what is expected of us helped us learn how to lead through service. We have found that the best way to understand how to lead the children in the classroom is to be of service to the teachers. This aspect of volunteering also enables us to help everyone in the group benefit from our service. If someone in the group is struggling in the classroom, or did not fully comprehend the benefit of our service, then it was up to us to reassure them that they were doing a good job.

We believe that the most important lesson that we have learned as a group is how to interact and communicate with the children, teachers, and each other. Most of our group never worked with people with disabilities, much less children with disabilities. Due to this, our group was very nervous about our service because we did not know exactly what was expected of us and how we would be helpful in a learning environment. However, through our service, we were able to transition into the classroom free of difficulties. The teachers were extremely helpful and understanding of our background and made it very easy to be in the classroom environment. We are thankful for this opportunity and the lessons it has taught us.