

# **Interns for Justice -Erin**

JUNE 4, 2016 BY [ERIN](#)

May 31 – June 3 (Erin Bothwell)

Hello, my name is Erin Bothwell and I've been interning at my old Elementary school which is located near a low income housing project and also adjacent to a middle school with a history of gang violence. Many of the parents at the school are unable to volunteer with their work schedules, limited English proficiency or criminal records. <http://marshall.vansd.org/>

It's been pretty hot here in Washington, but my morning walk to Marshall Elementary usually has a nice cool breeze. The walk back home tends to be a bit warmer than I'd like, but I enjoy the walks as a way to reflect on what I want to accomplish with the kids for the day and what I have done.

I continue to struggle as I watch a child who almost definitely has been a victim of domestic abuse at home. He is such a ray of sunshine and the most upbeat student in the first grade class I volunteer in, but I don't know what is going on at his home. He hasn't come into school with bruises on his face for a while now, which is a strange mark of progress. I wish I could believe he "ran into a tree", but his teacher and principal do not and neither do I. If domestic abuse were not already enough for a seven-year-old to handle, this student's family is also struggling with homelessness. I'm learning more about how kids from low income families behave vs. how kids from more financially stable. My observations surprise me a little. I've learned, even though I've come to expect certain kinds of behavior that allow me to read a person's financial status in adults, children are still elastic in their behaviors and refuse to let any sort of income status dictate their classroom lives.

I worked with the higher level students' reading group for the first time on Tuesday and it was interesting. Individually, each high level reader is engaging to converse with, but as a group the kids have a crazy level of energy. I've noticed I like working with the lower level kids because they tend to be more respectful and better at listening and following directions. However, I've also noticed the higher level kids may be getting bored because a) most of them have been told they can only read chapter books because all the other books are too easy for them and not challenging enough and b) this classroom doesn't have many chapter books so they run out of things to read. I'm also fascinated by how students with such high academic abilities can be so emotionally immature. I think generally the students from low income or less involved families react less visibly to things, like insults, than those from families with more involvement. I believe most of the high academic achievers are from more middle class families. Basically the income within the family does not have any correlation to how well behaved a child is from my observations.

To be completely frank, one of the students I am partial to is considered a “behavioral problem” (I try to treat each student with equal respect). His problem has to do with getting out of his seat and his parents have tried medicating him. From my experience with him, I think he mostly just needs a little one on one time with someone (aka validation for his work through praise and attention), but I am not a child expert. He is not in the high academic reading group and lives in the low income housing project near the school. In contrast, one of the high level kids is also a “behavioral problem” as he argues with adults’ authority and annoys other students, then cries when he gets into the slightest bit of trouble for it. I consider the first student to be less of a “behavioral problem” than the high academic student in the classroom although both are very sweet kids with usually great attitudes towards me and the others in the class.

Until next time,

Erin

## **Interns for Justice: May 30th-June 3rd** **(by Danielle Dillard)**

JUNE 4, 2016 BY [DANIELLE](#)

My name is Danielle Dillard, a junior at the University of Portland with a double major in Social Work and Spanish. I am currently interning through the Interns for Justice program at Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Oregon’s farmworker union founded in 1985. Within PCUN, there are many programs, including the Service Center, La Radio Movimiento, Acción Política PCUNista, the Workplace Health Projects, and the Collective Bargaining Committee. We are currently serving more than 6,000 members, 98% of them being Mexican and Central American immigrants (<http://www.pcun.org>). Most of my work is revolved around Acción Política PCUNista, the electoral arm of PCUN. Our work involves engaging youth and others in the political process, so that they can have a better understanding to actively participate in the decisions that affect their community.

Every day that I am there, I fall more in love with the work that is being done. Hearing the stories of my co-workers and the populations we are serving, has fashioned a vast amount of passion and humility in my soul. The energy there is filled with a perseverance that thrives off of culture, history, and social justice. And although they are put down, again they persist, united. For example, just a few weeks ago, students from Woodburn high school performed a walk out and marched in solidarity with those from Forest Grove High school. The walkout was sparked by a banner hung up in Forest Grove that read, “Build a Wall,” a phrase directly pulled from Donald Trump’s agenda. Seeing as a large percentage of the population in these schools is Hispanic,

this phrase hit home. In turn, the students stood together and marched through the city of Woodburn chanting, singing, and crying out for equality. My co-workers and I were lucky enough to join them. However, it was through this walkout that I experienced first hand, the discrimination, prejudice, and hate against the Hispanic immigrant population.

As the students were marching away, a woman pulled up in her car and said something that left me speechless. She said, "What is this stupidity?" Thinking, and more so hoping, that this might have been a joke I let out a little smile. She asked again, "What is this stupidity?" Luckily, my co-worker was able to speak up saying, "It isn't stupidity ma'am. They are exercising their rights." Ignoring that comment, she then said, "Do their parents know they are out here? I can't believe this. Our country feeds those people!" As she drove off, my co-worker shouted, "No ma'am! We feed you!"

I stood there, perplexed and amazed at what I had heard. Did she really say that? Did she really just say that our country feeds them? There was so much wrong with that comment that I stood quiet, shocked at what had happened. Our country feeds them. Them, as if they are separate from us. Them, she said, with a tone of disgust. I should've had the courage to say what my co-worker said. "No ma'am. They feed you." Many of these kids are the products of hard working campesinos: parents who often times work long hours, are underpaid, and do some of the most difficult work. They are the ones putting food on our tables. But do we think about that when we go to the store and buy our fruits and vegetables? Do we think about the people who spent hours in the sun and rain picking that food so we can eat? Yet she said that our country feeds them.

I am still amazed thinking back on that comment. It is another example of how prejudice is still very alive in this country, and as soon as everyone starts realizing that, real change can occur.

This work, the work that I am doing, is founded on social justice and equality. I feel honored to stand hand in hand with the staff of PCUN, as we create awe-inspiring change. La lucha sigue. ¡Sí se puede!

## **Interns for Justice: June 20-24 (by Jenna Kube)**

JUNE 21, 2016 BY [JENNA](#)

My name is Jenna Kube and I am junior Civil Engineering major with a minor in Environmental Science. I am currently working with Roosevelt High School on a summer project called Youth and the Law. This project will create a pamphlet and an accompanying workshop containing the legal rights youth have as well as tips and resources for handling interactions with the police and other authority figures. The goal

of this program is to help educate the students and their families as well as bridge the ever widening gap between minorities and the police. Ideally the end product will be distributed to every incoming freshman in the Portland Public Schools.

<http://uniqueink.org/our-books/youth-and-the-law/n>

I applied for the Interns for Justice Program after having a very long and in depth conversation with my roommate following the diversity discussions on campus and the growing list of cases of racial profiling and police brutality. My roommate happened to be the Service and Justice Coordinator for my dorm so she had the inside line on all the summer opportunities through the Moreau Center. I was unsure how to become involved in service period, but also the racial inequality and clear injustice that was brewing in my backyard. She urged me to apply and I figured there was no reason not to dive in this summer and actually do something instead of just talking. I am already so happy I took the chance. I have already made so many connections, many of which I plan to hold onto and continue working with to bring awareness and (hopefully) change to one of the most pressing issues of our time.

My first couple weeks were actually not my intended tasks and job description. I served as a writing assistant in the Roosevelt High School writing center. There I helped students fill out job/college/scholarship applications, edit essays and work on other class projects. The two weeks I worked in this capacity were incredibly illuminating. Of all the students I assisted, only one spoke english as their first language. Many were entirely overwhelmed with their assignments and were just looking for someone to sit down and take the time to walk them through what they were being asked to do. I went to high school in a predominately white upper middle class area where almost all the students were taking AP classes and did not require much outside assistance for their daily assignments. This change was jarring but also so necessary to be exposed to.

There are constantly statistic being hurled around about drop out rates and underachieving schools, but seeing the students that are the victim of this and forming relationships with them made these facts real. All most of these kids needed was someone to take an interest in them, and follow up afterwards to ensure that they actually cared. My most rewarding days were when I would run into a student I had helped on my way out and they thanked me for helping them. In my mind, I'm just doing my job, but for them it was someone showing them it mattered if they succeeded or failed. I am so excited to see where else this placement takes me and see the changes it brings about.

Updates coming soon!

Jenna

# **Intern for Justice: June 13- June 17**

## **(Thao Nguyen)**

JUNE 22, 2016 BY [THAO](#)

My name is Thao Nguyen, senior at University of Portland with a major in Biology. I am currently interning at the Asian Health and Service Learning Center this summer. I applied for the Intern for Justice program hoping to make a difference in my community and contribute the skills that I have. Even though it is only the first week, I already feel the impact and nothing makes me happier than knowing that every day I go to work, I get to be a part of someone's life, making it better for them, giving them the support they need. This non-profit organization helps the Asian population reduce health inequity and achieve healthier lifestyle. It started in 1983, operated in the basement of a church with the help of many volunteers and over the past decades, AHSC expanded into a 12,000 square foot, two story building.

The primary objectives are to build a harmonious community and help the members with health care. Each morning, the members (mostly seniors) gather in our big meeting room at 10 am. There are three main Asian groups that we work with-Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean. I was assigned to work with the Vietnamese group. On average, we welcome about 30-40 Vietnamese participants on a daily basis. We start out with 30 minutes Tai Chi, follow by another 30 minutes fast pace exercise after a 15-minute break. After the exercise activity is a presentation on public health; sometimes they get to watch a movie, traditional music, various of activity, etc. AHSC also offers social and support service everyday such as translation, filling out application for health care, provide opportunity for socializing, outing, games, etc. At the center, free lunch is provided for participants every day at 11:30-12:00 pm and the group is dismissed after lunch. There is also a clinic in the first floor to help with basic health check up

Within the past few days, I have learned a lot. Every day I assist with the setup in the morning, serving lunch, translating mails and applications. In the afternoon, I help with translating presentations into Vietnamese, and translating some materials into English. Currently I am working on the Breast Cancer Survey project that the center collaborates with OHSU and making my own educational presentation to present to the participants in a couple of weeks.

In addition to daily activities at the center, the participants often have social outing. This coming Saturday, we are going to Blue Lake for another outing. I am assigned to come up with activities and games for that event. Working here is such an amazing learning opportunity for me. Not only I get to help them with working toward a healthier lifestyle, I also get to practice/improve my language skill. All the staffs have been really welcoming and friendly. Despite my shortcomings, they teach me new things every day and trust me with many important tasks. Over the past few days of working here, I have learned

that language barrier is one of the main reasons that prevent people from getting access to health care. I feel so honored to be able to assist them with this process and help them become healthier everyday

## **Interns for Justice: June 13th – June 17th (by Kelli Oylear)**

JUNE 23, 2016 BY [KELLI](#)

Hello! My name is Kelli Oylear and I am an upcoming junior Social Work and Spanish double major with a minor in Social Justice at the University of Portland. I am from Southern California, specifically Anaheim, and I am currently completing my internship back at home this summer.

I am interning at KidWorks, a non-profit organization whose mission is “to restore at-risk neighborhoods...one life at a time.” This organization offers preschool and after-school classes for children in the city of Santa Ana, California. I work at the main facility, The Dan Donahue Center, but they have three smaller centers, also located in Santa Ana. When I began searching for service opportunities, I wanted to work with the Latino/Hispanic population in my local area, as this is more than half of my cities population, and to broaden my Spanish language skills. There is also great difference in income within this population in Santa Ana, a nearby city in which I am now interning. I was able to come across an organization that works with the same marginalized population, and whose goals matched my own, because my mom used to work for the company Donahue-Schriber. This company, as can be seen by the name of the center in which I intern, was a large donor to the organization. I was unsure about working with younger children, but that uncertainty subsided within just two days of working at the center.

In previous years I have worked in daycares and have baby-sat children and have found that it can be incredibly overwhelming. So, stepping into this internship, I expected to be just that, overwhelmed. While there was quite a bit to take in, as I had worked with preschoolers, kindergarteners, third graders, and sixth graders within just one week of interning, I was not overwhelmed. This organization has a structure that the kids respond to, like their three rules in the classroom that the children would recite, “rule #1: respect yourself, others, and the center. Rule #2: Come prepared! Rule #3: have fun!” During training, they prepared us for the possibility of working with children coming from tough family situations, the gang activity in the surrounding area, and the over-crowded and largely low-income population that lives in the city of Santa Ana. However, I have found that these children come to KidWorks and find a safe-haven to find help with homework, learn healthy eating habits, and enjoy themselves with kids their age. Everyone is friendly, and you can tell that the volunteers and teachers truly want to be there because they develop relationships with the students. This in turn harbors a

positive community within the local area. For example, one preschooler sadly remarked that her dad would not be able to see her graduate because he was in jail. I could not tell that her home life was difficult just by looking at her. She is a genuinely happy and talkative girl that is bright and eager to learn. I truly believe it is the community harvested in that pre-school classroom that give her an opportunity to grow regardless of her home life.

As the preschoolers have now graduated, and I now have a short break before the summer school program begins, I cannot help but think of all that I have learned. The pre-school teachers made such a strong effort to get to know me, and went out of their way to help me with my Spanish language skills. Working with children helped me gain a large amount of experience with kids, helped me appreciate my education even further, and helped me become more involved in my community. Children need an enriching environment in order to feel empowered, intelligent, and capable. It was my pleasure to be able to help in fostering that environment. While it might have seemed silly for me to sing and dance along to children's songs, color pictures, and sit with them at the lunch table, each small action played a large part in developing a relationship and helping them gain confidence. The funnier part is, that I feel as if I have gained some of the same values in return. So far, in a very short amount of time, this experience is changing my perspective of my local community, children, and the power of education for the better.



The area you live in should not determine your success. These kids are going places!



# Interns for Justice: June 13 – June 17

## (by Jessica Buchanan)

JUNE 27, 2016 BY [JESSICA](#)



**"Front entrance to Harvest Homes"**

As a junior social work major at UP with a fines arts minor I fit in perfectly at Harvest Homes. I'm a young woman looking to learn and help the people around me. That's me on paper though, it's all true, though you will not get the true sense of who I am by looking at my resume. When I first walked into harvest homes I did not feel at home. I was much younger than anybody I saw that day and much more alternative. I HAVE GREEN HAIR! There was no way that the employees none that less the residents were just going to overlook that. Three weeks later though I feel perfectly accepted and appreciated

as a presence. The residents love to ask me questions about the new world and the employees love to boss me around, lovingly of course.

Harvest Homes is not a nursing home, I made the mistake of calling it that one too many times. We offer assisted living quarters, residential care rooms, and a self-contained memory care facility for residents dealing with dementia and Alzheimer's.

Weekly activities include but are not limited to: bingo, arts and crafts, exercise, hair dresser appointments, nail salon, foot clinic, shopping trips, individual room visits, puzzles, and board and card games. I help with all of these as well as assist the office staff with paper work, memory care with cleaning, activities and general housework, planning, and individual care of residence.

Recently we planned and hosted a father's day BBQ including food, drinks and gifts. On this same day we had a musical guest to serenade the residents with some great music. The ended up being quite eventful. There were ups and downs like, successes and failures. All in all it work out in the end and mostly everybody had a good time. Personally I felt that I could have done more in the planning process that would have been helpful but I was there will all my skills and enthusiasm the day of to help so I feel



that I pulled my own weight. The men, specifically the residents, seems not to notice any of the hiccups and fully enjoyed the event. They ate and ate and ate. A success in our books because getting them to eat on regular days is often a struggle.

The musician was a huge hit and although not many of the men come to see him the ladies were quite thrilled, if you know what I mean. He will definitely be returning upon request from the residents who did show.

Some days I feel more helpful than others, but I know that my assistance and presence is appreciated by the residence. I like to remind myself that even if I don't help everybody in one day that even that one person will be better off that they were without me. And in the long run I can help more and different people each day, connecting and helping a lot of people in time. Eventually I will have spread myself across the home and made a difference in every corner.

## **Interns for Justice: July 4th – July 8th** **(by Carolyn Lutzenhiser)**

JULY 3, 2016 BY [CAROLYN](#)

Hello all! I am a senior French studies and sociology student and I chose to do my internship at Seattle's Union Gospel Mission's Summer Academy because I am particularly passionate about alleviating socioeconomic injustice and working with children. When I'm not commuting to Seattle or working as an ice cream scooper, I can be found writing for Odyssey Online, listening to my best friends yell at their video games, and climbing trees on campus with my girlfriend.

Seattle's Union Gospel Mission was started in 1932 by the Christian community to address the problem the city had with extreme poverty and the consequent other social problems. Today, the organization not only provides food, shelter, and recovery programs, but also resources for women and children escaping abusive households at Hope Place, free legal advice at Open Door Legal Services, and several after-school and summer programs for South Seattle students.

I applied for the Interns for Justice Program because I wanted to do something with my summer that wasn't just succumbing to the sense of financial doom that accompanies being in college in America. I wanted to do something for society instead of just working to stay afloat. I hope that this opportunity will teach me just how important service truly is, and how working for others is about just that—it's never about "building character" or getting a profile picture for Facebook. I hope also that this experience can give me a better glimpse into what moves me, and how I can translate my desire to fight for social justice into a career.

Right now I am in a small sort of limbo in my internship, as it is before the Summer Academy actually starts, but I am still working to help the Mission. For my first week at the Mission I got to interact with some of the kids I will serve during Summer Academy, but the rest of the time has been spent just being present for my coworkers who staff the Mission year-round, doing whatever they need from me. As I am sure anyone in service will tell you, it's the little administrative tasks that get pushed aside when every day you have to prioritize the hurting people you are called to serve. So I feel honored to be able to do just the tiniest bit to help keep the Mission functioning on the level it needs to serve hurting people, even if it means spending close to a hundred hours on Microsoft Excel (I wish I were exaggerating, I assure you I am not). Every day when I banter with my coworkers, when I groan about my eyes feeling like sandpaper and they sympathize with me, when I hold my boss's two-month-old daughter so she can pee for the first time in hours, I feel joyful in the fellowship I have found and in the knowledge that I truly am making a difference. And soon I will be working with kids again and telling Microsoft Excel to take a hike!

## **Week of July 4th-8th by Chelsea Cook**

JULY 8, 2016 BY [CHELSEA](#)

Hello everyone! My name is Chelsea Cook, I'm an upcoming Junior Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management major in the Pamplin School of Business. I'm doing my internship back in my hometown of Fresno, California where I am working with Habitat for Humanity Fresno County. I've been given the opportunity to work directly with staff members as well as community members and other volunteers. I'm the only general intern that HFHFC has had in their office, so everyone is just kind of playing it by ear which I don't mind too much.

I've been working everywhere; I've been given site/department rotations, which basically means that I work with each department for a selected amount of time. I've had the ability to work with Construction, and ReStore specifically already, but I have done various other work including going on the staff retreat my first week of work.

I've been doing a lot such as attending committee meetings, board meetings, and being a representative for Habitat at events that we partner with. Most recently I was able to attend an event called World Changer Fresno, this event is basically where members of the Fresno community, as well as members from communities from all over the nation get together, represent Christ, and work on revitalization of neighborhood homes. Having worked with Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization team working on Acts of Kindness every week, it was really good to see how they handled these events, as well as see other groups do similar or the same things as HFHFC Neighborhood Revitalization team.

Since my time here, I've worked one on one with a lot of people. One of my favorite people I've worked with so far is a gentleman named Jace. I was working with Jace the weekend I worked on the home build/construction site. We were working Roofing the Lotus location, and I was paired up with Jace to work on putting shingles on the roof. One of the construction leads looked at me and said "Chels its great you're working with Jace because he works at the ReStore too, so you'll get to know him real well on both these rotations!" Let me tell you, it has been such a blessing knowing Jace, being able to talk to him not only on roofing day, but also being able to come into my ReStore rotation and know somebody has really made it a good transition.

Jace only has about a month and a half left with ReStore due to the fact that he is working with the CalWorks program because he had lost his job. Habitat Fresno is expanding, we're building 7 more houses this upcoming Fiscal Year, and we're looking into hiring more construction staff, and let me be the first to say (I'm not the first trust me everyone loves this guy) that Jace is 100% qualified to be the guy on the ground that brings the volunteers together while also being a professional in the construction field. Jace is an amazing guy, and I cannot wait to see where he goes, and I cannot explain how much I love this dude.

As I continue my internship I ask that you keep myself and all the other interns in your thoughts, as the work we are doing can be taxing and draining, I ask you think of us and the passion we continue to have for this work.

Chelsea Cook

\*Name Changed for Confidentiality

## **Week of July 4-8**

JULY 9, 2016 BY [ERIN](#)

Week of July 4-8 (by Erin Bothwell)

Hello. My name is Erin Bothwell. I am an incoming Junior, majoring in Communication and minoring in Social Justice. I am starting an internship as a Musical Theatre Workshop Leader with Cathedral Park Performing Arts Collective (<https://cathedralparkarts.org/>) and will be there for the next month. It is located in North Portland about eight minutes from UP. Since I am starting my role there this coming Monday, I haven't filled out a learning agreement.

My expectations of the program have definitely been exceeded by the experiences I have had so far. Before my current host site, my host site was an Elementary School. I

did not expect to have attachments with the kids after working with them for a month, but I did. I am really pleased by the organization and the detail put into our guiding packet and would recommend applying to be an Intern for Justice for anyone who asks me about it.

Generally, at CPPAC, I will arrive at 8 am and have a brief meeting about what we will be working on that day. Then at 8:15 when the kids arrive we will go through vocal and physical warm ups to get us ready for the day. After that we will run through some musical pieces and choreography and then have lunch. Once lunch is over we will run through some more drills and reflect on our day together. After the kids depart, we (the leaders and directors) will have an end of the day meeting and evaluate how we think the day went, what we can improve on, etc.

-Erin Bothwell

## **Interns For Justice: July 13 (by Jacob Tressel)**

JULY 13, 2016 BY [JACOB](#)

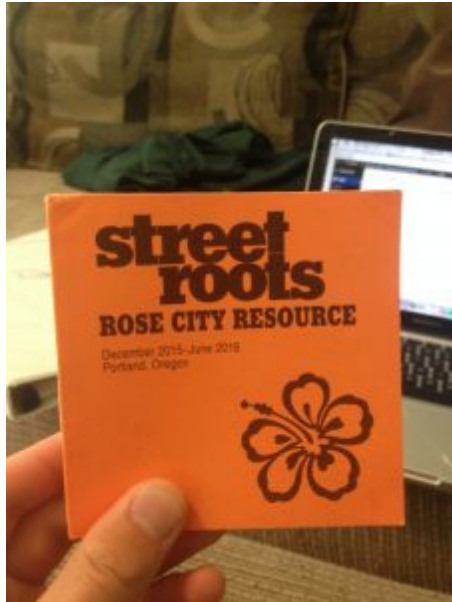
My name is Jacob Tressel and I am a Junior Social Work major at the University of Portland. I am interning with the Night Strike Program that is put on by Because People Matter. Every Thursday, underneath the Burnside Bridge, BCM mobilizes staff and volunteers to provide survival and dignitary resources to guests experiencing poverty and homelessness. Information regarding Night Strike can be found by clicking on [THIS LINK](#). My role as an intern is to work at and expand the Community Resource Center at Night Strike. I provide guests with contact information for organizations that provide services Night Strike does not, such as housing, job connections, and addiction counseling.

I broke a promise to a guest last week. I told her that I would give her a call to follow up on some housing resources that I had given her and I failed to do so. This has been eating away at me for a week, but it has given me time to evaluate her situation more thoroughly and come up with a better pathway towards a solution. I'm not justifying my broken promise, but rather speculating on how strange it is that my stumbling led me on a better path.

The solution I came up with is to partner her with a regular volunteer and his wife, who are interested in our Beyond the Bridge Partners program. This program matches guests who have ongoing needs that demand more than the distribution of contact information with willing sponsors who help them navigate this ongoing need. In this case, finding affordable wheelchair accessible housing is the ongoing need. This

situation calls for more than me calling the guest and giving her a list of places to apply to. It calls for someone to help her get to meetings and sort through different options to find the best fit for her.

I believe that this partnership will be successful, and as bad as I feel about breaking my promise, I am glad that I thought to propose it.



Street Roots Resource Guide,  
A.K.A. “Pretty Much the Bible”

## **Interns for Justice: July 11th – July 15th**

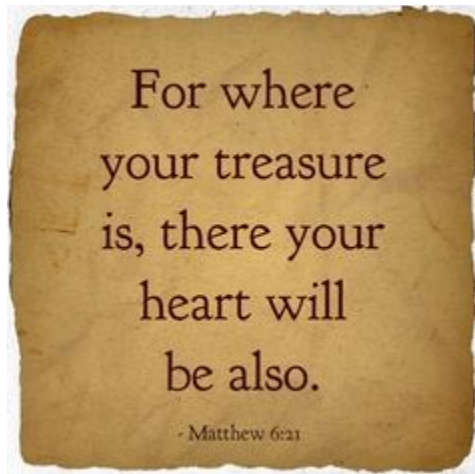
JULY 13, 2016 BY [KELLI](#)

Hello! My name is Kelli Oylear and I am an upcoming junior Social Work and Spanish double major with a minor in Social Justice at the University of Portland. I am from Southern California, specifically Anaheim, and I am currently completing my internship back at home this summer.

I am interning at KidWorks, a non-profit organization whose mission is “to restore at-risk neighborhoods...one life at a time.” This organization offers pre-school and after school programs for children in the city of Santa Ana, California. They also offer a summer school and various summer camp opportunities for children as well. More information about the organization can be found at <http://kidworksoc.org/>.

It is week two of the summer school program, and the theme is anything nautical. They are currently learning about pirates, how they stayed fit, what they wore, and whether they were good or bad. Although summer does seem to make them a little bit rowdy,

these children are truly excited to learn. I was very excited when I saw some familiar faces of children returning for the summer program that I had worked with at the end of their school year. One of the little girls is having a hard time transitioning from the small classroom to larger group sizes. The other day I came in and she was crying because she was overwhelmed by all the children in the lunch room. I was able to talk to her, along with some other teachers and volunteers. She found her brother and sat with him for a little while. However, when it was time to leave for the activities she began to cry again. So, I was able to be her buddy for the day and bring her to the lesson room, the craft room, and the play area outside. She is so sweet, but I am very happy that I can help make her experience a little less overwhelming. Another time that I felt that I was able to help was when there was a new girl that joined the group in the craft room, and she did not speak English. The teacher spoke in both English and Spanish to give instructions, but I was able to ask her about her craft and interact by using my Spanish language skills. These experiences help me feel as if I am truly helping in any small way I can to help reduce the stress and work of the teachers that work so hard every day.



I attached this photo, because this quote is placed at the entrance of the center, and was a part of the children's most recent lesson. They are learning about pirates, and how their pursuit of Earthly treasures is not the right pursuit. They should be pursuing Heavenly treasures, or treasures of the heart. The experiences I have had in this center, and specifically during the summer program, make me feel as if these children and this place will always have a place in my heart. It is truly a treasure.

I would just like to end this post by thanking Laurie and Lindie for the amazing opportunity to be an Intern for Justice. I cannot believe that this opportunity will be coming to an end in just a short month. I do not know where the time has gone, but it is time that is well invested. I will always remember this experience, and hope that I have effected the community as much as it has effected me. Thank you.

Kelli



# **Interns for Justice: July 10 – July 16 (by Jessica Buchanan)**

JULY 15, 2016 BY [JESSICA](#)

My name is Jessica Buchanan, I am a social work major with fine arts minor. I'm going to be a junior this fall, holy cow time flies. I bike almost everywhere and you will after hear me talking to myself. I have been doing my internship at Harvest Homes, an assisted living facility in St. Johns. where about to have our fifty first anniversary, woohoo!

In the last week of June the trip that we had all been impatiently awaiting had arrived. About a month earlier it had come up in conversation that recently there had not been enough field trips with the residence. So I asked around and did some research on what might be a fun excursion for some of the residence. I also had noticed that primarily the female residence we the only ones that regularly went out on trips, so I tried to make this trip appealing to both the men and the women. After talking to one of the male residence we decided that a trip to a baseball game is what were are going to try to do. The Hillsboro hops are the closets league to Portland so it was decided. We scheduled a day bought the tickets and waited. Everything was planned and on track. Then about a week out from the trip I came into work and there was news that we had to reschedule, to this day I still don't know why we had to change the date but it sure was a pain. After that was taken care of we had about five residences scheduled to go, next this I hear we only have three residences going and two members of the staff had dropped out. So now we have extra ticket and the trip is three days away. I quickly realized that my brother's birthday was the same day as the trip so boom those tickets went to my brother and mother. Although the trip didn't quick go as we had planned it surely was fun. My best friend even tagged along. The residence who did go had a blast and were very thankful the outing, they were also quite thrilled to have met some of my family and get to know me better.

I think my favorite part about the trip was that I got to interact with the residence outside of the home or Fred Myers in a completely new environment; and that my family got to volunteer and get to see what I do and work with the people that I've been getting to know so well. As I've had more and more experience working around elders have noticed more and more how discriminated against and poorly treated the often are. So when I get to share my experience and view point first hand with other people it makes me really excited.



Harvest Homes residence and staff hanging out with Barley at the Hillsboro Hops game.



Me and my family at the baseball game.

## **Interns for Justice Week of August 1-5** **By Chelsea Cook**

AUGUST 1, 2016 BY [CHELSEA](#)

Hello everyone, my name is Chelsea Cook; I'm still working at Habitat for Humanity Fresno County in my home town of Fresno, California. I'm an Executive Intern working with all departments within the organization.

Since you heard from me last I was working on my ReStore rotation. It's been a while since that rotation, and I have completed my other rotations, attended corporate sponsorship meetings, and weekly Acts of Kindness. I've had the opportunity to attend weekly staff meetings, board meetings, and committee meetings as well as attend the Sacramento California Regional Conference last week.

I've been completing a lot of office work for the Fresno affiliate, which has actually been surprisingly fun and interesting to me. I had the opportunity to write a market analysis for the future location of one of our build sites, I've written various outreach plans, even department analysis and improvement documents. To many people, this might sound

pretty boring, but to a business major, it's just our normal life and things that we enjoy doing.

One of my highs since the last time I wrote was the opportunity to attend the California Habitat for Humanity Conference. Last Thursday I was able to join 3 other members of the affiliate in Sacramento for the Northern California portion of the conference. Attending these sorts of conferences is new to me; I've never really had the opportunity to attend these things as a member of an organization so it was an interesting experience. It was a long day, I will admit, driving from Fresno to Sacramento is a 3 hour drive one way, so I had about a 12 hour day last Thursday, but honestly it was worth it.

To have the opportunity to connect and network with various other California Habitat affiliates gave me a really good insight on the differences between the Fresno affiliate and other affiliates. For those of you that don't know, nonprofits are not always as organized as you expect. Many are small and rely on lots of grants, hope for donations, and strive to grow. I found that in comparison, the Fresno County Habitat is much larger and more put together than many other California affiliates. Overall we seem small, but when you learn that a majority of affiliates don't have fulltime staff, or any paid staff at all, Fresno stacks up pretty well against the others. I do have major respect for all the affiliates that are working on a part time or volunteer basis, because to be able to even stay afloat that way is outstanding to me.



**First affiliate at the conference**

Working with Habitat has really opened my eyes to the world around me, the living conditions around me, and the housing market around me. Advocacy was an important part of the conference last Thursday, Holly Fraumeni, with Platinum Advisors, spoke to us about advocacy and about how a large majority of millennials, people my age, will

never own a home, but oddly enough, do not want to own a home. Statistics show that younger people realize they probably will never be able to afford a home, and don't mind renting. Yet rent prices are continuing to increase and you're no longer getting that "bang for your buck" that everyone loves to talk about.

Take a look at some of the statistics used in the market analysis I wrote for Fresno and Fresno County:

"As of 2014, a low-income household of 3, making \$36,500 would be able to afford a monthly rent of \$781, while a 2 bedroom apartment in Fresno County has a monthly rent of \$827, which makes the opportunity to have a fitting and safe apartment unobtainable. This instance causes overcrowding and/or overpayment, causing a cost burden... The median purchasing price of a home in Fresno as of 2014 was \$190,000. This means that the average 2-3 family household must earn between \$46,300-52,100, have perfect credit, be able to afford a down payment, and have no further debts or monthly payments... Average Wages at Low-Income Level: Healthcare Support \$32,350 Office & Administrative Support \$36,940 Protective Service \$42,050 Community & Social Service \$47,430."

It is amazing how these issues are not being discussed, and how the affordability of home and housing is not being talked about. This is real life, this is the world and reality that I am going to have to face, the world and reality that I am facing, and it's scary. I'll probably never be able to purchase a home, or not be able to do so within a reasonable time frame. With student debt to pay off, and the cost of living in a metropolitan area, I will struggle to find decent affordable housing, and many people including possibly you will face this same problem as well. So why not find a solution to solve it?

## **Interns for Justice: August 8th-August 12th (by Thao Nguyen)**

AUGUST 11, 2016 BY [THAO](#)

Hello! I am back again to talk about my experience interning for the Asian Health & Service Center. So far, this has been the realest, most challenging, and also most excited thing I have ever done. For a quick recap: AHSC is an organization that helps reduce health inequity and improve health quality for the Asian population. We work with low income population, help with housing and health care, and mental health patients. Their mission is "to be the bridge between Asian and American cultures and build a harmonious community." I was lucky that both of my parents are Vietnamese and I got to learn another language from them. Growing up, I only practiced my

Vietnamese at home with my parents. However, this language skill comes in handy when I started working for this organization. In addition to a lot of office work, I also work with the Vietnamese population. Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday we have group meeting, or what we called "Ethnic Outreach." This is when the elders come in the center to socialize, get help with whatever they need, including translating letters and filling out applications. We also have exercise activities, presentations on public health and free lunch for all the seniors. Ethnic Outreach is one of my favorite programs here because not only I get to interact with more people, but I also get to help them one-on-one.

Two weeks ago, we took the senior members out to Blue Lake for an outing. I had been to Blue Lake so many times therefore I did not think this place was that excited. But what stucked with me the most was the excitement on their faces. Everyone came in the center earlier than usual. Some brought food, snacks and water. We handed out their lunch and asked them to hold on to it. When we got there, everyone was all over the place. They acted just like little kids. Some elders ran to the bush to look at the roses, some tried to approach the birds for closer looks while others were busy taking selfie. At times like this, I felt like they were returning to their childhood. There were some volunteers from Pacific University that came with us that day and I could tell from their facial expression that they were really confused as to what was going on. I was also like that at first but I quickly realized the reason behind their excitement.

From one of the conversations I had with other staffs, I learned that some of them never had a chance to go anywhere. They had no relatives, no transportation and no language skill go out on their own. I had no reason to be sad or mad about this situation and to say that I understand how they feel was a lie because never in my life had I experience anything like that. But I somehow still got really frustrated when I tried to imagine myself in their shoes. I suddenly remembered an incident that happened to me when I was in Korea. I was trying to ask a stranger for directions but I had such a hard time communicating with the guy because I did not speak Korean. These elders had a lot of stories to share but due to the language barrier, they won't be able to express their thoughts.

This was certainly not the first time I learned that language is a main barrier for most of them. One of the tasks I was assigned to at the office was helping the elders fill out housing applications, translating medical paper work, calling the Oregon Health system such as Medicare/Medicaid to get answers for them. Even these simple tasks such as understanding a letter or asking someone on the phone for answer, they had to come all the way in the center to seek help. How frustrated they must feel. Starting this internship, I did not think I would learn this much. But the knowledge that I learned from the staffs and the experience that I gained working here gave me a new perspective in life. I will no longer take my bilingual skill for granted and I will try my best to understand people's struggle and see it from their point of view.



Blue Lake Outing!

## **Interns for Justice: August 8th – August 12th (by Danielle Dillard)**

AUGUST 24, 2016 BY [DANIELLE](#)

Hello again! It's Danielle from Acción Política PCUNista (APP). Like I previously said, I am a junior at the University of Portland with a double major in Social Work and Spanish. At APP, we work on educating the Latinx population on the importance of voting so that they can fully participate in their community.

Today I am going to talk about an event that happened on June 23, 2016. There was a tie in the Supreme Court that blocked the passing of DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans) and DACA+ (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). Because the case ended in a 4-4 tie, the decision went back down to Texas in the lap of a very conservative judge. As you can imagine, this news was horrific to many people who were hoping that the plan would pass, stopping the deportation of about 5 million undocumented immigrants and allowing them to work in the U.S. However, that didn't happen. Leaving their fate in the hands of an oppressive system.

The day after, we had a community meeting, where members of the community were able to come out and get a better understanding of what was going on. So many people couldn't fully understand the consequences of this tie. The main question was: What now? I sat in on two meetings, one with organization leaders, and the other filled with community members. The atmosphere of the room was gloomy. We cried. Everyone's eyes teared up at we thought about all the people we know will be affected. What now?

We went around the room sharing our feelings, our disappointments, and our hopes for the future. We focused on the struggle that began a long time ago. We discussed the



triumphs and the losses. We did not look at this tie as a permanent defeat. We looked at it as a temporary setback, a setback that will not suppress the people for long. In the midst of all the chaos and disappointment, we ended the meeting with a *sí se puede!* Why you ask? Porque la lucha no para aquí. La lucha sigue y nosotr@s seguimos fuertes.