

I wanted to return to Eye Street to be a part of the Alumni Service Corps because I missed the values that Gonzaga had instilled in me. While I was in college, the focus of my four years had always been myself. What grades am I getting, what am I doing this weekend, what job am I going to get next year? My senior year, I realized that this was not the attitude that I wanted to begin my post-collegiate life with, and I knew Gonzaga was the right place to rediscover everything I seemingly had forgotten.

I asked and received, because my first rotation has been working in the library and with Campus Kitchen. When working in the library with Patty Tobin and Pam Valeiras, there is always something to do, or a student who needs help. I have had a great time every step of the way because Patty and Pam are fireballs of energy who exude so much positivity, it is impossible not to love whatever you are doing. There is never a second to complain or focus on yourself because while you are sulking, another student has arrived asking for a book or the staff has found another task for me to complete. The range my day may start with passing out dress uniforms before class, setting up chess boards before lunch, running a ping pong tournament during lunch, and finishing with collecting food for Campus Kitchen before the final bell. The rapidly changing schedule has been something I have loved because I have been able to meet and help a wide variety of students.

My second main duty has been to help Patty run Campus Kitchen which is an organization that takes leftover food twice a week and creates meals for sixty elderly people in the community. Seeing how much work and volunteering contributes to the running of Campus Kitchen has been eye opening. All the students that are involved from the making, packing, and delivering of food are excited to contribute and be involved. My favorite part of the project has been meeting the customers to whom we deliver. Although there are some who are occasionally grumpy, the reaction that we get is overwhelmingly positive. Being able to meet and talk with the community has helped me again realize how much I have been given in my life.

Because of all of the construction of new luxury apartments and restaurants around Gonzaga and H street, participating in Campus Kitchen has given me a window into how changes can affect the forgotten people in our society. The contrast between the main complex we deliver, Sibly Plaza, and the new NPR building or the condos on the opposite side of North Capital Street is crystal clear. In the coming years, Sibly is going to be torn down and replaced and another higher quality housing building will be put in. While this is good for the development of the neighborhood, people who I am getting to know and talking to on a weekly basis will be displaced from their homes and forced to move. As a frame of reference, a lot of the customers of Campus Kitchen do not even have the ability to get to the grocery store on a regular basis because of disabilities. I have no idea what the right solution is to this problem, but being able to see the faces of individuals that progress hurts has helped me to see another part of how the world works.

My first month at Gonzaga has been a great time and I am excited to be a part of this once in a lifetime opportunity. I have already met some great people and students, so I cannot guess what the next eight months will hold for me.