

Amalia Lomeli

WLC 400

Dr. Urioste

3/17/2013

Service Learning

Span 301S Service Learning

To fulfill the service learning requirement I enrolled in Span 301S Service Learning with Dr. Zeilina. The purpose for this class was to meaningfully interact with members of the Hispanic community and to demonstrate critical self 'reflection of one's own assumptions and stereotypes. Examine issues that affect our local community and to interact with people of diverse culture and lifestyles. To demonstrate my ability to fulfill the outcomes mentioned above I chose to do my service learning at Dorothy's Kitchen situated in Salinas since 1982 its missions statement as follows:

"It is the mission of the Franciscan Workers of Junipero Serra to live, to love, and to work in harmony; to serve the marginalized; to create partnerships that are mutually liberating; and to pursue social justice with respect and dignity for all, in the spirit of St. Francis and Dorothy Day." My service learning consisted of helping in the kitchen to prepare meals, serve the meals during lunch time and cleaning afterwards. Besides the physical work I was there to listen to people, to know their stories, to show respect

regardless of their appearance, to shake hands with the homeless, the drug addicts, and the marginalized. One of the stories that most amazed me was the one of a University professor that lost everything and would visit Dorothy's place every day to get a meal because he could not afford one. Dorothy's kitchen serves anyone who needs a meal, no questions ask, no background check they don't judge they serve the community. Before taken this class I thought of homeless people as uneducated, all drug addicts and responsible for their own misery. Soon after I started my service and as I listen to the people's stories find out that some people lost their jobs, could not pay rent and soon they were in the street "homeless". Others had arrived from other countries and had not yet settled themselves in the new country. Some more were addicts to illegal substances. And last but not least undocumented man who worked in agricultural seasonal jobs; since they don't have legal documents they are ^{not able to} cannot collect unemployment when laid off which makes the winter extremely difficult to survive. I reflected on my own stereotypes not all "homeless" are uneducated; some of them are the result of our political system. As part of the community, we all share the responsibility of the wellbeing of our society economically, politically and socially.