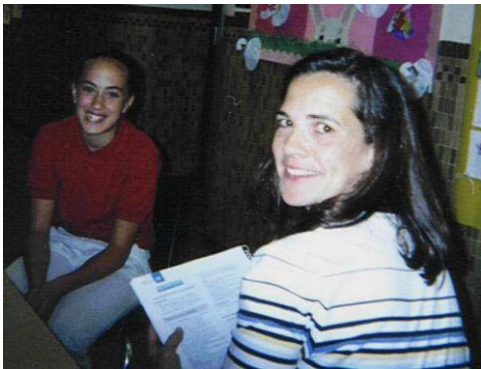


Sheri Leytem—AmeriCorps Fall 2002
St. Joseph the Worker

My AmeriCorps experience was varied indeed. I worked with a variety of students on many different subjects. There were high points and low points—as I look back on my first year of service, I have such a mixture of emotions. I have seen students trying so hard and giving it the best they can, and I have also seen students not giving much effort.

In trying to help those who did not give it their best, it helped me to learn right along with them. They taught me to be more patient and understanding to their needs because each and every student has a different type of need. I have become a better listener. There were days where I left my site and felt like I hadn't helped a bit; those days were a bit depressing. One day I helped a student in second grade who was crying at his desk. He needed to write about why his mother loved him, and why he loved her. I got him to calm down and actually laugh. When he finally finished his paper, he was so excited to have gotten the assignment done that he wanted to read together.



On a daily basis, I worked with individual students to help increase their reading comprehension.

During the school year, I was also able to participate in several school events. These included Catholic Schools Week Quiz Bowl, Ham House Museum and Cathedral Church field trips, a Loras College play, and the eighth graders' play, "Alice in Wonderland."

A wonderful part of my year was being able to serve at the school my children attend. Although I did not see them much, it was great knowing what was happening on a daily basis in their classrooms.

Overall, this is a great school with great kids. I think an AmeriCorps member should be placed in every classroom—you just can't beat that individual attention.

I also worked with groups of students. Here the students work on sight words but have fun in the process.

