

Laura Oakland- AmeriCorps Summer 2002 Comiskey Playground

Throughout the summer of service, I have had the opportunity to play an active role with community programming through two primary avenues, Comiskey playground and educational day camps.

Comiskey was my primary placement this summer and the location where the AmeriCorps presence seemed most vital. Five afternoons and four evenings a week, neighborhood kids and AmeriCorps members gathered to share fun games, foster creative expression, and promote a safe environment built on mutual respect and tolerance. With rotating kits and weekly field trips, there was always something new going on at Comiskey.



Making a piñata for the Fiesta!



Surrounded by the flexible atmosphere of the playground and kindergarteners every morning at summer school, planning and leading the day camp-“Fizz, Bubble, Goo” was definitely a change of pace for me. The eight to eleven year-olds I worked with were not only a lot of fun, but also quite knowledgeable about the scientific subject material. I really had to do my homework to keep a step ahead of them. For at least those few days, the kids truly got to put on their scientist goggles and explore how great experimental learning can be.

With safety goggles in place and countenances filled with concentration, the kids truly took on the scientist persona.



Although each morning I helped with summer school program at various elementary schools, my afternoons and evenings at Comiskey are what categorized my summer. In a neighborhood filled with frustration, with familial dissention and community turmoil, not a day went by when I wasn't swept away by the contagious laughter of children. These are tough kids growing up in a tough world, yet they taught me many lessons this summer. I only hope that through my service I was able to return the favor.

