

Elizabeth Gibbs- AmeriCorps Summer 2003

Audubon School

When I first heard about AmeriCorps I never thought that it would have such an impact on my life. I never thought it would change the person I am. I have become a better person and have more experience working with diversity while working with children. I made children's lives a little better for them every time just by doing a little something out of my way.

I started out at Audubon Elementary School, helping Kindergartners who were behind in class. One thing about these Kindergartners that I never realized was that they do not comprehend and often forget very easily. My mission was to help about 6 students increase their knowledge for the ABC's and 123's. What a feeling it was to know that I made a difference not just for the child but for me personally, knowing that I did something to help. Working with these children helped my imagination because each child was different and learned differently so I had to create 6 individual ways to teach them.

The kindergartners were also able to play with academic focused toys during the day.



The summer came and I was again placed down at the Audubon playground. The first night was crazy. When the night first started we had no kids. So we went to find some kids. By the end of the night we had about 50 kids. The nights after that we had about 30. It had its crazy nights and times when the kids would not behave. Those were tough but also interesting. I looked forward going down there every night. I missed only 3 nights. Basically these kids grew on me. They came to me with their problems and I learned more from them than from any education I have ever had.

These are the kids we saw on a regular basis every night.



Each week we were able to take the kids to programming at the library.



I have lived in Dubuque my entire life. I have never realized the things that the kids told me about their home life ever happened. It makes you feel very grateful for what you have and that your problems are so small compared to what they have to put up with. Words could never describe what I have been through and have learned during my experience at Audubon. These kids will never be forgotten and will always be a part of me. They have impacted my life more than they will ever know.