

Jennifer Hoffmann- AmeriCorps Summer 2003 St. Mark Community Center

AmeriCorps gave me a place to grow and the strength to move on. During the summer I worked very closely with one individual at St. Mark Community Center for 300 hours. She tested me in many ways. The first day she walked in with a scowl on her face. In my head I was begging, “please, don’t give me her!” I would have never guessed we’d do so well together and I’d come to care so much for her.

She was an expert at testing my patience, understanding, and creativity. She had a “thing” about workbooks and that “thing” was pure hatred. She would stop talking to me for 20 minutes. At first I would get upset that she wouldn’t do the work I planned out for her. Once I thought about it I was able to sympathize and relate to her, since I too hated workbooks when I was younger. I then discovered my creative side to make math more fun by using games. Each time she tested me, it taught me patience, endurance, new ways to express knowledge, and to never give up on a child no matter how difficult the behavior.



The whole summer was a growing experience that I would not trade for the world. It was a way to test my skills and make me a better person. I am grateful to AmeriCorps for giving me the opportunity with work with this individual. I hope she learned as much as I did this summer, and hopefully she has caught my fire for reading.

I finally convinced her to read a harder book and then for fun she picked the book Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen Space Camp, and was able to read it in four days! At the end she and I made a rocket, which she had to plan out and design. It really helped us to bond.

