

Little Rock, Arkansas

Habitat for Humanity

On Saturday March 15, 10 students and 2 hall directors left St. Norbert College at 4:00 in the morning and arrived at Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock, Arkansas at about 8:00pm. Students participating in this service trip were Peter Kane, Lisa Jicinsky, Matt Muenster, Ashley Knoke, Emily Czarnik-Neimeyer, Emily Schwanke, Lucas Keberlein, Melissa Tyson, Stephanie Del Santo, Andrea Ehlers, Conor DuBoyce, and Oyo Gootiz. Sunday, our first day, was our free day which we started off by going to a non-denominational church. It was a different experience for a lot of us. From church, we went downtown Little Rock where we got some lunch, found a variety of decorative statues, found out what “mudbugs” were (crayfish!), and even found an Easter themed petting zoo! On Monday, half of our group stayed at the camp, working to clean up the ditches and “rake the forest.” The other half of our group went to the MLK Green House which had started construction the previous year and was environmentally friendly. It was specially built to keep warmth in during the winter and keep cold air in during the summer. It was also made with eco-friendly materials. We worked along side a group of students from Kansas to clean up the yard. After dinner, we took some time to reflect with our group, going over our strengths and weaknesses, as well as what we hoped to gain from the week.



On Tuesday, we went to deconstruction where we started to work on a house that had been abandoned since 1992. Tuesday afternoon we were able to visit the Little Rock Central High School and see the visitor’s center. We learned about the Little Rock Nine. They were the first nine African American students that were to be

integrated into the all white high school. The governor of Arkansas did not want to allow this but the nine gained support from the rest of the country. Come Wednesday morning, it was still slightly raining but not as bad as it was the night before, when the roads were flooded. We got a quick breakfast and then were off to deconstruction again!

Thursday, half of our group got to sleep in a bit and went off to deconstruction again while the other half got up earlier and ate a quick breakfast. We said goodbye to a few of our new friends who were leaving later that day and then were off to The Promise Land Church Center, an afterschool/daycare center.

Emily S, Emily C-N, and I started off by organizing the back room for Ms. Carmen, the owner of the center. We finished within an hour and then went on to paint the boys bathroom. We got all different colors of paint and went with an “Under the Sea” theme. We said our goodbyes and left Little Rock, Arkansas at 6:30 that night.

We hit Chicago just as the storm started but our fantastic drivers were able to get us through it! All in all, it was an amazing TRIP and we all had a lot of fun! We were able to get to know everyone really well and went from being acquaintances to family!