Journal Entry #2

From the beginning, the Applied Learning Experience has been just that, a learning experience. There have been many highs and lows. From trying to find a mentor to the excitement I felt at having the grant I worked so hard on sent off! To begin with it took a lot of calls and emails to find an organization who wanted to take on being my mentor. Like a job search there were the usual rejection emails from groups that didn’t or couldn’t use my help, and even some dead end calls with people who said they would call me back, but never did. In the end I guess it worked out the way it was supposed to be, since I am really enjoying my work with the Poodle Rescue of New England.

Through this half way mark of the project, I have already accomplished so much and can't wait to do more. One major accomplishment that has occurred is finishing my first but hopefully not my last grant. After I looked through countless grant options, the rescue agreed that my choice of The Doris Day Foundation was a good one. It took a lot of phone calls with various members of the rescue group to get all the information I needed to complete the grant process. After that with the help of Pam, my mentor’s sister in law, I completed all the necessary parts and sent it to the rescue’s treasurer, Amanda. All the ladies who help with the dogs were so appreciative and wrote me saying so. It felt good to know that my work meant a lot to these ladies who work so hard for the rescue.

Some other work I have done is attending a Petco event where the poodle rescue goes and educates people about the organization. The day I was there they brought two adorable miniature poodles that attracted people over to the tables. I was able at this time to gather their marketing materials, so I could start the process of updating their brochures and flyers.

Although I have really been looking forward to this part of the experience it has also been an issue as I do not have publisher at my house, so I have been left to find free time at school to try and complete it, have the volunteers from the rescue review it, and eventually finalize and print new materials. I will be updating the information in it, adding some new pictures, and brightening up the look. I am hoping to complete this by the end of January, beginning of February.

In addition to working on the grant and marketing materials, I have bi weekly skype sessions with my mentor. Through her I have learned a lot about what goes into running a rescue organization. From the group’s finances, to marketing, to the work of the volunteers and fosters who care for the dogs, there is a lot that goes into it. While working on the grant my mentor was great. She helped me make connections with people within the organization, so I could complete the work. Being able to ask her questions at almost any time through emails and texts has also been helpful. She says all the ladies in the organization have contacted her to say how professional and knowledgeable I am.

In the upcoming months I plan to continue my meetings with my mentor, finish working on the marketing materials, and look for new grant opportunities to pursue.

Truly it has been a big confidence booster to know that I am capable of making a contribution within an organization. I didn’t start out thinking I would be writing grants, but that is what they needed and so that is what I did. Through it I improved my communication, organizational, and writing skills. I was also able to explain how google docs works as I teamed up with Pam to write the grant. She was so impressed with what it can do that she plans to use it in the future! As I begin to work on more of their marketing materials, I know I will enjoy using my creative side as well as my technology skills to further help the poodles. I can’t wait!