

## Final Presentation Script Rough Draft

### Nick Ovens

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." This is a quote from Aesop. I believe that this quote works perfectly with any sort of face to face service. I truly learned the value of the little things while I volunteered at the Madison Senior Center this year. I always valued being nice to people, but I didn't really know how much something could mean to someone. Whenever we walk into the center we're greeted with a bunch of hello's and good morning's. And you wouldn't believe how much the seniors would tell you if you give them the opportunity. Or simply spending time with them means so much. Now that the weather is warming up, we walk around the pond or just sit and have small talk. Community service changed my view on the little things in life. And how precious every little moment is.

There was a man I met at the senior center one day, named Homer. I was actually in the middle of making crafts with some of the ladies at the center when Jessica stopped me. She asked if I wanted to get away from crafts for a while, I obviously accepted. She introduced me to Homer, a quiet man I haven't seen at the center before. He shyly asked me to play pool. So we slowly worked our way over to the pool tables. We didn't talk much. Maybe a comment here and there about the game, but that seemed to be just enough for him. We weren't any good either. And it wasn't even a real game. We just took turns hitting in whichever balls we wanted. After every game he'd look at me and ask if I wanted to play again. I couldn't turn him down. We kept playing, and he kept asking after every game if I wanted to play another one. We ended up playing for around two hours. After a while, we came to a mutual decision that we've played enough for one day. As I was getting my time sheet signed, my supervisor told me that what I did was very sweet. I didn't think much of it because I thought I was just doing my job as a volunteer. She continued to tell me that his wife had passed away not too long ago and he now lives alone. He rarely comes into the center and is very quiet. She said she had never seen him smile, until she saw us playing pool. I now realize what something simple like that means to them. And it now makes my service mean so much more to me. I haven't seen Homer since.

Another person I've met during my time at the senior center, was Jeanette. She is such a sweet lady. And she doesn't seem like your average senior. She's always up and moving, she's loud and always talking and smiling. When we first met her, she sat us volunteers down to talk. She asked all about us, about school, family, and our futures. She went on and on about how important it is to fulfill our lives. She talked about her daughters and how successful they are and how proud she was of them. She let us know that nothing matters more than family.

They're something you'll have no matter what you're going through. And every time we'd see Jeanette in the center, we'd stop and talk for a minute or two. She wasn't the best at remembering stuff so she always tested herself with our names. She would always remember mine though. She said it's because her son was named Nicholas, but I'm pretty sure she thinks I'm the best, most handsome volunteer and she doesn't want Ryan and Darrin to feel bad. At first she would call Ryan "Bryan", but I'm pretty sure she's gotten the hang of his name now. And she would call Darrin "Darryl" from time to time but it's set in stone now that his name is Darryl to her. But we'd tell she's right every time, and she'd smile and say "Good. Maybe I'm not losing it."

Another experience that stuck with me were the Broadmoor basketball games. They were fun and it was great to interact with the kids, but those games really solidified that it's the small things in life that matter. We would play a game with them so effortlessly, not in a bad way, but it was something that was so easy for us to do. And it would make the kids light up. Seeing their faces when everyone cheered after they made a basket was priceless.

These experiences have made me realize that the littlest things can make the biggest impacts, without even knowing. Simply playing a game of pool or basketball, or just saying hi to someone can mean something different to everyone. I've realized to not take these things for granted, like I did, but to hold these simple gestures close. No matter what you do, it can have a huge ripple effect on someone's day, week, or life. Creating these memories that you and the people you serve is what service is all about. The things I have learned will carry with me through my life, and I hope to pass them on to family, friends, or complete strangers.