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LRDS

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Times I’ve Felt Alive

I have been going on mission trips since the seventh grade. I’ve served in Winchester, Virginia; Romney, West Virginia; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Although the mission trips were designed to improve the homes of the needy and elderly, my favorite part was probably when we helped people in unexpected ways. For instance, one day I was working on a wheelchair ramp for an older woman when I had to go inside the house for something. While there, I found a bunch of my smelly, dirty friends sitting on the couch with the homeowner who was a frail, older lady. She was telling them about how she first met her husband. It was incredible to see these kids hanging on every word she said. I’m sure the older woman was appreciative of the work we did for her, but I know she also loved talking with the kids and telling a story so near to her heart. Sometimes, just listening and being interested in the people we served seemed to make them just as happy as fixing their homes. Experiences like this make me realize that sometimes the connections we make with people are more important than what we can provide them with.

I feel especially alive when I a connect with those I’m serving. Instead of building like I used to, I focus a lot of my volunteering efforts on connecting with those I’m serving. I spend most of my time service now volunteering at Adult Day Services on the Virginia Tech campus. There, I mostly help by spending quality time with the participants, which I love. What I do at Adult Day Services is the type of work that really made me love doing service in the first place so I feel very fortunate that Wei-Ning showed me this opportunity and encouraged me to pursue it.