

Davis W. Brown

Episcopal Diocese of West Texas: **Mustang Island Conference Center**/Corpus Christi, Texas

June 19th – August 5th 2012

Over the course of my summer in Corpus Christi Texas, myself along with another Sewanee Intern worked on staff at the Mustang Island Conference Center. While there our internship was to have consisted of both Research at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi along with serving on staff at the Family Christian Camp at the Conference Center, however; due to some unfortunate scheduling issues we were unable conduct any research at the University. On the other hand in working at the MICC, it was a true joy and an amazing experience even without the research. The workers and staff there were so unbelievable and carried such love for the others around them.

In observing my responsibilities held at the Center during Family Camp, a typical day included everything from setting up the beach for the families, leading activities on the beach and at the center, working the weekly Talent Show, Dance, and main events, and of course helping out everywhere needed from the kitchen to Friday Night Bonfire on the beach. Myself along with the other Sewanee Intern lead the Environmental Education events each day for the families, which included fun activities for the kids to experience the environment of the beach first hand. On the beach we would catch all different types of species of fish, shrimp, crab, and sand dollars, and would hold them in an open container for the kids to examine and feel as we discussed what they were and what their purpose was. With this we ourselves had to do research on certain species and sea beans in order to further teach the families and children. Along with this, we developed an educational food web activity with another activity known as Freddy the Fish, where the families participated, learned, and witnessed the effects of our daily decisions on the environment.

Over the course of this summer internship, it was a great experience in being able to bring my knowledge and experience from Sewanee, into this new atmosphere and to be able to share with the families. In addition to giving me the opportunity to share what I have experienced and learned at Sewanee, I was able to develop amazing relationships with the families. The engagement with the families, rather than simply leading activities, was such a blessing in itself and on top of creating these new lasting connections and relationships, this engagement made the internship all the more worth doing.

Apart from the work and service done at MICC, every week the staff would partake in some form of community service. One of the main services we did was our work and assistance at Cliff Maus Apartment Complex in Corpus Christi. Cliff Maus is a very impoverished community in the rough neck of the neighborhood. On top of Family Camp, our weekly visit to Cliff Maus was one of the days I personally looked forward too the most. While there for the majority of the day, we would do everything from playing basketball, kickball, and arts and crafts with the kids, to picking up trash and cleaning the site all the while having the kids be involved. As simple as may seem, these days carried such a heavy impact in allowing us to engage in the lives of these children and to just show them unconditional love. Apart from Cliff Maus, a few other examples of community service included helping at a Surf Camp for Mentally and Physically Disabled Children and helping do some minor construction and building.

Once again although the research unfortunately did not pull through, there is not much that I would change about this summer. God really used the staff at MICC to impact and to love these different families and children, whether at Family Camp or Cliff Maus.