

# Community Work and Learning

## Fall 2021 Symposium



ST. CATHERINE  
UNIVERSITY

Community Work  
and Learning

**Lizzy Oleson**

America Reads Tutor, *The impact of tutoring students*

### **Impact of Work:**

In America Reads, I have helped many students in their learning and academic growth. I have been with America Reads for two years already previous of this semester. I have been through the transition of in person tutoring to online, which hadn't been easy. The first school I worked at was at Crossroads Elementary two years ago. I then worked at PPL, which meant I got to work with a student that had experiences with homelessness and other difficult situations. After that, we went online. I was then tutoring students online with the St. Paul Public Library. Online was extremely challenging as students did not want to listen as we talked to one another through a screen. Overall, I have had a lot of different experiences that have shaped me as a tutor. I believe I have been a beneficial addition to America Reads as I now do have a lot more experience than majority of the incoming tutors. I have been able to give advice to other tutors and explain what they should expect.

### **Personal Growth:**

I grew by pushing myself out of my comfort zone. I am naturally a shy and introverted person so I had to urge myself to have a positive attitude and wear a smile everyday I tutored even when sometimes I didn't feel like my best self. I learned how to navigate tough situations and problem solve. There were many times where I simply didn't know what the best thing was to do, but I got through it by using my best judgment and trying my best. I learned that I can be more extroverted and optimistic if I try. It takes a lot of effort, but I think I have gotten good at portraying myself as an energetic person, which is much needed when dealing with elementary age students. Funnily enough, I also learned that I enjoyed working with kids, although it was often difficult. It was rewarding when a student began to understand something or reached a milestone in their work because I knew that I had helped them with that. I also have grown a lot as a tutor. I have learned how to explain things better and what tricks aid in remembering something more. Overall, I have grown and matured a lot since my first semester in Freshman year at America Reads. I have been able to flourish and expand my skills more than I ever thought I could.

### **Career Impact:**

I'm not sure what I am going to do for my future work, but I am majoring in Sociology and Psychology. Both have to do a lot with working with people, which sometimes will mean working with children. I think I will have the skills set to handle any challenging situation that arises as I have learned great problem-solving skills from working with America Reads. Also, having positive energy is always a great help in any job. I also have gotten used to being put out of my comfort zone, which I think will also aid in my future work. It had made me more professional and aware of the rules that I need to follow as when dealing with students we have

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to be careful with what we do. All of my skills I have learned would be great for any work.