

Student Contributing to

Community Impact

by Evan Dixon



Alexis Toussaint Sees Mentorship as Important Practice in Community

Sometimes we get so caught up in the trying to do something big that we forget the little things that can add up.

Alexis Toussaint is a Barry sophomore who started her community service journey as simply as you can imagine. A conversation in passing with a resident assistant combined with a passion for activism was all it took for this 20-year-old to get involved.

The aspiring pediatrician had very little community service experience before she found herself in the CCSI (Center for Community Service Initiatives) and with Valerie Scott.

Then the program coordinator for Federal Work-Study Community Service, Scott gave Toussaint a work assignment with Gang Alternative, a Miami-based non-for-profit organization whose mission is to keep at-risk youth from being lured into youth violence and delinquency.

Students in Federal Work-Study Community Service – known as the Barry Service Corps – helped Gang Alternative youth with homework and even did some counseling.

“I was able to be a leader to them by showing them what’s wrong and right,” Toussaint said.



Now a fellow in the Barry Service Corps, Toussaint previously served at Gang Alternative. A strong advocate for more mentorship for kids, she believes it can prevent them from heading down the wrong path in the first place.

She believes mentorship is an important practice, especially when dealing with at-risk youth. So she reveled in the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those kids.

Toussaint said, "I love them, I miss them now. ... When I went back there, they were so happy to see me; they were really joyful."

Now a fellow in the Barry Service Corps, Toussaint is a strong advocate for more mentorship for kids. She believes that it can prevent them from heading down the wrong path in the first place.

The message she wants to pass on to her peers is: "Action, not reaction."

She said, "There are a lot of problems out there in the world, and I feel people need to go out there and try to help; to be the voice of the community. If there's a problem in the world, I don't think you should just sit and look at it. You should do something about it."

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