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### Library Award for Undergraduate Research Essay

In my FMSC383 (The Delivery to Human Services) class, we were required to write a program proposal paper as our final project. In the assignment, we had to create a new and creative human services program that served the unmet needs of a specific population. In addition, we had to provide a persuasive argument for why the program was needed, an explanation of how the program would work, and provide a budget for the program. When I read the assignment, I decided to create a self-esteem workshop for teenage girls of color based on my personal experience as a female of color. During my childhood, I had to deal with criticism towards my body from my parents. As a result, it was difficult to develop strong friendships with my peers due to my low self-esteem. Furthermore, there were very few peers who looked like me since I lived in a predominately white neighborhood. Though there are many programs focusing on female empowerment towards young girls, there were very few programs that focused on female empowerment towards girls of color. Therefore, I wanted to create a program that focused, celebrated, and bonded girls of color from the program.

When I began searching for my sources, I used the Research Port database on the University Libraries website due to the extensive filtering of articles. Since I knew my program proposal idea, I used the keywords “adolescents”, “girls of color”, and “self-esteem” to narrow my search. When I looked through the results, I was surprised that there were articles that focused on the relationship between self-esteem and mental health among girls of color and self-esteem among Latina and Asian adolescents. Though I was surprised by these articles, I was pleased that researchers were conducting research towards self-esteem among girls of color. However, I narrowed my sources by choosing articles between the years 2000-2015 in order to provide relevance to my program paper. In addition to searching articles on Research Port, I searched outside resources for the program proposal, such as the Dove Self-Esteem Project and the Fetzer Institute, a private organization that develops programs to increase awareness of love, compassion, and forgiveness globally.

When choosing and evaluating my sources, I chose different approaches towards Research Port and outside sources. With Research Port, I went by the article’s title and abstract. If I found the article’s abstract as relevant, then I read the article to see if I could include the article into my program paper. Though it was a tedious process, it was very important to choose this method because I was able to apply the article’s relevance to my program paper. With the outside sources, I underwent the same process as the sources from Research Port, but there was not an abstract for the articles. Therefore, I had to read the articles in order to determine the relevance of the article. Though the Dove Self-Esteem Project had many resources towards self-esteem, I wanted to emphasize the articles from Research Port in order to strengthen my argument of creating this program towards my chosen population.

Though I did not consult a librarian for my program paper, I received assistance from my professor since students were required to attend a meeting with my professor to discuss the program paper. During my meeting, I discussed the logic model, which details my resources, outcomes and activities for the program. In my logic model, I wanted to create pre-evaluation forms for the parents, the teenagers, and the mentors. In addition, I wanted to create post-evaluations after the program and six months after the program for the teenagers and their parents. Although I thought it would demonstrate the success of my program proposal,

my professor emphasized the importance of simplifying the program so the program did not seem complicated. Based on my conversation with my professor, I decided to modify the information on my logic model.

During the research process, I was able to apply my passion towards the public health field. I currently seek to conduct community-based participatory research about utilization of health care resources. Therefore, the program will aid me in the creation of future action plans to impact health disparities in my own and other populations. By contrast, I learned the difficulty of the research process. Though I found many sources, there were many times where I chose the article based on the title and abstract, only to realize that the article did not fit my needs towards the program paper and that I had to quickly search for another article. In addition, it was challenging to construct my program paper in a scholarly format. Though I was very passionate towards the topic, it was challenging to convey my thoughts to the paper. Therefore, I had to condense my ideas into a professional and concise format based on my conversation with my professor.

When I reflect on my research experience, I wish I utilized the library's resources throughout my program paper. Though this program paper was my final project, it was divided into three sections in order to receive feedback from my professor. If I utilized help, I would have avoided procrastination and sleepless nights towards my paper. Furthermore, it would have been helpful to know that the library has resources, such as a citation finder and scheduling appointments with a librarian. As for changes to the library, it would be helpful for the librarians to create a "How to" discussion that focused on a common research topic students face. Though the University Libraries has an "Intro to Research" section, I think this suggestion would be helpful because students can receive detailed information for their papers. Furthermore, this discussion could be divided into different colleges so each librarian could modify that discussion based on their assigned college. Though challenging at times, this program proposal gives me an exciting glimpse into my career, but more importantly, how I can contribute and change this world for the better.