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Reflection#1

Over the past couple of weeks, we have been seeking a new research project. I have been assigned to a new group, and it's been pretty interesting. We have been discussing the issues with Cahokia Heights and the challenges they have been facing. Some examples could be water quality, which has been the main focus for the first semester and has been mind-changing. My plans are a little different, and I will start by interviewing people in East Saint Louis. Also looking for grassroots organizations that have been dealing with flooding. We are also looking into how flooding has affected the livelihood of these people. How many homes and personal items have been lost because of this natural occurrence?

During my first semester, East Saint Louis has always been my focus because of these problems. Living down in the city, I experienced these events firsthand and never thought this issue was so big. There have been plenty of times when we couldn't drive down certain streets because of how much water there was. I learned that there are different organizations that have worked with recovery for the city. However, there are things I am still learning about my topic. While looking for organizations that have helped with this issue, there really aren't that many in the city. Surrounding areas tend to have more support because of funding, but there is one I have found. Community Lifeline is a group I worked with when I was 15, and come to find out, they

have worked with recovery. Giving back supplies like water, blankets, etc. This organization has also done healing circles to help those who have trauma and are affected by this issue.

It surprises me how many people are working together to bring forth this change. I'm not just talking about people in the community, but fellow members in CODES want better for these places. I see how hard they are working on their research, and their efforts are not being overlooked. It inspires me to keep going and try to find a solution to this problem. In the past, I have had setbacks with my research, and it left me discouraged at times, but we still prevailed. I still am curious about how I should go about looking for organizations or even interviewing people. I still must find places to go and find the time and opportunity to speak to others about the topic. I know we've got a lot of work to do this year, and I'm looking forward to the possibilities of this outcome.