

Reflection 4: The Fruits of Our Labor

When I first became part of this project, and even before that, when I joined the youth education group, I had no idea what I was doing in the group, what my place in the group was, or how I would help my new teammates, but this project shows that I am in fact capable of this project as well as rediscovering my fondness and aptitude for research. Recently, I have just finished my Youth Education project at JJK Academy, and it was a resounding success for all my group members, as well as the young students, their teachers, and I would like to discuss all of this in this reflection.

First off, I feel the students honestly had the most fun out of the experience. From what I could tell from my group members, the kids had a lot of enjoyment; they all asked questions and answered them with a lot of energy behind them. One thing that did catch me off guard was the sheer energy of these kids, they were very...excitable, this could have been the fact that we had come pretty late and these students likely all just got done with school and had been running on a lot of leftover energy, or the fact that they are all younger in age and just have that much energy regardless, I feel it was a mix of both these scenarios.

Regarding the teachers, they were so proud of how our projects turned out. During our video calls and even during the presentation of our projects to the kids, they had nothing but support for us during the presentations, and nothing but praise for us after the presentations. They particularly liked how we handled ourselves and the students, as well as how our projects translated to our research questions, like how I used a bottle and some sand, pebbles, and the like to make a miniature water filter. In fact, as I am writing this, they were so proud of us that they wanted to take us out to dinner to congratulate us for all our work. Our professor, Dr. Martinez, also showered us with praise for our effort in our projects and how we presented as educators, and also how we have carried ourselves with the preparation assignments.

Finally, in my opinion, I believe this is one of my proudest moments in the CODES Program. For starters, this is what we had been planning for ever since the start of the CODES Program: the ability to present to and educate the youth. We had all been working tirelessly on our specific projects, and in our case, we had spent weeks prepping to present to the kids, and I think this is the proudest I've been on a project, along with our System Day presentations. It feels so abundantly surreal that I have been a part of this experience, being welcomed into this project group after my original group had been dissolved, but in a way, I feel like that was the best possible scenario for me.