Mentoring Project

I did my mentoring project a little differently than most people. I chose two separate projects to do because of a scheduling conflict that wouldn’t allow me to get all the hours I needed by doing just one of them. I am glad that I got to experience the two different projects though. Each one was unique and between the two of them I got to experience students of all different age groups.

One of my experiences was working with the Bullitt East High School Marching Charger Band. This is the high school that I graduated from, and my former band director asked me to help run their sectionals during the marching band season. Since I play a woodwind instrument I helped the woodwind section which included clarinets, flutes, and saxophones. I helped the members of the section with the music and helped them get ready for their marching band competitions. I helped them with musical concepts like dynamics, rhythm, articulation, tempo, balance and blend.

I think this was an excellent experience for me considering that I plan to someday have my own band. I got to experience conducting a group of players, which is something I’d never gotten to do before. I also got to put to use all the musical knowledge that I have learned while here in college. It was great to be able to experience firsthand what I will be doing later in my career, but on a smaller level. I only worked with a section of the band, but it still gave me an idea as to what it would be like to rehearse a real band. I think it turned out to be a beneficial experience for both the students and me. They got help with their music and I got to experience teaching. It was definitely a good experience for all involved.
My other experience was working with the after school program at Model Laboratory. This program is offered for students in grades kindergarten through middle school. It is a program that allows students a place to stay when their parents are still at work. It starts at 11:00 a.m. (for the kindergarten students) and goes until 6:00 p.m. I helped the after school workers watch after the children. The children had many different activities they could participate in. They could play games, watch movies, do crafts, play with toys, or do homework (not may chose this option). We would help them with crafts or play games with them or just talk to them.

It was a great experience. I got to know some really special kids. Two that stick out in my mind are Wyatt and Eric. Wyatt was a very rambunctious child with a great personality. Although he did get in trouble sometimes it was never anything bad. He was a very happy child and always laughing. Eric was about 7 years old, but intelligent beyond his years. He learned things very quickly. I helped teach him how to play Clue, which is not the easiest game in the world to teach a normal seven-year-old. But Eric understood everything I told him and caught on very quickly.

This project helped me to see that I truly do want to become a teacher. I enjoyed working with all the kids. It was fun just to be around them and talk to them and it was equally fun to see them grow and learn. That’s what teaching is all about and that is what I truly want to spend my life doing.