Blog/Field Notes (Week of 10/19/2020)

On Monday, I was finally able to volunteer. It was my first day. Because I signed up for the 3-6pm shift, I logged into my computer at 2pm. I live in Chicago, so I had to account for the time change. I could not volunteer the previous week because of technological issues. The zoom link would not work. This time, I logged into the wrong zoom link. I was confused because no one was there. I realized the issue and would the correct zoom link in my email. I was two minutes late, so this was not a huge obstacle. I met with my co-leads. We introduced ourselves. Next, we sat in anticipation for kids to enter the room. None of us received training. So, we were not exactly sure what to do if a child came in. However, this did not matter because in the three hours we waited, no one came in.

Every 30 minutes, my peers and I would unmute we and discuss what was happening. We were disappointed. Although this experience is connected to a class, we were all looking forward to it. I love working with children; therefore, I was a bit frustrated. Our biggest worry was that this trend would continue the duration of the semester. I do not blame Eastside Community Action for this because of the circumstance. Many kids in Lansing were probably unaware tutoring was offered. Due to COVID-19, many children may not have access to technology requiring them to participate in this. Hopefully, next week a few kids join in.

While I waited, I worked on campaigning. I am a field intern for Hillary Scholten for Congress. I made volunteer recruitment calls. In addition, my camera was not working. I was worried that if a child came in, it would be hard for me to connect with them while tutoring. For me, it is important when tutoring. Nevertheless, I would not care if a kid had their camera on. I would not want them to be on camera if they felt uncomfortable or, plainly, did not want to.

For this Monday, I am stressed because I am not sure anyone will join. Yet, I am optimistic. A fellow volunteer has created pamphlets to advertise the volunteering services. It might encourage kids to take advantage of tutoring, especially if they did not know about before. So far, this experience has been interesting and eye-opening. This pandemic has been tough, especially on children. Even if I end up helping one kid with their schoolwork, I will be satisfied.