

West Virginia, a far place very different from my home, Philadelphia- that is what I thought and was expecting as the van pulled out of Immaculata. I expected that I was going to use a hammer, measure some wood, and watch everyone else use the power tools, because in all honesty who would let me handle a power tool? I expected to see some poor living with warm weather. Instead, I found freezing weather, families in poverty, and a power tool in my right hand. The week did not start out anything as I expected and my limits were pushed and pushed. Being around the trailers and the other poor areas, I searched for something to keep me smiling, even though my toes were the coldest they have ever been, then I finally found the good. It was the leaders who work with habitat everyday and put their whole heart into every house that they build. These people are the good in the world that the news and media ignore. Much of society is focused on the bad things happening which puts sad feelings into the minds and hearts of every human being. It is hard when there is so much pain and hurt to find the good, but I found it in the little town of Morgantown, West Virginia.

These people are the celebrities and the super heroes. They spend their lives working and helping others out without complaining. My toes unfroze at the top of the hill and I looked around I saw Gary and Lynn, husband and wife who had no prior construction work experience before volunteering with Habitat. I also met Tara, who oversaw the projects and spends her life helping others. Then there was Jim, an 81 year old man, who has been volunteering with Habitat for thirty years rain or shine. These people give hope to the world and prove that goodness still exists.

The week continued on and the temperature was rising every day. By Thursday, the last day with the Habitat leaders, the hats and scarves were replaced with new friendships. On Friday I met the woman who became my instant role model, Wendy, a young woman who used her money to buy an old school and renovate it into a wellness center for area families and the cognitively impaired. She spends her time at the run down school putting everything she has into turning it into a wonderful healthy place for her community. Her dreams are big and actions even bigger.

I wasn't sure why I signed up for the trip to West Virginia when I did, but in the small town of Morgantown, W.V., I found the role models and heroes of this time and the good in a world that focuses on the bad. These are the people who deserve the awards and honors, not because they trusted me with a power tool, but because they are the good in the world crushed with evil. All of them taught me so much on the trip and I will never forget them and all of the lessons I learned.

Elizabeth Rosinki
Class of 2011



Wendy, Mac, and Elizabeth working on the Wellness Center