

Civic Engagement in Action: *Making A Difference*

Rachel Rasmussen, Tawny Macdonald, & Sarah Teschler

▶ CLASS: ED-CIFS 330-003

▶ Instructor: Dr. Teresa England

▶ Agency for New Americans: To assist refugee families achieve durable economic self-sufficiency within the shortest possible time after their arrival in our community. To facilitate the social integration of refugees into the larger community and to encourage full participation in American life.

▶ Project Purpose: To diminish the language barriers refugees face & the hardships encountered because of culture shock.

▶ Learning goals: To better understand what refugees go through, so that as future educators we know how to accommodate their needs.

▶ Community need addressed: To ensure democracy to all of our citizens, including refugees.

Volunteering at the ANA meant helping new Americans feel welcome in a new place. It meant helping people feel capable at new things, make connections, and feel like they belong. We assisted them to become leaders of tomorrow.

By lending a helping hand to a family, we were embraced by the sharing of two totally different yet very similar cultures. They taught us, we taught them.

From the family....

"What we do without you?" – Osama

"She can teach us." –Abdirahim

"Thank you for everything!" –Amina

"Ahmed always love America., every since he was a little boy," –Tara

"Thank you. I love you so much." –family

"Can I go to college?" –Abdirakađi

"Any college, but you have to work hard." – Tawny

We made progress...

10-20-08 "Swim?" –Osama

10-27-08 "Can we go swim?" –Osama

We:

- Encouraged the use of English and provided positive feedback.
- Gave them confidence in their English.
- Practiced Fry's sight word list.
- Practiced dialogue
- Provided

transportation.

• Educated about American culture

They:

- Taught us patience.
- Taught us Arabic.
- Introduced us to new, yummy cuisines.
- Showed us how to be more humble and frugal.

Through direct experiences working with others in the community, students learn that American society is "unfinished," and that they can play a key role in narrowing the gap between our democratic ideals and the reality of daily life.



Abdirasaq's 1st Halloween in America



Abdirakađi's 1st time bowling



New friends