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Service Learning Report: Miracle on Main Street

1. The Miracle on Main Street event is organized by the City of Westminster Parks and Recreation Department. The mission of the event and other events this department holds is to raise money to contribute to the funding of the Parks and Recreation Department. The funding of the department is incredibly important, and raising the money helps to benefit everyone in the community. The money that was raised during the event helps the department to hold camps for children to go during the summer, organize events for families to attend, keep the local health and wellness center running, and keep the 14 parks clean and useful for the community.
2. The activities that were held during the Miracle on Main Street event were a 5k that was ran by families in the community, a parade through the town, a lighting of the downtown christmas tree, and many crafts and activities inside the town library. The activities supported the goal of the department which is to bring the community together and create events for the families in the city. Many families came to watch the parade and participate in the activities. The run and activities also raised money to benefit the department, so all of the goals of the organization and the particular event were achieved. The department saw the need for more community events for the large amount of children that live in the town, so they decided that a christmas event with fun activities that could involve everyone in the family was the best way to raise funding for the department.
3. When asking the director of the event how they know that the event is making a difference in the community, they said that seeing how excited the families are as they walk through the library to participate in the activities is validation that they are accomplishing their goals. The dedication of the community to participate in the run through the town and to donate money to the department shows how their events have created a sense of importance and community in the town. The funds raised at the event are incredibly beneficial to improving the parks and facilities. A visible difference that is made is the improvement and addition of facilities that all stem from the money raised at the event.
4. My time as a volunteer was spent running the many activities for children within the public library. These included christmas related arts and crafts like painting ornaments and making reindeer antlers with the children. The impact that my volunteering directly made was bringing families and the community together, and making children excited for christmas. While this volunteering activity may not seem like a large direct impact on the community, all of the activities that I helped to run are what bring the families to the

event in order to help raise money for the parks and recreation department. The impact of the event is felt later, when the money is used by the department to improve the parks.

5. The staff I met that worked or volunteered for the department were very passionate about the event and the goals of the organization. They informed me about the importance of these events and how the sense of community and relationships in the town have improved since the events began. They also told me how the department cares about giving back to their community, and how these events allow them to accomplish this. The parents that came in said that the event is something they looked forward to every year and the children loved the activities that were held. They also enjoy that the event is a way to bring the family together, while also contributing to their community parks and facilities they can later enjoy.
6. My impressions of the organization are that the staff really cares about their community and the impact that they are making. Everyone works hard to put on the event and to find volunteers who want to help the community. Before this volunteering opportunity, I did not recognize the importance of the Parks and Recreation department and how much they do for families in the city. I was impressed with their dedication to their community and how much they value keeping the city a nice place to live.
7. I would recommend this to PL volunteers who live in or around Westminster, because the effect of the volunteering activity is created for citizens of the town. I would encourage volunteers to find ways to volunteer for their own Parks and Recreation department in order to help their own community and get involved within their city. The volunteering also allows the volunteer to get to know the people in their own town and to see the effects that they can have on them.