Research exercise: Immigration and Refugee Plunge: A Social Justice Learning Living Cohort Community Project

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We thought we were going to do hands on activities
We expected to learn
We were expecting to raise awareness on immigration in our

The American Friends Service Committee is a practical expression of the

The Greek philosopher Plato wrote “The Allegory of the

We are a living learning community that:
- Engages in a process of intellectual inquiry
- Productively negotiates and creates space for critical listening and the
- Free exchange of ideas
- Holistically integrates academic, residential, and co-curricular experiences
- Deploys the particular methodologies of the Humanities disciplines,
- Specifically those associated with the study of English, Philosophy, and
- Religion
- Fosters an interdisciplinary approach to fundamental human concerns,
- E.g., what it means to be human
- Focuses on apprehending and addressing issues of Social Justice, such
- As stewardship, solidarity with those different from us, commitment to the
- Integrity and equality of all human life, and dedication to the common good
- Encourages undergraduate research that is informed by the experience of

The Building Community through Social Justice Learning and Living
Cohort is an opportunity for first-year students to get involved with
many aspects of social justice locally, regionally, and globally. One
of the greatest current challenges to our democracy is the issue of
immigration. There are several issues that confront our society and
the people wishing to immigrate to the United States. Our group
explored this issue first hand by participating in The Immigration
and Refugee Plunge, an event sponsored by the Center for Social
Concern in the spring of 2012. This plunge was designed to give
participants a better look at the process and the problems many
foreign nationals face navigating their way through the US
Immigration Service. We will be reflecting on the principles and
practices of the system; the benefits of the current system; the
negative aspects of the process; and, how maintaining the status
quo can impact immigration and our democracy.

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The Cave

Victoria Lewis
I felt the Immigration and refugee plunge was an inspiring experience for me.
It helped me to develop an understanding of the struggles immigrants are
facing. We listened to speakers who are immigrants and refugees from
Mexico, Equator, and Africa. These speakers helped me to realize how
unjust our immigration system is and how it is affecting the lives of
immigrants today. I got a first hand experience of what it is like to be an
immigrant and refugee.

Ian Fitzpatrick
What I will take away from the Immigration and Refugee plunge is simply
knowledge. I have learned how hard it is to be an undocumented immigrant
in the United States and the fear minorities have of being deported. I also
learned of the challenge of African refugees, and what they must go through
to get here in our country.

Nick White
The immigrant and refugee plunge was a great opportunity to see the
struggles immigrants face dealing with an American culture. I developed
more sympathy for immigrants after hearing a few personal stories from the
presenters. The plunge did a great job of showing what we can do to change
the problems in the United States Immigration problem.