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Student Social Work Association ALE
Southwest Metroplex Campus

 My personal development with the SSWA is still a work in progress. When I first started I was overwhelmed and intimidated by Robert’s Rules and how fast paced the environment seemed. However, with time, I began to understand that there was a method to the madness. I struggled with my social identity up until recently in this organization because, although I am normally very outgoing, I kept quiet and to myself. There was an order and way things worked and I didn’t want to throw anything out of balance. I reasoned that I would just sit back and watch during meetings so that I could properly assess what kind of group I was a part of and better understand the group dynamics. However, that began to change when I saw a different way to do things. The great thing about this particular organization is that it is full of listeners. There are no egos to be reckoned with and everyone respects one another. Once I finally got the courage to speak up, things started feeling much more comfortable for me.
 The interpersonal development I experienced was greatly influenced by my peers. I sensed outstanding leadership skills from some of the seniors as well as many of the new juniors. We have a diverse group of several different races which strengthens our efforts because we have representation from all different walks of life. The fact that we are all women was outstanding. Unlike the common stereotypes placed on women, we are able to get through meetings without talking over each other. We don’t waste time with gossip; I have never heard one member of the SSWA say anything negative about another. And the passion to serve our community can be found in each and every member. I do want to note on the age differences…they are all spread out so we have a wide variety. I noticed that the older generations wanted to take their time on things, were very patient, and wanted to be thorough, whereas the younger generations were interested in moving things along as quickly as possible, were proactive and made decisions quickly. Neither are bad qualities, they’re just something I noticed…I believe if we can combine the two, then we will have an efficient community and our meetings will be productive and concise.
 This organization is going to be great someday. It is good now though it has some kinks. I have learned that, for an organization to be successful, the leader needs to be strong. Our seniors have done a great job of leading the SSWA this semester. I believe we can only get better from here with a little bit more organization and time management. Each individual plays an important part in this organization. No one person is better than another no matter their role or status. That has been demonstrated consistently this semester; I never felt less than or unwelcome. I was forced out of my comfort zones at times but that is all a part of the learning experience and induces growth.
 This first semester has been a great experience. I look forward to pushing SSWA on to bigger things, promoting awareness, advocating, and generating more members. It is an association that deserves time and dedication from each and every member. I fully believe that we have that in the current population and the possibilities for us will be endless.