

From my participation in the Tsunami Relief Project in Professor Yap's Pols 150 class, I learned the value of organization, creativity, and civic involvement. Throughout the duration of the project my group stayed on task and worked hard to lead the group when it was a member's time to chair a certain aspect of the process. This leads to another value I learned from the project, accountability. I was responsible for Paper E, which contained information on the country to which we would donate our contributions. The idea of letting down my group by failing to complete the paper to the best of my ability drove me to work that much harder on it. Chairing this portion also made me more globally aware and appreciate how fortunate we are in the United States under normal circumstances and that a disaster of this magnitude did not strike us. It was great to be able to sell something that let others know that there was support for this cause. Advertising our product and using multiple locations could have led us to some more success. However, we were quite pleased with the success we had at selling our t-shirts.

The ultimate goal of selling t-shirts on Wescoe Beach for Tsunami Relief Day would not have been reached if it were not for the organization the group showed in each phase of the project. We met to discuss the progress of the different phases of the project and reaching our ultimate goal. The group never hesitated to contact each other with an idea or with useful information concerning any aspect of the effort. My group also collaborated well with initially deciding what country and organization to which we would donate our collections. We chose Sri Lanka because we believed that the size of their country and amount of casualties they endured would cause other fundraising efforts to overlook them. We chose Habitat for Humanity because a group member mentioned

that as an organization they were also being overlooked and still needed more funds to contribute to the relief effort.

In order to contribute to the effort, creativity was definitely an important part of the endeavor, especially in our class with so many groups trying to find a successful approach. My group's idea of selling t-shirts was brilliant in many ways. It seems that college students are always looking for more clothes and having something they can wear to show they support the cause seemed very marketable. Although there was a suggested donation of \$10, the fact that they could donate virtually any amount of money for a shirt helped us collect that much more for Habitat for Humanity. Another creative feature of our initiative was that any amount of money we raised would be doubled by the Lowe's store here in Lawrence. This helped our group morale when things our efforts did not look like they were paying off and helped us to continue trying hard knowing that we had that backing. Lastly, the creative group logo helped bring unity to the project and helped the entire class in our efforts. This was a result of XXXX's hard work, creativity, and dedication to the project.

One of the main values I learned from our participation in the project was the importance of civic involvement. The ability to see how much difference a single college class can make opened my eyes to how much can be achieved if we all work toward the same goal. I learned that when a group of our size moves in the same direction we are bound to attract the attention of others and increase civic involvement, which is important for many reasons. Civic involvement increases awareness about an issue that people do not know about or have not cared to know about. By exposing people to such issues that need attention and require action, there is hope that people respond positively. Within the

realm of civic involvement I also learned the importance of assuring legitimacy so that people feel confident in their efforts. This ultimately leads to more positive results.

My part of the project was to research Sri Lanka, the country we are donating our collections. I believe I completed that aspect of the process well and enjoyed learning about that entire region of the world. My research allowed our group's brochure to contain information and figures about the country and the tsunami's damage. By including this on the brochure, it gave people an in-depth look at the kind of relief that was going to be necessary for the recovery of the losses endured by Sri Lanka and the entire region. One of the mistakes I made with our paper was a failure to cite where my information from. This is crucial in any informative paper and is one thing I learned the importance of in this project.

Our project produced decent results of which we can be proud. The current total amount we have raised is around \$280 with the Lowe's additional contribution. Our organization and dedication allowed us to achieve the results we did. One person that was extremely dedicated in our group was XXXX. She used her talents and abilities to help design the tsunami logo as well our group's t-shirts and brochures we used to market the event and our product. I do think that as a group, we could have done a little better considering the resources we had. If we had it to do over again, I think we would put more effort into advertising the event and what we were selling. I would also want to try and sell our shirts at both Wesco and the Union. This would increase the probability of people seeing us and help raise our totals.

I think we ultimately reached our goal, which I perceived as doing our best to get the word out and sell t-shirts. We never set a monetary goal, but we did the goal we did

set. Through organization, creativity, and civic involvement we were able to sell tsunami relief t-shirts on Wescoe Beach on April 6, 2005. I also think we never lost sight of the big picture, which was to increase the awareness of ourselves and others about the disaster and the lingering need for relief it left with not just a country or region, but the world. This Tsunami Relief Project served as a reminder to the KU community and the Lawrence community that we must never forget this unfortunate event and the ongoing need of people who endure such atrocities.