



## **Hilary Young Helps Reshape Society - One Youth at a Time**

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When the word service is brought up, some students will roll their eyes, or drag their feet to the door, but Hilary Young exclaims with a smile, "I get to do my service today!" Hilary Young, a senior at the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire has chosen to fulfill her service-learning and pursue her passion of criminal justice at the Eau Claire Restorative Justice Program.

She came across this opportunity last year at the Community Action Fair, where vendors of different nonprofit organizations came in to speak with students on how they can fulfill their service-learning while perusing something in their field of interest. Young highlights the importance of picking a service-learning project you want to learn more about and something you are passionate about.

"I'm so fortunate I had the opportunity to pick something within my field of study, so I am going to take more out of this than just a 'volunteering' project."

As soon as Young was introduced to the Restorative Justice Program, she was hooked. She attributes her passion for criminal justice through her family, friends, and positively reinforced through her service-learning. The Restorative Justice Program aims not to punish juvenile delinquent adolescents, but instead, give them a second chance. Hilary has the privilege of working directly with these students once a week during three hour group-based workshops.

"Obviously not all of the students will engage in the group activity, but you can really see a difference in the kids who do take the time to listen and absorb the material."

After being better acclimated to the nature of the program, Hilary will be able to work as a mentor with an individual student 2-3 times a week.

"Sometimes these students don't come from the best backgrounds, so I would like to learn how to show them that I am very open-minded person and I would like to learn how to gain trust from many of them."

Hilary plans to surpass the 30 hour requirement to a full year commitment of service in order to further connect with the students. Her involvement in the project thus far not only has taught her valuable skills in the field she plans to go into, but also the individual impact she can have on her community.

"Working with adolescents is important because they are the main part of the upcoming community."

Hilary sums up her project with, "I feel exhausted, but at the end of the day, it's worth it and you feel more whole inside."

