

STUDENT SERVICE PROFILE

DANIELLE GORNICK

SERVICE LEARNING

Danielle became involved in her community as a high school student volunteering for the GUTS! program through the YWCA. GUTS! (Girls Using Their Strengths) is a unique community-based leadership and empowerment program designed by and for young women, ages 9 to 18. Her involvement in this program helped Danielle realize that she was eager to continue volunteering as she transitioned to UM.

Once in college, Danielle got involved with the Global Leadership Initiative (GLI) which connected her to her first service learning course: Hunger and Homelessness in America taught by Professor Daisy Rooks. Through this course Danielle was exposed to multidisciplinary perspectives on hunger and homelessness and volunteered with the Missoula Food Bank.

Danielle also participated in service learning through her Nonprofit Administration coursework, allowing her to continue to pursue her passion of empowering young girls through the GUTS! program as a group facilitator for 4th and 5th grade students. Danielle described her experience as “extremely rewarding to watch them start understanding their strengths as women and how to use them”. While volunteering for the GUTS program, a 4th grade girl came up to Danielle and said “I realized I could run just as fast as the boys, and I don’t have to call myself a tomboy if I play with the boys at recess. I am just a girl!”.

Through her service learning experiences, Danielle was able to engage in her community in a meaningful way. In her own words, Danielle says “The impact of mentoring these girls has been extremely personal to me. As a woman, I have always valued the strong feminists in my life that taught me I can do and be anything I want to”.

Danielle is proud of the work she has done and the impact she has had through her service learning experiences and she recommends it to other students who want to make a difference. “Service learning is not only a great way to get involved within the community, but the work itself is extremely rewarding. Honestly, a lot of the time it is hard to even consider volunteering as work, it’s really just about having fun and making a difference. I think a lot of students feel like certain parts of course curriculum do not pertain to the real world, but service learning definitely provides real life skills, awareness and knowledge.”

