**Building Your Temple:**

A three day training session through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes for Yukon High School Girls’ Basketball team

By Macie Snowden

When I was in high school, I never knew about the importance of hydration and eating healthy. I knew surface level information only because my coaches told me I needed to drink a lot of water to be hydrated for the game, eat a Clif Bar 45 minutes before a race to have an extra push during the final lap, or they gave me pickle juice every time I got a Charlie horse in my leg. I had to make myself study nutrition when I became lactose intolerant my senior year. There were certain things I couldn’t eat or drink anymore that had always been a part of my normal diet. Also during my senior year, I began my battle with anxiety and depression, which shifted my entire perspective on many different phases of life and being healthier overall.

That’s why I am so passionate about mental health and nutrition because if you feel good, in both aspects, you feel so much more empowered to work harder and strive for greatness. If you are mentally healthy, when you fail, it doesn’t seem as catastrophic.

With the numbers of teen suicide and obesity rapidly increasing, I knew I had to do something. As soon as Dr. Vincent began describing what the intent of this service learning project was, I quickly wrote down an outline of what I envisioned to be a three day training session. I created the “Building Your Temple” training through FCA in order to reach out to high school athletes possibly struggling with problems in three different areas: Physical health, mental health, or spiritual health. I immediately contacted my FCA sponsor and asked if my idea was plausible for the organization.

Eric, the Central Oklahoma FCA representative, was thrilled about my enthusiasm to incorporate health communication with high school athletes. He spoke with John O’dell, the Oklahoma FCA State Director the next day. After we got the green light for the project, he began to coordinate with the area coaches that would be willing to allow me to take some time with their team. That’s when I was put in contact with Coach Eric Sailer, Yukon High School Girls’ Basketball Coach. After completing FCA character coach training, I went to meet Coach Sailer and observe a few practices in order for me to introduce myself to the team before the actual training sessions in March.

This created a fantastic way to bring some encouragement to their team because they were right in the middle of playoffs. On the first day, I went with my best friend and one of the FCA interns, Hannah Davis. After practice Coach Sailer asked if we would introduce ourselves and explain who we were. I mentioned, “Hi everyone! My name is Macie Snowden and I am a junior at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond. I have been involved with FCA since I was 11 years old when I went to my first summer sports camp. I received FCA All-State as a senior in high school and now I am on the leadership team for FCA at UCO. I am so pumped to be able to come meet and hang out with all of you. I was a high school basketball player just 3 years ago, so I understand the stress of playoffs right now and the nerves that come before every game. We just want you to know that we are here for you, supporting you athletically, but also here if you just need to talk.” Hannah did the same type of introduction, and then we both shared how we met and an embarrassing sports story about ourselves. This got the team laughing as they began to become more comfortable with us. Coach Sailer mentioned to his team that if they ever need a female perspective or need to talk about something they wouldn’t want to tell their male coaches, they could come to us. After he dismissed his team, he thanked us for coming and we set up the actual training session dates.

**Context of Broad Health Problem**

The three broad health problems I addressed were obesity in the United States, the high rates of depression and anxiety in teens, and the lack of spiritual health in a confused culture. Though this seems like a lot to cover for one project, it worked out perfectly.

If these problems go unaddressed, there is the chance of this generation being uneducated and unaware of how to find solutions. Obesity can cause many different diseases like cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and many more. Also, if teens don’t know about how to combat feelings of depression and anxiety, then it could lead to self-harm or suicide. Correlated to that, if teens don’t understand where to find hope, life begins to seem hopeless. These are all extremely important aspects that many people are uncomfortable addressing. That’s why I made it my goal to talk about what teens sometimes wish someone would discuss, but many people don’t know how to bring up the topic without scaring anyone.

With these different health related problems, I used two different theories. I implemented concepts from the Health Belief Model relating to nutritional changes and I used the Social Support Theory to encourage the idea of having a strong support system to promote mental and spiritual health.

**Context of Service Learning**

Service Learning is one of the Central Six tenants here at UCO. The definition of service learning according to Fayetteville State University is “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (uncfsu.edu). According to generation.org, some benefits of service learning in school are included in the following:

1. 21st century skills: critical-thinking, problem-solving, leadership, decision-making, collaboration, and communication
2. Real-world experience connected to academic subjects.
3. Greater sense of the purpose for learning.
4. Deeper understanding of themselves and empathy and respect for others.
5. Opportunities to explore skills and interests and to network for career readiness.
6. Guided practice in taking action as socially responsible global citizens.
7. Increased self-efficacy as they address community needs.

There are ample reasons why more and more universities are implementing service learning as a portion of their academic standards. Many universities state that the reason they engage in service learning is because it connects academic curriculum with their communities in order to foster enriched learning and engagement in ethical collaborations (servicelearning.duke.edu). The point of this practice is to support academic programming that joins communities in promoting social equity and social change. In my opinion, service learning allows students to be a part of something bigger than themselves. It pushes them to go out and engage with their local community to gain new perspectives and provide assistance to those in need. Service learning teaches students values such as appreciation for cultural competency and how to be a humble leader.

**Oklahoma Fellowship of Christian Athletes**

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes is a non-profit organization that strives to see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes. Founded in 1954 by Don McClanen, FCA impacts lives across the nation and globe. The mission statement of FCA is “to present to coaches and athletes, and all whom they influence, the challenge and adventure of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, serving Him in their relationships and in the fellowship of the church” (fca.org). Alongside their vision and mission, FCA has what they call their 4 C’s of Ministry: Coaches, Campus, Camps, and Community.

I began my journey with FCA through their Camp Ministry. At 11 years old, I attended my first summer sports camp called competitors’ camp. This is where my love for athletics and competing was strengthened as well as my passion for spreading the gospel through sports. FCA seeks out coaches and athletes to take a stand for Christ on their team and equips them with the tools, resources, and support to do so. I have attended camps for 7 years, been a huddle leader for 3 years, received FCA All-State, was President of my high school FCA huddle, am on the Leadership team for UCO FCA, and because of this project, am now a new Character Coach for Oklahoma FCA.

By becoming a Character Coach, I got the opportunity to invest further in the FCA Campus Ministry. For this project, I reached out to Yukon High School Girls’ Basketball team which consists of young women ages 14-18. I was excited to have the target population of this project be young female athletes because that is a very influential stage of life. I can see now why FCA needed another character coach for this area. I saw how overwhelming it can be. FCA has so many schools they go to and represent and so many athletes to try and invest into. Their small staff can’t do it all by themselves, so that’s why they have people assigned as character coaches. I have so much more enthusiasm to work with FCA in the future! Yukon is a little far out and communication with coaches and their game schedules can just get crazy! I love being able to “pop” in to practice and feel welcomed. I like having the opportunity and platform to fervently speak about such important, but sometimes unaddressed topics, to young girls.

By completing this project and being guided by different Oklahoma FCA staff members, I was able to gain insight into the types of issues some of FCA’s “clients” face. FCA’s “clients,” or athletes, especially female athletes, struggle with recurring thoughts of not being good enough. This lie is partnered with the societal norm of working hard to get to the top and tangible things defining success. Especially body image issues amongst teenage girls. I got to step into the light of what Sarah Roberts’ job is. She is the women’s minister for Oklahoma FCA, so she sees this discontentment and anxiety expresses by young women all the time. I have a whole new respect for her as she counsels many different girls every day about the same exact thing. That can be very discouraging, but she handles herself with such grace and makes a huge impact in the lives of female athletes across the state and nation.

The training sessions were very well received and spurred my zeal for learning more about the problems addressed in order to provide more information to larger groups and provide a memorable health communication message.

After my research and training sessions, I saw how common anxiety and depression is becoming, especially among teenage girls. I would love to help FCA Women’s ministry in the future to reach out to those young women who just need to be told “it’s okay not to be okay.” The evidence I have would be Race 1:14 coming up in May. This is a female only FCA event open to any junior high or high school girl in the state of Oklahoma. I am volunteering to be a huddle leader at this event on May 5!

**Specific Health Problems, Causes and Effects**

The specific health problems I addressed were depression and anxiety amongst high school girls as well as the lack of knowledge about nutrition at a young age. We discussed how the food you eat now as an athlete can have a detrimental or progressive effect on you later in life. One of those detrimental effects would be obesity! One cause of obesity is the lack of exercise. The subjects of my project do not suffer from this because they get constant exercise from being in practice. What we discussed is the potential future causes of this problem. Their lack of exercise and continuous unhealthy eating habits will change their bodies quicker than they will be able to recognize. Once they aren’t athletes anymore, but continue eating the same way, obesity could become a threat. Obesity can cause many different health related issues like high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, etc. When I asked the team to explain why they might have unhealthy eating habits, many expressed it was because of their amount of time on the road traveling for games and school events. Also, they mentioned the lack of nutrition in the cafeteria or the lack of quality. In this nutrition training, we also discussed the importance of hydration for multiple different reasons like clearer skin, better focus, energy for muscles, etc. I gathered most of the information for the nutrition training from my previous knowledge, my sister, and concepts from the Health Belief Model.

Another specific problem my project was designed to address was the depression and anxiety rates in high school teens. According to a US nationwide study on suicide in adolescents, suicide is the third leading cause of death among US adolescents ages 15–24 (Sabo, Miller, Melnick, Farrell, and Barnes). Furthermore, anxiety disorders are the most common of all mental illnesses and affect 25 percent of teens and 30 percent of teen girls (elementsbehavioralhealth.com). However, though incredibly common, many anxiety disorders go untreated and unnoticed as they are labeled as just a “phase” among adolescents.

Depression and anxiety have so many different causes in high school females. The struggle of loneliness and body image are so prevalent in that age group. There are so many false beauty standards in our society that it has made it impossible for women to meet the body image expectations of modern day media. Striving to be accepted in this way causes many young girls to feel lonely, inadequate, and ugly, which then spirals into anxiety and depression. Also, specifically as a high school athlete, there is even more pressure to have it all together in order to win. You are constantly on watch!

The reason both these issues are so significant is because they could potentially lead to death. Both have the ability to cause a heart attack in a different way: one is physical and one is emotional. Obesity could cause the loss of life because of health limitations and an extreme side effect of depression and anxiety is suicide. Both are insanely hard to address, but worth talking about if it resonates with even just one person.

**Building Your Temple: Objectives and Outcomes**

The overall objective of this project was to educate the basketball team about the importance of forming good nutrition habits at an early age, why having a strong support system to surround themselves with is so beneficial, the knowledge of recognizing they are not alone if depression and anxiety are present in their lives, and the potential hope through sharing of the story of Christ. Honestly, though, one of my objectives was to go and encourage young girls who might not have anyone tell them that they are proud of them. I wanted to offer myself as a mentor or big sister figure if they needed that. I wanted them to know they weren’t alone! That was truly my objective.

I felt my role as a facilitator and teacher was better than I could have imagined. Because of my age and role in FCA, I was able to relate to these athletes because I’m not much older than them and I understand their sport. That alone was an immediate connection. I wanted to be there in case anyone had any questions or needed to talk after any of the sessions.

At first, I was nervous none of the girls were taking it seriously. The nutrition training was more fun and informational while the mental and spiritual health trainings were more personal. So though I was mildly discouraged after the first day, I couldn’t have asked for a better comeback on the second and third.

 On the second and third day, the girls were able to repeat things I shared the day before and started to become more responsive and transparent, though still not completely. I think they were shocked when I told them I battled depression in high school, so that allowed them to view me as more relatable rather than some random teacher who probably doesn’t understand. I knew that in order for them to open up, I was going to have to first. So after I shared my personal story about mental and spiritual health, I left my phone number with their coach and stuck around after practice on the last two days. I had some surface level conversations with about two of the girls, but no big tangible outcomes yet.

Then, I got a text message towards the end of April from one of the seniors. This was about a month after my training sessions at Yukon. She said she wanted to talk with me when I was there, but didn’t. So she got the courage to ask her coach for my number and texted me asking if I would be interested in meeting for coffee to talk through some things. I was ecstatic! We met for coffee and talked about different things she was struggling with that related to my training. She said she was wondering if I would be willing to be a mentor figure for her since I was closer to her age. That was the best outcome I could have hoped for!

I know that not every single player is going to contact me, but my overall desired expectation for the whole team form this project is that they can carry themselves with a new confidence because of the knowledge of physical health, that they are not alone, and that there is a God who loves them. No matter if I get to be a part of someone’s physical, mental, or spiritual health journey, I will be forever thankful for the information I got to share with them. It’s not always easy to speak up in front of your teammates, but I hope that something I said will click with one of the athletes in a way she will never forget.

In order for me to reach these desired outcomes I implemented activities, coordinated with outside sources, and did extensive research for this training. During the nutrition training, I knew I couldn’t stand and talk for 30 minutes and expect them to be able to really learn and understand anything. So I decided to do a nutrition trivia at the end of the training session. During the training, I asked the girls to share how many times a week on average they ate fast food and what some of their favorite fast food restaurants were. This got them talking and ready to listen as I related most of the remaining information to their sport. Also, at the end, I handed out a 3-day food tracker template for them to fill out and bring back on that Thursday. The purpose was to allow them to see what and where they are most frequently eating and how much water they consume per day.

Another activity we did was the “support panel.” During the mental health training, I discussed how vital it is to have a strong and encouraging support system around you, so I brought some of my very best friends in to answer questions asked by me and the team. I reached out to FCA leaders across the state and previous huddle leaders from summers before. They were enthused to participate! I had three different women there: Shalyn Files, Sarah Parker, and Angela Clifton. We talked about different times in our lives that would have been detrimental to our journey if we didn’t have each other there to pick us back up when we fell. All the women on the panel shared specific stories of when they faced trails and anxiety, but were able to persevere because they were being encouraged by their support system. The team seemed very intrigued by this activity, especially when we opened the floor up for questions. This allowed them to hear from other athletes across the state instead of hearing me teach again. To end that day, I asked for three volunteers. Each of the volunteers had to pick a teammate and verbally compliment them in front of the team. I challenged them to pick something about their teammate that everyone else might not notice. You could see the joy in the eyes of the girls who were being complimented as well as the girls who were getting to give the compliments.

Lastly, on the third day when I discussed spiritual health, I facilitated and activity called “stand up if.” I started off with silly questions like, “stand up if basketball is your favorite sport” or “stand up if you ate cereal for breakfast this morning.” Once we all got some laughs out, I moved on to more personal questions. One I asked was “stand up if you have ever wanted to change something about yourself.” Most everyone on the team stood up. Then I asked, “Stand up if you have ever struggled with body image issues.” For this question, about half of the team stood up. I continued to ask questions that became more and more specific, but surprisingly there was never only one girl standing. After each question I would tell the girls to look around and see the teammates who were standing with them.

This activity was incredible. You could see the relief as these girls truly started to understand that they weren’t alone. I hope this activity specifically could be a way for their team to grow closer off the court as well as on it.

None of these experiences would have been as impactful without detailed research and data collection. The need for the data I gathered was very prevalent. On day 1 of my training when we discussed the importance of eating healthy and hydration, I shared research I had gathered and different nutritional information I had learned from textbooks as well as interviews with trainers and coaches. During the mental health training, I shared statistics of teens with anxiety and depression to better relate the message of “you’re not alone.” This was important because it showed just how many people actually battle this. 25% of teens have struggled with anxiety or depression from 13-18 years old. This number took the girls by surprise according to their facial expressions. The data I collected for the spiritual training was scriptural references. I paralleled the verses used to teach about the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18) with other common passages throughout the bible about hope and trust (Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9-10, Romans 10:13, 1 Peter 5:6-9).

Referring back to Health Communication, the research for health theories was equally as important as the statistics shared for each issue. On training day 1, I used the Health Belief Model to describe the perceived susceptibility, perceived risk, perceived barriers and perceived benefits of eating healthy and staying hydrated, or the lack thereof. On the second day of training we discussed depression and anxiety in teens. As mentioned earlier, I related this mental health issue to the social support theory by bringing in some of my best friends through FCA to talk about the significance of having a strong support system around you. This demonstration brought the social support theory to life.

Overall, the training sessions were very successful. However, there were a few minor difficulties, but nothing that took away from the impact of each message. The only obstacle I really ran into was on the first day. I was going to show a video I made to demonstrate the Health Belief Model in action, but it was only online on my prezi, and the school didn’t have a wifi I could log onto. So I just explained it instead. Also, it wasn’t a huge obstacle, but it was difficult to communicate with Coach Sailer at times because he was in the middle of playoffs, then after playoffs was just exhausted. But we finally got a date nailed down and he was extremely kind and helpful!

Through the setbacks, the feedback I received was well worth all the hard work. Eric Randall, the Central Oklahoma FCA Representative, was very pleased with my work. He mentioned how professional but relaxed my trainings were. He said he appreciated the way I opened up to the girls about my personal story in order to encourage discussion from them. Also, Coach Sailer seemed very appreciative of the opportunity to allow his team to grow closer together. He hopes this training will spark a fresh team chemistry and accountability.

**Personal Reflection**

It’s crazy to think that a school project could be so impactful, but that is how I would describe my experience. My attitude beginning this training was very zealous, but cautious. I didn’t want to get my hopes up if it wasn’t received as well as I wanted. I knew that playoff season was approaching, so I was prepared for difficult communication. I wasn’t sure how the team would respond because they had to sit through this training right after practice on the gym floor. I honestly expected sarcastic attitudes from some of the girls, but they were very respectful and began to be transparent on the last day. I think they really enjoyed it. Coach Sailer was actually easy to get ahold of and prompt with his responses.

One thing I work hard to incorporate in many personal and professional aspects is the quality of innovation. I expected the unexpected, therefore, when things didn’t follow my mental script of responses, I had a back-up plan. On the last day of training, I was really hoping for more discussion, but I could tell the girls were apprehensive to share anything because they were scared of what their teammates would say, just as I was when I was their age. Instead of just discussion questions, I decided to call an audible and play the “stand up if” game. This allowed them to respond much more without having to really say anything. Once we got to some of the more serious questions, one of the seniors stood up, demonstrating great leadership. And as expected, her teammates followed. I didn’t anticipate playing that game, but it was the best ending to my project. Then at the end, I got to circle up with the team and pray over them. This allowed me to connect with the girls on a deeper level, which might not have happened if I hadn’t been flexible.

Though this act was very impactful, it still broke my heart to see that so many of these girls feel like they have to look the right way to fit in within the realm of high school in order to be accepted. Many of them admitted that they struggle with body image issues and anxiety. This comes from the social stigma of high school and the fight for status and acceptance. People sometimes label this age of females as overly dramatic, but what they don’t realize is that these issues are scarily real and often go unaddressed.

Teen girls have so many different ideals, opinions, and expectations being thrown at them from all different angles. They are trying to fit in while trying to figure out who they really are. They are working hard in the classroom and trying to fulfill the social norm of going to college, which causes even more stress and anxiety about being accepted. I have such a passion for telling girls this age that it’s okay not to be okay sometimes. Showing emotion is not displaying weakness. Don’t settle for anything less than the best and don’t let boys take advantage of you because society says it’s normal. Make standards, set goals, and strive for greatness, but be okay when you fall because you learned something. “Failure” in these aspects of life are what cause unhealthy physical, mental, and spiritual habits, so I want to show them that it’s okay to fail! Believe me I do it all the time and I turned out decent…I think!

This activity was a result of flexibility in action, since it was not a part of my original outline. Flexibility is one of the main characteristics I realized I needed to have for this project; flexibility with communication, presentation skills, and external factors I couldn’t control. For example, during the spiritual health session on the third day, we began discussing more personal experiences of life. This was the day where all the other coaches left so we could have “girl talk.” One of the players from the boys’ team forgot his bag in the stands, which is where all the girls were sitting. He was obviously unaware of what was going on and I could tell he just wanted attention because he came in right in the middle of everyone and got his bag, but then came back in about 1 minute later because he forgot his shoes. I might also mention he interrupted both times with his shirt off. This definitely negatively affected the focus and mood of the room, but the girls quickly bounced back to paying attention to the lesson. I was really annoyed at that kid, but tried not to show it and just focus on what I was there for. The girls didn’t need to see me be sarcastic or rude while I’m teaching about loving people and being patient. That’s why I chose to just ignore it and focus on the importance of the message I was trying to share. I had to be flexible and find a way to regain the attention of the room and respond properly to an unexpected distraction.

Another time I had to use flexibility was during the nutrition training on the first day. I had planned on playing a video that helped describe the concepts of the Health Belief Model as they pertain to real life scenarios. My presentation was online and I couldn’t connect to a wifi source at the high school. In order to keep the attention and energetic atmosphere, I decided to just act it out parts of the video and describe what it looked like. This got the girls laughing, comfortable, and allowed me to deliver the information in an understandable way.

Looking back on this specific situation, I don’t think I would have been able to handle that situation as well if I hadn’t done adequate research on the health communication concepts I was teaching about. Because of my research, I was able to not only learn the information but understand the ideas in order to teach them to others. My understanding of the Health Belief Model and Social support theory gave me the confidence to be passionate. I knew what I was talking about and prepared a way to break it down into a very simple form as well as answer unexpected questions. I think knowing how the Health Belief Model was set up allowed me to relate it efficiently to the circumstances of high school athletes, instead of providing examples that wouldn’t apply to the team. I began to observe the concepts of the model come to life in the lives of those student athletes which brought it off paper for me and put it into real world perspective. I saw the perceived barriers of eating healthy were lack of time and social seclusion from some of the athletes. If your whole team wants to go to McDonalds, you’re not going to cause a scene because you want subway instead. The understanding of the social support theory allowed me to do the same; understand what mental challenges high school athletes might be facing and appropriately relate the concepts of that theory. I saw how most of them wanted to impress each other so much instead of just being transparent and honest about things they struggle with. It’s completely understandable because as I look back at my high school days compared to where I am now, I didn’t appreciate transparency then like I do now.

There were a few things I would change about the project and the presentation if I were to do it again.

**1. More time for presentations**

**2. More secluded location that could provide less distractions and a quieter scene**

**3. More follow up communication with the coaches and players**

If I were to have more resources, I would hold the trainings with a much more intentional time frame and location instead of just sit where you are right after practice. This would allow me to plan in advance for the use of audio and visual elements. Also, I would have loved to meet with the team captains to encourage student leadership as well. Another thing I would improve would be to have more athletes on the panel and have questions specific to their story prepared for them instead of general information questions.

Overall, I would summarize my performance as very successful. I don’t define success by quantity, but quality. Therefore, I can classify my outcomes as successful because I got the chance to possibly speak encouragement into a young girl’s life. The team seemed very responsive, and when asked to share something they learned the day before, they were all able to quote something from the handout or something I mentioned. As far as my part, I made sure I was extremely prepared for each training session by making an outline, creating handouts, and rehearsing to myself and my roommates. I would rate my preparation highly, but the time allotted could definitely be improved. Many of the girls had to get to work, so I only had about 30 minutes each day. The last day, it was perfect timing, but for the nutrition training especially I could have used about 20 more minutes.

I had a few hypotheses going into this project and was able to confirm an idea I had about the girls being concerned about what their teammates thought of them. When they were all together with their coach, they acted one way. When they were all together without their coach, they acted more comfortable. But when they were one on one with me, they were even more open about things which seemed uncomfortable to admit in front of their team. One of the seniors stepped up on the third day during the “stand up if” exercise to break the silence and awkwardness and it opened the floodgates of transparency with the other girls as well. She showed amazing leadership and is also very fun to be around. I could tell her teammates respected her as their captain and looked up to her in many ways.

There were a few negative influences of apathy while I was teaching, but only from about three of the girls. Once one started talking, all three allowed it to become a norm, but the other girls remained attentive, so overall I was very pleased. I just ignored it most of the time because I didn’t feel I had the authority to really tell them to stop talking. It kind of worked itself out in the end because some of their teammates told them to be quiet.

On a personal level, I definitely rediscovered my love for basketball, but also the anxiety I felt as a high school athlete. As I spoke to the Yukon girls’ basketball team, I saw the joy in their faces when coach said, “Alright bring it in.” I noticed their anticipation to go to taco bell after practice. I watched them run the same drills I did in high school. I observed their team chemistry and their bond even though they may be dying from sprints. I played around a little with them and enjoyed shooting again. However, I also saw some of the girls release the feeling of loneliness when I mentioned I struggled with depression. It’s as if they were relieved to finally find proof that they weren’t alone.

This project also reignited my thinking. I had forgotten how much I love getting to share my story and pour into younger girls. I had forgotten how much I love sharing nutrition information with people and seeing the look on their faces when it all finally makes sense. And I had forgotten how treasured my best friends are to me until they spoke on the panel. Sometimes I get so caught up in the busyness of life and college that I lose sight of my priorities and passions, but this project reminded me of the “why” behind the “what” that I do.

Though the semester is ending, this project is not. I want to stay connected with the team as best I can. I don’t want this to just be a one-time training presentation. I want to use it as a way to pour into the lives of young girls by connecting with them through my struggles and upbeat personality. I would love to be a role model or mentor for them. I am excited that I have gotten the chance to already see some of those goals come to fruition. As I mentioned before, I met with one of the seniors to talk through some anxiety she is having about senior year, college, and answer other spiritual questions she had. I am eager to watch this relationship and hopefully many more grow stronger and become mutually beneficial.

I genuinely hope FCA is able to benefit from the trainings I got to do. I also hope they see an opportunity for me to serve more with them as a new character coach!

**Resources:**

1. <http://www.generationon.org/educators/lessons-resources/why-service-learning>
2. <http://www.uncfsu.edu/civic-engagement/service-learning/definition-of-service-learning>
3. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/overweight-obesity>
4. <http://naturalsociety.com/dehydration-making-sick-fat/>
5. <https://www.elementsbehavioralhealth.com/featured/teenagers-are-feeling-more-anxious-than-ever/>
6. Personal Interview. Madison Snowden. February 10, 2017.
7. <http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2015/august/nyu-study-examines-top-high-school-students-stress-and-coping-mechanisms.html>
8. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2563797/>
9. <https://wellness.ucr.edu/spiritual_wellness.html>
10. <http://www.fca.org/>
11. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/health-communication/>
12. <http://www.infosihat.gov.my/infosihat/artikelHP/bahanrujukan/HE_DAN_TEORI/DOC/Health%20Belief%20Model.doctriggers>
13. <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=cT_qCAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA3&dq=social+support+theory&ots=reSKskJ-fW&sig=cddRthjQ0bIn22BhK4FxeEAlA-4#v=onepage&q=social%20support%20theory&f=false>
14. <http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/30281715/critical-reflection.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1488260469&Signature=hs3K1XOaTxhYGKeUAvyOFNtnIfA%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DHow_critical_reflection_triggers_transfo.pdf>
15. <http://www2.uvawise.edu/pww8y/Supplement/OCSup/00%20Readings%20OC/101%20Goldhaber%20OrgCommo%20WhatIsOrgCom.pdf>