

Trenton Sanchez

I chose the South Plains Food Bank for my community service. This location was started in 1983. They are a private, non-profit, organization that supplies stock of food, typically basic provisions and nonperishable items, free of charge to those in need. Funding is received from monetary donations as well as donations from grocery stores and local businesses. The application process for those who need this service is simple. It can either be done on line or in person. The facility operates with paid staff as well as multiple volunteers. We started out day with a quick orientation of rules and safety. We sorted boxes of oranges which sounds simple however, we sorted enough oranges to distribute to 480 people. After sorting, which took a couple of hours, the boxes were taken to the back to be "smashed" and recycled. We helped the volunteer load hundreds of boxes into the machine to be smashed. One of the volunteers we worked with told us that she had taken care of her elderly father for eight years then wanted to enter back into the work force when he passed. She had a difficult time finding work and was told she needed to find something to get her used to working and being around the public again. The food bank was recommended and she has been there for 4 years. She has been offered a paid staff position but declined and continues to volunteer.

The work we did was physical and rewarding at the same time. I feel like we all walked away with a different perspective about community awareness and the need to give back. It is wonderful that this service is available and free of charge to the people that need it. Just a few hours of my day helped to ensure that the economically challenged and the elderly would receive food and not go hungry. We get wrapped up in the day to day, or at least I do, and forget there are people out there who have fallen on hard times and need help. Now that I am registered to volunteer I hope to return and volunteer again. I have the utmost respect for the staff and volunteers that work and donate their time on a daily basis.

