

### **The Dwelling Place**

This semester, we are instructed to do a group project called the “Legacy Project.” This entails a group of 4-5 nursing students getting together to find a local organization that we can serve to better understand our community. My group decided to choose “The Dwelling Place.” The Dwelling Place is an organization that works to assist those in need in our community. The organization is held in the basement of a church and consists of a kitchen, lounge room, quiet room, showers, laundry, and storage rooms used to hang clothes. On Mondays and Fridays, they offer hot meals and services from 10am-3pm. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, they offer sack lunches. A person in need may arrive to The Dwelling Place, fill out a slip requesting items they may need (hygiene products, OTC medication, cleaning supplies, clothing items), put their name down for a shower, sign up for laundry services, and enjoy some TV while waiting for the volunteers to finish preparing lunch. The Dwelling Place operates on donations and volunteers only. They wish to offer more hours and days to serve the community but require more volunteers to do so.

One of my classmates had attended this church and heard about The Dwelling Place. We chose this organization because we felt a lack of knowledge on its services and felt the need to spread its awareness.

Our group consisted of 4 nursing students. On separate days, 2 of us would attend The Dwelling Place for a total of 8 hours. During our service hours at The Dwelling Place, we spent time going through donations and separating them into men’s clothes, women’s clothes, children’s clothes, shoes, blankets, gloves, etc. We also spent time going through their inventory by organizing hygiene products, checking expiration dates on food, putting together the items requested by an individual in need, and operating the front desk.

Before this project, I was unaware this organization existed in our community. In knowing about it, I can now spread awareness to encourage those who can to donate and inform those in need where they can find a comforting place to enjoy a meal and get items for free.

The individuals served at The Dwelling Place are those who lack resources in their day-to-day life. Some of them are homeless, some struggle with affording hygiene products, some live in their cars and have no access to running water, and some struggled with mental health disorders. During my time at The Dwelling Place, I got to converse with several individuals there and listen to their stories. This helped me overcome the bias I held previously about homelessness and substance abuse. The individuals I spoke with had been raised from poverty, no living family or friends, or had become disable from the war and couldn’t keep a job. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at The Dwelling Place and encourage Lakeview College of Nursing to promote the organization to their students and staff for a place of donations and service hours.