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### Baltimore Trip

A few weeks ago, I was fortunate enough to travel with J-Teen to the city of Baltimore. I had only been to Baltimore a few times, mostly when I was younger. Although I had been before, this trip gave me a different perspective of the city, aside from the one I had saw. As we arrived at our first stop, Paul's Place I was shocked how rundown the neighborhood was. As we proceeded to get a tour of Paul's Place I started to really get a feeling for the real issue of homelessness in Baltimore. The nice women that gave us the tour explained how Paul's Place does more than your average soup kitchen, but it provides their members with all the necessary tools to turn their lives around, and get off the streets. What was amazing to me was, Paul's Place does so much, but runs on a relatively low budget. This helped me understand how important it is for people to give any money that they can to an organization like this because the more money they have the more people they can help. The women who run Paul's Place told us a story about how they acquired a small abandoned row house of maybe 1,000 square feet, and were able to use the space to employ two full time social workers. It shows how much they can do with such little space. Next we travelled to a slightly nicer area of Baltimore to a place called living classroom. Living classroom is a facility that runs afterschool programs for kids that may not have a place to go after school. They do everything from homework help, to dance, to basketball. Jteen had brought with us tons of school supplies to donate to these kids, and then we packed them each a goody bag. Once I was able to see the kids it made the work of packing I had just done feel so rewarding because I could see just how beneficial that was going to be for the kids. We had a very fun time with kids as we played sports with them and chatted with them. It was really rewarding to see the smiles on their faces. The kids were adorable and sweet and didn't want us to leave and we didn't want to leave. We then concluded our trip doing physical labor on a "farm" where we learned about their mission to bring healthy food to kids in food deserts. I am glad I was able to experience the needs of other communities such as Baltimore's away from home. It made me realize that there is so much work that has to be done in both of our communities and all around the world.