

All throughout America, there is poverty. Yes, there is poverty right in our backyard of Lower Westchester, but with J-teen leadership, I took a trip and explored the poverty present in the city of brotherly love: Philadelphia.

Firstly, the school systems in Philadelphia are quite poor, and cannot afford many supplies and staff that they need. Realizing the poverty in the school systems, the Boys and Girls club was opened. The Boys and Girls club provides afterschool activities for children in impoverished areas of Philly. When we went to the boys and girls club, we helped them clean and organize their materials, in order that they are able to provide a clean learning environment for their students. This experience taught me to be more thankful for where I live, and the fact that I have the ability to participate in any afterschool activities I want.

Next, we went to Our Closet, which provides clothing to the poor people in Philadelphia. We helped them pack and sort clothing in order that it can be distributed to people who don't have the money for clothes. What struck me about Our Closet is that when we were leaving, the employee there said that we had just done two weeks of work over the course of about two hours. Her saying that made me feel very useful.

Lastly, we went to the Jewish Relief Agency (JRA), which packs and delivers food to people who either can't afford or are unable to make food. We spent a few hours there packaging food to be delivered, but this did not affect me as much as what we did next. After we packed the food, we got on the bus and went to deliver the food that we had just packed to people in need of it. They were very grateful, though they did not speak much English. I enjoyed this part of the trip very much because it I felt as though I was having a direct impact on someone for the better.

Through my experiences in Philadelphia, I learned about the poverty present in Philadelphia, and more importantly that there are organizations to help combat it. This mentality of combating the poverty with support should be brought back to our local neighborhoods, in order that we can establish better lives for those in need.