

## **Christy Grossman**

From the first day of orientation, I knew ELI was going to be a special class, I mean how many classes have a whole day devoted to orientation? During that day I met many interesting people who I had a lot in common with. During these mounts, I have only learned more about these people and become closer to them. The atmosphere in this class is very friendly and it seems like I know people (and there names) in this class better than a lot of classes have been in. beside the special atmosphere another important aspect of the class is, each week we studied a different topic. For example the first week is learning your leadership style. Now before ELI I have been briefly introduced to this type of thing and thought nothing of it because it did not apply to me. However when Elisabeth started talking, it was like she was describing me. That is what all these session do they take something and apply it to your life, they teach you things that you can use each and every day. Another thing about these sessions is that they are often interactive, it is not a lecture, sometimes a game, sometimes just a discussion of the group and even if they speaker talks most of the time, he or she involves the audience. That is what makes ELI so great, it is a learning process that you actively participate in, the teacher are there to guide you, as Elisabeth told us the first day, it is your (our) class. There are also many special events including our group project, our individual leadership projects and the presentations.

My leadership project, I finally decided (I had a lot of trouble getting to a project that would work) to socialize an unsolicited cat at the Jessamine humane society. His name is tigger and he comes form an abuse situation. However before I decided on taking care of him I had to come "down form the clouds" and find a project that would work.

You see I'm a INFP this is my leadership style and these people tend to be daydreamer and think big. Well think big I did, first I wanted to design an education program with the Cincinnati zoo for handicapped children or elderly. Well there was a problem with this Cincinnati is two hours away from where I live, that is a four hour drive back and forth and I couldn't do a project over the phone. Next I tried to do a buddy system which may have worked if I knew how to do one. Anyway I finally decided to work with the Jessamine humane society which I have worked with before. Through this I have learned about myself and my leadership style, some of my weaknesses are and will continue to learn more about the shelter and animals I love. Another thing I am sure this project has done is allow me to mature and grow, in a way I don't think I can describe and while it is not a big project, it will affect the life of one maybe two little cats. In the future I will use this experience to improve projects and avoid problems in the future. I will put more thought and planning into my projects, in order to improve and catch mistakes, this being one of my main problems in this project .

Another thing ELI did that stands out to me is our group project, I really enjoyed it, we went out to the salvation army and worked for a day, there I cleaned and did yard work. Other kids also sorted clothes, prepared food and did more cleaning. While there I also meet a woman and her little girl, they were walking back and forth in front of where we were and the little girl said hello every time she passes after I said hello the first time. It has also made me think every time I see someone on the street, do they have a home. It was a wonderful experience and I hope I can get back to volunteer again,

Another thing we did was the actual presentations; I learned so much just by listening to my classmates. For example I learned more about the recycling program at UK from Jenny's (I think that is one reason kids don't participate, they don't know anything) and have ever intention of visiting that web site she gave. Other results from these presentations may see me participating in the various causes, knowing where to find information and/ or just being informed about the situation. Another thing about the presentations, I wish we had video taped them, then not only would we be about to see how we did but also future ELI could learn and even use things from our project and presentations. Another positive thing, if our presentations were on videotape is that people within the community could see the presentations and learn things, many were on issues (such as alcohol, homelessness and alternatives to abortion) and community service. I think if more people saw them, it would have a positive effect not only for the people but for the community.

In conclusion, I have really enjoyed ELI and hate to see it come to an end. Oh, I almost forgot to mention the mentor groups they're great. Each one is different and special depending on who is in them.

Next week we are going to have a ropes course (whatever it is) it sounds like fun, plus we get to go outside, if it is pretty, if it is not we may have a problem, but I am looking forward to it. Also I have enjoyed meeting every one and making all these new friends. I have also enjoyed the projects and the learning and I hope you will too.