

Following are some reflections by the program's faculty:

My Most Memorable Moment

My most memorable moment during our four weeks journey with a fabulous group of 26 under-graduate (four youngsters), engineers (almost all of them including the ladies!), college professors, and Ph.Ds ranging in age from 20-64 years old, was when Mario, the oldest of the group, came and sat next to me during our Farewell Dinner at "On the Border" in Princeton and politely asked if he could speak to me. Of course, I said. He then proceeded to tell me:

"Miss Julie, when I left Mexico to come to study at Mercer I had no idea what to expect or how the program would be. However, after the first week, I knew I made the right choice! Now as we celebrate the end of our journey, as you call it, I must say that the program exceeded my expectations. I am amazed at how well-coordinated the classes were and how the four professors worked together in unison to give us the best college experience possible. I have learned so much and feel so much more comfortable speaking English in public that I cannot wait to show off to my family! I know I still have to continue practicing my English and focus, as you told us, on my fluency and fluidity. I only wish that I could come back sometime soon and thank you and everyone in the Proyecto 100K team for making this journey a most successful and memorable one for all of us! I am sure my classmates agree with me in saying: WE WILL MISS ALL OF YOU AT MERCER!!!"

This last sentence brought tears to both of us at which point the rest of the group (who have heard it) chimed in and the hugs and more tears continued...

I hope we facilitate this program again and I can't wait to participate in it!

Prof. Maria Julie Lora-Ruiz, M.S. (ESL Instructor)

The anecdote that comes to mind is probably not appropriate for any newsletter! (It has something to do with the translation of the word atrophy.) Nonetheless, I had a wonderful experience with this project! As an adjunct at Mercer, I was equally honored and apprehensive to take part, but once I met the team and realized how wonderfully the selected courses fit together, I couldn't resist. As the days unfolded and the creative juices flowed I firmly agree that we were doing something great here that will change us all forever.

Signed Proud Team Proyecto 100K Team Member,

Prof. Jackie Franz, (HPE 110 Instructor)

One of my most memorable experiences with our visitors from Mexico arose when I asked a question about the class' impression of Americans prior to their visit, and how reading widely distributed magazines such as US, Newsweek and People influenced their perception of the American people. Practically each person's impression of American life was, that generally speaking, Americans are driven by the pursuit of money; and that people in America think it is the greatest country on earth. Our Mexican guests expected to encounter Americans who were brash (like Donald Trump), impolite, lacking empathy and hyper-competitive. However, after meeting a number of people of different ethnicities and nationalities while staying along the NJ Route 1 Corridor, and while touring Princeton, Philadelphia and NYC, they discovered much to their amazement, that their pre-judgments were incorrect and inaccurate. Their encounters with "everyday people " based on their personal experiences were profound and transformative. Many of our Mexican guests felt that their brief four-week stay had been professionally beneficial and invaluable. They expressed their positive impressions about Americans both in speech as well as in writing, although their use of English to express themselves was rather challenging. Their study at Mercer kindled an excitement and they were unanimous in their enthusiasm to share their positive experience with their countrymen. In their observation of Mercer as an educational institution they raved about how open and helpful the members of the College were; and commented about how passionate and committed the teachers were in their classrooms.

At the end of the four weeks, it is my impression that rather than seeing Americans monolithically, our Mexican guests have a more nuanced impression of the American people. The experiences and interactions they had on the East Coast allowed them to view American Culture more like that of a salad bowl and less like a melting pot.

Prof. Alwyn Haywood (CMN 111)