

Erica's Story

A summer at Mend can make a big difference.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 states, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

From the very first day at Mend, I saw this verse played out in Mend as whole but also in the individuals at Mend. Volunteering taught me the power of prayer. Every morning starts with group prayer, where we all huddle together and share our prayer requests. Then going around the circle prayers of thankfulness, prayers for others, and prayers of desperation are melted together in a sweet aroma to the Father. All the volunteers and staff at Mend have an instinct response to pray for everything. Out of wipes? Pray. Finish a phone call? Pray. Frustrated? Rejoice in prayer. I learned to make prayer my first response to anything in life. Pray before and pray after and pray during interactions. This valuable lesson has changed my approach to life. It has caused me to slow down and pray. I hope this lesson is a reminder throughout the rest of my life.

When someone asks me about me Mend, I catch myself speechless for a second because the overwhelming good I have seen here these past few months. I've seen individuals building each other up every single day, selflessly caring for and about coworkers, volunteers, clients, and donors. I've seen prayers that have moved mountains. I've seen an abundance of heartwarming love for every client that walks through those double glass doors or knocks the white pane of the education department, but that same love stems from an overarching love for God that is the conductor behind the sweet symphony of Mend volunteers and employees.

Whatever your current association or desired connection with Mend is, the guarantee is that any time spent with Mend is time God will use to mend your own heart in one way or another.

If I could give one piece of advice to future volunteers, it would be to pray on your way into volunteering. Pray for your heart that is would be soft, compassionate, and kind. Pray for the interactions you'll have with clients, staff, and other volunteers alike that your ears would be quick to listen and your mind slow to judge. Pray over the clients that they would feel loved and know truth, that they would find the resources needed to break a cycle and be godly parents. Lastly and importantly, thank God for the opportunity to volunteer. What a rich blessing!