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Day 10: Social Justice

Greenest Challenge

Challenges:

When you look across your campus and your community, do you observe any social injustices?

It may be something you don't know how to address, a concept you want to further explore, or an issue that resonates with you at this moment in time — whether it impacts, targets or relates to you directly or indirectly. (We all need allies!) Whatever you are thinking about, share thoughts and observations. Choose up to three social injustices you observe on your campus or in your community. Write about the following for each:

1. **Unequal school district zones:** The K-12 school district zones in Lawrence make an unequal dividing line that inhibits students of a lower economic status to enjoy new and improved technologies. There are 2 highschools in my city where one is in a bad part of town and has a lot of out-of-date technology. The other one is in a nice part of town that is extremely new and uses brand new technology. The dividing line that determines which students go to which highschool are extremely unfair. Even though some kids that live in a bad neighborhood are closer to the school with better technology, they are sent to the highschool with out-of-date technology.
 - a. Tell us who and what it impacts, and why that matters to you here and now.
 - i. The students who live in poorer communities in my city are sent to a school that sees them with no potential and are, therefore, not given good technology to use. This is important to me because I grew up below the poverty line, but I was given access to a nice school and good technology which got me into college. The future of these students can be determined simply by which high school they go to.
 - b. How you might become engaged and active around these issues? What is already happening – is there a group, club or nonprofit addressing it?
 - i. There is a local group of highschool students and parents that have talked about taking up a new vote on school district lines and equal technology access.
 - c. Reflect on how these issues in your local community or campus link to injustices happening globally.
 - i. This type of injustice happens everywhere. Racial and economic injustice is seen in most countries of the world and although Lawrence is trying hard to fix the issue, there are several places that are leaving the problem as is.

2. **Unfair advantages to college students who play sports:** College men and women who are on sports teams have an unfair advantage when it comes to breaking the law. They are often let off the hook for MIC's, bar fights, and even sexual harassment and assault.
 - a. Tell us who and what it impacts, and why that matters to you here and now.
 - i. College students that play in campus sports are seen as superior to students who don't. This is an issue because when it comes to the legal system, a sports player is more likely to get minor charges if any than an average college student. This gives these players an ego boost and creates oppression to those not on a team.
 - b. How you might become engaged and active around these issues? What is already happening – is there a group, club or nonprofit addressing it?
 - i. There is a sexual assault and prevention course that is required for ALL students to take at the beginning of every year, but this does not fix the fact that people on sports teams (usually men) are not given any charges for their wrongdoings.
 - c. Reflect on how these issues in your local community or campus link to injustices happening globally.
 - i. This can be seen everywhere. It's in the news and on social media. People who are famous or play sports are way too often forgiven for their unlawful actions and it needs to stop.
3. **Location of the city's community shelter:** The community shelter in Lawrence, KS is placed too far out of town to reasonably walk anywhere including a grocery store and is placed next to the county jail with only one bus route that takes the community members too and from the shelter.
 - a. Tell us who and what it impacts, and why that matters to you here and now.
 - i. The people who need this community shelter are sleeping downtown on the sidewalks rather than on a mattress in a building because they are too far away to get there. This issue matters to me because it's hard to see people struggling because they have no choice and the city they live in put them there.
 - b. How you might become engaged and active around these issues? What is already happening – is there a group, club or nonprofit addressing it?
 - i. About once a week I see people that use the community shelter protesting at city hall to fight for a more accessible community shelter. I'm not sure if there are any groups or clubs in town that fight for this, but there needs to be. I'm planning on protesting with them when I have a clear day from homework in order to learn more.
 - c. Reflect on how these issues in your local community or campus link to injustices happening globally.

- i. Accessibility is a huge issue in America and by not allowing people of the lowest economic status to have their basic needs met because of accessibility, America is forcing people to stay in that position. This can be seen with Flint, Michigan. When the water crisis happened, people who could afford to leave or had access to leave, left. People who could not afford leave were forced to live with contaminated water.