

## ROOTS Impact

The good thing about the ROOTS class is that it has allowed for me to research ancestors that even my dad doesn't know fully about. For example, the birthplace and birthdate of my great grandparents and beyond. Also, the experience of finding a document that he has never seen has really put the effort of this project into perspective.

My grandmother on my paternal side was long dead by the time I was born so I never met her. However, when she died in 1984 only a few of my uncles were present. This meant that when I found her death certificate my dad was ecstatic. It was the first time he had seen this document, imagine that! It had been about 30 years!

So this project has really impacted me personally because I enjoy seeing my family's reactions to certain documents I have found, but also my own reactions. I am also very thankful for all the techniques that the mentors and other specialists have shared with us. This has been very helpful for all kinds of research on a variety of topics. So yeah, good stuff.

How has the ROOTS class impacted my life? A better question would be, how has the ROOTS project impacted the lives of the students involved? Or how can the ROOTS project impact the lives of students all around the United States? I strongly feel that this project could and has shown evidence of having a positive impact on both students and mentors alike. The huge benefit of participating in this class is that we get to interact and learn from experienced mentors that do this genealogy research for a living. The impact that the research techniques we learned have helped a lot of us realize that when doing searches online, there are a plethora of different sources that can be used. This means that when you are trying to figure out something and want to get some legit sources and sites, you don't just go to GOOGLE! I realized how thankful I am for this opportunity to participate in this kind of program that is one of the first of its type. I have no doubt that if applied to other states across the nation; this ROOTS program could really produce some encouraging results.

I love finding something that makes me excited and brings a smile to my dad's face. I know other kids could use the positive support of their community like we have already in our ROOTS program.

### 1. Luis Ordonez

The ROOTS program has done quite a few positive things in my life. I had no idea what to expect when going into the program and honestly, it surprised me. I learned so much about my family and my history and to watch it unfold was incredible. I also realized how much more the Internet can be utilized.

I used to think that the only way to find answers was by websites such as Google and Bing and now I know so much more. ROOTS showed me how much I like genealogy and it will continue to be a hobby for me for the rest of my life!

### 2. Bridgette Sullivan

What ROOTS has taught me is that now I don't believe things I see at first. I now search and look deeper into the subject. I also found out that my dad's side of the family was very secretive about their past and things they did. Both my mom and dad's family maintained ( ) between Nayant and Jalisco. My parents are the first generation to be living in the United States.

### **3. Gabby Garcia**

The process is the knowledge we gained throughout this experience. The amount of time that both the mentors and students have put into this project has been paramount to the success of their experiment and is used as a basis to explore positive results in the data gathered. When looking at the hard facts of this project's results you will see some students with a family ancestry chart that looks outstanding. You will probably see a few that will only include their parents, grandparents, and other family within those generations. That is ok because it is about the process.

Remember that is what we base our knowledge on. The road taken is the story of our research and how we interacted with the community members and others in order to expand our imagination in the realm of studying and researching.

The vital ties and methods given to us by various mentors will forever impact us from now on. The research we learned will be used to guide us in future projects and adventures.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> entry for LO**

So far, I have learned that knowing your ancestors is very important. At this time I have learned from my mom that when she was growing up the village she was born in was very poor. My mom believes that I wouldn't find much information besides my grandparents' name.

I have learned to use websites that could provide me with information about my ancestors. During my time I could find more information because people found more ways to find information.

### **4. Alicia Mendoza**

During my senior year I was given an opportunity of being in a genealogy class. The class is given a grant from the Paul G. Allen Foundation in order to get a deeper insight on our ancestry and when it all started. While being in the class it impacted me in different ways.

First reason genealogy impacted me was when I got a hole of my great-great-grandparent's names and dates on when they were born. It made me realize because of them I am here today with my big family.

Second reason on how ROOTS impacted me was when the mentors taught us examples on how to search and look for documents and certificates of birth or death. In the future I might want to continue my research to try and find my ancestors and knowing how to look for my ancestors will be beneficial.

The third reason on how ROOTS has impacted me was the fact that I wasn't doing the research for myself, but for my family too. Having my family know where they came from is priceless to me.

Finally in conclusion, ROOTS is a very great class and impacted me in many different ways, these are just some of the many reasons.

#### **5. Sam Ramirez**

When I joined this class, all I thought was "I have to learn about old people; dead people." However, now I have learned quite a bit about each and every ancestor; I have grown to know and love.

I learned that all of these people had a lifetime worth of experiences, changes, and stories they got to leave behind for decedents like my grandmother and myself. Each decision they had to make during their lifetime, affected me and the way my life has gone; the way my grandmother's life has gone. Not all of the stories, or memories my ancestors left behind were "good" but it is interesting to know what a certain person in my line of family has gone through. For instance, if my grandmother's father, Carl Winburn Anderson, had never gotten behind the wheel of his car while drunk, on the night of October 12, 1953, he and the five others he killed might have had a longer life. It is possible that my grandmother would have grown up with a father. I wouldn't have ever discovered that without my ROOTS class.

ROOTS has been a tremendous part of my senior year of high school and my life. Documents are moments of life and death that my ancestors went thorough, and left behind so I could one day know them without actually having been there. It has been amazing experience learning about who, what, and where I came from. This IS my life, my ROOTS binder describes everything that has made me who I am; everyone. I had the guidance of my mentor all year and with that I have been able to expand all the way back to my great-great-great grandparents.

I am blessed to have had the opportunity I received when I entered this class, the people I have had the chance to share my story with, the mentors who have shown us nothing but guidance, respect, compassion, experience, and a lifetime full of genealogy. ROOTS will always be a big part of my life because there will always be more ancestors in more places to branch out again. I hope to one day give my gathered information to my children so they may also get to know those who built the foundation for their lives.

**6. Kaela Lee**

Before the ROOTS class I wasn't close with my dad's side of the family and I knew almost nothing about them. I barely even knew my grandfather's full name. Since the class I have not only been able to speak with family members that I haven't seen or heard from in many years, but it has made us all a lot closer. I learned way more about my family than I ever expected. It really taught me to respect my elders and to really enjoy all of the documents and information that I did find. I also gained a huge amount of knowledge in the research aspect of things. I'm not going to just Google things; I'm going to be more in-depth about it. I'm going to really take the time and effort to find what information is really needed, whether it is with using key words, incorrect spelling or using the millions of different internet websites that I was introduced to. To me, this wasn't just a class. This is just the beginning of a lifelong hobby.

**7. Katie Doherty**

I want to start off this essay by saying thank you to the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation for privileging us with the twenty five thousand dollar grant that was given to us and allowing us to be a part of this program called ROOTS. This class has really impacted my life because I was able to trace my ancestors back all the way to the 1800s finding information with my grandparents, great grandparents, and great-great grandparents. I've even found some of my father's aunts and uncles that he had never heard about or even met. Unfortunately they aren't with us anymore but we got a lot of information. My grandfather Ruben Ibarra sadly passed away about eight years ago so I cannot get any information from him. I've been getting information from my grandma and father to the best of their knowledge and so far I've done very well with the information I have been given.

My research skills have improved a whole lot since I started this program that involves a lot of researching. A big reason for my research skills improving is because of the mentors that help us every Thursday at the library. They are very helpful in giving out reliable websites that can give you very accurate information about the ancestor that you are researching. Also, they introduced us to programs like the Legacy 7.0 software and Ancestry. I thank you very much for this opportunity I will use it very wisely.

**8. Jose Ibarra**

Ever since I have had the privilege of joining the ROOTS program it has been a monumentally life altering experience. Not only was it an awesome experience for me but also my mother. We both grew in curiosity and our awareness of our family. I have acquired some stronger skills in researching by getting my information from multiple sources rather than the first one I had come across in my time researching.

The whole experience was very heartwarming; it made me feel great knowing all the mentors involved were more than willing to help in any way possible. The mentors were very generous with their time, which was greatly appreciated. There is not enough words to express my appreciation, but this is how ROOTS has affected my life.

#### **9. Chantel Charles**

This year's new program, ROOTS, has been a pretty cool program. It has helped me find things out about my family, past and present, that I never knew before. Going into this program I really only knew my grandma on my mother's side. I did know my father's parents but they both passed away when I was very young. This program has helped me trace my ancestry all the way to my great-great-grandparents on my mother's side and all the way back to my great-grandparents on my father's side. I also discovered that on my mother's side I have six great-uncles that served in the United States Marine Corps.

But aside from finding all that awesome information I discovered we also had a book work to complete. This program has also helped me learn how to properly research without just going to Google and typing the question into it. The program also helped me learn what primary and secondary sources were. This helps out a great deal because then you know where to look for what you are researching for and evaluate it.

Another thing that helped out a lot was the research plans. These helped me because it helped to plan what I was going to research and how I was going to go about that research. The research logs helped also because when I found a document or something else, I was able to go back to the place where I found it to possibly be able to find another document/finding.

This program was an awesome experience because it helped me not only find where I came from or from who I came from, but also what kind of people were a part of me. With the findings of my ancestors I was able to find out that on my mother's side of the family I am part French, Hispanic, American, and Aztec Indian. This program was a phenomenal experience and I would not trade it for anything else.

#### **10. Jesus Ceja**

This ROOTS project showed me that it is not just easy typing your name in the computer and finding out who your ancestors are. You actually have to work hard and put your time and effort to find your ancestors. Searching in many different websites for your ancestors and not just believing that the first thing you see or read about them is true because over the years information could get mixed up. Also searching different ways to spell a name because they might have misspelled it in any of the records recorded.

I had a lot of fun this year with the ROOTS project. We had the chance to visit the Seattle Public Library, which we learned there were many books that we could see that would have our own ancestors, and the history that they had left behind and the National Archives in Seattle. At the archives we found all sorts of records from immigrants to military records.

We also had a great time getting to know the mentors and learning a little about each and every one of them. Every mentor had a different background story and shared their research techniques with us. Some stories were sad and others were exciting adventures.

The ROOTS project taught me how to research and find information about my ancestors that I didn't know about and probably wouldn't know about today if I hadn't joined this class.

**11. Edgar Martinez**