



## Growth

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The last time I posted a CAPS blog, I was still in the very first week of my internship with the Urban League of Northwest Indiana. I was eager but also unsure about everything laid out ahead of me. I was stumbling through phone calls and the buttons on the fax machine. Compare that to last week, in which I was the only one in the office and I was running from desk to desk answering phones, buzzing people in, and simultaneously working on my own projects. I've been spending a significant amount of time training new volunteers and interns (who will probably help take up some of my projects once I leave) on the basics of working at the Urban League, and just today the President told me over a phone call discussing my own work as well as my assisting other volunteers, "I don't know how we are going to let you go. We might have to lock you in!"



### *The Urban League office.*

Through the Urban League, I've discovered just how much of an asset I can be through even the smallest tasks. I'm comfortable in so many situations that would have boggled my mind before, from directing a STEM activity for school-aged boys, to addressing board members in a meeting to discuss the new annual fund project of which I have played a key role. I truly can't believe I

have only been with the Urban League for two months, as it seems like I have learned so much, not just about the organization, but about myself as well.



*Myself and my alumni mentor Carolyn.*

My self-discovery was furthered this week as I had my first meeting with my Alumni mentor-Carolyn Stypka. We had been playing email tag for a while, but were finally able to arrange a time to have dinner together. Although it took a little while to figure things out, it was definitely worth it. I did not know Carolyn before being introduced through the CAPS program, but we ended up talking for over two hours about our shared interests, our time in the VU social work program (which has changed dramatically over the years!), and giving and accepting advice about graduate school and other post-Valpo options. Although our relationship was arranged through networks and emails, we truly connected as two people eager to learn from one another. After our two-hour discussion over pita and falafel, we got our phones and scheduled another meeting for a couple weeks from now.

The warm and inclusive environment at the Urban League has really allowed my professional identity to grow and flourish, and talking with Carolyn also gave me more confidence in my ability to choose a good path for myself after Valpo. Of all that the CAPS program has given me, this gained confidence in my own abilities as a professional and as a person is by far the best. As the summer comes to a close, I am sure that this new found perspective will help to carry me through my last year at Valpo, and help me decide on the next step I want to take.