

AFMIX IX - Capstone Reflection

When I got to Xavier, the idea of returning to Catholic Education after 30 years was both exciting and anxiety ridden. I wanted to fit in, to understand what we stood for, and to be able to apply that in my work every day. I like to call that professional light - “following true north”.

Immediately, I found AFMIX to be remarkably interesting. I soaked up the history and it began to make me feel at home. More than that, I was able to listen to my colleagues and hear their stories and their take on the direction of the university.

The third semester intensified this and I began to really feel as if I was beginning to understand. Two events happened in the fourth semester that let me apply what I had learned.

Early in the semester, one of our long term employees in the Dining Commons died. She was 85, and had worked at Xavier for 22 years. We stopped food service one day and asked students to join us in the server where we both prayed (Joe wrote an amazingly inspirational prayer) and then celebrated her with loud applause. Around 500 students joined us. It was very moving.

A few weeks later, I was approached about Tibetan Monks that would be coming to campus for several days to do their Mandala sand painting. They asked if we could discount meals. We worked with Chartwells and were able to donate their meals. While revenue generation is of paramount importance in my work, AFMIX has helped me guide that work while remaining focused on what our overall mission is.

I truly believe that AFMIX should be mandatory for anyone coming into a leadership position and lacking the Jesuit background that I was. It was not only the best 90 minutes of my week, it was also clearly the vehicle most responsible for acclimating me to our Jesuit world. I am very grateful.

Sincerely,

Jude Kiah, Ph.D.

AVP, Auxiliary Services