

Chad & Luis
One on One
We Energies & LaFollette Site

As a first-time mentor this year, I wasn't sure what to expect. Would I get along with my mentee well? Would I be an all right teacher? Could I remember what it was like to be an eleven-year-old? I shouldn't have worried. My mentee, Luis Concepcion, and I got along great from day one. Whether my Wednesday at work was hectic, stressful or enjoyable, at the end of the day I found I could always look forward to sharing a few laughs.

Luis is a great kid. A bunch of his classmates have come up to me and commented on how he is considered the class clown and always "makes the girls laugh." (I could have used a wingman like him when I was younger.) Luis is extremely energetic and open-minded; he is always the first to sign up for a week of camp, a weekend study session, or a park cleanup. He loves to try new things. But he is a pretty sharp guy too. He excels in math and art, speaks two languages fluently, and is a pretty good singer. Just please don't ask the guy to spell or write anything!



Luis and I had a lot of fun this past year and we learned a lot as well. We started off reading a book about a haunted ventriloquist's dummy, but then dropped that one and finished another one concerning an explorer mouse. I joked that it was because Luis was getting scared, but apparently he forgot that he had read the first book before. (Sure, buddy.) It was also cool that it was an election year; as Luis and the other kids learned a lot about the election process, President Obama, and the country in general. One thing I like about the one-on-one process is that the class was always doing something new.

The mentoring process was also a great excuse to get out and have some fun. Luis and I had lunch one day at a Mongolian BBQ. We got to pick out different types of meats and sauces and noodles that we wanted and then watch while the chef cooked it all with a couple of long sticks on an open grill. We went and caught a movie, and we've got a Brewer game coming up later in the summer. The class also had an end of the year cookout blast in the park with burgers, brats, chips, soda, candy and ice cream. I think that Luis sampled a bit of each of those so I sure pitied the kid who sat next to him on the bus.

All in all, mentoring was a great experience. I know that Luis and his family are considering moving to Puerto Rico at the end of summer. I admit that I will be a little sad if he goes, but I am sure that he will handle the move with the same eagerness and excitement that he approaches everything. I'd love to keep in touch, but after a year of trying to get him to put his thoughts on paper, I know better than to suggest the option of being a pen pal. I think the cell phone will work a lot better for Luis and me.