Summer Bash in Review: Samuel Girgis

Working with the Summer Bash this summer was delightful despite the ongoing pandemic. It was definitely a challenge to adapt to the health regulations while planning our events. Still, it was definitely worth the effort because we succeeded in connecting our community just a little bit more than they would have otherwise. I learned a lot about what happens behind the scenes of these city-wide events. From the technology I figured out to run the IT Box to the practical knowledge I gained from arranging cars in the drive-in movie parking lot to communicating with local suppliers for materials and sponsors. It goes without say that I learned more than I would have working at any other job. Most importantly, I think, is that I learned about the flexibility and management that is required for these events, especially in adapting to the COVID-19 situation. Many times, throughout the summer, we had to change upcoming plans for our projects due to changing corona-related restrictions. Most notably was our near constant change in location as our movie licensing changed with the re-opening of the movie theaters. We had to relearn set-up in over three separate locations while following different requirements of the owners of each location. Overall, working as a student planner with the Summer Bash has easily been one of the best learning experiences I've had so far.

As for improvements for how the Summer Bash is run, I think most issue will be resolved just as soon as COVID-19 restrictions are relieved. Most, if not all, of the stress associated with the job arose because of fluctuating restrictions and planning brand-new events like the drive-in movies. These changing demands required a lot of flexibility on my part, the others student planners, and the coordinators themselves. Outside of that, I think the Summer Bash would benefit from a more structured initial work setting. Again, this is something that is easily solved in regular non-pandemic times. Working from home is isolating, hinders the sharing of ideas, and promotes working longer and later hours. As soon, as our team decided to meet for work, our productivity and understanding of the task at hand skyrocketed. With this structured workplace, I think a set outline for the summer would help to slow workers' burn out. It's much more challenging to run for forty minutes when you don't know how long you'll be running for. It'd be ideal if working days were set and didn't change. Inevitably, schedules collide, and the weather doesn't cooperate, and so changes must be made, but I think the less changes in the schedule the better.