Building Effective Community Partnerships

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Background

- Community Engagement H2O (CE-H2O) is a faith-based student organization that works to promote health and wellness in marginalized populations of the Columbus metropolitan area (active since 2012).

- This student organization leverages building effective community partnerships with training and inspiring university student teams to advance the health and wellness of five marginalized communities.

- The five communities are:
  - The immigrant and refugee population
  - The orphan population
  - Those suffering in poverty
  - The widowed and elderly population
  - Survivors of human trafficking

- CE-H2O has created a model for sustainable, student led, volunteer community engagement through a foundation of shared motivation with partner organizations.

- For CE-H2O, this shared motivation is a faith-based, genuine care for the health and well-being of those in need.

- CE-H2O partner organizations serve the Columbus area through medical clinics, education, hunger relief, human trafficking abolition and long term health care.

Objectives

1) Developing university student teams to teach students a life-style of community engagement.
2) Effectively working with partners to advance the health and wellness of urban populations.

Student Leadership Development

Training

- Monthly CE-H2O meetings:
  - Partnership events are organized
  - Leaders equipped to liaison with community partners
  - Past events discussed for reflection and improvement
  - Compassion and care for community discussed to focus motivation on love for marginalized communities

Enduring Involvement

- Multiple community partner events are established
- Student volunteers are able to select event to attend.
- This diversity allows student volunteers to match their passion with a community partner organization.
- Passion-matching promotes enduring relationships between students and community partners.
- All participants have opportunity to become a student team leader.

Participation Growth

- Student leaders have debriefing meetings to discuss results of each community engagement event.
- Leading to an improved student involvement process
- Leading to more student participation
- Leading to further advancement of health and wellness with Columbus community partner organizations

Results – Student Involvement

Table 1: Repeated Attendance of Students to Community Engagement Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016-2017 Academic Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Community Engagement Event</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Community Engagement Events</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Community Engagement Events</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Community Engagement Events</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Community Engagement Events</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Participation:</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Repeated Attendance at Specific Community Partner Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016-2017 Academic Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Partner Involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve at 1 partner organization</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve at 2 partner organizations</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve at 3 partner organizations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve at 4 partner organizations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion & Conclusions

- The data in Table 1 shows a repeated attendance of 116 out of 316 students.

- This is equal to 37% of students continuing to participate beyond their first community engagement event.

- With 12% of students participating 4+ times in the academic year.

- Table 2 shows the number of students who serve at multiple community partners throughout the year.

- 37 participants (11.7%) return to the same organization, showing enduring relationship building between students and community engagement organizations.

- Of the 316 participants from 2016-2017, 79 participants (25%) chose to attend multiple events with several community partners – showing a desire to explore multiple ways to promote health and wellness in the community.

- Figure 1 shows an increase of total participation of 27% from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 through the 2017 Autumn semester with similar growth expected for the remainder of 2017-2018.

- Conclusion – this is a sustainable model for creating community partnerships that facilitates committed involvement from university students to promote the health and wellness of marginalized communities.

Information and Involvement

Partnership Information and Further Involvement:
http://www.h2ocolumbus.org/community-engagement/

Email Contact:
community-engagement@mail.h2osu.org