

## Leadership Connection 2018 (15-18 September)

### Engaging Members for Chapter Sustainability: Review of a New Chapter's Best Practice Strategies

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Sigma, one of the largest nursing honor societies in the world, was founded in 1922 by six nurses, at what is now known as the Indiana University, School of Nursing. The organization has grown and has roughly 520 chapters with over 135,000 members from over 90 countries. One chapter of Sigma was chartered in March 2016 at a local university. In order to meet the needs and expectations of over 98 chapter members, the Board of Directors conducted multiple needs-based assessments on how to best serve the chapter members.

A google forms survey was sent to chapter members in January 2018, via email, to pre-licensure, post-licensure, community nurse leaders, transfer students and graduates of the university. This needs based assessment helped to identify the areas of greatest interest for the chapter. Of the twenty chapter members who responded to this needs assessment, 40% represented the pre-licensure students, 25% represented post-licensure students, 20% represented community nurse leaders and 15% represented graduates of the university.

Over 70% of respondents were interested in workshops, such as abstract writing, resume/curriculum vitae and evidence based practice sessions; networking events, such as educational dinner programs and socials; and community outreach volunteer opportunities. In addition, 90% of respondents were interested in participating in a leadership mentorship program. The chapter also received additional feedback from its members with requests to provide more continuing education units (CEUs). This survey has provided objective information for chapter leaders and board members to help chapter members reach their current and future nursing goals.

The chapter's best practices have helped to develop and implement several initiatives to meet the needs of chapter members. Most recently, the chapter was highlighted by Sigma in April 2017 for demonstrating excellent commitment to fulfilling the STTI mission to advance world health and celebrate nursing excellence in scholarship, leadership and service. The chapter was also recognized, through Sigma's Showcase of Regional Excellence, for the chapter's efforts in fulfilling the former presidential call to action in the areas of Philanthropy, Advocacy and Lifelong Learning.

Chapter goals and strategic plans are based on Sigma's Key Award criteria, with the purpose of excelling in chapter-related areas that include: membership recruitment and retention, publicity and programming, local, national and international collaboration and leadership development. In the past two years, the chapter has hosted several fundraising events to contribute to student scholarship funds; hosted continuing education dinner programs for post-licensure members and co-hosted the poster session at the Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Research Day at the local university. In addition, the chapter supported DNP students' poster presentations at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Sigma Biennial Conference, donated to and supported members' outreach programs including the March of Dimes' March for Babies Fundraising event; held guest-lectured events for pre-licensure students on topics centered on becoming nurse leaders in their future work environments; and partnered with a local continuing education company to provide discounted rates of the state mandated continuing education programs.

The chapter has been able to engage many active members, but based on the recent needs assessment, the board of directors is looking into creating and implementing a local leadership mentorship program to engage more chapter members. In order to best prepare for the planning, implementation and evaluation of this program, a literature review was performed to identify current best practice or evidence of an

existing leadership mentorship program in nursing. Several programs were identified however none appeared to support the idea of a leadership mentorship program for a diverse nursing group.

Several programs have been implemented to foster the leadership growth of undergraduate students (Hershorin, I.R., et al, 2018; Crisp, et al, 2017). Other leadership mentorship programs supported the development of clinical nurse managers (Ramseur, R, et al, 2018; Vatan, F & Temel, A.B, 2016) or postdoctoral nurses (Hafsteindottir, T.B., Zwaaf, A.M. & Schuurmans, M.J., 2017).

A leadership education and development program for clinical nurses appeared to be most relevant to chapter needs, however the design of this program appeared too time consuming for participants, as participants met for six, four hour sessions over the course of three months to enhance leadership skills (Fitzpatrick, J.J, et al, 2016). The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) was used before and after the structured sessions by these clinical nurses, however cost of the LPI is a limiting factor for use of this self-evaluation tool in the local setting.

As described above, literature exists to support leadership mentorship programs in nursing, however it is not a "one size fits all" for all settings of nursing. Sigma also has leadership mentorship programs however chapter members are looking for something closer to home.

In conclusion, based on the recent needs assessment of chapter members and Sigma's Key Award criteria, the chapter has excelled in several areas through chapter best practice. The chapter plans to assess the needs of its members on an annual basis, however in the meantime, chapter leaders will begin the design and implementation of a Leadership Mentorship Program, close to home, for its chapter members.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

Best practice, Chapter success and Member engagement

**References:**

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### **Abstract Summary:**

A needs assessment of a Sigma chapter helped to elucidate topics of interest of its chapter members. The chapter was successful in engaging a majority of its members through chapter best practice.

### **Content Outline:**

1. Introduction
  - a. Discuss an overview of Sigma and chapter membership statistics.
2. Chapter Needs Assessment
  - a. Review data from recent needs assessment of chapter members.
3. Review of Chapter Best Practice
  - a. Highlight chapter's current best practice related to:
    - i. Fulfilling president's call to action
    - ii. Supporting student scholarship
    - iii. Engaging current members
    - iv. Recruiting new members
4. Literature Review
  - a. Analyze existing literature related to leadership mentorship programs in nursing.
5. Future Directions
  - a. Describe future directions for the chapter based on needs assessment.

First Primary Presenting Author

### **Primary Presenting Author**

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**Professional Experience:** Dr Kuretski has 8+ years of experience as a Family Nurse Practitioner, 4+ years of nursing education experience and 1+ years as a chapter leader for Chi Phi.

**Author Summary:** Dr Kuretski has been a family nurse practitioner for over 8 years. She has extensive experience in clinical research, serving as a sub-investigator in over 50 clinical trials. Dr Kuretski currently serves as the NP degree track chair and Associate Professor in the DNP program at Palm Beach Atlantic University. In addition to her role as Secretary for Chi Phi, she serves as Vice President for the NP Council of Palm Beach County.

Second Secondary Presenting Author

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**Professional Experience:** Christine has over 3 Years of experience as a Medical/Surgical floor nurse, 2+ Years of pre-licensure nursing education experience and 3+ years as chapter leader for Chi Phi.

**Author Summary:** Christine graduated from Palm Beach Atlantic University in May 2014 and is currently enrolled in the DNP Executive Leadership program. Christine worked for three years on a medurg/oncology unit and currently works as the Skills Lab Coordinator for PBA. She was inducted into PBA's Nursing Honor Society in November 2012 and has been involved in Chi Phi since the beginning. She currently serves as President of Chi Phi.

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**Professional Experience:** Jessica is a current BSN student at Palm Beach Atlantic University. She has 2+ years of experience as a NSNA board member and is a newly elected Chi Phi chapter board member.

**Author Summary:** Jessica completed her prerequisite nursing courses at Florida Atlantic University and will be graduating from Palm Beach Atlantic University's nursing program in May 2018. Jessica currently serves as the secretary for the National Student Nurse's Association for PBA as well as the WebMaster for STTI's Chi Phi Chapter, which she was inducted into in November 2017.