

Why We Love Community Engagement (And Your Chapter Will Too!)



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF NURSING

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Introduction

The Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International was interested in developing their philanthropic relationships in the community. The Epsilon Chapter has already been very involved in anti-human trafficking efforts within the State of Ohio, providing education to healthcare providers and serving at the local “well” at the Salvation Army, but wanted to have an impact on the youth in the area. The chapter became involved with two inner-city high schools in the central Ohio area. The relationship developed proved to be positive for the chapter, participating high schools, high school students, The Ohio State University College of Nursing students, and Epsilon members.

Purpose

The purpose of this relationship was to build the Epsilon Chapter’s community engagement and serve members of our community in a positive way. Many of these high school students come from very challenging home environments and this was a way to bring positivity, health education, and wellness to these students.

How it worked!

The Sigma Theta Tau International Epsilon Chapter worked with the founding teacher at one of the high schools to determine the needs of the high school students. After conversation with this teacher, the Epsilon Chapter agreed to teach three forty five minute sessions at one high school and one forty five minute session at another high school one Monday a month for the duration of the school year. The Epsilon Chapter was able to have two faculty at each high school, as well as Epsilon members who were current undergraduate students participate in the educational development and plan for the high school students. The educational sessions to the high school students were focused on needs identified by the high school teachers, high school students, and nurses/nursing students from The Ohio State University College of Nursing. These educational sessions were created to be interactive for the students while providing focused information based on preventative health and the nine dimensions of wellness.

The Experience

The Epsilon Chapter was able to build relationships with these students while providing lessons. The chapter purchased all members of this high school group sweatshirts and beanie during the holidays. This was significant

for these students because for many this served as their only warm clothing item for the winter.



Additionally the Epsilon Chapter worked with The Ohio State University College of Nursing to provide a field trip for the students. We were able to highlight opportunities for the students within the healthcare field, demonstrate simulations in the lab, and have the students deliver chemo kits to patients at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute (OSUCCC – James)

Discussion

The high school students responded positively to the education provided and positive relationships built with the students. One of the main problems for these high school students was consistency and trust. This is something these students have gained through these positive relationships with members of the nursing community. Additionally, these philanthropic efforts has allowed seasoned faculty to engage with Epsilon members/undergraduate students providing a 1) sense of worth and value to the community; 2) networking; 3) lesson in empathy and providing new perspective about the community we serve; and 4) an outlet for creativity.

The relationships built through this philanthropic effort has benefited all parties involved. Community engagement has been an avenue to strengthen our Epsilon Chapter and our presence in the community.



Epsilon Chapter