

**Title:**

From Virtual to Real Advocacy: An Infographic on Phi Gamma's International Engagement

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**Session Title:**

Chapter Invited Posters

**Keywords:**

Inter-Chapter Collaboration, International Engagement and Technology Integration

**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

The infographic poster provides a substantial overview on how the virtual initiatives of Phi Gamma Chapter (virtual) are grown relevant in the globalized world. This focuses on its background, highlights and future directions in sustaining meaningful connections among nurse leaders from various countries and relevant contributions internationally.

**Learning Activity:**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</b>
Develop a modest strategy for a virtual philanthropic activity within their respective chapter.	Chapter highlights on: 1. WAVE Project, 2. Online Conferencing (The Circle, GoToWebinar), 3. Recorded Information (Google Drive, the Circle library), 4. Information Campaign (Email, STTIconnect, The Circle)
Describe Phi Gamma as a collaborative chapter in support of honor societies around the world	Chapter highlights on: 1. Collaborative Partnership, 2. Membership Absorption (as proxy for members), 3. Memorandum of Understanding
Propose new media and technology for effective interaction among members and implementation of activities	Chapter highlights on: 1. STTI platforms (STTIconnect, Circle, Circle Library), 2. External platforms (such as Google Drive,

**Abstract Text:**

**The Phi Gamma Chapter: A Virtual International Engagement**

Connecting to diverse nurse leaders worldwide can be difficult especially in places with no land-based Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Chapter. This resulted in the establishment of the Phi Gamma Chapter (481) as a virtual honor society by the direction of the International Board. In June 2010, the Phi Gamma Chapter was chartered and received its Coat of Arms. Its mission and vision correspond to the STTI Honor Society of Nursing with an international focus. As the only virtual chapter, Phi Gamma offers boundless opportunities in promoting global health and nursing excellence on an international scale. Following its success, Phi Gamma has evolved into meritorious chapter with several recognitions in 42nd and 43rd Biennial Convention, which includes Chapter Global Community Building Award (2013) and Phi Gamma's first Chapter Key Award (2015). The Chapter also sponsored honorary members from the Daisy Foundation, which likewise honor international nurses.

**Chapter Highlights: A Virtual Advocacy**

Successful chapter operation generally requires transformational leadership, professional interactions, and adequate resources. Phi Gamma Chapter has planned its programs and activities strategically and virtually. However, a customary approach of a land-based organization may not be necessarily effective for a Chapter located in the cyberspace. This challenge has necessitated the utilization and integration of information and communication technologies as Virtual Resources to support Phi Gamma Chapter operations, meetings, discussions, and presentations.

**Virtual Leadership** has been reinforced through regular online board meetings to ensure effective directions and sustainable operations. Although many Board Members, Committee Chairs and Members have not met in person, they have maintained good working and harmonious relationships. Phi Gamma's electronic delegates were from outside the United States in 2012 – 2015 to leverage an international footprint. Likewise, a director-at-large for international was appointed per proviso to the 2013 – 2015 Chapter Bylaws. These initiatives have resulted in membership involvement and collaborative partnership at the international level. Many excellent programs and activities were offered by a variety of speakers, and co-sponsored with other chapters. A memorandum of understanding is being signed between Phi Gamma Chapter and Our Lady of Fatima University for joint activities such as research and presentations.

Phi Gamma Chapter has facilitated **Virtual Interaction** through the use of reliable media and technology to allow outreach throughout the world like conferencing and even large presentations. The STTIconnect and The Circle have been exploited to maintain contact with members and ensure their engagement by keeping them informed and updated about the Chapter news, events and activities. Online induction has been conducted quarterly to foster membership engagement. Further, an International Poster Presentation was successfully presented virtually in 2014. These interactions have been recorded to allow synchronous events to become asynchronous information in the Phi Gamma Circle Library. Phi Gamma Chapter also blends different STTI and external platforms (i.e. Google Drive and GoToWebinar) to foster effective communication among members and stakeholders.

Despite the presence of virtual leadership, interaction and resources, Phi Gamma Chapter has experienced a struggle in finding ways to promote **Virtual Advocacy** (i.e. social responsibility and philanthropic activity) that could involve and be meaningful to all Chapter members. As for social responsibility, Phi Gamma is considered a feeder chapter for other areas, and it maintains many dual members. This provides several opportunities for involvement. Members from dissolved chapters, who have not indicated a transfer chapter, are designated to Phi Gamma Chapter. Moreover, nurse leaders from countries without land-based Chapters are given the chance to become STTI members. Phi Gamma

is also involved in supporting development of new honor societies to become land-based chapters in international settings such as Egypt and Philippines.

On the other hand, philanthropic activity needs to consider the interests and needs of nurse leaders from 27 countries in the world. When planning such an event, it should somehow involve all members. However, this proves to be demanding especially it cannot be confined in one place at one time. In addressing this challenge, Phi Gamma Chapter conceptualized the Water Access Virtually Ensured (WAVE) project. The WAVE project was launched to support STTI Global Initiatives by incorporating one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that is access to water and sanitation for all. In partnership with a non-profit organization Water.org, the Phi Gamma Chapter encourages its members to participate in this cause. This strategy is highly relevant since Water.org provides innovative solutions that change everyday lives with safe water and sanitation in several countries, where most if not all Phi Gamma Chapter members are residing. It was initiated strategically by marketing the WAVE project in the STTIconnect and Phi Gamma Circle. Members were informed about this fundraiser activity to see who would participate. Further discussion about their experiences with poor water access and sanitation has been made on Phi Gamma Circle page.

### **Future Directions: A Virtual Dream**

The Phi Gamma Chapter has become what the STTI had planned it to be as the only Virtual Chapter for nurse leaders globally. Upcoming plans includes (a) creation of an Information, Education and Communication Committee for better global visibility and campaign using social media like Facebook and other platforms, (b) implementation of monthly chapter activities with a different type each month on a quarterly rotation, namely: synchronous conversations (July, October, January, and April) for real-time knowledge exchange; program events (August, November, February and May) for continuing education in cooperation with Omicron Delta and other activities with collaborative partners; and virtual induction (September, December, March, June), (c) intensification of the Virtual Advocacy campaign for Founder's Day in October 2016 with all members encouraged to participate and contribute \$2-3 to the WAVE Project through Water.org, and (d) expansion of the collaborative partnership with various institutions and organization worldwide for joint activities. On the whole, Phi Gamma Chapter continues to evolve in promoting global health and nursing excellence through its virtual leadership, interaction, resources and advocacy. It is hoped that these virtual initiatives would produce sustainable impacts on the real world.