Title: Impacting Global Healthcare Through the Development of the Beta Xi Global Service Initiative

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Session Title: Initiatives to Promote Chapter Health
Slot: I 10: Monday, 30 October 2017: 3:45 PM-4:30 PM
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Keywords: global ambassador, global health and global service initiative

References:


Abstract Summary:
The purpose is to highlight how the Beta Xi chapter has utilized the global ambassador role in the development of a Global Service Initiative Program.

Learning Activity:

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<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
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<td>I. The learner will be able to identify ways to help improve health care locally and globally through educating chapter members on the relevance of having a global perspective.</td>
<td>I. Improving health care locally: A. Provision of coats for Code Purple. B. Hygiene items donated to local homeless shelter. C. “Bring Your Own Bag Delaware” recycling program. D. Community health fairs. E. Hurricane Sandy relief II. Educating members on improving health globally: A. Membership Appreciation Night: members shared their global experiences of improving health in developing countries. B. Dissemination of global health needs are highlighted in the chapter newsletter. C. Evidence based practice dinner</td>
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2. The learner will be able to discuss ways to develop a Global Service Initiative within their chapter.

I. Developing chapter presence at the global level: A. Flip flops to Haiti B. Financially supporting a water pump in Africa C. Medical Supplies to Kenya D. Global Service Initiative development

Abstract Text:

The Beta Xi Chapter has been supportive of the global ambassador program for over 10 years through encouraging and financially supporting members who apply and travel abroad. Chapter members have served as global ambassadors to Haiti, Jamaica and most recently, Kenya. The financial compensation may be used for travel expenses, educational materials, or medical supplies as Beta Xi members educate, conduct health screenings, and care for the ill.

A review of the literature supports Beta Xi’s global effort as there are many facets to meeting the health care needs on a global level. Despite the advances that have been made in the understanding and treatment of disease, significant disparities remain in relation to those who receive care. According to the World Health Organization (2016), chronic diseases are expected to rise to 73% of all deaths worldwide and 60% of the global disease burden. Clean water and food are essential in preventing chronic disease and food crises that impact global health. In 2008, the price of rice was 100% higher than in 2003 (Benatar, Gill & Bakker, 2011). According to the United Nations, increases in food prices and higher energy costs are primarily responsible for more than 100 million people remaining or forced into poverty and poor health (Benatar, Gill & Bakker, 2011).

There is a global crisis of significant shortages and maldistribution of health professionals that is exacerbated by three global transitions: demographic changes, epidemiologic shifts, and redistribution of the disability burden (Crisp & Chen, 2014). Each of these require changes to be made within health care systems, education and the role of the health care professional. The World Health Organization has underscored the alarming global shortage of approximately 4.3 million doctors and nurses, which constitutes a shortfall of 15% of the total number of doctors and nurses worldwide (Crisp & Chen, 2014).

Over the years, the Beta Xi Chapter has helped individuals in need at the local and global level. Local needs have been met through the provision of coats for Code Purple, donation of hygiene items for a local homeless shelter, and financial contribution towards Hurricane Sandy relief. Global initiatives include providing flip flops to Haiti, financial support of a water pump in Africa and sending nursing textbooks to a developing country. In 2014, a Beta Xi nurse midwife travelled to Haiti and taught health hygiene and safe sex practices. She was able to spend one week in a small village where she discussed proper hand hygiene, food safety, and safe sex practices.

Most recently a global ambassador’s ongoing mission trips to Kenya has fostered a relationship with a Kenyan nurse who began her own medical centre to serve the poor in the surrounding “slums” of Kitale. Sr. Freda’s Medical Centre was born as the result of her observation that people were dying alongside the roadway as they tried to reach the district hospital in pursuit of health care. Her vision led to the development of a feeding and preschool program, a girl’s high school and a college of nursing in which she currently has over 120 nursing students. Because of Sr. Freda’s efforts, the Global Ambassador nominated her for honorary membership in Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI). Sr. Freda’s application was overwhelmingly approved and the Beta Xi Chapter sponsored her by paying for her travel expenses and registration for her induction at biennium.

After Biennium 2015, the global ambassador contacted the African Regional Coordinator of STTI, Dr. Deliwe Rene Phetlhu, to inquire what the next step was for Sister Freda’s chapter level engagement. She advised Sister Freda to remain an active member of the Beta Xi Chapter. To connect Sister Freda with regional support, she has the opportunity to hold a dual membership in a Kenyan Chapter. Also, Beta Xi
will support of development of a STTI chapter at Sr. Freda’s nursing school, the Nzoia College of Nursing. This, of course, would begin when the Nzoia College of Nursing advances from a Diploma program to a Baccalaureate program. Currently, there are two STTI chapters in Kenya, one at Moi University in Eldoret and the other at the University of Nairobi. These are part of the Tau Lambda-at-Large chapter. Thus, there will be many options to explore for Sister Freda’s school and the students who are eligible. The Nzoia College of Nursing has recently revised their curriculum and created a strategic plan that would meet the requirements to establish themselves as a baccalaureate program.

As a result of Beta Xi’s support of global ambassadors and the STTI Global Initiatives set forth at Biennium 2015, the chapter completed the Beta Xi Global Service Initiative as a means to expand our impact upon global health care. This initiative is open to all chapter members who are interested in global health and will include a Global Services Initiative Coordinator and the Beta Xi Global Ambassadors. These goals are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the CDC’s Global Health Strategies, and the World Health Organization.

Beta Xi’s purpose is to help improve health care locally and globally while educating chapter members on the local relevance of having a global perspective. The objectives are to generate new knowledge that expands global thinking, improve practice, and engage chapter members to positively contribute to global health challenges. We also plan to provide education regarding ways to reduce infectious disease and other emerging public health threats.

Moving forward, the global ambassador program, which had an individual focus will now become transformed into a sustainable chapter program that aligns with the STTI mission and UN Sustainable Development Goals. This Global Service Initiative is multifaceted. A chapter must identify a partner organization in a particular region or country that is impoverished, and identify the needs within that population. Also, work with a “national” (an individual within the identified country) within that organization to determine the best approach to reduce or improve the problem. Though the intent of the chapter may be admirable, your approach in the implementation of an idea may be offensive if it does not align with cultural mores.

In addition, the chapter must identify how they will make a contribution towards the endeavor and the length of time for the commitment. This may be a one-time financial contribution or involve sending members to provide assistance on an annual basis through teaching or providing medical care. Be creative, but always seek input from those whom you desire to assist. Also, the chapter must seek ways to create a sustainable project and provide education necessary for all individuals involved, including chapter members, international partners, and contributing organizations. As you consider the role of education, it is important to consider access to the internet as this is not readily available in some developing countries.

This unique global initiative increases awareness at the chapter level regarding the impact that the chapter may have in global health care. This awareness should occur throughout the year and begin early in STTI membership. Some potential venues include chapter newsletters, meetings, e-mail, social media, induction ceremony, and chapter events.

Finally, the Beta Xi chapter is striving to assist Sr. Freda in not only her pursuit of establishing a baccalaureate program at the nursing college, but also in the management of her health clinic which she founded twenty years ago. How this will be accomplished has yet to be determined. The transition and chapter development should be seamless as the primary contact for the Tau Lambda-at-Large chapter is Hester Klopper, Past International President. Beta Xi’s commitment to Cathy Catrambone’s Presidential Call to Action: Influence to Advance Global Health and Nursing (history of fulling STTI mission and values) will also facilitate that transition. Though this may appear to be a daunting task, our chapter has seen the results of what a few individuals have been able to do in making a difference in global health.
The Beta Xi chapter desires to expand its global outreach through the development of the Global Service Initiative. As chapter members are provided information to increase their awareness of global needs, it is the intent that more individuals will not only lead locally, but also will reach globally in meeting the needs of the world.