Title:
Lifelong Learning: Developing Professional and Personal Leadership

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Session Title:
Leadership Development Influences Legacy Building, Lifelong Learning, and Global Health Policy
Slot:
G 16: Monday, 30 October 2017: 1:15 PM-2:30 PM
Scheduled Time: 1:15 PM

Keywords:
leadership development, lifelong learning and professionalism

References:

Abstract Summary:
The purpose is to illustrate various avenues to engage new and current members while fostering active membership through lifelong learning. Advancing the practice of lifelong learning within your chapter ensures member engagement and chapter sustainability by enhancing scholarship, leadership, and service. Lifelong learning has underpinnings in the STTI mission.
Learning Activity:

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<td>relationship to personal and professional leadership development.</td>
<td>development A. Personal; B. Professional</td>
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<td>I. Scholarship A. EBP dinner meeting 1. Hosting a CE event with another STTI chapter</td>
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<td>(Mindfulness continuing education credit focusing on integrating personal wellness into</td>
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<td>your work life balance and professional endeavors) 2. Special edition newsletter</td>
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<td>focused on research and scholarship B. Awards 1. Undergraduate and Graduate awards 2.</td>
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<td>Grant C. Career Boot Camp III. Service A. Mental Health Wellness 1. Holiday Outreach B.</td>
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<td>Vulnerable populations 1. Homeless - Newark Empowerment Center 2. Human trafficking IV.</td>
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Abstract Text:

Introduction

The local chapter cultivates an environment of lifelong learning through the promotion of opportunities that enhance leadership development for professional and personal goals. Since lifelong learning has been recognized as a priority by the Institute of Medicine, it is imperative that agencies and facilities have an avenue in place for nurses to practice the art of lifelong learning (Foster, 2012). STTI and its chapters are poised to provide activities and events that foster lifelong learning to enhance personal and professional growth. According to Dr. Catrambone (2016), STTI President, the ability of the chapter to influence through lifelong learning helps to advance nursing practice in an effort to transform global health. A variety of chapter events allow members and non-members to grow in scholarship, leadership, service, and global health awareness.

Scholarship
Scholarship is essential to move the field of nursing forward. Research, Evidence Based, Practice (EBP), and quality improvement are essential components of lifelong learning (Connelly, 2013). As part of the STTI mission, the local chapter acknowledges the professional achievements of members through an EBP program and End of Year celebration. These forums not only allow members the opportunity to present the results of their research, but also as a means to illustrate that conducting research is an attainable goal. In order to engage more clinicians and students, the EBP meetings are held at a local community partner agency. In 2016, the local chapter initiated a special edition EBP newsletter, which highlighted members’ scholarship achievements via poster presentations, podium presentations, and journal articles. The EBP Newsletter was distributed at the EBP dinner meeting and shared electronically with all members via The Circle and email. Most recently, the local chapter coordinated with another chapter to provide continuing education credits on Mindfulness focusing on integrating personal wellness into work life balance and professional endeavors.

Through the provision of financial support for research projects and research presentations, research awards and scholarships are available with the intent to stimulate research generation, dissemination, and utilization. The local chapter desires to recognize and support students who demonstrate leadership potential, academic excellence, and a dedication to community service. The chapter strives to increase STTI presence and collaborations with local hospitals and healthcare agencies. During Nurses Week, chapter board members participated in a local pediatric hospital awards ceremony and presented a nurse with a financial gift for the top research poster and all chapter members were recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation. This event served to promote STTI and recruit potential nurse leaders for the local chapter.

Leadership Development

The local chapter is committed to growth and improvement to fulfill STTI’s mission in leadership development. “In order for nurses to grow as leaders, they must be allowed the opportunity to experience situations that require leadership skills and foster their development” (Galuska, 2012, p. 337). The local chapter reaches out to chapters across STTI and creates collaborative initiatives by networking at conventions and conferences. The chapter awards two emerging leaders an Educational Leadership Training Grant to attend Leadership Connection and network with other chapters. In 2016, the emerging leaders presented a poster as well as participated in many other STTI activities. From this conference, the chapter gathered ways to enhance its strategic planning, social media presence, member recruitment and retention, philanthropy activities, and development of global health awareness.

The local chapter is committed to cultivating future leaders and ensuring an active sustainable chapter through various activities of the Leadership Succession Committee. These activities include a Career Development Boot Camp, Leadership Intern Program and a Nursing Skills Boot Camp. The Leadership Intern Program began serves as a formal mentoring process that is mutually beneficial to the mentors, mentees and the chapter. Potential interns, who are newly inducted members, submit an application for
consideration. The Leadership Intern Program has grown over the years as board members listen to needs and requests of the newly inducted members. The intern positions include Diversity in Nursing Initiatives Intern, Social Event Coordinator Intern, and Membership Liaison Intern. These interns provide much needed support to the chapter and in return, they receive financial support for their NCLEX exam. Along with STTI, the vision of the Leadership Intern Program is to provide each intern with the opportunity to expand leadership skills, develop a relationship with a mentor, and nurture a lasting commitment to STTI. This program uses various mentoring modalities such as face-to-face contact, emails, social networking and telephone calls. This has been a means to sustain membership while also recruiting new members and potential leaders.

The Career Development Boot Camp is for all senior nursing students (members and non-members) to assist with interviewing skills, dressing for success, resume development, and graduate school. Volunteers including, faculty, talent acquisition specialists from local hospitals, graduate students, new graduates, and clinicians from various areas of nursing. Students have the opportunity to ask questions, revise their resume, hear from new graduates, and gain valuable interviewing tips. These programs and events help members feel engaged and supported in their professional and personal life.

Service

Service to the community locally, regionally, and globally promotes lifelong learning while also transforming global health. Through various service projects, chapter members learn and may begin to see the world in a new light. This is important for nurses to understand healthcare inequities through engaging in volunteer service with vulnerable populations (Jacobson, 2013). Chapter service opportunities focus on mental health wellness and vulnerable populations. For almost 15 years, the local chapter of SSTI and affiliated University in collaboration with a local clinic hosts an Annual Holiday Outreach benefiting a local Counseling and Support Service Agency. Clients in this program have only a small stipend each month, about $30.00, to purchase all of their clothes, hygiene products, and other personal items. For this reason, each year the chapter sponsors these clients in the outreach program by providing them with hygiene gift bags and items from their wish lists, which includes items they would like to have for the holidays but cannot afford. Volunteers collaborate to meet with the clients and host a holiday party, which exposes members to this vulnerable population. This event and current mental health conditions are disseminated to members via The Circle and newsletter.

The chapter educates members by increasing the awareness of human trafficking in a variety of ways. Members provide financial support and volunteer hours towards Meet Me at the Well (MMATW). This is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing human trafficking issues in the First State. Green (2016) suggests that 75% of trafficked women saw a healthcare provider while in captivity and often passing through the ED. Yet, these victims are often invisible to the very people providing care. The U.S.
Department of Homeland Security (2017) states that human trafficking is “modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act; or, commercial sex” involving a person under 18 years of age. Since 2012, human trafficking has become the nation’s second fastest growing criminal activity, trailing only drug trafficking (Anderson, 2016). To increase awareness and financial support, human trafficking was discussed at the annual Membership Appreciation night, at an induction ceremony, and a full article was published in the Newsletter.

The local chapter also forms strategic alliances with numerous community agencies to conduct other service efforts, which help publicize the unique contributions of STTI. Community collaborations help to increase the impact of service efforts and ensure the sustainability of efforts over time. Another vulnerable population are those who are homeless. The chapter supports the a local center by donating hygiene bags throughout the year. The hygiene items are collected at many of the chapter events. The local center helps men and women with clothing referrals, helps pay medical prescriptions, distributes bus tickets and helps to purchase birth certificates and/or state I.D. cards. The hygiene bags are donated throughout the year to be given out to anyone utilizing services at the facility.

**Conclusion**

The local chapter strongly believes in the process of lifelong learning through scholarship, leadership, and service. The ability to maintain a vibrant service outreach orientation that responds to the needs of vulnerable populations locally, regionally, and internationally is directly related to the passion, dedication, and enthusiasm of the members. The continued success of the Leadership Intern Program and varying scholarship opportunities is due to members who remain engaged with the chapter and who believe in the mission and vision of STTI. The various avenues that the chapter offers encourages lifelong learning to assist members in professional and personal goal development. Through lifelong learning, members can also realize how important they are in influencing the transformation of health while fulfilling the mission and vision of STTI.