



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

2020 Edition

civic scholar

Phi Theta Kappa | Journal of Undergraduate Research

TRANSFORMATIONS:
Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change

About Phi Theta Kappa

Phi Theta Kappa is the premier honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges and helping them grow as scholars and leaders. The Society is made up of more than 3.5 million members and nearly 1,300 chapters in 11 nations.

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A letter from the editor

Welcome to the 2020 edition of *Civic Scholar: Phi Theta Kappa Journal of Undergraduate Research*. First published in 2018, *Civic Scholar* emphasizes Phi Theta Kappa's mission to recognize academic achievement of college students and to help them grow as scholars and leaders. We are proud to publish research conducted by community college students who have developed and implemented research-based, action-oriented projects that have had positive impact on their communities.

The articles published in this edition of *Civic Scholar* include both substantive research and intentional college and community engagement. These Honors in Action projects began as explorations of Phi Theta Kappa's interdisciplinary 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic, *Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change*. Each chapter focused on one of nine themes related to the topic and developed a research question to guide their study of transformations. Honors in Action teams then developed, implemented, and reflected upon their work. Students analyzed their research and developed conclusions to determine what action they could take in their communities that would have both short-term and potential for long-term impact.

This year, we received 495 submissions for possible inclusion in this journal. We are pleased to publish 16 of those submissions. They represent 16 community colleges from 16 of the United States. Students' research illustrates diverse lenses through which to investigate Phi Theta Kappa's biennial Honors Study Topic, as well as varied action elements of the projects about which they wrote. Many chapters included graphs, charts, and images with their entries to highlight and support research and action components. We are excited to include examples of these figures in the 2020 edition of *Civic Scholar*.

We are proud of all the chapters who took the opportunity to develop, implement, and write about their Honors in Action projects this year. They are conducting research that matters, and their work has engaged people on their community college campuses and in their communities. A special congratulations to the chapters whose work is published in these pages. Your work inspires us and highlights something we have known all along: community college students are central to the production of new knowledge and meaningful scholarship.

Happy reading,



Susan Edwards

Associate Vice President of Honors Programming and Undergraduate Research
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

About the Honors Program

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program is designed to engage students in informed action that fosters student success and helps fulfill our mission to provide college students opportunities to grow as scholars and leaders.

Learning Outcomes

Participation in the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program contributes to personal, academic, and career development and affords students opportunities to have an impact on their campuses and in their communities by addressing challenges related to their Honors Study Topic research. Members who participate in the development and implementation of an Honors in Action project will be able to:

1. Evaluate multiple, global perspectives of a theme as it relates to Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Study Topic.
2. Demonstrate undergraduate research fundamentals by identifying sources, appraising their credibility, and formulating conclusions based on evidence.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking and reflective skills throughout the research process.
4. Design, organize, and implement a plan of action that solves a real-world problem related to the Honors Study Topic.
5. Form and develop teams that collaborate and communicate with college and community partners to enhance the impact of the project.
6. Provide evidence of project impact through the use of quantitative and qualitative assessments.
7. Compile a report using clear, correct, and effective language.

Achievement of these learning outcomes builds the analytic and collaborative problem-solving and leadership skills necessary and valued in advanced academic pursuits, work places, and communities.

Editorial Board

The *Civic Scholar* Editorial Board is comprised of members of Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Program Council and Student Engagement Team. The Honors Program Council is responsible for making recommendations to Phi Theta Kappa Headquarters staff about the new Honors Study Topic and Honors in Action Program and for assisting with the compilation and editing of the biennial Honors Program Guide as well as serving on the Editorial Board of *Civic Scholar*. Made up of Phi Theta Kappa chapter advisors, Headquarters staff, and consultants. Honors Program Council members are selected for their broad knowledge of the Honors Study Topic and Phi Theta Kappa's integrated approach to the Hallmarks of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Fellowship, as well as their balance in academic disciplines. The Honors Study Topic on which the projects selected for inclusion in this edition of *Civic Scholar* was the 2018/2019 topic, *Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change*.

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Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change

2018/2019 HONORS STUDY TOPIC

Theme 1: Networks of Life

How do relationships among organisms, their environments, and the systems in which they exist transform each other?

Theme 2: Economies of Everything

How are economic systems transforming to meet contemporary needs and future expectations?

Theme 3: Politics of Identity

How do the ways in which people and communities identify themselves and others transform societies?

Theme 4: Dynamics of Discovery

How have changes in research and technology transformed the process of inquiry and discovery?

Theme 5: Channels of Creativity

How does our broadened view of the arts and entertainment transform us and the world around us?

Theme 6: Visions of Justice

How are shifting views of justice transforming global realities, and how are communities responding?

Theme 7: Powers of Connection

How are the ways we connect evolving and transforming the world?

Theme 8: Worlds of Work

How are global trends transforming the work we do, and how do we navigate these changes?

Theme 9: Systems of Belief

How do systems of belief change, and how do they have the power to transform us?



Art/Mind: Promoting Mental Health Awareness Through An Educational Modern Art Exhibit

Alpha Lambda Zeta Chapter
Asnuntuck Community College
Enfield, Connecticut

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) have been in a state of transformational restructuring for this past year, but one issue has remained stagnant despite student outcry: mental health care for community college students. The conversation surrounding mental health issues has completely changed in recent years, and students' need for services has remained unmet. In response, the passionate staff at Asnuntuck Community College (ACC) developed a Wellness Center with integrated community services connecting students with care. This initiative inspired our chapter to analyze the subject of mental health and wellness: how it has transformed over time, and how we can address the pervasive stigma surrounding mental illness to increase the accessibility of resources to students on campus. Our priority became to investigate the situation through diverse study into the topic of mental health and its manifestation on campus. Through discussions with the Director of the Wellness Center and by conducting academic research, we found that mental health is affected by numerous issues, particularly among community college populations. Our research led us to the importance of developing coping skills and utilizing local services for improving and maintaining mental health. Our focus was to determine how to promote awareness of this topic and these services effectively, which led to the inspiration for our final action. Our chapter sought to bring these issues to the forefront of our community's attention. We designed an exhibit featuring art, education, and local resources to transform participants' perception

of mental health issues and empower them to take charge of their own mental health. This exhibit impacted over 50 individuals and will be continued in the spring semester.

Objectives

After preliminary research into various themes within Phi Theta Kappa's 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change," our chapter found a common interest: mental health. This unified interest determined our guiding theme, "Politics of Identity." Based on this theme, our chapter developed a question to focus our research: "How has increased mental health awareness transformed discussions about mental illness in local and global communities?"

Through our research question, we set the following objectives to diversify our intentional research into the topic:

1. Examine mental health and mental illness through various perspectives, including race, gender, nationality, age, art, education, and history.
2. Track how mental health discussions and mental illness treatment have transformed over the years and in different communities.
3. Analyze how people have attempted to combat stigma.
4. Connect our research to the issues unfolding on campus.

Our overall, long-term goal was to connect individuals with care through stigma reduction and to promote resources and information about the importance of mental health. To accomplish this goal, the following objectives were set for our project action:

1. Design and execute an art showcase about mental illness highlighting the evolution in methods of treatment and recovery.
2. Empower and educate students to take charge of their own mental health as we learned that self-assessment produced the best results for seeking care.
3. Familiarize ourselves, our campus, and our community with the stigma associated with mental illness.
4. Create and further the local narrative about mental health conversation.

5. Evaluate mental health awareness on our campus through the use of a survey.

In order to complete this project as effectively as possible, we set the following objectives for collaboration:

1. Work with students to acquire artwork on various mental health topics to showcase at the exhibit.
2. Reach out to local mental health organizations for material about coping strategies, warning signs, public support organizations, and mindfulness.
3. Collaborate with and promote the Wellness Center at our college.

Academic Investigation

Viewpoints on mental health issues have evolved over time. While mental illness has historically been either dismissed or demonized, medical advances and an overall more informed population have contributed to social inclusivity for those living with mental illnesses. This shift has led to a focus on recovery and maintaining mental health. We explored the subject of mental health issues through a multicultural lens. Across the globe, misinformation regarding mental health remains pandemic. Even within our own nation, cultural differences can lead to differences in opinion, experience, and quality of care. These differences in social identities led our investigation to focus on methods of stigma reduction as a communal goal. To promote discussion regarding mental health issues, we learned that taking a multi-pronged approach was best. Discrimination and stigma remain a persistent threat to fostering mental health and seeking treatment for mental illness. Discriminatory historical traditions are perpetuated through narratives that portray the mentally ill as dangerous and untrustworthy.

Conclusions

To reduce this stigma, the best tools to utilize are education, contact, and bias feedback. As mental health enters mainstream dialogue, increased access and awareness of tools that address bias and share individual experiences are vital in transforming perception and treatment of mental illness. Our research suggested that to advocate for mental health and create a positive change

on our campus, it would be effective to portray the topic through a contemporary perspective. We analyzed creative methods used for stigma reduction and determined that incorporating art into social action projects permits an inclusive and holistic approach that targets different communities and generations. There was evidence that positive associations toward mental health reduce stigma overall, which subsequently increases access to mental health services for those who need it.

Action

The studies that were most influential to our final action included the Rural Art Roadshow, the California Mental Illness Stigma Reduction Campaign, the student-led campaign from a

4. local organizations and resources for individuals who may wish to seek help for themselves or others, and
5. a survey to measure impact and encourage conversation beyond the exhibit.

Each element of this process was the result of collaboration with local resources. Our college's Wellness Center and its operatives were a source of inspiration and education. ACC's psychology department provided substantive education and advice on the content of our work. They were pivotal to our ability to craft our surveys in a professional and unbiased manner. For the portion of our action addressing local organizations and resources, we worked closely with the Jordan Porco Foundation's 9 Out of 10 Ambassadors to raise awareness about suicide prevention including spotting warning signs in loved ones. The Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative provided a breadth of resources about the addiction connection to mental illness, as well as information on local organizations including the Foundation's partner, the Wheeler Clinic.



Figure 1

small campus, and the school-based mindfulness program. From these articles, we were inspired to use art as a means of relaying the importance of mental health to participants. We established an interactive exhibit on mental health issues at our college (Figure 1) with a digitized version available for those who could not make it to campus, titled "ArtMind." To address our objectives, we included the following components in our exhibit:

1. art, including photography, prose, music, film, and poetry, showcasing mental illness narratives,
2. information about mindfulness and coping skills,
3. a timeline of advances in mental health treatment and outcomes spanning millennia,

Impact

To measure our outcomes, we encouraged participants to take a pre-survey before viewing our exhibit, followed by a longer post-survey. These surveys assessed how participants interacted with mental health in the following ways: their

ease of discussion, familiarity with the topic, and knowledge of coping mechanisms. We had a total of 74 respondents. A comparison of the results of the pre- and post-surveys can be found in Figure 2.

The post-survey included a section specifically to measure the event's effectiveness. Results from this portion can be found in Figure 3. These results showed that we were successful in our goal of familiarizing our campus community with resources and the stigma associated with mental illness. Following the event, participants chose a neutral or above response far more than a negative response.

One confounding variable for our quantitative survey outcomes was that people interested in our

Figure 2

Percentage of Alignment with Statements Assessing Mental Health Issue Familiarity and Comfort Level Before and After Exposure to Art/Mind Exhibit

■ Pre-Survey
■ Post-Survey

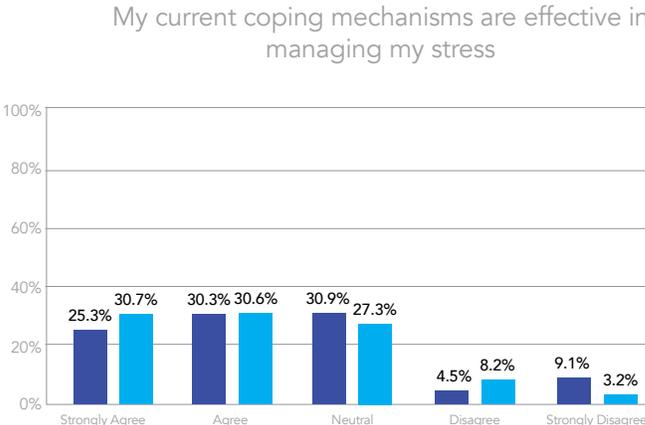
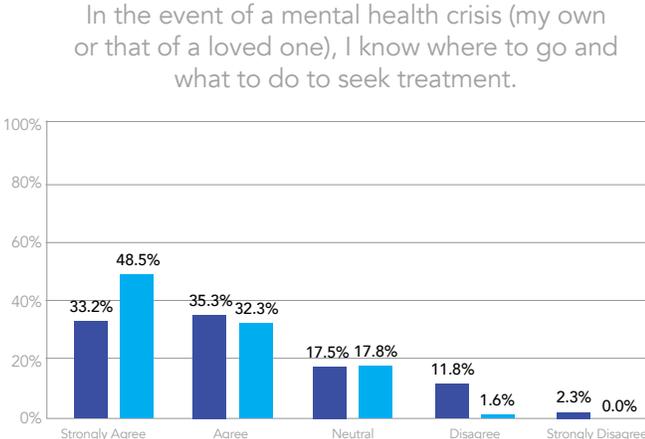
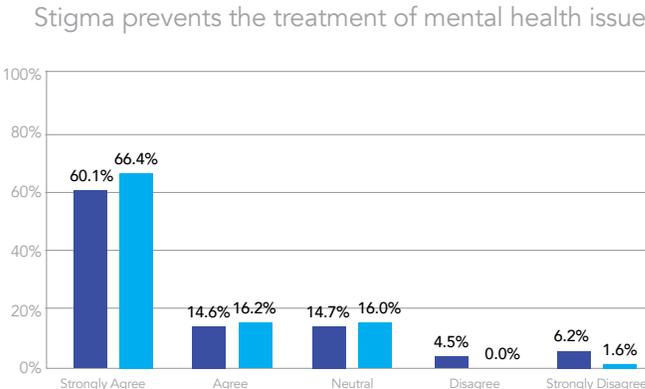
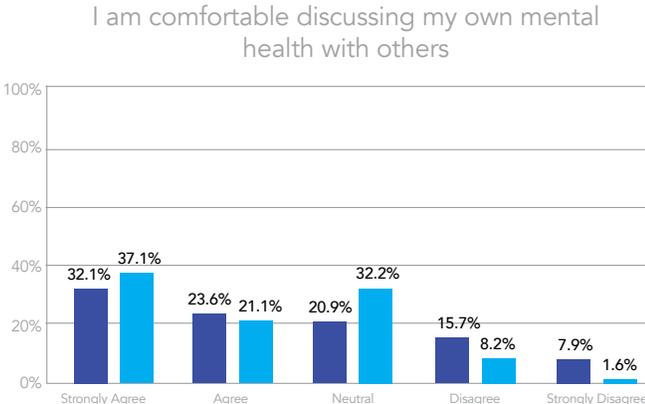
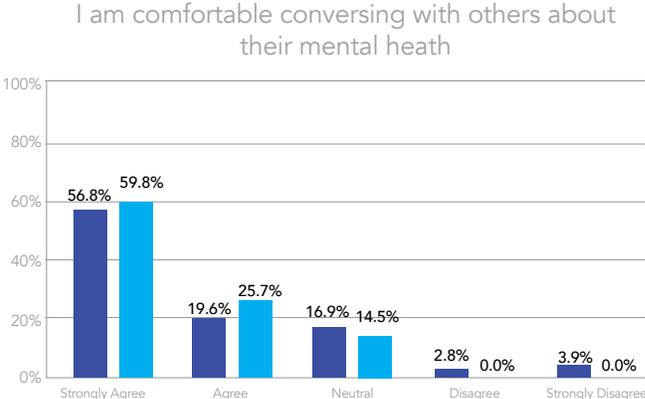
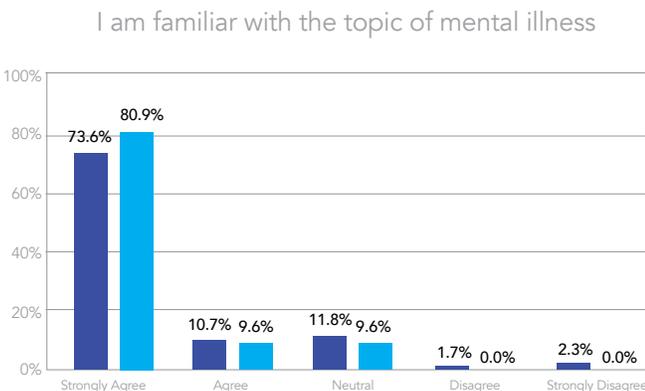
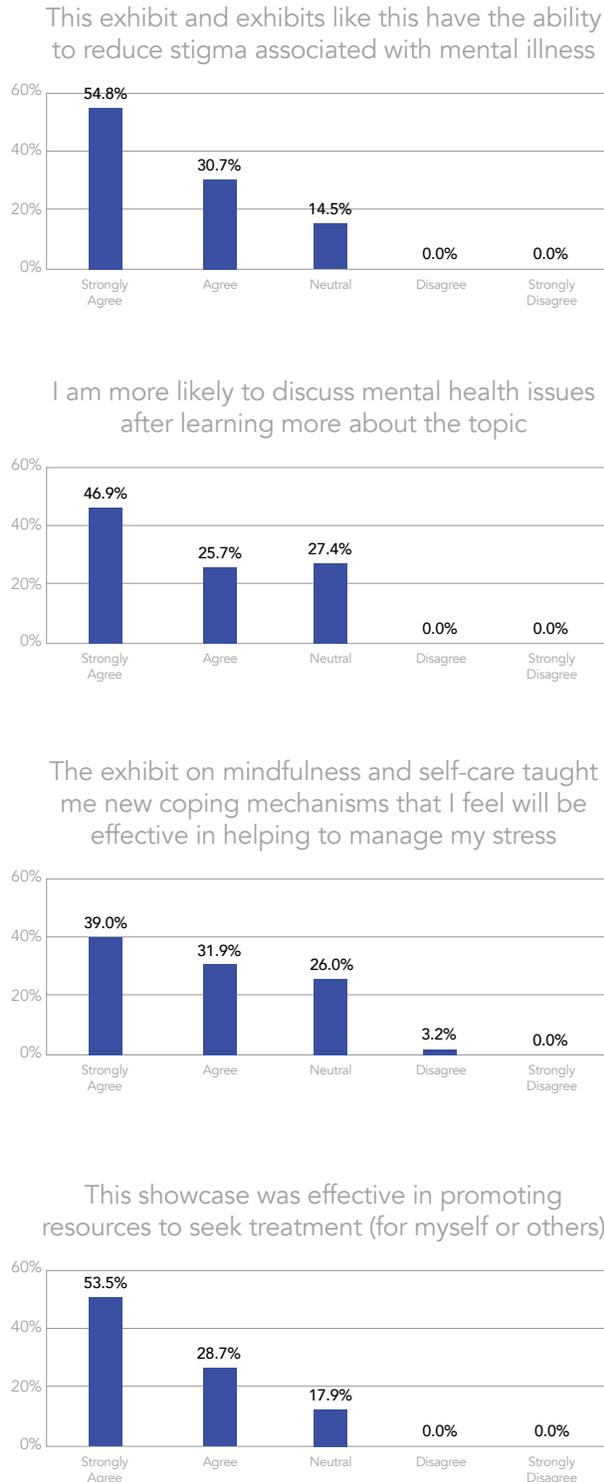


Figure 3

Percentage of alignment with statements assessing event effectiveness



project were primarily people who were familiar with the topic of mental illness and would not be shocked by exposure to it. To combat this in the future, we are running the event again during the first few weeks of spring semester classes where the exhibit will be exposed to a broader population who will not have to extend extra effort to attend. Additionally, we will rework survey questions to better measure the effectiveness of our event.

In the post-survey, we provided individuals with a space to give us feedback on the effectiveness of the exhibit and how it can be improved in the future. Every aspect of the exhibit was brought up as being valuable. Of particular note were the photography and the resources on coping mechanisms. Constructive criticism recommended that we expand the exhibit to include more artwork, run it for a longer period of time, and include more resources at the end. One individual suggested a panel discussion inviting guest speakers and holding open forums. Regarding the impact, one student asked us to look up the walk-in hours for our local Community Health Resources office for her own personal use. It meant so much to us that we were able to help this one student directly make a positive change in her life. Another member of the community reached out and thanked us for including the information on coping mechanisms, noting that she intends to use what she learned in her daily life.

We were congratulated by the Director of the Wellness Center on our project's professionalism, and we received a request to repeat the event in the future due to its importance. Many individuals expressed that our exhibit brought the subject of mental health and mental illness to the forefront on campus, provided a sense of community to those suffering from mental illness, and enhanced open communication about mental health on our college campus and in our local community. Our chapter developed as individuals and leaders over the course of planning and executing this event. We developed survey writing skills, researched methods for conducting an interactive event, and learned crucial information about local mental health resources. Particularly with the latter, we improved as leaders and provided resources for students who need help or want to learn more about mental health.

Resources

Giroux, D. & Geiss, E. (2019). Evaluating a student-led mental health awareness campaign. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, 24(1), 61–66. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.acc.idm.oclc.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN24.1.61>

Our chapter was inspired by this article since it reflected our own campus situation. The study assessed an awareness campaign with the goal of reducing stigma and promoting resources. While our event differed, this article laid a foundation for our work. The article suggested that student-led awareness campaigns had “potential to both target stigma and increase help-seeking among college students.” It inspired us to utilize that model.

Young, R. E., Goldberg, J. O., Struthers, C. W., McCann, D., & Phillips, C. E. (2019). The subtle side of stigma: Understanding and reducing mental illness stigma from a contemporary prejudice perspective. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(3), 943–971. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12343>

This article detailed the most effective methods of combating stigma: education, contact, and bias feedback. We focused on education and contact, as the suggested resource for bias feedback - a word association survey through Harvard - wasn't feasible for our event's scope. However, we shaped our exhibit with the concept of implicit bias in mind, specifically choosing works of art that challenged people's perceptions about the experience of being mentally ill.

Collins, R. L., Wong, E. C., Breslau, J., Burnam, M. A., Cefalu, M., & Roth, E. (2019). Social marketing of mental health treatment: California's mental illness stigma reduction campaign. *American Journal of Public Health*, 109, S228–S235. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305129>

This article demonstrated that campaigns that emphasize the need for resources are effective. In our event, students shared their personal battles with mental illness to spark discussion and personal reflection in other students and the general public. The article also provided insight on developing pathways to connect students with

care, which led to our inclusion of local resources in our on-campus event.

Barnett, T., de Deuge, J., & Bridgman, H. (2019). Promoting mental health through a rural art roadshow: Perspectives of participating artists. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 13, 44. Retrieved from [doi:10.1186/s13033-019-0302-y](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-019-0302-y)

This article served as a wildcard in our research but nevertheless proved to be the catalyst for our entire project. Its description of an event that used art to portray perspectives about mental illness to a community transformed our understanding of how to conduct an awareness event. The Rural Art Roadshow served the purpose of increasing awareness, highlighting services, and eliminating stigma. It had a strong focus on inclusivity. We aimed to bring inclusivity to our event by using multi-media and, thus, making our work accessible to a wider range of people. Results of this study showed greater levels of conversation amongst participants, which related intimately to our research goals.

Hutchinson, J. K., Huws, J. C., & Dorjee, D. (2018). Exploring experiences of children in applying a school-based mindfulness programme to their lives. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, 27(12), 3935–3951. Retrieved from <https://doiorg.acc.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1221-2>

This article reflected the evolution of mental health in education. Elementary schools are beginning to enable young children to be aware of and maintain their mental state, as it is the base of all learning outcomes. The authors brought attention to mindfulness and its importance in maintaining mental health. This focus ultimately became its own exhibit within our showcase.

Torquati, L., Mielke, G. I., Brown, W. J., Burton, N. W., & Kolbe-Alexander, T. L. (2019). Shift work and poor mental health: A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *American Journal of Public Health*, 109(11), e13–e20. Retrieved from <https://doiorg.acc.idm.oclc.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305278>

It is not unusual that a community college student has to juggle work and school while working during unconventional hours. This article relates

to us by acknowledging the fact that our mental health is negatively affected by sleep deprivation and lack of balance between work, school, and leisure time. It shows how self-care promotion can be beneficial to minimizing poor mental health. This research led to our inclusion of self-care tactics including information on meditation as a form of stress relief, sleep hygiene, and the importance of rest.

Canas, E., Lachance, L., Phipps, D., & Birchwood, C. C. (2019). What makes for effective, sustainable youth engagement in knowledge mobilization? A perspective for health services. *Health Expectations*, 22(5), 874–882. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12918>

This article made clear the necessity of connecting youths with mental health care. Not only does it help them as individuals but, through this connection, they are often empowered to help others. The authors argued that, “Youth engagement is committed to social justice, the foregrounding of previously marginalized perspectives and the practice of continuous reflexivity upon issues of power and privilege.” Helping people who are struggling with mental health issues has a snowball effect that helps the world.

Rennick-Egglestone, S., Ramsay, A., McGranahan, R., Llewellyn-Beardsley, J., Hui, A., Pollock, K., Repper, J., Yeo, C., Ng, F., Roe, J., Gillard, S., Thornicroft, G., Booth, S., & Slade, M. (2019). The impact of mental health recovery narratives on recipients experiencing mental health problems: Qualitative analysis and change model. *PL OS ONE*, 14(12), 1–23. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.acc.idm.oclc.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0226201>

This was one of the final articles we found as we transitioned from research to action. It was pivotal to use personal narratives as a form of “contact” with our participants and the mentally ill community. This article further solidified our research conclusions, while providing additional insight into the importance of creating a multimedia, interactive narrative experience. The authors contended, “Interventions should incorporate a diverse range of narratives available

through different mediums to enable a range of recipients to connect with and benefit from this material.” While what we accomplished is far from an intervention, we nevertheless took the article’s advice in incorporating a range of mediums including text, photo, video, audio, and tactile activities into our event.



Exploring Disparities in Healthcare Based on Identities

Beta Alpha Tau Chapter
Community College of Baltimore County,
Dundalk Campus
Baltimore, Maryland

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

For our Honors in Action project, our team began by reviewing the Honors Study Topic, “Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change.” We discussed each theme and how it relates to transformations. Our discussion turned into a focus on how modern technology transforms people’s lives, which revealed our chapter members’ mutual interests in healthcare. We brainstormed ideas and eventually agreed on looking at inequalities in healthcare. Realizing our interests best fell into “Politics of Identity,” we wanted to answer the question, “How do the ways in which people and communities identify themselves and others transform societies?” Through our HIA process, the following question emerged, “How does someone’s identity (sex/gender, age, race, immigration status, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status) impact the quality of healthcare they receive?” We discussed with members of our community their healthcare experiences and discovered that our experiences were not unique. Research into the topic revealed that our assumptions were accurate, and disparities based on identity do exist. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and most inhuman.” This, in addition to our research, led us to develop a plan of action and decide who to collaborate with to achieve the most change. We determined that educating members of our community on this topic was essential so that people could act upon the inequalities, becoming self-advocates. Through educational forums, local events, and engagement

in the college community and beyond, we were able to successfully transform the minds of students and members of our community.

Objectives

The following are the objectives our chapter created after our decision to explore healthcare to guide intentional research:

1. gain understanding of the Honors Study Guide and the theme “Politics of Identity” through investigation of the impact identity has on quality of healthcare and how that transforms the communities affected,
2. examine a minimum of 15 peer-reviewed articles with varying points of view pertaining to how identities affect quality of healthcare,
3. meet objectives 1 and 2 by the end of summer semester, and
4. after research, determine conclusions with chapter to design an action plan that correlated with findings.

Our team’s collaboration objectives were to:

1. work with organizations/clubs within the college to expand our chapter’s outreach and advocacy,
2. work with organizations within the community to expand our chapter’s outreach advocacy, and
3. work with an organization outside the state to expand our chapter’s outreach and advocacy.

Our action objectives were to:

1. support legislation and laws that work to bridge gaps in equality in healthcare,
2. petition against legislation and laws that will increase inequalities in healthcare,
3. raise awareness about current disparities in healthcare, and
4. educate others about disparities that directly impact their community healthcare.

Academic Investigation

Our chapter started our research by exploring the question, “How do the ways in which people and communities identify themselves and others transform societies?” with a focus on transformations in healthcare. At the beginning of our research, we exclusively looked for academic, peer-reviewed resources. Struggling to avoid

opinion pieces, our team sought the assistance of our college librarian to steer us to the type of sources that best suited our research needs. She helped us navigate our college’s database that houses academic journals. This research was preliminary and specifically undertaken to help us formulate our research question. Through this, our team developed the question “How does someone’s identity (sex/gender, age, race, immigration status, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status) impact the quality of healthcare they receive?” In order to answer this question, we started locally by using Maryland’s Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities as a resource. This resource highlighted the sex, racial, and ethnic healthcare disparities in Maryland. These disparities include the fact that African Americans are more likely than other demographic groups to experience heart disease, cancer, stroke, bloodstream infections, kidney diseases, HIV, diabetes, and homicide. As for Hispanics, AIDS, obesity, and teen pregnancy occur at higher rates than Whites. Asian Americans are 18 times more likely to acquire tuberculosis and experience stomach cancer, a rate that falls just under three times the rate of Whites.

For our research into disparities in the United States, we initially divided the research by identities. With this method, we found that the disparities based on age and sex were the most prevalent when combined with other identities such as race or ethnicity.

For example, Hispanic women are twice as likely to contract cervical cancer, and African American women have a higher risk of high blood pressure and hemorrhage. The frequency and intensity of the disparities concerning race and ethnicity were overwhelming.

African Americans have the highest prevalence of asthma. Hispanics are 50 percent more likely to die from diabetes than Whites. Native Americans have the highest percentage of obesity, are sixty percent more likely to have a stroke, and are thirty percent more likely to be diagnosed with cancer.

Inequities in healthcare are also extensive for those who identify in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual spectrum (LGBTQIA+). For example, as a whole, the community experiences higher rates of smoking, substance abuse, obesity, sexually transmitted illnesses, and violence against them. Disparities in healthcare towards the LGBTQIA+ community worsen when factoring in race and ethnicity.

Conclusions

We continued our research into how socioeconomic status impacts healthcare and anticipated there would be disparities exacerbated when combined with other categories of identification. What we did not expect or anticipate was what the impact of having a higher socioeconomic status would mean for these disparities. We found that disparities in healthcare that are related to identity almost completely diminish when a person falls within a high socioeconomic status. Wanting to unveil the reasons behind this, we further analyzed our research to find that insurance can be a large factor. For those in racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation minorities, it is harder to access healthcare. Nationally, 21% of Hispanics and 11% of African Americans are uninsured. This leads to a lack of preventative care. Finally, education is a pivotal piece necessary to alleviate healthcare disparities. Upon review of additional research, we ascertained that higher socioeconomic status typically includes a higher level of education. This tends to correlate with a higher sense of self and can result in one making better lifestyle choices and being more likely to effectively self-advocate. Our team's research helped us effectively answer our research question. One's identity directly affects the quality of healthcare received. Those who identify or are perceived as minorities in the groups we explored are subjected to a less-than-ideal quality of healthcare. Disparities in healthcare become apparent when factoring in race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, and, especially, when there is a combination of these identities. A lower standard of healthcare for these groups negatively transforms their daily lives. These disparities occur because of perceptions, stigmas, and stereotypes that are institutionalized into the healthcare industry.

Action

For the service portion of our HIA plan, we wanted to bridge gaps in social determinants for our local community. We did this by creating "survival kits" for the homeless in collaboration with our college's Student Life Office and the Healthcare for the Homeless organization (HCH). These kits included items requested by HCH and were distributed to the homeless population in Baltimore. Also, members volunteered with the Rise Against Hunger event on our college campus. Volunteering with this international organization included raising money to support its work, packaging meals, and collecting non-perishable items for our campus' student pantry. For the Rise Against Hunger event, we collaborated with our Office of Intercultural Engagement, who scheduled the event. Finally, our chapter volunteered with Giving Tuesday, a national day of giving that our college uses as an opportunity to collect monetary donations for our student pantries. We worked with Institutional Advancement Department personnel who organize this college-wide initiative. Volunteering included educating students about access to the pantry, asking for donations, but also educating about food insecurity. Our chapter added a deeper level to this by connecting information about food insecurity to health.

In addition to working with initiatives on campus related to our research, our chapter saw the importance of addressing both direct and indirect political influence. To achieve this, we signed and promoted petitions that advocated mental health reform, access to healthcare for all, and rural access to critical care. We contacted our local, state, and federal legislators asking to schedule a meeting to discuss healthcare disparities. Receiving no verbal responses, our chapter sent written letters advocating for reform and representation in our healthcare system. Through other avenues, we were able to speak with one of our state delegates, a State Senator, and a representative of our County Executive. In these conversations, we proposed voting for legislation that would directly affect disparities happening in our community and to consider healthcare disparities when voting. For the legislative component of our project, our chapter worked closely with the Student Government Association to

reach a wider audience for our petitions and to take advantage of their connections with local politicians.

Along with our service and legislative initiatives, we hosted six educational forums throughout the semester. In these, we used tri-fold boards and PowerPoint presentations to educate our community about specific healthcare disparities and the reasons why they occur. We held these forums at different times throughout the semester to maximize their reach. Our chapter also participated in a Community College of Baltimore County student-led community forum focusing on addiction and mental health. We were able, through conversations, to educate about disparities in mental healthcare with those who participated in our educational forums. To educate participants about specific identities and connected disparities, we engaged in conversations about students' personal healthcare experiences, and we collectively discussed how to fight back against these injustices in collaboration with the Gender and Sexuality Acceptance Club and the Multicultural Student Association.

Impact

Our quantitative outcomes included the following. We:

1. packaged and donated 50 survival kits to an organization that is international in scope
2. raised over \$3,000 for student pantries,
3. signed 10 petitions that reflected our research,
4. averaged 43 people attending each of our college educational forums,
5. educated approximately 60 people at a community forum, and collected personal stories of 26 students.

Our qualitative outcomes included educating our community about the disparities in healthcare related to identity. One student said, "I had never thought about healthcare in these ways." Via our discussions and research presentations at our educational forums, we had an impact on participants' perspectives about our HIA research. As a result of our presentations and our work inviting and organizing collaborators, we reached new comfort levels with public speaking and with seeking resources within and outside the college. Since reaching these new comfort levels, we have more tools that have helped us become better

leaders. We realized through the HIA process, that everyone's input is vital, and, as a result, learned the value of teamwork.

Resources

AHC MEDIA. (2019). Transgender patients face many challenges in the healthcare system: *Hospital Case Management*, 27(12), N.PAG. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ccbcmd.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ccm&AN=139453147&site=eds-live&scope=site>

This article educated us on the discrimination that occurs in healthcare for transgender patients. The authors included information about discrimination that happens from healthcare providers themselves and from insurance companies. Also, the mention of social determinants and how they can impact the quality of healthcare helped guide our research on how critical healthcare is to quality of life. The most significant portion of the article for our team was the data provided about disparities faced by those who identify as transgender.

Alegría, M., Araneta, M. R., & Rivers, B. (2019). The National Advisory Council on Minority Health and Health Disparities Reflection. *American Journal of Public Health*, 109, S14–S15. Retrieved from <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105 AJPH.2019.304961>

This article recognized the level of forward progress that has been made in terms of closing the gap created by disparities in healthcare. To continue making breakthroughs in access to healthcare, there must be changes in criminal justice, education, welfare, and healthcare systems. The authors also illustrated the importance of legislation at the community, state, and federal levels, which directly led to a big piece of our action.

Dedania, R., & Gonzales, G. (2019). Disparities in Access to Health Care Among US-Born and Foreign-Born US Adults by Mental Health Status, 2013–2016. *American Journal of Public Health*, 109, S221–S227. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6595516/>

In this article, our chapter found evidence of disparities in healthcare based on immigration

status. These disparities were that medical treatment was nonexistent for a significant number of people who migrated to the United States due to the cost of healthcare, fear of deportation, stigmatization, and the complexity of the US's health insurance system. Also, this study found that immigrants were at a much higher risk of experiencing aggressive and malicious attitudes. All of these factors resulted in feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, and an overall negative state of mental health. This data showed our chapter on the cycle of disparities in healthcare.

Dye, B. A., Duran, D. G., Murray, D. M., Creswell, J. W., Richard, P., Farhat, T., Breen, N., & Engelgau, M. M. (2019, January). The Importance of Evaluating Health Disparities Research. *American Journal of Public Health, 109* (Sup 1), S34-S40. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6356135/>.

This study gave us our definition of disparities in healthcare. Also, the article educated us on the importance of studying disparities as they account for higher morbidity and mortality rates in minority communities. The authors explained the importance of avoiding mainstream bias that may result in misrepresentation of specific identities.

Hughes, M. C., Baker, T. A., Kim, H., & Valdes, E. G. (2019). Health behaviors and related disparities of insured adults with a health care provider in the United States, 2015–2016. *Preventive Medicine, 120*, 42–49. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30639668>

This study analyzed the relationship between insurance and disparities. The authors confirmed that even insured adults are not following recommended health guidelines. From reading this study, we concluded that insurance alone does not bridge disparities. The authors also examined how income, education, sex, race, and metropolitan status impact behaviors that affect health. Lower economic status and lower education are associated with lifestyle-related risks. This directly influenced our choice to use education as part of our action plan.

Kaye, H. S. (2019). Disability-related disparities in access to health care before (2008–2010) and after (2015–2017) the Affordable Care Act. *American Journal of Public Health, 109*(7), 1015–1021. Retrieved from <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305056?af=R>

Our chapter chose this article as one of our sources, and it had a major impact on our view of access to public healthcare. The Affordable Care Act made positive improvements in closing disparities in healthcare based on identity. The study showed that the legislation reduced rates among uninsured young adults with and without disabilities.

Ponce, A. N., Carr, E. R., Miller, R., Olezeski, C. L., & Silva, M. A. (2019). Psychologists as educators: Creating change in community mental health. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 50*(6), 427–433. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fpro0000253>

This journal expanded our understanding of the importance of mental healthcare. The authors explained the important role that mental health centers play in closing disparities in mental health. These centers, to adequately represent the communities they serve, have to be diverse and represent cultural identities of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religious faith.

Taylor, L. A. (2018). How do we fund flourishing? Maybe not through health care. *Hastings Center Report, 48*, S62–S66. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/hast.916>

The author of this article acknowledged social determinants like housing, nutrition, and support to be impactful regarding health outcomes and costs. The article focuses on efforts being put into place by cities to improve citizens' healthcare. These efforts included housing projects and food services. Though the author was against implementing this strategy into the American political system, the article led us to search for ways we could help the social determinants side of healthcare and directly impact our actions.



Using Immigrant Narratives to Transform Belief Systems

Omicron Psi Chapter
Grayson College
Denison, Texas

Theme

Systems of Belief

Abstract

Immigration is world history. Galvanized by recent events, Omicron Psi chapter members learned that competing belief systems about immigration often lead to the creation of offensive labels and stereotypes about immigrants. Opponents further use fear as a mechanism to transmit their beliefs. Members created teams to research systems of belief about immigration, how beliefs are changed, and how those changes transform society. Members learned in their research that people often avoid controversial topics but are open to exploring them when the approach is less confrontational. The team also discovered that sharing stories of people's lived experiences has the power to transform belief systems. Finally, members realized that immigration changes have come about not simply because members of persecuted groups stand up, but because upstanders join them. Members concluded that creating a display on campus in which immigrants shared their stories would be the best approach for changing beliefs. This awareness campaign fostered a greater sense of community within the chapter and on campus. It also has the potential for long-term impact as people move into various communities. These are powerful lessons in understanding "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change."

Objectives

The chapter's research objectives were as follows:

1. read the Honors Program Guide to better understand the Honors Study Topic,

“Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change,”

2. identify members to serve on the research team and create a research timeline,
3. conduct independent research to identify possible themes and questions for investigation,
4. provide opportunities for regular reflection of research during weekly meetings,
5. create opportunities and provide training for members to grow as scholars,
6. develop a better understanding of the transformative power of belief systems,
7. develop a better understanding of issues related to immigration, both globally and domestically, and
8. Review the research and use conclusions to develop an action component.

Our action and collaboration objectives were as follows:

1. collaborate with college administrators, faculty, staff, and students to create an awareness campaign regarding immigration,
2. create a communication plan for outreach to immigrants willing to share their immigration stories,
3. create a display to share information learned in research and the immigrants’ stories collected,
4. develop a marketing plan for advertising the display on campus and in the community,
5. gather relevant data related to creating the project and visitors to the display, and
6. reflect on the lessons learned from the project.

Academic Investigation

When Omicron Psi members began researching “Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change,” we explored various themes and research questions related to this topic for discussion at weekly meetings. In preparation for conducting academic research, members arranged research training with the college librarian. Members then advocated for research themes based on their findings. We narrowed our focus to Politics of Identity and Powers of Connection, then further centered on immigration, globally and domestically. Having gained a deeper understanding of the repetitive history of discrimination against immigrants as a global issue, members learned those attitudes centered

on belief systems. The team realized this direction actually fit best within the scope of Systems of Belief and began further exploration of beliefs about immigration as agents of transformation.

Human migration is a historical constant; people have been moving around the globe throughout history. Migratory hunter-gatherers moved to ensure a plentiful food and water supply. The rise of nation-states made such movement more complicated, but it did not end migration. People have continued to emigrate to escape poverty, crime, disease, famine, and persecution. The team learned that despite the universality of immigration, it has often been met with tremendous resistance. Discussion soon shifted to experiences our own members have had with the immigration process to the United States (U.S.) from applying for visas to seeking citizenship. Some faced only the expected challenges that come from working through bureaucratic regulations. One member, Abby, shared the challenges her family faced when her mother was deported, taking Abby with her. Abby’s father and brother, both of whom had legal status, remained in the U.S. The family was not able to reunite in the U.S. for 16 years, and then just two years later Abby’s father died. Abby’s story affected members significantly. Sadly, Abby’s story is not unique, as members’ research had clearly demonstrated. Members continued their research with additional motivation and passion to better understand this complicated issue.

Conclusions

Members’ research demonstrated how pervasive immigration controversy has been as part of American history. Irish Catholics and Chinese immigrants were opposed in the 19th Century; Jewish refugees were opposed in the 20th Century; Muslims and Hispanic immigrants are the primary groups facing opposition today. Those who seek to immigrate to the U.S. are often given offensive labels and stereotypes are attached, such as Muslims being labeled as “terrorists.” Immigration opponents often play upon people’s fears as a means of further growing the opposition movement. They make claims that immigrants are taking American jobs; however, the research does not support this. Opponents also ignore research that demonstrates the positive overall impact immigrants have had on the U.S. economy.

Members further learned immigrants help contribute to the nation's productivity and increase the number of consumers for goods produced, both of which stimulate the economy. However, immigration is not strictly an American issue. Today, Syrian refugees face challenges in finding countries willing to accept them. The Rohingya have faced violence for generations and are seeking to escape persecution by fleeing the Rakhine State, Myanmar. Members realized harmful stereotypes used in many opposing arguments create anxiety and fear about immigration.

Ultimately, this puts immigration at the center of two competing belief systems. Understanding this, members developed the research question, "How can belief systems about immigration change, and how do those changes have the power to transform our campus and community?" Though belief systems are tightly held, they can be changed; however, rarely can that be done through confrontation.

Members learned in their research people often avoid controversial topics but are open to exploring them when the approach is less confrontational. The team also discovered that sharing stories of people's lived experiences has the power to transform belief systems.

For immigration, people would be able to associate the issue with real people who have been harmed during their immigration journeys. Members looked again to history and realized immigration changes have come about because upstanders join members of persecuted groups in fighting for change. And in light of the fact immigration is no longer considered solely a national issue and states are starting to pass immigration laws, members realized change had to begin by focusing at the local level. Thinking critically about the breadth of their research provided members with tremendous insight into "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change". Members realized their belief systems changed through this research process, and they were transformed into upstanders. They

believed this knowledge could be used to provoke transformations in society. This left the team with a desire to bring this knowledge onto campus and into the community to transform others' belief systems regarding immigration.

Action

In investigating Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change, members learned the role belief systems play in determining how people view issues such as immigration. Having learned, too, an awareness campaign focused on sharing immigrants' lived experiences would have greater impact on changing beliefs, the team began planning an awareness display on campus. A possible roadblock emerged when sharing the project plans with administrators. Due to the controversial nature of the topic, administrators were wary of possible conflict on campus. The team shared what they learned in their research about approaching the topic in a nonconfrontational manner. With that assurance, administrators agreed to support the project.

Members met with the international students' advisor (ISA) and laid out their ideas for collecting and displaying immigrants' stories. The advisor agreed to help connect members with international students and suggested International Students Day as the best time to open the display so the two groups could work collaboratively to support each other's projects that day and increase turnout. A team of members met with the college's marketing department to receive guidance on creating the display and marketing it to the campus and community. Marketing agreed to create a graphic for the display, "This is America," which would be shared on the college's website, social media channels, and digital monitors. Marketing also helped identify a location on campus that would generate the most foot traffic. Members worked with the student life director to obtain event approval and set the official opening date. Members created a questionnaire to share with immigrants so they could tell their stories. Questions focused on their immigration experiences, as well as personal information such as their plans for the future. The hope was by focusing on them as individuals, it would help others see them first as people and start to transform their beliefs about immigration.

Members worked with the ISA to contact international students to ask them to respond to the questionnaire. Members also reached out to Society members from other chapters, as well as alumni. A strict timeline was set for returning the questionnaires so members could format and print them for the display. Because members wanted visitors to the display to better understand their own connection to immigration, an interactive element was added. A large world map was installed, and visitors were invited to place pins in the map to identify the nation(s) from which they or their families originated. Additionally, a section of the display was dedicated to sharing information from the research, including sections on debunking myths about immigration and providing examples of times in history that closing borders to those fleeing persecution has ended in tragedy.

Impact

Chapter members grew through their research, learning to set aside preconceived notions and investigate multiple perspectives. Ten members gathered over 100 sources during their research and significantly improved their research skills. Twenty members worked together on the action portion, improving their communication and leadership skills. Weekly meetings with advisors helped members meet all of their project timelines. Members also learned to work through differences of opinion by having open and honest conversations about a difficult topic. One member encountered strong opposition from her family regarding immigration stating, "I found the strength to articulate my beliefs even though they were completely different than what I had been taught growing up." Members collected over 50 stories from immigrants from 26 countries. In just three weeks, over 1,100 people visited the display, and over 200 individuals placed pins in the world map to showcase the nations where they or their families originated.

Many of the members were able to contribute their immigration stories to the project, permitting the chapter to understand how close to home this issue really is. Embracing this vulnerability allowed members to grow closer by recognizing that while they come from varying backgrounds, their strength emanates from their differences.

Recognizing how many had their own belief systems transformed through this project, members understood the power advocacy has to bring forth significant societal change. Members also learned how diverse the campus and community are and the value that stems from that diversity. Through their reflection, they also understood better that immigration is world history. The conversations being held today are not new, and immigration is not strictly a U.S. issue. Members learned, though, the importance of being upstanders as agents of change. Further, members hoped that by addressing the issue locally, the project helped change others' beliefs, and they will find themselves transformed. Members want that transformation to spread as people go out into various communities. Finally, members have grown as scholars and leaders. They learned how to use the information they researched, connect it to issues within the community, as well as nationally and globally, and actively address those issues to improve themselves and society. All who participated in the project feel they have grown and better understand, as well as find value in, leading a life of service. They now recognize that it is the only way to ensure transformation and progress.

Resources

Orrenius, P.M. & Zavodny, M. (2007). Does immigration affect wages? A look at occupation-level evidence. *Labour Economics*, 14, 757-773. Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp2481.pdf>

This article addressed the ways in which immigration impacts natives' wages. While immigration can negatively impact the wages of native blue-collar workers, there was no effect on natives in skilled occupations.

Albarracín, D. & Kumkale, G. T. (2003). Affect as information in persuasion: A model of affect identification and discounting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(3), 453-469. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2003-01588-002>

This article explained how controversial topics deter individuals from becoming involved. However, we can create an engaging environment by using awareness as a form of conversation. This allows the positive discussion of sensitive topics.

Sternberg, E. (2011). A self-fulfilling prophecy: Linking belief to behavior. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1234(1), 98-99. Retrieved from <https://nyaspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1749-6632.2011.06184.x>

This article illustrated that when exposed to others' experiences, such as a child's suicide due to bullying, people's beliefs are impacted regardless of personal experience. Therefore, sharing experiences, or stories, could transform someone's beliefs without confrontation. By intentionally providing new perspectives, it is possible to combat the broken narrative surrounding topics, such as immigration, and to introduce a new outlook.

Myers, J. (2017). Orange is the new white: Trump's "Brand" of whiteness, its transformation of the brown body, and its effect on immigration policy and socioracial ideology in the United States. *Arizona Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 6, 33-44. Retrieved from <https://journals.uair.arizona.edu/index.php/azjis/article/view/21777/21323>

This article detailed how U.S. politics is focused on "anti-brown bodies," because the current administration associates "brown bodied" people with rapists and murderers, which has driven much of the contemporary rhetoric about immigration.

Johnson, K.R. (2012). Immigration and civil rights: Is the "New" Birmingham the same as the "Old" Birmingham? *The William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal*, 21(2), 367-397. Retrieved from <https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1638&context=wmborj>

Responding to the perception the federal government is failing to control immigration, states have begun passing immigration-related laws. In Alabama, limiting educational access is at the center of the immigration issue just as it was historically in the African American Civil Rights Movement. Additionally, this article demonstrated the importance of advocacy at the state and local level for issues that were once considered strictly federal matters.

Tichenor, D. (2015). The political dynamics of unauthorized immigration: Conflict, change,

and agency in time. *Polity*, 47(3), 283-301. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1057/pol.2015.11>

Tichenor studied immigration policy history, the struggles surrounding illegal immigration, and the differences surrounding policy reform. Rather than being passive in this struggle, immigrants and their supporters have played a vital role in this political dialogue.

Brader, T., Valentino, N.A., and Suhay, E. (2008). What triggers public opposition to immigration? Anxiety, group cues, and immigration threat. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(4), 959-978. Retrieved from <http://pscourses.ucsd.edu/ps100da/Brader%20What%20Triggers%20Public%20Opposition%20to%20Immigration.pdf.pdf>

This article explained how group cues influence opinion and political action on immigration by triggering anxiety. News about the costs of immigration prompts white opposition when a differing group, such as Latino immigrants, are featured. The authors suggested the public is susceptible to manipulation through the triggering of this anxiety independent of any actual threat posed by the specific immigrant group.

Nethery, A. (2009). "A modern-day concentration camp": Using history to make sense of Australian immigration detention centres. In Neumann K. & Tavan G. (Eds.), *Does History Matter? Making and Debating Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Policy in Australia and New Zealand*, 65-80. Canberra, Australia: ANU Press.

This article dove into the harsh similarities between the recent detention facilities in modern day Australia and camps during World War II in Germany. This article showed how eerily similar facilities in these countries are with those that are currently found on the southern border of the United States.



Safe Zone Alabama

Beta Lambda Delta Chapter
 Jefferson State Community College,
 Shelby Campus
Birmingham, Alabama

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

Our Honors in Action project—Safe-Zone Alabama—focused on transforming the cultural climates of the 23 colleges in the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) to make them safer, more inclusive places for LGBTQ community members. Our project began at our annual planning retreat. While studying the Honors Program Guide, a brave new member came out to us as non-binary and shared their struggles to feel fully included at JSCC. Their story led us to focus on Theme Three—Politics of Identity—as it related to LGBTQ students. We surveyed students at our college. Nearly 500 students responded, and they told us that many LGBTQ community members did not feel physically or emotionally safe. We then analyzed over 40 academic sources addressing this topic. We concluded that Jefferson State Community College (JSCC) was not the only Alabama campus dealing with this crisis. Moreover, our research showed that safe-zone training for faculty and staff members could make an immediate, transformational difference for students. To act, we hosted LGBTQ safe zone training open to every ACCS college. Fifty-seven educators from 21 educational institutions from across Alabama participated, resulting in a trained safe-zone faculty or staff member being available to 157,539 students who previously did not have an identifiable ally at their campus or institution.

Objectives

Our research objectives included:

1. conducting a preliminary survey to assess the status of LGBTQ students at Jefferson State,

2. creating a five-member team to oversee our research and analyze our findings,
3. studying and annotating at least 40 academic sources that addressed our topic from various perspectives,
4. using sources drawn from multiple genres, including academic books, articles, surveys, and interviews, and
5. holding a scholarly debate to identify and articulate our research conclusions.

To act, we decided to offer safe-zone training to all ACCS schools. Our action objectives included:

1. inviting one faculty and one staff member from each of Alabama's 23 community colleges (and other area schools/nonprofits) to Safe-Zone Alabama,
2. expanding safe-zone training into geographic areas less welcoming to the LGBTQ community,
3. offering this training free of charge,
4. working with experienced LGBTQ educational experts to conduct the training,
5. staying in close communication throughout all project stages through weekly meetings and our online project forum, and
6. assessing our work after our event.

Our collaboration objectives included:

1. writing for and receiving grant funding from community partners,
2. inviting the ACCS to support and promote our event, and
3. spreading awareness to a wide audience through media coverage of our event.

Academic Investigation

We began by investigating the status of LGBTQ students at Jefferson State by administering a campus-wide survey. Of our 475 respondents, 50% strongly or somewhat felt that the college was unsafe. We compared these numbers with a "snapshot" of LGBTQ students in Alabama compiled by the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network. These statistics confirmed that LGBTQ students face severely elevated risks of experiencing harassment and physical violence. This preliminary research helped us to formulate our two-part research question that addressed both assessing and achieving change:

- What is the current cultural climate on campus for LGBTQ college students?
- Could we transform this climate through intentional intervention and training?

Conclusions

After analyzing over 40 scholarly sources, we held a research symposium to debate our findings. Our goal was to listen to the broad perspectives in our sources yet reach data-driven consensus. These conclusions emerged: LGBTQ students have the right to be fully themselves at school by being out, and they have the right to feel safe at school (Biegel, 2010). LGBTQ students experience higher rates of facing physical harassment, verbal harassment, and risk of suicidal ideation compared to non-LGBTQ students (Moran et al., 2018). Educators often feel ill-equipped to respond to acts of bullying directed towards LGBTQ students (Dragowski et al., 2016). Process-based LGBTQ safe-zone training programs for higher education professionals are a highly effective way to improve campus safety. (Ballard, et al., 2008). The best safe zone is a person (Roestone Collective, 2014).

Action

On November 15, 2019, we hosted a day-long seminar of safe-zone training—Safe-Zone Alabama—open to the entire ACCS. (Figure 1) The day began with testimonials from LGBTQ students on why this training meant so much to them. Nationally recognized spoken word poet J.T. Bullock then performed a powerful original poem. Our morning session, led by Amanda Keller and Lauren Jacobs from the Magic City Acceptance Center (MCAC), concentrated on terminology, definitions, and working effectively with LGBTQ students. Topics covered included: sexual identity; gender identity, including cisgender, transgender, and non-binary; gender expression; and pronoun usage. For our afternoon session, we broke into small groups. Chapter members led these groups by workshopping real-world scenarios such as:

- "You overhear a student call another student a dyke. How do you respond?"
- "A student emails you and requests that you now use he/him/his instead of she/her/hers to address the student. What is the best way to respond?"

- “A student comes to you and reports self-harm due to being bullied for her membership in the LGBTQ community. What do you do?”

Working through these scenarios provided a chance for participants to collaborate and formulate their best responses. Several participants noted that they had been confronted with similar situations already, underscoring the relevance and timeliness of safe-zone training. Our day ended with a discussion of LGBTQ resources available in Alabama. We also announced that we had created an online portal where participants could report how they were using what they learned. Finally, we were able to give an abbreviated version of our safe-zone training at the Alabama Community College Association’s annual meeting in Montgomery, allowing us to reach even more constituents.

We could not have been successful without our collaboration partners. The LGBTQ Fund awarded us a grant of \$2,550, allowing us to advertise our event, pay expert lunch to attendees. The George and Genie Taylor Foundation gave us an additional \$1,000 to support our action. The LGBTQ Birmingham Educational Consortium became a charter member of this 15-member consortium of schools and non-profit organizations. We met with them twice to discuss the status of Birmingham LGBTQ students. This collaboration helped us learn about effective strategies in LGBTQ education. Professionals from the Magic City Acceptance Center (MCAC) facilitated the training for Safe-Zone Alabama. It was essential for us to bring in experts in the field. Many schools offer training by simply presenting downloaded Internet material. According to our research, this is not a best practice. We met with MCAC three times to refine the training for our specific audience. The Alabama Community College Human Resources Management Association provided us contact information for community college presidents and human resources directors across the state. They helped us publicize our event and emphasize its importance. The Shelby County Reporter published a pre-event article promoting our training, and it also provided

coverage of our actual event. These articles reached a readership of 200,000 readers.

Impact

Quantifiable data from our action revealed our project’s success. Fifty-seven educators from 21 institutions attended Safe-Zone Alabama, including representatives from 13 Alabama Community Colleges. Educators from five high schools/school systems, two non-profit institutions, and one four-year university also attended. In total, 157,539 students now have access to a safe zone advocate because of the training we offered. (Figure 2) Since our event provided the first training of its kind to



Figure 1

Alabama community colleges, we felt especially proud that over half of all ACCS schools chose to attend. Participants from colleges located in rural areas told us that they do not have the resources available to them that educators in metropolitan areas have. Therefore, we offered training to educators who were eager to learn but who lacked local resources to assist them. In addition, 98% of Safe-Zone Alabama attendees rated themselves as feeling more knowledgeable and equipped to support LGBTQ students after participating in our training.

As is often the case, though, our qualitative results tell an even richer story. One participant stated: “As an educator and as a parent of an LGBTQ kid, safe spaces on our college campuses are absolutely crucial to making our campuses welcoming to all students. If we wish to educate

Figure 2

Safe-Zone training participating institutions and students served

School/Institution	Number of students served
Alabama Possible	46,663
Auburn University	27,287
Bevill State CC	3,526
Calhoun CC	10,000
Central Alabama CC	2,451
Coastal Alabama CC	4,415
Drake State Technical and CC	1,384
Hewitt Trussville High School	1,438
Hoover High School	2,950
Jefferson State CC	8,943
Laswon State CC	5,460
Lurleen B. Wallace CC	1,790
Oak Mountain High School	1,558
Pelham High School	1,785
Reid State Technical College	760
Shelby County School System	22,000
Shelton State CC	5,307
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church	300
Snead State CC	2,436
Trenholm State CC	1,785
Wallace State CC	5,301
Total	157,539

students, we have to understand and incorporate their experiences into our pedagogy. Self-identity is a crucial component of anyone's experience, and educators have to embrace student's identities in order to educate them." Another participant reported: "Genetic testing has revealed that my daughter has a high amount of Y material in her chromosomes. This is the first time I have felt comfortable speaking about this in public. This seminar had confirmed that society will love my daughter no matter her identity." A JSCC administrator simply stated: "I believe this training will save a life."

Chapter members also grew through our work. At the beginning of our journey, some members shared that they did not understand LGBTQ issues, especially transgender rights. Other members responded with compassion. After researching and enacting this HIA initiative, all members are now staunch LGBTQ allies. We let the process work, so members' opinions evolved organically. No one forced them into positions. Instead, intentional research and interactions with others changed their minds. We reflected on our project at a post-event retreat. We noted that we learned the value of researching a topic, identifying a problem, crafting a solution, and assessing our work. Members recorded their experiences in reflective essays that we archived as part of our project's documentation. Reflections included: "The environment for Safe-Zone Alabama was unlike any other I have ever been a part of. I learned that I can achieve positive change and help make life better for others." "I learned many beneficial ways to help LGBTQ members of my personal community from LGBTQ members of our Jeff State community. It was amazing to see everyone so united for such a great cause!" "I learned how to create an action from the ground up instead of just volunteering for a few hours." "I never knew that so many students felt threatened simply for living their lives and being who they are. This is a global problem in need of a solution. I am dedicating my life to making the world safer. I am now a change agent!!"

While hanging posters advertising our event, a JSCC professor was threatened with physical violence. While this altercation left us shaken, it also left us absolutely convinced of the need for offering

safe-zone training. This was a threat we happened to hear about. How many other threats go unreported? LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff have a right to go to school on a campus that is safe and welcoming. They have a right to be fully, beautifully themselves. The book of First John says, "Perfect love casts out fear." We want to flood our campuses with love so that students are not afraid to be who they are. Our hope is that all Alabama community colleges truly become safe zones.

Resources

Ballard, S. L., Bartle, E., & Masequesmay, G. (2008). Finding queer allies: The impact of ally training and safe zone stickers on campus climate. *Institute of Education Sciences Report*. Retrieved from Publihttp://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=eric&AN=ED517219&site=eds-live

Professors Ballard and Masequesmay argued that safe-zone training is much more than a superficial discussion of LGBTQ issues or placing allyship stickers on faculty office doors. Instead, training is a lifetime commitment to supporting LGBTQ students. This study helped us to reconceptualize safe-zone training into an ongoing process that attends to evolving issues such as non-binary gender expression and pronoun usage.

Biegel, S. (2010.) *The right to be out: sexual orientation and gender identity in America's public schools*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

UCLA law professor Biegel supplied an overview of the legal aspects of coming out at school, ranging from Constitutional principles to case law and legal precedents. His work also enumerated several best practices we were able to use concerning how to craft LGBTQ policies for schools. For example, Professor Biegel's work clarified for the chapter that bringing in LGBTQ experts to lead safe-zone training was an essential best practice.

Campbell, B., & Manning, J. (2018.) *The rise of victimhood culture: Migroaggressions, safe spaces, and the new culture wars*. London, England: Palgrave MacMillan.

Professors Campbell and Manning disputed the necessity of safe spaces on college campuses.

They argued that the theoretical underpinnings of safe spaces rely on political correctness and repressive ideologies that limit free speech. We carefully considered these findings but concluded that a well-designed safe-zone program promotes dialogue instead of restricting speech. The study did, however, encourage us to approach safe-zone training thoughtfully by bringing multiple voices into the discussion.

Coley, J. (2019, June 7). Skype interview with Beta Lambda Delta Chapter.

Jonathan Coley, professor of sociology at Oklahoma State University, authored *Gay on God's campus: Mobilizing for LGBT equality at Christian colleges and universities* (2018). While ACCS institutions are public and secular, dominant local cultural norms caused us to anticipate receiving religious pushback against our project. During our 80-minute interview, Professor Coley offered invaluable insights on how to engage with religious opposition by appealing to overarching values of freedom and justice. Professor Coley also stated that creating safe spaces for coming out is the best way to create change for the LGBTQ community.

Dragowski, E. A., McCabe, P. C., & Rubinson, F. (2016). Educators' reports on incidence of harassment and advocacy toward LGBTQ students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 53(2), 127–142. Retrieved from doi.org/1080/87567555.2015.1078275

This survey of 968 educators reported that 90% of teachers have described witnessing an act of harassment directed at an LGBTQ student; however, only 30% of these educators intervened. According to this study, teachers stated that they wanted to protect students but felt inadequately trained to do so. This study's findings contributed to our conclusion that offering LGBTQ allyship training can empower educators to intervene effectively in harassment situations

Mayo, C. (2014). *LGBTQ youth & education; policies & practices*. New York, New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Professor Mayo argued that, far from being a monolith, LGBTQ students face challenges stemming from the intersectionality of ethnicity, socioeconomic class, and regional cultures. Her

work was particularly helpful for educating us about transphobia. This volume assisted us in learning about the need for schools to reimagine the spaces they create for LGBTQ students, including emphasizing anti-bullying initiatives and incorporating LGBTQ themes into mainstream curriculums. Professor Mayo's work was also particularly valuable for formulating scenarios for the workshop portion of our action.

Moran, T.E., Chen, C.Y., & Tryon, G.S. (2018). Bully victimization, depression, and the role of protective factors among college LGBTQ students. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 46 (7), 871-884. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=edb&AN=131152323&site=eds-live>

These researchers found that LGBTQ college students face four distinct harassment issues: verbal, relational, cyber, and physical; in addition, the bullying experienced by these students can have long-term psychological effects, including anxiety and depression. Most concerning was that this bullying often leads to an increased risk for suicidal ideation. This study confirmed that a supportive school environment can make an immediate, transformational difference in the lives of college students. It convinced us of both the efficacy of changing school environments and the moral imperative to act as the stakes were literally life and death.

The Roestone Collective (2014). Safe space: towards a reconceptualization. *Antipode*, 46(5), 1346–1365. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/anti.12089>

Professors Heather Rosenfeld and Elsa Noterman (The Roestone Collective) problematized the very concept of safe spaces. They noted that safe spaces can serve as an empowering force for minority students; however, ill-conceived safe spaces can, paradoxically, become locations that exclude others by segregating students. We used this study to narrow our focus for safe-zone training. We concluded that a so-called safe space could unintentionally exacerbate problems by creating barriers. A safe zone understood as a trained ally, however, works against the marginalization of LGBTQ students by promoting and celebrating inclusion.



Transforming Networks of Life: Raising Awareness about Microplastics

Alpha Lambda Phi Chapter
Joliet Junior College
Joliet, Illinois

Theme

Networks of Life

Abstract

In the summer of 2019, our Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Alpha Lambda Phi, began surveying the 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic, “Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change.” After much deliberation, we reached a consensus to pursue the theme, “Networks of Life.” Amidst growing environmental concern, we decided to investigate the topic of microplastics. Eventually, this led us to propose the following research question: As human reliance on plastics increases, how can addressing our role in microplastic pollution transform the environment? As a team, we combed through dozens of scholarly papers from various research databases. This research helped uncover single-use plastics and synthetic clothing as the leading contributors to microplastic pollution. We examined studies demonstrating the effectiveness of plastic alternatives and discovered which fabrics released the most microfibers when washed. Our team tested the Cora Ball, a microfiber-catching laundry ball, to examine the practicality of commercial products addressing microplastic pollution. The research we conducted inspired us to design an experiment that illustrated how different methods of washing fabrics could lead to microplastic pollutants in our waters. We collaborated with our school’s STEM Scholars Program and Honors Program to present this at two public elementary schools and on our college campus. With our actions, we used our experiment to impact over 30 adults and 123 middle-schoolers by raising awareness of

microplastics. Our members learned how to use research to develop a plan of action and catalyze change within the community. By collaborating with others to pursue change, our project has the potential to inspire others to take on advocacy roles in the fight against microplastic pollution.

Objectives

The research objectives proposed by our chapter were to:

1. determine a topic that addresses an issue in our community,
2. gain a better understanding of transformations as it relates to our chosen topic,
3. establish that each member involved in the Honors in Action Project participates in research by providing at least one credible source,
4. organize a timeline, with research beginning during the summer and concluding by the end of September, and
5. evaluate the effectiveness of preventative measures and products which exist to address an issue concerning our topic.

Based on our research, our chapter established specific action and collaboration objectives to assist us in raising community awareness towards personal plastic usage as it relates to microplastic pollution. Our collaborative objectives were to:

1. meet with an expert to share our team's research findings and discuss potential actions, and
2. identify likely organizations within our campus whose collaboration would allow our project to reach a broader audience

Our action objectives were to:

1. create and design a presentation and experiment which promotes and summarizes our research findings
2. share our research findings with multiple populations, preferably of differing ages.

Academic Investigation

At the beginning of our research, members of our chapter were invited to contribute potential topics for consideration. We cast votes to narrow down our choices to microplastics, invasive species, and water toxins. Limited to these options, we assigned

each team member a unique topic from the three options to investigate. Through preliminary research, we felt that microplastics were shrouded in mystery and took a back seat to the much larger and more visible sources of plastic pollution. We saw a need to uncover how our community is affected by microplastics in the environment, so we pursued it as our topic. To guide us in our academic investigation, we proposed the initial question: How do microplastics in our environment affect the health of humans, aquatic life, and impact our environment?

Research responsibilities were divided among our team, with some members utilizing the library and online resources, while others interviewed professors and reputable experts. During our investigation, three sources we encountered piqued our interest and further illustrated how the topic of microplastics transforms Networks of Life. The first was a study of a fish that proved microplastic ingestion reduced enzymatic activity and resulted in blockages of tissues and reproductive organs (Ding, Zhang, Razanajatovo, Zou, & Zhu, 2018). The second was a study involving humans, that showed plastic fibers in the lungs of 87% of the participants examined (Geyer, Jambeck, & Law, 2017). Our third source was a recent report from the World Health Organization released August 2019. In this report, there was insufficient evidence to prove that microplastic accumulation in humans poses a definite health risk at current intake levels (World Health Organization, 2019).

Conclusions

Our findings expressed, while microplastics pose a detrimental effect on biological processes in many aquatic species, human exposure has not reached a level to raise an immediate health concern. With what we learned so far, we revised our research question as followed: As human reliance on plastics increases, how can addressing our role in microplastic pollution transform the environment? Going forward, we began identifying products and approaches to reduce microfibers released in our community. We found a study that looked at various fabric types and examined how different washing conditions influenced the number of microfibers released (Napper & Thompson, 2016). These strategies compared older clothes

versus newer clothes, reducing the amount of synthetic fabric you own and wash, and washing less frequently, preferably with a heavier load. We examined the Cora Ball, a product used to capture microfibers in your laundry's washing cycle, as a potential solution to microplastic pollution originating from washing machines.

Our chapter's president purchased the Cora Ball and used it for a week to determine its effectiveness. After the week of use, we established that the Cora Ball was a practical and easy-to-implement product; however, it may not be feasible to expect everyone to spend \$37.99 to own one. Based on our research, we concluded that anthropogenic plastic pollution from single-use plastics and synthetic fabrics have led to a microplastic overload in our environment. Since the production of synthetic materials took off in the 1950s, 6.3 billion tons of plastic waste has accumulated around the world (Geyer, Jambeck, & Law, 2017). Staying on this course, experts project this number may nearly double by 2050 to approximately 12 billion tons of plastic waste (Geyer, Jambeck, & Law, 2017). By taking the necessary actions to reduce the use of single-use plastics and synthetic fabrics and implementing more contentious washing strategies, individuals can significantly reduce the number of microplastics released into the environment.

Action

Officers were able to set up a conference call to interview Rachael Miller, the CEO of Cora Ball, and co-founder of the Rozalia Project: For A Clean Ocean. During the call, we asked Rachael about her research and discussed experimental designs that would effectively raise awareness about microplastics. Through our team's ingenuity and Rachael's expertise, we developed an experiment that we could use for potential collaborations.

Our experiment worked by introducing a cutout piece of fabric into mason jars filled with water. Participants secured the lid and were directed to shake the mason jar as much as possible for the next 30 seconds. After the time elapsed, the mason jars were reopened, and the water was passed through a filter. Finally, the filter was examined under a magnifying glass to detect the presence of microfibers.



Figure 1

At our college, we determined that the Sustainability Club, STEM Scholars Program, and the Honors Program, were our top candidates for collaboration. Based on events from previous years, these groups offered many initiatives that would allow our chapter to present our project to a broader audience. Chapter officers were tasked with reaching out to the advisors of each organization. Discussions with the STEM Scholars Program revealed they offered an opportunity to travel to different middle schools to perform hands-on, science-related projects. With the experiment we developed, an agreement was reached for us to accompany the STEM Scholars and perform our experiment for middle school students. Our discussions with the Honors Program uncovered a presentation opportunity at their Honors Symposium on December 5.

During the fall 2019 semester, only two students were scheduled to present during the Honors Symposium. Since the duration of the event was an hour-long, we both saw a mutually beneficial opportunity for collaboration. We agreed to attend the Honors Symposium and present our Honors in Action Project (Figure 1). We learned our dependence for plastics has a definite impact on Networks of Life. Over-reliance on systems that bring us single-use plastics and synthetic fabrics impacts our environment by contributing to pollution. This over-reliance also has a substantial effect on the many species of aquatic lifeforms

inhabiting our polluted waters; this has the potential to impact the health of humans in the future.

Impact

Our chapter reviewed a total of 37 scholarly sources during our project. We successfully achieved our research goals by discovering how microplastics affect our community and uncovered how it transforms Networks of Life. We also successfully executed our timeline for research, with all 11 members involved in the Honors in Action Project contributing as a part of the research team. We discovered products like the Cora Ball and prevention measure people in the community could take to reduce their microplastic footprint. Through our collaboration with the Honors Program, we presented our project at our Honors Symposium, which garnered the attention from a crowd of 30 individuals, which encompassed honors students, professors, and parents.

Our collaboration with the STEM Scholar Program provided us with a unique experience to present our project to Laraway Elementary School and Hufford Elementary School, which impacted a total of 42 sixth graders, 45 seventh graders, and 35 eighth graders. The demonstrations occurred from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Fridays for three weeks. Our presentation covered six classes a day, with class periods spanning 47 minutes in time. In three visits, our chapter members and officers volunteered 200 hours of service to educate middle school students about microplastics. Follow-up discussions with teachers from the elementary schools showed students were receptive to the project, and conversations about microplastics continued after our presentation. A teacher at Laraway Elementary School reported that his 7th-grade class expressed concerns about the safety of aquatic life and championed the phrase, “save the turtles” as motivation to be more conscious of their plastics use.

Our project offered many co-curricular learning opportunities for chapter members. Members who aspire to become teachers had the chance to spend hours educating students. Those with careers relating to health professions in mind were able to research the dietary intake of microplastics. Our sole graphic designer created a visually appealing trifold to illustrate essential facts from our research, while our

science majors gained valuable experience conducting research. Also, members gained and developed leadership skills by taking on new and challenging responsibilities. Working in tandem with collaborative parties, strengthen teamwork and allowed members to learn unique problem-solving skills.

Completing our Honors in Action Project, each member involved went above and beyond to meet the objectives set. Throughout our journey, we persevered through adversities and grew closer as a chapter by forging strong familial bonds with one another, which will last for a lifetime. Most of our team this year, including our advisors, was new to PTK. Despite the lack of experience, as a chapter, we worked cohesively to research, plan, and execute our Honors in Action Project. Our chapter members were empowered by completing the Honors in Action Project and expressed much gratitude from taking part in something which had a positive impact on their community.

Resources

Cox D., Covernton, G. A., Davies, H. L., Dower, J. F., Juanes, F., & Dudas, S. E. (2019). Human consumption of microplastics. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 53(12), 7068-7074. Retrieved from doi:10.1021/acs.est.9b01517

This study looked at the American diet and used data from previous studies to determine the average microplastic concentration from human consumption in America. Results showed that airborne consumption of microplastics was the highest, with water and seafood consumption following. The annual dietary consumption of microplastics was determined to range from 39,000 to 52,000 particles. This study allowed our team to recognize that drinking from and simply using single-use plastic water bottles and other plastic utensils leads to high microplastic consumption.

Ding, J., Zhang, S., Razanajatovo, R. M., Zou, H., & Zhu, W. (2018). Accumulation, tissue distribution, and biochemical effects of polystyrene microplastics in the freshwater fish red tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*). *Environmental Pollution*, 238, 1-9. Retrieved from doi:10.1016/j.envpol.2018.03.001

This study looked at freshwater red tilapia and exposed them to polystyrene microplastics for 14 days at different concentrations. Results showed potential neurotoxicity and accumulation of microplastic in tissue. This study allowed our team to apply the health defects that microplastics have on aquatic life to how human health can be affected as well.

Hardesty D., Good, T. P., & Wilcox, C. (2015). Novel methods, new results and science-based solutions to tackle marine debris impacts on wildlife. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 115, 4-9. Retrieved from doi:10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2015.04.004

This article emphasized the importance of continuing our efforts as a society to lower the amount of microplastic in the environment. The authors clearly stated that with continued advocacy, we do have the potential to transform the frightening trend that microplastic accumulation is currently approaching.

Hartline L., Bruce, N. J., Karba, S. N., Ruff, E. O., Sonar, S. U., & Holden, P. A. (2016). Microfiber masses recovered from conventional machine washing of new or aged garments. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 50(21), 11532-11538. Retrieved from doi:10.1021/acs.est.6b03045

This study focused on two variables that affect the amount of microfiber shed during a wash cycle: type of washing machine used, and age of garment washed. By increasing awareness on the benefits of front load washers, the amount of microfibers shed during a regular wash cycle can be significantly decreased. Also, by using newer clothing, less microfiber would be produced. We were able to use and display this information in our demonstration.

Koelmans A., Nor, N. H., Hermsen, E., Kooi, M., Mintenig, S. M., & France, J. D. (2019). Microplastics in freshwaters and drinking water: Critical review and assessment of data quality. *Water Research*, 155, 410-422. Retrieved from doi:10.1016/j.watres.2019.02.054

This research confirmed the presence of microplastics in drinking water and freshwater sources and called for more high-quality studies in order to better understand microplastics.

This allowed our team to understand the line of travel that microplastics take when released from our clothing, into the washing machines, and eventually into our diet.

Miller, R., (2019, September 12). Personal interview with Alpha Lambda Phi chapter.

This interview was conducted with the founder and CEO of the Cora Ball. Her team researched water samples throughout the Hudson River and found no significant difference in microplastic concentration throughout the river, driving her current research of how this could relate to synthetic products. Miller provided our team useful advice on how to best intrigue and educate young students about microplastics.

Napper, I. E. & Thompson, R. C. (2016). Release of synthetic microplastic plastic fibres from domestic washing machines: Effects of fabric type and washing conditions. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 112(1-2), 39-45. Retrieved from doi:10.1016/j.marpolbul.2016.09.025

This article provided information about the source of microplastics, specifically microfibers from washing machines. Synthetic fibers are released from clothing into washing machines, enter the water draining system and accumulate in marine environments. Polyester, a polyester-cotton blend, and acrylic are common synthetic clothing fabrics and are unable to decompose as natural fibers would. We used this information to determine what fabrics we should utilize in our experiment. This article made it clear that if the production of synthetic clothing continues to increase, so will the amount of microplastics in our environment.

World Health Organization. (2019). Microplastics in drinking-water. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization. Retrieved from <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/326499/9789241516198-eng.pdf?ua=1>

This report was significant to our chapter as it unified numerous studies focusing on the existence of microplastics in human consumption. Although there is a breadth of research that currently exists, this report emphasizes that there is still a long way to go for society to fully understand and appreciate the dangers of microplastics.



Educating Communities about the Transformative Power of the 2020 Census

Omicron Beta Chapter
Mesa Community College
Mesa, Arizona

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

Through scholarly research, collaboration, and focused action, the Honors in Action Council (the Council) discovered that the decennial census is a fundamental process to monitor population changes, political representation, and distribution of federal funds. The Council explored "Politics of Identity," one of the themes from the Honors Program Guide related to "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change" and determined that a community's identity heavily influences the politics of a city and the state. Due to large underrepresentation in minority populations, Arizona struggles with full census participation. The misrepresentation helps create a sense of "otherness" for those who are marginalized. A fear of discrimination leads to severe undercounting of Arizona residents, affecting funding and political representation.

The U.S. Census Bureau identified five misconceptions about the census: loss of privacy, fear of repercussion, distrust in the government, belief that the census does not provide benefits, and lack of efficacy. These misconceptions were amplified in 2019 when the Presidential Administration advocated for the inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. The question was ultimately dismissed, but the discussion dissuaded participation of marginalized communities, especially undocumented individuals. In the 2010 Census, the college's surrounding community was one of the most underrepresented tracts in the city, with 60.2% of residents being undercounted. Annually, every person counted brings in \$3,000 in federal and

state funding, which affects hundreds of public services essential for communities. To increase participation and dispel misconceptions about the 2020 Census, the Council collaborated with the City of Mesa to establish a project titled "ICount2020." The Council participated in 14 events to discuss the census with residents in diverse communities. The Council educated more than 7,500 individuals about the benefits and security of the census and over 1,000 people pledged to respond to the 2020 Census.

Objectives

The Council's overall goal was to engage the community, address misconceptions about the census, and educate the public about the benefits the census provides to their city. The first objective was to educate the Council on the Honors Study Topic by hosting seminars and lectures with field experts. The second objective was to conduct research using scholarly works, including articles, books, journals, and interviews that address census misconceptions, racial tensions in census response, and the importance of accurate representation. The third objective was to assess the local, regional, and national impact of the census and identify target audiences.

After the research objectives were met, Council members used their findings to set action objectives in order to make a positive impact on marginalized groups. The first action objective was to participate in a variety of community-oriented events to promote the census. The Council set a second action objective: to educate residents about the census and encourage them to complete it in 2020, and to fulfill the goal of collecting 500 pledges. The third action objective was to establish a Census Ambassador Program, which encourages civic engagement among students.

The Council recognized this project was a major endeavor, so members created a network with whom they would accomplish their action goals. Research stressed the importance of building community connections with participation of college students to increase census response rates. Since the project began as a grassroots movement, the Council worked directly with the college's Center for Community and Civic Engagement. The second objective focused on

communicating with key figures within the City of Mesa government and its Census Taskforce. This objective resulted in the City of Mesa and events in the city.

Academic Investigation

After attending the 2019 International Honors Institute, the Council committed to studying the Honors Study Topic and initiated preliminary research around current events within the community. The Council then evaluated the relationship between the Honors Study Topic and the community's needs. They learned about the significance of the 2020 Census and became dedicated to understanding, "How will educating community members about the census dispel associated misconceptions, encourage participation, and transform communities?" Thinking critically about the impact of their research provided the Council with overwhelming insight into Transformations and Politics of Identity.

The U.S. Constitution requires a decennial count of all residents. Research has demonstrated challenges in achieving this goal. The first census in 1790 counted only white, free men; the census was not designed to count people of color.

Research indicates that race and ethnicity have always been an underlying issue in the census. The lack of inclusivity created by the census impacts the response rates and effectively undercounts marginalized groups. This disconnect deepens the misconceptions identified by the U.S. Census Bureau. The census also affects the political distribution of power. In 1920 U.S. Congress rejected the reapportionment of the House of Representatives because it felt the census results inadequately reflected the population. To combat undercounted populations, the U.S. Census Bureau manipulates census data; any slight alteration affects federal funding and political reapportionment. The census also affects a state's Electoral College representation.

Conclusions

Along with particular groups being systematically undercounted, populations are often unwilling to participate in the census as well. An outbreak of fear among vulnerable communities emerged after the discussion of adding a citizenship question in 2020, which was expected to affect response rates within Hispanic communities. Minority populations fear deportation and misuse of their information, and generally are unaware of the importance of their responses. The census provides funding and resource allocations for programs on a local level, including firefighter assistance, Pell Grants, adoption, state and community highway safety, Section 8 housing, Head Start, special education grants, national school lunch and breakfast programs, foster care, student loans, and over 100 initiatives. Understanding fund allocations is the number one motivator across populations to increase response rates. In conclusion, the Council recognized that the identity of marginalized groups impacts a state's political power and federal funding. As scholar-servant-leaders, the Council embraced the role they had in the upcoming census. In response, they wanted to address the link between identity and politics within the community.

Action

The Council's first action was to collaborate with the Mesa Community College's Center for Community and Civic Engagement and secure funding. The Council applied for and received a \$15,000 grant from the City of Mesa to fund the project and foster collaboration. Upon receiving grant approval, the Council created the Census Ambassador Program, open to students at both college's campuses.

The Council wanted a combined effort from both of Mesa Community College's campuses, an ongoing challenge for the chapter. As a condition of the grant and to demonstrate the project's urgency and sustainability, the Council agreed to collect 500 pledges and complete 2,000 service hours by the end of May 2020. To reach the goals outlined by the grant, the Council recruited 25 students to serve as Census Ambassadors to educate and engage the public in the census awareness campaign. Ambassadors serve as

change agents in the local community and are trusted advocates. This role increases student awareness and instills servant leadership as a lifelong endeavor. They participate in campus and community events, collect pledges, and promote job opportunities. Additionally, the city donated promotional materials and items to distribute at college and community events, including pledge cards written in both English and Spanish, pens, stickers, water bottles, chapsticks, polos for the Census Ambassadors and volunteers, along with a large blackboard with the question, "What would you do with \$3,195?" in English and Spanish. The City of Mesa Census Administrator suggested the first community event, Fiesta Latina, which celebrated Hispanic heritage in a variety of ways. The Council hosted a table and spoke with community members, answering any questions about the census.

Twenty volunteers attended, 67 pledges were received, and over 200 attendees answered the question on the blackboard. An unexpected victory occurred when the City of Mesa Mayor John Giles and the college's mascot visited the Council's census table to respond on the blackboard.

Further, the Census Bureau Partnership Specialist acknowledged the project's progression in its monthly report.

The Council hosted their informational booth at numerous events, many with diverse communities in attendance. People from low-income or Hispanic backgrounds were most prominent which tied perfectly into one of the project's action objectives. The Council witnessed first-hand the uniqueness of the community's identity related to "otherness" and were determined to transform the state's political representation. To affect this transformation, Council members collected pledges and informed attendees about census misconceptions. Overall, the Council attended 14 events including: Celebrate Mesa, Las Sendas Food Truck Fridays, the Arizona State Fair, the

Special Olympics Bocce Ball Competition, Mesa United Way's One Community Health and Resource Fair, Westwood High School's football game, the Phi Theta Kappa Arizona Regional Honors Institute, the East Valley Veterans Day Parade, and Halloween Extravaganza. Further, in October 2019, the City's 2020 Census Administrator invited the chapter president to report the progression of the project at the Mesa City Council meeting.

Impact

The Council impacted a large, diverse group of individuals, including college and high school students, college faculty and staff, community members--predominantly Spanish-speaking--and local leaders within the city. They accomplished this through awareness projects, educational outreach, and the Census Ambassador Program. Transformed perceptions in marginalized groups forged change in their communities resulting in their increased understanding of the importance of census participation. To achieve this, the Council was comprised of 30 students, 25 of whom were Census Ambassadors; together, they served over 590 hours. By participating in 14 community events and utilizing social media to promote the census, the Council engaged with a diverse demographic and received over 1,000 pledges. The chapter invited the Census Administrator from the City of Mesa to present to over 75 students on the census at two general meetings - one at each of the college's two campuses. To raise awareness of the 2020 Census on a large scale, the Council contacted the director of a local clothing company State Forty-Eight, to request a unique shirt design to connect the 2020 Census to Arizona pride. This idea was presented to the City of Mesa Census Taskforce and six municipality representatives for potential funding. The Council worked with these municipalities and State Forty-Eight to create the design with the Council's slogan, "United We Stand, Together We Count" and produce 1,000 t-shirts. Additionally, three Council members presented "ICount2020" at the Phi Theta Kappa Arizona Regional Convention to over 180 people.

Qualitative outcomes reflect the responses received at community events, such as when the question, "What would you do with \$3,195?" was answered. The Mayor responded, "Paying tuition for college students." Common responses were

paying for medical bills, affording tuition, taking vacations, and assisting family members. These responses helped community members understand the importance of participating in the census. This project held significance for the community and for project members. Students had the opportunity to hold leadership roles during community and college events to develop their soft skills and grow as leaders and scholars. For example, the collected pledge cards asked for private information, such as phone numbers and email addresses. Members learned how to protect privacy while collecting the public's sensitive information, which is an important skill that can be useful in the workplace. Additionally, four students chose this project as their leadership endeavor in the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development course. One utilized his passion for magic tricks as a way to educate students about the census in an engaging way. Another member led the project's logistics, where he organized protocols for events, established volunteer schedules, and created a timecard for the Census Ambassadors.

Overall, the Council recognized the census' ability to transform community life for the next decade. The project provided an opportunity of active citizenship and embraced community diversity. By participating in community events, connecting with over 7,500 community members and creating the Census Ambassador Program, the Council served as a catalyst of change for the future of the 2020 Census. Through collaboration with the Center for Community and Civic Engagement, the City of Mesa, and the U.S. Census Bureau, the Council acknowledged, assessed, and achieved major change within the community.

Resources

Eagles, C. W. (reprint, 1990). *Democracy delayed; Congressional reapportionment and urban-rural conflict in the 1920s*. (2012, February). *Reference & Research Book News*, 27(1). Retrieved from https://link-galecom.ezp.mesacc.edu/apps/doc/A278666365/AONE?u=mcc_mesa&sid=AONE&xid=f18c2706

This source described the historical conflict of congressional reapportionment. With the shifting demographics of rural and urban populations, the 1920 Census failed to provide an accurate

representation. This example identifies the repercussions when large portions of the population are undercounted.

Haugen, D. M., Musser, S., & Berger, R. M. (2012). *The US Census: Opposing viewpoints*. Detroit, Michigan: Greenhaven Press.

This book focused on the lack of minority representation and contends that Census Bureau partnerships with undercounted groups helped increase participation. It directed the Council's commitment to work alongside the community and increase participation in the census.

Johnson, S. (2019). Stand up and be counted: Communities prepare for the largest, most expensive, and most controversial census in U.S. history. *The Progressive*, 83(3), p. 57+. Retrieved from https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=OVIC&u=mcc_mesa&id=GALE|A591323752&v=2.1&it=r&sid=OVIC&asid=9f43409f

This article considered the risk of an undercount in the 2020 Census due to fears surrounding the citizenship question. It highlighted a need to inform fearful populations and dispel misconceptions about the census.

Kimball, A. M. (2019, Fall). Complete count committees: The 2020 Census and beyond. *Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics*, 729+. Retrieved from https://link-galecom.ezp.mesacc.edu/apps/doc/A604381442/AOE?u=mcc_mesa&sid=AONE&xid=fa59122e

This article explained that when communities are undercounted, the Census Bureau manipulates the data in an attempt to create true representation. This slight manipulation alters the interpretation of the data, ultimately affecting the House of Representatives and the Electoral College apportionment. This information reinforced the connectedness of politics and identity.

M. Leal, personal communication, January 14, 2020.

Leal, a Partnership Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau, advocated the importance of the census in reference to political power and state representation. The Council learned about the tie between politics and community participation in the 2020 Census.

McGeeney, K., Kriz, B., Mullenax, S., Kail, L., Walejko, G., Vines, M. Bates, N., & Garcia Trejo, Y. (2020, January 24). 2020 Census barriers, attitudes, and motivators study survey report: A new design for the 21st century. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau website: <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/final-analysis-reports/2020-reportcbams-study-survey.pdf>

The U.S. Census Bureau identified five reasons why people do not respond to the census: concerns about data privacy, fear of repercussion, distrust in government, lack of efficacy, and belief that there is no benefit in completing the census. The Council worked to address these issues when educating the community.

J. Robbins, personal communication, January 15, 2020.

Robbins, the Census Administrator for the City of Mesa, emphasized the vital role college students must play in the 2020 Census. As a result of this interview, the Council better understood the leadership roles they played in the upcoming census.

Schor, P. (2017). *Counting Americans: How the US Census classified the nation*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press.

This book comprised a detailed record of the evolution of the decennial U.S. Census from its inception in 1790 to 2010. The Council understood that race and ethnicity has historically impacted the census.



Transforming Negative Community College Stigma into Positive Action

Zeta Eta Chapter
Riverland Community College
Austin, Minnesota

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

While no single story or perspective fully defines a person, our chapter researched the “Politics of Identity” and discovered that others can influence how our identity is shaped in part due to stigma. Stigma, we discovered, has powerful repercussions. Research on the Honors Study Topic, “Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change,” led us to develop a project that transformed negative stigma about community college students into positive impressions through education. Our initial research on stereotypes stimulated discussions on how community college students are looked down on by many. We then narrowed our focus and concentrated on the impact of negative stigma on enrollment and retention at Riverland Community College. After reflecting on our research, we developed a project with the goal of changing negative stigma into positive impressions. To achieve our goals, we identified collaboration partners on campus and in the community. We developed three components: focus groups, presentations, and a pen-pal project. We targeted current college students, high school students, and fifth grade students. The impact of our project was debunking myths to increase enrollment and retention by reducing the negative stigma of community colleges. Because this is such an important and far-reaching issue, our chapter is committed to continuing to fight against negative stigma associated with being a community college student.

Objectives

Our research objectives included:

1. reviewing the Honors Study Topic, “Transforming: Acknowledging, Assessing and Achieving Change,” and multiple themes,
2. discussing initial research to narrow the focus,
3. ensuring that our research reflected a variety of perspectives, not only of sources, but also of our culturally diverse team, and
4. constructing a timeline to complete research by fall semester to allow time to reflect on research results and develop a project.

Our action and collaboration objectives included developing community and college collaborations to help us reach a wider audience. Our chapter’s main objective evolved from trying to understand the impact of the “Powers of Identity” on community college students to a project that reversed the negative stigma of students at community colleges into a positive impression.

Analysis of our research resulted in a better understanding of how stereotypes and stigma affect perceptions. In order to combat negative stereotypes of community college students, we decided to:

1. create a multi-faceted approach in order to dispel negative perspectives,
2. seek collaboration with partners at the college and public schools, and
3. find methods to provide education to a variety of audiences.

Academic Investigation

In February and March 2019, we explored a variety of themes, generated research questions, and conducted preliminary research. At the end of March, we chose the theme “Politics of Identity” and further refined our research into identity-based discrimination. One committee met with the college librarian to get advice on how to search for general information about stereotypes and identity. After analyzing the results of the general research, we developed more specific research questions including:

- How do stereotypes affect someone’s identity?
- How does a shared identity lessen the focus on differences?
- How much influence do the people around us have on how we view ourselves?

As part of the process, members read several books and articles about the topic. The chapter president met with college administrators to review the project concept. The College President was especially interested in our approach to this Honors in Action Project because it corresponds to Key College Performance Indicators used to drive college strategic planning. During her research, one member discovered the book *Whistling Vivaldi* by Claude Steele, which focuses on how stereotypes transform us and looks at ways to overcome barriers created by the politics surrounding identity. All members read the book as a chapter project over the summer. From reading this book, members developed a shared understanding of the role stigma can play in pressuring individuals into accepting an identity. We then conducted additional research and discovered an article focused on the idea of the boomerang effect, where those who are in a largely stereotyped group will eventually fall into the stereotype that is expected of them. This research ignited a passion that had been missing because of a lack of focus with our research into the broad nature of stereotypes. Members began sharing personal stories about their experiences of being looked down on because they chose to study at a community college. This inspired us to explore ways to transform negative stigma into a positive movement.

After agreeing on a theme, we further narrowed our focus and asked the following:

- How does stigma affect enrollment and individual success at a community college?
- In “Politics of Identity,” how do students live up to or down to the expectations portrayed in stereotypes - such as being thought of as a mediocre student because they attend a community college?
- How can students resist the pressure to conform to stigma confirmation or false perceptions about being community college students?

Conclusions

Ultimately, our research showed that if we do something in a purposeful manner through education, we can transform negative stigma. We recognized that research from a variety of perspectives could lead to the development of a

substantive project. We also found that we could personally change through a consistent message from trusted resources.

Action

First, we facilitated focus groups with current college students to assess whether their perceptions aligned with research about community college students. Our partners included Riverland College's Human Services Coordinator who helped us develop focus group questions and students in the college's speech classes who served as focus groups. Next, we developed "Busting Community College Myths," a presentation for prospective students. After careful reflection on our research, we realized that there is a need to debunk myths about community college students. We decided it was important for the community and prospective students to understand the benefits of a community college education to aid in enrollment. Our presentation was timely because a local foundation had recently implemented a program for local high school graduates to receive a degree at our college tuition free (Figure 1). We discovered that a small percentage of eligible students had taken advantage of the opportunity during its first year. We wanted to learn if stigma had played a role in students' decision making and if education and personal connections would entice students to enroll.

Our project collaborators included the College Advisor for the free tuition program who connected us to community partners and recommended a presentation venue. We worked as well with local public and parochial high school counselors and principals who gave us permission to survey students and allowed us to provide information about community college benefits to their students. Honors Leadership Development class students helped with presentation and survey development. College administrators guided strategic planning and provided funding. College admissions and marketing personnel assisted with venue, logistics, and advertising. Finally, we developed a pen-pal project to create

a connection between elementary students and college students. We wanted to understand the elementary students' perspective and to introduce them to the Assurance Scholarship program. Our partners for this part of the project included multi-language learner teachers who helped facilitate a pen-pal project with fifth graders. Email was our primary means of communicating with our collaborative partners. This kept everyone informed about necessary details and ensured that tasks were completed in a timely manner. Our partners commented that they were impressed with our thoroughness and follow through. By doing this project, we were able to build an important network that will help us in the future.



Figure 1

Impact

Focus Group:

Ten current college students participated in focus groups. They shared that friends had made negative comments about them being community college students, causing them to doubt their decision to attend. Students also stated that having a safe place such as a focus group to express fears and insecurities helped them better understand stigma and provided them with strategies to move past the stigma. Surprisingly, most of international students in the focus group said that negative stigma did not affect their decision to attend a community college. One outcome was that participants planned to talk with friends and family members to debunk myths about community college. We experienced first-hand what we had

found in our research - that there is power in personal narratives to transform perspectives about identity.

Presentation/Surveys:

Approximately 95 high school students attended "Busting Community College Myths" presentations: Demographically, 46 were eligible for the free tuition program and 47 were not eligible because of residency requirements. Prior to the presentation, 72% believed there was a negative stigma about being a community college student. Following the presentation, 47% of participants reported a positive change in their perceptions. When asked which aspect of the presentation affected them the most, attendees responded with comments such as:

- "I had no idea how many organizations I could belong to at a community college."
- "I was surprised there were honors and leadership classes."
- "Community college students are really smart and have lots of access to teachers."

Survey results showed that negative stigma can be transformed with accurate information from current community college students. This validated our research which showed that personal narratives from peers can be transformative. We understand the need to reach out to additional groups, including parents of prospective students, and to conduct further presentations to keep spreading the message. We included Figure 1 and Figure 2 which feature two of the audiences who listened to our presentation.

Pen-Pal Project:

Sixteen fifth grade multi-language learners participated in a pen-pal program with current community college students. After exchanging handwritten letters, our chapter arranged for the fifth graders to come to campus to attend a presentation about the benefits of community college and the tuition-free program. Following the presentation, their principal reported that students were "awestruck." Fifth graders identified with the student speakers because they have similar stories and barriers to college attendance. They recognized that they could have the same opportunity to be successful at a community college. The fifth graders became motivated to complete the requirements to

be eligible for the tuition-free program. This experience confirmed research highlighted in the book *Whistling Vivaldi* that narrative confirmation can transform individuals when the narrative is delivered by a trusted source. We included Figure 3 which shows some of the pen-pal participants. Our chapter learned that negative stigma can shape our identity. Through our research and project components, we found a direct correlation to the "Powers of Identity." Members felt empowered when they saw that negative stigma can be transformed through active intervention. As former congressperson, Shirley Chisholm said, "We must reject not only the stereotypes that others have of us but also those that we have of ourselves." In order to transform, we must acknowledge that a need for change exists, assess the tools needed to make the change, and then create an environment where that change can be achieved.

Resources

Bosson, J.K., Parrott, D.J., Swan, S.C., Kuchynka, S.L., & Schramm, A.T. (2015). A dangerous boomerang: Injunctive norms, hostile sexist attitudes, and male-to-female sexual aggression. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ab.21597>

This article described the concept of the boomerang effect. It helped our group understand that those who are in largely stereotyped groups will eventually fall into the stereotype that is expected of them. It ignited the discussion about how the boomerang effect pertains to community college students and got everyone excited to develop a project that would counteract it.

Caporrimo, R. (2008). Community college students: Perceptions and paradoxes. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 32(1), 53-67. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233033459_Community_College_Students_Perceptions_and_Paradoxes

Reading this article helped us understand the perceptions of community college students versus university students within the same system. The study concluded that the perception of community college education was inferior to

universities. We felt that this applied directly to us and that we needed to change negative stigmas.

Casey, L. & Hayes, S. (2019). How to recruit and retain transfer students: Comparing the college choice decision process among two- and four-year transfer students. *College and University*, 94(3), 2-13. Retrieved from <https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/c-u-pdfs/cuj9403-webebb4ef3ad2524686946a68fb93f480df.pdf?sfvrsn>

This article examined the reasons students transfer to universities and which students are most successful at completing their bachelor's degrees. The findings were that community college students were more successful because they have a predetermined goal of finishing their degree, have time to ensure the university will be the best fit, and have better information and support regarding transfer credits. This served as evidence community colleges better prepare students for bachelor's degree completion. It also gave us incentive to share this important message.

Hawk, J.L. & Hill, L.H. (2016). Hipster freshmen: Popular culture's portrayal of community college students. *Community College Enterprise*, 22(1), 28-42. Retrieved from <https://ocrl.illinois.edu/docs/librariesprovider4/update-newsletter/pop-culture-portrayals.pdf>

This article helped us understand the negative perceptions of community college students portrayed by media, which results in a negative attitude toward community college education. From this we recognized the magnitude of the issue because the stigma is so far reaching.

Rayle, A.D. & Chung, K.Y. (2007). Revisiting first-year college students' mattering: Social support, academic stress, and the mattering experience. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 9(1), 21-37. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ762088>

This article resonated with chapter members because feeling as if they mattered was one key element that helped them decide to continue their education. Our group compared and contrasted the different experiences community college and university students have, which

helped us focus on the "Politics of Identity." Feeling as though one belongs and matters helps ensure degree completion and college pride.

Steele, Claude M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi*. How stereotypes affect us and what we can do. New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Reading *Whistling Vivaldi* helped us understand that stigma confirmation exists. Just as our own identities have shaped our experiences, other people's identities also shape us. Researchers discovered that narrative intervention or guided conversations from trusted sources proved to be effective at breaking stigmas. Reading *Whistling Vivaldi* gave us the impetus for further research which ultimately led to our project.

Stokes, T. & Somers, P. (2010). Who enrolls in two-year colleges? A national study of price response. *Journal of Student Financial Aid*, 39(1), 4-18. Retrieved from <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1031&context=jsfa>

According to authors, the main reasons students choose community colleges rather than four-year colleges is that they are independent and cost conscious. One interesting finding was that international students are more likely to choose community college and do not embrace the negative stigma surrounding community colleges. This article contradicts the idea that there is a negative stigma about community colleges which gave us a different perspective about our topic.

Turk, J. (2019, June 26). Erasing the community college stigma. [web log comment]. Retrieved from <https://www.higheredtoday.org/2019/06/26/erasing-community-college-stigma/>

This blog prompted a discussion about myths and misconceptions of community college education. We debunked many myths, and our focus changed to the positive aspects of community college and the quality of education received by students. This discussion ignited a passion in our group and inspired them to share positive information on the quality of community college education.



Cultivating Community Connections Through Urban Garden Technology

Beta Tau Gamma Chapter
Pearl River Community College,
Forrest County Center
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Theme

Powers of Connection

Abstract

Many Mississippi citizens suffer from health issues related to nutrition. For example, 37% of Mississippians suffer from obesity. Ironically, Mississippi is also cited as having the worst hunger problem in America with one in four children going to bed hungry. Indisputably, Mississippi is America's poorest state where the poor rely on connections with and interventions from others in the community to survive. This cycle of poverty and poor health and dependence on social connections for basic needs makes it difficult for Mississippi's poor to overcome their limited access to nutritional foods and raises questions about our community's social connections: do community interventions to feed the poor provide necessary sources of nutrition? How might these connections become more effective? Our team set out to investigate the efficacy of community food pantries and to suggest ways that might transform their "power" to help. After initial fact-gathering, the question guiding our research was what agricultural technologies could be implemented to transform gardening methods and provide sustainable fresh food to food pantries? Our interest in Theme 7: Powers of Connection of Phi Theta Kappa's 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change," developed during the 2019 Mississippi/Louisiana Regional Honors Institute as our team listened to various speakers discuss positive community transformations in the Jackson area. We conducted research at our local level to assess what nutritional resources were available to our community's poor and found a lack of healthy

food available. Our research included examining academic journals and interviewing agricultural experts and people maintaining local urban gardens. We identified solutions that may provide an increase in fresh-food available to local food pantries: additional urban gardens, hydroponics, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). We presented our findings during a free public forum (Figure 1), published our findings on the internet, and offered suggestions to food pantries in our community. We have also proposed a campus garden to provide nutritive options for students.

Objectives

Our research team established several measurable objectives. These objectives included working as an effective and consistent team, ensuring that our research was scholarly in nature, and understanding the significance of identifying and collaborating with local “connections.” Our objectives related to working as a team included conducting weekly meetings beginning in the summer of 2019, creating shared editable documents, and using collaboration software to hold virtual meetings. Our research team was organized shortly after returning from our PTK Catalyst experience in Orlando during the spring of 2019. We knew that getting to work on identifying the Honors Study Guide topic that would inform our research should happen sooner rather than later. Once we had the eight-member team in place, we decided to meet weekly -- without fail. When some of our members left for out-of-town vacations with family, we used collaboration software to include them in virtual meetings. We knew that academic research was crucial to our efforts, and so we set up meetings with our college librarian and chapter advisors for suggestions on the best practices we might undertake to ensure that our sources were not only academic but vetted according to current research standards. Our local librarian discussed the significance of evaluating sources, and we learned how to navigate the Google Scholar and EBSCO Host databases.

As sources were identified and vetted, we made specific assignments for each team member. The assignment included a writing component; each member recorded their reviews of sources

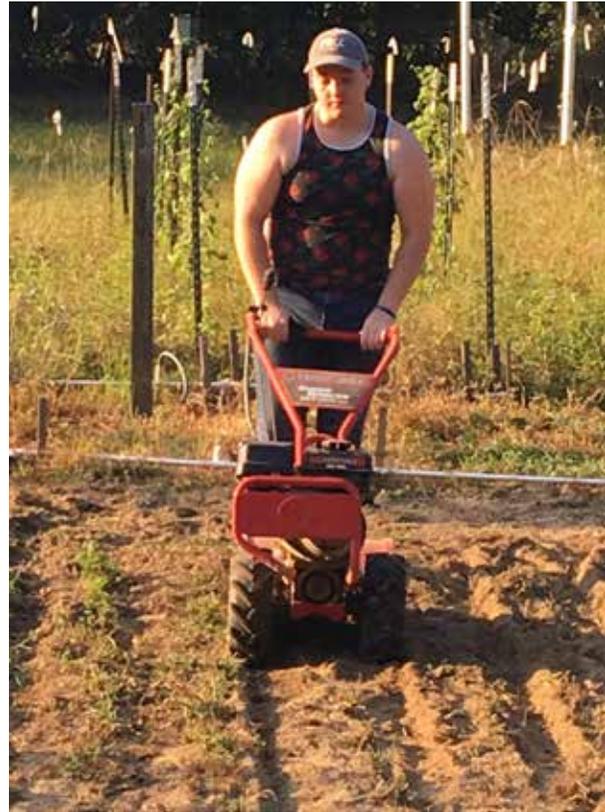


Figure 1

using Google Docs. Creating and using editable documents to share our research and ensuing questions helped us all along the way to keep in touch with each other and to consistently be on the same page. Our objectives related to collaborating with our local community included visiting local food pantries, interviewing people who work in local urban gardens, interviewing experts on agricultural technology, and working with PTK alumni to help cross-reference our sources. After our research, we developed objectives related to our action. A location was secured to hold our free public forum, and we invited our local high schools as well as others in the community. We developed informational speeches, established a website, invited guest speakers, and developed a proposal to build a garden at our school to provide fresh food for our own college’s food pantry.

Our research gave us a new perspective on the importance of urban gardens and modern agricultural technology. Our action was determined by our research and consisted of

two parts. First, we sought to educate the public about new agricultural technologies and the need for fresh food in our local food pantries. Starting with our college, we met with the administration on our campus to discuss our research findings and suggestions. With administrative support, we contacted guidance counselors at local

and which was included in all publicity. Second, we developed a plan to implement a community garden at our community college and await approval from the administration.

Academic Investigation

We began by focusing our attention locally with two goals. We wanted to determine whether or not local interventions to feed the poor were sufficient with regard to providing food with better nutritive value. Our investigation delved into whether or not local food pantries offered fresh food. We also wanted to know what technology was being utilized by local community gardens. When we researched food pantries within our community, we found that only one, Edwards Street, offered fresh foods. The Edwards Street food pantry also had the largest of only two community gardens in our area. We scheduled an interview with the program director, Lauren Mason, and the head of their community garden, Dr. Marvin Miller. During the interview, we were able to gain insight into areas of improvement that the organizers saw as necessary for community gardens to become more productive. We learned that Edwards Street's community garden loses upwards of 30% of their crops to pests and that there was a lack of gardening space. These discoveries shaped our research on cutting-edge agricultural techniques as we tried to find solutions to these problems. We initiated our academic search for possible solutions by reading peer-reviewed articles sourced from the databases in EBSCO Host and Google Scholar. Sources were shared with our team through Google Docs and then cross-checked by our librarian for validity. We also spoke with the Mississippi State extension representative Matthew Thornton and agricultural instructor, Dr. Kenneth Parker.

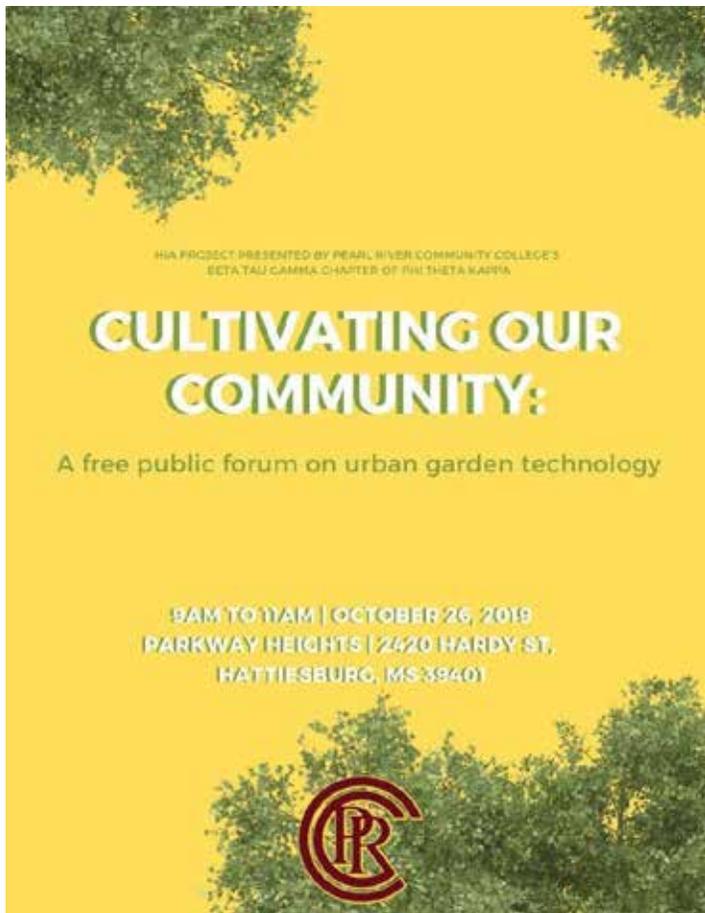


Figure 2

high schools and invited students, in particular, those associated with FFA or STEM-related organizations to attend our free public forum on urban garden technology. We contacted the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) and Mississippi State University (MSU) and secured a special guest speaker from MSU for our forum. We also communicated with local food pantries and invited them to attend. To increase our audience, our research team created an event flyer that was approved by our college's public relations team and then posted on our college's, as well as our chapter's, social media accounts. We also created a website that included our research findings

Conclusions

As we read, discussed, and read some more, we determined three possible solutions that may provide an increase in fresh food available to local food pantries: the call for and implementation of additional urban gardens, the use of hydroponics for gardening, and the possible use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Our research suggested that implementing

community gardens in urban areas could improve socioeconomic climates as well as nutrition for the local community. We concluded that two of the promising emerging agricultural technologies that could lead to higher yield and more efficient urban gardens are GMOs and hydroponics. Although GMOs could provide many benefits like pest resistance and longer shelf life, we initially had concerns for safety. Further research conducted by our team proved that these concerns were unfounded. We learned that the stigma behind GMOs was caused by misconceptions and how they were introduced to the public. Despite the expenses and paperwork involved, GMOs could serve as an effective means of reducing crop loss and successfully transforming the urban agricultural scene. Hydroponics proved promising due to less stigma and easier access to the technology needed to implement.

Action

We held a public forum at the Parkway Heights Methodist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Members at Parkway Heights founded the Edwards Street food pantry in their efforts to assist the poor in the Hattiesburg community and seemed a fitting venue for the event. We invited nearby public schools to attend the forum as well as a Mississippi State University representative to speak about GMOs and agricultural technologies (Figure 2). Three other students from our research team presented their research on varying topics relating to agriculture. One presented his research on genetically modified organisms and their use in agriculture as well as addressing the general bias of the public. Another presented research on community gardening and the possible economic, nutritional, and social transformations to society at large. Our last student speaker presented research on hydroponics and demonstrated a working example of hydroponic technology. A companion website was developed to share the information from our educational forum.

The second part of our action and our intended ongoing action is to implement a community garden on campus grounds (Figure 1). This action will provide fresh produce to the school food pantry. This will provide healthier options

for students who rely on the food pantry. The garden can also serve as a place for the sciences to review and experiment with plants and agriculture technology. Administrators have been approached, and the school appropriated land to build a garden pending an approved proposal outlining the cost and plans for maintaining the garden. The honors in action team developed a proposal, which is currently pending acceptance from the administration.

Impact

Measuring the quantitative outcomes of our project presents a challenge -- but not as big a challenge as the numbers, themselves, say about the needs of our community. Hattiesburg consists of three counties comprised of about 150,000 people. According to welfare information, about 34.7% of the population live in poverty status. We were stunned when we discovered that our area relies on two community gardens to provide fresh food for the poor in our community. Being able to offer information to the public that might inspire the cultivation of other community gardens is bigger than we might count. Edwards Street community garden shared with us that they distribute more than 4,000 pounds of fresh food annually. If they increase their productivity by 10% using our suggestions, that's 400 more pounds of good food provided in 2020. Once our campus garden is approved, we will have increased the number of local community gardens by more than 30%. The potential quantitative outcomes offer us great hope for the future.

As for qualitative, our team also developed leadership skills, teamwork skills, gained a valuable understanding of our community, and we accomplished a little gardening as shown in Figure 1. We learned to communicate and collaborate with experts outside and within our college campus. Through our website and educational forum, we were able to inform people in our community about the importance of community gardens and the emerging technologies that will help make agriculture more efficient. The forum was attended by students, faculty, our community college recruitment staff, and the general public. People are now more aware of food resources in our area, what healthy

options are available, and the safety of new agriculture technology. The proposed garden will provide fresh food and healthier options for the students at our community college. Previously, only prepackaged food has been available to students who may be in need. The garden will also provide research space for our science club to further research emerging agriculture technology. We are grateful for this Honors in Action project and the possibilities offered to us by PTK to grow as community-minded scholars who want to transform our powers of connection.

Resources

Dubock, A. (2017). Golden rice: Instructions for use. *Agriculture & Food Security*, 60 (6). Retrieved from: <https://agricultureandfoodsecurity.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40066-017-0136->

This article discussed a genetically modified rice called Golden Rice and its being a possible solution to vitamin A deficiency. The article showed the benefits of applying GMOs on the global stage.

Kling, J. (2014). Labeling for better or worse. *Nature Biotechnology*, 32(12), 1180–1183. Retrieved from doi.org/10.1038/nbt.3087

The general public stigma against GMOs stems from the public's lack of knowledge in how the genetically modified plant differs from organic hence the push for labeling. The GMO companies are pushing back against this causing more mistrust from the public.

Kuzma, J. (2018). Regulating gene-edited crops: Advocates of second-generation genetically modified crops are making choices likely to trigger another round of public opposition. *Issues in Science & Technology*, 35(1), 80–85. Retrieved from <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=133097085&site=ehost-live>

This article explained the misconceptions and stigmas around GMOs and how they came to be. It also speaks on some of the technology used in modern day genetic modification. In addition, the article offered steps towards GMO scientists

and researchers in order to avoid creating more misconceptions/stigmas.

Miller, M. & Mason, L. (2019, October). Personal interview with Beta Tau Gamma chapter.

Dr. Miller and Mrs. Mason were an important part of our investigation due to their hands-on experience working with food pantries and community gardening. Dr. Miller provided an abundance of information relating to community gardening and ways in which we can help to transform food production for gardeners.

Remley, D. T., Kaiser, M. L., & Osso, T. (2013). A case study of promoting nutrition and long-term food security through choice pantry development. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, 8(3), 324–336. Retrieved from doi: 10.1080/19320248.2013.819475

This article was chosen because of the information it provides pertaining to food pantries. A case study was performed in Butler County, Ohio, investigating food pantries and describes the development by a local food bank of a food pantry model that promotes nutritious options. It reviews the basic proponents of a food pantry and investigates ways to conduct food pantries in a more effective and nutritious way.

Smith, V. M., Greene, R. B., & Silbernagel, J. (2013). The social and spatial dynamics of community food production: A landscape approach to policy and program development. *Landscape Ecology*, 28(7), 1415–1426. Retrieved from doi: 10.1007/s10980-013-9891-z

This article was chosen because it provides a mass of information regarding any form of community food production, including community gardening. It provides an assessment of the city of Madison, Wisconsin as pertaining to CFP's, some of the benefits of community gardening, and a review of the individuals that have access to such gardens. It also cross-references socioeconomic status of CFP owners, household income, owned vs. rented homes, percent of single-family homes, relationship between home garden participation and socioeconomic variables, and correlations in CFP clusters.

National Institute of Health (n.d.). What are genome editing and CRISPR-Cas9? - *Genetics Home Reference*. Retrieved from <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/primer/genomicresearch/genomeediting>.

This article defined gene editing and explains the process behind CRISPR-Cas9. It talked about the different parts of CRISPR-Cas9 and how they work together to bind to specific genes in order to edit or cut them. This article was important with understanding the process behind gene editing and more specifically GMOs.

What Are The Types Of Hydroponics Systems? (2019, September 26). Retrieved from <https://smartgardenguide.com/types-ofhydroponics-systems/>

This source provided information on different mechanisms for hydroponics from simple 2-liter bottles to massive operations. This source of the several looked at had the most organized and widest amount of material for me to break down and present to a large audience.



The Cost of Being a Woman: Increasing Education and Reproductive Justice in our Community

Alpha Sigma Zeta Chapter
Onondaga Community College
Syracuse, New York

Theme

Visions of Justice

Abstract

Despite many examples of societal transformations toward gender equality, women continue to face countless forms of economic and reproductive injustice. Women earn on average 80 cents to each dollar earned by men. Women experience the “pink tax” when items marketed to women cost more. The mental and financial burdens of contraception are usually borne by women, and the stigma around menstruation and accessing affordable feminine hygiene products are monthly struggles for women around the globe. Therefore, we developed a multi-tiered education and outreach project to help combat these injustices and educate our community. We wrote a \$5,000 grant to provide free feminine hygiene products on campus and collected 11,152 feminine hygiene products for women in need. We collaborated with community partners to provide free contraception and education in our dorms and organized a community educational health forum led by an OBGYN Nurse Practitioner. We also held an educational event focused on the pink tax, wage gap, and other costs of being a woman. Our project helped bring awareness to these issues of gender inequality and transformed our campus and community by increasing reproductive justice.

Objectives

This year's team was all female and as a result we focused on how our society has transformed for women. We gravitated to Visions of Justice, focusing on women's rights and gender inequality. Our team had different thoughts on the topic,

ranging from the belief that men and women are now fully equal to first-hand experiences of gender inequality. We scoured academic literature and found that transformations toward gender equality are still needed. Women continue to face many forms of gender inequality including economic, sexual, health, and cultural injustices. Our focus moved to the costs of being a woman, including the wage gap (women earn less than men for the same work), the pink tax (goods marketed to women cost more), and higher costs of women's health care, hygiene, and contraception.

Our main research objectives were:

1. educate ourselves about various types of economic injustice faced by women and
2. learn more about the costs of women's hygiene needs and sexual health.

To combat economic and reproductive injustice as well as educate our community about these issues, we created a multi-tiered education and outreach project and found campus and community partners to help us create programming and reach more people.

Actions objectives included:

1. working with our campus grant office to apply for a \$5,000 grant to provide free feminine hygiene products in our campus bathrooms,
2. organizing a feminine hygiene product drive to provide resources for women on campus and in our community,
3. collaborating with community sexual health partners to provide free contraception and education in our dorms,
4. holding an educational event focused on the pink tax, wage gap, and other costs of being a woman, and organizing an educational health forum led by an OBGYN Nurse Practitioner for campus and community members.

Academic Investigation

Our research centered on gender inequality and the costs associated with being a woman. Our main research question was, "What types of inequality, if any, do women face in our society?"

Once we confirmed that women still face injustice in countless areas, we began to explore several economic areas that hit women hardest. The most commonly understood form of economic gender inequality is the wage gap. Women earn on average 80 cents on the dollar compared to men. However, when wages are examined over a 15-year period, the gender wage gap is much larger because many women exit the workforce to care for children at some point in their career.

We learned that women often pay more for consumer goods. This "pink tax," named for the gendered packaging (often pink) of items advertised to women, refers to women paying more for personal care products, services like dry cleaning and haircuts, and clothing and accessories. Research shows that women's health can even be negatively impacted by gender inequality, and the mental and financial burdens of contraception usually fall on women. Feminine hygiene and the cost of menstruation are often taboo and ignored forms of gender injustice. We found that more than 70% of states tax feminine hygiene products resulting in women paying around 150 million dollars a year in tax alone. Socioeconomically disadvantaged women often can't afford hygiene products, and despite the necessity of these products, government assistance programs like WIC and SNAP do not cover them.

Conclusions

The research shows that gender inequality is still pervasive and societal transformation is needed. Therefore, we wanted to combat economic and reproductive injustice and educate our community about the costs of being a woman.

Action

Based on our assessment of our research, we created several actions toward achieving change on campus and in the community. For each action we developed a committee responsible for all planning, organizing, partnerships, advertising, and running the event/action. We planned to increase reproductive justice on our campus and in our community, focusing on access to feminine

hygiene projects and contraception. We wanted to provide free feminine hygiene products in our campus restrooms. However, we learned that due to declining enrollment, our college was unlikely to fund this initiative. We decided to research appropriate grants and found a \$5,000

GoFundMe drives to collect money for hygiene products, and we partnered with Vera House (Syracuse's Women's Shelter) and the Syracuse Rescue Mission who gladly accepted our product donations. Reproductive justice also includes access to contraception. We wanted to increase contraception access in our dorms and partnered with several community organizations to obtain resources and education. We met with the Director of Residence Life to discuss potential partners and create a plan. We worked with ACR Health (AIDS Community Resources), who helped us apply to the NY State Condom Program, an initiative that provides non-profit organizations with free contraception. They also donated/distributed male and female condoms in our dorms monthly, and we organized safe sex events led by their community educators. Additionally, we partnered with Planned Parenthood and FACES NY, who donated condoms and educational materials to our campus.



Figure 1

grant through the Women's Fund of CNY. To write a competitive application we collaborated with Nicole Schlater, our college's Associate Vice President of Grants Administration. We worked with her to obtain organizational background information needed for the application and she helped us brainstorm, outline, and draft each question.

To extend reproductive justice community-wide, we held a feminine hygiene product drive to collect pads, tampons, and menstrual cups for economically disadvantaged women. We placed collection bins in five locations and made flyers to advertise the drive. We collaborated with campus departments including nursing, human resources, and our campus chapter of the American Association of Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC). Each partner spread the word and came up with ways to increase participation. The nursing department offered extra credit and AAWCC made our drive their fall service project. We also collaborated with community members, requesting donations from local businesses for funds and supplies. We organized two

To bring awareness to various forms of economic injustice faced by women, including the pink tax, wage gap, and the overall cost of being a woman, we created an educational event called, "Being a Woman Can be Taxing" (Figure 1). We set up three educational booths on campus, each focusing on a form of economic inequality. We sold cupcakes priced to reflect the average annual wage gap – 80 cents to women and one dollar to men. The sale raised funds to support our feminine hygiene drive and raised awareness for pay inequality between men and women. Another booth focused on the pink tax, and we created an interactive game. Students guessed the prices of items, some marketed toward men and some toward women. The activity demonstrated the absurdity of the gendered price increase for nearly identical items. Our final table focused on the cumulative cost associated with being a woman. We set up a laptop with a website that calculated the amount that women are "taxed" over their lifetime, based on birth year. The "tax" included the cost of the wage gap, feminine hygiene products, and the pink tax. Our final

action was an educational event on women's health. We partnered with Susan Dougherty an OBGYN Nurse Practitioner who led a forum for students and community members. We advertised this event with the help of the nursing department and addressed sexual health, contraceptive options, misinformation about women's health, and answered attendees' specific questions.

Impact

Our team explored the costs of being a woman in today's society, and, based on our assessment, we need more societal transformation and social change. Therefore, we created projects to work toward economic and reproductive justice through education and action. We wrote a grant for \$5,000 that will provide free feminine hygiene products on our campus if we are selected. We organized a drive and collected 5,825 pads, 5,300 tampons and 27 menstrual cups, which were donated to our community partner organizations. We raised \$1,022, which was used to buy pads, tampons, and menstrual cups. To increase access to contraception, our three community partners have donated over 1,500 condoms to our campus and will continue to donate each month. We organized four trainings to educate students about safe sex, and we applied to the NYS Condom Program, which will provide access to our students indefinitely. Thirty-two people attended our Women's Health Forum focused on women's health, STIs and sexual health, and common misconceptions. Despite the topic being uncomfortable for some, many attendees had questions and moved past personal embarrassment to help educate others.

At our "Being a Woman Can be Taxing" event, we sold 87 cupcakes and raised \$90 selling cupcakes for 80 cents to women and \$1.00 to men. We spoke with 113 students about various forms of economic gender inequality at our three educational booths. When a male student expressed frustration about the gendered price difference, we listened and tried to explain our project in more detail. He said he treats women as equals and therefore charging him more was unfair. His daughter was with him, and we asked how he'd feel if his daughter entered the workforce and was paid less money than a man for the same work. Using his daughter as an example helped

him see this issue from a woman's perspective and something clicked. He saw how his own daughter could be impacted by this pervasive inequality. Working on each action helped us grow individually and as a team. We learned a lot about gender inequality and made important community/campus connections. By having several actions, we learned the importance of accountability and relied on our teammates to do their part. We also learned how important advertising and outreach are to organizing successful events. Even as an all-female team, we felt the stigma surrounding women's health. Menstruation and safe sex can be difficult topics to broach, especially with peers. Through extensive research and in-depth conversations, we were able to collaborate and overcome any discomfort we felt to educate others and discuss these topics with friends, family, and fellow students. Most importantly we learned that though gender inequality is a continued global concern, we can work to combat the issue in our own community.

Resources

Durkin, A. (2017). Profitable menstruation: How the cost of feminine hygiene products is a battle against reproductive justice. *Georgetown Journal of Gender & the Law*, 18(1), 131-172. Retrieved from <https://go.gale.com/ps/anonymous?id=GALE%7CA503262690&sid=-googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=15256146&p=AONE&sw=w>

This article examined menstruation as an issue of reproductive justice. Durkin explains how unaffordable and inaccessible feminine hygiene products can be, especially for homeless, poor, or incarcerated women. While some have laws to relieve the tax burden on feminine hygiene, more than 70% of states still tax these products. Durkin argues that as an issue of reproductive justice, the federal government must eliminate these taxes and provide affordable access to these products for all women.

Homan, P. (2019). Structural sexism and health in the United States: A new perspective on health inequality and the gender system. *American Sociological Review*, 84(3), 486-516. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0003122419848723>

While women are hurt in many ways by sexual harassment, the wage gap, and gender discrimination in the workplace, Homan finds that these inequalities can also harm physical health. Therefore, gender inequality should be considered a public health issue as well as a human rights issue.

Jacobsen, K. (2018). Rolling back the “pink tax”: Dim prospects for eliminating gender-based price discrimination in the sale of consumer goods and services. *California Western Law Review*, 54(2), 241-266. Retrieved from <https://scholarlycommons.law.cwsl.edu/cwlr/vol54/iss2/2/>

This article examined the pink tax, which refers to the higher costs of items marketed towards women and girls despite the items being nearly identical except color/packaging. Though the price difference may seem small, the pink tax costs women \$1,351 each year. In a society where women already earn less than men, this tax impacts the economic lives of women.

Kimport, K. (2018). More than a physical burden: Women’s mental and emotional work in preventing pregnancy. *Journal of Sex Research*, 55(9), 1096-1105. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6115298/>

This article illustrated the burden of contraception, which is disproportionately faced by women. Women not only bear the physical burden of contraception, but also experience mental and emotional burdens. In order to relieve women of these burdens, we need to expand research on men’s contraception.

Rose, S. & Hartman, H. (2019). Still a man’s labor market: The slowly narrowing gender wage gap. Washington: D.C.: Institute for Women’s Policy Research. Retrieved from https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/C474_IWPR-Still-a-Mans-Labor-Marketupdate-2018-2.pdf.

While it is generally acknowledged that women earn 80 cents compared to a man’s dollar, this figure is calculated based on wages in a given year. Because women are likely to discontinue

full-time work for domestic responsibilities at some point during their careers, the authors measured the wage gap over a 15-year period to understand the consequences of exiting the workforce. They found the wage gap is much larger, and women earn only 49 cents on the dollar compared to men. Despite considerable workplace progress over the last 50 years, almost half of women have at least one year with no earnings, nearly twice the rate of men. When women exit the workforce for even a short period, earnings suffer.

Sayers, R. (2012). The cost of being female: Critical comment on block. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106(4), 519-524. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Cost-of-Being-Female%3A-Critical-Comment-on-Block-Sayers/eb0923c353b5159e32bf18f-125570654e5925a7c>

Sayers criticized the work of Block, who argued that the wage gap is the result of women not being suited for physical labor and marriage disadvantaging women in the workplace due to domestic demands. Sayers argues that we harbor unconscious bias about women’s abilities and roles. This bias leads to pervasive societal sexism and consequently women are undervalued in the workplace and hired, paid, and promoted less.

Sebert Kuhlmann, A., Peters Bergquist, E., Danjoint, D., & Wall, L.L. (2019). Unmet menstrual hygiene needs among low income women. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 133(2), 234-244. Retrieved from https://journals.lww.com/greenjournal/Citation/2019/06000/Unmet_Menstrual_Hygiene_Needs_Among_Low_Income.33.aspx

In this study of 10 organizations serving low-income women, the authors found that over 60% of women interviewed couldn’t afford feminine hygiene supplies during the past year and 21% faced this struggle monthly. They found that many women instead use rags or tissues, which can cause infection. The authors argue that menstrual supplies are a basic health need for all women and health providers should advocate for better access.

Sommer M., Hirsch, J., Nathanson, C., & Parker, R. G. (2015). Comfortably, safely, and without shame: Defining menstrual hygiene management as a public health issue. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*(7), 1302-1311. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4463372/>

This article illustrated how the shame of menstruation has led to organizations around the world ignoring this women's health issue. Ten years ago, there was little focus on Menstrual Hygiene Management, which is now a globally recognized issue. As menstruation gets discussed openly in the public arena, organizations around the world have started to provide education and supplies to low-income girls and women, challenging the taboo that surrounds menstruation.



Networks of Life: The Dynamic Relationship Among Bees, Humans, and Ecosystems

Beta Mu Alpha Chapter
Orange Coast College
Costa Mesa, California

Theme

Networks of Life

Abstract

Our chapter was motivated to pursue the Networks of Life theme of Phi Theta Kappa's 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change," because we were fascinated by the concepts of extensive interconnection between seemingly unrelated systems and organisms presented in the theme's introduction in the Honors Program Guide. At the time, we were intrigued by the ecological relevance of the bee population. Our investigation led us to the Colony Collapse Disorder of 2006 when beekeepers across the globe noticed a gradual decline in bee colonies. In 2018, there was a sharp collapse in the population, with reported rates of 40% dying off. This year, a team of six students passionate about bees gathered to investigate how transformation in the bee populace can affect the daily routines of humans. With the honors study theme in mind, the team inquired into the vital position that bees occupy in the global ecosystem. Research demonstrated not only the wide range of essential tasks bees carry out, but how those transformative roles create a cycle that influences the human diet and economy (Figure 1).

The team researched scholarly articles that highlighted the value of bees for the way they affect crop yield, agricultural production, and overall human health. Some journals framed the way human activities, such as pesticides in farming, worsen these insects' ability to pollinate. Other journals emphasized the positive impact of proper beekeeping practices and identified

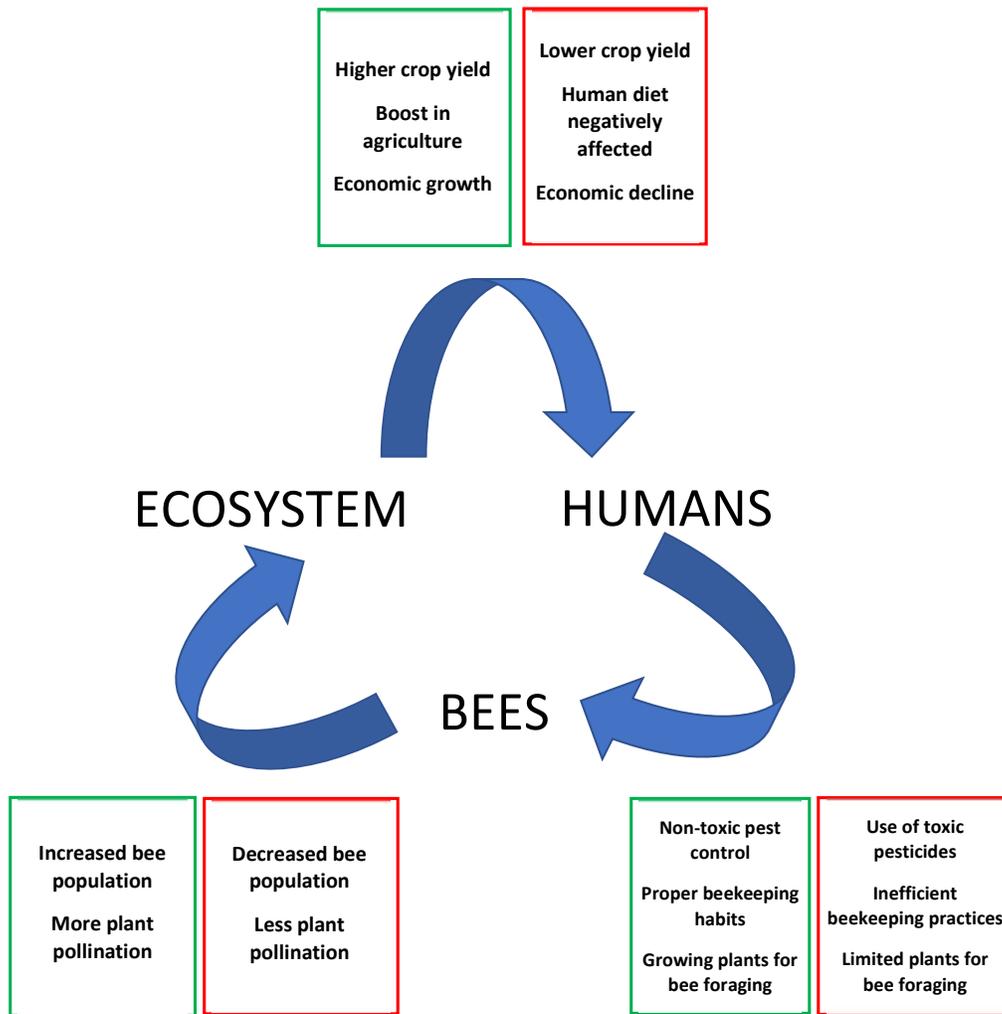


Figure 1

suitable plants for bee foraging. The team decided to take action and implement an event to raise awareness about the prominent role bees play by working with several non-profit groups who shared the same concern for the bee population. In a collaborative event, a platform was provided for bee specialists and passionate individuals to interact and connect with the Orange County community. Attendees remarked that the event was simultaneously enjoyable and educational, hence achieving the team’s goal of making a small yet significant change in the community.

Objectives

To set reasonable objectives, our team scheduled weekly meetings to decide on a topic that fostered critical thinking, empathy towards the chosen field of study, and team communication.

Eventually, we decided that our primary research objective was to explore the interdependence of bees, humans and the ecosystem, in hopes of verifying mutualism among these three entities. In doing so, we would acknowledge an urgent real-world issue that is relevant to the local community. We also planned to consult with on and off-campus experts to examine “transformations” pertaining to bees and exchange ideas for the ways to approach our academic investigation.

After completing our research, we decided that our action objective was to conduct an event that reached out to a diverse audience and accommodated all age groups. As a means of increasing credibility, we planned to collaborate with on and off-campus administrators and bee organizations. However, we needed to secure an appropriate venue which would attract public

attention and take the necessary steps to promote our event to the local community. Finally, we would provide the attendees opportunities for feedback, which we would analyze to determine the success of the event.

Academic Investigation

Upon forming a team consisting of students mostly involved in the field of life sciences, the team gravitated towards complications pertaining to the surrounding environment. We became engrossed in the topic of bees and the effects of human activities on their ecological functions. Following each meeting, several team members also consulted with horticulture and biology professors to gain insights on the bee population. The team's preliminary research brought our attention to the Colony Collapse Disorder in 2006, which intrigued us to further investigate the shift in bee population over the years. As we sifted through sources within our school library's online database, we realized that there is not a clear-cut explanation to the declining bee population, however we noticed a pattern between three interlinked systems: humans, bees, and the ecosystem. The team then visualized a cyclical diagram depicting ecological relationship between the systems mentioned above and decided to divide the research into thirds based on each section of the diagram. Specifically:

1. How and what human activities negatively or positively affect bees?
2. How crucial is the role of bees in the proper functioning of our ecosystem?
3. In what ways does the ecosystem, in turn, influence the well-being of humans?

Eventually, we formulated our research question: How do human activities transform the impact of the bee population on ecosystems and, in turn, create a cycle that influences our human diet and economy?

Conclusions

The team concluded that this dynamic relationship highlights the influence of human activities on the ecological and economic relevance of bees as primary pollinators. Recently, the bee population's contribution to the almond industry in California

generated more than 100,000 jobs and amounted to an output value of \$21.5 billion. Hence, there is an economic incentive for humans to support this species. The team singled out three human activities to raise awareness about: harmful pesticide usage, limited bee foraging, and inefficient beekeeping practices.

Action

Drawing from research by Migdal et al. (2018) and Lau et al. (2019), our team reasoned that our plan of action should consist of teaching members of our community ways to cultivate the plants that bees forage while implementing proper pest management practices in their maintenance. We also sought to introduce them to proper beekeeping practices while providing local beekeepers with a platform to sell their honey products. We determined that simple, conversational presentations on care instructions for bee-friendly plants and proper pest-control practices would be an accessible format for the general public. Hence, we reached out to three organizations:

- the Horticulture Department at Orange Coast College (OCC),
- Non-Toxic Costa Mesa -- a local group of residents who aim to reduce institutional use of chemical pesticides by promoting the use of non-toxic pest control alternatives, and
- Orange County Beekeepers Association (OC Beekeepers Association) -- a volunteer-run, non-profit organization committed to educating both local beekeepers and general citizens about the practices of beekeeping.

Our action component took the form of a "Bee Fair" that was held in close proximity to our school's weekly swap meet. It consisted of a booth operated by the OC Beekeepers Association to conduct honey sales as an incentive that motivated attendees to learn about the ecological and economic importance of bees. Several other booths featured OCC horticulture students presenting care tips for daisies, asters, clovers, eucalyptus, willow, and soapberry trees, and representatives from Non-Toxic Costa Mesa discussing low-toxicity pest

management techniques and how to safely select, utilize, and dispose of chemical pesticides. By setting up booths next to each other, we provided presenters with opportunities to interact and discuss their respective efforts in bee conservation. Our collaborators have responded that it was fun and productive to talk about bees with like-minded people from different backgrounds and experiences. The "Bee Fair" also featured a booth with bee-related coloring books, puzzles and stickers designed to attract the attention of families, engage with children through kid-friendly activities, and catalyze future involvement in bee-friendly endeavors. Among other efforts in promoting our event, we conducted classroom announcements, distributed flyers, and announced the "Bee Fair" on social media prior to the event day. Additionally, we collected feedback forms from participants at our event and people who dropped by to see the presentations, and we thanked them with free sample honey sticks.

Impact

In our attempts to raise public awareness on the importance of the bee population, we successfully collaborated with three parties of similar interests in bees: OCC Horticulture department, OC Beekeepers Association and Non-Toxic Costa Mesa. Among "Bee Fair" attendees, we gathered 20 student volunteers and an OCC biology professor, who was an advisor for the event. We experienced the highest engagement at noon with 23.7% of the crowd drawn in by event flyers distributed by volunteers around the swap meet area, and the rest from prior advertisement, such as classroom announcements and extra credit opportunities provided by various professors. The crowd was visibly interested in each presentation, as shown by continuing conversations and frequent inquiries with each collaborator. Additionally, many children were visibly joyous when their parents bought them candy made of local honey at the beekeeper's booth, which we hope will predispose them to support the conservation of bees in the future. Thus, it is safe to say that our team successfully achieved our goal of educating members of the OC community in ways to contribute to the longevity of bees. We believe that each attendant age group will play a unique role in positively

transforming the bee population -- parents making gardening adjustments, young children being primed to support bee conservation in the future, and students expanding their knowledge of bee-friendly gardening and pest management practices, which will allow them to employ such techniques in the future or possibly conduct further academic research.

According to a total of 40 feedback forms and questionnaires that were collected from participants at our event, 94.7% of the total attendance indicated that the information presented at the fair was useful for future gardening purposes. Among the three questions that tested participants on bee terminologies, we received an average accurate answer of 90.3%. Furthermore, 60% of the participants were convinced to utilize less non-toxic pesticides, and every participant showed interest in planting at least one plant mentioned by the Horticulture student presenters. Furthermore, the OC Beekeepers Association generated \$400 from honey sales which they will put to club expenses along with beekeeping research and projects. Our team also acquired much knowledge on the Honors Study Topic along with the intricacies associated with event planning. Most prominently, our research showed that all pesticides adversely affect honey bees and, we were able to share that honey bees forage more frequently on some plants more than others. We were fascinated by how extensive the honey bee's impact is on the human diet. Pertaining to event planning, we underestimated the time it would take to reserve a swap meet booth for the beekeepers, and their involvement in the event was almost canceled because of this. By maintaining a good relationship with the administrators responsible for swap meet operations, we were able to reserve a booth the day of the event and carry out our event as planned. This allowed us opportunity to play our part in the community by raising awareness and, in the long run, we hope, making a significant impact on area honey bees and, through them, the human population.

Resources

Amulen, D. R., D'Haese, M., D'Haene, E., Acai, J. O., Agea, J. G., Smaghe, G., & Cross, P. (2019). Estimating the potential of beekeeping

to alleviate household poverty in rural Uganda. *PLoS ONE*, 14(3), e0214113. Retrieved from https://link-galecom.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/apps/doc/A580304601/AONE?u=occc_main&sid=AONE&id=aeef2c67. Accessed 12 Aug. 2019.

This study provided our team with a global view of the transformations in profitability and economic welfare through increased honey production. Modeled scenarios showed various interventions that beekeepers can adopt to achieve full production potential, such as improved pest and disease management, an optimum combination of traditional and modern hives, suitable bee forage and a timely harvest. The team understood that improved beekeeping practices directly enhances economic resilience.

Glenny, W., Cavigli, I., Daughenbaugh, K. F., Radford, R., Kegley, S. E., & Flenniken, M. L. (2017). Honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) colony health and pathogen composition in migratory beekeeping operations involved in California almond pollination. *PLoS ONE*, 12(8), 1–24. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/10.1371/journal.pone.0182814>

This investigation brought up the enormous role honey bees play on the California almond production, where over a million of commercially managed honey bee colonies were transported to California annually to pollinate almonds. As a result, the California almond industry is a billion-dollar industry that controls 80% of the global almond supply. This article also discussed the assessment of migratory honey bee colonies and the factors that impact its population.

Lau, P., Bryant, V., Ellis, J. D., Huang, Z. Y., Sullivan, J., Schmehl, D. R., Cabrera, A. R., & Rangel, J. (2019). Seasonal variation of pollen collected by honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) in developed areas across four regions in the United States. *PLoS ONE*, 14(6), 1–24. Retrieved from doi-org.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/10.1371/journal.pone.0217294

Bee nutrition and growth heavily depend on the availability of a sufficient and diverse floral resource for worker foragers. In this study, the

authors identified and studied pollen collected from four different regions in the United States. They believed the data obtained would promote the floral plants that provided appropriate and nutritious forage for honey bee colonies, as well as regulating the use of pesticides in terms of timing and application.

Madras-Majewska, B., & Majewski, J. (2016). Importance of bees in pollination of crops in the European Union countries. *Economic Science for Rural Development Conference Proceedings*, (42), 114–119. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=115474371&site=ehost-live>

This article highlighted the importance of pollination for human diet and the economy. Among the large-scale crop production and its subsequent billion-dollar value, honey bee pollinators play the predominant role, which meant that they not only contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity, honey bees also supply humans with nutrients and support economic growth.

Migdal, P., Roman, A., Popiela-Pleban, E., Kowalska-Górska, M., & Opalinski, S. (2018). The impact of selected pesticides on honey bees. *Polish Journal of Environmental Studies*, 27(2), 787–792. Retrieved from doi-org.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/10.15244/pjoes/74154

This study aimed to assess how pesticides of different classifications (fungicides, herbicides, insecticides) affect honey bees. Researchers examined the following criteria: mortality rates, the amount of various trace elements in bees, and bee behavior. The study concluded that all pesticides changed the bee's survival rates, regular behaviors, and amount of trace chemicals present.

Remley, D., & Redmon, A. (2017). Save the bees and butterflies! *Public Roads*, 81(2), 4. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f6h&AN=125912622&site=ehost-live>

The authors of this article discussed the relationship between pollinators and agricultural production, crop value, human health, and a balanced ecosystem-- which is why the decline in pollinator

species and the possibility of extinction pose a threat to human well-being and the nature of ecosystems. In this article, human activities are identified to be a huge factor for pollinator population decline.

Stanimirovic, Z., Glavinic, U., Ristanic, M., Aleksic, N., Jovanovic, N., Vejnovic, B., & Stevanovic, J. (2019) Looking for the causes of and solutions to the issue of honey bee colony losses. *Acta Veterinaria*, 69(1), 1–31. Retrieved from doi.org.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/10.2478/acve-2019-0001

Honey bees may not be the only pollinators, but their dominance in pollination and agricultural production draw significant respect, in addition to considerable attention to their plight. The Colony Collapse Disorder in 2006 was not attributed to a sole cause, but instead a sequence of stressors such as the use of pesticides which decrease the quality of pollen and subsequently lower honey bee immune systems, the infestation of Varroa mites, and inefficient beekeeping practices. The team was particularly interested in general apiary management and the methods to mitigate infestations.

Zhu, Y. C., Yao, J., Adamczyk, J., & Luttrell, R. (2017). Feeding toxicity and impact of imidacloprid formulation and mixtures with six representative pesticides at residue concentrations on honey bee physiology (*Apis mellifera*). *PLoS ONE*, 12(6), 1–19. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezproxy.occlib.nocccd.edu/10.1371/journal.pone.0178421>

The authors brought imidacloprid to the team's attention. Imidacloprid is a widely utilized pesticide in farming that could have moderate to severe effects on pollinators. Although specifically imidacloprid alone may not have a considerable impact on bees' health, a mixture of certain pesticides has a considerable impact on bees' health, concluding to increase mortality rates by 53%. The team learned that rotating such pesticides were vital in reducing any residue levels in surrounding environments in order to protect essential insects.



Historic Route 66: Transforming Geographic and Psychological Connections

Alpha Psi Tau Chapter
Ozarks Technical and
Community College
Springfield, Missouri

Theme

Powers of Connection

Abstract

Route 66 is a cultural icon unique to the United States. In fact, John Steinbeck, in his novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), coined the term "The Mother Road" due to the route's significance in the 1930s as migrants fled the Dust Bowl for opportunities in the West. In its heyday, Route 66 was the great geographic connector from the Midwest to the West Coast. Unfortunately, the need for efficient travel in times of global unrest led to the decline and eventual decommission of this great byway resulting in "American's Main Street" becoming a broken and divided path that can no longer be found on a map. But that does not mean that its Powers of Connection have waned. In fact, they have grown exponentially. With the rise of heritage tourism and a cultural need to return to nostalgic times, Route 66 has found its new home in the hearts and memories of not only Americans, but citizens of the world who make the trek to travel "The Mother Road." It is this power of connection that we chose to explore as we examined the Honors Study Topic, "Transformation: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change." From our research, we discovered the route's significance in our cultural history and the need to preserve it for future generations. In an effort to ensure that the Route continues to be remembered for its ability to connect us, our chapter filmed an oral history documentary that can be used to promote the revitalization of "The Mother Road" and preserve the nostalgic memories travelers experience when they, as Nat King Cole sang, "take the highway that's the best" and "get their kicks on Route 66."

Objectives

The chapter met at our annual Honors in Action workshop to determine our research objectives. Prior to delving into the Honors Study Guide, the 30+ members and officers in attendance determined the following objectives. First, we sought to develop a research question that fully embraced the Honors Study Topic (HST). To do so, the chapter officers presented an overview of the HST and facilitated a discussion of transformations and how they were present in our daily lives. Second, we would seek to acquire knowledge and practical skills in academic research with emphasis on research analysis. This aim would be achieved through a follow-up workshop with the college research librarian with hands-on practice to determine research validity and how to evaluate conclusions. Third, we would explore a minimum of 40 sources that presented both supporting and contradictory views and would include a minimum of one personal interview with an expert source. This objective would be achieved through the creation of a research team that utilized our college's Learning Management System and the online collaboration application, SLACK. A three-week research window was set for the team. The research team would then present their findings to the chapter and the eight most significant sources would be determined and four potential expert interviews would be identified. Finally, we sought to research a topic that was relevant to our chapter and our community. To achieve this objective, we conducted a brainstorming session and identified the topic of Route 66. We then reviewed the Honors Program Guide and chose to focus on Theme 7: Powers of Connection and what role Route 66 played in our community.

After review of our research conclusions and discussion with the Executive Director of the National Historic Route 66 Federation, we determined the following project objectives:

1. seek to support the efforts of the National Historic Route 66 Foundation,
2. create a meaningful promotional tool that highlights personal experiences along Route 66, and
3. honor the nostalgia and history of the people who have traveled the route.

To achieve these objectives, we set the following collaboration goals:

1. work with content experts and Route 66 historians,
2. develop working relationships with local governmental and historical preservation societies, and
3. engage in meaningful connections with individuals who have traveled the route.



Figure 1

Academic Investigation

The chapter met four times to refine our research question. Our initial question focused on heritage tourism along Route 66. We reviewed our research objectives and realized that we had overlooked an objective: a topic relevant to our chapter and community. We then revised our research question and it became: In what ways did the rise, decline, and resurgence of Route 66 connect and transform the country and our local community?

Throughout the research process, we met with the Ozarks Technical Community College research librarian to verify source validity. We then met with a local expert on Route 66 who directed us to several authors and the founder of the National Historic Route 66 Federation, who we were fortunate enough to interview. We found that, due to the declaration of an Oklahoma businessman, our hometown is known as the "Birthplace of Route 66." In our explorations, we discovered the route was significant in how it connected our

country geographically and eventually became known as “The Mother Road.” The route gave unprecedented ease of travel between Chicago, Illinois, and Santa Monica, California, and provided what was referred to as a “carnival-like atmosphere” that resulted in economic boom for communities along the route. The geographic



Figure 2

connection was broken when President Eisenhower began to build the current interstate highway system as a means to transport troops and provide evacuation routes in case the nation, as people feared, engaged in atomic warfare at home.

As Route 66 declined and eventually was decommissioned, a new phenomenon occurred. The country and the world began a nostalgic fascination with the route. A fascination that birthed an annual International Route 66 Festival that brings visitors to the birthplace from all over the world. The festival connects people from America and beyond as they bond through a

sense of nostalgia for a Route 66 past gone, but not forgotten by many people. This fascination was spearheaded by one man who had a special connection to the route as a result of the memories made with his father. His personal connection to those memories of Route 66 was the beginning of the revitalization. His efforts led to the creation of a Congressional bill that established the route as a historic cultural site and created funding for its revitalization as well as global not-for-profit agency that supports these efforts. While Congressional funding ended in 2019, ongoing private funding efforts are still being pursued.

Conclusions

From the exploration of these research findings, we were able to conclude that:

1. the advent of Route 66 provided a vital geographical connection between the Midwest and the West Coast,
2. the decline was a result of a need for more efficient travel,
3. the resurgence is the direct result of one man's memories and the nostalgia for times past, and
4. this sense of nostalgia has become a cultural phenomenon connecting people across cultural and geographic boundaries.

Action

In our discussion with the Executive Director of the Route 66 Federation, we learned about the need to demonstrate the personal connections that Route 66 has for those who traveled it in order to promote the need for continued Congressional and financial support of the route's revitalization. The director made note that there are no oral histories of individual travelers along the Route 66 corridor. He discussed the value and significance of personal experiences and the need to preserve these experiences for the future. Therefore, in order to meet our project objectives of supporting the foundation, creating a meaningful promotional tool, and honoring the nostalgia and history of the route, we chose to develop an oral history documentary that could be used by the Federation and shown in our local community and beyond. We then met to discuss the project, what skills we would need, and what collaborations would be necessary.

A new round of research was initiated to investigate the mechanics of creating a documentary and conducting oral histories. To investigate the skills necessary for documentary work, we consulted our campus electronic media instructor, a chapter alumnus who is a film maker based in Belgium, and textbooks about the documentary process. To learn more about oral histories, we did online research and met with local historians who had conducted oral histories in the past. This research allowed us to determine what needs we would have for the action piece of the project. These needs included the purchase of film equipment, education in the equipment's use, learning the legalities associated with films' public music use, conducting auditions for narrators, the development of interview questions, and practice of conducting interviews. The documentary would require the chapter to work with the Springfield History Museum and their Route 66 gallery, local historians, and travelers who had toured the route. The documentary was filmed over a four-week period with oral histories conducted inside the history museum during the 2019 International Birthplace of Route 66 Festival (Figure 1). Interviewees were selected by solicitation at the festival, as well as by predetermined Route 66 experts. Additional interviews and footage were conducted at the Route 66 Car Museum.

We identified the following collaborators,

1. Thomas Romainville: film maker, critic, and tutor in documentary techniques,
2. Lawrence Photo who gave us equipment recommendations and education in how to use the equipment,
3. KY3 Television and Ashley Reynolds, on-air reporter who taught us interview skills and discussed with us legalities about using music and video footage,
4. college Electronic Media Instructors who taught us technical skills and critiqued our work,
5. the College Research Department who worked with us to determine legalities and necessary college permissions,
6. Festival Staff who granted permissions to interview people during the festival,
7. City of Springfield whose leaders granted permissions and discussed legalities with us, and
8. a graphic designer who assisted us with designing our poster.

Impact

To produce the documentary, we utilized 30+ members in the research and development phase. During the production phase, a six-person film/interview crew spent 23 hours and conducted 22 interviews at three locations. Two film editors spent 40 hours of tutorial time and an estimated 83 hours of editing to produce the 16-minute film. A budget of \$1,500 dollars was set for the project with funding earned entirely from chapter fundraising.

The film was premiered at the local library with nine members from the community. Low attendance was the result of an ice storm the day of the premier (Figure 2). The film has been shared with the Route 66 Federation where it will be used as promotional material. The Federation has had their new funding bill passed in the House of Representatives, and the bill has been forwarded to the Senate for consideration in 2020. It is our hope that the film can be used, too, by the Federation as they approach private donors.

Over the course of the project, the chapter gained knowledge about legal requirements needed for documentary film making, including the procurement of music permissions from major studios and necessary releases and liability paperwork for use of shooting locations. We also engaged with in-depth training on the use of film equipment. As amateur film makers, errors were made and interviews had to be re-shot, files were lost, and the management of international work across time zones was an issue. Of particular note was learning about online video management and working across international borders. We learned from each of the mistakes, and these experiences made the documentary stronger.

Our interviewees spanned ages 16 to 72 and included both male and female participants. Interviews included a former mayor of Pontiac, Illinois, a noted landmark on the route, as well as authors and historians. Interviewees expressed their appreciation for our interest in their stories and thanked us for preserving memories of travels with their loved ones on "The Mother Road."

A link to the documentary, "Route 66 - The Mother Road: Memories and Transformations" can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/>

watch?v=TyXVfs9Pu84&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3cyds2Q6XvJwojIOqHIUR7vc0R9ih-6ZltomHUVtredjcdS7q5voej5SfY

Resources

Caton, K., & Santos, C. A. (2007). Heritage tourism on Route 66: Deconstructing nostalgia. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(4), 371–386. Retrieved from doi: 10.1177/0047287507299572

This study disputed the belief that nostalgia drives tourism of the Route 66 National Historic Corridor. The authors used heuristic inquiry and in-depth personal interview to explore tourism along the route. Findings refuted the idea of nostalgia as the driving force for heritage tourism and argues that tourism is driven by historical exploration and personal growth.

Elly, S. C. (2019). *Father of Route 66: The story of Cy Avery*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

The author presented a detailed history of the creation and promotion of Route 66 from its beginning in Springfield, Missouri, to the struggle with the governor of Kentucky regarding the federal numerical assignment of the highway. The role of Cy Avery in the route's creation was examined in detail including his motivations for the establishment of the route through Springfield, Missouri, and the corridor leading to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Klinkel, E. and Gerlich, N. (2019). *A matter of time: Route 66 through the lens of change*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

The authors explored nostalgia and anemoia. Nostalgia is a wish to return to a romanticized past that may never have been and anemoia is a wish to experience a romanticized past that is not a part of our personal experience. A particular focus is placed on marketing and promotion of the route and an exploration of the sites, billboards, and attractions that were declining.

Knudson, D. (2019, May 31). Personal interview with Alpha Psi Tau Chapter.

Knudson is the Executive Director and founder of the National Historic Route 66 Federation, a

worldwide, not-for-profit organization dedicated to drawing the public's attention to the cultural significance of the Route 66 highway system and acquiring state, federal, and private financial support for the preservation of landmarks along the route. Knudson is personally responsible for the Congressional Preservation Bill signed into law in 1999 to establish the route on the historic register. The interview explored the founder's motivation for the foundation's creation and directly linked its establishment to his own experiences and nostalgic memories of traveling the route with his father. It was revealed that the Congressional bill would expire at the end of 2019, and the foundation is working to garner continued Congressional support and private sponsorship from American Express.

Knudson, D. (2012). *Route 66: America's mother road*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Shire Publication, LTD.

The author detailed the history of the route beginning at its conception in Springfield, Missouri, to its decline. President Eisenhower's role in the route's eventual decommissioning, due to the need for a fast and efficient method of travel for the nation's military and civilian evacuation in fear of potential atomic attacks, was documented. The route's revitalization was documented through personal experiences. The concept of nostalgia was explored, too. Important existing Route 66 landmarks were noted for their cultural significance.

Wallis, M. (1990). *Route 66: The mother road*. New York, New York: St. Martin's Press.

Considered the seminal work on Route 66 and referred to as "the Bible of Route 66" by scholars, this text was credited with the resurgence and interest in tourism along the route. The author detailed the history and cultural importance of the 2,448-mile route from Chicago, Illinois, to Santa Monica, California, and linked the route's moniker, "The Mother Road," to John Steinbeck's novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The role of memory and nostalgia was explored as part of the romanticism related to the route.

Witzel, M. K., & Young-Witzel, G. (2007). *Legendary Route 66: A journey through time along America's mother road*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Voyageur Press.

Considered to be two of the most noted historians of Route 66, the authors explored the rise, decline, and resurgence of the route as well as profiled individuals of historic significance in Route 66's history. The route's cultural significance as our country's first 'tourist adventure' is explored as well as its growing popularity with international travelers.

World Monuments Fund. (2013). *Route 66: The road ahead*. Anaheim, California: World Monuments Fund.

This study emphasized the cultural significance of heritage tourism and the importance of Route 66 in the cultural landscape of the United States. Particular emphasis was placed on the route's sustainability as a cultural and recreational venue for the eight states that it encompasses. This study establishes the route's designation as "The Route 66 National Historic Corridor." Specific sites of interest along the route are analyzed for their potential economic and historical impact.



Transforming Families Impacted by Substance Abuse: The Opposite of Addiction is Connection

Alpha Xi Tau Chapter
Surry Community College
Dobson, North Carolina

Theme

Powers of Connection

Abstract

The Alpha Xi Tau Chapter chose to research the Power of Connection theme related to the 2018/2019 Honor Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change." After completing our 2018/2019 Honors In Action (HIA) project, we learned that our region's substance abuse problem was worsening and education was essential to the solution. We also learned that helping those already addicted to substances was an extremely complex issue and outside the skill set of our HIA team. However, knowing that, we developed this research question: how does substance abuse impact families and friends of those who are addicted? Researching this topic led us to develop a student survey which asked who was likely to be affected by the substance abuse of others and how they were likely to be affected. From the data we collected and analyzed, we concluded that all levels of family, from children to grandparents, are impacted in a multitude of ways. Yet, most people are not aware of resources available to help. We used these research findings to develop a plan of action. We partnered with Nancy Taylor, an instructor specializing in the psychology of addiction, and Mark Willis, the county's Opioid Response Director, to create a resource guide to help families impacted by substance abuse. We included counties where the majority of our Surry Community College students reside and included sections based on specific needs revealed through our research: food pantries, shelter, health care, counseling, and additional vital resources. We searched for churches, organizations, and other groups who

provide these types of services. During the course of collecting information, we realized we would need two guides: one for resources in English and one for those provided in Spanish. After developing both, we shared them with students, college administrators, county officials, and community members to help connect families affected by substance abuse with available resources.

Objectives

Our research objectives were to:

1. improve our ability to use scholarly databases,
2. collect at least eight recent, peer-reviewed sources, which reveal different angles on our research question from global perspectives, and
3. collect local data through use of a scientific survey.

Our collaboration objectives were threefold:

1. meet with the Surry Community College President and his Cabinet to ask permission to survey the student body, share our findings, and gain support for the creation and distribution of our resource guide,
2. partner with instructors, administrators, and county officials to create the guide, and
3. work with the county's Opioid Response Team (ORT) to distribute it.

Our action objectives were fourfold:

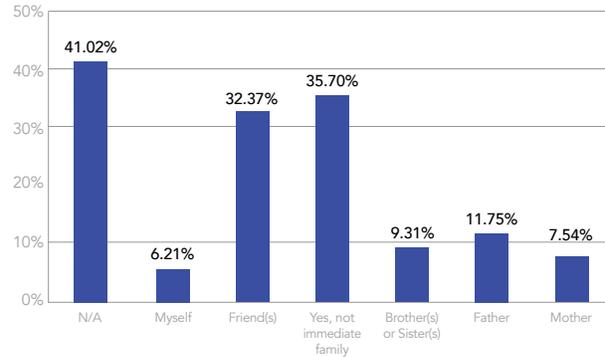
1. design a project inspired by and directly connected to our research findings and aligned with both the Honors Study Topic and our chosen theme,
2. gather and collate information on outreach organizations in our region,
3. create a resource guide to connect people with these organizations, and
4. distribute the guide as widely as possible.

Academic Investigation

Substance abuse and addiction transform lives. Our county has the highest rate of overdose deaths in North Carolina. Therefore, substance abuse is a major concern for our chapter. As a result, both our 2018 and our 2019 HIA teams chose to research how substance abuse

Figure 1

Question1: Using the list below, do you know of someone who has been affected by substance abuse? (Choose all that apply)

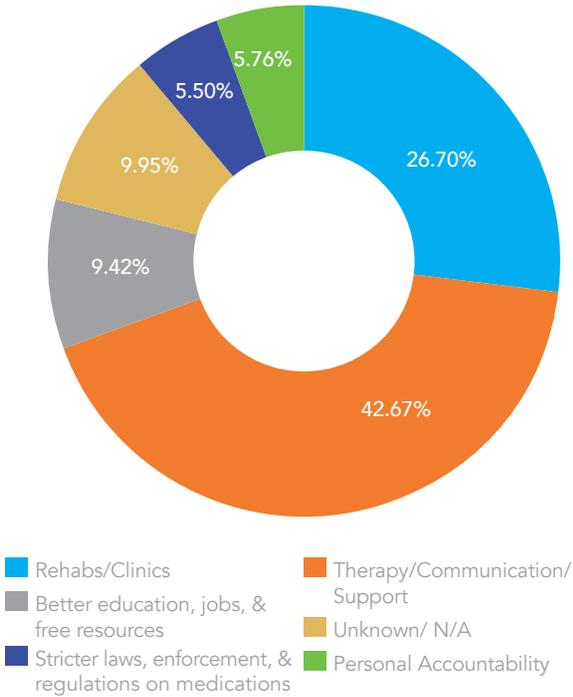


negatively transforms communities. Last year, we focused on the nature of addiction and the multipronged approach necessary to reduce its hold on communities. Raising awareness and educating people about addiction are one prong of this approach. We wanted to connect people with information about the dangers of substance abuse to break the cycle of addiction before it can start. Therefore, we chose the theme, Powers of Connection for our project. This year we wanted to continue this theme and research a related question: how does substance abuse transform the lives of a user's family and friends? We began by researching ProQuest's Social Science Database looking for journals on our topic. The information we found led us to investigate effects of substance-abuse on children. Through this line of inquiry, we realized grandparents are often impacted as they must foster grandchildren while also dealing with the challenges of having a substance-abusing son or daughter.

We learned families are affected in varied ways: mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, socially, and legally. Children may be born with physical illnesses and/or develop problems as they grow. Often, they are abused or neglected and lack even the most basic needs. Without a safe and caring environment to protect and nurture them as they grow, children and teens face greater odds of developing behavioral and emotional issues and may withdraw from family, school, and community. They also have an increased chance of turning to substance abuse. To help children of substance-

Figure 2

Question 4: In your opinion, what resource(s) or plan(s) of action is needed to help the people who are impacted by the substance abuse of family member(s) and or friend(s)?

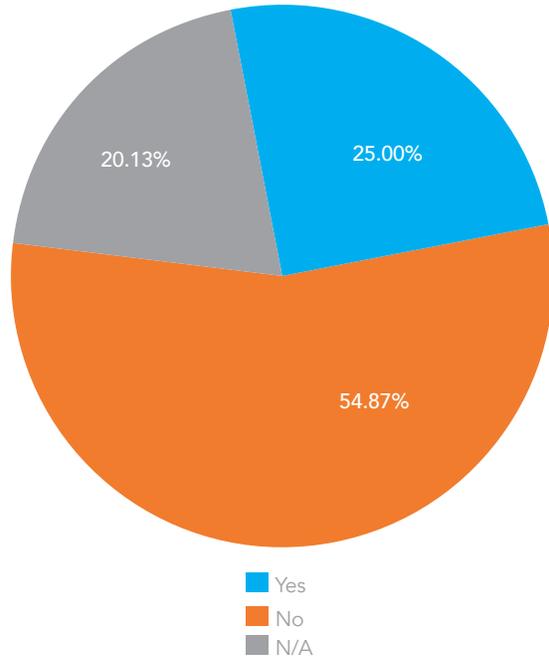


abusing parents, the welfare system often turns to grandparents to foster them. As older care providers, grandparents face significant challenges ranging from hypertension, chronic stress, and depression to social isolation and increased economic burdens on fixed incomes. While drug courts may play a part in relieving some of these tensions by reunifying parents and children, they are more successful if the families attend support group meetings and test negative for substances.

Based on our research, we wondered if local families were impacted in similar ways. Working with our college's Institutional Research Department, we created a scientific survey. Robin Slate, Data Technician, reviewed our questions to ensure they would generate reliable data. Once the Cabinet approved the survey, Slate uploaded it to SurveyMonkey and e-mailed the link to the student body. Almost 14% responded (454 of 3,315). The results were alarming: 59% of the respondents had at least one friend or family member impacted by substance abuse (Figure 1); at least 6% were affected themselves. The

Figure 3

Question 5: Do you know of resources that are available to help people who are impacted by the substance abuse of family member(s) and or friend(s)?



demographics reflected the age of our college population, with most respondents being 15-25 years old (81%). Their comments on our open-ended questions emphasize that substance-abuse is not only an inner-city problem; it is our problem. It is tearing apart our families and destroying lives. Nevertheless, 55% of the respondents did not know of resources to help (Figure 2).

Conclusions

Responses to our research surveys suggested substance-abuse results in personality changes such as depression and anxiety. These in turn may cause difficulty maintaining jobs, forcing users to steal. Human trafficking and sexual abuse may also result. One respondent described being sold by her mother for drug money. Other respondents described family members serving jail time or dying from overdoses. Those left behind felt helpless, with no idea of where to turn. From our research we concluded: 1) many families need to be connected with shelters, services, and organizations that can help; 2) the largest

categories of need include addiction and mental health services, emergency resources (including basic needs such as housing, food, clothing, and medical assistance), and domestic violence shelters; 3) we needed to include resources for our entire region; 4) we needed to include both English and Spanish resources; and 5) we needed to distribute our resource guide to as many people as possible. As one of our respondents stated, “The opposite of addiction is connection” (Figure 3).

Action

Before this project we knew our region had a drug problem, but we had no idea how bad it really was. This knowledge prompted us to take action to make a difference. Over half our survey respondents had friends and/or family members impacted by substance abuse, and over half had no idea what resources are available to help. Since our chosen Honors Study Topic theme was “Powers of Connection,” we decided that connecting people with the resources they need could transform lives for the better. Thus, the action piece of our project, a resource guide, was born. We analyzed the responses to our survey to determine the categories of resources needed: addiction and mental health services; emergency resources such as housing, food, clothing, and medical assistance; and domestic violence shelters. We then divided our action into three phases:

1. collect information on outreach organizations in each category,
2. create a resource guide, and
3. arrange for distribution.

First, we contacted Nancy Taylor, an instructor specializing in the psychology of addiction. She was able to provide a core of essential services around which to develop our guide. We then contacted Jesse Cockerham, a college administrator, who has worked with local addiction counseling services for decades. He provided us with a list of shelters and support groups. Next, we e-mailed chapter members for contact information about outreach organizations in their areas. Several responded, including Kathy Roten, Office Manager for Daymark Recovery Services, which treats addiction and provides counseling services to recovering addicts and their families. As our list grew, we separated the contacts into

our predetermined categories and checked for gaps. We then searched the internet and collected pamphlets from individual organizations to complete our list. We were now ready to begin creating a resource guide.

While double-checking the accuracy of all contacts, we recognized the need for a separate guide of resources offered in Spanish. Upon completing a rough draft of both guides, we presented them to the College President and his Cabinet, who approved them and granted permission for distribution. We then contacted Mark Willis, the county’s Opioid Response Director, asking for his input. Receiving a favorable response, we asked his advice on improving our resource guides. Willis requested we break them into three county-specific and more aesthetically pleasing pamphlets. He also requested a personalized cover letter highlighting a Phi Theta Kappan’s struggles in a family affected by substance abuse to tempt people to look, read, and connect. Willis forwarded the guides to Amanda Carter at the county’s Health and Nutrition Center. We then coordinated a meeting with the ORT, the Dean of Student Services, and three interested instructors. Our twofold purpose was to decide on a distribution strategy and educate students about effects of substance abuse. To reach as many people as possible, we decided to provide both paper and electronic versions of our guides. The ORT agreed to distribute them through EMS and hospitals county-wide. Willis also agreed to supply Narcan kits to the college in January. In addition, he requested we review a mentorship program for at-risk youth. The goal of this county-wide program is to deter youth from abusing substances by encouraging them and helping them succeed. Student Services requested partnering with us to host a substance-abuse awareness event in March. The instructors suggested creating student-produced videos to be shown at the event about the effects of substance abuse on the body.

Impact

Our project helped us grow as scholars and leaders. We improved the quality of our research by finding 10 scholarly sources from topic-specific databases, and we improved the quality of our writing by emphasizing precision and

revision. In addition, we learned the importance of collaboration in researching our topic, creating our seven-question survey, analyzing the 454 responses, and collecting resources (150). By reaching out to chapter members (135), instructors (3), college administrators (15), and county officials (2), we grew as leaders and communicators by learning to clearly and persuasively state our project's goals and gaining support.

In the short term our project has already increased awareness of college administration concerning the challenges of substance abuse problems in our region. President Shockley has authorized the electronic distribution of our resource guides through our college portal, so they can be accessed by 3,315 students and 391 faculty and staff. We can also distribute copies at an awareness event in March 2020. In addition, Student Services supported having Narcan on campus to save lives. In the long term, our project has the potential to help people on our campus and in our region. It has already inspired administrators to negotiate with Easter Seals to have an addiction counselor on campus for students. Moreover, our resource guides will be distributed in care packages and discharge papers given to all EMS, post-EMS, and hospital visits involving substance abuse or overdose in our county. As a result, there is potential for reaching a significant percentage of the 72,000 residents. Our project will impact both our campus and our community, now and in the future. Through partnering with administrators and officials we have effectively set goals to transform lives. There is no quick fix to overcoming the effects of substance abuse on families. It is a long-term endeavor. By connecting people with resources they need, however, we may be helping to set people on the right path.

Resources

Calhoun, S., Conner, E., Miller, M., & Messina, N. (2015). Improving the outcomes of children affected by parental substance abuse: A review of randomized controlled trials. *Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation, 6*, 15-24. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.2147/SAR.S46439>

This article explained problems that children are at risk of developing due to parental substance

abuse. From this information we created lists of needed resources.

Canfield, M., Radcliffe, P., Marlow, S., Boreham, M., & Gilchrist, G. (2017). Maternal substance use and child protection: A rapid evidence assessment of factors associated with loss of childcare. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 70*, 11. Retrieved from <http://login.proxy172.nclive.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1957208685?accountid=14179>.

In this Oxford journal publication, Canfield et al examine factors associated with substance-abusing mothers who lose their children (maternal characteristics, psychological factors, substance-abuse patterns, etc.). Understanding this problem spreads throughout Western countries, we researched how the children removed from maternal custody and the protective care providers are impacted. This led to understanding what resources are needed.

Child, H., & McIntyre, D. (2015). Examining the relationships between family drug court program compliance and child welfare outcomes. *Child Welfare, 94*(5), 67-87. Retrieved from <http://login.proxy172.nclive.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1804902235?accountid=14179>.

While proven successful, Family Drug Courts do not guarantee reunification of parents and children unless they participate in support group meetings and test negative for substances. Therefore, we looked for county and regional initiatives including community-based activities and clinical interventions for our resource guides.

Cook, A. K., & Worcman, N. (2019). Confronting the opioid epidemic: Public opinion toward the expansion of treatment services in Virginia. *Health & Justice, 7*(1), 1-12. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s40352-019-0095-8>.

Eighty percent of Virginians support expansion of community-based treatment over jails to address the substance-abuse problem. Sixty-nine percent support the use of housing. These statistics prompted us to research the treatment centers

and housing currently available and how the availability or unavailability is impacting families.

Harris, N., Brazeau, J. N., Rawana, E. P., Brownlee, K., & Klein, R. (2017). Self-perceived strengths among adolescents with and without substance abuse problems. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 47(2), 277-288. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022042616687118>.

This article focused on relationships and support in the lives of teens as well as analyzing how substance-abuse causes withdrawal from these relationships and supports. The authors' research helped us understand what types of resources may be useful for teens.

Lent, J. P., & Otto, A. (2018). Grandparents, grandchildren, and caregiving: The impacts of America's substance use crisis. *Generations*, 42(3), 15-22. Retrieved from <http://login.proxy172.nclive.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/2188099799?accountid=14179>.

Child welfare systems increasingly rely on grandparents to care for children affected by substance-abuse. These grandparents face significant challenges such as physical, mental, and economic burdens.

Pollock, M. D., & Green, S. L. (2015). Effects of a rural family drug treatment court collaborative on child welfare outcomes: Comparison using propensity score analysis. *Child Welfare*, 94(4), 139-159. Retrieved from <http://login.proxy172.nclive.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1804471012?accountid=14179>.

Children affected by substance-abuse benefit from Drug Court treatment programs because while possibly prolonging child custody placement, the likelihood of future maltreatment is less than children within families who do not participate. Based on this information we researched impacts on both groups of children.

Van der Pol, T. M., Hoeve, M., Noom, M. J., Stams, G. J., Doreleijers, T. A. H., von Domburgh, L., & Vermeiren, R. R. (2017). Research review: The effectiveness of multidimensional family therapy in treating adolescents with multiple

behavior problems—A meta-analysis. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 58(5), 532-545. Retrieved from https://www.stichtingjeugdinterventies.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Pol_et_al-2017-Journal_of_Child_Psychology_and_Psychiatry_10022017.pdf.

This article reviewed a large group of studies on multidimensional family therapy (MDFT) which is used to treat behavioral problems in adolescents, including substance abuse, by focusing on areas of family dynamics (behavioral problems, communication, child-rearing skills, etc.). It found that MDFT is often more effective than other therapies, particularly if the problems, such as substance abuse, are severe.



Overcoming Stereotypes Through Faculty Cultural Competence

Beta Sigma Pi Chapter
College of Western Idaho,
Nampa Campus
Nampa, Idaho

Theme

Politics of Identity

Abstract

In the United States in recent years, there has been a general decline in civility within the political climate, the workplace, the media, and in relationships between American citizens. Ninety-three percent of Americans believe that incivility is becoming worse (State Legislatures, 2019). One area of negative interaction that perpetuates incivility is the act of stereotyping which often leads to prejudice, bias, and discrimination (Cortina, 2008). Stereotypes may cause inequality and discrimination by influencing people's perceptions, interpretations, and judgments. They can also be used to justify disparities between groups (Gilroy, 2008). The purpose of our research into Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change," was to investigate the relationship between stereotyping and incivility on college campuses and to explore whether stereotyping is a problem at the College of Western Idaho (CWI). Through our research and analysis, which included an IRB-approved survey of the CWI student body, we found that identity can be used to forge stronger bonds with others or to undermine the value of others, further driving societal incivility. Snide comments, off-color jokes, and stereotypes can support implicit bias which creates a culture of discrimination that incites what is referred to as 'otherness' (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, and Esses, 2010). Rather than using our politics of identity to tear each other down, positive social identities can be used to challenge divisive otherness, to encourage and celebrate diversity, and to promote equity and inclusion for all (Pang, 2001). We learned that while a majority of students see CWI

as an inclusive place, 10% reported witnessing stereotyping, and nearly 9% had experienced stereotyping on campus, indicating that this is an encroaching problem for our campus community. Through our Honors in Action (HIA) project, we learned that civility really comes down to treating others how they would like to be treated.

To translate our research into action, we created a Cultural Competence training for CWI faculty, and we shared the results of our research which included an evaluation survey about faculty perceptions about the training.

In addition, we shared suggestions for promoting inclusiveness and overcoming implicit bias in CWI classrooms. Through our project, we hoped to reduce instances of harmful stereotyping on campus by providing ongoing education and support for faculty members, who will in turn instruct their students and use the training to create inclusive classrooms.

Objectives

Officers wanted to determine if CWI had a problem with stereotyping and incivility. In order to accomplish this objective, we took the following actions. We:

1. organized our project through Trello, Blackboard, and our school email,
2. set up in-person meetings to discuss and work on our HIA research and other project elements,
3. each researched a set number of peer-reviewed sources and created an annotated bibliography.

Chapter officers completed Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) ethics training and wrote an Institutional Review Board research proposal to create and distribute via email a five-question survey to the CWI student body. We then created a Cultural Competence training course for faculty based on our findings.

Objectives related to collaborative outreach included:

1. reaching out to a local hospital inclusion and diversity chair to discuss how to create a training for faculty,
2. contacting Dr. Yolonda Barnes, the previous lead advisor for Beta Sigma Pi, to learn more about her work as the former CWI Diversity Committee Chair,
3. working with the CWI Marketing Department, Psychology Department, Inclusion and Diversity Committee, Student Government president, Math Department, and Tutoring Center to ensure that the training we developed was reliable and appropriate.

We collaborated with the IRB Board to obtain approval for our initial survey and Student Affairs to distribute the survey to all CWI students. We sought external partners including the St. Alphonsus Diversity Director to help us create the faculty training, the Center for Teaching and Learning to house the faculty training, and CWI's marketing team and academic deans to promote awareness of the project.

Objectives related to the action component of our HIA project included the following:

1. creating an online training module in Blackboard,
2. working with Courtney Colby-Bond, our Center for Teaching and Learning Director, to add elements of our training to Blackboard where faculty could access it, and
3. coordinating with the deans at CWI to disseminate the training to all faculty and to secure permission that faculty could use our training for professional development.

Academic Investigation

Our honors study topic research began with peer-reviewed sources with the research question, "To what extent do CWI students experience incivility and/or stereotyping on campus?" We each found and summarized sources for an annotated bibliography which helped us learn about civility and incivility, identity, and stereotyping on college campuses. We worked with our chapter advisor to formulate research questions based on our academic research. Our chapter then completed the Institutional Review Board process and partnered with Student Affairs to survey to all

active CWI students in October 2019. We asked the following survey questions:

1. How does stereotyping cause incivility on college campuses?
2. Is there stereotypical behavior exhibited at CWI?
3. If so, how prevalent is stereotyping on CWI college campuses?
4. Do CWI students perceive stereotyping as a problem?
5. Do members of the campus community experience discrimination as a result of stereotyping?
6. Is awareness of stereotyping correlated with demographic characteristics?

Student survey respondents consisted of 205 students. The data indicated that 10% of CWI students have encountered stereotyping, and 8.8% reported experiencing discrimination as a result. The data indicated a problem on campus. CWI does currently have a Netiquette Expectations contract, a Diversity Committee, a “Respectful Community Commitment,” and a C.A.R.E System for the purpose of protecting student. However, students still report experiencing stereotyping and discriminatory behavior on campus. CWI acknowledged a problem and assessed that an intervention was necessary to promote civility and inclusion on campus.

Conclusions

We concluded from our research that incivility can be a challenge on college campuses, and that positive messaging and interactions with faculty can help all students to feel supported and included. After we analyzed our data from the initial survey distributed to the CWI student body, we wanted to help stakeholders become more aware of the 10% of participants who feel there is a problem on campus with stereotyping, so we created a training course for CWI faculty. Our training is being housed as part of the CWI Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offerings. Our course focused on “Cultural Competence, Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Higher Education.” After faculty members complete the CTL course, they will receive a training certificate that will count toward required continuing education.

Action

Once we completed our research, the action component of our HIA project started out as an idea for a live seminar for faculty. The seminar would be presented by one of our chapter officers based on our team’s research conclusions. However, we realized that we could reach a larger audience by partnering with the College Center for Teaching and Learning to create an online training.

We initially did not have much insight on how to create faculty training. Our Vice President of Leadership connected with Gayla Thomas-Dabney, who is the Regional Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Trinity Health-Saint Alphonsus Hospital in Boise, Idaho. Thomas-Dabney is responsible for advancing Trinity Health’s Diversity and Inclusion strategic action plans for Saint Alphonsus Health System in Idaho and Oregon and for Saint Agnes in Fresno, California. Thomas-Dabney met with our leadership team and shared a sample PowerPoint presentation she had used in the past for diversity training. It provided us a template to create our faculty training.

To implement our training, we worked with Courtney Colby-Bond, the Director of CTL. She helped us incorporate our training module for faculty in the CTL Blackboard Learning Management System. As part of the process of creating the training, we met with Max Shue, chair of CWI’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee, to get his feedback and subsequent approval for our training curriculum. We also met with Ryan Herring, the Director of Human Resources at CWI. Herring gave us his approval to move forward with our training. Once we had approval, Colby-Bond posted our training to the CTL Blackboard site. Our training module included PowerPoint slides created by our team and a 10-question post-training quiz. Colby-Bond helped us collect data about the training to evaluate its effectiveness with faculty. CWI deans forwarded the training link to all CWI faculty to promote the training. Our final step was meeting with Jessica Argyle, who is a part of CWI’s Communications and Marketing Department, to work on a press release for our training. Argyle wrote the press release and posted it the following day on the CWI website where faculty could access it.

Impact

While 10% may seem relatively low number of students who, based on our survey research, perceived they had experienced stereotyping and discrimination on campus, we contended that, if any student feels the incivility of stereotyping or discrimination on campus, it was important to raise awareness and promote reflection and civility. Our faculty training raised this awareness and provided faculty specific strategies to promote civility and combat stereotyping in their classes. Quantitatively, 100% of faculty members who completed the training evaluation survey responded that they could implement some of our suggestions to minimize bias, inequity, and negative stereotyping in their classrooms. Respondents stated that they learned something new as a result of the training, like using P.A.U.S.E. (Pay attention; Acknowledge your reaction; Understand other possible reactions; Search for the most constructive way to deal with the situation; Execute your action plan) within their classrooms.

Of those faculty members who responded to our training evaluation survey, 66% said that they would recommend the training to other faculty members, and 66% percent of faculty members said that the resulting data from our student survey was surprising.

They agreed that the roughly 10% of students who had reported experiencing negative stereotyping indicates an encroaching problem that calls for preventative action.

One faculty member added that their takeaway from this presentation was that removing the causes of inequity makes for a better learning environment and reduces stress for students and faculty alike. Another noted that our presentation was “an evidenced-based and balanced approach to an important topic.” Because this training will remain available to faculty, we hope that our work will continue to promote inclusive teaching and civility in CWI classrooms.

As Phi Theta Kappa members and officers, we grew tremendously through this process. We learned the importance of grounding action in academic research. We faced numerous institutional challenges and overcame them. We learned how to ask for help and whom to ask. We explored a creative approach to a problem we found in our research, and we collaborated with stakeholders both at our college and in our community, to provide a solution to the problem of negative stereotypes, implicit bias, and the incivility it engenders. Ultimately, we feel that what we have learned has made us more empathetic and more passionate about inclusion, diversity, and civility.

Resources

Dovidio, M., Hewstone, M., Glick, P. & Esses, V. (2010). Prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination: Theoretical and empirical overview. *The SAGE Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination*, 7-8. Retrieved from doi:10.4135/9781446200919.n1

This article helped us define stereotyping and, as a result, strengthened our CWI student survey. It played an integral part in helping us describe why stereotyping is harmful. It also assisted us to make the connection between stereotyping and discrimination and how they can cause incivility.

Ford, W. J. (2011). Minnesota State University hosts second oldest LGBT center in nation. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 28(22), 8. Retrieved from <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/cwi.idm.oclc.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=7f8c7941-fd0a48a4-ab15-ffc-9da18b734%40sdc-v-sessmgr03>

This article explained how stereotyping affects the safety of LGBT students. LGBT students are at a higher risk of being publicly shamed and targeted. The article provided an example of a certain group of students who experience abuse arising from the incivility caused by stereotyping.

Gilroy, M. (2008). Colleges grappling with incivility. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review*, 74(4), 36-40. Retrieved from <http://cwi.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=E-J888633&site=ehostlive&scope=site>

This source provided us an explanation of what types of incivility, including bullying, intimidation, sexual and verbal harassment, rudeness, demeaning remarks, disregard, and violence frequently occur on college campuses. Many of these uncivil acts stem from stereotyping. Even habitual lateness to class, leaving class early, sleeping in class, inattentiveness, and nonpermitted cellphone use are all considered types of academic incivility.

Harro, B. (2008). The cycle of socialization. *Conceptual Frameworks*, 52(6), 45-52. Retrieved from <https://app.uhds.oregonstate.edu/intranet/files/Public/CRF%20Class/Week%202/The%20Cycle%20of%20Socialization%20-%20Bobby%20Haro.pdf>

Harro's cycle of socialization described why stereotyping, prejudice, and bias are difficult to combat. Stereotyping and bias are learned and, therefore, must be disrupted by learning healthier socialization processes and better techniques of relating and interacting with others. This article connected the issue with our chosen Honors Study Topic theme, "The Politics of Identity." Encouraging a healthier socialization process is what we attempted to create during our cultural competence training for college faculty.

Iitzkovich, Y., & Alt, D. (2016). Development and validation of a measurement to assess college students' reactions to faculty incivility. *Ethics & Behavior*, 26(8), 621-637. Retrieved from doi: 10.1080/10508422.2015.1108196

This source was useful in defining incivility for our research. Incivility is an intentional deviant behavior with intent to harm, which violates norms for mutual respect and is manifested through a host of inappropriate social interactions. Incivility causes an atmosphere of disrespect, conflict, and stress. This source provides sufficient evidence that incivility on college campuses, or anywhere within society, creates significant problems.

Johnson-Ahorlu, R. N. (2013). "Our biggest challenge is stereotypes:" Understanding stereotype threat and the academic experiences of African American undergraduates. *Journal of Negro Education*, 82(4), 382-392. Retrieved from doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.4.0382

This study attested that stereotyping is a major cause of incivility on college campuses. It described the consequences that stereotyping has on college students. Not only do stereotyped students have to navigate stereotyping, incivility, and absurd and unreasonable expectations from other students, faculty, and administration, but they must also navigate stereotype threat, which is a valid, disruptive and powerful force in academia. The pressures of stereotype threat cause lower test scores, lower academic achievement, academic disengagement, not seeking out assistance, withdrawal behaviors, and high drop-out rates.

National Institute for Civil Discourse (2019). The public: Creating community solutions. Retrieved from <https://nicd.arizona.edu/>

This resource provided us with information about incivility at the early stages of our research. The source provided statistics pertaining to incivility and invaluable materials that we used to implement the action part of our HIA project. Through this site, we took the civility pledge and signed up for the civility challenge. We were able to print fliers from this site to pass out to CWI students to educate them on civility and on how to find common ground with others and peacefully resolve disputes. We also used information from this site for our cultural competence training.

Pang, V. O. (2001). Reducing prejudice and stereotyping in schools. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 29(3), 550-554. Retrieved from <http://cwi.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN==36242218&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

This study offered various methods to address stereotyping on college campuses through education of faculty and students, college policies, and programs. Because most people have learned prejudicial attitudes over many years, they must be involved in several opportunities to reflect upon and move away from bias. One workshop or discussion will not cure stereotyping, discrimination, bias, or prejudice.

Vorhaus, J. (2014). Prisoners' right to education: A philosophical survey. *London Review of Education*, 12(2), 162–174. Retrieved from <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/ioep/clre/2014/00000012/00000002/art00002;jsessionid=femcmbd8fko4h.x-ic-live-02>

Vorhaus questioned and supported the right of education for prisoners by presenting evidence and uncovering the lack of clarification. This prompted awareness, transformative justice, and recidivism.



Transforming to Tackle Global Agricultural Challenges

Beta Zeta Mu Chapter
Western Iowa Tech
Community College
Sioux City, Iowa

Theme

Economies of Everything

Abstract

Global agricultural challenges have an enormous impact on the economies of everything and require political and technological improvements. There are several factors impacting agricultural challenges, and the most important may be the lack of modernization for producing agricultural goods in emergent nations, followed closely by the global economic impact of political agricultural trade wars. The Beta Zeta Mu Chapter researched how available resources are transforming agricultural challenges as our investigation into Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Study Topic, "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change." Research analysis revealed that, despite many advancements, there are still barriers that prevent full agricultural productivity. Our research also revealed that both national and global political challenges have severe consequences on agriculture. Our analysis concluded that there is a strong need for increased community awareness and education on ways to give financial support to help modernize developing countries and ways to tackle political problems in our own backyard to help facilitate long-term solutions for local farmers. Beta Zeta Mu collaborated with a member of the Siouland Tanzanian Educational Medical Ministries (STEMM), who has been working in Tanzania to help locals with their agricultural challenges, a former Iowa legislator who has served as a government relations coordinator, and a specialist from the Agriculture and National Resources Department. Each of these collaborators participated in a public educational convocation held at our college with

both college and community audience members in attendance. These presenters offered extensive data regarding nationwide economical farming challenges and the trend behind the theme of the convocation “Global Agricultural Challenges.” Following the convocation, Beta Zeta Mu conducted several tabling events that promoted awareness and involved public discussion of the topic. Other efforts included hosting a silent auction to raise funds for the STEMM organization to assist in providing modern agricultural tools for farmers in Tanzania. Our Honors in Action project succeeded in providing both direct funding support and public awareness education in order to help tackle global agricultural challenges that have a significant impact on economies of everything, at home and abroad.

Objectives

Our research objectives were divided in two parts:

1. global challenges (especially abroad) and
2. agricultural impact in Iowa.

Initial cursory research showed that global challenges were more likely impacted by lack of education and inadequate resources for modern agricultural production.

At home, challenges were more political. In recent years, the profound economic impact of political trade wars has been a challenge for farmers. We focused our research on finding out what type of firsthand effects political decisions have had on our local economy. This included gathering statistics on some of these economic challenges concerning topics such as farm bankruptcies or concerns over sustainability of subsidies in place of real agricultural trade. Our global impact research relied more on primary sources for data. We found a local physician, Dr. Steven Meyer, who is involved with the STEMM organization and who provided the global insights pertinent to the project objective and two other experts, Mr. Wright and Mr. Warnstadt, who gave insight on the impact of current trade policy on Iowa farmers as well as on national trends related to exporting and importing agricultural goods. These experts spoke about the many challenges that our farmers face annually. These challenges include the impact of sudden changes in governmental policies and unpredictable climate changes.

Academic Investigation

After extensive deliberation, we narrowed down the Honors Study Topic themes that most interested us. We were assisted in this review process by several English faculty and other professional educators before we selected Theme 2, Economies of Everything. Our chapter began looking at research geared toward the Economies of Everything and the avenue of inquiry we would pursue. Many members brought forth a variety of interesting topics, but the chapter’s curiosity peaked when we discussed challenges surrounding agriculture. Our initial inquiry began with international agricultural challenges and how advances in technology could possibly help with this problem. Our chapter held another meeting to narrow our research to two countries. We were particularly interested in nations that were tied to our local community. Based on our discussions, we selected Tanzania and the United States. We wanted to show how global challenges can be just as severe in a wealthy nation as they are in emerging countries. We also wanted to determine how both Tanzania and the United States can overcome their existing economic barriers. According to Collins (2019), Tanzania has, due to its proximity to Lake Victoria, some of the most fertile land in Africa. After compiling and organizing our research, we interviewed three individuals who work with agriculture-focused organizations. The experts with whom we spoke included Gary Wright, Iowa State University, Dr. Steve Meyer, Founder of STEMM whom has been working on Tanzanian agricultural challenges on the ground, and Steve Warnstadt, a former Iowa legislator and an expert on agricultural trade. These interviews yielded three conclusions:

1. We should educate the community about the existence of global agricultural challenges.
2. We should help fund organizations providing new advancements to emerging nations.
3. We should try to inspire the local community to stand up to legislation that is bad for local farmers.

Conclusions

The main research objective was to understand how global agricultural challenges are affecting the economies of everything. Due to the extensive variety of available academic sources,

our investigation had to be narrowed to focus on topics relating to all challenges farmers and people relying on agribusiness are facing due to the lack of knowledge and potentially short-sighted governmental decisions that impact agricultural business worldwide. Once the objective was formulated and focused, one common need was identified: the overwhelming need for awareness of the economic impact of trade on agriculture.

The lack of proper education that prevents many people in emerging nations from using effective methodologies to meet their agricultural needs and the decision of powerful countries like the United States has a significant impact on farming communities. After several discussions, members agreed the best course of action would be to raise awareness to increase support for organizations that can bring education to Tanzanian farmers and create public debate on legislation that is harming local agribusiness. Beta Zeta Mu members chose to focus on providing educational awareness for both the college and the community while also undertaking fundraising for the local organization, East Africa, that will directly help farmers in Tanzania. The extraordinary knowledge and experience about our topic shown by experts Meyer, Wright, and Warnstadt augmented our research.

Action

The action component of our HIA project focused on how to best promote public awareness to help abolish barriers between global agricultural advocacy organizations, connect global and local volunteers/donors, and raise funds that would have an immediate positive impact on agriculture. This was accomplished in several ways. We organized an educational convocation to which we invited three experts to give professional presentations about the process of helping farmers in Africa. Our speakers helped convocation participants learn how farmers can apply advanced forms of soil preservation and modern methods and tools to address agricultural challenges. The convocation also helped us tackle the challenge of making the general public aware of global agricultural challenges, their impact on our community, and varied government policies

related to agriculture that have an impact on our economy.

In addition to our convocation, we held tabling events as opportunities to promote further discussion and awareness while providing access to educational information and data. We collected donations from people bidding on items in our silent auction that produced \$600 for STEMM to help Tanzanian farmers.

Primary collaborators on our project included Dr. Meyer, the founder of STEMM, who attended the community-wide educational convocation forum. He provided images and data about life in Tanzania and gave specific instructions on how everyone can help educate Tanzanian farmers about better care for their agricultural soil. Dr. Meyer also explained how people could raise money for organizations that are devoting their time to helping this cause. His speech had a ripple effect that has led to increased public visibility for his organization in the entire region through coverage by local media outlets as well as financial support through donations stemming from fundraising efforts for his organization by our members. Gary Wright came to our convocation and talked about the agricultural challenges in Iowa and other parts of the United States. Mr. Warnstadt attended the convocation and spoke about the economic impact of trade policy on agriculture. He focused much of his presentation on the pros and cons of recent government tariffs on China.

Auxiliary collaborators whose impact provided a quality event for the attendees, included members of our Student Senate and our college's Student Activities Director who helped us with our logistics. We also enlisted the help of the Campus Public Relations Department to help engage with local media in order to promote our Global Agricultural Challenges convocation. We also collaborated with the college cafeteria, Instructional Technology Department, Campus Security, college administrators, faculty, and audio

engineering and photography students to help execute our project.

Impact

During the months of September and October 2019, officers and members began planning a convocation that would be informative and inspiring. Our educational convocation was held on November 5, 2019, at the Rocklin Center of Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC). The chapter had an enormous impact by connecting with more than 100 business leaders and thousands of local community members through our educational convocation and media campaign. There were 298 people (excluding chapter officers) in attendance. All three local television stations were present to report the event. The college donated food for up to 350 attendees. Many of the attendees were local farmers who were primarily interested in the data presented by Mr. Warnstadt (see Figure 1). Moreover, they were interested in learning about the direct impact of the recent trade restrictions on China by the United States.

The chapter also set out to collect donations from businesses for a silent auction. We collected 140 items and raised \$2,300, \$600 of which was donated to STEMM. The convocation inspired a dozen audience members to purchase Dr. Meyer's books (all proceeds going toward helping Tanzanian farmers), and one audience member making an on-site \$200 donation at the convocation. Furthermore, 40 students attending the convocation committed to help conduct further research on how to help local farmers. The convocation also led to donations and increased volunteer participation by students, WITCC staff, and community members to tackle challenges faced by both Tanzanian and American farmers. For the rest of 2019, the chapter held five tabling events on campus to continue promoting awareness and to provide an opportunity for more public involvement. The chapter reached out to an additional 167 people through this on-going tabling activity, making the number of total direct contacts over 450 people with many thousands more through media.

During our Honors Study Topic theme selection process, chapter members learned to listen to each other respectfully. There was healthy

debate over the course of several meetings about whether we should research Theme 2 or Theme 8. Chapter members unanimously agreed on Theme 2, "Economies of Everything," as the lens through which we would examine transformations. The convocation covered key concepts the audience was keenly interested in, including local, state, national, and global statistics, misconceptions regarding trade and agricultural challenges, and different farming techniques. Through our educational convocation, we were able to promote awareness within our college, community, and beyond. Students, faculty, administrators, and people from the community learned much how they can find their part in helping the global agricultural community. Feedback from the convocation audience was positive. We made a commitment to Dr. Meyer to help him recruit volunteers with extensive modern farming knowledge to join him on his next trip to Tanzania. Chapter members grew as scholars and leaders as a result of our HIA project events.

Resources

Gava, O., Galli, F., Bartolini, F. & Brunori, G. (2018). Linking sustainability with geographical proximity in food supply chains. An indicator selection framework, agriculture, 1-22. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/edwardsh/Downloads/agriculture-08-00130.pdf

This article explored global challenges in sustainable farming as it relates to transporting crops in emerging nations with poor transportation infrastructure.

Bekkers, E., & Jackson, L. (2018). Exploring the economic impact of changing climate conditions and trade policies on agricultural trade: A CGE analysis. *Economic Review - Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City*, 5-26. Retrieved from <https://search-proquestcom.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/2124700689/abstract/63320F695C154590PQ/1?accountid=4485>

This article examined interaction between two of the most important challenges affecting global agriculture: climate change and trade policies.

Boerema, A., Peeters, A., Swolfs, S., Vandevenne, F., Jacobs, S., Staes, J., & Meire, P. (2016). Soybean trade: Balancing environmental and socio-economic impacts of an intercontinental market. *PLOS ONE*, 11(5), 1-13. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0155222>

This journal article examined the environmental and socio-economic impact of the global market on soybean trade. Soybeans are one of Iowa's largest agriculture exports. This journal article focused on the effects of imports of soybeans from countries such as Brazil and Argentina on global agriculture. The global trade of soybeans has had an effect on the export of soybeans from Iowa.

Fischer, A. C., Hanemann, W. M., Roberts, M. J., & Schlenker, W. (2012). The economic impacts of climate change: Evidence from agricultural output and random fluctuations in weather: Comment. *The American Economic Review*, 102(7), 3749-3760. Retrieved from [doi.org: 10.1257/aer.102.7.3749](https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.102.7.3749)

This study examined the effects of climate change on agricultural production. The authors concluded that even though most studies determine that climate change will have an adverse effect on agricultural production, there are a number of mitigating factors that could have an impact on these projected results.

Gnangnon, S. K. (2019). Effect of aid for trade policy and regulation on tariff policy volatility: Does institutional and governance quality matter? *Economies*, 7(6), 1-19. Retrieved from [doi.org: 10.3390/economies7010006](https://doi.org/10.3390/economies7010006).

This article discussed trade and tariff policy and their effects on world agricultural trade. The study examined the World Trade Organization's "Aid for Trade" policy which was enacted in 2005 to help the least developed countries build infrastructure that would help them benefit from global trade.

Barakabitze, B. B., Fue, K. G., & Sanga, C. A. (2017). The use of participatory approaches in developing ICT-based systems for disseminating agricultural knowledge and information for farmers in developing countries: The case of Tanzania. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in*

Developing Countries, 78(1), 1-23. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/j.1681-4835.2017.tb00576.x>

This journal compiles research on how best to educate farmers in Tanzania and parts of Africa.

Jensen, N. M., & Shin, M. J. (2014). Globalization and domestic trade policy: Foreign frames and mass support for agriculture subsidies. *International Interactions*, 40(3), 305-324. Retrieved from [doi.org:10.1080/03050629.2014.899228](https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2014.899228)

Jensen and Shin examined global trade policies and agricultural subsidies.

Ruhl, K. J. (2011). Trade dynamics under policy uncertainty. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 93(2), 450-456. Retrieved from [doi.org: 10.1093/ajae/aaq161](https://doi.org/10.1093/ajae/aaq161).

This study used the 2003 ban on Canadian beef as a model to study the effects of uncertain trade policies on planning and inventory management. Ruhl's work was particularly relevant in light of the current trade disagreements with China and other countries. The uncertainty of trade policies highlights another challenge to agricultural production both in the United States as well as in nations worldwide.

Employing Community-Based and Economic Demographic Strategies to Improve and Enhance Volunteer Engagement

Alpha Sigma Rho Chapter
Reading Area Community College
Reading, Pennsylvania

Theme

Economies of Everything

Abstract

Our Honors In Action project began with unsupported assumptions about volunteer engagement and a failed Volunteer Fair. Our original Honors Study Topic theme was Systems of Beliefs as the lens through which we planned to study “Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change.” Preliminary academic research indicated declining volunteerism in recent decades. Unsupported assumptions on our part that holding a Volunteer Fair on campus would improve volunteerism by appealing to students’ belief systems led to a failure to increase volunteer attendance and community impact. Fortunately, one component of our fair was a qualitative research survey we conducted to identify reasons students participate in volunteerism. Following up our analysis of this data with academic research showed us that contrary to our assumptions, belief systems may influence a person’s choice of volunteer organization, but the deciding factors in volunteer engagement include community-driven appeals, clear directions, and strong communication. With research indicating the majority of college students wanted opportunities to volunteer but were under enormous financial pressures, we set out to create a campaign to impact and transform volunteerism in our community. We collaborated with the Reading Area Community College administration and staff to create a volunteer Holiday Tree for 32 student families most in need (Figure 1). We offered a range of opportunities to volunteer and/or donate to members of our campus community. Participation was strong.

We engaged 173 volunteers and donors who provided food and gifts for 72 children and 132 people in total.

MAKE THE HOLIDAYS MERRY
FOR RACC FAMILIES IN NEED - YOU CAN HELP!
 Can you donate a simple food item? Or maybe a child's gift?
 Let's help RACC families in need this holiday season!

Be a Star

Take a Star!

Take a **Blue or White Star** to donate a food item

Take a **GOLD STAR** to donate a gift

Donation suggestions can be found on the back of the stars

Due Date for all donations: Dec. 4th!

Food donations go in **DONATION BOX** here in the Lobby.

Gift Donations, CALL VALERIE (RACC Phi Theta Kappa Vice-President) **610-207-0172** for gift donation pick-up (I can meet at RACC or at your convenience)

Figure 1

Objectives

We began with the research objective of creating three teams. One was tasked with research and writing, one with collaboration with college administrators, and one with organizing the action part of the project based on our research conclusions. An original objective was to explore the Honors Study Topic via Theme 9, Systems of Beliefs. We were interested in investigating declines in volunteer engagement and transformative ways to impact this decline by uncovering and acting on factors behind students'

motivations to volunteer. Unfortunately, ignoring advice from our chapter advisors, with only minimal research on the Honors Study Topic, the chapter chose to use an event from a prior year, a Volunteer Fair College Project, as our HIA action. We subsequently cherry-picked research that would support our decision. Unsupported by research, our assumptions that students' internal motivations would drive attendance at our Volunteer Fair were flawed, leading to very low attendance. Chapter officers called an emergency meeting to determine new research objectives:

1. analyze primary data obtained from attendees at the fair,
2. conduct further academic research of at least ten more academic sources suggested by our primary data, and
3. re-examine the HIA Honors topics and theme to choose a new theme and design an HIA project to explore our original goal of transforming volunteer engagement on the college campus.

With several months lost on the wrong path, our HIA objective was to complete a fully research-driven, impactful project within a shortened time frame.

Although our initial HIA action was a failure, primary research that we conducted and student feedback we received at that event spurred the chapter to adopt revised research objectives and create a new research-driven action. From our new research conclusions, we set out to transform a decline in volunteer engagement on campus by designing a campaign to increase volunteer engagement on our campus, even among students who might be struggling with economic pressures. Research suggested that using effective and targeted marketing strategies, a clear call to action, and a wide range of donation options could significantly increase volunteer participation on campus, even for students struggling economically. The chapter designed a Holiday Tree with donation star decorations for both gift and food donations, coordinating with the College Student Support Services department, which provides support to students in need, to find those most in need of help. Donors could choose a star for any type of donation they could afford, whether for a large donation or a small

food item. With a short timeframe, we worked closely with our chapter advisors and college President Looney to obtain approval for our proposal. Chapter officers collaborated with personnel from multiple departments, including Facilities, Security and Safety, and Student Support Services, in order to set up our Holiday Tree, hang decorations and lights, set up a donation box, and obtain lists of students' needs.

Academic Investigation

The chapter began our HIA project by taking an erroneous direction. Since initial research indicated declines in volunteer engagement in recent years, rather than follow HIA guidelines, we made some assumptions and chose our action prior to conducting further academic research. Our original research question asked, "What motivating factors spur volunteerism, and can understanding of factors help transform unmotivated people into volunteers?" Because we assumed we already understood people's motivations to volunteer and planned to find research to corroborate our assumptions, our decision to hold a college Volunteer Fair believing that motivated students would attend was flawed and resulted in low student attendance and minimal engagement. Fortunately, the second component of our original HIA project was a qualitative survey designed by a chapter member and conducted during the Volunteer Fair. We had assumed the survey would corroborate our assumptions that volunteers' intrinsic rewards systems would stimulate volunteer engagement. Instead, data analysis of the surveys showed us that while many students do want to volunteer, most are unsure how and where they should do so.

Conclusions

Combining this data with primary research conducted by chapter members during our Completion Week, we found that 57% of students surveyed were overwhelmed by financial pressures. Chapter members realized that these issues should be addressed as part of any action to transform volunteer engagement on our campus. Based on the qualitative data we had gathered, the HIA team conducted



Figure 2

further academic research that suggested better communication, marketing, an emotional appeal, and a direct call to action could help us increase volunteer engagement. This new research provided us with a research question under the theme "Economies of Everything," which now asked, "How can communication and marketing strategies transform volunteer engagement on campus, while addressing the financial insecurity and responsibilities of our students?" This question led us to academic sources, and our conclusions from this new research led to the new action piece of our HIA project.

Action

Academic research conducted at the beginning of our HIA project on the decline of volunteerism in recent decades comprised our initial exploration of the HIA Honors topic. Although our initial HIA action failed due to a flawed decision-making and research process, the prior academic research on volunteerism and qualitative research obtained from that first failed action inspired us to switch themes and begin fresh, despite a very short timeframe. With primary research showing that many of our fellow students had the desire but not the financial security to participate in volunteerism, and with new

academic research analyzed, we designed a volunteer campaign to offer opportunities to any student and to simultaneously help alleviate some of the economic burdens weighing down fellow students. We designed our HIA campaign to inspire and transform volunteer engagement within our community, offer intrinsically rewarding volunteer opportunities for students irrespective of their financial situation and address the financial needs of as many of our fellow students as possible. Incorporating a Facebook Fundraiser allowed us to reach community members outside our campus, and the response in monetary and gift donations was heartwarming.

Our HIA campaign was so successful in obtaining donations and volunteers that we were able to add additional families who had missed the initial opportunity to sign up. We provided gifts and food for every applicant family.

The chapter's close collaboration with program coordinators for students in need was instrumental in making our campaign a huge success. The cooperation and donations received from the college staff, faculty, and administration were remarkable. With help from our college and community collaborators, our project was such a success that coordinators informed us that recipient students were overwhelmed, and some students were reduced to tears at the outpouring of donations they had received. Numerous faculty, staff, and students have subsequently asked our chapter if we would consider making this event an annual campaign.

Impact

Our primary research undertaken by the chapter indicated that 57% of students surveyed regarding barriers to their education cited financial insecurity. Analysis of our research also showed that intrinsic motivators prompt people to want to donate and volunteer, but students consistently reported needing both opportunity and direction regarding volunteer opportunities. Our Holiday Tree campaign provided opportunities to donate

to families in need within our student community, ranging from donating a can of vegetables to fulfilling a child's holiday wish list. This allowed us to increase volunteer engagement on campus while alleviating some of the financial strain of our most vulnerable students and their families during the holiday season. The Holiday Tree project provided 72 children from 32 families with a minimum of three gifts each from their wish lists, and each family was also provided with items from a family needs list, such as blankets, Christmas trees, or frozen turkey. Each family also received at least one large box of donated non-perishable food items. We created a Facebook Fundraiser that raised over \$340, which we used to bolster any child's gift list that was lacking in donations. Each member of the HIA team promoted the campaign within their academic courses, bringing Holiday Tree stars to class to share among fellow students and professors. Chapter officers packed food items into donations boxes, while our chapter advisor collaborated with the HIA team leader to cross-check, pack, and label all gift boxes for the 32 families. Food and gift box delivery was coordinated with college staff, student program coordinators, and chapter members, since a truck was hired to transport the 93 boxes to a central location at the college for program coordinators to distribute to recipients.

We obtained primary research data from 20 students and 15 volunteer organizations who attended our initial failed HIA project, the Volunteer Fair. This provided the impetus to revise our research direction and HIA theme and led to a brand-new HIA project. During the short timeframe we had to plan and implement our Holiday Tree, we received a massive outpouring of both food and gift donations. Chapter officers met with donors daily to pick up gifts and received feedback from faculty, students, and staff members expressing appreciation for the inclusivity of the volunteer opportunity we provided. The chapter received positive feedback from program coordinators on how appreciative students had been, including emails such as, "The students in the Advantage Program were brought to tears (as I was myself) to see the generosity of the RACC community and PTK. Thank you for your incredible organizational skills. It was all our good fortune to have you share those skills with us."

The chapter learned valuable lessons from our HIA project. We learned that making assumptions based on what we think we know, without first researching and analyzing results, led to flawed conclusions and failures in attempting to implement actions based on those conclusions. Chapter officers learned the hard way that leadership and scholarship cannot be ignored in favor of doing things “the easy way.” We also learned that people will answer the call when a clear call to action is combined with well-articulated directions and emotional appeals. Chapter officers developed organizational, communication, and planning skills they did not realize they possessed, in order to accomplish a massive donation campaign serving over 132 people in a very short timeframe. The disappointment and failure of our original HIA inspired our chapter to accomplish something beyond our expectations, and we learned that sometimes, failing abjectly can provide some good results.

Resources

Bussell, H., & Forbes, D. (2002). Understanding the volunteer market: The what, where, who and why of volunteering. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 7(3), 244-257. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/236364532?accountid=3588>

This paper posited that successful recruitment and retention of volunteers can be achieved if the right demographic is targeted but that wide ranges in activities and societal groups can be challenging when defining volunteers’ motives. This paper also provided an overview of prior research showing careful matching of volunteer and organization can bolster participation.

Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., & Miene, P. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1516-1530. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.6.1516>

This paper studied the functions that volunteerism serves, showing that volunteer engagement can

provide opportunities for volunteers to demonstrate their convictions and beliefs, bring a sense of understanding to a person’s world, and be intrinsically rewarding.

Kang, M. (2016). Moderating effects of identification on volunteer engagement. *Journal of Communication Management*, 20(2), 102-117. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-08-2014-0051>

Kang’s paper discussed the significance of creating a mutually-agreeable identification with volunteers to empower and inspire volunteers, promoting engagement and intrinsic volunteer satisfaction. This research focused our campaign design on providing volunteer opportunities within our College community to benefit students in need.

McLean, J.A. (2019). Volunteering: How millennials who do not volunteer talk about volunteerism (Master’s thesis, North Carolina State University). Retrieved from <https://repository.lib.ncsu.edu/bitstream/handle/1840.20/35742/etd.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

McLean’s qualitative research studied millennials to discover underlying causes for declines in volunteer engagement within that age group, reporting that communication strategies and lack of clear direction were often key factors. We used this research to create effective communication strategies for our Holiday Tree campaign to ensure maximum volunteer recruitment and engagement.

Nencini, A., Romaioli, D., & Meneghini, A. M. (2016). Volunteer motivation and organizational climate: Factors that promote satisfaction and sustained volunteerism in NPOs. *Voluntas*, 27(2), 618-639. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11266-015-9593-z>

This paper focused on factors that either encourage or discourage satisfactory volunteer engagement with non-profit organizations. The study’s findings that recruiting and retention policies focused on volunteers’ needs and motivations could impact volunteerism focused our attention on improving extrinsic volunteer rewards to increase engagement.

Wei, Y., Donthu, N., & Bernhardt, K. L. (2012). Volunteerism of older adults in the United States. *International Review on Public and Non-Profit Marketing*, 9(1), 1-18. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s12208-011-0069-6>

This study examined multiple demographic points, such as socio-economic status, age, health, materialism and education as factors in volunteer engagement. This research bolstered our understanding that a college community would be an excellent target demographic for a volunteer organization or campaign.

Wilson, J., & Musick, M. (1999). The effects of volunteering on the volunteer. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 62(4), 141-168. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/218575595?accountid=3588>

In their paper, Wilson and Musick reviewed research on the impact of volunteering upon volunteers and discuss whether helping others can be as beneficial for the donor as the recipient. This research guided the design of our HIA action to ensure engagement in our donation campaign would have a positive impact on volunteers as well as recipients.

Young, M. J., & McChesney, J. (2013). Contemporary trends in recreation volunteerism. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 84(6), 25-28. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1431434785?accountid=3588>

This report discussed how volunteerism has changed due to the economic constraints and technological impacts of contemporary society. The study also discussed ways that organizations can create meaningful volunteer experiences to improve recruitment and retention.

Transforming Culture Through Trauma-Informed Practices: Cora Cox Home Trauma-Informed Near-Peer Mentoring

Alpha Iota Chi Chapter
Northeast State Community College
Blountville, Tennessee

Theme

Networks of Life

Abstract

After studying the themes for Phi Theta Kappa's 2018/2019 Honors Study Topic (HST), "Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change," the chapter chose Networks of Life as our focus. We examined 76 scholarly sources and attended community awareness events. We discovered that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) underlie many social problems, and toxic stress can negatively transform lives. We developed two research questions: (1 Is there a link between ACEs and future involvement in the criminal legal system? (2 If so, what strategies exist to change that course? Our research identified an ACEs-to-prison pipeline and indicated that healthy relationships can mitigate the negative impact of ACEs. We enlisted the support of local experts and met bi-weekly to evaluate our research conclusions and collaborate on the development of action objectives. Together, we identified the effectiveness of—and the need for—trauma-informed near-peer mentoring. We drafted a proposal and identified a pilot location at a local alternative high school, Cora Cox Academy (CCA). The Chapter 1) secured a "Building Strong Brains" certified trauma-informed trainer who later trained program mentors, 2) formed a committee of area high school superintendents to evaluate our formal proposal for the Helping Our Mentees Excel (HOME) trauma-informed near-peer mentoring program, and 3) submitted that proposal to the City of Kingsport for approval. We recruited and trained 13 mentors who served 45 students weekly during the fall semester. Because of our Honors in Action project's

success, we will present the program outcomes at the spring quarterly school superintendents meeting and at East Tennessee State University's (ETSU) 2020 Student Success Conference in March. This project has inspired a nomination from the Northeast State President's Cabinet for the Community Colleges of Appalachia Service Award.

Objectives

We established the following phase one research objectives:

1. establish a research completion timeline,
2. workshop research methods,
3. create a Google site to share findings and an Excel spreadsheet to organize an annotated working bibliography,
4. form research teams to examine the HST themes,
5. monitor themes-related current events at local, regional, national, and global levels,
6. identify at least three themes of interest,
7. form small groups to research and present findings on selected themes weekly,
8. consult 15 scholarly sources for each selected theme, and
9. select one HST theme to ground phase two research.

We established the following phase two research objectives:

1. examine the chosen theme and associated issues,
2. conduct theme-focused brainstorming sessions,
3. develop research question(s) to guide our investigation,
4. identify scholarly sources and assess their credibility,
5. research and consider opposing viewpoints,
6. present group research reports weekly,
7. formulate evidence-based conclusions, and
8. narrow our research to determine community need-driven issue.

Our collaboration objectives included the following:

1. form a steering committee of local experts to develop action objectives,
2. enlist Beth Ross (Chapter alumna and member of Harvard Law School's Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative) to lead a post-project reflection workshop,

3. secure funding to develop a sustainable mentoring program,
4. partner with Kingsport City Schools,
5. utilize the college's peer mentoring program structure to inform the design of HOME,
6. invite college faculty, staff, and students to assist in project planning, promotion, and implementation,
7. coordinate with CCA's principal to create an appropriate mentoring structure, and
8. enlist "Building Stronger Brains" and ACEs trainer to conduct trauma-informed mentor training.

Our action objectives included the following:

1. develop a research-based proposal for trauma-informed near-peer mentoring,
2. establish research-based mentoring objectives,
3. identify a pilot location,
4. form a committee of superintendents to evaluate the proposal,
5. submit the proposal to the city for approval,
6. establish a Memorandum of Understanding between the college and the city,
7. recruit and train mentors,
8. provide CCA students with consistent, positive interactions,
9. create evaluation instruments to assess the project's impact, and
10. utilize reflective practices throughout project implementation.

Academic Investigation

We conducted an eight-week, two-phase research process. We met weekly, created an annotated bibliography, and recorded findings on our Google site. During phase one, teams explored the HST, presenting theme-related findings weekly. The "Networks of Life" team's findings deeply resonated with the chapter, leading us to select this theme. During phase two, teams explored issues corresponding to "Networks of Life" including homelessness, prison overcrowding, school inequity, and ACEs. We considered sources in Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Program Guide before broadening our inquiry to examine issues at local, regional, national, and global levels. Teams consulted scholarly sources and monitored news outlets to identify connections between issues. The ACEs team recognized connections between childhood

trauma and other concerns of interest. Thus, we narrowed our focus to ACEs and developed two research questions:

1. Is there a link between ACEs and future involvement in the criminal legal system?
2. If so, what strategies exist to change that course? The American Psychological Association (2015) describes trauma as “an emotional response to a terrible event.”

Exposure to toxic stress and hardship transforms the structure of developing brains, potentially resulting in learning and behavior challenges (Ferrer, 2016). We attended two local ACEs awareness workshops, learning that ACE scores are determined by how many ACEs one has endured and that ACEs can negatively impact everything from health outcomes to the likelihood of suicide or future incarceration.

Felitti et al. (1998) distributed the first ACE questionnaire to nearly 28,500 people, asking about “personal experiences with physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, and household dysfunction, including incarceration of a relative, relatives with mental illness, divorce, violence against the mother, and exposure to alcohol and substance abuse” (p. 776). This study revealed a connection between childhood trauma and premature death. Wilkinson, Lantos, McDaniel, and Winslow (2019) reported that nine of every thousand U.S. children have been mistreated by a parent or guardian. Though most children of trauma do not become incarcerated, trauma negatively impacts “physical and emotional health, future experiences of victimization, lifetime educational attainment, and socioeconomic stability,” and mistreated children are more likely to experience incarceration (Wilkinson et al., 2019, p. 2). Honorato, Caltabiano, and Clough (2016) studied prisoners in Australia, finding links between criminal activity and ACEs: the child endures untreated trauma, abuses substances to conceal pain, and then experiences “a brain snap precipitating a violent offence” (p. 1). However, while considering opposing viewpoints, we uncovered studies questioning the validity of adult reports of childhood trauma. McEwen and Gregerson (2019) stated that a fundamental limitation of the original ACE questionnaire is that it does not ask about

social inequalities. Colman et al. (2016) found that depressed individuals are more likely to report ACEs. Finkelhor (2018) cautioned that more research is needed before universal screening for ACEs becomes commonplace.

Conclusions

Studies consistently showed that most adolescents in America’s juvenile justice system are children of trauma, and these experiences impact their “physiological, neurological, and psychological development” (Ferrer, 2016, p. 551). Wilkinson et al. (2019) also found that positive relationships and connections potentially prevent ACE-affected children from committing future criminal offenses. The State of Tennessee has developed the “Building Strong Brains” initiative “...to change the culture of Tennessee so that the state’s overarching philosophy, policies, programs and practices for children, youth and young adults utilize the latest brain science to prevent and mitigate the impact of [ACEs]” (Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, 2018). Berger (2018) reported that 60% of Nashville, Tennessee children have endured at least one ACE. In response, one Nashville elementary school became trauma-informed and now intentionally facilitates positive relationships, including a mentoring program for students needing academic, personal, and emotional support. The school has seen improvement in its culture and students’ academic performance. To better understand the impact of ACEs on students’ future prospects, we formed a committee of local experts with whom we shared our findings. Through personal interviews, committee members further educated us on the impact of ACEs on school aged children in our region and helped us identify potential action steps for addressing the long-term effects of this problem. Together, we concluded that ACEs predict future involvement in the criminal legal system and intentionally providing stable adult relationships is the only existing successful intervention.

Action

We convened a committee of local experts with whom we established research-driven action objectives. The steering committee included

state and local officials and representatives from the college's education, psychology, and social work departments. Community consultants—Jill Stott, Northeast Regional Coordinator, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth; Rebecca Haas, Trauma-Informed Administrator, Ballad Health; Richard Church, Principal, Cloudland High School and trauma awareness trainer; and Dr. Julia Bernard, East Tennessee State University's Interim Chair of Counseling and Human Services, helped us identify successful trauma-informed practices and critical gaps in the region. We discovered that our community lacks positive mentor relationships for ACE-affected youth. We proposed a trauma-informed near-peer mentoring program. Church collaborated with us to develop goals and objectives and provided mentor training. We requested feedback from northeast Tennessee's school superintendents at their quarterly meeting, where they approved the proposal and asked for an outcomes report.

Our education department shared required criminal background check forms, and the college's Executive Director of Grant Development helped us secure a \$6,900 grant for mentor expenses. We recruited and trained 13 mentors from PTK membership and the college's social work, psychology, and education departments. After discussing our proposed project with CCA Principal, Julie Malone, we traveled weekly to CCA to provide 45 students with:

1. academic support and personal direction,
2. encouragement to pursue post-secondary education,
3. strategies for overcoming obstacles to educational attainment,
4. a feeling of belonging at CCA,
5. a sense of self-worth and self-confidence, and
6. opportunities to recognize individual and unique strengths.

Mentors have assisted students in five classes with an online curriculum for high school credit recovery. CCA students begin each day "in a Restorative Circle where they can talk and discuss numerous issues or concerns as well as get to know one another. Restorative questions are utilized to resolve conflicts and hold restorative conferences..." (CCA, 2019). To support this effort, mentors created an e-Portfolio through

which students partnered with mentors to reflect on their daily restorative.

Impact

Through a research-driven process, we achieved all research, collaboration, and action objectives. We consulted bi-weekly with local experts and collaboratively developed HOME to disrupt the ACEs-to-prison pipeline. To measure impact, we created and distributed evaluations using open-ended questions and two 5-point Likert scales: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree, 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Neutral, 4=Often, 5=Always. Twenty-seven students responded (62% response rate):

- 59% often or always look forward to mentoring
- 67% plan to attend college
- 78% agreed or strongly agreed that Northeast State mentors help them
- 56% agreed mentors helped with class work
- 33% felt mentors helped them establish future plans
- 22% reported mentors helped with personal struggles.

When asked to describe their mentoring goals, students replied:

- "to become a better student"
- "to learn from my mistakes"
- "to graduate"
- "a bond."

When asked if mentoring affected their perspective on attending college, students stated:

- "Yes, because there's more to life than trouble and lockup"
- "They have made me look forward to attending college..."
- When asked for suggestions, one student stated:
- "They do a good job but sharing more about themselves may help students open up more and be willing to cooperate."

One faculty member remarked, "Mentors in my room have added a whole new dynamic. My students are now asking when they will be here." Another teacher was astonished when a

challenging student completed algebra during mentoring. When another of his students began reading with a mentor, he later exclaimed, "He never reads!"

With our help, nearly all mentees have made significant progress on credit recovery. Even more than what can be measured in a survey, the impact of HOME is most apparent during weekly interactions and e-Portfolio reflections. Students have described their lives outside of CCA and their hopes for the future.

While students were heard and encouraged, we have a chance to connect with lived realities much different than our own. Even those of us who are children of trauma were deeply moved by the life stories of our 12-17-year-old students and their hunger for a lost childhood. Those who had been placed in a halfway house after detention remembered, "Miss Brenda made sausage gravy and biscuits. We got to go on trips and stuff. We went to the movies and parks and Just Jump." Common throughout were tales of incarcerated parents, stints in juvenile detention, drug use at very young ages, poverty, homelessness, and violence. In short, our mentees are living the trajectory that Honorato, Caltabiano, and Clough (2016) described, but they are at a stage at which intervention may disrupt the ACEs-to-prison pathway. We hope our program will steer these students toward continuing their education and re-imagining their futures. Through this project, we developed an evidence-based understanding of ACEs, their prevalence, and best practices to mitigate their effects.

We grew as scholars by researching answerable questions that stimulated critical thinking and quality reflection. We advanced as leaders by collaboratively designing, organizing, and implementing an action plan that addressed a real-world problem as we worked to mitigate the negative effects of ACEs in the lives of trauma-affected youth. Undoubtedly, through the network we created in HOME, our lives, those of our

students, their friends and families, and members of our community have been transformed.

Resources

Cavanaugh, B. (2016). Trauma-informed classrooms and schools. *Beyond Behavior*, 25, 41-46. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/107429561602500206>

Cavanaugh reported that 68% of youth experience some kind of trauma. Teachers must understand the impact of ACEs, including behavior, learning, and mental health problems. We developed a new perspective regarding the possible causes of many of our region's problems.

Colman, I., Kingsbury, M., Garad, Y., Zeng, Y., Naicker, K., Patten, S., & Thompson, A. (2016). Consistency in adult reporting of adverse childhood experiences. *Psychological Medicine*, 46(3), 543-549. Retrieved from doi.org/10.1017/S0033291715002032

The authors found that current mental health may influence the reporting of childhood trauma, reminding us of self-reporting bias.

Felitti, V., Anda, R., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D., Spitz, A., Edwards, V. Koss, M. & Marks, J. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The adverse childhood experiences (ACE) study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14(4), 245-258. Retrieved from doi.org/10.1016/S0749-3797(98)00017-8

The authors of this article reported correlations between childhood abuse and risk factors for death in adulthood. We utilized this report as a foundation for action.

Ferrer, E. R. (2016, Summer). Transformation through accommodation: Reforming juvenile justice by recognizing and responding to trauma. *American Criminal Law Review*, 53(3), 549-594. Retrieved from https://www.northeaststate.edu:2080/apps/doc/A481881262/AONE?u=tel_a_nestcc&sid=AONE&id=ea53391a

Ferrer explained that toxic stress changes brain structure, leading to behavior and learning problems. Stable relationships can mitigate the impact of ACEs. Ferrer clarified connections to Networks of Life and provided a rationale for intentionally creating stable relationships for ACE-affected youth.

Finkelhor, D. (2018). Screening for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs): Cautions and suggestions. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 85*, 174–179. Retrieved from doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.07.016

Finkelhor cautioned against global screening for ACEs until more research is completed. This study highlighted the limitations of current research.

McEwen, C., & Gregerson, S. (2019). A critical assessment of the adverse childhood experiences study at 20 years. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 56(6)*, 790–794. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2018.10.016>

The authors conducted an in-depth analysis of the original adverse childhood experiences study after 20 years. They recognized the impact of the ACEs study with regard to subsequent research and resiliency building efforts but highlighted the limitations of the study.

Wilkinson, A., Lantos, H., McDaniel, T., & Winslow, H. (2019). Disrupting the link between maltreatment and delinquency: How school, family, and community factors can be protective. (Report). *BMC Public Health, 19(1)*, 588. Retrieved from doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-6906-y

The authors explored interventions that disrupt the trajectory from mistreatment to criminal activity. Authors identified peer interventions to prevent recidivism in youth who experienced abuse.



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