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Fun, One Day Community Outreach Ideas

by Heather Young, MPH, CHES

One of the main reasons that students give for not being involved in community service/outreach projects is a lack of time. Here are some ideas for ways to be involved in the community that are one day events and are also fun.

Races for a cause: Most of these events require only the amount of time that it takes you to run, bike, or rollerblade to the finish line. The race entry fees are donated to the organization. Some races may also ask that you raise pledges for the organization as well, but this is usually voluntary. This is a great way to support community outreach efforts and get some exercise. Many times the race organizers also encourage teams to enter so post some notices at your school and get your classmates together for a morning of fun and exercise.

One day work or cleanup projects: Most cities have various one day projects throughout the year to clean up, paint, or plant flowers at community centers, schools, or housing. Students from George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services participated in Hands On DC this spring. This was a one day event to help plant flowers, pick up trash, and paint in local schools.

Everyone involved in the project had a great time and said that it was definitely worth the time to see the effect of that one day of effort. These types of events usually require no planning for most of the volunteer workers. One student volunteers to be the team leader, attends a planning meeting, and recruits other student volunteers. Projects in the neighborhood of your school are particularly satisfying because you have given back to a community that you are present in on a day-to-day basis.

Food banks or soup kitchens: Food banks and soup kitchens around the country are always looking for individuals or groups of volunteers to help one night of the week or on the weekend. These organizations usually have a volunteer coordinator who can answer your questions and help you choose a good time for your group to volunteer. Many food banks also conduct food drives during the holiday seasons.

The above are just a few of the ways that students can get involved in the community. Remember every little bit helps even if it is a few hours a month. After all, we are students of PUBLIC health so it is time to get involved and active in our communities.

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CONVENTION 98

PHSC will be sponsoring several sessions at APHA's annual meeting, in November, that will be of special interest to students, new professionals, academicians, and first time meeting attendees. Our schedule of events follows below. The theme of this year's meeting is "Managed Care and Public Health". The meeting will be held November 15th through 18th, in Washington, DC. For information on registering for the meeting or finding housing, please check out APHA's web pages (www.apha.org) or call APHA at (202) 789-5600. Register early!

If you are interested in volunteering at the annual meeting, there are several areas where we could use help. Please contact Jeanne Alongi at JIAI@cdc.gov.

Session moderators: We need to have a volunteer to attend each of the sessions for which we are the primary sponsor. Duties would include making sure the AV equipment is there and functioning, greeting presenters, passing out Caucus materials and presentation handouts before the session, and possibly introducing speakers. It isn't necessary to be an AV wiz, but you'd have to be willing to page the APHA AV staff person if there were a problem and once you committed to a particular session, we would have to be able to count on you. We also need people who are willing to attend sessions that we are co-sponsoring but are not the primary sponsor. In those cases, you would have to commit to being there and to passing out Caucus materials when appropriate.

Booth: We will for the second year now, have a booth in the exhibition hall. We need people to plan the booths attractions and to set up staffing. We will need many people to volunteer for a shift in the booth. APHA is also providing a student lounge area called the Student Connection. We would also like to have staffing in that area.

Washington DC Survival Guide: For the last two years the caucus has put together a student's guide to the meeting city. We'd like to keep the tradition going. Anyone who has lived or is living now in Washington DC should feel free to participate.

The Schedule:

Business meetings - Everyone is invited to attend.

Sunday, Nov. 15th: 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Wednesday, Nov. 18th: 12:30pm - 2:00pm

Sessions:

Monday, Nov. 16th

4:15pm - 5:45pm: Public Health Student Welcome

and Orientation

Tuesday, Nov. 17th

12:15pm - 1:45pm: PHSC Poster Sessions

2:15pm - 3:45pm: Insights for Public Health Leadership

Wednesday, Nov. 18th

12:15pm - 1:45pm: Models for Public Health Career Development

2:15pm - 3:45pm: Public Health and Medicine Initiative

7:00pm - 8:30pm: PHSC Presidential Awards

Thursday, Nov. 19th

8:30am - 10:00am: How to Build a Student Government

PRESIDENT'S PEN

For most of us, the school year has just ended. For the Public Health Student Caucus, this is just the beginning of the most intense and exciting time of the 1997-98 term.

The summer starts with the "PHSC World Tour". Not quite as spectacular as U2's Pop Mart or as grounding as Lilith Fair, but equally insightful. Representatives from the Caucus speak at public health schools and programs. Not only do we "spread the word" about PHSC, but we get the opportunity to meet you, find out what you think about us, and solicit input on how we can make our organization better.

No Democratic or Republican Conventions this season, but that does not stop us from running our Annual Election for President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary. Think you can be the next Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Geraldine Ferraro? **We want you!**

Final preparations start for the 1998 APHA Annual Meeting, We have an incredible line-up this year, highlighted with a centralized PHSC booth and the new student area called "The Student Connection". More details to come.

Have a few moments to spare? No time is too much or too little. We welcome new people to get involved. Contact us at Caucus@unc.edu.

The key for an incredible summer, leading to a tremendously successful fall, is you. Make things happen. Make us a success.

Maria S. Cervania
University of Illinois at Chicago

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NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

At the Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, this November, the new Public Health Student Caucus' Executive Board will assume responsibility for the 1998-99 year. This is a CALL FOR NOMINATIONS for three officers to be elected prior to the Annual Meeting.

According to the PHSC's bylaws, the Caucus is governed, between meetings of its governing body, by an Executive Board composed of the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President. Elections are held each year for the President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The role of the President is to chair the Governing Board (composed of one representative of every public health school and program) and to be a liaison between the Caucus and various outside interests. The President-Elect will chair the Executive Board in the absence of the President and will oversee all committees and internal Caucus operations. The Secretary will chair the communications Committee and be responsible for all administration and communication. The Treasurer will chair the Finance Committee and will oversee the budget, fundraising, and accounts.

If you are interested in serving as an Officer, please send your name and desired position to the Caucus e-mail account (caucus@unc.edu) by noon EDT on August 14, 1998. The three Officer positions are open to anyone who is both a Caucus member and an APHA member at the close of nominations. You MUST be a member of both the PHSC and APHA to be eligible.

Please get involved! The Caucus will prosper only if we all get involved and work hard together! For further details on the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Board members and on the elections procedures themselves, please feel free to consult the Public Health Student Caucus webpage (http://www.sph.unc.edu/caucus/).

MENTORING COMMITTEE

Dear Student-Mentor Participants:

To maintain a sound research project, please complete the mid-term evaluations (via mass e-mail or the link to the caucus web page). Many thanks.

Dear members:

While completing the mid-term surveys and analyzing the data is our main priority for the summer, the most immediate benefit from these surveys will be the development of the mentoring web page. A complete list of the participating mentors, their names, titles, personal email addresses, names and links to the agencies/organizations they work for will be compiled. Information is left to the discretion of the participants.

Volunteers to the committee are always welcome.

Very special thanks to a wonderful job of the mentoring committee!

ACTION COMMITTEE

Summer is here but our work is not done. Action alerts will be sent out every other week on various topics. Keep your eyes out for them on e-mail, and be ready to respond. I strongly encourage you to participate in vocalizing your opinions. That is the only way we, public health advocates and public health graduate students, can be heard. Our vote does count, and we should let our Senator(s) and representative know that. As future leaders of tomorrow, we have to acquaint ourselves with our Congress members and inform them with the facts of the health issues we are advocating for. Please feel free to contact me any time or to request for more information about the alert or advocacy at fnguyen@ucla.edu. I look forward to working and hearing from you!

PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

The Student Connection: An informal setting for students in which to promote leadership development and communication links among students & professionals in the "field".

Location: Alcove on First floor of DC Convention Center, after Message Center & Sack Sitters

Hours of Operation: Sunday 1:00 - 5:00
Mon - Wed 10:30 - 5:00

Program Info:

- Advocacy materials (postcards) on appropriate issues to be sent to Congress
• Q & A with Gov't Relations staff
• Career development
• Opportunities for involvement in APHA
• Critical PH issues to be addressed in the present & future
• Membership information (Barbara Reck)
• Section/SPIG information from Representatives of several sections

***** CORRECTION *****

Internship Insights at WHO, Spring 1998
The 7th paragraph, beginning with "Since I completed my first draft ...", should read "Because I completed my first draft early, it could go to the Jakarta Conference." The presentation at WHO was not related to completing my paper early and was held at the very end of my internship. For Jakarta, I prepared a presentation (of colored overheads), but I did not go to Jakarta myself. Somebody else presented my paper for me. However, I presented my paper at WHO with a PowerPoint presentation to some professionals and to other interns, but not during a school health workshop.

PHSC

News & Views

P.O. Box 9313

Chapel Hill, NC 27515

The PHSC needs your help!

Please give what you can to help us continue to serve and represent the student members of APHA. Make checks and money orders payable to:

PHSC

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Name: _____

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Thank you for support!

JOIN THE PHSC TODAY!!!

Membership Form

Caucus membership is available to all APHA members. To join, please complete and return the following form with your \$5 dues or join via the Web site and mail in your dues. Membership forms and dues should be mailed to *PHSC, P. O. Box 9313, Chapel Hill, NC 27515*. If you are not a member of APHA, you need to join before you can join the Caucus. APHA offers discounted rates for students that are 60% off the regular membership price. All APHA student members receive subscriptions to the *American Journal of Public Health* and *The Nation's Health*, and discounted registration fees for the Annual Meeting for only \$50 a year. For APHA membership information, call Membership Information at (202)789-5674 or visit their Web site at <http://www.apha.org>.

Name: _____ APHA member #: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

University/Affiliation: _____

I would like to be included in:

PHSC listserv _____ Network Database _____ Mentoring Program _____