

Professional Development Grant Report
Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting
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Highlights and incorporation of information:

In hopes to begin a Fraternity and Sorority Life endowment in the near future, I attended Miami University's session, "Cultivating and Utilizing Alumni and Donor Relations". Although their presentation was primarily for individual organizations, the tools presenters provided were applicable to program areas. For example, contacting national offices of each fraternity and sorority on SJSU's campus to seek lists of initiates; in return, our university (if allowed) would provide headquarters any flagged members in our database. SJSU has begun partnerships within our departments. Our next priority will be to keep interested alumni(ae) updated with our community, provide materials and increase student interaction.

I was particularly excited to attend Phired Up's "Dynamic Recruitment" workshop. Students often recruit on a larger scale but do not recruit their expected goal. "Dynamic Recruitment" essentially brings back the basics of recruitment: 1) You can't recruit who you don't know; 2) People don't join organizations, people join people; 3) Be more normal. The aforementioned is all relative to Phired Up's values-based selection process (rituals, creeds, standards of values). I was grateful Phired Up shared their presentation with us. I will have the opportunity next semester to practice their theories with spring recruitment and fall workshops. All of their suggestions will easily be passed on to our council and chapter leadership to improve our recruitment process and new members.

Higher education professionals are confronted with the "Me" Generation, also known as Millennials. Millennials are products from the Baby Boomer generation; their anxiety and depression levels are high, are less familiar with social norms, and have an increased sense of entitlement. Presenters opened up for questions and discussions, the most helpful portion of the session, when I realized I was not the only one experiencing frustrations. Tools to work with the "Me" Generation are: 1) Teach self-control and accountability; 2) Do not side with poor decisions or bad behavior; 3) Limit exposure to violence; 4) Give realistic expectations. I am interested in reading their suggested text, "Generation Me" by Jean M. Twenge, Ph.D. to obtain more information and methods in working with our students. I find challenges everyday in sending receptive messages, consequences, and communication in general to our students. *Consistently* practicing the four tools will hopefully teach Millennials the value in accountability, partnerships, social norms and expectations—in addition, our programs will be better received.

"Why We Should Be Closing More Chapters" provides a combination of the aforementioned sessions. Presenters were national representatives and experienced the success of closing more chapters: quality of men increased, values improved, numbers increased, and GPAs increased. Their theory is not to shut all fraternities and sororities, but rather the concept of re-building. Our colonies and recent chartered groups are directly educated from headquarters of the expectations, values and privileges members have earned; the process is not easy and once completed is simple to relax and let items slip. The objective to their presentation was to increase

accountability in our chapters and keeping “the right guys on the bus and getting the wrong ones off” (personal communication, Mike McCree). Engaging the support of (inter)nationals, advisors, alumni(ae) and the university is pivotal to rebuild.

I also had the opportunity to meet with fraternity and sorority (inter)national representatives during our fireside chats. Each discussion was specific to issues SJSU and headquarters could seek to partner with.

Contributions to SJSU student learning:

Accountability and taking initiative to change “what used to be” were key themes throughout the conference. As Student Affairs professionals, it is our responsibility to give students the tools to critically think through challenging situations and find resolutions; seeking accountability and change will be essential to become contributing citizens to our society. Upon networking with fellow colleagues within Greek Affairs and other areas, we can teach skills through planning, programming, conflict mediation, judicial issues, presentations, interpersonal communication, professionalism, etc. Their personal development will progress via situations we guide students through.

Sharing results:

I have shared my experience with advisors, alumni(ae), Student Involvement staff and with the Division of Student Affairs via this report.

Website:

www.fraternityadvisors.org

Some presentations from past and present conferences are posted under the Professional Development tab.