



Student-Led Best Practices Submitted by Bonner Congress Representatives

Name of Best Practice:

Planning/Choosing of Upcoming Events using Community Night Meeting

College/University Name and Contact Information:

Saint Mary's College of California
jphelps@stmarys-ca.edu

Name of Congress Representative(s) Preparing Report:

Jenise Phelps

Background:

Through our Community Night planning meetings we were able to plan and implement Saint Mary's first large scale Voter Registration drive. Over 500 people were registered as a result of our Community Night planning structure.

What Makes This Unique:

This is a unique Best Practice because it involves major projects that are started, implemented, and completed by Bonner Leaders. Community Night planning is a way in which Bonner Leaders can have a voice in their own program and on their own campus.

How it Works:

Community Night is the key component to planning events like the voter registration drive. Community Night is a time when all of the Bonner Leaders, the Senior Intern and the Director of the program meet. We meet for an hour and a half every other week. It's a chance for us to talk about business, find out how other Bonner Leaders have been doing at their sites, reflect upon our own work and discuss upcoming events.

We brainstorm new events during and at least one Community Night of the year. The ideas are all written down and then discussed. Items which seem most feasible, effective, and important are chosen through a facilitated process. Sometimes this simply means continuing events already in place, and other times this means beginning entirely new events. The Bonner Congress Representatives for the next year begin to plan the events and when it is time the Bonner Leaders run and promote them.

Recommendations:

The actual implementation of the events can be difficult. Taking the ideas from paper and turning them into real events is a labor-intensive process. However, once this process is started the results can be amazing. In order to make these events happen the ideas shared by the Bonner Leaders cannot just stay on the paper, they have to be made into reality.

Supplementary Documents:

Bonner Curriculum on Action Planning (available at: http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules_pdf/BonCurActionPlanning.pdf)

may give you some ideas for how to turn the idea from vision into action.