**College Student Outreach**

**7.15 Crossroads: An After-College Guide**

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| **1. Section, Branch** | San Francisco Section, Fresno Branch |  |
| **2. Section/Branch Size** |  |  |
| **3. Project Contact** |  | |
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| **4. Project Category** | College Student Outreach | |
| **5. Project Description** | The Crossroads Conference was designed for recent and upcoming graduates (juniors and seniors) within the ASCE San Francisco Section. Overall the conference included presentations, focused breakout groups, a resume workshop, a networking lunch, and an Industry Leaders panel. The core material of the program this year included: team building, defining a leader, discovering the different leadership styles and how they work together, and conflict resolution. It is a full day conference, ending with a YMF social mixer in the evening to foster personal relationships between each ASCE entity. | |
| **6. The Process**  (What you did, When and How) | The concept started with the opening of the STAY Grant. Fresno YMF wanted to offer a valuable activity for college students that was not only intended to attract upcoming graduates to continue their membership but was also meant to pass knowledge onto them from current professionals’ experiences.   * Award Notification * Determine desired group size * Venue search and date selection * Create an outlined schedule, topics, and a budget * Guest speakers and panel search and ask for volunteers for the day of * Order materials and supplies (lanyards, folders, pens, etc.) * Catering order made within the week of the event (from Chipotle)   There was also a social activity in the evening after the mini-conference which was coordinated about one month prior to event day. | |
| **7. Those in Charge** (Committee, Task Committee, Etc.) | The whole Fresno YMF Board took a role in executing the event but the Activities Chair on the board was in charge of organizing the event and applying for the STAY Grant. One other board member partnered with the Activities Chair to assist in the overall event planning. | |
| **8. Time Frame**  (When Started, When Completed) | September 2017 - Completed grant application & received notification of receiving the grant  October 2017 - Began planning  March 2018 - Event Date | |
| **9. Success Factors**  (The Parts that Worked Really Well) | The best sections of the conference were the Resume Workshop, Industry Leaders panel, and the two main topic speakers. These were the most volunteer based sections of the conference, so not only were they the best sections of the day according to the students but they were the best part of the conference because of the professionals who volunteered their time and energy to make it all happen. | |
| **10. Setback Factors**  (The Parts that did Not Work Well) | Some areas for improvement include:   * Venue: Finding a venue that fits your target group size while accommodating the activities planned for the day is challenging. Other things to consider is audio/visual equipment, facility lighting (will it hinder the attendees view of slides on screen?), lunch area, and place for registration.   + Technology: Our venue had a lot of natural lighting which made it difficult to see the PowerPoints on the screen. * Outreach: The event was promoted in upper division classes and at ASCE Student Chapter events along with email blasts and posters, but getting participation was still a challenge. Starting earlier and planning more discussions on the event with the students would have been beneficial. Also getting the faculty more involved with the event in the beginning stages might be a good source of promotion. * Event Schedule: Overall the order of the events went well but it was noticed that the participation in the afternoon died down after the Industry Leaders panel. Planning in more breaks and activities will help keep them engaged but also switching the order of the topics so that the more intense subject is in the morning could be beneficial.   Follow-Up Surveys: Surveys were given to students and professionals involved in the event. The professional survey was done online but the student surveys were on paper at the end of the event. Making them all online and during the week after the event would’ve helped gather more responses and input. | |
| **11. Creativity**  (This is something off the wall that we did) | The whole event in itself was a very ambitious engagement that Fresno YMF hadn’t done before. On a smaller scale, the resume workshop was unconventional for Fresno YMF as resume reviews are typically done via email or over a longer period of time. | |
| **12. Administration**  (What was most Important?) | The most important administrative tool used for the registration of this event was Constant Contact. This is used for all of Fresno YMF’s monthly newsletter emails and the membership team on the board manages all communications through this tool. The team was able to help create registration pages for students and professional volunteers where the fee could be collected along with other information which would be downloaded in an excel file later on. | |
| **13. Follow-Up**  (What was most important?) | Following up the event with the survey was extremely helpful to us. It helped us to gauge how the event went with students and professionals, whether it was a success or not, and if there were a lot of things we should have changed. | |
| **14. Recommendations**  (What you should ALWAYS do with this project?) | * Planning and creating a budget as early as possible * Book guest speakers immediately after booking location and setting a date * Make enough time to advertise the event   See what kind of promotional activities you can request from ASCE National - will help alleviate your budget! | |
| **15. Cautions**  (What you should NEVER do with this project?) | * Wait last minute to plan your budget - define this early on so that if you need more sponsors to aid in the expenses you have time to fundraise.   Assume that a single email to spread the word is enough - this event was intended to be for the whole San Francisco Section and follow up emails with the other branches would have ensured that students outside of our area were informed about this opportunity | |
| **16. The Outcome** | From the participant survey results that were collected, 100% stated that they would attend this event again, 100% saw it as an asset to being a member of the organization and 100% would recommend it to other students. Each participant gained something different from the conference but in general the most important sections, according to the survey, that were addressed included: communication, management and leadership styles, conflict resolution, the importance of continually growing and how to make an impact and long-lasting connections in the industry. | |
| **17. Ongoing Activity**  (Would you do it again?) | Planning an event of this caliber is a formidable task. After seeing the feedback from both students and professionals, ASCE in the Fresno area definitely sees the value in an event of this kind but it would ultimately depend on the YMF leadership having the bandwidth to produce another successful event. | |
| **18. Speaker Contact Information**  (person from your Region who would be willing to speak about the Best Practice) |  | |
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| **19. Additional Comments** | **See Attached:** *flyers, event schedule, pictures, Final Report* | |

