**Public Outreach**

## **8.15 Rainbow House Community Service – Nebraska Section**

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| **1. Section, Branch** | Nebraska Section |  |
| **2. Section/Branch Size** | Large |  |
| **3. Project Contact** |  |
| Name | Christopher PodanyIsabella Walsh |
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| **4. Project Category** | Public Outreach |
| **5. Project Description** | We created tie-blankets and put together gift bags for residents of the Children's Hospital and Medical Center's Carolyn Scott Rainbow House, in Omaha, Nebraska |
| **6. The Process**(What you did, When and How) | We contacted the Rainbow House to find out the items that they might need/like us to include in the bags, and check that we weren't including anything they didn't want. During our event, we set up different stations for people to work at. These stations included writing "take care" notes from ASCE, folding the animal themed fuzzy sock tents, stuffing the bags, cutting the fleece into lengths for the blankets, and tying the blankets. When these were completed, we dropped them off at the rainbow house |
| **7. Those in Charge** (Committee, Task Committee, Etc.) | Christopher Podany, Isabella Walsh |
| **8. Time Frame**(When Started, When Completed) | We came up with the idea in October and contacted the Rainbow house. We started buying supplies in December and brought all items to the hotel on January 25th. We used the 1.5 hours of an CRYMC conference session to put bags together. Since we were not able to finish tying all the blankets, we held a separate community involvement session for the Nebraska Section YMG on February 6th. The blankets were completed, and all bags/blankets were delivered to the rainbow house on February 8th |
| **9. Success Factors**(The Parts that Worked Really Well) | Setting this event up in stations worked very well. It was efficient, and the younger members separated into groups easily |
| **10. Setback Factors**(The Parts that did Not Work Well) | We did not have enough scissors for cutting the strips for tying the blankets, and this caused us to not be able to finish tying blankets by the end of the session. We had 20 pairs of scissors for 35 people; I would recommend one pair per person. Additionally, rolls of fabric needed to be cut down into the sizes of the blankets. This caused a delay with people not being able to start a blanket right away. I recommend all material to be cut down prior to the event, in order for everyone to be able to start on a blanket right away |
| **11. Creativity**(This is something off the wall that we did) |  |
| **12. Administration**(What was most Important?) | The written communication with the Rainbow House to discuss what items would benefit their organization and what items do not work well for them |
| **13. Follow-Up**(What was most important?) | Check in with the Rainbow House a few weeks after donations to see how items were received. Modify for future events based on comments |
| **14. Recommendations**(What you should ALWAYS do with this project?) | When setting up an event, have written communication between the event organizer and charity. Share event details and deliverables and ask if there are any accommodations they would like you to make. We initially were going to pack art supplies in the gift bags but after input from the Rainbow House, all art supplies were taken out |
| **15. Cautions**(What you should NEVER do with this project?) | Phone conversations are good starters but always follow up with something in writing to be clear there is a mutual understanding between the organizer and charity involved. Approximately 200 yards of fleece fabric was needed for this project. Do not wait until the last few weeks to acquire your materials. Large quantities of things may be hard to find |
| **16. The Outcome** | Children and families at the Rainbow house will be given gift bags to help lift spirits in the midst of a hard situation |
| **17. Ongoing Activity**(Would you do it again?) | Yes, and I would try different forms of community service activities at all conferences |
| **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** | One benefit to this activity that was not foreseen was the ability to easily "network" while participating in this event. I use quotes because this type of networking doesn't necessary feel like what we usually consider to be networking; it is very easy to chat with the person next to you while also absorbed in an activity. The conversations tend to be less forced in this type of environment, since neither party is forced to come up with something to say |