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Increasing Member Involvement

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
International Center for Studies in Creativity

Increasing Member Involvement in Volunteer Organizations

A Project in
Creative Studies

By

Courtney Belluccio

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

December 2008

Abstract of Project

Increasing Member Involvement in Volunteer Organizations

This project focused on understanding current member motivation and involvement in the two organizations; Outdoor Activities Unlimited Club of Monroe Community College and the Genesee Valley Region Adirondack Club Younger Members. As a leader in both organizations it was intended to understand member motivation and involvement in an attempt to increase both. Through three months of events, meetings, and communication both membership and motivation have increased. Members have various reasons for joining clubs pertaining to the outdoors and there are cycles in the feeling of member responsibility and convenience as people's lives change.

Signature

Date

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Date of Approval

Project Advisor (Title)

Student

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Background to the Project

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to understand the member participation and attendance in the Outdoor Activities Unlimited (OAU) club of Monroe Community College and the Genesee Valley Region of the Adirondack Club Younger Members (ADK-YM). Through understanding the motivation behind the current member involvement a proposal will be made to increase attendance and participation for each club.

Description - Background

I am the Advisor to the OAU Club of Monroe Community College (MCC) as well as the co chair of the Genesee Valley Region of the ADK-YM Section. These two organizations bring people together who have a shared passion for activities in the outdoors. The activities in both organizations vary from educational, physical, volunteer, and social.

The OAU club is for faculty, staff or students at MCC. There are no dues to pay except students are required when registering for courses to pay an activity fee that aids in clubs and organizations receiving funding. OAU fundraises to put money in their private account and is provided a budget from the Campus Center that is less than \$500 and earmarked for projects at time of budget creation. OAU currently maintains a private account budget of approximately \$2,000 from car washes, concession sales, candy bar sales, coupon books sales, and vendor sales. This money is used to help subsidize the

price of trips. There are no restrictions on membership and officers are voted in by active members.

The ADK YM club is for anyone in the Genesee Valley Region of New York State. There is a \$50 annual membership fee. The ADK-YM club is a subsection of the Genesee Valley Region Adirondack (ADK) club which is a regional part of the Adirondack Club. The younger members are between the ages of twenty and thirty. There are no restrictions to being a member; positions that are held in the organization are appointed based on interest. The younger member's budget is less than \$300 and although this organization is non-for-profit they do not fundraise, members are expected to pay for their full trips.

Rationale for Selection

There are currently twelve members in OAU that are considered active, by attending meetings and participating in trips. There are four Officers and two Advisors who maintain the club all of which report to the Assistant Director of the Campus Center at MCC. Of these twelve active members only four are taxed with planning the activities, completing the paperwork, following up with receipts, and organizing people. Members are inconsistent in their attendance, unreliable in their information gathering, unwilling to commit, and nonresponsive to events or trips planned.

There are two people leading all three hundred of the younger members. These two younger members report to the Chair of the Genesee Valley Region of the Adirondack Club. The role as co chair is to organize activities to lead or be lead by members for the entire organization. Since my inception in august 2008 my co chair and

I have organized several events of which the greatest attendance was twelve people and only one other person has led a trip.

In both organizations there is a clear purpose that brings people with similar interests together. There is a lack of participation and attendance in these volunteer organizations and a strong need to change this. If OAU is inactive for two consecutive semesters with no officers or members the club will become unchartered. Without active members in the ADK YM club people lose interest and membership will drop. There is a definite lack of ambition to plan, organize, and execute. There are similar initiatives in these organizations as well as a common problem to solve. This problem needs to be resolved in order to have successfully active organizations. Through increasing participation and member motivation then membership will go up.

Creative Addition

People join volunteer organizations when the mission or purpose align with their interests. Through understanding people by strengthening our emotional intelligence, improving our leadership skills, and fostering productive teams the organization will prosper. There is a strong need for understanding people and what will motivate them in various areas of their lives from what items they purchase to why do they donate their money and time to certain organizations. Everyone has a civic duty to volunteer and having an understanding of what will strengthen motivation and attendance in volunteer organizations will help more than just that organization.

Pertinent Literature

Narrative Introduction

It was difficult to find literature to review that related specifically to motivating people in volunteer organizations. There is much to read on motivating in the work place or in school especially with reward or respect. Much of my research revolves around personal experiences within volunteer organizations, higher education, and leadership. I have studied leadership, the formation of teams, business and managerial practices, as well as personal skills of influence and emotional intelligence in an attempt to understand how to motivate people. Motivation in volunteer organizations does not revolve around tangible rewards as much as personal satisfaction.

In speaking with different people such as colleagues, students, co-advisors and co-chairs, friends and family I have gained many ideas to implement. The Internet held a myriad of diverse suggestions on motivation and there were some literature reviews that discussed motivation in the workplace and amongst community service organizations.

A selected bibliography is included below for a list of books that would be beneficial in additional research on this topic.

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Process Plan

Introduction

The process followed in this project was to assess what I know about OAU and learn what I can about ADK-YM. In knowing the organizations and learning about the members and their needs I could begin to see where both organizations currently are, study what will help them change, and propose steps to reach intended outcomes.

Each organization has begun this process with introductory meetings. This gives each member an opportunity to learn about the organization and share their expectations through their commitment to join. The OAU club maintains weekly meetings and the ADK-YM club mostly communicates via the web but has established a meeting pattern of every four months. In having meetings, OAU and ADK-YM have gained insight into the types of activities and events that both organizations would like to see take place.

The OAU officers have dedicated one hour a week for an officer's meeting as well as one hour a week for the club meeting. The ADK-YM co chairs communicate weekly via e-mail and have scheduled a few meetings to foster effective communication and organization. Through this there are agendas and minutes for OAU for each meeting and organized e-mails that go out communicating the proper information for ADK-YM. There have been several events set up in each organization to build and strengthen a community amongst the members. Some of the events have taken place and have been very successful, while others have failed due to lack of participation, bad weather, and lack of communication. The list of events that have taken place and are coming are described next:

OAU – Taken Place

Activity Day – the club set up a table with it's members to advertise the club to the College community, sharing information about the club, it's activities, and meeting times and locations.

Go-Karting – cancelled due to lack of communication from participating company

Zarpentine Corn Maize – twenty-five people showed up from 6pm to 9pm to complete the five acre corn maize.

Letchworth Camping Trip – seven people camped at this state park. The students and I arrived at 5pm on Friday October 17th, set up camp, made dinner, and sat around the camp fire. It was a very cold evening and we all told stories and roasted marshmallows while getting to know each other until 1am. I had to leave at 7am the following morning and the other Advisor was to join the students in early afternoon. Approximately 12:30pm I received a call from the students informing me that they were leaving and aborting the trip for the remainder of the weekend. The students departed due to lack of supervision and a clear plan during the six hours they were alone.

Gananda Corn Maize – this was a spur of the moment event where seven people in total attended of which 3 were active OAU members.

Genesee Valley Gorge Hike – cancelled due to rain

Kayaking – Two members committed to going. One cancelled less than one week prior and the other had a family emergency just before we had to meet. There were a total of three people who still went, myself included.

Rochester clean up – The City of Rochester did not have any available dates to assist in planning a cleanup that corresponded with those planning the event.

OAU – Upcoming Events

Team-building overnight party – There is an anticipated 30 people playing basketball, dodge ball, spud, kickball, swimming, racquetball, WII, watching movies, eating pizza, and playing board games from 7:30pm to 2:30am. OAU has successfully planned this event in conjunction with five other college clubs in hopes to advertise OAU and increase participation. There has been some frustration in planning this event: The original location that was approved fell through, gaining approval from administrators in charge of clubs and organizations had taken over three weeks only leaving two weeks to advertise, communicating and gaining commitment from other college clubs and organizations has been difficult, gaining additional adult supervision has proven unsuccessful.

Ronald McDonald House Dinner – we will plan a menu, purchase food, tour the home and cook a meal for the Rochester Ronald McDonald House collectively.

Paintball – we will play paintball with fifteen members.

Teambuilding and 11th hour film – OAU has had little to no response from members to participate in this event. It has been suggested to change the movie to something more fun and entertaining as opposed to educational.

Ski Trip – Traditionally fifty students attend this trip of which ten are active club members. The trip this year was intended to be to Killington Vermont but it may have to be to White Face and Gore Mountains due to lack of planning. The process is for a trip pack, detailed packet outlining the trip, to be submitted for approval to the Campus Center. OAU had intended on turning this in in early October. Due to a lack of response

from the Advisor helping them plan it the trip pack is still not turned in in early November and the trip may have to change or risks not happening at all.

Snow Shoeing – the Advisor will plan this in conjunction with the ADK-YM club.

Allegany camping and skiing – the officers of the club are working on planning this trip

MS Walk – the students will have a representative on a college committee to help plan for the MCC team and coordinate OAU members to walk.

White water rafting in Maine on the Penobscot – the students will be meeting in January 2009 to begin planning this trip.

ADK-YM – Taken Place

ADK Executive committee meetings are where all of the chairs of the sections of the Adirondack Club meet to discuss club business. The attendance is always very full of at least twenty five chairs.

ADK-YM Meeting – this was the first younger members meeting ever to introduce ourselves and learn about what the members want to do. Twelve members showed up and shared their feedback with us.

ADK-YM Putt putt and macgregors – three members showed up for this making it a total of five people. The putt putt was skipped because one person was late and the group went to macgregors and had a good time having dinner, playing pool and darts, and getting to know one another.

ADK- hike – Mendon Ponds –

Barktober Fest Lollipop farm walk – 3 club members and one non club member walked and raised over \$250 in support of pets.

Pauly Shore comes to MCC- no members responded with interest in attending

Stony Brook Park Hike – this was cancelled due to trip leader sickness

Zarpentine Corn Maize – ADK-YM did this in conjunction with OAU and had four members in attendance.

Chimney Bluffs Hike and Apple Picking –

Fall Walleye Tactics – no ADK-YM members showed up

Racquetball – no ADK-YM members showed up

TK & Karaoke – nine people in total ate pizza and then went to karaoke. Out of these nine five of them were ADK –YM members

Genesee Valley River Gorge Hike – was cancelled due to rain

Eagle Bay Camping – was cancelled due to lack of attendance and the requirement of deposits

ADK-YM – Upcoming Events

Planetarium- Harvest Moons and Autumn Stars – members will take a tour of stars, constellations and planets of a fall nightfall.

ADK – Hike – Black Creek Park – Wetlands and Ridge Trails – this hike will be approximately 2.5 miles and will end with lunch at noon.

Social Dinner and Tickle the Taint Band

Younger Members Holiday get together – we will all bring a dish to pass and a Toy for Tots donation

Snowshoeing – we will get together and snow shoe the marshlands in Webster

Paintball

Kickball tournament amongst MCC and ADK clubs

Superbowl get together

Hockey game

Geocaching

Dinner and Bowling

Quarterly meeting – members will get together to discuss the past few months and what they want to do over the next few months.

Movie night 11th hour – this film is about sustainability and the human footprint on the world.

Ice skating – we will ice skate at ESL

Sledding – we will meet at Cobbs Hill park for sledding

ADK - Rattlesnake Hill Hike – This hike will be about 5 miles on the trails at Rattlesnake Hill Wildlife Management Area south of Dansville, NY.

ADK – Letchworth State Park Hike – Trout Pond Loop – This hike will be approximately 6 miles on the Trout Pond Loop trail in Letchworth State Park.

ADK – Mendon Ponds Park – East Esker Hike - hike is about 5 miles on the trail in Mendon Ponds Park..

ADK – Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge – Mohawk Pond Hike – hike about 5 miles on the trails in the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge.

ADK – Hike-a-Month - Harriett Hollister Park Hike –hike about 5-6 miles on the trails in Harriett Hollister Park.

ADK – Canadice Lake Trail Hike –hike about 3-4 miles on the trails Canadice Lake.

ADK - Hemlock Lake – Big Oaks Trail Hike –hike about 3-4 miles on the trails around Hemlock Lake.

ADK- Green Lakes State Park Camping Trip. Green Lake State Park tent camping and hiking around Green and Round Lakes.

Corning Museum Tour – we will meet and view the museum

In coordinating many events thus far there have been patterns emerging and insight gained into what motivates people to participate and attend. A survey was distributed via the ADK-YM website and the results tallied. Out of three hundred members only seven responded to the survey. The information in the survey reflected that the majority of the members were aged 30-34 and their best availability is Saturdays. The top three preferences out of eleven types of events (entertainment, social, hiking, winter outdoor activities, sports, seasonal, extended outdoor, educational, volunteer, high impact, family) are hiking, winter outdoor activities, and entertainment. The majority of those who responded would lead trips to assist in more activities available to the members and to alleviate the burden on the co-chairs. Most of them do read the website but do not attend the Adirondack Club chapter meetings. The members would like change in having activities that do not require sign ups or having to respond that they will attend, and having more trips that require travel. The members would like to see regularly scheduled outings such as Monday hikes every Monday, items that fit more into their personal schedules, and different and fun things like kickball and paintball.

With a low response rate of only seven people out of three hundred members I will be obtaining a list from the chair of the Adirondack club and personally call each member to solicit feedback. By reaching out to each member it is my goal to get to know them and create the club that best serves their needs.

I will facilitate a brainstorming session with OAU to facilitate change and learn how their reasons for joining align with the club purpose or mission.

Project Final Timeline

September 3rd, 2008 – attend ADK Executive committee meeting

September 10th, 2008 – attend OAU Activity Day

September 15th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

September 16th, 2008 – plan and execute the ADK-YM meeting

September 17th, 2008 – attend OAU first club meeting

- Attend Adirondack Club chapter meeting

September 19th, 2008 – plan and execute putt putt miniature golf and Macgregors
Happy Hour

September 21st, 2008 – ADK-YM Mendon Ponds Hike

September 22nd, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

September 24th, 2008 – attend OAU club meeting

September 27th, 2008 – attend Lollipop Barktober fest walk

September 29th, 2008 – attend OAU Officer's meeting

October 1st, 2008 – attend OAU club meeting

-attend ADK Executive committee meeting

October 4th, 2008 – Pauly Shore comes to MCC

October 5th, 2008 – Stony Brook Hike -

October 6th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

October 8th, 2008 – attend Adirondack club chapter meeting

-attend OAU club meeting

October 10th, 2008 – Zarpentine Corn Maize

October 11th, 2008 – ADK-YM Chimney Bluffs and Apple picking

October 13th, 2008 – attend OAU officers meeting

October 15th, 2008 – attend OAU club meeting

October 15th, 2008 – fall walleye tactics seminar

October 16th, 2008 – ADK-YM racquetball

October 17th, 2008 – October 19th, 2008 – attend OAU Letchworth Camping

October 18th, 2008 – TK and Karaoke for ADK

October 20th, 2008 – attend OAU Officer's Meeting

-Sustainability Day event

October 22nd, 2008 – attend OAU club meeting

October 24th, 2008 – Gananda Corn Maize

October 25th, 2008 – Genesee Valley River Gorge Hike

October 26th, 2008 – Kayaking at Bay Creek

October 27th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

October 29th, 2008 – attend OAU club meeting

November 3rd, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

November 5th, 2008 – attend ADK Executive committee meeting

November 6th, 2008 – brainstorming session with OAU

November 7th, 2008 – attend OAU Team building overnight event

November 10th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

November 12th, 2008 – attend ADK chapter meeting

November 15th, 2008 – ADK Planetarium – Harvest moons and stars

November 16th, 2008 – Rattlesnake Hill Hike

November 17th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

November 22nd, 2008 – Black Creek Park – Wetlands and Ridge Trails

November 24th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

November 30th, 2008 – Letchworth state park hike

December 1st, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

December 3rd, 2008- attend ADK Executive committee meeting

-attend OAU club meeting

December 6th, 2008 – Mendon Ponds – East Esker Hike

December 6th, 2008 – Dinner and the Coverband

December 8th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

December 8th, 2008 – Quarterly ADK-YM meeting and movie night – 11th Hour

December 9th, 2008 – Ronald McDonald House Dinner

December 10th, 2008– attend OAU club meeting

December 10th, 2008 – attend ADK Chapter meeting

December 13th, 2008 - Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge – Mohawk Pond Hike

December 15th, 2008 – attend OAU officer's meeting

December 15th, 2008 – Holiday gathering of YM's at Courtney's place

December 20th – Hike-a-Month - Harriett Hollister Park Hike

December 27th – Canadice Lake Trail Hike

There have been many e-mails, phone conversations, and face to face meetings to discuss both club information as well as actions to complete. I have been working on implementing teambuilding exercises with OAU during their club meetings. I met with the Vice President of Student Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology and we discussed her experiences with volunteers in clubs, organizations, and volunteer work.

I will be conducting a brainstorming session of ideas to implement to build momentum and inspire club members to become more active. I will also meet with the former Director of the MCC Campus Center who is very familiar with the history of OAU. He has told me on numerous occasions the club had approximately 300 members in the 70's.

Outcomes

Introduction

The intended outcome for this project is feedback from members through a survey and face to face interaction. Another intended outcome is documentation of several events and their success or failure. A brief word document has been started pending further information of the ADK YM club such as feedback and instructions on the club trip hotline.

Description

A survey was e-mailed to members of the ADK YM club with a return date of two weeks. The survey was intended to be brief and solicit a response from club members that would aid club leaders in accommodating the majority. The questions asked gathered availability, activity interest, and if the current communication was effective. Seven students responded to the survey. (See survey in Appendix B).

Club activities that had taken place were documented and posted in the Adirondack club monthly flyer, the Geneseean. These follow ups were accounts of the activities and attendance. (See an example in Appendix C).

To aid in organization of the co-chairs of the ADK YM club as well as assist future club leaders a brief manual was created. This manual is an outline of chair responsibilities, contact information, and a guide on how and what to do. (See Appendix D).

Key Learnings

Key Learning One

One reason I joined the Adirondack club is to work on my leadership skills. I have been involved in OAU in the capacity of an Advisor for over six years. Prior to this experience I was the Club President. It was a difficult transition for me to run the club and then find a balance between taking over and not being involved enough to aid the students in developing their leadership skills and run the club.

The Adirondack Club, more specifically, my position as Co-chair of the younger members, has afforded me many learning opportunities about the way I lead and has allowed for my study of leadership. According to John C. Maxwell (1998) with respect to business and nonprofit organizations “by raising your leadership ability – without increasing your success dedication at all – you can increase your original effectiveness by 600 percent. Leadership has a multiplying effect” (p. 7).

There are different types of leaders; many books discuss being a leader by title versus being a leader by example and experience. It is important to note that “true leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence, and cannot be mandated. It must be earned.” (Maxwell, 1998, p. 13).

John Maxwell is the author of a book titled, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. This book has been very informative and insightful to developing an understanding of what leadership entails and what qualities a leader possesses. Out of the twenty one laws the ones that stood out most to me were: The Law of Influence – The True Measure of Leadership is Influence, The Law of Magnetism – Who You are is Who You Attract, The Law of the Inner Circle – A Leader’s Potential is Determined by Those

Closest to Him, The Law of Empowerment – Only Secure Leaders Give Power to Others, The Law of Buy in – People Buy into the Leader, Then the Vision, The Law of the Big Mo – Momentum is a Leader’s Best Friend, The Law of Priorities – Leaders Understand That Activity is Not Necessarily Accomplishment.

In helping students grow it is important to not only understand leadership and your own skills but to be able to help others in developing their leadership skills. Maxwell and Dornan (1997) touch upon this in discussing mentoring, “when you help people enlarge themselves, you aren’t giving them only a temporary, short-term shot in the arm or tools that will help them only today.” He goes on to say “after being enlarged, whenever they receive a resource or opportunity, they are better able to use it to its greatest benefit” (p. 123).

Building a community and team requires work and leadership. Warren Bennis in his book *On Becoming a Leader* (2003) discusses the benefit of a shared vision and team support in backing the mission. He goes on to say that group effort has four ingredients for leaders to have and use: constancy, congruity, reliability and integrity. “When these four factors are in place people will be on your side. These are the kinds of things that can’t be taught. They can only be learned” (p. 150).

Key Learning Two

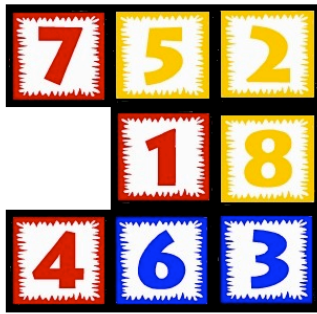
There are many benefits to building team and using teambuilding activities. I have always thought that by having many diverse activities you will gain the interest of more members. In meeting with Dr. Mary Beth Cooper, Vice President of Student Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology, it was suggested to me to work on creating a

team in smaller groups as well as changing the formal names of things, as teambuilding can now be called a game or an activity to be more attractive.

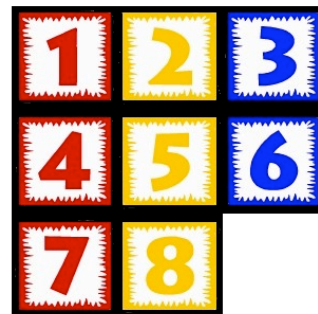
In an organization like OAU there is significant annual turnover as MCC is a two year institution. The majority of the student population works full time, attends school full time, and often have children or other responsibilities. This turnover makes it difficult to create a tight knit group or family type unit. There is a strong need to quickly build a team through events and group activities. In an attempt to maximize efficiency club leaders ask for the assistance of the members. As illustrated in *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni OAU experiences the lack of embracing accountability. Lencioni (2005) explains “it is direct, peer-to-peer accountability, and it is based on the notion that peer pressure and the distaste for letting down a colleague will motivate a team player more than any fear or authoritative punishment or rebuke” (p. 61).

I have been working on building teams within both organizations. At first I worked at being available and planning several events but then I switched gears and focused on smaller groups and tailored activities. During one OAU meeting I used an activity from Newstrom and Scannell’s *The Big Book of Teambuilding Games* (1997) and tailored it to OAU. The activity was a Battleship type game, trademarked by Milton Bradley Company, where you have a small board of squares and ships. You then guess where your opponent has placed their ships by calling out a row letter and a column number to either hit, miss or sink a ship. I tailored this activity by having items that the students would use in the club: White water raft that in the shape of a square with four square, a parachute that was ‘L’ shaped and consisted of three squares, etc.

Another activity that the students worked on was putting a three by three square on the floor with tape, giving eight student's numbers, randomly arranging them on the squares and then giving them a pattern to complete with only one available spot to move numbers.



Start



Finish

I began to notice after these activities of the students working together either in small teams or collectively to solve a problem they began to feel like a team. There was a cohesiveness that came out. According to Witteman “cohesiveness describes a set of influences and reasons that keep members in a group and keep them motivated and willing to contribute extra time and effort to help the group complete its job” (as cited in Harris and Sherbloom, 2002, p. 52).

Key Learning Three

Another key learning for me was that there is a strong need for knowledge on the history of the organization and documentation as well as creativity. In discussing the problem of lack of participation in clubs and organizations with many friends and

coworkers as well as brainstorming with leaders and members there were a myriad of ideas on what the problem is and what to do to help solve it.

It is important to know what has been done before you and to understand the trends and surrounding circumstances. A book that touches upon trends and the explanation for the trends of involvement in nonprofit and volunteer organizations is *Bowling Alone* by Robert D. Putnam. Putnam (2000) discusses the baby boomer generation and the decline of civic responsibility as this generally comes with age or how fads pass and people outgrow what was once popular. The decline of what a community is, the downsizing of education and its effect on motivation, in general the change of our populations and their daily concerns. There are a myriad of reasons to explore as to why people opt to spend time in ways other than volunteering and understanding these reasons will help when implementing change for the future.

Lastly, creativity is necessary to aid in seeing the problem and making changes. As stated by Puccio, Murdock, and Mance (2007) “creativity is a process that leads to change, you don’t get deliberate change without it” (p. 245).

What Worked Well

What worked really well for both organizations is that the small group that has formed works hard to maintain a successful club and are all supportive of each other. Just recently I had to ask for assistance in a program I was organizing for ADK YM and reached out to the members via the website asking for a volunteer trip leader. Up until that point only one person had shown interest in attending the trip but someone stepped up and the trip had a total of five people in attendance.

I feel that I have formed great personal relationships with the leaders of both organizations. Jo, my co-chair, has become a friend whom I've come to trust and rely on in planning events with me. Will, the OAU President, and Pat, the Vice President spend a great deal of time communicating with me via e-mail, phone and in person to ensure that we have a successful club. Will does a great job relating with the students and maintaining a professional mentoring relationship with me.

Another success is the feedback from members of the ADK-GV. So many people are excited to see activity amongst the younger members and this momentum will only grow. The club has been quite inactive over the last couple of years. Jo and I have at least seven to ten activities planned per month and are receiving a consistent eight to twelve attendees. We are also noticing support from members when one of us can not lead the trip and alternate leaders have grown to at least five. We are building a community amongst the members.

What I Would Amend

This project changed for me several times while I was exploring potential explanations of the problem of lack of participation. It was difficult to seek information that was not solely discussing business where the career was the driving force. I also ran across issues of communication, so my problem changed where people were not reading the website, and I now needed to locate documentation on how to reach out to these members. My problem had just become proper documentation of membership. Another topic that I looked at was sales, should I be studying more of reaching and audience and pulling them in before I sell them with what we have to offer?

The scope of this project became so large that I was overwhelmed in finding a starting point. Every idea that could possibly hinder involvement and motivation of people, such as they are not being reached, the club isn't doing what they would like, it's too costly, the days are convenient all made sense as the problem. I wondered if I should look into motivating people in the workplace, selling to get them in the door, leadership qualities within myself, communication techniques and websites. If I could do this project over I would focus on the individual people that made up each organization, more specifically the ADK YM because there is less turnover and the cultures are very different. I would spend more time on learning about each person, their personalities, their Myers Briggs Type Indicator, their motivations, their personal lives. I would then use this information to aid in forming a tight smaller group and build outwards.

Conclusion

I am a highly active and involved in many things. This past year alone I organized a team to walk for multiple sclerosis, I joined two breast cancer walks, I walked for Lollipop farm and crohns disease. I am helping plan the walk for Rochester for crohns disease, I volunteer as an Advisor to OAU and as a co-chair to ADK YM. I sit on the service committee for an organization called American Association of Women in Community colleges and organized a community service clean up day. I cook meals for Ronald McDonald House, volunteer my time for senior citizen holiday parties, hand make Christmas cards for the troops and senior citizens. The list does go on. It is very difficult for me to understand why people are not involved in organizations they join, especially one like ADK where there is an annual membership fee of \$50. There are a myriad of potential reasons but what I concluded continuously is that it is not in their top priorities.

For a couple of months I focused on what the dimensions of the problem could be. I drew upon my experiences and talked with many people around me. After holding brainstorming sessions and conducting surveys and meetings I began to envision a solution. Any solution would require change, change in the structure and interaction of the organization. I know I have to approach this creatively, as it has been expressed to me that everyone across the organization is experiencing the same difficulty in member participation.

I know that I alone cannot solve the dilemma in both organizations of low member involvement. In furthering my leadership skills I can help those around me to develop theirs and we can have a trickledown effect and increase our productivity. There

needs to be leadership and member buy in and while using the creative process we can have an organization that will satisfy the popular vote.

I have several ideas brainstormed on ways to improve motivation and will implement these over the next six months to a year. It would have been interesting to implement a change and then document and report in this paper affected people or actions.

List of Changes that I Propose

Do not be repetitive and encourage new trips

Improve communication through maintaining up to date information, building a contact list, finding a different forum than Yahoo, adding a personal touch.

Build a team through social activities, events and teambuilding.

Allow for opportunities to fundraise and have bigger trips.

Analyze trends for the majority age group and their priorities.

Increase the benefit to the members such as creating a resource library of outdoor books, offering laminated cards after a hike as in baseball cards featuring the park.

It is important in next steps that I encourages trust, builds a community, and remain consistent and constant. The next step will be to implement these changes and analyze the results. I am excited to see what will come from these efforts.

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Appendix A

Increasing Member Involvement in Organizations centered around the Outdoors.

Name: Courtney Belluccio

Date Submitted: 9-19-08

Project Type: This project will look into increasing membership and member involvement in two organizations that I am heavily involved in, the Outdoor Activities Unlimited (OAU) Club of Monroe Community College and the Genesee Valley Chapter Adirondack Club (GVC-ADK). I will use several skills I have learned in studying creativity and leadership.

What Is This Project About?

This project is about finding a solution to attendance and participation issues in two pleasure seeking organizations. In my ten years of involvement with the OAU club there have never been more than ten to fifteen active members. Several students come forth with ideas of trips that they would like to go on but no one has the drive to plan it themselves. There seems to be ownership lacking. I have recently joined the GVC-ADK club and within a month I am noticing similar patterns. There are over 300 members to this organization who each pay \$50 annually but when an event is posted on average three to five people respond.

In completing facilitations with several key players in both organizations this project hopes to look into why member participation is low and seeks to present solutions that will potentially solve the problem. There is a strong need for team and community

building in each organization. People are brought together in a club because they share similar interests, I would like to play upon these interests to identify and resolve problem areas in order to have successfully active organizations

Rationale for Choice:

I chose this skill as these organizations are important to me. I was the OAU Club President ten years ago when the club was inactive and I do not want to see it fail. I have always heard that this club had over three hundred members and was very active. I recently joined the GVC-ADK club in order to further my leadership skills in the community with my love of the outdoors.

The OAU club presents students an opportunity to develop their leadership skills. There may be information that they do not have access to that is inhibiting their development. I would like to know that as an Advisor to them that I am doing all that I can in order to help them be strong leaders.

The GVC-ADK club is a rather large organization and I think with some structure and presence the members may come out of the word work and be a unified team doing more for the Rochester community.

Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes:

Every group requires an organized structure. It is my goal to develop a program that will allow the leaders of these organizations to give the members what they want. By completing four facilitations with the leaders and those affected by these organizations I will develop an understanding of where the problems lie and how to move forward. I

will solicit feedback through surveys and face to face interaction and communication. I will plan several events and document the success or failure of these events. I hope to develop a structured manual for the GVC-ADK club future co-chairs to help them in their efforts in leading these members.

Criteria to Measure Effectiveness

I know this project will be successful when members are planning and leading trips that other members are attending. I will also measure the growth of membership and member involvement by attendance sheets and activity on the club websites. It is important to develop a forum for feedback and the comfort ability of the members to share their opinions. I think it is also important to take note of the relationships and bonding that occur through participation. I will take periodic surveys and hold membership meetings.

Who is Involved or Influenced; What is my Role?

For the OAU club the officers will be involved and influenced. The officer positions are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Each of these officers will be asked to share their feedback and then assist in putting on programs to increase membership, involvement, and teambuilding.

For the GVC-ADK club my co-chair will be involved and influenced. She will share in giving her input and reviewing feedback.

In both instances the members will be involved by expressing their needs as members and participating.

In both instances my role will be the facilitator and leader. I will document and orient the processes, results, and suggestions to aid in moving forward.

When Will This Project Take Place?

This project will take place over the course of the Fall Semester, September 2008 – December 2008.

Several meetings, events and activities will be planned weekly.

Occurrence of Project:

This project will occur mostly in the Genesee Valley Region of New York State, United States. The OAU club is formed under Monroe Community College and so many events and meetings will be held there. OAU has an office in the Campus Center, 3-138A, to conduct their officer meetings and has been assigned a meeting room 9-256 during the semester to conduct their Wednesday meetings. The majority of their events will be held off campus in the outdoors at the above listed locations. The GVC-ADK club meets regularly at the Rochester Science Museum. Their events will also held in the outdoors at the locations listed above on the calendar.

Importance of doing this:

This project is important beyond my own wants and needs because people come together in these organizations regardless of my participation or not. OAU has consistently had approximately ten to fifteen members participating over the last ten years and GVC-ADK has over 300 members with only three to five responding. These organizations are at risk of dissolving with lack of participation if a slow year were to present itself. These organizations not only help the individuals involved meet people with similar interests they help the students and community members who lead them develop their leadership skills. Volunteer organizations, especially those involving the outdoors, give back to strongly to the community and environment. In increasing membership, member participation, and relationships community service projects will grow. The health, wellness, and physical activity of members will increase as the result of meeting others with similar interest in outdoor activities.

Personal Learning Goals:

- Develop my leadership skills in creating a successful club
- Put together and successfully use teambuilding tools
- Further my facilitation skills through completing four facilitations
- Creatively approach and solve this problem

-Develop the clubs and create an organized manual for the next GVC-ADK Younger Members Chair

The Plan to Achieve My Goals and Outcomes?

My plan is to lead facilitations to identify problem areas as well as potential areas to generate interest in these clubs. I will conduct surveys, hold meetings, and solicit feedback, host and plan trips and events to generate interest. I will offer a variety of things to incorporate the diversity of members and document the member attendance and interaction. I will take note of increased participation and involvement on both club websites. I will speak one on one with members and reach out to people to create an open forum for communication.

Evaluation:

I will review the quantitative data collected through surveys, facilitations, and attendance / participation. I will document with graphs and photographs participation at events and trips. I will look at the success of the club prior to this project and assess the activity on the websites, member excitement, and increased motivation at the middle and end of this project.

Prepare Project Timeline:

September 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 ADK Executive Meeting	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 OAU – Activity Day	11	12	13
14	15 OAU Officers Meeting	16 ADK YM Meeting	17 ADK Chapter Mtg OAU first meeting	18	19 ADK putt putt and macgregors	20
21 ADK – hike mendon ponds	22 OAU Officers Meeting	23	24 OAU Meeting OAU Go Karting	25	26 Facilitation with OAU	27 Barktober Fest Team walk
28	29 OAU Officers Meeting	30				

October 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 OAU Meeting ADK Executive Meeting Facilitation of Executive Board	2 Online Member Facilitation for GVC ADK Younger Members	3	4
5 ADK Stony Brook Hike	6 OAU Officers Meeting	7	8 ADK Chapter Meeting OAU Meeting	9 Facilitation for OAU with Campus Center	10 Zarpentine Corn Maize 6-10pm OAU and ADK	11 ADK Chimney Bluffs and Apple picking
12	13 OAU Officers Meeting	14	15 OAU Meeting	16	17 OAU Letchworth Camping Trip	18 OAU Letchworth Camping Trip
19 OAU Letchworth Camping Trip	20 OAU Officers Meeting OAU /PTK Sustainability Day	21	22 OAU Meeting	23	24	25 ADK Genesee Valley River Gorge Hike with OAU
26 Rochester Clean UP / Hike	27 OAU Officers Meeting	28	29 OAU Meeting	30	31	

November 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 OAU Officers Meeting	4	5 ADK Executive Meeting	6	7 OAU Team Building Overnight Party	8
9	10 OAU Officers Meeting	11 OAU Ronald McDonald House Dinner	12 ADK Chapter Meeting	13	14	15 ADK Planetarium Harvest Moons / Stars
16	17 OAU Officers Meeting	18	19	20	21	22 ADK Hike a month
23 30	24 OAU Officers Meeting	25	26	27	28	29

December 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 OAU Officers Meeting	2	3 OAU Meeting ADK Executive Meeting	4	5	6
7	8 OAU Officers Meeting	9	10 OAU Meeting	11	12	13
14	15 OAU Officers Meeting	16 OAU / ADK Film "11 th Hour" ADK YM Meeting	17 OAU Meeting	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

There are still more events to be added as well as events from the feedback of the facilitations.

I will administer a survey before September 30th, 2008.

I will also discuss and solicit feedback from my SBP.

My own planning will be conducted as often as possible, after each event.

An estimation of time would be:

Meetings – 46 hours

Events – 25 hours

Trips – 80 hours

Facilitations including planning – 20 hours

Analyzing / data collection – 171 hours

Communication with club members / SBP / Co-chair / Officers / Teacher – 30 hours

Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

There are several resources that I know that will be useful. The Campus Center at Monroe Community College oversees all Clubs and Organizations. Their knowledge and experience will be priceless.

The leadership library at Monroe Community College houses several books to assist in developing my own as well as my co-chairs', members', and officer's skills.

The members of both the GVC-ADK and the OAU organizations, previous leaders, and leaders of other sections of the clubs or other clubs in general will be useful with their experience.

Appendix B

Genesee Valley Adirondack Club Younger Members Survey

10-13-08

What is your age range?

20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40+

What is your best day of the week for availability to attend events?

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

What is the best time for your availability to attend events?

Morning afternoon evening anytime depends on day

Please rate your preference for types of events, 1 being highest and 11 being lowest.

Entertainment (movies, games)	_____
Social (dinner, karaoke)	_____
Hiking	_____
Winter Outdoor Activities (snowshoe, ski)	_____
Sports (racquetball)	_____
Seasonal (corn maize, apple pick)	_____
Extended outdoor (camping, backpacking)	_____
Educational (Planetarium)	_____
Volunteer (Barktober Fest)	_____
High Impact (white water, sky dive)	_____
Family	_____

Would you consider leading a trip? Yes _____ No _____

Do you read the Yahoo Website? Yes _____ No _____

Do you attend the Chapter Meetings? Yes _____ No _____

What would you like to see change from your YM Co-Chairs? _____

What is going to get you out at the next event? _____

Name (optional)_____E-mail

(optional)_____

Please e-mail your survey answers to CBelluccio@monroecc.edu by October 24th, 2008

Appendix C

Trip Report

Hike-a-month: Mendon Ponds Park – Quaker Pond Trail.

September 21st, 2008

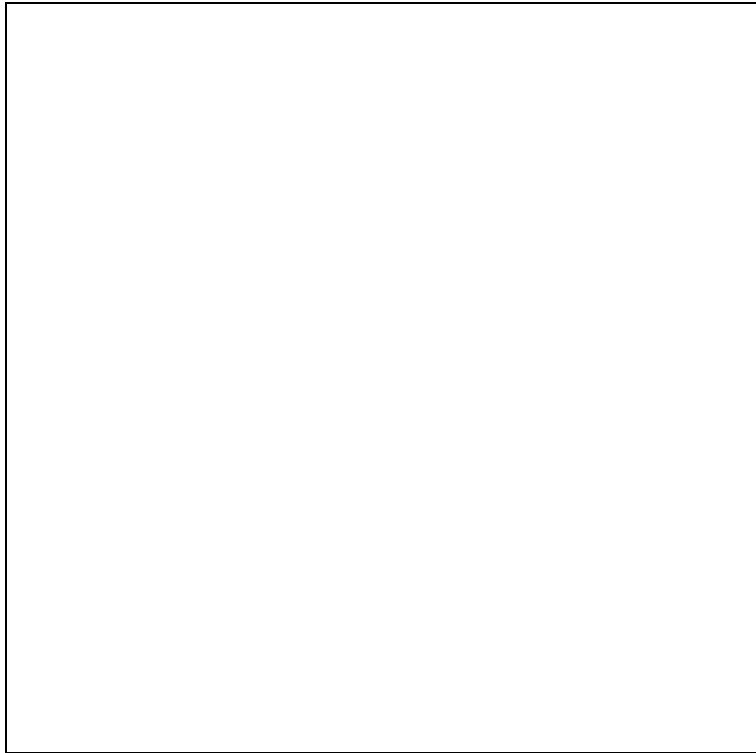
Leader: Jo A Roy

On Sunday September 21, nine GVC ADK Younger Members met at Mendon Ponds Park for a day hike to traverse the Quaker Pond Trail. Despite the weather, the company and conversation were delightful. All the group members mixed amongst each other and worked well as a team. WE completed the loop on Quaker Ponds trail in great time. It was then agreed that we wished to continue hiking since it was only mid-morning, and took the scenic route around Devil's Bathtub trail. We finished up just before noon with everyone in good spirits and looking forward to the next hike.

This 2.7 mile hike was the first in a series of local hikes (Hike a Month) in the local parks of the surrounding five counties of Rochester.

Participants: Jerry Santelli; Rebecca Powell; Chris Asbury; Bob Krenzer; Cathy Colcannon; Catherine Cornell; Jamie Brown; Kevin Hoyt; Jo Roy

Appendix D



ADIRONDACK CLUB – GENESEE VALLEY REGION

YOUNGER MEMBERS

Manual for Chairs

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Trip Leaders & Badges

The Geneseean

About

The Younger Members Committee is geared towards members of the Genesee Valley Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club who are in their twenties or thirties, but everyone is always welcome. We've come a long way since the winter of 2000-01, with approximately 200 subscribers to our Yahoo Groups site, many of them active members in our chapter. Nice work, YMs!

Our objectives are to enhance the ADK experience by:

- providing opportunities to meet other members
- encouraging participation in activities sponsored by the chapter and club
- educating new and younger members about programs and events sponsored by the Education, Conservation, Trails, Waterways and other committees.

We host monthly activities and social gatherings, including local day trips (hiking, paddling, biking, etc.), some weekend trips, and some fun stuff like ice skating, happy hours, and bowling, too. Attend one of our upcoming events, and be prepared to have fun, meet new people, and share ideas for future activities and events.

Co-Chairs / Chairs List

Do not hesitate to contact any previous Chair with questions.

August 2008 through July 2009

Jo Roy – rubybaygonya@aol.com & Courtney Belluccio – cbelluccio@monroecc.edu

_____ through July 2008

Paula Chase – pjchase76@yahoo.com

_____ through _____

Laura Williams -

Your Job as Chair or Co-chair

As chair or co-chair of the ADK-GV Younger members you are to plan and organize trips for club members to attend. It is your responsibility to advertise these trips properly on the club yahoo website and the hotline as well as communicate with the proper people to post this information on the chapter website. There is also a need to keep accurate records of trip leaders for badge presentation and monies spent. You are to follow the proper procedures for safety and paperwork when leading trips as outlined by ADK. Regular attendance at meetings and availability via the phone or e-mail are expected.

Budget

Most trips are subsidized through club members and a clear price is advertised at time of posting / communicating the trip details. There is a small budget available to you in the case that you want to host a meeting and supply light refreshments. Since ADK-GV is a non for profit organization you do have the ability to organize fundraisers.

Club Trip Hotline

We maintain a local telephone INFORMATION HOTLINE and VOICE MAIL for the Chapter's outings and committees. Our number is (585) 987-1717, which is not a toll call for most in the Rochester area. Calls are received by a Main Greeting announcement that provides the various mailbox options for either obtaining information or leaving a message within the individual mailboxes. The mailbox options are:

1. Chapter and Meeting Information
2. Membership Information
3. Sunday Hikes
4. Trails Committee trip announcements & information
5. Waterways Committee trip announcements & information
6. Conservation Committee Information
7. Younger Members Activities
8. Saturday Hikes and Other Local Outings

If you experience any difficulty in getting the information you are looking for on the information line, you can leave a general message after the main greeting and a

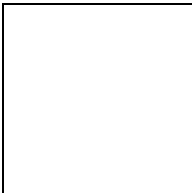
message can be left in individual mailboxes and you can expect a return call usually within a week. Remember, any of the Executive Committee Officers or Committee Chairs can help you obtain the information you seek or they can refer you to other resources, which may be helpful to you. We hope our Information Hotline is helpful to you.

The directions to post information on this hotline will be added shortly.

Meetings

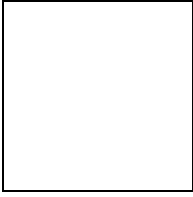
You are a member of the Executive Committee (EC), chair of the younger members, and you are responsible for attending the EC meetings. These meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the 12 Corners Presbyterian Church. The meeting begins at 7pm and parking is available right outside the church.

Your agenda items for the EC meetings are due to the Chair no later than 10-14 days prior to the meeting. Having any item that you want to share or report posted on the agenda will aid in keeping the meetings moving along.



There are chapter meetings the second Wednesday of the month and are held at the Rochester Museum and Science Center located at 657 East Ave. The social hour is from 6:30-7:30pm where you can set up a table advertising the Younger members and share your contact information and then the program is at 7:30pm.

The Younger Members have a board holding information about previous trips. You are expected to print off contact information that will fit in the board holder. Feel free to be creative when staffing a table and sharing information about the younger members section of the club.



The Younger Members have set up a quarterly meeting for the first time. The first meeting was in September 2008. The location is set up per individual meeting per the response received and availability of space. At these meetings members have the opportunity to socialize and discuss either issues or potential trips they would like to see.

Member List

There is no current member list of younger members. Current chair is working on creating one.

The Store

The chapter has a bookstore with several items for sale. Please see website at: http://www.gvc-adk.org/useful_info/bookstore.php

Contact List

Increasing Member Involvement

Chair

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Younger Members Co-Chair

Courtney Belluccio
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Websites

The chapter website is: <http://www.gvc-adk.org/>

Steve Tryon updates the YM information. He can be reached at: stryon@rochester.rr.com or stryon@gmail.com

The younger members have a link on this site that outlines their trips.

The Younger member's website is: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ADK_GVC_YM/

You will need to be made a moderator of the site by the former chair.

You can post pictures, use e-mail lists, and post trip information in this forum.

Trips & Trip Ideas

The Adirondack club is a hiking club and brings together outdoor enthusiasts. You are encouraged to plan any activity that will bring current and new members. Please note that due to liability there are a few trips that are not encouraged (ex. skydiving, white water rafting) and must be done outside of the Adirondack club if you care to pursue. If you have any questions on this matter please discuss with the club Chair.

It is always encouraged to solicit feedback from the members on previous trip and any future trip that they might like. Once you have planned and advertised your trip it is important to complete the necessary paperwork. On the Adirondack Club Website (<http://www.gvc-adk.org/young/young.php?sitemap=forms>) under forms there are liability forms and trip reports. Have all trip attendees fill out the liability forms and turn them in at your Executive Committee Meetings. Also, follow up with trip reports which are then printed in the Geneseean, the ADK newsletter.

Trip Leaders & Badges

You may find that active members will lead trips to allow in flexibility in your schedule and a variety of activities offered to members. It is important to keep track of who is leading what trips and communicate with them about the proper procedures and follow up per trip. There is a patch available for trip leaders that read "ADK LEADER". This patch is awarded per 12 points achieved. The points are awarded 4 for overnight hikes / trips and 2 for day hikes.

The Geneseean

The Geneseean is the Adirondack club's monthly newsletter. An example is: http://gvc-adk.org/Geneseean/200812_December_Geneseean.pdf and they can be found at most club meetings as well as the chapter website at: <http://gvc-adk.org/Geneseean/>

To have your trips and trip follow ups posted in there you will need to e-mail Joanne Mitchell [jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com] by the second Wednesday of the month for the next month's information.