Creatively Attracting New Members

One ACHE chapter took advantage of a grant program to recruit new members.

In 2008, ACHE established the annual Grant Program for Chapter Innovation to encourage chapter innovation in the delivery of new programs, products and services. The project adds value for ACHE members by funding demonstration or pilot projects that other chapters can replicate. The intent is that the grant money will encourage a chapter to try a new service or offer a program in a new geographic area without incurring financial risk. In 2014, three grants were awarded for projects implemented in 2015.

One chapter recipient, Central Virginia Healthcare Executive Group, received a grant to launch its Documentary and Discussion Series, which works to recruit new members and engage current ones in a unique format.

Board members of CVHEG brainstormed creative ways to increase membership, with a focus on physician executives and early careerists. The chapter found it frequently conducted the same panel discussions with the same structure.

A member of CVHEG’s Membership Committee proposed the idea of a Documentary and Discussion Series. The structure of each event in the series would consist of screening a relevant documentary to attendees, followed by a discussion of the film led by an expert panel and then a question-and-answer session. Attendees also would have the opportunity to network beforehand and receive ACHE Qualified Education credits. The event would be free to an ACHE member and nonmember guest.

For the first event, the chapter purchased a license to screen Code Black, a documentary featuring patients and physicians at the busiest community ED in the country—Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center.

Chapter President-Elect William D. Maixner, associate administrator, director of planning and development, Virginia Commonwealth University Health System, Richmond, Va., helped lead the project’s planning and worked with a team of chapter committee members to obtain the innovation grant from ACHE.

“We selected Code Black because it focused on many aspects of healthcare: policy, quality, administration, nursing and challenges facing physicians,” Maixner said.

After the screening, there was a discussion on how the issues depicted in the film related to healthcare executives in Virginia and how executives would handle some of the situations that came up in the film. The first screening took place in a movie theater the chapter rented, but later screenings were held in hospitals and schools.

For its second screening, CVHEG showed a film about a mobile care van in rural Virginia; later, it offered an additional screening of Code Black in another area of Virginia. Each event attracted an average of more than 50 attendees, with more than 100 attending the second screening.

Additional Grants Awarded

Central Virginia Healthcare Executive Group developed its Documentary and Discussion Series through funding from ACHE’s Grant Program for Chapter Innovation. Additional grants were awarded to two chapters for new programs implemented in 2015:

ACHE of Middle Tennessee

The chapter increased student recruitment by using the grant to fund career services opportunities such as matching students with senior leaders and offering ACHE assessments and career advice.

American College of Healthcare Executives of Central Florida

Funding awarded to this chapter was used to provide focused, comprehensive support for eligible Members to advance. The project emphasized individual encouragement, Board of Governors Exam preparation support, mentorship and recognition.
Satisfaction scores from members who attended the event were strong, averaging 4.5 on a 5-point scale. CVHEG will continue to analyze member feedback to determine whether a correlation between the Documentary and Discussion Series and member satisfaction and growth exists, particularly in the area of physician executive membership.

The series has opened up opportunities for CVHEG to partner with area organizations to screen *Code Black* at future events, including Virginia Commonwealth University Medical School’s physicians and physician trainees and Virginia Commonwealth University Health System’s nursing administrators and managers.

The series also has given CVHEG opportunities to showcase ACHE and the chapter to recruit new members. The chapter is in the process of selecting new documentaries to screen based on how well the *Code Black* screenings were received by its members.

The Grant Program for Chapter Innovation provided CVHEG with the means to offer this nontraditional event to its members. “We are so appreciative of the chapter grant and we put a lot of effort into our application,” Maixner said. “More chapters should apply for this grant to help fund their unique projects.”

To find your ACHE chapter, search the online Chapter Directory at ache.org by entering your ZIP code on the left side of the page. Then, contact the chapter officials listed for information on how you can get involved. To discuss your ideas for chapters, contact the Chapters Committee’s ACHE staff liaison, Desmond J. Ryan, FACHE, CAE, associate director in the Division of Regional Services, at (312) 424-9325 or dryan@ache.org.