

Returning Projects

NWACC SIFE: Learning to Sustain

Program Sustainability: NWACC SIFE began in August 1996 under the direction of Bob Marion. This rookie team was able to garner top honors at the regional competition in spring 1997 as well as Rookie of the Year. The team also placed the next spring in 1998 at the regional competition for 2nd runner up.

The SIFE team unfortunately stagnated from 1998 until 2003 when Brian Aguiar led the team to several honors at the regional competitions completing his tenure with regional champs in 2005.

NWACC SIFE was revitalized in summer 2005 when the team president and a new advisor developed a SIFE student organization in addition to the existing class. This enabled all students across the curriculum to join in SIFE no matter what their major.

The new SIFE team became regional champs in 2006 as well as capturing a special topic award for Market Economics. The team went on to compete at the SIFE national championship, advancing to the final round--which was the first time ever for NWACC SIFE. The team placed fifth in the nation during the final competition in May 2006, and are currently headed into the fall semester of 2006 with strong momentum for even greater accomplishments in the future.

Recruiting Efforts: First annual SIFE Year Beginning Rally, Created brochures and handed them out in classrooms, Created a website, Held a pizza day, accompanied staff from the college to area high schools

Succession: Transition Notebook, Historian, Outstanding Administrative support

Because of these efforts, SIFE is a well-known presence on our campus; in fact, students now ask us how they can become a part of SIFE. As of our meeting on August 23, 2006 we now have 31 members.

NWACC is the only two-year college team in Arkansas and it is our students that drive our team. We are proud of the accomplishments we have made this past year and we feel we have implemented a succession plan that will make NWACC SIFE a strong presence in NorthWest Arkansas.

This year we will host our second annual SIFE Year Beginning Rally. We are also organizing the "SIFE Road Show. We will take our team to as many events as possible to gain even more exposure. Our next one is the Business Women's Conference on September 26. We will also participate in events on campus that will allow us to speak to more students. Also scheduled to be at the SOAR HIGHER Conference on November 2.

Timeline: Team sustainability is an ongoing project with no timeline—carries on throughout the year.

SIFE Year Beginning Rally

This will be our second one! The format is much like that of a high school pep rally. The entire program lasts only about 30 minutes but it is an intense program aimed at recruiting new team members. This year's speakers were Kyle Kinnard, Sam's Club manager/Bentonville, Gregory Marrufo, HR Director/Wal-Mart ISD, and Dr. Becky Paneitz, College President. Pizza and sodas as well as goody bags and door prizes were available for all who attended. The food and prizes were donated and we thank members of our Business Advisory Board for their diligence in obtaining these donations. Two special presentations were made during the program. Kyle Kinnard awarded the SIFE team with a \$1000 dollar donation from the Bentonville Sam's Club and Dr. Paneitz awarded two students, Christy Cordero and Phillip Rothlisberger, \$500 SIFE scholarships for the spring semester.

Kids Learn About Mexican Market- Exchange Rate Coloring Book

Educational Topic: Market Economics

Need: Due to increased immigration in our area, our team wanted to teach children about doing business in a foreign market.

Description: We took a coloring book we created last year and edited it to include games and mazes. Our coloring book, geared to children ages 4-8, teaches them about the differences in Mexico and the United States; it is written in Spanish and English. In the fall last year, we presented our coloring book to 15 children at the Rogers public library during story time. We read to them in both languages, acted the story out in a skit, and gave those coloring books and crayons.

Impact: Library staff asked us to come back and we did so in March of this year to an audience of 29 children. We performed pre and posttests and the children showed they knew the difference between pesos and dollars and where they could use each one.

Future Plans: Staff at the library asked us to repeat this project several times a year and to reach a wider segment of our diverse population we will translate it to include other languages. We will also revise to include a section about environmental sustainability—recycling.

Timeline: We will be presenting at the Rogers Public Library on Saturday October 14 at 2:00 PM. We will also repeat, possibly to more than one library, in the Spring.

Business Leaders' Lecture Series

Educational Topic: Success Skills

Need: To help people in our community reach for success

Description: Our team started this series in the fall of 2005, and feature speakers who will speak on issues people need to address in order to be successful. We host a small reception on the evening of the event. We also ask one of our students to speak to the topic. Jack Shewmaker helped us get this event started and is still an integral part of the event. Past speakers include: Jack Shewmaker who spoke on The true meaning of leadership and the price that comes with it; Jack Kahl, who spoke on Personal success and servant leadership; a panel of four women CEO's, including Carol Bernick, Ann Drake, Karen Greenbaum and Tonise Paul; their topic was, The challenges facing women as leaders and the glass ceiling. John Lopez spoke on his own success and diversity, and addressed the need to recognize diversity within the workplace, and Mark Goodman spoke on The importance of market branding in the marketplace. All of these presentations are free to the public.

Impact: Anywhere from 100 to 200 members of our community attend these. We prepare surveys and ask the audience what they were able to learn from these events.

Future Plans: This ongoing event takes place at least two times a year and will continue.

Timeline: The fall 2006 series is scheduled for October 23. We are going to combine the fall lecture series with our Ethics Survey project and host a panel of community ethics leaders in a forum. We are also talking with Walt Pavlo about attending this event. Our spring series will be in February. We are currently working a proposal for Janice Bryant Howroyd—a dynamic speaker we heard at the National Expo. Our intent is to make the Lecture Series an event that people look forward to and they know that in February and October of each year they will take place.

American Businesses: Are They Ethical?

Ethics Forum

Educational Topic: Business Ethics

Need: Inform our community of the ethical practices of American businesses.

Description: Our team developed a survey to find out what students thought about American business ethics. A large majority of the students felt that foreign businesses acted in a more ethical manner than American businesses. We wanted to address this issue and decided the first step was to find out how businesses felt about the same questions. We developed our survey online and asked area business people to complete it. These results were just the opposite by almost the same percentage; however, there is still concerns that some members of our community believe American businesses are not ethical. The two groups did agree that business ethics should be required curriculum for all business majors.

Impact: We cannot measure impact of this project yet as the survey was only research for our forum. Impact will be measured at the forum itself.

Future Plans: We are organizing a forum for the fall and will invite ethics officers from area businesses to moderate. Our intent is to educate all members of our community of the good ethical practices in the U. S. We have invited four area ethics leaders to moderate our forum. We hope to have Jack Shewmaker speak to the topic and possibly be a moderator.

Timeline: If the above mentioned speaker does not work out we will have this forum on October 23. If we are able to secure Ms. Howroyd as our featured speaker we will plan this event for early October.

Entrepreneurs in Training Willy Walton Chocolate Factory

Educational Topic: Market Economics, Entrepreneurship, Business Ethics, Financial Literacy, and Success Skills.

Need: To introduce third through sixth graders to business by teaching market economics, production, exchange rates, budgeting, business ethics, and entrepreneurship.

Description: “Willy Walton’s Chocolate Factory” is an award-winning program designed by the University of Arkansas. Last year we hosted the University of Arkansas on our campus, and were mentors to the kids. This year they let us use their curriculum and our own team members presented the project. Children were divided into teams of four with SIFE members as mentors. They then rotated through breakout sessions where SIFE members used PowerPoint to teach each of the lessons. Teams prepared PowerPoint presentations where they designed and named a product, established a factory location, developed a marketing plan, devised a budget, and prepared an operation plan. The teams then presented to an audience and a panel of judges. Two teams were selected to go to the Willy Walton finals hosted by the University of Arkansas on their campus; one of our teams won first runner-up in this event.

Impact: Twenty-three excited students participated in this event. Impact was measured by pre and posttests, as well as student and parent surveys. Responses to these surveys showed that the children believed they learned valuable lessons and the parents were extremely satisfied.

Future Plans: We will continue this project each spring and though we cannot make it completely our own, it will be a “staple” project for our team.

Timeline: March of each year.

Job Interviews: Not as Easy as They Look

Educational Topic: Success Skills

Need: Students in our Marketing Analyst program were having difficulty securing jobs because of poor interview skills.

Description: We held a one evening seminar consisting of training on the proper way to dress, perform, and answer questions in an interview. Students were given mock job descriptions and time to prepare for interviews. Area business leaders then gave each student three interviews with written evaluations. Afterwards, we held a general question and answer session.

Impact: Several interviewers asked the director for resumes of some of the applicants. Students told us they were excited about their new skills. Impact will be measured as we follow up with each applicant’s success in finding a job.

Future Plans: The director of the program was so pleased with our team that he asked us to repeat this project with each graduating class—three times a year and we did so twice in the spring of 2006. We have decided to implement pre and post tests as well as follow up with each student. We are discussing the possibility of taking this project to other venues—perhaps with graduating seniors.

Timeline: At present this project is on hold. The Marketing Analyst Program has a new director and we have not had the opportunity to speak with him about this project. We hope to have it up and running again—even if it is with a different audience—by spring.

Unwritten . . .

Educational Topic: Financial Literacy, Success Skills

Need: Help recovering addicts gain the skills needed to succeed in life.

Description: Our team partnered with Decision Point Rehabilitation Center. During the course of this eight week curriculum, three SIFE members used hands on lessons to teach three different sections, including computer skills, financial skills, and professional success. Participants in this project are starting over in their lives and our team taught them the skills needed to succeed. The final step of the project was to bring in recruiters from Staffmark Recruiting Agency to help the women find roles in the workplace.

Impact: Seven women attended the classes. The best measure of impact for this project was heard when, participants told us “thank you for finding me” and “you don’t know how much this means to me.” We also performed pre and posttests with each section of the curriculum and saw a significant increase in learning. Because they are still in rehabilitation, we have not seen any of the participants placed in jobs, but Staffmark is excited about placing them in positions as soon as they are ready. We will follow up with each one as they complete their program.

Future Plans: This is an ongoing partnership with Decision point and we will repeat this program each semester and with each repetition will fine-tune it to maximize results. We will be adding a session on job interview skills and dressing for success. We are discussing with Decision Point the possibility of expanding to other facilities. We also hope to take the program on the road by securing laptop computers. We recently learned that Decision Point has obtained a house in Lowell that they will use as a half-way house. Our team will help them with the remodel of this house.

Timeline: A timeline has not yet been established for this project. We will be speaking with the director of the program at Decision Point to see what the best fit is for the women we will be working with.

Our project is titled “Unwritten” because these women are learning to take charge of their lives. At this point, those lives are blank pages, their book is just beginning; each life is still Unwritten. . . .

New projects

Please be aware that all of our new projects are in the planning phases and have not yet been implemented. Some will be completed this year while others will only be beginning.

Environmental Sustainability

Educational Topic: Business Ethics (Social Responsibility), Success Skills, Market Economics, Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship and program sustainability.

It is our intent to implement a recycle project on our campus. We are in the research phase of this project. The next phase will be education. We realize this is not a project that will happen overnight but it is one that once implemented will continue year after year. We plan to involve other student organizations as well as staff and faculty. We will involve the science department as well as staff and faculty creating a cross campus environment project building a stronger team with students from other departments. We fully intend to get so many people on campus involved that it will be impossible to let this project fade away. We will start small, looking at recycling plastic or aluminum and will grow from there. Some of the impact that we hope to create will be environmental awareness as part of social responsibility, implement free market economics and entrepreneurship skills with getting cash back for our recycling effort by selling the recyclables to recycling brokers, developing success skills and financial literacy in business management for our team and those we teach. We also intend to implement environmental sustainability into each of our projects.

New Member Mentoring

Educational topic: Success Skills, Program sustainability.

So that they will not be totally overwhelmed (and we all know SIFE can be totally overwhelming) each returning SIFE member has taken at least one new member to mentor. We feel this will increase our team succession rate because those that know will stay.

Global Ethics

Educational topic: Ethics, Success Skills.

This is going to be a work shop with high school students that are starting to work in the real world. The workshop will cover a basic intro as to what ethics is and then it will go into the different types of ethics for a few different countries compared to the US. The idea is to bring awareness to the high school students that ethics have are held to different standards in other countries.

Small Business Project

Educational topic: Entrepreneurship, Success Skills, Financial Literacy, Business Ethics, Market Economics.

This started as an idea brought to us by Christine Stillwagon who works for Sam's Club. Our team would like to find a small business owned by a woman or a minority that may be struggling or one that is just starting out and doesn't really know where to go. With this business we would find what our team could do to help the business to grow. Whether it is a business plan, marketing, or perhaps help with the menu we want to help them to grow. We now have four businesses that may be able to utilize our team. We will be meeting with each of them before we determine our next step.

Credit Education for NWACC Students

Educational topic: Success Skills, Financial Literacy.

One of the colleges VP's approached us to see if we could initiate a project that would help new students understand credit and loans. Our project leader has a meeting with the VP on August 30th. We will determine our next move after that.

SIFE Junior

Educational topic: Program Sustainability, Success Skills.

This will be a project that covers all criteria and helps with recruiting. It will be a team of high school students, and we will mentor them in what SIFE is. In mentoring the high school students we will show them real life examples of what we do and how we do it, so in turn we would be able to utilize the high students in helping out with our projects and completing them. The team will also serve as a reference point for future recruiting of high school students like them.

NWACC SIFE Website

Educational topic: Program Sustainability.

The SIFE website was designed by Rush Shah in 2005. Once the basic format was established, IT personnel loaded the webpage editing software on a computer in the LDC so Christy Reynolds could keep it updated during her off time. This website has been in the development stage for almost two years and now we have the tools we need to keep it up and running. Eric Vest has been a help to Christy in getting a survey link established for the Job Summit Survey. Any student or college employee can answer the survey from the SIFE website. Also, Vance Lewis (SIFE Co-Advisor) has assisted the SIFE team in getting the year beginning rally on an MPEG file so Christy can upload the video to the SIFE website. It is planned to have those who are running for team leadership positions to video tape their presentations and then those video files will be uploaded to the SIFE Website. This will allow the SIFE advisory board to view the presentations and then they can vote for who they feel can fill those leadership positions using an online survey instrument. The votes will be anonymous and the program will tabulate the results. Theresa Neal, SWF, is gathering pictures, word documents, and video clips to save to a CD for Christy to use in updating the website. She will update the links for team profiles, projects, SIFE calendar, and media page with minutes and newsletters.