

Sharing Our Success (SOS) Submission Form

Chapter Name: Southeastern Wisconsin

Chapter Membership Size: Medium (101-299)

Chapter Contact Person: Colin Hahn

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Chapter Board Position: President

Chapter Website URL: sewi-atd.org

Submission Title: Increasing diversity through partnerships

What did you do? (a 2-3 sentence summary of your effort): Our chapter partnered with the local chapter of National Association for African Americans in Human Resources (NAAAHR) over a series of collaborations, including inviting their chapter members to attend select events at our chapter as guest members.

Who benefitted from this effort (Target Audience) Check all that apply:

- Chapter Members
- Board Members
- Chapter Volunteers
- Chapter Partners
- Potential Chapter Members
- Non-Chapter Members

Why did you do it? What chapter needs were addressed? This partnership is a key aspect of our diversity & inclusion strategy. We need to create a community that feels welcoming to members of under-represented groups in order to continue growing our membership, to stay relevant in our community, and for our members to have credibility in their organizations (where they are often tasked with leading DEI efforts).

What were the measurable outcomes? (May include data regarding financial gains, membership increases, target audience satisfaction levels, publicity for the chapter or for the profession, etc.) We increased the participation by visible minorities at chapter events from less than 5% at at typical event to approximately 15% at our latest summer social. We also landed several senior leaders who were NAAAHR members to be speakers or panelists at our events, and we were able to offer our members access to relevant NAAAHR events as guest members.

What steps did you take to implement this effort? (Remember that other chapter leaders will use this to replicate the effort. Be specific)

This initiative started by identifying our local NAAHR chapter as a candidate partner. Our memberships work in similar areas (talent development vs HR) and they are well respected within our community.

We identified how to begin building relationships by getting introductions to leaders in their chapter. Some of our chapter members were also members of their chapter and facilitated introductions; we found other chapter or board members that worked with NAAHR members in their organizations.

Once introduced, we began the relationship with listening and genuine curiosity. We sought to understand how they wanted to add value for their members and what professional challenges their members faced.

During those conversations, we uncovered some opportunities for shared purposes. For instance, their members were sometimes pigeonholed as "DEI experts" because they were minorities; we could use our chapter events as a platform for their broader HR expertise to be recognized. Their members looked for ways to grow their professional networks; our chapter could offer opportunities to facilitate introductions.

We began experimenting with ways to collaborate. Our experiments included inviting their members to select events as our guests, cohosting events, copromoting events, and featuring their speakers at our events.

Is there anything you would do differently?

Some of our experiments required far more time and effort than anticipated, or did not get traction (despite both sides being enthusiastic.) We should have started some of the experiments smaller; for instance, planning a single co-hosted event instead of a series of three events. We should also have been more willing to hit pause on an experiment that wasn't working and pivot to different options.

When did you start working on this effort?

Jul 01, 2019

When did this effort go live?

Jan 01, 2020

Approximately how many hours were spent working on this? Include an estimate of hours spent across all board members and volunteers.

100

What resources did you use? Check all that apply:

Sponsorships/Partnerships
Volunteers
Board Members

Was this an in-kind or monetary sponsorship? If monetary, how much was provided? Who were your partners/sponsors? How did you solicit sponsors?

These were in-kind sponsorships with that specific chapter. There was some indirect spillover to our sponsorship efforts, in that our paid sponsors saw that we were able to bring a larger pool of non-members to events and were able to feature NAAHR leaders who were senior level in their own organizations at our events.

How many volunteers were you able to recruit?

We had about a half dozen current members helping us to build the initial relationships. This year, we have seen an increase in minority volunteers in our chapter; we can't directly link that outcome to this effort, but it is plausible that having more visible minorities at our events made it easier for them to say yes when asked to volunteer.

Which board positions were involved in the effort?

The president track, professional development, and community relations roles were most involved from a role perspective. Nearly all the board members contributed via their personal networks.

Do you have any additional insights to share with other chapters implementing this effort?

It's incredibly important to go into these conversations listening to the partner's needs and building rapport. While we had some ideas of what the collaboration could look like, we waited several months before putting those proposals forward to make sure that we had established our genuine interest in collaboration, and not merely using their talent as a means to our own ends.

Don't be intimidated by our timeframe or estimate of hours; it's hard to track this initiative because it grew out a series of conversations of deliberate but organic conversations. The key is to start the discussion and then be open to where it might go.

While my name is on the submission line, I want to recognize Matt Meuleners and Nikki Palmer-Quade for doing far more work than I in nurturing and sustaining this relationship over time, and I need to emphasize that this would not have been possible without the support of many chapter members who helped us start the conversations on the right foot.

How did you become familiar with the Sharing Our Success (SOS) program? Select all that apply:

Chapter Leader
ATD Chapter Leaders Conference (ALC)
National Advisors for Chapters (NAC)
NAC Area Call
Leader Connection Newsletter (LCN)
Chapter Relations Manager (CRM)
Success Series

Would you be willing to apply to present on this submission at the ATD Chapter Leaders Conference (ALC)? *Request for Proposals (RFPs) open in May of each year at td.org/alc. Selected session facilitators receive complimentary registration.

Yes