**2012 SOS Submission: Central New York**

**Member Orientation**

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| **Submission Date: 07/10/12** **Chapter Name: Central New York** **Chapter ID: CH2001** **Chapter Location: Syracuse** **Chapter Membership Size: Medium currently w/ 143 members** | **Contact for this Submission: Rita Barger** **Email Address: rmbarger@twcny.rr.com** **Phone Number: 315-382-2892** **Chapter Title: VP Curation** **Chapter Website URL: http://www.cnyastd.org/** |

**Description of Effort: Member Orientation**

**Need Addressed: Member Orientations address CNY ASTD’s need to create better awareness of the value of CNY ASTD and National ASTD memberships, and to increase the level of engagement of members. Engaged members are the key to sustainability and growth for ASTD chapters.**

**Member Orientations address this need with three different constituents:**

* **New members - New members need to quickly know how they can benefit from membership and how they can make a difference to the membership. Member Orientations address the need to rapidly and effectively engage new members.**
* **Current members – Current members need to be reminded of how they can benefit from membership and how they can make a difference to the membership. Member Orientations address the need to effectively refresh and engage current members.**
* **Prospective members – Prospective members need to become aware of the benefits of membership. Member Orientations address the need to effectively provide awareness of how prospective members can benefit from membership and how they can become engaged.**

**Additional needs addressed through Member Orientations include: increased memberships in chapter and national, increased joint memberships, and higher level of retention of memberships. Member Orientations also provide a unique networking opportunity for a small group of new, existing and prospective members to meet and learn about each other as well as the organization.**

**Does this effort align with your chapter mission? This effort aligns very closely with our chapter’s mission— to connect learning and performance professionals throughout the region, and contribute to the growth of its members and the recognition of the profession. This effort also aligns well with our primary 2012 goal of increased engagement of members.**

**Does this effort align with ASTD's mission? This effort aligns very closely with ASTD’s mission— Empower professionals to develop knowledge & skills successfully. Bringing new members into the fold quickly helps them to be aware of programs and other resources available to help them successfully develop knowledge and skills critical to their profession. Reacquainting current members of the value of programs and other resources available helps them improve knowledge and skills. Providing prospective members with information about programs and other resources available helps them to develop knowledge and skills successfully. Additionally, these Member Orientations align with National ASTD’s mission of joint memberships through awareness of both national and chapter programs and resources.**

**Target Audience: The target audience of the Member Orientation effort is**

* **New members - New members need to know how they can benefit from membership and how they can make a difference to the membership.**
* **Current members – Current members need to be reminded of how they can benefit from membership and how they can make a difference to the membership.**
* **Prospective members – Prospective members need to become aware of the benefits of membership.**

**Additionally, through lending support and welcoming/networking, the Chapter Leadership Team is able to recruit for engagement for their respective committees.**

**Costs/Resource Use:** *(Include any details regarding use of resources including monetary, donations, contributions, volunteer hours, people resources, etc. and how you went about getting these resources.)*

**Member Orientations cost approximately $50.00 per session for handouts, beverages and food and is hosted at the VP Membership’s location. The Membership Committee, with assistance from the Chapter Leadership Team, conducts the Member Orientations. Volunteer hours consist of 3 Membership Committee members preparing for the sessions, for a total of 3 volunteer hours, and an average of 6 Membership Committee members and Chapter Leadership Team attending the 1.5 hour orientation for a total of 9 volunteer hours.**

**How did you implement?** *(Please give a brief description.)*

**Based on the idea of creating better awareness of the value of national and chapter membership for new, current and prospective members, the Membership Committee developed a plan to hold orientations. Sessions were implemented quarterly beginning in 2011. Sessions are advertised in the weekly emails, on the website and in media publications. New and renewed members receive a personal invitation by the VP of Memerbship. The orientations are also mentioned at each event. 38 individuals have attended the 6 sessions we have had to date (leadership team or membership committee members are not included in the totals). The Membership Committee welcomes the attendees and then briefly presents a power point presentation detailing the features of national ASTD and the local chapter while highlighting ways to get engaged. This presentation is followed by a question and answer session and networking.**

**What were the Outcomes?** *(Include financial, membership increases, target audience satisfaction levels, publicity for the chapter or for the profession, etc.)*

* **Primary desired outcome – engaged members**
  + **New memberships from prospects attending sessions….  5 out of 8 non-members joined following orientation**
  + **Retained memberships from member attendees who learned more about value of organization and its activities… 68% retention of those members who have attended**
  + **Engaged members through involvement on committees….. 29% of attendees (11 members) are now on committees**
  + **Engaged members through involvement in organization’s activities/events…. 61% of attendees (23 individuals) have gotten involved in organization’s activities/events**
  + **Joint memberships from member attendees who receive increased awareness of value of national ASTD membership…. 2 members joined national ASTD following sessions**
  + **Increased awareness of CNY ASTD, the organization and its activities, and national ASTD’s services for those attending…. rating of understanding following sessions – 4.5 out of 5**
  + **Increased general awareness of CNY ASTD in community through notices of orientation – continually on website in 2 locations; included on 48 weekly emails; 45 calendar notices published**

**Lessons Learned:** *(Hints and tips for other Chapters who may be considering a similar effort)*

* **Not promoting it as just a New Member Orientation, but as a Member Orientation, along with detailing that the orientations are open to new members to get acquainted with CNY ASTD and learn how to get the most value from their membership, current members to refresh themselves with what CNY ASTD offers, and prospective members to learn about CNY ASTD**
* **Providing sufficient time for networking before and after sessions to allow making good connections with attendees. Also, providing attendees a listing of fellow attendees following the sessions to allow for continued networking and discussions**
* **Involving various members of membership committee to be part of member orientation as part of showcasing engagement**
* **Encouraging various organization committee chairs to attend to help them promote their committees and make personal promotions/connections**
* **Scheduling, at a minimum, 2 orientations out to allow potential attendees options if they can't make the next one**
* **Scheduling sessions shortly after big events because of the potential number of non-members and members attending the big event (ex.CNY BEST Awards Ceremony, Employee Learning Week, etc)**
* **Continual promotion of member orientations through website, emails, notices to new and renewed members, upcoming program flyers, media notices, etc. And, continually reviewing all other possible opportunities for promotion of member orientations**
* **Ensuring a balance between local and national value, providing enough understanding of national ASTD’s value, while ensuring sufficient coverage of local chapter’s benefits and offerings**
* **Not pushing the engagement request, but providing a follow up process to answer attendees questions, particularly about getting engaged**
* **Providing evaluations for each orientation to receive feedback for improving the sessions**

**Please list the specific ASTD chapter resources that helped guide you in the process of completing this best practice:**

* **National ASTD Membership Presentation – used some of the presentation as part of discussing value of national ASTD**
* **Power of 2 – to discuss value of belonging to both national ASTD and local chapter**

***Please email completed forms to*** [***SOS@astd.org***](mailto:SOS@astd.org) ***along with any supporting documents.***