IAEP Academic Relations

IIA Beach Cities Chapter
Student Night Best Practice

"We are proud to hold this event and believe it helps students gain insight about internal auditing as a profession, helps promote The IIA, and creates an opportunity for students to connect with world-class recruiters with the possibility of getting job offers."

The Beach Cities Chapter Student Night was a very successful event that required a great deal of planning and execution. A 3-person student night committee was formed to spear-head the effort. The committee consisted of the Chapter President as Chair, the Chapter Academic Relations Board member and the student President of the California State University and Accounting Society. They were accountable to and reported quarterly to the full Chapter Board. Planning began early, around October 2014. This included meeting monthly, face-to-face over lunch or coffee, telephone conference calls, and emails. We had a written agenda for each time we met or spoke and appointed the student member to take notes and send them to all participants within 3-4 business days after each interaction to provide a record of items discussed, actions required, with due dates, and by assigned member.

Key factors involved in our strategy included:

Sponsorships

Many organizations begin their recruitment drive around September and start interviewing candidates at universities for start dates in the fall of next year. The letters to successful students are sent out during October/November. We wanted to contact potential sponsors for our event by November, when they are no longer preoccupied with hiring students. We created a list of potential sponsors and assigned responsibilities to the committee and other board members to contact organizations based on prior experience and known personal contacts. This list was made available to the full board and to the committee and they were responsible for initiating contact with their assigned targets and report back if they were successful in getting commitments. The list was regularly updated and shared with the full board and committee members. Maximizing sponsorships was key to a successful student night as we needed to cover the cost of the free meals for the students. Our goal was to raise a fixed dollar amount for a sponsorship of each table. We encouraged chapter members to contact organizations they worked for to get sponsorships and we encouraged them to make personal contributions. We also reached out to CAEs in targeted organizations via email. We encouraged sponsors to send recruiters from their organizations while understanding that not every sponsor is a recruiter.

> Maximizing sponsorships is key to a successful student night.

Recruiters

We reached out to recruiters, but made it clear that in order to have the privilege of coming to our event and having the ability to recruit from a pool of highly motivated students under one roof, they would need to sponsor a table or two. Having good recruiters come to the event is key for the students, especially graduating seniors, as they are looking for jobs and this is the biggest draw for them apart from the free food!

Venue

We assigned one board member to select the venue for the event and had the member negotiate a contract with the restaurant, based on location, accessibility to freeway, free parking, and overall cost of the restaurant. Since we have been doing these events for some years, this was not difficult, but we did have to negotiate the cost of the meals, based on

estimated attendees. Also, based on the business we have provided to this restaurant in past years, we were able to negotiate an additional ballroom that accommodated all the recruiters and had the main ballroom for serving a sit-down dinner and hold the speeches. The ballrooms were provided to us at no cost.

Advertising

We hold monthly lunchtime seminars at a local Holiday Inn and we started making announcements at each event about the upcoming Student Night. Also, it was mentioned in our chapter newsletter every month beginning in January. The event was regularly mentioned in the "President's Message" in the newsletter and under the "Training & Events" section of the chapter website. We also had one chapter member send email blasts about the event to our membership regularly each month and more often towards the end.

Reaching out to Professors

The committee reached out to professors at 12 universities in the Southern California region via email and started the campaign in November, advising them of the upcoming event. We continued sending the professors regular emails and kept track of the responses received from them. We sent them the event flyer and requested they mention the event in their classes and post on their electronic bulletin boards at school. We made sure that we kept following up and reminding the professors every three weeks or so, starting in October, so that the message was not lost or forgotten. We checked the websites of several local universities to ascertain when the universities have spring breaks and made sure the event was scheduled after all the spring breaks were over. We blitzed the professors immediately after the spring breaks with email reminders, knowing that students often need reminders for events, especially after holidays. We even made presentations to classes on internal auditing, The IIA, and differences between internal and external auditing.

Reaching out to Student Body Presidents

We encouraged the CSUDH president committee member to introduce/connect us to Beta Alpha Psi and Accounting Society presidents (students) at local universities and we obtained their contact email addresses and mobile cell numbers. We wrote to them in October and requested their help and support in rallying their student bodies to attend our event and sent them the flyers for the event. We were invited by CSUDH Accounting Society, University of California, Irvine BAP and Accounting Society and CSU Long Beach Beta Alpha Psi and Accounting Society to speak to their students on separate evening events arranged by the respective presidents at their campuses. They wanted us to speak about Internal Auditing as a profession and we made presentations at their request, all of which were well received. We took flyers for the event to these presentations and marketing material about The IIA.

Acknowledging Key Participants

At the event, we recognized three key groups of people in the President's welcome address:

(a) Sponsors and recruiters
(b) Student Body presidents and attending professors
(c) Members of the chapter who contributed to the event, directly or indirectly

These groups are also acknowledged in our newsletter and on our website.

Banners, Displays, Photography

Our committee created banners for the event, displays, and name cards for registrants and recruiters and we had appointed one volunteer to take photographs at the event. This was done to make the event more organized and to create a festive atmosphere.

Student Volunteers

We asked student body presidents to provide us with 5-7 volunteers at the event to set up the banners and displays and then take them down after the event. This shares the numerous tasks that can be otherwise overwhelming for the organizers.

Raffles

We held two raffles for gift cards and gave away two student memberships of The IIA for one year in raffles. This not only promoted the IIA but also created some degree of excitement for students.

Promote the IIA and Internal Auditing

The Internal Audit team from UCLA set up a table to talk to students about internal auditing as a profession and promote The IIA as the premier organization for internal auditors. The student night is a major event for our chapter and we have organized and promoted this event for several years. We are proud to hold this event and believe it helps students gain insight about internal auditing as a profession, helps promote The IIA, and creates an opportunity for students to connect with world-class recruiters with the possibility of getting job offers. Student outreach is an important goal for our chapter.