

## College Project 2019

### **1. Briefly describe your College Project and what your chapter set out to accomplish with your college administration.**

Alpha Nu Sigma's 2019 College Project "Stay Safe, Be Active" was designed to spread public safety awareness at Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC). We knew meeting with our College President, Dr. Fore, would be the first step in our initiative, which would determine the path of our project. One of our goals was to review HGTC's mission statement prior to meeting with her. Dr. Fore first asked for our ideas, before giving suggestions of her own. College Project committee members determined Dr. Fore's idea for enhancing public safety would be the right direction for our project. Members then decided "to provide a student-centered environment," taken directly from HGTC's mission statement, would be a core objective. Committee members agreed to place particular emphasis on active shooter scenarios to ensure our college community knew how to react in those situations. We decided to work with HGTC administrators to effectively teach the student-body about public safety facts. Believing our contribution would be an asset for the college and student body as a whole, Dr. Fore recommended we collaborate with two of our college vice presidents who were already working on public safety initiatives.

### **2. Describe the planning process in detail including who was involved in determining the project and who your chapter collaborated with to carry out the project. (It's perfectly acceptable to list individual job titles or departments/organizations rather than listing everyone by name.)**

We created a College Project committee during chapter and officer meetings early in the year and met biweekly throughout the project. We studied HGTC's mission statement and met twice to prepare potential proposals before meeting with our college president. In our first meeting with Dr. Fore, she invited us to share our ideas and discussed the topic of emergency preparedness. We decided to address this issue, combining it with active shooter training in line with her requests. Mr. Harold Hawley, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Dr. Melissa Batten, Vice President of Student Affairs, and Public Safety Officer, Lieutenant Marsh, attended our initial College Project planning meeting. They shared their ideas and offered important administrative insights. Our administrators discussed decisions HGTC cabinet members (college vice presidents) were currently addressing, such as new emergency preparedness protocols and new emergency manuals for all classrooms on all campuses. We also discussed adding AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) throughout the college. Our conversations with Lieutenant Marsh prompted our committee to share our initiative "Student and Police Together," a Welcome Back Week project supporting openness between college students and public safety officers. Dr. Fore also asked for ideas to get all students to complete a SAFE (Secure, Alert, Fight, Escape) Training video. We worked with HGTC's marketing department and suggested adding a student introduction to the college's current SAFE Training video. Throughout this project, we worked with the following:

- Assistant Director of Marketing and Public Relations
- Administrative Assistant, Business Affairs Finance Office
- Director of Student Engagement
- Public Safety Department
- Academic Affairs Vice President

### **3. How did chapter members develop their leadership and/or knowledge, skills and abilities needed for project implementation?**

Through team building and active listening exercises, we improved our leadership skills. Committee members strengthened professional communication skills by providing advisors with drafts of emails to administrators for review. We improved our presentation of self by dressing professionally for meetings

## College Project 2019

and wrote and rehearsed scripts prior to meeting with administrators. We utilized the online organization tool, Trello, to keep meeting minutes and track progress.

In meetings with Dr. Fore, we learned she and HGTC administrators struggled to connect with the student body regarding public safety. We also learned there was an “Emergency Preparedness & Response Webinar” created by the HGTC’s administration, which was unsuccessful in reaching students. This led us to create a public safety awareness campaign.

After reviewing HGTC’s “Emergency Preparedness & Response Webinar,” Public Safety Policy, and the Safety & Emergency Response Manual, we proposed a friendly video introduction, filmed from a student’s perspective, to present to the student body. The video would be mandatory for college professors to show on the first day of class and include in their online classes. College Project committee members created a script which was reviewed by HGTC’s assistant marketing director. Significant changes, such as cutting it from 90 seconds to 30 seconds, were requested and made. Safety tips were included and displayed on slides throughout the video. During the creation of the “Stay Safe, Be Active” video, we collaborated with the marketing director and HGTC’s marketing team to strengthen the skills needed for a strong camera presence, such as having good posture, voice projection, expressing emotions while filming, annunciation, and speaking with informal diction. We used these skills to successfully create a video to which HGTC students could relate. Throughout this project, members learned how to accept constructive criticism to improve communication skills and polish our presentations of self.

#### **4. Describe in detail how the chapter collaborated and communicated with others before, during and after the project.**

Chapter members brainstormed ideas before discussing them with our college president. We provided periodic updates to administrators throughout the project and acted on their feedback.

Committee members met with HGTC’s cabinet in July, proposing 1) a SAFE Training video introduction, 2) tips to encourage students to report suspicious activity to public safety and 3) purchasing Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).

We worked with Public Safety Officers to create safety tips such as “Be Aware,” “Know Your Campus,” and “Educate Yourself.” Committee members submitted these tips along with the rough draft of our video script to the marketing department for approval. They thought our script contained an informative message that would be beneficial and relatable to the student body. Chapter officers met with the marketing director and an HGTC videographer who would film our “Stay Safe, Be Active” video introduction. Both were very active in the discussion before filming, giving us feedback about body language and posture.

This video was completed in early August with the goal of it being shown during the first two weeks of fall semester classes. Our student introduction had to be spliced into an existing video. Though it took longer than anticipated, when the video was complete and ready to view in October, the Academic Affairs Vice President sent faculty members an e-mail containing the link to the video “Stay Safe, Be Active.”

In a follow-up email regarding the proposed AEDs, Mr. Hawley indicated we needed to make a formal presentation to the Student Engagement Funding Allocation Committee (SEFAC). The Director of Student Engagement accepted our proposal and forwarded it to committee members. They balked at the cost and asked HGTC cabinet members to pay for half. Cabinet approved the request and SEFAC committee members approved the remainder in December.

After the project, we followed up with the college president and administrators, via email, expressing the importance of a mandatory “Stay Safe, Be Active” training initiative. We also proposed sending the SAFE

## College Project 2019

video training link to all professors at the start of the spring semester in addition to installing deadbolts on office suites to secure the areas from the inside in the case of an active shooter situation.

### **5. What were the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of your project, including the lessons learned by your chapter members and others?**

Alpha Nu Sigma members manned tables at Welcome Back Week on two campuses and worked with Public Safety officers to share information about Phi Theta Kappa and safety practices at the college. Members spoke to hundreds of students about our “Stay Safe, Be Active” initiative and distributed 500 student emergency contact information postcards.

We completed our SAFE Training video introduction in August and shared it with faculty, staff, and students in October. We requested data on the number of views from our Institutional Research Department, yet they were unable to provide us with the exact number of video views. Once the link was posted in the student services area of the college website, 6,757 students had access to view it. One professor who showed our video to her class provided us with positive feedback. One student stated, “The most important thing I learned from the ‘Stay Safe, Be Active’ video is that HGTC wants us to, if possible, escape and leave the area right away. Growing up attending public school we were taught to hide in the classroom instead of running away.” Another student said, “The most important thing I learned from the ‘Stay Safe, Be Active’ video is to stay aware of my surroundings when I am walking around campus. I am the type of person to always keep two earbuds in while walking around and not pay attention to who is around me, but I see now how that may be a bad idea.” This feedback demonstrated the importance of our video and we hope all professors will show it in the spring semester.

Our committee proposed a plan to purchase 52 Automated External Defibrillators. The total cost was \$91,500. These AED’s will be strategically placed on all three college campuses in various buildings. The Director of Student Engagement forwarded our proposal to SEFAC members in October, and the committee asked HGTC cabinet members to pay half the cost of \$45,750. Cabinet approved the request and after weeks of voting, committee members approved the remaining \$45,750 in December. We expect the AEDs to be purchased and installed in 2020.

We learned not to be intimidated by our college president and administrators as a result of this project. They were friendly, listened to our ideas and showed a strong interest in our safety. It was a challenge to see how a bureaucracy works as we created brochures to HGTC standards and had to make numerous changes to colors, fonts, and the logo. Being part of this public safety initiative made us more aware of daily habits that could threaten our safety and provided ways for students to remain safe on campus.