Revitalizing Networking Opportunities by Reconnecting Diverse Communities on Campus

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Agenda

• Background of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

• Goals and Learning Outcomes

• New approach to programing
  • CONEXIONES
  • DINE (Diversity and Inclusion Networking Exchange)

• Evaluation of Events

• Impact
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

• Total Enrollment: 44,880

• Diverse Student Population
  • 24.0% International
  • 14.7% Asian
  • 8.7% Hispanic
  • 5.6% African American
  • 2.6% Multiracial
  • .08% Native American
Cultural Houses

• The university has been able to develop a sense of community among students
  • Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center
  • Asian American Cultural Center
  • La Casa Cultural Latina
  • Native American House
  • Women’s Resource Center
  • LGBT Resource Center
Rationale

• Saw a gap and opportunity
  • New programs by partnering with the Cultural Houses
  • Allow us to target certain student populations across campus
    • Diversity and Inclusion Networking Exchange (D.I.N.E)
    • CONEXIONES

• Diversity and Inclusion Networking Exchange (D.I.N.E)
  • Co-Sponsored with Office of Minority Student Affairs, the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations, Native American House, Asian American Cultural Center, University Housing, and Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center

• Conexiones
  • Co-Sponsored with La Casa Cultural Latina, the Latino/a Alumni Association, and a Latino Registered Student Organization
How we define Career Readiness

• Learning Outcomes
  • Students to feel comfortable initiating conversations with professionals (1a)
  • Students to understand the value of networking (1b)
  • Student to understand the qualities that employers seek (1b)
  • Student to feel comfortable asking professionals’ questions regarding their organization’s diversity and inclusion practices (1c)

• NACE Competencies
  • 1a. Oral and Written Communication
  • 1b. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
  • 1c. Global/Intercultural Fluency
Conexiones

• Program
  • Held on a Saturday (2-3 hour event)
  • Lunch is provided (provided by grants)
  • Keynote Speaker
    • Angelica Sanchez (local news reporter)
    • Ceasar Perez (local entrepreneur)
  • Mini Workshop on Developing Elevator Pitch
    • Brief explanation and tips on perfecting your pitch provided in program booklet
    • Practice with professionals & fellow peers
Conexiones

• Panel Breakout Sessions (5 panelists per session)
  • How to prepare for interviews
  • The importance of joining professional organizations
  • Resumes and Cover Letters
  • Starting your career – What’s Next?

• Open Networking
  • Standard networking questions to ask professionals were provided
  • Follow-up questions were provide in hopes to encourage conversations at a later date
Diversity and Inclusion Networking Exchange (D.I.N.E)

• Event
  • Keynote Speaker
  • 20-25 Employers – who attend the All Campus Career Fair
    • Employers are stationed at a table – students complete 6 rotations to meet employers
    • During each rotation, a question is given for each table to discuss
      • Sample questions – What are some ways that your company helps diverse employees acclimate to your organizational culture? How should I bring up my identities and experiences during a job interview?
  • Open Networking
## Data Analysis – Who came to the event?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Conexiones</strong></th>
<th><strong>D.I.N.E.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47 Students &amp; 7 alumni / professionals</td>
<td>68 Students &amp; 36 Companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% female &amp; 10% male</td>
<td>69% female &amp; 31% male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% self-identified as Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>23% African American, 23% International, 20% Hispanic, 19% Asian, 9% White, 3% Multi-race, 3% unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17% freshmen, 19% sophomores, 24% juniors, 30% seniors, 2% graduate students and 8% unidentified</td>
<td>3% freshmen, 10% sophomores, 15% juniors, 57% seniors, and 15% graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most students came from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (18) with 5 or fewer from other colleges.</td>
<td>Most students came from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (32) with 8 or fewer from other colleges</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Conexiones - Survey Results

Difference in Pre vs. Post-Event Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>***Comfortable</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Elevator</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Meaningful Connections</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Interview</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>4.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflect</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.31</td>
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</table>

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DINE - Survey Results

Difference in Pre vs. Post-Event Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comfortable</strong></td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
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<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employer Qualities</strong></td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity &amp; Inclusion Practices</strong></td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Conexiones - Student Reflections

Connecting
• “Networking is about creating bonds, and it is about being yourself not selling yourself”

Embracing Opportunity
• “I need to be comfortable being uncomfortable. Stepping out of my comfort zone because taking action can open unexpected doors”
• “Network with all kinds of people not just people that are in your own field”

Exploring
• “Being inspired by the professionals’ “stories and experiences.”
• “It is okay to not find your perfect career right away-time and patience is key.”
Diversity and Inclusion Networking Exchange (D.I.N.E) - Student Reflections

**Personal Reflection**
- “Being open with your diverse background adds more value to it.”
- “The information provided is valuable to grow professionally.”

**Connecting**
- “How to effectively network and communicate in a more social setting.”
- “Very beneficial to students looking for a job.”

**Embracing Opportunity**
- “DINE is a good introduction to presenting yourself as a college student when finding a future career.”
- “I learned that it is highly important to bring up personal experiences and relate it to job opportunities.”
Student Impact

• High impact
  • Enhancing student’s knowledge that help in their career decision making
  • Infusing perspectives from the real world into programs for specific communities
  • Engage in powerful conversations about diversity as it relates to the workplace
  • Students meet other students with similar backgrounds and create a small community with each other as they navigate their way through the event

• Learning Outcomes – Career Readiness
  • Students to feel comfortable initiating conversations with professionals
  • Students to understand the value of networking
  • Student to understand the qualities that employers seek
  • Student to feel comfortable asking professionals’ questions regarding their organization’s diversity and inclusion practices
• Innovate: New approach to programing

• Inspire: Help build self-efficacy among student communities

• Transform: Change our tactic to help student become career ready
Transform

• Changed our approach to programming based on assessment
  • Target different communities on campus – meet their unique needs
  • Create other programs to help students with career readiness
    • International Illini Networking in Chicago
    • Women’s Resource Center Women’s Career Institute
    • Military to College to Career Professional Development Series for Veterans
    • Best Employers for Individuals with Disabilities
What’s Next…

• How can you do this at your institution?
  • Collaborate with other units around campus
  • Target different communities
  • Connect with diverse student organization
  • Develop assessment methods/strategies
  • Create a network with alums/employers