



2011-12 Action Learning Projects Abstracts

Associated Artists of Winston Salem

"Painting a Wider Rainbow: How to Diversify a Local Arts Group"

Many of Associated Artists' members belong to an older demographic, particularly retirees who have more time to create art and volunteer. To remain viable and relevant, Associated Artists wishes to enhance the diversity of its members – especially in terms of age, but also with respect to other demographic and artistic categories (race, artistic media, etc.). The action learning team delivered recommendations (provided in presentations to the Partner) as well as new survey data and written materials for the Partner's further use.

Project Partner Statement

The work of this Leadership W-S Action Learning Team will be invaluable to Associated Artists in the future. Having a small staff, we would never have been able to be so proactive as to conduct this research on our own.

Brunson Elementary Backpack Program/Second Harvest

"Develop Implementation Plan"

Prepare report of suggestions, digital & electronic resources, checklists, etc. for implementing a system of referring & tracking children, monitoring, sharing resources & partnering with other agencies; assist in developing marketing & PR materials for raising awareness, outreach activities, and fundraising.

Outreach in the community to get the word out about the needs of our food insecure children is paramount to the success of the backpack program. While everyone understands that there is a national problem, what is clearly not reaching our community is just how acute this crisis is in Winston Salem and the greater Northwest North Carolina region. Today, access to information is limited to Second Harvest Foodbank. There is no mention on Brunson's non-profit partner's website, Winston Salem Forsyth County School's website or social media sites about the need for help.

Goodwill Industries of NW NC

"Market research"

Conduct market research of donating community, using focus groups, surveys, etc. to help develop future growth plans, future campaigns, future store and donation center placements, and ability for future workforce development growth.

Without donations, Goodwill would cease to exist. People's donations are driven by convenience. If they can donate conveniently, they will do so, but why would 15 percent of people choose to not donate goods that could be donated? The Goodwill folks asked us: Find out why people don't donate. Partly because of our work and surveying, Goodwill is considering a donation-drop-off truck at or near the Hanes Mill landfill. Leaders have said they will discuss the prospect with the officials with the city and county. That will save landfill space and encourage more recycling.

Project Partner Statement

"Working with the team over the past few months has been a rewarding experience. Their enthusiasm and drive to provide a beneficial deliverable for us has been palpable and we appreciate the opportunity to educate a group of bright, diverse business and community leaders on our mission."

2011-12 Action Learning Projects Abstracts continued

Habitat for Humanity

"Assess Plan & Research Prospects"

Assess Resource Development Plan for ReStore & make enhancement suggestions; identify donation streams & additional partnerships; research grants for an additional truck.

Project Partner Statement

1. This Action Learning team had great chemistry! Never underestimate the power that comes from enjoying the people with which you work. If you can't get to a point of liking each other, at least get to a point of respecting each other. This team did both.
2. The key takeaway from the project (apart from getting a \$1000 donation for a new truck for pick-ups) was the objective insight that HfH needs to revisit "how easy/ difficult we make it for people/organizations to donate to the ReStore". As a result of the team's work, we will be reviewing item acceptance guidelines, days/hours for pick-ups that work for the donor more so than HfH, and using technology for both scheduling and promoting donations to the ReStore. Think of this as the new and improved KICS rule (i.e. the rule formerly known as KISS): Keep It Convenient, Stupid.
3. Congrats to this AL team and all the AL teams! As graduates of LWS you will make our community a better place to live and work.

Hispanic League

"Strengthening Membership within the Hispanic League"

The Hispanic League, a dedicated nonprofit committed to improving the quality of life for Hispanic/Latinos through promoting involvement and understanding, asked our Team to help them create a more effective membership program. Through research into best practices, individual interviews, and conversations with Board members, we used an outside perspective to enhance the structure and target certain markets more effectively. We produced deliverables that we believe are useful and will prove immediate benefit to the organization.

Project Partner Statement

"The Hispanic League is most pleased with the creativity and energy the Action Learning Team dedicated to capturing the essence of our membership and benefits. They brought to the Board of Directors fresh ideas to make our membership renewable with tangible benefits that include a commitment to the community. "

Second Harvest Food Bank--Senior Feeding Program

"Research & Develop Strategic Plan"

Research existing senior feeding programs & prepare strategic implementation plan addressing need for food assistance targeted to the elderly, steps to plan program, timeline and suggest appropriate agency for pilot program.

- Food distribution options specific to individuals with challenges such as limited mobility and pride;
- Nutritious food options, whenever possible, but focus on providing **more** food to **more** Seniors;
- And be able to deliver the biggest challenge...something sexy.

Project Partner Statement

"Thanks so much to the entire team for the dedication and hard work toward this effort. It is greatly appreciated by the Food Bank, and of course, by the seniors who will be fed through the programs we initiate."

2011-12 Action Learning Projects Abstracts continued

SECU Family House

“Research Development Plans & Best Practices”

Develop comprehensive development plan to determine appropriate revenue-producing objectives, create strategy for Board, determine whether additional personnel will be necessary and assess the vital philanthropic needs of the organization.

Our strategy was to research and benchmark other family houses and organizations similar in size. We put together a list of standard questions to ask each organization contacted. The National Association of Hospital Hospitality Houses (NAHHH) and NC Center for Nonprofits provided us a list of contacts. Each team member gathered information from their assigned contacts. The information was compiled and common themes were extrapolated from the data. This research was then used to expound upon and complete the approved budget and strategic plan (Goal #2, Strategy #7) adopted by SECU Family House Board of Directors.

Project Partner Statement

The Action Learning Team assigned to the SECU Family House was a very easy partner with whom to work. Communication with the primary contact was purposeful and proactive, and the end result that was presented to my Board of Directors was thorough, understandable, and well-received.

STEAM Academy (formerly the Downtown Middle School)

“Research Competition & Potential Funding”

The Downtown Middle School is in the midst of transforming to the new STEAM Academy and asked that our Action Learning Group conduct a research-based project with deliverables that will aid the current administration in increasing enrollment and finding potential funding sources.

The deliverables include: a competitive analysis of surrounding schools, a market analysis of feeder schools, potential community partners, and grant opportunities.