CSCC Continuous Improvement Team Award

**Project Name:** Dental Hygiene Alumni Network


**Project began:** October 2009

**Project (phase 1) completed:** March 2011

**Team Members**

- Elissa Schneider, Coordinator of Annual Giving, Development Foundation
- Andrew Laux, Systems Specialist, Development Foundation
- Barbara Furlow, Adjunct Faculty, Dental Hygiene Program
- Jeanette Ferguson, Instructor, Biological Sciences

**Project Synopsis**

Columbus State Community College Dental Hygiene Program celebrates 10 Years by forming Alumni Network. The program began in winter of 1999, graduating their first class in the summer of 2000. In honor the milestone, they held a celebration event on October 17, 2009 at CSCC WD Building.

Over 60 Alumni came back to campus to share stories and re-connect with each other. The event was the first meeting of the newly formed CSCC Dental Hygiene Alumni Network, an initiative of the Development Foundation. The group plans to have an event each year offering continuing education credits to all alumni who attend as well as networking with alumni through Facebook.

A scholarship fund was also initiated to honor Connie Grossman RDH. The scholarship is called The Connie Grossman Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded to a worthy second year dental hygiene student.
Since the initial event the Alumni committee and the team members listed above have worked to build a full functioning Alumni network that interacts with the Central Ohio Dental Hygiene community, Alumni and their employers, and current CSCC Students. The groups has put together continuing education events that stimulatingly raise dollars for the Connie Grossman fund to offer scholarships as well as provide additional interactive educational opportunities outside the classroom to students in their second year of the program. One of these continuing education events included a instructor from Columbus State’s Biological Science program. Jeanette was able to share her personal and professional experience and knowledge with Alumni, students, and other Dental Hygiene professionals in an interactive way that helped raise dollars for the Connie Grossman Scholarship Fund.

**Team Work & Collaboration:**

The Dental Hygiene event team was able to gather information from the Development Foundation alumni list by Andy to inform alumni of the Dental Hygiene reconnect event. Barbara also provided contacts from the Dental Hygiene department that allowed for the connection to community partners that had not been engaged with the Dental hygiene department on a consistent basis. Elissa helped to establish the event logistics including reservation of the room as well as having the mailing pieces developed. Elissa also worked with the Development Foundation website developers to make it possible for registration for the event to occur online which had not been possible prior to this year.

Once the mailing was out Andy helped to develop a receipt procedure to allow the attendees to have a portion of their tickets sales tax deductible through their donation to the Development Foundation Dental Hygiene Connie Grossman Fund supporting the Dental Hygiene Program.

Through the collaboration of Andy, Barbara, Jeanette and Elissa the project events were planned attendance and payment records were tracked CEU’s were awarded and information on the threat of Oral Cancer was shared with individuals in the field of Dental Hygiene that otherwise may have missed out. The information and oral cancer program and agenda was set and provided by Jeanette Ferguson, an employee in the Biological Science program. Hopefully this momentum will continue to grow and the Dental Hygiene Department will be able to not only continue to grow their department fund but also keep their graduates and community partners well informed in their field. Much of the work done on this project has been done by employees who have selflessly given much more than their job description suggests and is often quite out of the scope of their work. By using employee’s talents and the college’s resource the project has been a success.

**Outcomes:**

- This project has become a pilot project that is being used as example of how to effectively connect with Columbus State Alumni in a way that is dynamic, creative and sustainable. This project has helped the Foundation streamline how it interacts and connects with Alumni in a way that is digital, virtual and somewhat turnkey. This model can be applied to many of the other career and technical programs at the college and has already begun to reap benefits in other program areas.
- In addition the college is connecting to the whole community of industry leaders for that specific major, increasing our community and helping students gain real interactions with alumni and leaders in their field. The project has helped the program address updates and new technologies and issues surrounding Dental Hygiene. Community colleges
nationwide are beginning to slowly address Alumni interaction in new and different ways from a traditional University model of Alumni Associations. This Dental Hygiene project is a pilot program not only at Columbus State, but has been shared with Alumni professionals across the state.

- Because the project has involved connecting industry leaders, Alumni and their industry contacts, Columbus State faculty and staff, and our Students a environment that encourages diverse interactions and learning has resulted. The dental hygiene industry and it’s Alumni are now more connected and find Columbus State more accessible as a result of this project. Student interaction with Alumni and industry leaders has helped to facilitate student confidence in the industry and job readiness.

- The Alumni and the industry has responded favorable to the project and it’s core mission to raise dollars for the Dental Hygiene program. The first event has 33 of 145 active Alumni attend, and the second event had over 70 Alumni, Students and Industry leaders in attendance. The fund has raised over $5,385.00 since 2009 and one scholarship has already been awarded to a Dental Hygiene student in the program.