Teen Meetings Outside the Box: Building Science Communication Skills through a Network of Graduate Level Trainees, Science Teachers, and High School Teens.

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ABSTRACT

TeenMOB’s vision is to leverage the knowledge and skills of graduate level trainees and K-12 science teachers in a science outreach program for high school teens to develop scientific interest in schools with limited science resources. With faculty guidance, planning for TeenMOB events was eagerly embraced by graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio (UTHSRSA). TeenMOB planning and implementation was facilitated by interactions between UTHSCSA trainees and science teachers from the Voelcker Bioscience Teacher Academy (VBTA), a network of local education professionals working to improve STEM education in the San Antonio region. During a School Science Night at Natalia High School in rural Natalia, TX, TeenMOB enabled trainees to interface directly with teachers, teens, and their families through dynamic activities and interactive lessons to educate the public on healthcare related issues. Trainees were aided by high school science teachers (both local and VBTA-derived) and the school nurse. School District Leadership (School Board, Superintendent of Schools, and high school Principal) also took part in the event, cementing the engagement of the TeenMOB to meet their local science education needs.

TeenMOB:

✦ Provided engaging & facilitated group discussions that promote scientific career building skills and mentoring relationships among research trainees, science teachers and teens
✦ Increased STEM education experiences for high school students underrepresented in STEM fields
✦ Established a sustainable template for science night programs in San Antonio.
✦ Established an educational relationship between UTHSCSA and a local community.

FUNDING

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ASBMB Public Outreach Seed Grant Program Award Recipient (2014-2015)

OUTSIDE THE BOX

TeenMOB Science Night Feedback And Future Plans

Demographics Of Attendees

Natalia Attendees: N = ~180
Age range = 3-85 years with the median age being 16 years old.
65% Spanish
29% English
62.3% At-Risk
5.9% Special Education
35% English
29.4% Minimum Program
81.1% Hispanic
66.67% Most Definitely
25.00% Sure
0% Somewhat
6.95% Teachers/Staff
77.01% Students
80.35% Faculty
5.99% Teamwork
4.04% Science Night Feedback And Future Plans

Science Night Feedback And Future Plans

Future Plans

1. Host TeenMOB Science Night: May 12, 2015
2. Write a “How To Guide for Science Nights”
3. Build a platform for teachers to request science night support
4. Teacher Initiative for Science Outreach and Communication (TISSCO) will provide graduate trainees the opportunity to engage in local science outreach efforts, work closely with K-12 audiences (teachers and students) in organization and execute science nights across San Antonio, support existing UTHSCSA outreach programs, and identify new programs for science outreach efforts.

Learn more at: gsbs.uthscsa.edu/gsbs_ocd/outreach-opportunities

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How did you advertise?
A: Through the Natalia High School’s email newsletter and website, posting the event on the school’s Facebook and Twitter pages, and distributing flyer to science teachers and students.

Q: What topics did you cover?
A: Medical and biological sciences, Tricuspid Atresia: Anatomy, Pathology, and Treatment.

Q: How did you get support for the event?
A: Support was provided through faculty mentors, graduate students, and science teachers from Natalia High School.

Q: How did you recruit trainees?
A: Open recruitment through email and word of mouth. The program was designed to require minimum time of trainees but provide maximum interaction time.

Contact & Information

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Post workshop attendee survey results:

Would you attend another Science Night?

95% Absolutely
4% Maybe
0% No

Did you like the Science Night event?

40.39% Loved it
30.66% Loved it
19.30% Liked it
4.85% Neutral
0.10% Did not like it

OUTSIDE THE BOX...