

# Building Effective Community Partnerships

Daniel R. Richie<sup>1</sup>, Megan Luthie<sup>2</sup>, Sarah Stewart<sup>3</sup>, Mike Malone<sup>4</sup>  
 The Ohio State University, 1. Department of Mechanical Engineering, 2. Department of Sociology, 3. John Glenn College of Public Affairs, 4. Community Engagement – H2O Church



## Background

- Community Engagement H2O (CE-H2O) is a faith-based student organization that works to promote health and wellness in marginalized populations of the Columbus metropolitan area (active since 2012).
- This student organization leverages building effective community partnerships with training and inspiring university student teams to advance the health and wellness of five marginalized communities.
- The five communities are:
  - The immigrant and refugee population
  - The orphan population
  - Those suffering in poverty
  - The widowed and elderly population
  - Survivors of human trafficking
- CE-H2O has created a model for sustainable, student led, volunteer community engagement through a foundation of shared motivation with partner organizations.
- For CE-H2O, this shared motivation is a faith-based, genuine care for the health and well-being of those in need.
- CE-H2O partner organizations serve the Columbus area through medical clinics, education, hunger relief, human trafficking abolition and long term health care.



## Student Leadership Development

- ### Training
- Monthly CE-H2O meetings:
    - Partnership events are organized
    - Leaders equipped to liaison with community partners
    - Past events discussed for reflection and improvement
    - Compassion and care for community discussed to focus motivation on love for marginalized communities
- ### Enduring Involvement
- Multiple community partner events are established
  - Student volunteers are able to select event to attend.
  - This diversity allows student volunteers to match their passion with a community partner organization.
  - Passion-matching promotes enduring relationships between students and community partners.
  - All participants have opportunity to become a student team leader.
- ### Participation Growth
- Student leaders have debriefing meetings to discuss results of each community engagement event.
  - Leading to an improved student involvement process
  - Leading to more student participation
  - Leading to further advancement of health and wellness with Columbus community partner organizations

## Results – Student Involvement

Table 1: Repeated Attendance of Students to Community Engagement Events

2016-2017 Academic Year	
Repeated attendance	Participants
1 Community Engagement Event	200
2 Community Engagement Events	60
3 Community Engagement Events	18
4 Community Engagement Events	11
5+ Community Engagement Events	27
Total Participation:	316

Table 2: Repeated Attendance at Specific Community Partner Organizations

2016-2017 Academic Year	
Community Partner Involvement	Participants
Serve at 1 partner organization	237
Serve at 2 partner organizations	51
Serve at 3 partner organizations	18
Serve at 4 partner organizations	10

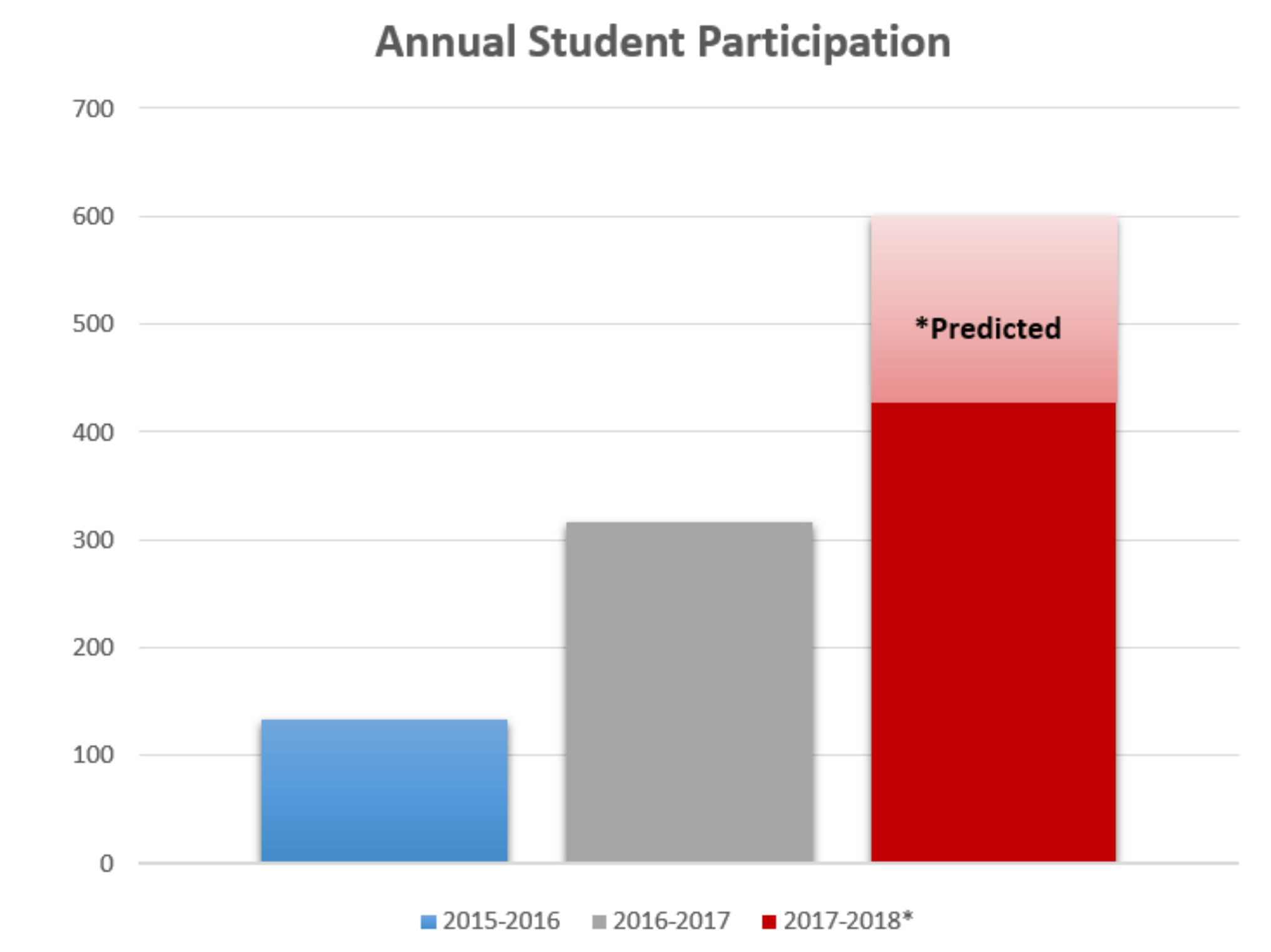


Figure 1: Growth in student participation through three academic years

## Discussion & Conclusions

- The data in Table 1 shows a repeated attendance of 116 out of 316 students.
- This is equal to 37% of students continuing to participate beyond their first community engagement event.
- With 12% of students participating 4+ times in the academic year.
- Table 2 shows the number of students who serve at multiple community partners throughout the year.
- 37 participants (11.7%) return to the same organization, showing enduring relationship building between students and community engagement organizations.
- Of the 316 participants from 2016-2017, 79 participants (25%) chose to attend multiple events with several community partners – showing a desire to explore multiple ways to promote health and wellness in the community.
- Figure 1 shows an increase of total participation of 27% from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 through the 2017 Autumn semester with similar growth expected for the remainder of 2017-2018.
- Conclusion – this is a sustainable model for creating community partnerships that facilitates committed involvement from university students to promote the health and wellness of marginalized communities.

## Information and Involvement

Partnership Information and Further Involvement:  
<http://www.h2ocolumbus.org/community-engagement/>  
 Email Contact:  
[community-engagement@mail.h2osu.org](mailto:community-engagement@mail.h2osu.org)



## Objectives

- Developing university student teams to teach students a life-style of community engagement.
- Effectively working with partners to advance the health and wellness of urban populations.