

Friday, September 12, 2008

Student Nursing Association helps students get connected, give back

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

The Student Nursing Association at Oakland University (SNAOU) has brought the spirit of caring to their community for a long time. With more than 200 members, SNAOU participates in numerous charitable events, including the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, March of Dimes' March for Babies and Walk for Warmth, an annual campaign to help Oakland County families cover winter heating expenses.

A service-driven organization, SNAOU offers nursing students a forum to share ideas and become active members of their community.

"Our goal is to give nursing students a way to interact with each other and their community," said Christine Bates, president of SNAOU. "We want to give them opportunities to apply their knowledge in the real world."

Last April, SNAOU sponsored a guest speaker to help raise awareness of the organ donation process and issues surrounding end-of-life decisions. The event featured an informational PowerPoint presentation, as well as personal perspectives from a donor recipient and donor's family. Other presentations have included self-defense demonstrations and talks on the importance of good hygiene.

SNAOU members regularly participate in OU blood drives and are involved in clothing and food drives in support of organizations such as the Salvation Army. More service activities are being planned for this academic year, including a bowling fundraiser and possible work in an area soup kitchen, Bates said.

In addition to its humanitarian endeavors, SNAOU provides a way for students to connect with their faculty and advisers. Students develop strong relationships with teachers and mentors who can help with coursework, as well as provide guidance and direction on career goals.

SNAOU membership can unlock a vast network of contacts to help nursing students pursue their personal and professional interests, but Bates stresses personal responsibility and participation as the keys to success.

"You have to participate to get the most out of the experience," she said. "If you're not active, you won't be able to get the full advantage of these opportunities."

Students can obtain membership forms and register for events by visiting the **SNAOU** Web site. Membership packages are available for varying rates, ranging from \$9 for six months to \$41 for 36 months. Members who meet certain requirements will earn an honor cord at graduation.

"Right now, we're in a transition period focusing on getting a lot of participation and getting more people out into the community," Bates said. "We want to make it easy for students to stay connected and make SNAOU into something that nursing students want to be a part of."

SNAOU meetings are held the second Monday of each month from 5-6 p.m. in Oakland Center rooms 126 and 127. New members are accepted throughout the year and are encouraged to attend the School of Nursing's Welcome Back and Career Exploration Day on Friday, Sept. 19, from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. For more information on the event, students can visit the **SON** Web site or call the advising office at (248) 370-4083.

SUMMARY

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