

# Honors in Action Project Award - Application

Chapter, Upsilon Pi Chapter1

**Provide a brief abstract or summary of your Honors in Action project including the following components: academic research and analysis, leadership roles, leadership development, action, collaboration, reflection and outcomes.**

**Word Count Limit:** The essay responses for the entire application cannot exceed 2600 words. No limit is given for each essay question, but to the application as a whole.

Through research and analysis, leadership roles, leadership development, action, collaboration, and the reflections of Upsilon Pi chapter's Honors in Action Project, members gained many new experiences and skills. Before researching, the chapter focused on Theme 6, Question 9 in the Honors Program Guide. Members researched the theme and question. Members were put in different leadership roles that aided the chapter's research and action. Members also received several opportunities for leadership development from faculty at John A. Logan College (JALC) that increased their knowledge about their topic. The chapter's research led to an action that brought awareness of a proper healthy plate (food types and portions) to children through a presentation. By the collaboration of a school nutritionist, elementary school teachers and other fellow chapter members, we were able to develop and complete our project. The reflection of this project allowed members to think about the leadership, fellowship, scholarship, and service opportunities they were able to participate in and grow from. The overall outcome of this project was a highly informative research and analysis phase that brought many new skills and experiences for members as well as influence many young children about choosing a healthy plate whenever they eat.

**What theme in the current Honors Program Guide did your chapter focus on?**

Theme 6 - Food Fight!: Competition and Food

**Why and by what process did you choose this theme?**

When we began working on our Honors in Action project, we passed out copies of the Honors in Action program guide to all active members asking each to choose which themes and questions interested them the most. In our next meeting, we wrote everybody's favorite choices on a white board, and found that the majority of our chapter had a pronounced interest in the nutritional aspects of Theme 6. This was particularly interesting to our chapter because several of us are science majors and enjoy nutrition and health. Of the people interested in Theme 6, several were interested in question 9, "How do guidelines, such as the USDA's Food Pyramid and school lunch programs compete with or match parental and/or community food standards and/or realities?" They had interest in particular because several of our members disliked the experience of food served in their own public schools! In addition, one of our members currently has a daughter enrolled in public school, and she is very concerned about her daughter's nutrition. By a vast majority, we decided on Theme 6 with question 9 as our focus.

**List the 8 academic/expert sources that were most enlightening regarding multiple perspectives of the Honors Study Topic Theme you selected. Briefly explain why these were the most important sources and what you learned from each of them as you researched your Theme.**

Example:

St. Amant, Mark. *Committed*. 2005.

St. Amant discusses fantasy football, a competitive activity for some 20 million people. He tracks progression of the hobby from its beginnings in the early 1960s to what is now a multibillion dollar business. St. Amant explains why fantasy sports capture people's attention in a culture of competition and helped us better understand their appeal.

Be consistent with and formal in the way you present the citations for your sources. While it is NOT necessary to use APA or MLA formatting for your sources, please be sure to include the author's name, title of publication, publication year, and a brief description.

For websites, provide a document title or description, a date (either the date of the publication or the date of retrieval from the Internet), and a web address (URL). Whenever possible, identify the authors of a document as well.

For individual or group resources, list contact person's name, email address and/or telephone number, job title, and place of employment.

Submitting more than 8 sources is not encouraged. Additional ancillary materials and/or links to those materials will not be considered for judging.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA. Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs Federal Register Vol. 77, No. 17 January 26, 2012 Website: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf> A document of the FNS and USDA that details food guidelines in relation to school.

#### Resource 2

USDA MyPlate Website: <http://myplate.gov> 2013. The government website for the new USDA food system which explains eating a healthy plate with grains, proteins, vegetables, fruits, and dairy. It is the replacement for USDA's Food Pyramid.

#### Resource 3

Upsilon Pi Chapter Surveys Doan, Europe — Vice President of Public Relations, Upsilon Pi Chapter Contact: Phone- (301)-922,6806, Email- [edoan3356@volmail.jalc.edu](mailto:edoan3356@volmail.jalc.edu) The surveys give parent/community view of the nutrition in schools.

#### Resource 4

Rudolph, Charles — JALC professor of English Contact: Phone- (618)-985-3741 Ext: 8769, Email- [charlesrudolf@jalc.edu](mailto:charlesrudolf@jalc.edu) Charles Rudolph discusses the chapter's research topic, aids them in finding where to research their topic, and gave valuable ways to organize research.

#### Resource 5

Cannon, Carl — Speaker at the Illinois Honors Institute, June 2013. Contact: Phone- (309)-589-5923 Email- [ccannon@peoriaparks.org](mailto:ccannon@peoriaparks.org) Carl Cannon discusses the importance of teaching children at a young age by going into classrooms to make a bigger impact. His focus is on helping children create better lives through his ELITE Youth Program.

#### Resource 6

Most, Paula — JALC nurse/nutritionist Contact: Phone- (618)-985-3741 Ext: 8702, Email- [paulamost@jalc.edu](mailto:paulamost@jalc.edu) Paula Most discussed feasible ways to conduct a plate waste study and introduced curriculums that taught nutrition alongside other subjects.

#### Resource 7

Nutrition and Schools by Carla Thomas McClure — Website: <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/nutrition-and-schools> Carla Thomas McClure gives examples why eating according to the USDA's MyPlate is important for children.

#### Resource 8

Waste Plate Study Doan, Europe — Vice President of Public Relations, Upsilon Pi Chapter Contact: Phone- (301)-922,6806, Email- [edoan3356@volmail.jalc.edu](mailto:edoan3356@volmail.jalc.edu) The study presents a view of reality that focused on what children are eating in school.

#### **What conclusions did your chapter reach based on your research and how did these conclusions guide you to select the action part of your project?**

We centered our research around Theme 6, Question 9. To begin we wanted to to understand each part of our question. To do this, we began researching the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) food guidelines and school lunch programs in our school district, as well as the food standards of parents and the community. The availability of the USDA's food guidelines allowed us to delve into the many different food standards set by the government. One of the chapter's members also gathered information from local public schools regarding their food program. We learned that the public schools are required to follow the USDA's guidelines in their food programs in order to receive funding. This means that the guidelines for the USDA are exactly what is used in school lunch programs. We also did some research that compared the USDA's previous standard, Food Pyramid, with their new standard, MyPlate. Our initial research of the USDA's MyPlate showed that eating according to its standards is crucial for a child's performance in school, prevention of type 2 diabetes, and prevention of obesity. Knowing the standards, we then set out to discover how these compared with what the children in our community were eating based on their parents' standards. By surveying parents in our community, we found that 47.9 % out of 117 parents were not satisfied what their children were eating while at school. Many parents claimed that their children simply would not eat the food provided for them because the lunch programs contain less salt, fat, and calories, which, whether healthy or not, discourage their children from eating their food due its lack of appeal or taste. Parents claimed that their children can go hungry throughout the day because at certain schools, the calories the children are receiving do not properly satisfy them for their busy days. Parents were especially upset because, for some kids, lunch at school is the only meal they will eat throughout the day. With this survey information, our chapter could clearly see that there was a huge competition for the way children were receiving their food. While the government and school food standards seek healthy meals for children, a good percentage of parents were not satisfied with their child's food intake at school because it did not match what they would feed their children. This disparity intrigued us. Once we researched how food standards compared with the parents in our community, we asked ourselves, "What is the reality of it all?" To help us answer this, we invited an English Professor, Charles Rudolph, from our college, JALC, to one of our

weekly meetings. He was impressed by how we compared the set USDA's food standards with parent's views. After meeting with him, we were able to regain focus of our project's research. We took his advice for our research by speaking with a nutritionist concerning our topic in hopes to find the reality of food standards. After meeting with Paula Most, a nutritionist on campus, we learned that schools value parent's concerns more, at times, than a nutritionist's opinion. We also learned that the best way to find the reality of a child's school lunch experience, was through conducting a plate waste study in schools. So the chapter conducted a basic plate-waste study focusing on 135 second graders at Carterville Elementary school. To conduct our study, we chose two food items that were being served: healthy orange slices, and not-so-healthy cookies. As each child threw away their trays, we tallied if they threw away all of, part of, or none of their orange slices, and we did the same for the cookies (students were not allowed to share or trade food). Through the study, we found that 59% of the children did not eat their orange, while only 29% of the children did not eat their cookie. We also found that 84% of students chose to drink strawberry or chocolate milk over milk or water. From our research, we concluded that the reality of food standards and parents views is that children are going to eat what they want regardless if they are given a healthy plate to eat or not. We then asked ourselves, "What can we do to help children choose to eat healthier both at school and at home?" We concluded that it would be irrational to attempt to change USDA and school standards to make food more appealing to children or try to change the way parents encouraged their children to eat. We then decided that the best way to get children to eat healthy was to educate them on the importance of nutrition and how to build a healthy plate. We went into the classroom to teach the students. This effort was inspired by Carl Cannon, a speaker at the Illinois Honors Institute Conference. Cannon runs a successful ELITE Youth Outreach program working with schools and children to create better lives. The conclusions of our research influenced our decision to create and conduct a presentation which encourages children to be excited about nutrition and to create their own healthy plates whenever they eat.

**Summarize your objectives for this Honors in Action project and the process by which the chapter set these objectives.**

Our objectives for research were based on our chosen theme's prompt, and are as follows: to gather information about the government standards of nutrition, determine what is actually nutritious, and what meals parents and the community think are nutritious. Our objectives for our action were established during an Honors in Action meeting in members reflected upon their research and collaborated together based on the research to create the goal for our nutrition presentation. The chapter decided upon the following goal: to teach the students what a healthy plate is according to the USDA's MyPlate standards, and to show the students how to make their own healthy plate.

**With whom did you collaborate for this Honors in Action project?**

Europe Doan and Ethan Edwards collaborated to make and distribute parent surveys during research. Upsilon Pi collaborated with the Carterville Illinois school district nutritionist, Jeannie Ellis, to do our plate waste study and presentation, and with Tri-C Elementary school teachers, Kim Swallers and Ashley Dixon, to give our presentation. Anna Buetow, Brandi Husch, Denetta Magruder, Ethan Edwards, Kristi Fleming and Europe Doan collaborated to give a presentation to two second grade classrooms.

**Describe the leadership of chapter members that contributed to the planning, preparations, and implementation of this Honors in Action project. The exercise of leadership may come from groups/committees, officers, and non-officers. Leadership roles are not necessarily those that come with "titles."**

Our chapter president, Anna Buetow, was head of our Honors in Action project. She led the meetings in which we decided on a topic, planned our researching meetings, decided on a process, and developed an action, etcetera. Brandi Husch, was the head of our Research Committee; she led research meetings, set up informational appointments with Paula Most and worked to keep our research on track. Members of the research committee, Ethan Edwards and Europe Doan, led the survey portion of our research by designing surveys, coordinating areas to distribute them, and collecting and analyzing the data received. Europe Doan led the plate waste study by coordinating with school district supervisors, nutritionists, and lunch-room supervisors for permission and to set up a time for our study. Europe Doan served as head of our Action Committee. She led action meetings; coordinated with school district supervisors, nutritionists, and second-grade teachers. Denetta Magruder and Brandi Husch were in charge of writing a script for our presentation, and Anna Buetow was in charge of designing the slide show for the presentation. Our presentation was divided into the five parts of MyPlate with an introduction and a coloring segment. Upsilon Pi members volunteered to lead each part as follows: Europe Doan introduced Upsilon Pi and gave an abstract of why we were with the students and what we hoped to accomplish, Kristi Fleming led the fruits portion, Anna Buetow led the vegetables portion, Denetta Magruder led the grains portion, Europe Doan led the protein portion, Ethan Edwards led the dairy portion, and Brandi Husch led the coloring portion.

**Describe leadership education and training activities taken to specifically help chapter members be more effective leaders for this Honors in Action project.**

The Chapter met with Charles Rudolph to gain insight on the research portion of our project. Mr. Rudolph helped us refocus our research, encouraged us to be creative, yet effective, with our research, and later helped us narrow down our project to something we could accomplish. Europe Doan met with Dr. Jane Bryant, a political science professor at JALC, to attain advice on gathering and analyzing the data collected from the surveys. She was very helpful with providing a software program designed for surveys and offering to help us with the use of the program.

**Describe the service or "action" components of this Honors in Action project that were inspired by your Honors Study Topic research. (Action can also include advocacy.)**

For our action, we created a 45 minute presentation that incorporated the five food groups associated with MyPlate—fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy. Each category was assigned to a different person on our Honors in Action committee to present. Our presentation included examples of foods in each category and the importance of eating the different foods. We gave our presentation to two second grade classes at Tri-C Elementary school, followed by giving each student an opportunity to color their very own MyPlate place mat, which we laminated and returned to them. We encouraged each student to color their placemat in a way that would remind them of the important things they had learned about nutrition. Upsilon Pi enjoyed watching the students color because they were creative as they represented what they learned.

**What were the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of your project, including the lessons learned by your chapter members and others?**

Forty-eight students at Tri-C Elementary school learned what to eat on a daily bases, and why they should eat those things. This will hopefully result in them being better students, healthier kids and eventually, healthier adults. One of the teachers, Ashley Dixon, said, "Over half the class still uses their place mat today which is awesome!" Our members grew as scholars and leaders throughout this project. They grew and developed their research skills as the project developed. Members learned how the school system works, how the USDA's food standards impact school lunches, and how strongly parents feel about what their kids eat at school. They also improved their leadership skills as they tackled how to conduct a presentation for a younger audience. Overall, members improved their ability to think critically and not take on more than what can be handled, but instead be creative in finding a way to make a big impact with the little time and resources that were available. All members of Upsilon Pi who attended our presentation had a great experience, and felt like they were making a difference. Ashley Dixon also said that, "Overall, I thought the presentation was wonderful and I believe my students learned a great deal about the food groups and healthy eating." One member, who had previously given little thought to the components of a healthy plate, now looks for each food group in every meal and values the importance of eating healthy. It was a very rewarding project and gave encouragement for projects to come.

**What is left undone or what opportunities remain for the future?**

Our chapter would like to continue this project by giving our presentation to more second grade classes at Tri-C Elementary and other schools. We could also do more consistent plate waste studies over a longer period of time. Since the school we studied was very interested in our results, other schools would probably be interested as well. We could also adapt our presentation so that it could be given to students of other grade levels. We could share our surveys with other schools so that they can benefit from the comments left by parents pertaining to the food schools are serving their kids.

**Chapter Advisor Certification**

Certifying the application should be the final step after all parts of the application are complete. The person responsible for certifying the application must log in to certify. Choose your name below and press "Save without submitting." A check box to affirm the statement below will appear. Check this box and click "Save without submitting." Once the application has been certified, edits can no longer be made unless the certification is un-checked. Once the application has been completed and certified, a "Submit All and Finish" button will appear to submit the final application.

**I certify that the award application is the work of our chapter's members and that only supervision and/or assistance was provided by chapter advisors, faculty members or alumni in the preparation of this award entry. The activities represented in this entry are, to the best of my knowledge, an accurate portrayal of the work the chapter has completed.**

Adrienne Barkley Giffin: Certified