

#1. Scholarship

One of the best ways that a chapter can spend their often limited financial resources is by investing in a recruitment scholarship. A scholarship for POTENTIAL MEMBERS that allows chapters to set clear standards, formally evaluate leads, and generate lots of candidates.

A great time to implement a scholarship like this is at the beginning of each academic term and especially during the summer months. Note, your scholarship applications will be limited to the amount of promotion you and your members do for it. Some great way to get individuals to apply are by promoting it on your social media, tabling, having members nominate people to apply, and physically handing out hundreds of paper scholarship applications. When promoting your scholarship, get started early and be sure to partner with your admissions office for better success. They may be able to help in promoting it, and even provide access to names of those already on scholarship or first year students who have already been awarded one should they end up attending your university. Ask about the opportunity to send information to prospective candidates through university mediums or if you can get access to a list of students yourself to reach out directly and set up interviews.

Scholarships don't have to be for a lot of money, setting aside \$250-\$1000, or even a smaller scholarship to be used specifically for books and living expenses. Either way, it is a great opportunity to give back, connect to new people, start a conversation and most importantly, show that your chapter holds academic success as a high priority.

#2. Civic Organization Referrals

If you're in a civic group, ask another group for help. Start by asking presidents in your community if two or three members from your chapter can stop by their next meeting. Ask the group the question, "What are the top qualities you want to see in the next generation of leaders?" After fielding responses, then ask "Who are the wo/men that are in the community who possess those qualities and are not already involved?" Do this with humility and gratitude, and you'll walk out of that meeting with PLENTY of new leads.

#3. “5 for 5” Challenge

Our members consistently pass up the opportunity to interact with young people in the community. The 5 for 5 Challenge asks 5 members to meet 5 non-involved wo/men on campus for 5 consecutive weekdays (done right, that’s 125 new names in 5 days!) Often a simple challenge with clear measurables is more effective than some gimmick or expensive event.

#4. Door Holding Campaign

This is one of the more creative ideas that we've seen. Think of the most trafficked places in your community – the Mexican restaurant, the city hall, the local bar. Now picture one of your members, sharply dressed, holding the door open for people and saying “have a nice day.” A few paces inside the building stands another sharply dressed member. They might ask something like “Did you notice the person that held the door open for you? We're trying to create the community culture we believe this city deserves -- we're spreading kindness, civility, and small acts of goodness. (Hands an index card and pen) Who are the wo/men you know in this community who share those beliefs? We would like to interview them for a scholarship/award, etc.” The Door Holding Campaign can be a great PR tool for your organization in addition to ADDING A BUNCH OF NAMES TO YOUR LIST.

#5. Mind Jogger

Of your entire membership, who is the most connected to people in the community? **YOUR NEWEST MEMBERS!** The Mind Joggers activity does more than just give them a pen and a piece of paper and ask the simple question, “Who are some wo/men that you know?” Instead, while your new members are thinking of “who are the non-involved that they know,” you provide specific examples to help jog their mind. “Who are the people that live in your neighborhood? Who is the person that you always see at the gym? Who is the most reliable person you know? Who are the three funniest people that you know? Who came to this community from your high school? etc.” Give your members 2 minutes to write down names without the Mind Joggers. Then put an additional two minutes on the clock, give them the specific examples, and watch how the names pile onto their list. In 4 minutes, you could add 100+ names.

#6. Rule of 3-to-7

There are barriers to joining civic organizations at every community in America. Some chapters are challenged because of a commuter-heavy community. Others have an overall lack of interest in getting involved. The great equalizer...? Meetings! Maximize this daily commitment and ace both your meetings and recruitment. Show up 3-to-7 minutes early. Sit in the first 3-to-7 rows (where research says the best place sit). Develop 3-to-7 relationships in each place. Put those names on the list!

#7. Partnering with Select Organizations

In every community, there are hundreds of other organizations. Smart chapters are creating partnerships with groups that have similar values. This partnership is mutually beneficial. Your chapter can provide resources like volunteers and connection to your system, and the student organization is allowing your members to be more visible and interact with the members inside the organization. Partner with service groups, academic societies, cultural associations, or cause-based organizations —match your values with their work for a perfect fit (and lots of qualified leads).

#8. Info Tabling with a Hook

Each year, every community hosts some variations of an “activities fair.” Organizations set-up tables all in a row, pass out fliers, and have surface level conversations. Or, there is an opportunity for orgs to set up tables in high traffic areas of the community. The goal of “tabling” should not be to pass out your information. It is to get their information. Create an experience that will encourage the person passing by to stop, engage with you and write down his/her name and the name of a few friends. Our favorite ideas? Check out the next several pages!

#9. Rock Paper Scissors Tabling

You want people who are walking by to be surprised, delighted, and willing to engage with you. They won't do that if you just put up a bunch of chapter paraphernalia and look cool. You have to do something fun! We've seen success when people simply put a poster board up on the table that says, "Rock Paper Scissors Challenge" at the top. Then the instructions read something like, "If you win, you get a high five and a piece of candy. If we win, we get 30 seconds of your time!" Then just step in front of passersby and challenge them to RPS! What's fun is that even if they win, they'll often ask, "Who are you all and what are you doing this for." And remember, if you win, be sure to engage them in a meaningful conversation not some cheap pitch about recruitment. Connect with them, gather their contact information, and set up a time to connect again soon.

#10. Predict the Score Tabling

Super Bowl coming up? Big homecoming game next week? March Madness happening soon? What about the women's Rugby team? Don't forget about the big rivalry game of the local NFL team!

Pick a game. Set up a system for passersby to guess the winner/score (or fill out that super important March Madness bracket!) Then offer a small prize for the winner. Make sure to collect people's names, email, and phone numbers so you can notify the winners!

#11. Tabling with a Raffle or Drawing

Super simple idea. Give away the hot new tech toy, raffle off tickets to the big event happening in the community or nearby. Do a drawing for a lunch with the Mayor. Get something autographed by someone famous, and raffle it off. Create a charity silent auction with lots of fun prizes that folks can “bid” on with tickets they buy at a set price. Whatever you do, make sure you have people write their name, contact information, and something fun about themselves on the entry form/ticket!

#12. Fun Question Tabling

We've seen chapters table with a big board where passersby can write down their favorite song lyric/movie quote and put their name next to it.

We've seen tabling done with a piece of posterboard with a line drawn down the middle -- on one side the heading says, "Give Up Music," on the other side the heading says, "Give Up Sports." Chapter members then ask passersby to put their name in the column they choose as the answer to, "Would you rather be forced to give up music for life or give up sports (watching and playing) for life?" Then ask why?

We've seen tabling done where people make a deck of 15 cards with powerful questions on each of them. Ask folks walking by to "pick a card." Then engage in a conversation about the question. Finish up with an offer to put their name on a list of people willing to engage in thoughtful dialogue at some upcoming coffee shop sessions.

#13. Non-Engaged Surveys

What if you and 10 of your most dependable members spent the next hour walking around town (or standing at a table) surveying non-engaged people about their perception of the community. Create a survey like this one and try to get 100 responses in the next hour!

What is your interest level in joining a civic group?

- a. Very High
- b. High
- c. Neutral
- d. Low
- e. Very Low

2. Which term best describes civic groups, in your opinion?

- a. Influential
- b. Meaningful
- c. Fun
- d. Helpful
- e. Other: _____

3. If there was an organization in the community about high moral development, human connection, leadership, and making a positive impact on the world, would you be interested in learning more?

- a. Yes

- c. No

#14. Sock Drive

The Sock Drive combines service and recruitment. After your chapter partners with the local homeless shelter, you go door-to-door in the neighborhood. Your pitch, “Our organization is collecting socks (substitute toiletries or canned goods) to donate to the local homeless shelter. Would you be willing to help those in need with an old pair of socks?” If the person donates, ask if they would like to help even more, by inviting them to a service event your chapter is hosting at the homeless shelter. Be sure to exchange contact information in order to GROW YOUR NAMES LIST.

#15. Move in/Move out Day

The concept of groups helping students move into their residence halls is not new. However, there are more effective ways to do it than swarming the student and his/her family, handing a business card and carrying a few boxes. The best practice is to send teams of two over to the residence halls, begin your interaction with “Hi, what can I help you with?” and be sure to exchange contact information rather than just handing over a business card/flyer. Also, while move-in days are commonplace, move-out days are an untapped market. You could be the only organization on your campus that helps first-year students move-out, building a relationship for the summer and the upcoming school year.

#16. Ask the Rest To Find The Best

Every person you interact with in the community is connected to literally hundreds of other people. If you want to find the best people on campus to be your members, start with asking everyone you see: "I'm trying to meet the best of the best men/women in the community, who should I know?"

Ask this question to:

Mayors

Chamber Directors

Business Owners

Managers

Desk workers

Administrators

The barista making your coffee

#17. Professor and Class Referrals

In a 1-on-1 conversation, ask professors or administrators for recommendations of men/women/students they consider to be leaders, scholars, and well-respected students. You'll be surprised at the number of amazing people you'll get information for that may have never considered joining an organization! The magic is in how you present your request. Here is a sample script:

“Dr. Jones, I am working with a group of community leaders to improve the quality of life in our community. We think we can change the behaviors and image of civic groups by improving the level of students we target for membership. We want a higher quality student. We're missing out on some of the best leaders on campus and good students are missing out on the resources that our organizations offer. Would you share with us the names of several of your top students, especially those who show signs of leadership? Also, may we make a 60 second announcement at the beginning of tomorrow's seminar to share this opportunity with others in our class?”

Sometimes, bringing a small piece of candy or other incentive will help the class open up!

#18. Alumni/Alumnae Referrals

An annual or semi-annual appeal to your alumni for recommendations of incoming citizens is often highly effective for established chapters. However, it may take several years to cultivate the alum list and/or train them to trust their referrals to the chapter. Once you've got a strong base of alums, recommendations typically pay off in the end. Be sure to invite them to other events within your chapter as well; don't only contact them for recruitment needs! Many inter/national organizations have alumni groups in large metropolitan areas, so if you're near one you should contact them for referrals as well.

The same thing should be done to family and friends of members of the chapter as well as family of members. And don't forget to put an easy to fill out form for alumni or parents to fill out right and suggest referrals on the homepage of your website! Remember to plan for proper follow up. People love receiving updates to let them know the status of their referral in the recruitment process. We love to feel that we made a difference. Let them know you are using their referrals and they will continue to provide you with names. A simple thank you note or appreciation letter will go a long way.

Example:

Dear _____,

Thank you so much for your recommendation to our chapter. We are so lucky to have dedicated alumnae/i such as you in our organization. Your opinion and insight for our chapter is extremely beneficial and we hope you continue to support ABC. We will let you know our recruitment success soon!

Thanks again

#19. Past Recruitment Lists

Contact your communities local chamber or your city council. They should have the lists from the past years of people that have served on boards available for you. Ask for a copy of the list. Make an effort to contact these people and see if they are still interested in joining an organization and making a difference.

When meeting with them, do not push your organization on to them. Ask them why they aren't currently involved, and then proceed accordingly.

Keep inviting these students to other small activities and meetings with you and your chapter members so that they continue getting comfortable with the process and other members of your chapter!

#20. Haters

Do you have anti-involvement people on your community? Yes, of course you do! Did you know that they can be one of the best groups to from which to get referrals? As long as you don't bombard them with twenty of your members, things should go well.

Here's a sample of what to say:

"I know you aren't really a fan of the civic groups here. I'm embarrassed sometimes by what has been done, but I also know what we could be if we had the right people to lead us to a better future. I'm sure you can relate to values like truth, friendship, and service to the community, right? Well, that's what we're supposed to be about, and I'm working on creating that reality within at least one chapter here. Can you think of anyone who might be interested in talking with me about how to change the image of leaders in this community? I'd love to talk with them."

In talking with these people, you may gain a new perspective on why people aren't too fond of your organization. You may even find a new member out of it. Talking through issues and truly listening to people can make a huge difference.

#21. On-Line Referrals

If someone is interested in civic organizations, it should be RIDICULOUSLY SIMPLE for them to a) learn more and b) indicate their interest by signing up somewhere.

However, most community groups websites, most inter/national headquarters websites, most chapter websites, and most organizations social media feeds make it virtually impossible to effectively do either of these things.

We're not really in the "website design" business, but we often find ourselves helping communities simplify user experience for prospective members hoping to learn more. Marketing, after all, isn't just designing flashy stuff — sometimes it's about SIMPLIFYING. In fact, often it is about simplifying.

On your website and in your social media profiles, is it simple for someone who might be interested in learning about your organization to a) learn exactly what steps they should take next, and b) actually give you their name, contact information, and a little info about themselves?

#22. Rebuild A Community Group

Most communities have hundreds of organizations. Many of these groups are on the brink of extinction because they lack the membership and/or leadership to sustain themselves.

This is an opportunity for your chapter to step in and revive an organization by plugging in several of its own members. In addition to the service you are providing to this group, you are creating a pipeline for membership into your group's community. Every eligible person that joins the group is added to your Names List.

Often, people who would never consider being part of a civic organization will join these other groups. They meet several of the members and build a friendship. That friendship often develops into interest in the organization!

#23. Resource Center

A great way to serve the community and gather names of potential new members is to run a resource center in the community. Consider working with your Mayor to create a resource center that meets the needs of individuals on campus (especially people your organization is directly targeting for membership). Maybe you could set up shop (table, booth, or office) with educational materials and networking resources for one of the following needs of students:

Men's/Women's Health Needs

Community Involvement Clearinghouse

Environmental Conservation Information and Opportunities

Campus Social Scene (What's Going On When?)

Book Exchange

Marginalized Population Support

Transfer Students

International Students

Etc.

#24. 100% Community Involvement Policy

A requirement of membership should include leadership in at least one other organization outside of your civic organization. Not only does this help to instill a valuable trait in your members, but it also helps you to meet other leaders who aren't yet involved in your civic organization! In order to continue developing the leadership skills in the members of your chapter, 100% of your membership should be involved in another group.

In addition to being known as the chapter that campus leaders join, you will have access to dozens of organizations' meetings and rosters. Use this information to build your names list.

Bonus Tip:

To help keep this focused and "results producing," identify up to 20 groups that typically attract the highest caliber people in your community. You might consider making membership in at least 1 of these groups mandatory for your members and new members.

#25. In the Community Service

Member positioning is really about putting your members in positions of access to and influence over prospective members. There are position in the community where you can do these things!

A great standard to have is that a minimum of 20% of the chapter members should intentionally be involved as a leader with service opportunities. Not only does this add names to your names list, but it gives them exposure to other parts of the community.

#26. Shadowing

Many colleges offer opportunities for students to spend a day or two off campus “shadowing” a professional. This gives the potential member a better idea of what a day in the life of a young professional in your community is actually like. You let them see where you live, meet your friends, go to meetings with you, eat together in the community, etc.

Spring is the most popular time of the year for these visits. Get as many of your members as possible involved in these “shadowing” opportunities. Of course, this is not a time to hassle prospects or push your organization onto them – use this opportunity to explain the benefits of being involved in the community and answer any questions they may have.

Members of your chapter are already role models for other students on campus, so encourage your members to step up and be a friendly face and future role model to your future community members.

#27. Chunking

During small activities and 1-on-1 meetings (coffee is awesome for this with potential new members), it's ideal to close by asking them to share names and numbers of the people in their social network that they consider top notch. We always want to be growing our social network and building our names list.

Ideally, you want to get 3-5+ additional names of more potential members at a meeting or up to 10+ from someone that's showing a high level of interest. Every new relationship is a gatekeeper to dozens of potential new members!

It can be a little awkward to ask someone having coffee with you to write down 10 names and numbers of their friends. So, we use a technique called "chunking" along with a series of intentional questions to make sure they feel great about recommending their friends. Chunking is the process of getting to a lot of referrals by asking several times in the same sitting for smaller 'chunks' of leads.

Start by asking the potential if they'd be comfortable sharing the names of two or three other individuals who they consider the "best of the best." After they share these names, continue asking them to think of two more people who are similar to the person they just named. Finally before you end the conversation, see if they can name 3-5 more high caliber qualified leaders.

Ask permission from the potential to get their contact information and set up new small activities. Repeat the process with each new prospective member you meet and continue chunking and adding new leads to your names list!

#28. Scouting

Top corporations and sports teams do not wait for their best players to call them. They actively scout talent in their sector and approach talented individuals to help lead their team. Championship teams are never built from a signup sheet. The same is true of top organizations. Do you have a scouting report that lists the top leaders, scholars, and volunteers in your community?

Encourage your leaders to create a “scouting report” of these top unaffiliated people and do your best to maintain communication that allows them to get to know members of your chapter by building new friendships. This is NOT an opportunity for pressuring people into joining, but is instead a way to intentionally recruit the best people into the overall community involvement experience!

#29. Hunting For Names (a game!)

This game is a hunt for one thing and one thing only.... NAMES! Grow your names list with a multi-day or recruitment workshop challenge for your members. Attach a prize to the end, and just like that you've got a fun way to grow your names list and teach your members how to have a casual, fun conversation at the same time!

Gather names and contact information of non-affiliated qualified people on or around the community by fulfilling as many of these challenges as possible. Use the challenges to start deeper, friendly conversations, then record whom you had these conversations with...

Talk to 1 person about how heavy their bag looks

Talk to 2 people about the smell in here

Talk to 3 people about the weather this week

Ask 1 person where they got their shoes

Ask 2 people how long they've been waiting here

Ask 3 people why the Turkey isn't the national bird

High Five 1 person because of your good meeting

High Five 2 people because you both love a certain show

High Five 3 people because of their hard work

The content of your hunt doesn't really matter (I mean, don't be dumb though) — as long as you're using it as an opportunity/excuse to go out and interact with new people. These ridiculous challenges offer an opportunity to start a conversation with someone you just met — which then gives you a chance to add their name to your names list — which then gives you a chance to recruit them.

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Obviously don't force anyone to do this, or even come close to doing that. This is meant to be a fun way for the whole organization to make meeting new people a bit

#30. The Perfect Recruitment Shirt

If you believe in the recruitment principles taught by Phired Up, you know that your first task should be to MEET as many of those people in your target audience as possible, because you can't recruit who you don't know.

We all know how important t-shirts are to members. Imagine a recruitment t-shirt that made it easier for your members to meet stranger. Now, imagine this simple design...

Bright colored shirt (red, yellow, orange, pink, anything neon) Your logo at the bottom Really big, in block letters, on the front and back, these words...

"I CAN HELP!"

Since you and your members are involved, knowledgeable, older community members who would like to be as helpful as possible to people... BE HELPFUL! Be the organization that chooses to truly provide service to your community by being the unofficial community tour guides, information centers, inside-information-sources, social network builders. But whatever you do, actually be helpful.

Wear these t-shirts and go up to everyone you see in the community all day long and say, "Can I help with anything? I'd love to recommend some organizations for you to be a part of, what would you like to get out of your community experience?"

Meet them. Exchange contact information. Grow your names list!

#31. Service and Philanthropy Projects

Set up a marketing effort announcing the event as an open opportunity for community service. Involving non-members will help improve your image and serve as a strong recruitment tool for a different type of potential member. Ask people to sign up to help while at a table strategically placed in the community, or just by wandering around and engaging with people (add those names to the list!)

It's not critical to have a blow out service project, but cleaning the highway isn't typically an appealing proposition. If you're having trouble being creative or organizing the event, you may want to consider partnering with another group or service organization that needs more people to power their event.

Examples of things you can do include:

Community clean up

Clothing drive for a local shelter

Food drive for a local food bank

Reading to children at a nearby school

Volunteering at a local animal shelter

Cleaning up a local park

Helping at a run/walk

Volunteering at a fundraising opportunity

#32. The Listening Table

Set up a table in the community. Instead of filling it with organizational paraphernalia, bring a simple sign that says: “I’m here to listen”. The sign could also say something like “What is wrong with life in the community?” or “What changes would you like to see happen to make our community a better place?” or “Comment Box”.

As curious people approach your table, let them know that you’re there to listen. Engage in deep, meaningful, authentic conversation with your peers and listen to what they have to say. Don’t provide your own opinions. Learn from others. Ask more questions.

Imagine what would happen if setting up a booth or doing marketing work wasn’t meant to SHOUT OUT HOW AWESOME YOUR ORGANIZATION IS... Imagine if it was all about just offering to listen.

Listen to others’ opinions of you and your group. Listen to others’ ideas for your organization. Listen to others’ ideas about your community. Listen to learn. Listen to engage. Listen to connect with others. Listen because it will make the other person’s day. Be genuine.

This process will help you get to know people better in the community and can also create an opportunity for you to follow up with the individual at a later date. Trust us, there probably won’t be too many other tables like this one in your community.

#33. Parent Solicitations

Honors & Recognitions:

Mom and dad love to brag about their child and nominate them for special awards. Your chapter or council can host a special recognition for top leaders. A solicitation to parents can be created that requires an on-line nomination by a friend or family member. In addition to sharing some positive information about the organization, you're capturing personal contact information and pre-qualifying data about their child like their leadership experience.

Fundraiser:

You could also consider partnering with a local sandwich shop or bakery to offer care packages during the holidays. Mail a letter to alumni a few weeks before the exam period with a special form that allows mom and dad to send both a care package and a note of encouragement. Your chapter can then deliver the packages while making new friends and a few extra bucks at the same time!

#34. Referrals from High School Teachers & Counselors

You've probably got some great relationships with past teachers, guidance counselors, or administrators from your high school. They already know who is staying in your community this/next year, and if you ask the right way they might let you in on that important information. Then you can call those students from your local high school to welcome them to post high school world. Consider asking your past high school connections something like this:

“Mr. Johnson, I really appreciated all the guidance and support you gave me as I was making the transition from high school. I don't know if you have heard, but things are going great and I've really found a way to stay focused on the community but also really enhance my leadership responsibilities – through my organization. Are there any students from our school graduating and staying around next year? I'd love to show them how to get involved.”

#35. Presentation to Community Organizations

Reach out to the leaders of clubs and organizations focused on specific interests. Many of these will give you access to people that never considered your organization.

Ask to visit a group meeting to make a presentation regarding community involvement and leadership.

Example:

“We are interested in changing the image of our organization in the community. We believe in the specific skill sets and interests that your group represents. We can probably both agree that there are some improvements that we can make in the community. In order to change the way organizations are seen, we must consider people who have never been interested in the experience. If you could handpick the members, who would you feel most comfortable leading an organization in the community? Who should be leading this community? (Passing out note cards) Would each of you take a moment and write down the names of 5 wo/men who you would feel comfortable leading an organization in this community?”

BONUS: Meet with the group’s leaders for coffee before the presentation. You’ll get a warmer reception and get better results.

#36. Handshaking Through the Town

After you've recruited some new people, go over to their neighborhoods for a visit, and say...

"Jordan (that's the new member/recruit), I'd like to meet the best of the best people in this community so that I can make sure they all have the opportunity to at least consider our organization. More importantly, I'd like to learn from their perspective about how the best of the best people in this community would revolutionize our organization if they had the chance. I don't know nearly enough people in this neighborhood. Could you introduce me to the top 5-10 folks you've met so far in this neighborhood? I'm looking for the 5-10 people with the most potential for leadership, excellence, and influence. Let's go..."

Jordan introduces you to one of them

"I'm Casey, what's your name? Nice to meet you. Jordan says that you're someone I should know, isn't that right, Jordan?"

What are you doing right now? Do you have 5 minutes to chat? Can I come in / Want to sit down?

I asked Jordan to introduce me to people in this neighborhood that seemed like they might have some potential for doing great things while they're living here. He already introduced me to Taylor and Jaime down the hall. Do you know them? What do you think of them?

Cool. Listen, I'm looking to learn from the best of the best people in this community. I really believe in the power of leadership, and I'm a part of a number of organizations. I want to know what students like you want out of their community experience. I want to know what this community needs to offer to make your time here incredible. Would you be open to me buying you a cup of coffee this week so that we could chat for 20 minutes or so?

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What morning works best for you, Monday or Tuesday? Perfect, can I get your number in case something weird happens and I need to call you? Thanks, here's my

#37. High school / College Visits

Typically there are days at the end of the year that teachers can fill with activities that tie to the curriculum, reach out to local teachers and see if you can talk to students about to graduate about how to be an engaged part of your community. Some high schools and colleges require a certain number of volunteer hours to graduate, be sure to offer the students to events you are having that can help them meet those requirements during their summer break.

#38. Pick-Up Sports

Often, less planning is better when it comes to meeting new people. Maybe your chapter plays pick-up games of football, basketball, volleyball, ultimate Frisbee, or something similar. Instead of just playing with members, simply head out and see how many prospects you can gather just before the game is about to start. It doesn't seem "recruitment-y" and is just a fun way to get to know people. Make a schedule of "spontaneous" pick-up sports games, and play the sports near the places where your prospective members live or hang out.

#39. Niche Targeted Marketing

Many organizations have a niche market that they are able to focus on and offer a special benefit for membership. Perhaps you're a part of an organization focused on engineering or agriculture. Maybe your organization celebrates a particular culture or heritage. Perhaps you're focused on music or business, or science, etc.

If your organization has a natural niche, be sure to leverage it to the fullest. Build relationships with similarly aligned organizations or clubs (don't forget about high school level related organizations). Hold events focused on your target "niche" audience (remember to serve them first, don't just show up to promote your organization).

If your chapter does not have a niche, you may choose to create one. For example: International members, people from out of state, people interested in a particular career path, people focused on social justice initiatives, people interested in certain political causes or affiliations, etc.

Be about something! The people who are about that thing too will come flocking to you!

#40. Open Entertainment

Most people think that “open entertainment” has to mean a big party, big band, and/or big barbeque. They might also be thinking big expense and big time commitment. None of these have to be true.

Find a creative need that you can fill with the organizational power of your chapter to offer something of value to your community. Some examples might include:

- Yard Games
- Spa-Like Treatments
- Sports Tournaments
- Drive-in movie: Renting/moving furniture into the lawn and projecting the latest movie onto the side of your house.
- Gaming tournament

The important part is not the activity itself, but rather the opportunity it affords the chapter to capture new names for the list and build new friendships at the event. Don't forget to require an RSVP, register attendees, and/or use a sign in sheet.

#41. Top 20 Lunches & Coffees With Influencers

Who are the 20 most influential people in your community that you don't yet know well? Think of the people in positions to influence opinion about your chapter.

Write those names/positions down.

Now, one of the most important things you can do to improve the reputation of your chapters is to reach out to them to invite them to coffee or lunch with you and one or two other chapter members.

While you're there... ask for referrals! Aim for 5 from each influencer. That would get you 100 new names from the most influential people in your community!

This tactic does two things. It grows your names list, obviously. But just as importantly, we know that reputation is earned through relationships. Building trusting relationships with these key influencers can help your chapter and you become more connected, more successful, and more respected.

#42. Snow Day Recruitment

When it's cold outside you have two obvious opportunities, bring people together for indoor activities. Or, exploit the weather. Either way, be the person that creates social opportunities that bring new friends together. It might be time to get creative.

Snow ball fights, ice skating (in parking lot?), snow fort competition, creative sled riding, cold pranks, bonfire, hot tub, winter campus Olympics, and warm beverages. Ever wonder how many organization t-shirts one person can fit into? Is human bowling possible? What is the world record for launching a snowball? Why do we stop caroling in December?

Take the snow day to change your community, meet unaffiliated people, and grow your names list by participating in fun snow-themed activities with your new friends!

For those that are more relationship-minded, remember that your snow day is an unexpected gift for local officials, too. How many points would you score by taking an assortment of hot chocolates to your City Council, another organization, or the Mayor and his/her spouse?

By cultivating these relationships, you could also gain access to new referrals and attract new names to your names list.

#43. Crossword Puzzle Help

We once worked with a recruiter who was famous for sitting in a coffee shop with a crossword puzzle. Every few minutes he asks someone walking past, “hey I’ve got a random question ... can you help me with 47 across?” This icebreaker gives him a reason to learn more about that person and gather referrals of top students he/she knows in the community.

#44. High School / College Pipelines

Once your new member are settled in, you'll probably plan to get referrals from them right away to meet their current friends. Let's see if you're willing to take it a step further.

Have each new member build a list of at least 15 students they know who are still in high school or college, and are looking to move/stay in the community next year. This can include high school seniors or community college students. Hold a calling/texting session. Reach out to each contact, and invite them to hang out one weekend. Invite them to an event. Be a great host. Your chapter is an ambassador for your community.

#45. Purposeful Summer Retreat

Many chapters have summer retreats to get together and enjoy some fellowship over the summer months. But imagine if you had a “leadership retreat” that was simply a way to prepare people to serve as great leaders in the upcoming year. Hold it at a campground or a member’s cabin to keep costs down – or even on a campus. Also consider a “service retreat,” a “networking retreat,” or a “spiritual retreat” depending on the priorities of your members.

#46. Community Partnership Opportunities

The community hosts activities throughout the year. Create a partnership opportunity to tap into one that already exists.

- Beer Pouring
- Table Setup
- Planning Meetings
- Wristbands Distribution

Though it may not be possible to promote your chapter at many of these community sponsored events, it's certainly encouraged to build friendships and network with new people who live there. Let your face be the first one those people associate with being a "friend" in the community. You may also have an opportunity to invite him to an organization-sponsored activity during your conversation (if appropriate).

#47. Incoming Student Shadowing

Many colleges offer opportunities for students to spend a day or two off campus “shadowing” a professional. This gives the potential member a better idea of what a day in the life of a young professional in your community is actually like. You let them see where you live, meet your friends, go to meetings with you, eat together in the community, etc.

Spring is the most popular time of the year for these visits. Get as many of your members as possible involved in these “shadowing” opportunities. Of course, this is not a time to hassle prospects or push your organization onto them – use this opportunity to explain the benefits of being involved in the community and answer any questions they may have.

Members of your chapter are already role models for other students on campus, so encourage your members to step up and be a friendly face and future role model to your future community members.

#48. Social Media Connections

There are about a million ways to utilize social media to drive names onto your list. And they change every few months, it seems. Here are some basic ideas to consider to use social media for more than just showing off cool pictures of your members' summer vacations.

PAID ADS

Purchasing advertisements on social media platforms is a smart and useful use of your money if those ads direct people to connect with you and give you their contact information. Use smart inbound marketing techniques that result in names on your list (hint: aim all interactions at a landing page that collects contact information)

SCOURING FOR CONNECTIONS

Nothing wrong with spending some time looking through individuals who have self identified as community members. Learn about them, connect with them if appropriate, offer to be helpful in their lives. Don't be creepy, but do be smart enough to realize that they're begging for connection in the communities.

SEEK REFERRALS

Share the fact that you're seeking to connect with "the best of the best" people through your chapter and personal social media feeds. Make clear who you're seeking and don't just post publicly, ask individuals and leaders of other organizations privately through social media for those connections too.

COMMENT

See a current or prospective member posting some strong content? Let them know. Give them some social media love in genuine ways so that they know they're being noticed. Invite further conversation in your comments.

#49. Targeted Community Programs

Are you the “leadership” organization? Are you the “service” organization, the “diversity” organization, or “some other” organization? If you want to create your own brand like that, consider hosting community-wide programs that are specific to your particular values.

What program can you put on for the community (and maybe don’t attach your name to it) that will attract the type of person you want?

Hold a leadership program with the dean of the business school. Hold a community service program with a group of volunteers from a nearby non-profit. Hold a women’s empowerment program featuring local business leaders, life-changing moms, young entrepreneurs, and others. Host a spiritual group with local religious leaders. You get the idea.

#50. Positive Absurdity

There are times during the year when it is hard to get people to talk with you. When they have their heads down as they walk through town is an example of when doing something absurd (but positive) to get noticed might make sense.

- Utilize the bold members of your chapter
- Don't buy pizzas and have a meeting in a meeting room. Buy pizzas and hand out free slices in exchange for a good conversation.
- Don't hang up fliers on bulletin boards. Ask people if you can tape fliers to their backs for a day (and shake their hands).
- Don't write about your organization with chalk on the sidewalk. Have a "chalk art" competition one day between classes and challenge people to color in the lines (don't forget the sign-up sheet).
- Don't say "I'll meet some people in my building." Give high fives to everyone who walks into your office today. Do that with a high five buddy.
- Don't have an info meeting about your organization. Quietly arrange a secret meeting by personal invite only... with a secret password to get in.

#51. Free Text Books

Every semester, nearly every student (especially first year students) will stand in line at the bookstore and spend too much money on textbooks. Partner with the bookstore by hosting a raffle.

“Put your name, phone number, email on the back of your receipt. Drop it in the fish bowl at the counter. One lucky winner will have their receipt reimbursed by organization as a ‘thank you and welcome’ to campus.”

Approach parents as well – there’s no way a Mom or Dad will pass up a free book scholarship raffle after dropping \$600+ in an afternoon. Now you have their digits and a reason to call them with a “welcome to community” message.

If your chapter can’t afford the \$600+ receipt reimbursement, try offering a flat \$100 - \$250 book scholarship.

#52. Organize Community Forums

Many people have ideas on how to improve their communities, but don't have forum to express them. Host regular sessions to allow people to provide input to topics that impact them. Be sure to see if they know anyone that would interested in helping to address any issues as well.

#53. Event Tickets

Several chapters successfully partner with their school's athletic teams, local sports teams (e.g. minor league baseball), community events (e.g. chili cook off or community days), concert venues, gaming centers, religious institutions, career fairs, etc.

Many times bulk tickets are given away to organizations willing to help promote the event. The chapter is able to create a buzz about the event and rally students to attend. The RSVP's are added to the chapter's names list. The chapter gets valuable exposure and positive PR. The event itself becomes an opportunity to meet new people and highlight how your organization supports the school and/or local community.

Bonus: Be the chapter that organizes the carpool to "Away" college sports games!

#54. The Other 22 Hours

On most organizations, “recruitment” consists of a of 2-hour events that take place from 7-9 p.m. If your organization has something similar, be sure to make the most of those events... But what are you doing for the other 22 hours of each of those days?

The work you do TO GET PEOPLE TO THE EVENTS matters far more than the events themselves. Build a plan to maximize the hours of 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (those daytime hours outside of the event time) to put names on your names list, and invite potential members to your Events.

Walk through downtown businesses.

Go through the dining areas asking people if they want to join you.

Put a sign around your neck and walk through town letting people know what’s going on.

Go find all friends and ask them personally to bring their 10 favorite people with them.

The work you do TO GET PEOPLE TO THE EVENTS matters far more than the events themselves.

#55. “Exploring The Jaycees” Wristbands

Provide the little rubber “cause” wristbands to everyone who signs up for volunteer opportunities. Let them know that they should wear these wristbands during the day so that members can easily identify them and strike up conversations.

Bonus Tip: Provide each person who signs up to help with 5 additional wristbands. Attach a small information sheet to each of the 5 additional wristbands that tells other people how to sign up to help. Tell the potential members that it is their responsibility to hand these extra 5 wristbands out to 5 of their friends.

#56. “Missed Recruitment” or “Sneak Peak”

Think about a 3-5 day period called “Recruitment Sneak Peek.” Offer a preview opportunity for people considering membership in your organization.

Perhaps it includes highly visible marketing activities. Perhaps it includes a targeted push to get Local Government Leaders, Business Leaders, Cultural Organization Leaders, and other people in positions of influence to have lunches with your members.

No matter the details, make sure to create opportunities like this to gather names, start forging relationships, and driving interest in your organization (and show interest in non-members). It doesn’t require a lot of planning. You don’t have to wait for your organization’s governing council to make it happen. It just requires effort. Go.

#57. Advocacy

Are you and your members passionate about making the world a better place in some way? Use that energy to build your names list.

Instead of “showing off your brand” or asking people, “are you interested in our organization?” Approach people who want to change the world with you in the same way. Ask them to help. Ask them to protest, to write letters, to do fundraising, to sign petitions, to march with you.

Whatever your cause, lead with it. It’s more authentic to “recruit” people to help you change the world than it is to “recruit” members and hope that they’ll help.

#58. Make It Easy To Sign Up

Is it simple for someone in your community (or who might be interested in learning about your organization) to a) learn exactly what steps they should take next, and b) actually give you their name, contact information, and a little info about themselves?

Probably not.

Your website, your social media profiles, all of your marketing materials... pretty much everything... should point people to a super easy to find form on a website where they can tell you about themselves and indicate their interest (and suggest referrals).

This is often the most obvious overlooked strategy in the world!

#59. Make It Easy To Sign up

Imagine your chapter displays posters, buys a billboard, rents space on the screens in the chamber, buys newspaper ads, chinks the sidewalk, etc. But this time you're not just trying to "get your name out there." You're trying to get contact information of non-Greek students.

Example:

Which Local Is Changing the Most Lives?

"Text Your Full Name, Any Orgs You Belong To, and Your Vote To: 555-555-5555"

Or make it a game. Or make it a quiz. Or make it a raffle. You get the idea.

#60. Text for...Something

Imagine your chapter displays posters, buys a billboard, rents space on the screens in the chamber, buys newspaper ads, chinks the sidewalk, etc. But this time you're not just trying to "get your name out there." You're trying to get contact information of non-Greek students.

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