The National Emerging Leadership Summits: Analyses of Data from Four Years of Conference Participants

Samantha Paider¹, Joshua Bagley², Robert Burke, Ph.D.², Douglas Olson, Ph.D.¹, and Kevin Hansen, J.D.¹

¹University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, ²The George Washington University

Introduction and Background

• By 2050, the number of Americans aged 65 and older is projected to nearly double to 83.7 million. ¹ About 40% of nursing home administrators (NHA) are 55 and older, and 32% of NHAs are expected to retire in the next 10 years. ² The past years of National Emerging Leadership Summit for Healthcare Administrators in Health and Aging Services (NELS) participants have defined challenges for the NHA profession, including recruitment and perception issues, due to low pay and low prestige.

• NELS is an annual gathering of emerging leaders in the field of health and aging services administration to engage in discussions of current best practices, meet with representatives of key professional organizations, gain an inside perspective on the legislative process, and explore solutions for attracting and retaining new and evolving leaders.

• The first NELS cohort in 2010 built the foundation for all NELS participants by identifying four thematic areas which have evolved throughout the five-year life of NELS.

Purpose

• Strategize: Collaborate with other Generation X and Y leaders in the post-acute and long term care and services field to develop strategies on how to increase, improve, and support the value of the profession for executives to attract and retain talent.

• Advocate: Learn about regulatory and legislative issues facing the profession and support innovative change. Professionals Leading Passionate Innovation engage with fellow emerging leaders to strategize, advocate, connect, and innovate the future of the health care and aging services administration profession.

• Connect: Unite with fellow Generation X and Y Leaders. Network with key leaders of NAB, AHCA, AHA, LeadingAge, and the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging.

• Innovate: Gain knowledge on how to effectively lead an organization and the profession through shared learning experiences.

Methods

• Since 2011, four white papers have been published annually by industry and academic experts summarizing the proceedings of each conference.

• These white papers were analyzed and compared to establish common themes and goals. Survey data from each NELS summit (N = 110) were analyzed by students and faculty members at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and The George Washington University.

Summary of Results and Trends

• Satisfaction: 85% of attendees feel satisfied or very satisfied with their job.

• Work hours: NELS participants work between 31-75 hours per week, with the average being 46-55 hours per week.

• Community involvement: Nearly 100% of NELS participants feel contributions to their surrounding communities are important or very important.

• Education: Roughly 30% of attendees have at least a master’s degree.

• Association involvement: Nearly 90% of NELS participants are involved in associations.

References:
¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2014; ² Healthcare Workforce Data Center, 2015

Contact information: Douglas Olson, Health Care Administration Program, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire. (715) 836-5067. olsondou@uwec.edu

Preliminary Conclusions and Follow-up

The profession needs to be informed by emerging leaders’ views:

• Early job and educational experiences draw people to the profession

• High need for professional development and people contact

• Focus on a caring environment and the community connections

• Relationship between the need for a variety of tasks and challenging work climate

• Concern about lack of prestige and awareness of the profession

Major themes reported by individuals in post-Summit assessments:

• Expanded involvement in association activities (e.g., AHCA, AHA, and LeadingAge)

• Reached out beyond their facility to the community to a greater degree

• Explored connections with new partners (e.g., universities)

• Felt like they were making a bigger difference in the profession (e.g., NAB)

• Experienced advancements and new opportunities within their present company

• Reported efforts to work on each of the current NELS initiatives

All of the above-listed areas represent opportunities for NELS, in partnership with other entities, to advance the NHA profession.

NELS Recommendations Over the Years

• Supporting the health services executive (HSE) initiative currently being advanced by NAB

• Increasing awareness and improving perception of the NHA profession

• Sustaining NELS cohorts by reconvening no less than annually in order to continue ongoing accomplishment of NELS initiatives

• Reducing barriers for entry into the profession and improving recruiting efforts

• Enhancing community outreach and publicity

• Promoting accountability of participants and the marketability of NELS Summits

* White papers from each Summit and legislative reports are available for each of the respective cohorts over the years.

Focus for 2015 NELS Summit

The Central Theme for the 2015 National Emerging Leadership Summit is “Reaching Beyond our Field to Enhance the Image of the Profession.” The 2015 NELS Summit will be held July 21 – 23, 2015 at George Washington University. Program and registration information is available at the NELS website: http://go.gwu.edu/OWNELS