Campus club wins national honor for promoting public health

Sacramento State’s Public Health Club (PHC) topped all national entries in the Instagram “This Is Public Health” photo contest sponsored by the Association for Schools and Programs of Public Health. The competition was held by the Washington, D.C.-based organization to promote “National Public Health Week 2014.”

Club members prowled the campus April 7-11 photographing Herky the Hornet at different locales proudly displaying a “This Is Public Health” red sticker. The pictures were posted on Instagram as often as 30 times each day proclaiming Herky’s commitment to promoting the importance of public health.

Although the PHC is composed primarily of health science students from the Kinesiology Health Science Department within the College of Health and Human Services, all academic majors are welcome. The nonprofit student organization was created in 1991 to make people aware of the importance of personal and community health. This is the club’s first foray in a national contest.

President Teresa Sosa is keenly aware of public health’s importance, having worked at a nonprofit in Manhattan helping those living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. Sosa, who came to California several years ago, is on track to get her bachelor’s degree in health science next spring.

Kinesiology Professor Patty Woodward, the club’s advisor, says Sac State has one of the state’s best health science programs. She came to the University in 2003 specifically to teach and is impressed by the students’ willingness to help others.

PHC members recently volunteered at the St. John’s Program for Real Change “Simply Mad for Tea,” which is the program’s primary fundraiser in support of homeless mothers with children. In December, club members collaborated with health science Professor Heather Diaz and kinesiology Professor David Mandeville to raise 2,000-plus pounds of groceries for the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services.

Last semester the students volunteered for an event sponsored by My Sister’s House, a local safe haven for Asian and Pacific Islander women and their children endangered by domestic violence. PHC also raises money for the American Cancer
Society’s research for breast cancer, and club members help decorate Shriners Hospital during the Christmas season.

These and other activities give Sac State students hands-on experience in the health science field and provide an incalculable human dimension. Winning a national award this year only enhances the PHC’s core mission of creating greater community awareness of public health issues.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Alan Miller

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