Benefits To Learning About Baldrige and the Applications To Quality of Care

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INTRODUCTION
The ACHA/NCAL Quality Award recognizes U.S. organizations for performance excellence in post-acute and long-term care. The award includes 3 levels: gold, silver, and bronze. Students entering the health care field are taught about the relevance of credentialing but are often unaware of specific accreditation opportunities in health care such as the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award.

Within the Health Care Administration program at University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, the Baldrige Criteria is taught in class and built into a high impact practice where students collaborate with AHCA/NCAL scoring teams to review applications for the AHCA/Quality Award.

RATIONALE
This project aims to assess the benefits of including content focused on the Baldrige Criteria in a health care class.

METHODOLOGY
Following training by Cathy Bergland, an ACHA/NCAL quality award trainer on how to review Baldrige award applications, in a health care administration course that is required for juniors in enrolled in the program, students completed a month-long project interacting with a sample application. Surveys were administered to students in enrolled in the Quality Management class to gauge the success of the education specific to the Baldridge accreditation.

STUDENT SURVEYS
Surveys were administered to students enrolled in the Fall 2022 HCAD 301 course.
- Response rate: 84%
- Responses to the questions were compiled into the graphs that follow.
- In addition, in the Summer of 2022, previous Quality Award student examiners were asked to share their experiences via short testimonials.

RESULTS
A further understanding of the Baldrige criteria has shown to have many benefits for health care administration students in preparing for residency/internships as well as future career of health care students.

In addition, qualitative examples via quotes provide insight into the benefits of Quality Award silver examiner team provides to their careers.

CONCLUSION
The results of this research show that training and collaboration opportunities with ACHA/NCAL and the Quality Award program with college campuses provides a great learning opportunity and valuable career skills to the students who participate. The benefits of this project will allow UWEC HCAD staff to continue to improve their strategies to educate students on the quality of care and its importance, in addition to serving as a best practice for other programs.

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