**Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment was to work in a team, plan and execute an event for an assigned client. My group consisted of Abby McConnell, Kristen Bixby, Lauren Mancuso, Mary Moncacla, Meghan Beytagh, Meghan Spillers, and myself, Lauren Woodward. Together we were assigned to be in charge of the annual fundraiser for Georgia Southern University’s Communication Arts Department. The purpose for our event was to raise at least $300 in donations- to help our very own department!

**Goals and Objectives**

The main purpose of the fundraiser event was to raise at least $300 for Georgia Southern’s Communication Arts Department, at our Celebration South vender spot, selling snow-cones, water-bottles, candy, and chances at a candy guessing game.

**Planning**

*Meetings*

Our usual meeting time was on Wednesday nights, at Meghan Beytagh’s house. Meetings usually lasted an hour or two, and all the members would volunteer for different tasks to complete the planning of the fundraiser. At each meeting, we would discuss tasks to be achieved by the next meeting, assign duties to each member, brain-storm ideas, trade emails about any important files, and go over any materials from previous meetings that still needed to be re-addressed. At our later meetings, I brought my tables to Meghan’s house and we set up our vender spot, in her garage, for practice and decorating purposes.

*Schedule of Main Events*

February 11- Goal Budget and Timeline due; 19- Determine Items being purchased for event. March 3- Finalize plans; 10- Have all purchases and reservations finalized. April 7- Bring tables to Meghan’s for practice; 16- Last minute preparations; 17- Celebration South; 20- Recap and work to complete events book; 28- Final Presentation.

*Forms and Contracts*

In order for our event to take place, we first had to have a consent form to approve our idea for our event. Then, after we decided that our fundraiser was going to be at a vender spot at Celebration South, we had to reserve our spot with an application. Finally, we needed to rent Georgia Southern’s snow-cone machine, which required filling out a reservation request and filing it with the Office of Student Activities. After all forms were approved and contracts were made, the fundraiser was on its way to having its plans finalized.

*Budget*

Georgia Southern’s Communication Arts Department gave us a budget of two-hundred dollars. We divided this money among different categories such as: the vender space, decorations, and snow-cone related items. The vender space was our biggest steal, at only twenty dollars. Scrapbook paper, fabric to line the tables and ribbons to decorate the candy and donation jars, cost about twenty-six dollars. The snow-cone items consisted the flavors, spoon straws, and shipping for these items, which cost about forty-seven dollars. Items such as cups, napkins, bottled water, and jars, totaled in at about forty-one dollars. The overall total spent was $155.80, which was forty-four dollars under-budget.

*Marketing and Promotions*

Our team created an online Facebook group to keep in touch with each other, which included an events section, showing our fundraiser information. Before our event, I sent out invitations to as many friends as possible to encourage attendance. Additional links on our page were to the Celebration South Facebook group. Other marketing consisted of posting flyers around the Veazey building and other high-traffic areas, with our logo, fundraiser, and Celebration South information on it, to get the word out on how to support our group.

Theme/Audiovisual

Our theme for our event was “Sweetening Education.” We represented this idea by selling snow-cones, Blow-Pops and Jolly Rangers, in addition to providing a candy-guessing game. Customers could buy our sweets, while also learning about our Communication Art’s Department, by two informational posters on either side of our stand. With each snow-cone sold, customers were helping us “sweeten” our education by providing us with the donations and snow-cone sells we needed to make our fundraiser a profitable success.

**Execution**

The day of our event, all the group members met at Meghan Beytagh’s house at 9 a.m. to move our pretend-vender set up to the real deal downtown. Once we got there and found where our spot was, we set up our tables, tent, and booth the way we had practiced. Set-up was to be completed around eleven fifteen. From noon until just past 7 p.m., we served up snow-cones to the Celebration South attendants; taking turns rotating between the cash-box, snow-cone machine, flavor station, and getting ice/water-bottle refills.

Within the first few hours we made our first $100 and then broke even. Business had its slow points and rush-crowds, but as we steadily worked into the evening, we were seeing great results.

Around 7 p.m., we began to throw away trash, organize items to be moved and sold off our last water bottles. At 7:15 p.m., we began to deconstruct our booth, making sure to still be able to serve customers until we officially closed down for the night. Finally, after a long hot day in the sun, we made our last few snow-cones and packed up the remainder of our booth and parted ways.

*Profit*

Our total revenue was $468.65, making our net income a total profit of $312.85! We were very pleased with this outcome, considering our initial goal was to raise $300- we were right on target!

**Problems and Suggestions**

During the process of planning and executing our event, we ran into a few issues. The first and most obvious issue was our low budget. Originally we had planned on a more extravagant event called, “Screen on the Green,” where we would have a movie played on a large screen in Sweetheart Circle. Unfortunately, upon receiving our budget of $200, we had to quickly reconsider, which brings us to our next problem.

When we were unable to have our original idea play through, our group began brain-storming lots of great ideas for a new fundraiser. So many, in fact, that we couldn’t seem to all agree on one and stick to it. Finally we all decided on snow-cones.

Shortly after deciding we wanted to do snow-cones, we were informed there would be another snow-cone stand in the kid’s area of the festival. Coming closer to our event date, we decided to just keep with it, which paid off because the other snow-cone stand turned out to be an Italian Ice stand instead!

The last problem to note is that before we knew the other stand was Italian Ice (not snow-cones), we thought we had to have something a little extra to earn the additional attention from the kids, so they would want to come to our booth instead. Our group had a hard time deciding if we wanted to sell something in addition to snow cones, have a game, or even do face-painting. We were told we would not be able to do face-painting so we finally decided on a candy-guessing game to keep with our sweet theme, and later even started selling off the candy.

**Overall Conclusion**

Overall, I had a lot more fun throwing this event than I thought I would have. Initially I was stressed about the amount of little things to keep track of to make this event successful, but in the end everything seemed to come together and work out well.

The planning process could have been made easier, if everyone would have agreed upon the same ideas and stuck with them and didn’t try to constantly add a new element to the event. However, all the ideas were very good ones and helped make sure the one we chose would be successful, because if *we* could all agree on it, then *all* types of people that were at Celebration South might agree that a snow-cone sounded like a good investment that day.

I think that the next fundraiser group to have this project should consider working a vender spot at Celebration South. It was an easy way for our group to get recognition, with the popularity of the festival, as well as being a cost-effective way for us to earn back our budget. Also, during the slower moments of the day, being set up close by the stage to see he bands and puppet-show, were definitely a plus!

I really did enjoy making snow-cones and running our booth. It felt good knowing that after I was finished with the day, not only was it a success for my personal grade, but also for our entire department. For such a large group, in such a tiny spot, I felt like we all did a good job at taking turns and carrying the weight of the work evenly, even throughout the planning portion too. Overall, I learned hands-on what it takes to prepare for an event and present it successfully.