

Board Retreat: *Upping Our Game*

Members of the GSWO Board and leadership staff participated in a retreat with objectives defined as:

- Reviewing current membership and volunteer trends
- Understanding girls' perspectives on future needs for Girl Scouts
- Identifying Board priorities for 2015 and 2016

Everyone participated in an ice-breaker activity to share why they are passionate about the Girl Scouts.

Membership and volunteer trends

Susan Osborn presented the most recent research on Girl Scout membership and volunteer trends.

- Overall national membership trends have been slowly declining for the last 10 years. Although GSWO has seen an increase in girls' membership, the number of adult volunteers has declined. Increasing the number of adult volunteers is a focus for the organization.
 - Data showed the top reasons adults' volunteer:
 - Daughter's troop needed volunteers – 75%
 - Spend quality time with daughter – 41%
 - To have a positive impact on girls' lives – 40%
 - Give back, focus on girls' leadership – 12%
 - GSWO is involved in a Customer Engagement Initiative to simplify processes for signing up as a volunteer or member. The initiative is set to start in fall 2015. A digital volunteer toolkit is also in development.
- Board members discussed how access to underserved communities might be improved.
- 2014 data from the Girl Scout Research Institute on The State of Girls in Ohio and Indiana were also shared.

Girl Scout panel

Chris Salley Davis moderated a panel of 8 Girl Scouts ranging in age from 10 to 18. Panelists shared their views on:

- The definition of leaders
- How adults can help them become leaders
- What taking action and outdoor experiences meant to them
- Why they stay in Girl Scouts and how to keep others in scouts as well
- What adults can do to make Girls Scouts even better

Priority areas for Board action during 2015 and 2016

Many ideas were suggested and combined into three primary areas for action planning:

1. Put Girls First
2. Fund Development
3. Outdoor Experience

A fourth area, increasing Board's knowledge about external factors, was also identified for further study.

Small groups developed action plans for each of the areas listed above. (See pages 2-5)



BOARD PRIORITY PLANS

PRIORITY AREA: Put Girls First – Building and mobilizing community resources for girls (pipeline and perception)

TEAM MEMBERS: Patricia, Victoria, Zo, Sue, Alex, Susan

ACTIONS (WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO)	TIMELINE	TASK GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS MEASURES
1. Connection to people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pipeline for talking to girls b. Find recent grads who are former Girl Scouts c. Pipeline for funding d. Find out who has access to powerful people 2. Use Women of Distinction events to capitalize on women we are honoring and follow up for funding 3. Get board members to submit a name for pipeline – board, investment committee, finance committee 4. Exec Connect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bring a group of girls into a company to speed date with women leaders in that company 	1. Year one		
5. Changing the perception: Public Service Announcement messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have powerful people say they are Girl Scouts and more than cookies; Girls do one that says, “We are more than cookies.” b. Align with faith-based and other community organizations to learn how to change perceptions in their groups (Spanish and English versions) 	5. Year two	5. Get production services donated (use connections for resources: money, people, equipment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Council to develop script and video b. Strategically identify where we can speak and show video (Rotary, Chamber, etc.) c. Air PSAs on Morning TV and social media 	



BOARD PRIORITY PLANS

PRIORITY AREA: Fund Development

TEAM MEMBERS: Jody, Ann, Angela, Theresa, Bridget, Marcia

ACTIONS (WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO)	TIMELINE	TASK GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS MEASURES
1. Get current individual and corporate lists	1. End of February		
2. Board members identify who they have connections with on the list of individuals and corporate names	2. End of February		
3. Identify who is missing on the list	3. By April Board meeting	3. Task group makes individual calls to Board members who have not complied	3. Hear back from 80% of board by the April 2015 Board meeting (This is a minimum!)
4. Each Board member commits to bring one person to an event (Women of Distinction, Gold Award or similar)	4. April 2015-April 2016		4. 100% by April 2016
5. Identify groups that Board members belong to (i.e. Rotary Club)	5. June 2015		
6. Look at Girl Scout Life Members (looked at Board and Staff)	6. End of February		
7. Build size of Fund Development Committee	7. April 2015		7. 5 to 6 Board members on committee



BOARD PRIORITY PLANS

PRIORITY AREA: Outdoor Experience

TEAM MEMBERS: Kandi, Kimber, Dave

ACTIONS (WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO)	TIMELINE	BOARD ACTION/INITIATIVES	SUCCESS MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More leader training and rewards (badges) for girls related to outdoors activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop principles of outdoor experiences for GSWO b. Address “fear of outdoors” c. Look beyond “camps” as it relates to “outdoors” 2. Develop relationships with other outdoor providers for partnerships 3. Identify how to remove the stigma, costs, difficulties and red tape of doing outdoors activities and camp 	<p>Year 1 or Year 2</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand what outdoor experience means and what it can be (camps, ecology, horticulture, animals, et.al.) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Board education on current state of “outdoors” at GSWO 2. Explore community partners to team with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. More urban outdoor experiences focus could address inner city and underserved membership 3. Study and promote the other benefits of the outdoor experience 	

External Factors – for further study

Answers to the questions below will fuel fund development and strategic planning for out years giving us the ability to make course corrections and shift funding/resources where necessary.

What the Board needs to know about external factors:

1. What does the staff believe our knowledge gaps may be?
2. What are larger councils learning that are impacting them?
3. Digging out the real numbers for GWSO graduates, % to college, % to career
4. Do a better job of listening to our owners
5. Do a better job of listening to girls who are leaving. Understand why? (exit interviews)
6. What is the trend line for Gold Awards? If it's decreasing what are the factors we need to address?
7. How is GWSO using social media? Webinar topic
8. Understanding outdoors – educating Board to understand land ownership, importance of nature to perception of Girl Scouts. What are the barriers to outdoor activities (gaining access, first aid person)
9. What is behind the numbers in "The State of" reports and how do GWSO numbers compare?
 - a. How is emotional health measured?

Next steps

Task Groups/Chairs agreed to convene their teams and report out on April 21.

Closing

Each person verbalized their personal commitment to GWSO for the coming year. 100% of attendees felt the group achieved the objectives of the retreat.