

## The Transformation of the Girl Scout Movement

By now many of you are familiar with the work currently going on to define a core business strategy for the Girl Scout Movement. Outstanding work and progress is taking place at GSUSA in all areas. However, we recognize that while the transformation of the Movement is extremely exciting, it provides a fertile field for rumors and angst. Change can be exciting and positive, yet also cause anxiety and questions. So, in an effort to be as upfront and transparent as we can, we are providing you with a complete and total update of the progress so far on the transformation. Rest assured it is our intent to keep you updated. We also must recognize that many questions remain unanswered yet at this time.

In June 2004, under the coaching of Willie Pietersen, author of *Reinventing Strategy*, GSUSA began developing a core business strategy to transform the Girl Scout Movement from good to great. Six strategic priorities were selected to focus the transformation. For each priority, a Gap Team designed ways to get us from our present state to our desired future. The strategic priorities are:

- Program and pathways
- Brand
- Volunteerism
- Funding
- Culture
- Governance and organizational structure

Exciting and transformational work has been accomplished by each of the Gap Teams. These teams are comprised of about 100 people who are council CEOs and council board members, national board members and national staff members. Their work includes a lot of feedback from girls through focus groups, research and additional input. Their objective is to create a girl-centric, innovative, agile, aligned and accountable organization that will take us from good to great.

### *Program and Pathways*

This Gap Team has been defining desired outcomes and creating a program model for personal growth and leadership development, by age level, for girls ages 5-17. They are exploring pathways to deliver Girl Scout program to a diverse population. They have been taking the new program model (*Girls Discover, Girls Lead, Girls Take Action*) to councils around the country for input and feedback. They will be spending much of the fall of 2005 refining the new program model and conducting focus groups with girls nationwide.

### *Brand*

The Gap Team's job is to transform the Girl Scout image with a compelling, contemporary brand. With the assistance of an outside agency, they are gearing up to re-launch the Girl

Scout brand in a nationwide campaign. The Team is working to create an integrated network of Marketing and Communications Girl Scout council professionals, a Brand/Advocacy workbook, and a Brand Dashboard.

Supporting these key principles is a ***Voice for Girls*** platform and a new policy process.

- The ***Voice for Girls*** platform articulates Girl Scouting's core values and beliefs and demonstrates a commitment to build girls of confidence, courage and character, who make the world a better place.
- The new, inclusive **policy process** for selecting public policy issues will shape our agenda on Capitol Hill and allow us to speak with one unified Movement-voice when advocating for girls and Girl Scouting.

### *Volunteerism*

This Gap Team is designing a flexible, enriched volunteerism structure that includes: structural redesign; competencies for volunteer positions; recruitment strategy; screening and placement; re-engineering learning opportunities; and reward and recognitions.

Twenty volunteer focus groups were completed around the country, focusing on strategies and issues related to recruiting, training and retaining volunteers. An email address, [volunteerismgapteam@girlscouts.org](mailto:volunteerismgapteam@girlscouts.org), lets volunteers and staff easily give input to the Team. In addition the Team is developing competencies for volunteer positions, using (with the Program Gap Team) a "Theory of Change" process that maps out how volunteers reach specified outcomes with girls, to give girls the best experience possible.

### *Funding*

The Gap Team's main goal is to significantly increase contributed income to fund the Girl Scout Movement. The Team is working to develop a national case for support. They've hired an outside firm to develop a national Girl Scout alumnae initiative that will build a reliable donor base for every council, and they are working on developing materials and courses that create a culture of successful fundraising in Girl Scouting.

### *Culture*

The Gap Team is building tools for councils (electronic, conference calls, brochures) that will help create a culture that supports the core business strategy. The Team will author a Culture/Values Booklet for the Movement. There also will be regional coaching to support councils as they reorganize.

### *Governance and Organizational Structure*

The work on creating a more nimble and effective governance model has begun. The Open Space session and a Strategy Café at the National Convention focused on governance. The Team's future work on governance will be informed by recommendations from these sessions. Governance models will be tested at future regional meetings.

The Gap Team on organizational structure is comprised of three national board members, four council CEOs and four national staff members. Based on research about the nonprofit sector, a study on our own structure and efficiency by Grant Thornton, LLP, council performance and demographic trends, this Team recommends a complete reorganization of councils using a high-capacity based model. Their working definition of a high-capacity council is one that has "the funding, the connections and the scale to achieve our Mission, now and in the future, and to use the Movement's resources efficiently."

Although the specific criteria for a high-capacity council have not been approved, the Team has recommended that the criteria be developed using these guiding principles:

- Provide contiguous coverage across the nation
- Incorporate entire media markets
- Incorporate a diverse population
- Align with established transportation patterns and state boundaries where possible
- Provide a funding base to support a minimum \$2.5M budget
- Facilitate optimal utilization of property
- Yield economies of scale
- Anticipate population growth patterns
- Unite areas that have a regional identification
- Respect natural geographic barriers
- A large enough jurisdiction that councils do not rival one another for funding and other resources

GSUSA will have a preliminary map of council jurisdictions available for a work session for council CEOs and Board Chairs in late February and early March where we will continue to dialog on high-capacity criteria for councils and how to move to a capacity-based organizational structure.

The finalized map will not be driven by a pre-determined total number of councils but by criteria for capacity. So the discussion will not "start" with a number but eventually we will "arrive" at a number. However, to achieve the goal of increasing the Movement's collective capacity to deliver on the Mission, the restructure will create fewer councils and impact all councils, regardless of their size or current performance. Right now the restructuring process is expected to be phased in, beginning next year, with the hope of finalizing the structure within three years.

GSUSA is in the process of realigning national staff to better support councils during and after the transition. They will be appointing a transition leadership team and developing support resources for councils as we all move through this restructuring.

Our major focus during the months and years ahead will be to continue to provide girls with a high quality *Girl Scout* experience. While changes are ongoing, our focus on the delivery of a quality *Girl Scout* program remains our top priority. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our mission, and your time and effort invested for our girls.

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