

REGIONAL FORUM TOPIC PRIORITIZATION AND STATUS

June 28, 2010

Here is some background information on how this document was created:

At the training session for Representative Assembly members in May 2009, participants were asked to identify topics for two regional forums to be held in October 2009. Participants were provided with a checklist of several topics or were encouraged to write in topics of interest.

The Board Representative Committee (BRC) prioritized the list from the training down to six major topics for discussion at the October regional forums.

At the regional forums, participants provided their ideas, suggestions, and comments on the six topic areas. Many ideas and suggestions were provided – too many for immediate implementation. So the BRC prioritized the list and organized it by council department. Council departments were asked to consider the ideas and suggestions as they developed their department objectives, created events, training sessions, etc. Periodically the BRC will post the status of the ideas and suggestions to this list. Representative Assembly members will receive an email to let them know the list has been updated.

While many ideas and suggestions did not make it on this current prioritization list, they are not forgotten. As future lists are generated, the BRC will review the original list of ideas and suggestions.

ADULT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

How to retain girls in Girl Scouts especially at the older girl level

- Help leaders build expectation of future in Girl Scouts to be able to encourage girls
Status: A “Take Action” class is being developed for adults that includes information on the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards which should help illuminate future opportunities for girls.
- Experienced leaders mentoring new leaders
Status: The Service Team Basics class is being restructured to show service team members how to welcome and include new leaders and that mentoring is the role of all service team members. This class has been offered a couple of times outside the regular service team training schedule.
- Educate the leaders better about progression (too long since core training – leaders are forgetting)
Status: The Adult Development Department is considering adding an enrichment workshop for leaders on this topic.
- Get parent buy-in; show how Girl Scouts helps the girls; workshops for parents to explain the program (regional training, web based)

Ways to make it easier to be a troop leader

- What program (Try-Its, Badges) blends with Journeys
Status: This topic is part of the new Leadership Essentials course being offered to new leaders. It will also be part of a supplemental workshop for continuing leaders.
- Teach them how to delegate; isn't too difficult if you have participation from parents
- Dividing older girl leader training by age level (not 11-17 as a group)
Status: GSUSA's new training format does not provide for grade level training. The grade level trainings that GSHCC previously provided will continue to be available online and some limited number of classroom courses will be provided. However, there are no plans to substantially change these courses.
- Priority for training to occur sooner
Status: The Board of Directors approved a policy change at the April 2010 board meeting which now requires that training be completed within 3 months of a leader's appointment to her position.
- Clearer guidelines for parent involvement
- Flexible training options (online, classroom, more dates)
Status: As the calendar for the upcoming year was developed, this suggestion was considered. More courses are being put online and more dates for classroom courses have been added.
- Offer trainings in their area (e.g. Turlock)
Status: The new Leadership Essentials course (formerly known as New Leader Basics) will be offered in more locations than in the past.

What should be the major priorities to GSHCC for the next four years?

- Too many trainings are being cancelled – need to figure out how to get training
Status: GSHCC is offering more courses online to provide options to participants when a classroom course has been canceled.
- How to go from structure Junior Girl Scouts to unstructured Cadette Girl Scouts (awards, focus books, interest projects)
- More online training
Status: The following courses will be online in the fall of 2010: Leadership Essentials, Trip Planning, and Take Action.

Ways to elevate the prestige of the Girl Scout Gold Award

- Encourage girls to write their own press release for local papers; make this part of their training

MEMBERSHIP

How to retain girls in Girl Scouts especially at the older girl level

- Girls are the best recruiters – instill that in them; have them be recruiters at fairs and event
Status: Older girls come to Parent Information Nights to help with younger girls and speak to the adults. They also help with friendship troops.
- Sell Girl Scouts to older girls – we don't do a good job at this; Recruitment focuses too much on younger girls; not recruiting to older girls; not showing them what we have to offer
Status: Older girl recruitment events are being planned for the Modesto area service units.
- Mix and match troops – networking troops to allow girls to participate in activities that interest them (service unit or council)
Status: Whenever opportunities arise, GSHCC distributes the information to troops.

Ways to make it easier to be a troop leader

- Something at leader meetings each month to help them (mini-workshops, training, etc.)
Status: This is being done already in many service units. The Adult Development Department is considering developing “short and snappy” information sheets on various topics that can be easily presented at a service unit meeting.
- Publicize non-traditional ways to run a troop
Status: Shared leadership/co-op troops are promoted at recruitment events as an option. A Mariner Program for older girls was recently started.
- Membership Directors should follow-up, make personal contact with them
Status: The membership directors do follow-up with new leaders and the mentor program is being established to be sure support is ongoing.
- Service teams needs to be more available to get leaders going (i.e., conduct orientation whenever, wherever, to get them going)
Status: GSHCC actively attempts to recruit orientation specialists and mentors in service units who can provide the immediate orientation and on-going support. If you

can fill one of these positions in your service unit, speak to your service unit manager or membership director.

- Virtual meetings
- Planned roundtable discussion for new leaders at service unit
Status: Several service units have break out groups for new leaders and some have grade level discussion groups. If you need to get this started in your service unit, speak to your service unit manager or membership director.
- Yahoo groups for service units and troops
Status: Many service units have been doing this for years and more have been added this year. If you would like to start one for your service unit, speak to your service unit manager or membership director.
- Service Unit websites
Status: These are basically created by the service units who have someone in the unit who is skilled enough to create it and keep it updated. If you have these skills and want to create one for your service unit, talk to your service unit manager or membership director.

What should be the major priorities to GSHCC for the next four years?

- Co-sponsor events geared towards recruiting more girls
- Partner with girls and parents – connect the parents; how to sell Girl Scouts to the parents; orientation to parents; GSHCC starts at the district level
- Retaining and getting girls
Status: This is the major focus of everything the membership department does.

Ways to elevate the prestige of the Girl Scout Gold Award

- More personal ceremony at service unit level
- More enthusiasm/encouragement from leaders to complete the process. Pump the girls up about the awards.
- Model ceremony after Boy Scout Eagle Award ceremony

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

How to retain girls in Girl Scouts especially at the older girl level

- Promote the value of the Girl Scout leadership program
Status: This is currently being done through news releases
- Promote opportunities for older girls
Status: GSHCC promotes opportunities in the following ways – MarComm internships, advocacy postcards, Hear and Now publication, use of blogs, facebook, and emails.
- Promote awards
Status: This is currently being done through news releases

Ways to make it easier to be a troop leader

- PDF creator forms (savable forms); more online forms
Status: Updates are in the works to make the PDF forms more user friendly.
- More online resources for badges, meetings
Status: Many resources are already posted in the Troop Leader Toolbox. Meetings in a box and the Dolores Huerta patch are also online.

What should be the major priorities to GSHCC for the next four years?

- Continue to work on the website; keep it up to date
Status: This is done on a weekly basis.
- Bronze, Silver and Gold are not known; showcase the awards – need prestige
- Publicize the 100th anniversary
- Continue to promote leadership goals, world-wide affairs
- Better public image
Status: The MarComm department is working with the media and news releases to increase public awareness of Girl Scouts.

Ways to elevate the prestige of the Girl Scout Gold Award

- Encourage girls to write their own press release for local papers; make this part of their training
- Create a traveling display of awardees that goes to community events, libraries, etc.
- Get more information out about successful projects and importance to all leaders (not just older girls)
Status: MarComm has begun to spotlight a Gold Award girl and her project in the *Celebrate* Newsletter which is emailed to all leaders.
- Have Service Unit Community Relations Rep coordinate publicity
Status: MarComm Department encourages the community relations reps to push stories out to local publications about their service unit activities, awards, etc.
- Have schools and alumni recognize girls
Status: MarComm is looking into the cost of congratulatory ads in school district newspapers.
- More newspaper articles
Status: At this point in time, GSHCC is at the number of newspaper articles published during the entire last year. We are on track for increasing the number.
- Need to increase awareness to girls; get more buzz among girls
Status: GSHCC is increasing awareness to girls by using a blog and facebook as well as the girl web site and the Hear and Now publication. The MarComm interns (Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts) are providing feedback on the best ways to reach girls.
- Encourage girls to go to annual meeting to hear Gold Award recipients talk
MarComm is looking into the possibility of promoting the annual meeting at training classes for Silver and Gold Awards.

PROGRAM

How to retain girls in Girl Scouts especially at the older girl level

- Establish a senior forum (planning board) – each troop sends a representative; they plan council-wide activities for older girls

Status: GSHCC used to have a planning board but the attendance and interest dwindled over time and was disbanded. Because of the size of the council a face to face group meeting is no longer practical. GSHCC plans to create an internet group during the 2011-2012 membership year. A Special Interest group (High Adventure) was started this year by older girls in the Sacramento area who plan their own high adventure events for older girls.

- Workshops – stress relief, time management, practical skills (i.e., college application advisory, college tours, “u.c. road trip”)

Status: The last college trip was canceled due to low enrollment and the cost of renting buses. Other avenues are being explored such as day camp activities, events at local colleges. Also, older girls have not expressed an interest in these types of events when completing the evaluation form question “What other program events would you like to see us offer?”

- Council support for destinations

Status: This year GSHCC was able to obtain a \$3,000 *destinations* scholarship which has been advertised to girls.

- Co-ed events (high adventure) with Boy Scouts

Status: GSHCC is an organization for girls and expressly creates events or activities for girls only so they have a safe space in which to grow and explore. The High Adventure special interest group has been formed, initiated by girls, for girls. GSHCC has several new high adventure programs for older girls at camp.

- More local events, activities, training

Status: A concerted effort was made this year to offer events spread over a large number of the council’s 18 counties. This effort will continue in the next membership year.

- Offer more than one session of popular council events

Status: GSHCC tries to offer sessions as often as possible. However, certain logistics, such as available volunteers, space, etc., prohibit us from offering it more than once. Whenever possible, we will try to accommodate as many participants as feasible. An example is changing the event Beauty Academy which only accommodated 20 girls, to Beautiful U, which accommodates up to 150 girls.

Ways to make it easier to be a troop leader

- Have more events for Leaders at Modesto office (out lying areas)
- Awards by age level on website

Status: Awards by grade level are currently on the website.

What should be the major priorities to GSHCC for the next four years?

- More interesting council events (program and training more frequently; online service unit training)

- Community service to show the girls ways they can impact their community
Status: There will be several tree-planting events over the next couple of years to coincide with the Girl Scouts 100th anniversary theme. Also, the Take Action portion of each Journey gets girls to think about ways they can impact their community.
- Partner with other organizations
Status: GSHCC continues to expand their list of partner organizations. This year GSHCC worked with a number of new groups, including the California Medical Association and the Student Health Advisory Committee from Sacramento State University.
- Programs more flexible – spread them out; have trainings in summer
Status: This year award trainings will take place during June and August. Events have been conducted in more areas of the council than in previous years.
- Outdoor emphasis is gone. Need more outdoor experience; organize at council level
Status: GSHCC has attempted to provide outdoor experiences through several events. However, due to low interest, several events were canceled.

Ways to elevate the prestige of the Girl Scout Gold Award

- Every girl who earned the award is posted on the council website with her name, picture, and description of her project; remains on website until next round of awards
Status: GSHCC is concerned about privacy issues and will need to resolve this before proceeding with this idea.
- Invite elected officials to the ceremony
Status: GSHCC plans to invite elected officials to the next Recognitions of Excellence ceremony.
- Put grant and award possibilities on web site so girls know there are ways to fund their project
Status: This information is currently on the web site at:
<http://www.girlscoutshcc.org/gshccadmin/site1/girlscouts/girlscouts/ambassadorsLinks.asp>
- Get more information out about successful projects and importance to **all** leaders (not just older girls)
- Create Gold Award Alliance consisting of girls who have earned the Gold who can mentor other girls to inspire and motivate them
Status: A request card was distributed to each girl who earned her Girl Scout Gold Award asking if she or her advisor would be interested in mentoring other girls. Also, stories from other girls are available on the GSUSA web site at:
http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/insignia/highest_awards/gold_award.html
- More information about scholarships on the website
Status: This information is currently on the web site at:
<http://www.girlscoutshcc.org/gshccadmin/site1/girlscouts/girlscouts/ambassadorsLinks.asp>
Also, GSUSA is updating the scholarship information on their website.
- Sample projects on the website for inspiration
Status: Sample projects are available on GSUSA's web site at:
http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/insignia/highest_awards/gold_award.html

- Put on website famous women who have earned the Gold Award – as inspiration to girls thinking about earning the award. Would be good to put this in the newspaper also
 Status: GSHCC will be putting this information on the web site as we enter the 100th Anniversary celebration timeframe in 2011-2012.
- Give the other Girl Scouts more contact with past Gold Award recipients both new and older
 Status: As mentioned earlier, GSHCC is recruiting mentors to work with girls who are interested in earning the award. Hopefully, the request card will produce some good candidates.
- Make sure all officials are contacted (use to girls got about 35 proclamations; now just 3 or so); More proclamations from officials
 Status: GSHCC is encouraging service units to seek proclamations at the local level for girls in their area. A list of girls who have earned the Girl Scout Silver and Girl Scout Gold Awards will be distributed to service units prior to the recognition ceremony.

GOVERNANCE

What should be the major priorities to GSHCC for the next four years?

- Review new governance structure every three years; reevaluate

100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Ideas for celebrating the 100 year anniversary of Girl Scouts in 2012

Marketing-Communication

- Need to have lots of press and publicity with a diverse audience appeal.
 Status: Space on council website is being designed to focus on all 100th activities, both service unit and council-wide. An adult fundraising event is being scheduled in 2012.
- Lots of history... a traveling show
 Status: MarComm and the History committee are working on this.
- Former Girl Scouts in leadership or famous roles. Use in PR.
 Status: Efforts are being made to gather information about adults who earned their Girl Scout Gold or Curved Bar Award and these adults will be invited to speak at the Annual Meetings in 2011 and 2012 and other special council 100th anniversary events.

Service Unit-Troop Level

- Booklet for every troop leader with suggestions on activities and resources.
 Status: This booklet is currently being designed. Implementation and distribution is scheduled for January-February 2011.

- List of “100” things to do...i.e. collect 100 coins.etc.
Status: This will be in the activity booklet referenced above.
- Historical places in your community to visit/ learn about.
Status: This will be in the activity booklet referenced above.

Website-Technology

- Special page on our website for a 100th - countdown and information.
Status: Currently under development – will be available in October 2010.

Events

- Year-long celebration with service unit events, council events, troop events
Status: Events to celebrate the 100th begin March 2011. A list of all events will be published for service units and will appear on the council website.
- A big celebration similar to the 90th with everyone together.
Status: The celebration will not be as big as the 90th. A Daisy, Brownie, Junior event is scheduled for April 2012 at Cal Expo.
- A huge camporee or Jamboree or Scout-a-rama
Status: GSHCC is collaborating with Girl Scouts of Northern California to offer an older girl (Cadette, Senior, Ambassador) camporee in August 2011.
- A Council-wide service project
Status: Among other ideas, tree planting is the big council-wide service project being planned.
- Contest for the design (patches, tee)
Status: Contest details will go out to all girls in an email blast in July 2010.
- Sing-a-long at the Capitol (West coast)
Status: No plans to have any events at the Capitol.

Resources

- 100th T-shirt
Status: A national T-shirt design is being created by GSUSA.
- Find corporate sponsors
Status: The GSHCC Fund Development department is working on this.
- Use Raley Field
Status: No current plans to use Raley Field.
- Partner with the new Children’s Museum (in RC) or Ca History Museum for a yearlong display
Status: There will be Girl Scout related exhibits in local museums and a large adult only fundraiser at the California History Museum.
- Put a big banner on the offices for the year
Status: This is on MarComm’s list of things to do.