



This edition of Realignment News is about Council Partnerships new structure, a recent realignment focus group, and an addition to the Early Adopter group. Also included are questions and answers to the most recent inquiries received.

Questions are always welcome. Please send them to Vicki Wright at [vwright@girlscouts.org](mailto:vwright@girlscouts.org).

### ITEMS OF INTEREST

#### **Council Partnership Staff Structure**

Staying true to our goal of being a more nimble organization to meet the needs of councils at various stages of the realignment process, the Council Partnership Department's structure continues to evolve. The current structure will allow GSUSA staff to provide:

- customized realignment support
- a process to define, measure and pursue high performance
- access to cross-functional consulting services
- council tools and resources for success

Council Partnerships is comprised of two teams, with councils being assigned to the team that reflects where the council is in the realignment process. A major highlight of the structure is that all councils will have a team of consultants versus a single liaison to answer questions and/or provide support and resources. However, councils actively involved in realignment will have a primary contact person from their team. The two teams are:

#### **Realignment**

This team will support councils actively involved in realignment as well as help prepare councils waiting to start realignment. In addition to GSUSA staff, National Operational Volunteers and retired CEOs will be supporting councils by:

- Coordinating and delivering shared learning teleconferences, webinars, work sessions and affinity groups for council actively involved in and waiting for realignment
- Developing additional council realignment resources
- Providing hands-on realignment support to realigning council groups in the form of advice, coaching, and/or facilitation and assistance in securing other functional services from GSUSA

Interim Director of Realignment: Vicki Wright

Realignment Consulting Manager: Dale Scolnick

Consultant Team 1: Kate Genaitis, Barbara Jeter, Valerie Romero

Consultant Team 2: Donna Rhoda, Bea Rocha, Chivonne Williams

Consultant Team 3: Victoria Rapozo, Pat West, Vacancy

Consultant Team 4: Sol Magay, Linda Saldibar, Vacancy

### **Council Partnerships**

This team will support councils that have completed realignment, not changing or are not yet going through realignment. Additionally, resources developed by this group will be shared with councils actively involved in realignment.

- Developing council resources which further define and support building high capacity
- Coordinating with the Resource Development Team in delivering shared learning teleconferences, webinars, work sessions and affinity group session
- Assisting councils to secure/access GSUSA services
- Providing direct support for questions, advice, referrals
- Completion of chartering renewal processes
- Developing and delivering a redefined chartering process beyond 2008

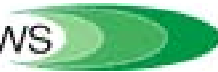
Director of Council Partnerships: Sheryl Schulte

Property Consultants: Glen Chin and Nick LoPiccolo

High Capacity Consultants: Jun Egawa, Gwen Gourley, Kim St. Bernard

Council Relations, Referral and Chartering: Gladys Acosta, Karen

Bremberg, Rae Schopp



Additional details for those councils not actively involved in realignment regarding services available and how to access information will be shared shortly. In the meantime, council CEOs and Board Chairs should feel free to contact Sheryl Schulte, Director of Council Partnerships or Vicki Wright, Interim Director of Realignment with questions.

### **Reflections on Realignment**

In early August a focus group of four CEOs, one Interim CEO, and one NOV, representing Early Adopter groups and councils that had been through recent mergers gathered for a one day meeting to 1) share best practices/lessons learned and 2) help identify council needs as realignment moves forward. Highlights from their input answering several questions are highlighted below. Participants were asked to share expectations, successes, challenges and surprises.

#### *Expectations*

- That there would be a commitment to the mission and a cooperative working environment.
- There will be resistance, confusion and fear that may come from a variety of places.
- There is fluidity in this process – realignment is a work in progress.
- Integrity in decision-making will be key to the success of any realignment.
- This will be a difficult process and keeping everyone speaking with good purpose is paramount to success.

#### *Successes*

- We've been able to keep the Core Business Strategy as the focus with the commitment to vision and the reasons for change.
- Our merger took less time than expected. We clearly articulated an outline of structure and timeline.
- The quality and progress toward goals was enhanced by keeping personality issues out of the way of work.
- Separate the realignment vote work from the integration of systems.

### *Challenges*

- To keep the mission above personal needs and wants.
- Realignment is not incremental change, but transformational change.
- We had to recognize the difference in council cultures.
- We had to keep communication, clear, open and consistent at all levels.
- There have been different and unrealistic expectations to deal with.
- CRC structure issues that need to be addressed – conflict of interest, assuring inclusive process, consensus vs. high performance, clear leadership, integrity in decision making.
- The timing of the CEO Search and identifying the process to use, needs to be determined fairly early.

### *Surprises*

- The lack of patience at times can be a challenge.
- Resistance to change at the mass level can halt the process.
- More attention is needed to address the cultural aspect of the process.
- Past friction between councils can present roadblocks.
- Open communication and language issues are critical – how and when we talk – avoid inflammatory language (i.e. taking over, swallowing up).

The focus group was extremely helpful in assisting GSUSA staff in identifying areas where realignment resources and services could be further developed to provide maximum benefit to councils as they begin realignment. Further, they suggested the following key messages for their colleagues as they move through realignment:

- Be courageous
- Take a chance, but have a plan
- Move quickly and stay focused
- Be flexible
- Think BIG
- Clearly separate governance and operational functions
- Look for the Win/Win
- Find a way to gather history and honor tradition

- Stay girl focused
- Respect and acknowledge various thoughts and opinions
- Leverage people's skills and abilities

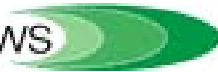
### **Texas Northeast Joins Early Adopter Group**

When the CEO vacancy occurred in Tejas Council earlier this year, the three councils working together to form the new Texas Northeast Council (Cross Timbers, Red River Valley and Tejas) decided that the time was right to move forward quickly with realignment, rather than wait until October 2006. With approval from GSUSA, the Council Realignment Committee in partnership with National Operational Volunteer, Betty Richardson, has been tenaciously working towards an April 2007 date for the new council to begin. Their first membership votes are taking place in the coming weeks. Congratulations for your commitment to creating such a positive partnership in realignment.

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#### **Q & A**

- 1. Can you clarify for me whether a council that is determined to be the legal “surviving corporation” will also be eligible for the National Girl Scout Council Retirement Plan VERIP? I’ve heard something to the contrary. Answer:** Girl Scouts of the USA, as the National Girl Scout Retirement Plan Sponsor, makes the determination of which councils will be permitted to offer eligible employees the enhanced benefits provided under the VERIP. As stated in prior GSUSA communications regarding the VERIP, all participating Girl Scout councils realigning and have staff that will be potentially impacted by realignment are eligible. Since the “surviving corporation” is only the legal shell of the new council and does not have any special status, their employees will be potentially affected the same as other councils in the new council group.
- 2. What kind of success have councils or council groups had in securing funding for realignment? Answer:** Several council groups have shared their success in fundraising for realignment. The grants that have been reported to GSUSA so far, range from \$10,000 from a corporate foundation, \$40,000 from a United Way, to \$100,000 from a Community



Foundation. The Fund Development Department can assist council groups in identifying sources for capacity building grants and has prepared a realignment grant template that will be included in the next issue of Realignment News. For realignment inquiries regarding fund development, contact Rori Lindo-Britton, Mgr. Major Gifts, Partnerships & Alliances at Ext. 8044 or [rlindo-britton@girlscouts.org](mailto:rlindo-britton@girlscouts.org)

**3. We will be transferring four counties to another council through a jurisdictional change. Should we be part of the CRC in the council group where this jurisdiction change will take place in addition to the CRC where we merge?**

**Answer:** There is no one answer to this question. Considerations would include the percentage of the council that is being transferred, the number of girls and volunteers in the area, whether your council has the people resources to manage participation in two CRC's, etc. We would suggest that there be conversation between the councils affected to discuss how the areas being transferred can be engaged in the process. There certainly could be opportunities for involvement in giving input to the CRC, and perhaps participation in some of the subcommittee work without being full members of the CRC. If you need further assistance, contact Vicki Wright, Project Director, Realignment Strategy.

**4. What should our board be doing to ratify our new jurisdiction and get ready for realignment?**

**Answer:** The first step is for the board of directors to approve a Good Faith Resolution, of which there is a sample in the appendix of the Realignment Guidebook. The next step might be to look at your board and nominating terms, when they expire and how that relates to your scheduled realignment. You may want to consider having council delegates approve extension of terms, even beyond term limits, to enable the current leadership to provide continuity through the realignment process.

**5. Can you help me understand the timeline and steps at GSUSA to process a jurisdictional change to get the membership transferred?**

**Answer:** Once the Application for Jurisdiction Change form with troop information is received from both councils involved, the steps are:

- a) The paperwork is reviewed by the Realignment Team and prepared for signature. If both councils are in agreement, the paperwork is

forwarded for signature. If there is not agreement, the issue is prepared for National Board action.

- b) Once the signature is acquired either from the Executive Vice President of Mission to Market and/or the National Board, the paperwork is submitted to Membership Credentials for processing.
- c) Membership Credentials reviews the paperwork, assures troop numbers, reports codes and council's codes, etc., are assigned and correct and the information is forwarded to IT.
- d) IT then contacts the council and works in partnership to actually transfer the database information.

Needless to say, with a multiple step process and the demand during realignment, this process will take several months. For smaller jurisdictional changes, a minimum 2 – 3 month turnaround time should be allowed. As councils begin to actually merge, GSUSA will be working with each council group to stage the timeframe expectations and this will be discussed at Council Realignment Trainings.

- 6. Can you help us understand the difference between high capacity and high performance? Answer:** Yes. The Gap Team Definition of High Capacity Council is “A council that has the funding, the connections and the scale to achieve its purpose, now and in the future, and to use the Movement’s resources efficiently.” To achieve this, the council mapping criteria guided the creation of larger scale jurisdictions that increased demographic, economic and geographic potential.

Now, as councils come together to build these larger organizations, they will be engaged in increasing their internal organizational capacity as well by establishing and strengthening their leadership, adaptive, management, cultural and operational abilities. Building and strengthening these core capacities will increase the council’s ability to perform and achieve its mission.

The criterion and standards defining council high performance will be further developed when the new Chartering Process is defined beyond 2008.

