

## **Board of Directors Retreat**

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

12 noon – 4 p.m. at Camp Mountain House

### **Mission Moment**

The Girl Advisors facilitated a Girl Scout Investiture Ceremony for the four new Board members.

### **Management Report**

CEO Kim Fraites-Dow reported that our current girl membership figure reflects an increase of almost 6% Year over Year at this time; however, the number of adults is slightly below where we were last year. Our Spring Membership Renewal Campaign ended on June 30; almost 7,500 girls re-registered for MY26, which is lower than last year. Additional recruitment efforts for MY26 include partnering with the Philadelphia Parks & Rec department as well as other sites and organizations during the summer to offer Girl Scout programming; a Council-wide initiative to have a strong presence during the National Night Out celebrations in early August; and working with Service Units to be at local Back-to-School Nights in September.

Summer camp registrations currently are at 3,359 girls. Most of our camps are serving more girls than last year, with Mountain House and Wood Haven being the exceptions. The Council is putting in a new pool at Wood Haven in the spring. Plus, the renovations at Mountain House are also slated to begin this fall. Both projects should build excitement for those respective camps next year.

Kim Fraites-Dow and Chief Advancement Officer Gina Range traveled to Harrisburg last month with Silver and Gold Award Girl Scouts to visit key legislators in our Council's footprint. The girls shared their projects and personal stories, and our CEO discussed current happenings in the Council, with a special focus on the Calling All Girl Bosses initiative.

Our GirlzDay girl expo was held on May 17 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, and more than 15,000 people attended. The most popular part of the day was the Hall of Experiences, which some girls spent the entire day exploring.

GSUSA has been working and implementing their three-year strategic plan, and GSEP's plan will align with theirs. The primary six areas of focus are: Market Analysis, DEIRJ, Current Strategy, Mission Delivery, People & Operations, and Finance & Revenue (which includes Fund Development). The Council is just beginning the creation of the MY26-MY28 plan.

### **Camp Mountain House Update & Tour**

Property Committee member Stacy Broad reminded the Board that although they had originally approved building a new “Clubhouse,” we pivoted to renovate the large house the Council purchased due to its similar sized footprint and potential program space. The renovation plans are less expensive (approximately half the original cost estimate for a new building) and more environmentally friendly; plus, the Council has already received appropriate permissions from the Township and State to move ahead.

Gina Range shared that capital campaign for the new Girl Program Center would be refreshed. She thanked State Representative Milou Mackenzie for securing state funding for the project, along with Senator Nick Miller. Rep. Mackenzie was a guest at the Board Retreat, and she thanked Kim for her vision and educating the legislators on how impactful Girl Scouting is on girls and the community.

DJ Gable, GSEP’s Director of Property, then shared the proposed floor plan of the new renovated house and explained how the transformation from private home to girl-friendly program space will be achieved. He then took the Board on a tour of the House and the camp.

### **Finance Update**

CFO Mike Vanic explained that as of June 30, the Council is anticipating ending the year with a small deficit. Some of the key factors are the revenue shortfall in the Cookie Program and the termination of the Department of Labor grant (which GSUSA voluntarily opted out of on behalf of all participating Councils). Due to concentrated efforts to reduce expenses and increase revenue when possible, the variance is forecasted to be considerably less than originally noted at the end of Quarter Two. The staff is currently working on creating the FY26 budget.

### **Calling All Girl Bosses Update**

CAGB Project team members Jenn Richards and Carin Johnson first explained why the program was needed, especially in the city of Philadelphia. They explained that GSEP serves only 4% of the girl population in the city (which is less than half of the market share of our other counties), and older girls do not realize they are welcome to join. Plus, the highest awards programs have a rather complicated process to navigate to officially earn a Silver or Gold Award. Before launching the program, a tremendous amount of research was conducted to understand the needs of the girls, adults, and communities. The team learned they needed to not only support the girls in their leadership journeys but also the adult volunteers who were providing guidance to the girls.

In MY25, participants attended 12 free three-hour in-person workshops. The team recruited 209 girls from 93 schools and 48 zip codes, 79 of whom were new to Girl Scouting. We had a 63% retention rate. The team offered monthly training to the volunteer facilitators on the upcoming curriculum three days before the girl workshops so that the volunteers would be confident in the materials. Of the 146 girls who completed the 12 workshops, 78 submitted Silver or Gold Award project proposals, and 31 awards were earned by May. The team and volunteers are continuing to support the other girls who are still working on their projects.

Surveys were sent to the girls, caregivers, and volunteers for feedback three times (pre-, during, and post-program). All the groups agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the CAGB program.

Year Two plans include hosting the program in Allentown and in Reading (for a smaller number of girls in each community) as well as continuing to support the girls in Philadelphia from Year One. The team will also continue with a new cohort of girls in Philadelphia. Plus, the team will now include the GSEP Girl Experience Specialist responsible for the Highest Awards, scholarships, and other older girl leadership opportunities so that all the highest awards efforts are integrated, with the goal of having more volunteers involved at the Service Unit level.

### **Closing Remarks**

On behalf of the Board Chair, Treasurer Jen Fox first thanked Bunmi Ojikutu, Ellen Iobst, Joann Gonzalez-Generals, Judy Freyer, Fari Azad, and Kathy Killian for attending and participating in GirlzDay.

Take the Lead nominations are now open. The fourth annual Golf for Girl Scouts event is being held on September 8 at Saucon Valley Country Club.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.