



REALIGNMENT NEWS is Back!

In December 2006 we transitioned **REALIGNMENT NEWS** from a regular communication focusing entirely on realignment to *Strategy News*, an “every six weeks” communication covering all aspects of our Core Business Strategy. *Strategy News* has been well received — however, we received many requests for the return of **REALIGNMENT NEWS** for the timely, interactive dialogue that was helpful to many in the early stages of our realignment effort. As a result, **REALIGNMENT NEWS** is back!

We are picking-up where we left off, with Issue No. 29. Beginning with this issue, an edition of **REALIGNMENT NEWS** arrive in your email box on Tuesday, every-other-week. As in the past, your questions will drive much of the content. Please send questions that you would like addressed to: realignmentnews@girlscouts.org. We will answer as many questions as we can in this format — others will be answered individually.

REALIGNMENT NEWS will cover subjects of interest to all Board Chairs and CEOs, whether you are beginning the process — in the middle of the process — or have completed the process. We expect that a portion of each edition will be devoted to questions from Board Chairs and CEOs who are providing leadership to our newest councils.

This edition includes a general update on council mergers, a report on lessons learned from the first councils to complete realignment, a brief report on recent realignment training, updated information from MetLife regarding GSUSA’s Sponsored Life and Dental Insurance Plans and a complete listing of new councils. The Q&A section will be reintroduced in the next edition.

ITEMS of INTEREST ➤

General Update

Two hundred (200) of 280 councils slated to realign have started realignment, completed realignment, or have taken training and are ready to begin. Eighty (80) councils remain. Here’s the update:



Six additional councils were formed between April 1 and May 1. The new councils are:

- Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas
- Girl Scouts of South Carolina – Mountains to Midlands
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho
- Girl Scouts Heart of Pennsylvania
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania

Five additional “new” councils will join the list in June and July. Those new councils include:

- Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York
- Girl Scouts Heart of Central California
- Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore
- Girl Scouts of Northeast Kansas and Northwest Missouri
- Girl Scouts – Dakota Horizons.

By October 1st, another 20 councils will have been formed. This will bring the total number of new councils to 35 — formed from 128 current councils.

CEO Search: Twenty-three (23) CEOs have been appointed. Eighteen (18) have Girl Scout CEO or Board backgrounds — four appointed after a national search. Six (6) are from outside Girl Scouting and a result of a national search. Ten councils are currently in the CEO Search process; 8 are using GSUSA’s J. Walter Thompson Executive Search Services — 2 are using other outside search firms.

Lessons from Early Adopters

GSUSA employed Dovetail Associates to interview co-chairs of Council Realignment Committees that were scheduled to complete realignment by July 1, 2007. Interviews took place over a three week period in March/April. Seventy percent (70%) of early adopters continued with a positive attitude in embracing change while 30% encountered greater difficulty than they initially anticipated. All commented that the process took much more time than expected. The full summary report will be posted on the Online Council Network (OCN) by the end of May. Here are some suggestions from these realignment pioneers:

On Forming the Council Realignment Committee (CRC): It is important to dedicate initial meetings to addressing ways of work and the decision making process. Those who preferred “minimal process” or endeavored to truncate the process found that issues kept developing. Spending time at the front-end to form the group and establish ways of work is time well spent.



The most frequently mentioned challenge encountered in forming the Council Realignment Committee was mediating interpersonal issues. This was mentioned by 58% of all co-chairs. Cultural differences between councils exaggerated territorial issues throughout the process. Co-chairs also stressed how important it is to select committee members with a positive predisposition to the realignment process.

The second greatest challenge mentioned was leadership conflict. Some CEOs had difficulty separating personal interests from the needs of the future entity. The dual-leadership role sometimes lead to difficulty in enforcing agreed upon rules and assuring that everyone had an equal voice.

Some of these problems were mitigated with the use of a facilitator to run meetings so that all CRC members would have an equal voice.

Respondents also noted that CRCs should focus on governance and legal issues early during the process since these issues often drive the timeline for everything else.

Decision Making: Many noted that the process of deciding how decisions would be made was the most important issue in the realignment process and that insuring that all voices were heard, appreciated, and understood consumed the greatest portion of the co-chairs energy. Respondents indicated that GSUSA staff or a consultant was useful in guiding the decision making process.

Many felt that agreement on a decision-making timeline was essential to moving the group forward. Co-chairs emphasized the importance of keeping disagreements within the confines of the committee. They felt it was important to leave each meeting in agreement about what messages would be shared. Most major conflict resulted from one council deciding to seek a change in a decision that had already been made by the full committee.

Policy: Sixty seven percent (67%) indicated that they initiated policy work with a side-by-side comparison of each council's policy in a particular area. Looking back, 20% felt that that process hampered their creativity.

In setting policy, early adopters emphasized the need to constantly compare their vision of the new council and their plan for its organizational culture to policy development. Going forward, they suggest that CRCs keep policies flexible to accommodate operational needs that cannot be anticipated.

Management Challenges: The largest management challenge, noted by 63% of respondents, was dealing with staff angst. Clear and transparent communication with staff and volunteers helped this situation. Many felt that moving the CEO search forward to the earliest possible point would be most effective in retaining staff. Similar retention and severance packages also increased morale. Holding joint staff meetings and meetings of like staff groups also helped.



Other Advice: Co-chairs cautioned that the division between governance and operations can become unclear during the realignment process. It was suggested that CRCs defer as much of the operational decision making as possible until the new Board of Directors and new CEO have been determined.

When negative resistance is encountered by future CRCs, early adopters suggested that the committee answer questions as fully and transparently as possible; then move on. One individual often shut down the entire process when too much emphasis was placed on consensus. Co-chairs noted that some members don't feel they have been heard unless a decision is made in the direction of their wishes.

Report on April Realignment Training

The most recent Realignment Training was held April 13–15 at Macy. Leadership teams from 58 councils participated. The training received very high ratings with 48.6% rating it Excellent, 46% rating it Very Good, and 5.4% rating it Good. Information provided by early adopters through both formal presentations and informal dialogue was a great contributor to the training's success.

GSUSA Sponsored Life and Dental Insurance Programs – MetLife

In order to expedite the process of enrolling, moving employees, canceling employees and assuring that billing procedures are in place, merging councils must contact MetLife at least 30 days before the effective date of the merger. There are implications for both active employees as well as potential Cobra coverage.

MetLife contacts for assistance:

Dana LaBounty at (315) 792-5901 or dlabounty@metlife.com
Marlene Clapp at (315) 792-5908 or mclapp@metlife.com
Fax Number for Dana and Marlene – (315) 792-5830

Dana and Marlene should be contacted in regard to:

- Moving employees from one council to another
- Enrolling or deleting employees from coverages
- Billing to councils

Saurabh Patel at (631) 499-3647 or spatel@metlife.com

Saurabh should be contacted in regards to:

- Council Life and Dental Insurance Plan designs
- Councils that do not have MetLife coverages

The GSUSA contact for GSUSA's Sponsored benefit plans is Rich Berman at 212-852-8121 or rberman@girlscouts.org.



Looking Ahead to the Next Issue

The next issue of *REALIGNMENT NEWS* will be sent on Tuesday, May 22. Content will include information on training plans for new Board Chairs and CEOs, announcement of Realignment Training for the remaining 80 councils, and our ever-popular Q&A section. Please send questions, comments, and/or content suggestions to realignmentnews@girlscouts.org.

Contact Information for New Councils

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana, Inc.
1800 North Meridian Street, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46202
(Tel) 317-924-3450 (Fax) 317-924-2976
www.girlscoutsindiana.org
Deborah Hearn Smith, CEO

Formerly
Covered Bridge
Hoosier Capital
Sycamore
Treaty Line
Wapehani

Edward Armantrout, Board Chair

Girl Scouts Wilderness Road Council (name pending)
2277 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505
(Tel) 859-293-2621 (Fax) 859-299-3692
www.gswrc.org
Anne M. Weston, CEO

Formerly
Licking Valley
Wilderness Road

Natalie Wilson, Board Chair

Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas
202 East Madison Avenue
Harlingen, TX 78550
(Tel) 956-425-2388 (Fax) 956-425-9602
www.gstotc.org
Lea A. Peacock, CEO

Formerly
Paisano
Tip of Texas

Valerie Peisen, Board Chair



Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina
2412 Pisgah Road
Florence, SC 29501
(Tel) 843-669-5174 (Fax) 843-669-08
www.girlscoutsofeasternsouthcarolina.org
Deborah D. Poindexter, CEO

Ruth Metzger, Board Chair

Formerly
Carolina Low Country
Pee Dee Area

Girl Scouts of South Carolina – Mountains to Midlands
419 The Parkway
P.M.B. 229
Greer, SC 29650
(Tel) 864-297-5890
info@old96girlscouts.org
Penny Cooper, CEO

Karen Mitchell, Board Chair

Formerly
Congaree Area
Old 96
Piedmont Area

Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas
6001 Summerside Drive
Dallas, TX 75252
(Tel) 972-349-2400
www.gsnetx.org
Gwonda Washington, Acting CEO

Lynne Mabry, Board Chair

Formerly
Cross Timbers
Red River Valley
Tejas

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois
2001 2nd Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201
(Tel) (309-788-0833
www.girlscouts-mvc.org
Diane Nelson, CEO

Mary Lagerblade, Board Chair

Formerly
Conestoga
Little Cloud
Mississippi Valley
Shining Trails



Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho
1404 N. Ash Street
Spokane, WA 99201
(Tel) 509-747-8091
www.gsewni.org
Pam Lund, CEO

Formerly
Inland Empire
Mid-Columbia

Teri Wessels, Board Chair

Girl Scouts Heart of Pennsylvania
350 Hale Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17104
(Tel) 717-233-1656
www.pennlaurel.org
Jeanette Archer Simons, CEO

Formerly
Hemlock
Penn Laurel
Penn's Woods
Scranton Pocono

E. Lee Beard, Board Chair

Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania
330 Manor Road
Miquon, PA 19444
(Tel) 215-564-4657
www.gssp.org
Ann Meredith, CEO

Formerly
Freedom Valley
Great Valley
Southeastern Pennsylvania

Andrea Kramer, Board Chair
