

**GMSA Board Meeting**  
**7-21-14 ~ 9:30am to 12:30pm**  
**Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT**



Meeting started at 10am because we had to change locations due to original meeting room having broken elevator.



**GROUP UPDATES**



**Friends Helping Friends**

Members are preparing to present at the SABE national conference



**Capitol Advocates Together**

Members are preparing to present at the SABE national conference

**Communication Alliance** - Group is presenting on presuming competence to agency staff at WCMH. This will be a run-through for future presentations to high school students. Three members, Tracy Thresher, Scott Brody and Kris Medina are also presenting next week in Syracuse at the Inclusion Summer Institute.



**Speak Up Addison County** – on July 12 and 13 members volunteered for St.



Steven's Church peasant market. This fundraising effort funds church activities and grants. Group members helped out as a way to say thank you because the church lets us use their

space. On August 28 we are having a Speak Up group picnic in Middlebury. Antoine and Delsie are available to teach their Love and Marriage workshop for other groups.



**Strong Advocacy Voices and You** - Just had a BBQ, raffle and bake sale to raise money for Voices and Choices conference for next year.

**Vermont Choices** - Doing a carnival in September 9<sup>th</sup> to raise money for members to attend the national conference. Just held officers elections:



- Brett Sweeny – Sargent of Arms
- Levi – president
- Buster and Rosie – treasurer
- Josh – vice president

**Next Step Self-Advocates** has been extremely busy. A representative from the St Albans LGBT group for people with disabilities came to speak to group. Trainers from the mental health division of NCSS spent time with the group presenting therapeutic options training.



The group just formed a committee that will be doing long term planning for the group. And members collected 173 pounds of food for a local food drive. Finally, State Representative, Brian Savage is coming to our group to teach us you how to use the legislative website and register people to vote.

**Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy** – Our member planted a garden and will be donating what we produce to our local food shelf. The group is having a picnic on August 8<sup>th</sup> and invited state legislators to our cook out. Invited are State Representative Linda Martin and State Representative Shap Smith.



**Our Drop In Center** hosted a picnic for parents and home care providers. The parents of 3 Self-Advocates participated in this July event. The group used money from their fundraising efforts to buy equipment for outdoor activities like croquet, Frisbee, water floats. Everyone brought a potluck item and enjoyed the games. This was the first time this group included family members in their events.



**Advocates for Action** - We will be attending the national conference. We are planning a cook out for September

**Randolph Area Peer Support** member were present.

**VOICES AND CHOICES CONFERENCE** – we brainstormed the Pros and Cons of having the 2015 conference at the Killington Hotel.

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liked the food and the restaurant</li> <li>- Welcoming climate, better customer services</li> <li>- Liked that the WIFI was free</li> <li>- Swimming pool and hot tub – had a lift and was accessible – was a nice place to spend time with friends</li> <li>- Getting room keys in a timely manner</li> <li>- Beautiful location</li> <li>- Seemed more organized</li> <li>- Liked the rooms we had a kitchen and pull out couch</li> <li>- Hotel was smaller and the layout was better – rooms easier to find than the Sheraton a lot closer this time – not far away</li> <li>- Liked that the hotel was willing to accommodate person’s needs and let us check out later</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Never want to go anywhere that is not big enough for everybody</li> <li>- Too small – over 200 GMSA members and allies were not able to participate.</li> <li>- Traveling was too far for some</li> <li>- Bumpy, not well maintained road to hotel</li> <li>- Quiet room had a buzzing sound</li> <li>- Felt crowded with too many people</li> <li>- Hard to be in one of the rooms that came from the ballroom because servers cleared table, had to wait to get AV equipment set up</li> </ul>

We considered getting a bid from **Jay Peak** but unfortunately their ballroom only has room for 425 people and we need space for a minimum of 600 in the ballroom and 10 breakout rooms

**June Board Retreat** - We talked about becoming a non-profit organization. We decided we need to write down a list of the things GMSA believes. We broke up into small groups to discuss what we believe as GMSA. Here are the group responses:

- Involvement in the community
- Access to Assistive technology
- Access to community supports
- Employed in local community
- No sheltered workshops
- Competitive employment, chance to earn raises and have
- Real careers
- Live in least restricted setting
- Promoting diversity

- Freedom to fail – dignity of risk
- Respectful language
- Support workers respect everybody, are kind, caring, work with you
- Being listened to
- Self-advocates make final decision
- Everyone gets accommodations they need to participate
- Communicate with local groups
- Grow and learn from other self-advocates
- Being mentors for each other
- Everyone has their own voice
- Right to their own opinion
- Right to work
- Want to work together with moving loads of opinions that demean all humans
- Always give people benefit of the doubt when assessing one’s capability
- Always presume competence!
- More choices
- Think for ourselves
- Make own decision
- Speak up for ourselves
- Rights to opportunities
- Don’t disrespect others input
- We all can accomplish goals – believe in ourselves
- Part of the community
- Jobs – work environment
- Volunteering
- Everybody has a voice
- Our communication is valued by others in our groups and all meetings and we are invited to represent GMSA on state and national levels

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE is OCTOBER 2014** - Reminders about the need to register by August 15<sup>th</sup> and buy plane tickets as soon as possible. We can let people know by end of July who is getting DD Council scholarships.

**JUNE RETREAT**

We reviewed the notes from the June GMSA retreat and voted on things listed.

**Vote #1 – when to have board meetings?**



Linda Monette from Advocates from Action made a motion to have 11 meetings per year. 4 of the meetings will be board meetings. So only board members will get to vote at the 4 official board meetings. But everyone can come to the meeting and give feedback to their representative. Motion was seconded by Craig Davis from Speak Up Addison County. Motion was carried without opposition.

**Vote #2** – Voted to change job titles for GMSA staff.



Linda Monette made a motion to change Max’s job title from Outreach Coordinator to Outreach Director. Kris Medina seconded the motion. Motion without opposition.



Adam Moztzierz made a motion to change Skye’s job title from Program and Development Coordinator to Program and Development Director. Craig Davis Medina seconded the motion. Motion without opposition.



Adam Moztzierz made a motion to change Topper’s job title from State Coordinator to Administrative Director. Craig Davis Medina seconded the motion. Motion without opposition.



Linda Monette made a motion to change Nicole’s job title from Advocacy Coordinator to Advocacy Director. Kris Medina seconded the motion. Motion without opposition.

**THE BIG DECISION**

VOTING - We have been asked by Rhode Island Self-Advocacy to co-host the next National Conference. We would hold it in Providence, RI in 2016. We would hire a company to help with the administrative stuff. Phone meetings once a month. Lots of volunteering to do. We would need to apply by the end of August.



Lori Jones motioned that GMSA help RI apply for and host the national conference. Seconded by Nicole LeBlanc. The motion carried without opposition.

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close to home, can drive to conference</li> <li>- Less money to raise</li> <li>- VT and RI working together to take a stand on having a conference up in the New England area</li> <li>- We would have more people to help us with the conference</li> <li>- VT and RI have an awesome work ethic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a lot of work</li> <li>- a lot of prep planning</li> <li>- we would take a year off from Voices and Choices conference</li> </ul>

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People can work on leadership skills</li><li>- we could make some money</li><li>- we will become more famous if we do this</li></ul>	

Meeting ended at 12:35pm