



GMSA Board Meeting
10/26/15 -9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT



GMSA Officers: Randy Lizotte, Lori Jones, Levi Gardner.

Board Members: Kaiya Andrews, Danielle Viau, Linda Monette, Beverly Williams, Raymond Gordon, Joel Marshall, Heather Raymond, Erik Johnson, Conor Cleveland.

Self-Advocates: Josh Dumias, Nick Zechinelli, Brook Merrill, Mark Preman, Robert Martin II, Daniel Davis, Hillary Christian, Lona Merrill, Tesha Thibodeau, Michelle Haberern, Margarie Burns, Cristy Golec, Patrick Flinn, Cy Trombley, Marilyn Shank, Tara Audet, Debbie Demars, Jon Ingalls, Antoine Polgar, Craig Davis, Kris Medina.

GMSA Staff: Karen Topper, Max Barrows, Nicole LeBlanc.

Allies: Tracey Robar, Amy Anderson, Edward Thorndike, Nancy Randall, Tim Cota, William Gilbert, Kyle Griggs, Mark Schroeter, Paula Collins, Tammy Maberry, Mary Ruffing, Deb Savery, Maryellen Sudol, Danielle Cote, Melanie Bangoura, Brittany McAdams, Darlene Deroehn, Colin Provencher.



AGENDA #1: Group Check Ins

Communication Alliance: The peer leaders in our group use supported typing. We were approached by a group of people from NH who want to form a self-advocacy group like ours, one that is geared for people who type to communicate. We have been



working with them to so they can form a group of their own. Our members are making blog to get the word out about supported typing.

CAT: Talked about the GALA and the ways their group will volunteer to



help run the event. They discussed possible workshops to teach at Voices and Choices conference. The group is pleased to report that an ally won a beer brewing contest and donated the prize money (\$1,500) to the CAT group.



Champlain Voices: They had their legislative lunch. It was awesome. They prepared a presentation where each of the advocates could ask questions and talk about themselves.

COPS: They had a lunch in and did board member elections.

GATSA: On October 28th, they did a training for CIS staff at LCMH. They



sold raffle tickets for their fundraiser. For a community service project, the group decided to use some of the money they raised to put together food baskets and donate them to

organizations that support people in need.



Speak Up Addison County: They applied for and

received grant money that allows their member to take art classes at the Vermont State Craft Center at Frog Hollow in Middlebury.



Next Step: The group set up a display about self-advocacy at a Core Transition Fair at their local high school. They also had a meeting to discuss ways to

support self-advocacy with special educators at the high school.

And it is the end of October and 'tis is the season of Halloween dance parties. Four groups were busy organizing their annual events: **BSAC, Advocates for Action, Vermont Choices and RAMB.**

Ice Breaker: Everyone wrote three positive things about themselves on a piece of paper. Then they crumpled up that paper and had a snowball fight with the papers. Once the snowball fight had finished everyone found one snowball and kept it. You then had to try and figure out whose snowball you had in your hand.



Candidate Speeches from people nominated to be an officer

President



Randy Lizotte: I've been your board President for I don't know how many years. I don't know what else to say that hasn't already been said in the past except I trust the people around this table to make the decision that they think is right. Most of you have seen my leadership skills and how I run the meetings. For those of you who don't know my leading skills, I hope to be able to have the opportunity to show you.



Kaiya Andrews: Hi. My name is Kaiya Andrews and I am running for President. I feel like it's time for a new vision and new leadership in the office. I think I would be a good candidate due to my experience. I've been in Green Mountain Self-Advocates for 6 years. I've been with the local group called CAT, Capitol Advocates Together. I've been a self-advocate and worked my way up to President now for 4 years. I've also been involved in different committees and involved with the State House. I am working on the IHPP which is a healthcare committee right now. I

attended leadership skill trainings this year. Through all my experience in training, I've learned and strengthened my skills to become a better leader and Self-Advocate. My goal ever since I was elected President for CAT, is to help Self-Advocates become better leaders for themselves. I am proud to say that I am making progress with my group and helping them succeed and achieve. My political agenda includes the following; More youth leaders, and more training and advocates in the community.

Vice President

Danielle Viau: I've been doing BSAC meetings and going to them for 2 years. I am running for Vice-President. I am committed to coming to the meetings. I am willing to work and speak up and check in on the agenda to see how things are going. I will do what I am asked to do and help when needed.



Levi Gardner: I would like to run for Vice-President. My commitment is to help the President and attend every meeting. Please vote for Levi Gardner as your Vice-President. Thank you.



Robert Martin II: I am running for Vice-President. I am willing to help the President if he is not there. Of course, if he's not there, I'll run the meeting.



Josh Dumais: Hi Guys.

I want to run for Vice-President.

I'll be a good Vice-President.

I will help the President and the other officers. Thank you.

Secretary

Cristy Golec: I would like to run for secretary because I want to help and be a part of the team. I believe I would be a great leader and I believe I can help support the President with ideas. I would find it to be very important to be in this position.



Lori Jones: Hi. My name is Lori Jones and I am currently running for secretary and I would like to be secretary again for GMSA. I am good at what I do and I am also currently the secretary for GATSA, Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy.



Treasurer



Raymond Gordon: Hello fellow Self-Advocates. My name is Ray Gordon and I am the board member for GATSA. I've been a member of the board for a few months and the President of GATSA for a little less than a year. As treasurer, I will work hand in hand with the other officers to come up with a comprehensive but understandable budget plus I will be available to talk to via email or text. Do not hesitate to give me your input or suggestions.

GALA: GMSA staff went over the GALA handouts that were passed out in envelopes. The challenge is for everyone in the room to take one of the fundraising packets and to think of someone in your life that frequently donates money to organizations. Give them the information and talk to them about making an annual donation GMSA.

Hot Seat Activity: Danielle was in the “hot seat” this time. People got the chance to ask her various questions.

Leadership Series: Randy described the VT leadership series. You learn about state house advocacy, talking to legislators and general leadership skills. You get to go to a hotel for three weekends. The hotel is paid for. We are looking for 8 members to go this year. It is half self-advocates and half parents. You do not have to stay overnight if you do not want to. You will have dinner with everyone. Max and Topper will be there. Anyone can apply to do it. You can bring this information back to your local group so the people in your group can decide if they want to apply or not.

Alternate Board Members: Randy asked how everyone’s discussion about having alternate members went.

Snow Day: Discussion about how to handle snow days. What we do now is put a message on the office phone that would tell you whether the meeting was canceled or to travel at your own risk. 802-229-2600 is the number to call after 5:00 pm on Sunday night if you want to see if the meeting is canceled or not. We will also send out emails and put it on Facebook.