

GMSA Board Meeting
12/15/2014 ~ 9:30am to 12:30pm
Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT



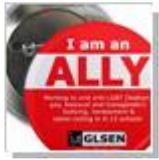
Self-Advocates:

Officer (1): Lori Jones

Board Members (15): Erik Johnson, Danielle Viau, Joel Marshall, Rachel Colby, Dan Dunn, Michael McDonald, Linda Monette, Kaiya Andrews, James Paradis, Heather Raymond, Conor Cleveland, Raymond Gordon, Patty Grassette, Taylor Terry, Sarah George (via Skype).

Members (13): Levi Gardner, Lorna Merrill, Cy Trombley, Debbie Demars, Amanda Bianchi, Nick Zechinelli, Dan Davis, Adam Moztzierz, Lauren Tewhill, Brandon Magarine, Tracy Thresher, Cheyenne Martin, Robert Martin 2nd.

GMSA Staff (5): Max Barrows, Hillary Clark, Nicole LeBlanc, Karen Topper and Skye Peebles.



Allies (16): Emily Michaud, Jayne Weber, Sue Hawley, Patti Mack, Danielle Cote, Barbara Bruno, Rich Atkinson, Richard Young, April McCandless, Heidi Lorenz, Janet Fuhrmeister, Cindy Grant, Paula Collins, Amy Anderson, Fletcher Dean, Linda Bellville, Kathy Bent, Nicole Taliman.

What Members Are Proud Of Accomplishing in 2014

- Visiting 4 new states
- Getting my own place, owning my own trailer and getting my learner's permit.
- Going to the Voices and Choices conference.
- Trying to lose weight.
- Continuing with Zumba.
- Taking pictures of my miniature horse.
- Proud of going to Johnson State College, this is my second year.
- I am proud that I am now working on my own at Kinney Drugs and I started a new job there.
- I did Special Olympics bowling.
- I am proud to be a mom.
- I am proud of where I am living.
- I am very proud of being an elected reporter for my group (GMSA Board member)
- I got a new home.
- In my professional work I have traveled to quite a few places. I worked with my colleagues presenting on the topics of Presuming Competence and typing to communicate.
- Getting an apartment and living on my own. Finally having a girlfriend. I am



the Vice President of Champlain Voices supported by Champlain Community Services.

- I have my first job, it started in June. I work at Price Chopper. I am proud to be President of Vermont Choices.
- I visited another new state and spoke at South Carolina's self-advocacy conference as their keynote. I am also proud of presenting to UVM medical students about interacting with people with disabilities. I am proud of getting together with Clarissa Kripke (a doctor from CA who wants to make health care better for people with disabilities) and talking in Oklahoma about national healthcare.
- Proud of being on the board for HCRS

ALLIES said...

- Blessed to have 2 granddaughters living next to me
- Glad to come to these GMSA statewide meetings
- 32 years working as an advocate; only advocate in my agency who is willing to work nights and get people out to socialize.
- Proud of Max Barrows who graduated from the high school where I work.
- Proud that I did a better job about being an aunt this year.
- I grew tomatillos, new crops this year.
- I am proud of my garden!
- Grandkids coming from Oregon for Christmas.
- 10 year anniversary of playing poker with my ex-students.



2015 Resolutions ~ Our Dreams for Next Year

- Want to show my miniature horse at Lamoille County Field Days and Lyndonville Fair.
- I want to try to do an internship.
- I want to save money
- To keep losing weight and going to Curves.
- To go to Voices and Choices
- Being a better mom.
- Our group wants to do more work with youth in the schools this year's.
- I just got approved for more services and I am working on getting a community support person.
- I want to go to Disney World.
- To keep advocating.
- A calm, meditative way of being is my New Year's Resolution.
- Relying on being more of a self-advocate and being more independent.
- To try to get to all the GMSA meetings next year!
- I would like to move (out of my parent's house) into an apartment and be on my own.
- I want to find my own place and get my driver's license

- Want to move forward about being a better self-advocate and representing people with disabilities on the national level

Allies

- I need to connect with my mom (who is about to turn 80) at least once a month.
- Moving things around in my house right now. Looking to share my home with a person with a disability.
- Want to keep working on reaching out to people in my life who I lost track of and express gratitude for them being part of my life.
- Keep going to the gym
- Help the guys I work with become more visible in the community



Local Group Updates

RAMB

- We had elections and will have a holiday party on Wednesday.
- Our group “gleaned” that is we collected leftover crops from farmers' fields and brought the leftover food to food shelves.

Communication Alliance

- I should congratulate Kris Medina for giving 2 keynote addresses this year. He represented the CA and all of those with disabilities.
- I would like our group to move forward with the Learning Collaborative. We need to work with youth in the schools.
- This year our group started a new project called the Learning Collaborative. The purpose is to teach people about inclusion and presuming competence. We want to teach the world we are not stupid.

Champlain Voices

- We are here today attending our first board meeting! Hurray!
- Our group has a new ally and we are selecting goals with more of a focus on advocacy.

SAVY

- I am proud of the fundraising my group has done with year.

We apologize - the notes are missing updates from 8 groups: Vermont Choices, BSAC, Friends Helping Friends, CAT, Advocates in Action, Windsor Self-Advocates, GATSA and Families First.



Feedback on the GMSA Gala which was on 12/6/14 at Montpelier Elks Club

What was your favorite part?

- The song called Gangnam Style!
- The food was great.
- Dancing and Singing Happy Birthday
- Hearing my sister say “I love what you do.”
- Good to have it in the holiday season – people are in a giving mood
- Some groups used their fundraising money to pay for people to come and their allies.
- Well organized. My favorite part was the slideshow up on the screen.
- I loved seeing people – I came from Brattleboro.
- Wonderful to have peoples’ families come

What suggestions do you have to make it better?

- Invite more people.
- Have it closer to Burlington.
- Better time of year – December was a bad time of year, weather was bad.
- Try to get a discount rate at a hotel so people can stay over
- Better job of checking people in at registration
- November might be a better time of year?

How was the food? Most said the food was great; One person said the Chicken was cold and dry; Didn’t know there was water/ drinks available.

How were the speeches? One person said too long. Most others agreed that the Speeches were not too long, not too short. Fantastic – my Mom and I agreed. It was perfectly planned.

Silent Auction feedback. Was great. Looked like people put a lot of effort into it. Next time get more stuff from Burlington area and areas outside of Montpelier.

Why didn’t more Self-Advocates buy tickets? Almost all of our group (CAT) came. Too far for people. Some couldn’t find a ride. People didn’t hear about it in

enough time. (Staff pointed out that information was available for 3 months prior to event). Tickets too expensive especially if they wanted to take somebody.

General Feedback:

- Too far for people to come.
- One idea – we should make a DVD of the past 20 years of all the conferences and all the things your group has done. Get some feedback from folks about the gala.
- Payment should be PayPal.
- Best time of year? – early November (gives us 6 months to organize after the conference), Spring is hard because of the conference, September,
- Day of the week? Is Friday better than a Saturday?
 - Friday is a continuation of that day's support
 - Saturday is a harder day to staff



Leadership Training will be held over 3 weekends. We need to pick 7 advocates to attend

- We need to know who is interested by the end of January. Give Topper or Randy a call on their cell phones.
- Will be 3 weekends – one in March, one in April, one in June. You can bring a support person with you.
- The GMSA Officers (with support from GMSA staff) will pick the people. Would be great to have new board members consider doing this training.
- Testimonials:
 - Nicole – I did this in 2010. You listen to speakers and get homework. You develop a plan for how to do a project, picking a mentor.
 - Lori – I did it in 2012. It's a lot of work to learn the words to talk to your legislators. It was fun.
- Topper handed out a handout about the training.
- We don't know where it will be this year.

Board Member Training: What Skills are good to Have to be a Board Member

Qualities:



- Be reliable
- Support others
- Respectful
- Compassionate
- Passionate
- Caring
- Outgoing
- Creative thinker
- Trustworthy
- Have an open mind

Skills and Knowledge

- Willing to work with previous board members
- Need to understand finances
- Need to understand how to do evaluations
- Learn Robert's Rules of Order – how to come to agreement when you disagree
- Eager to Participate
- Leadership skills
- Know how to be a great communicator
- Information gathering
- Be a good example of a self-advocate
- How to communicate to the group the whole discussion
- Get comfortable asking questions
- Have a support person for help
- Make eye contact
- Build social skills
- Get to know other people
- Break out of your shell, speak up
- Put out a survey for members
- Make sure each group has a strong reporter back from GMSA meetings
- Talk to others in nearby groups and encourage attendance at GMSA meetings
- Encourage ride sharing
- Know your responsibilities
- Want to help others
- Stay at the same pace as the whole group
- Share your group's opinions
- Learn to negotiate when there are disagreements
- Know how to speak up for yourself
- Learn to teach about what GMSA does for others
- Learn how to properly run a meeting



#1 Work with Schools – Ideas for Activities

- The Sub-Committee is the #1 delegating specific people to create plans and details. Needs to have members who are really committed to generate different plans and to do work.
- How do we plug into what is already started?
- Who do we already know in the schools that can get the doors open for us?

- Local groups should brainstorm new ideas – do a little outreach before going to the schools.

#2 Get People Outside the Disability World to Know about GMSA

- Need to get parents involved
- Work with others
- Work with schools – get them involved
- Learn how to educate people about GMSA
- We needed to find ways to get the word out there.
- Make poster boards, fliers, pictures to get the information out there about what we do.

#3 Connect with People with Disabilities Who Are Not Yet Part of the Self-Advocacy Movement

- Newspapers, internet, public forum fishbowls
- Front Porch forums
- Go on the radio to talk about self-advocacy
- Have a booth with info about self-advocacy
- Start a small committee to get the word out in hospital settings
- Make pens with our info on it
- Deliver stuff to places, hang fliers, etc
- Make a video telling people what we are like and all about and what stuff we have learned from GMSA
- Have more fundraisers so that people without disabilities can learn what we are and what we do- for example: do something where we partner with other organizations (for example humane society) to raise awareness about what we do.