

GMSA Board Meeting
9/29/2014 ~ 9:30am to 12:30pm
Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT



36 Self-Advocates:

Officers: Randy Lizotte, Nicole Villemaire, Lori Jones.

Board Members: Kaiya Andrews, Erik Johnson, Danielle Viau, Dan Dunn, Linda Monette, James Paradis, Heather Raymond, Rachel Colby, Conor Cleveland.

Members: Jeremy Chaim, Levi Gardner, Robert Martin II, Patricia Gibbons, Margarie Burns, Lona Marroll, Carol Cole, Cy Trombley, Amy Guinard, Raymond Gordon, Dan Davis, Tiffany Martinez, Debbie Demars, Dureen Mason, Marilyn Shank, Amanda Bianchi, Barbara Abbott, Nick Zechinelli, Joel Nelson, Tracey Thresher, Rachel MacMartin.

GMSA Staff: Kris Medina, Max Barrows, Hillary Clark, Nicole LeBlanc, Kyle Moriarty, Karen Topper and Skye Peebles

19 Allies: Emily Chaud, Tonja Mattfeldt, Jayne Weber, Stephanie Decesare, Sue Hawley, Paula Collins, Skye Peebles, Patti Mack, James Gordin, Danielle Cote, Fletcher Dean, Barbara Bruno, Jeanette Hurdle, Amy Anderson, Janet Fuhrmeister, Richard Young, Leigh Descoteaux, Rich Atkinson.



Group Updates

Friends Helping Friends



- Getting ready for SABE conference. Helping to teach 2 workshops
- Want to team up with another group to do a dinner dance in the future.
- Starting a "Living On Your Own" support group

Communication Alliance

- They have a learning collaborative preparing to present in schools



Capitol Advocates Together



Had a dinner for parents of our group members. 5 parents attended. Many members don't get services so self-advocacy group is the only connection to peer support. If other groups are interested in doing a family event, CAT can help you plan and give advice and GMSA could give some money to help pay for food. The dinner was part of our collaboration with Vermont Family Network. Parents shared how self-advocacy has helped their sons and daughters.

RAMB · Members of this group attend high school at U-32, Harwood, Williamstown, Spaulding

Our Drop In Center (Newport)



- Sold RADA (knives, pizza pans) and made \$1300. Having Halloween party on 10/31.
- Had a picnic for parents and home care providers. We used fundraised money to buy equipment for outdoor activities like croquet, Frisbee, water floats. Everyone brought a potluck item



Next Step Self-Advocates

- Went to Direct Support Professionals event in Montpelier; held a movie night; Heather passed her driver's permit test; and a large group going to the national conference with 4 peer leaders co-presenting workshops.
- Doing a training of "Look Through Our Eyes" for Special Educators in Franklin and Grand Isle counties.
- We had an agency-wide food drive. We collected 233 pounds of food. We went and visited food shelves and decided to do a food drive before the holidays because there is always a need. We made up posters, got 4 bins and placed them at 4 agency buildings. The food is picked up every Thursday and brought to the food shelf.

GATSA ~ Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy



- This summer our group planted a community garden and will donate the vegetables to our local food shelf. We grew tomatoes, squash, corn, cucumbers, beans and more.
- We are selling cutlery in raise money for Voices and Choices and we sold 77 Little Caesar pizza kits.



Windsor County Self-Advocates

- Working on selling T-Shirts and hosting a Halloween dance
- James' first time going to Oklahoma



BSAC ~ Burlington Self-Advocacy Club

- Doing a fundraiser for the food shelf
- Going to GMSA Board meetings and Danielle Viau is the GMSA Board Representative

Vermont Choices Have members going to Oklahoma & Erik Johnson is the GMSA Board Representative

New Board Members



We reviewed the 3 requirements of board members:

- Active in local group
- Have a developmental disability
- Must be able to attend 4 meetings per year

Local Group Representatives to the GMSA Board include:

- GATSA – Raymond Gordon
- Bennington – Sarah George
- FHF – Rachel Colby
- Communication Alliance – Conor Cleveland
- BSAC – Danielle Viau
- Windsor – James Paradis
- CAT – Kaiya Andrews
- Advocates for Action – Linda Monette
- VT Choices – Eric Johnson
- Newport – Ray Wagner
- RAPS – Dan Dunn
- Next Step – Heather Raymond



Candidate Forums



It is election season! How can we hold candidates accountable for what they say they will do? We are working with the Vermont Workers Center, VCIL and 350 VT to host candidate forums all over the state. Each person got a flyer listing times, dates and locations. We worked in small groups to write stories to use. GMSA provided a form with questions to help write stories.

The group came back into a large group and some people shared their stories for the forum. People talked about issues such as:

- their support services being important especially communication supports
- getting an education in college
- accessibility of crosswalks in Burlington
- need help finding a job, getting transportation
- need help with meals
- need help getting dressed.



We will email out all the information to groups! People found the form really helpful.



Gala for GMSA

New date is 12/6 from 6-10pm at the Montpelier Elks Club.
A meeting to plan the event will happen by conference call.
Skye explained the Silent Auction and Sponsorship Form.

Voices and Choices

The group reviewed a list of pros and cons about having our annual conference at the Sheraton Hotel vs. Killington hotel.



Pros		Cons	
Killington	Sheraton	Killington	Sheraton
Like the space Lots of fun stuff Nice spot More in the middle of the state	Bigger Inclusive – everyone can go Maybe would listen to us more if we chose them	Not enough room for all/ we turned people away because the ballroom is too small	We waited 3 hours for keys Poor service 2 out of 5 years Had to wait in back lobby



Barb Abbot made a motion to have the conference at the Sheraton.
 Seconded by Rachel Colby.
 Local group members talked about how to vote with their board representative.
 · 12 yes · 1 no
 Motion PASSED

We are moving back to the Sheraton! Randy congratulated everyone on a great day.

Working with DS Directors



We already do some events with the DS Directors at the state house. We are applying for a small grant to do more work with the DS directors to educate legislators. What are your ideas about what we could try?

- ★ Have a special event at an agency and invite legislators to come to hear about our issues
- ★ Invite legislators to a board meeting and extend the day
- ★ Do training on our mission and educate people on what is self-advocacy
- ★ Have self-advocates do training on education for legislators
- ★ Invite DS directors to a board meeting to see how well we are doing at GMSA.



Voting

November 7th is Election Day. But you can vote by absentee ballot.

We handed out voting books to everyone and talked about why voting is important. We also talked about where to register to vote, and who can register to vote.

NEXT MEETING: October 27 2014 9:30-12:30 at Vermont Technical College in Red School Building