

Communication and Connection: Helping G.I.R.L.S. Ranch Recruit and Retain Volunteers

by
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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
LIST OF TABLES	ii
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	iv
G.I.R.L.S. RANCH	1-10
Background.....	1-4
Publics	4-10
Girls	5-6
Parents/Guardians	6-7
Organizational Structure	7-8
Staff	8
Board of Directors	8
Volunteers.....	8-9
Donors & Corporate Sponsors	9
Competitors/Other Organizations	9-10
Public Perception.....	10
THESIS STATEMENT	11
PUBLIC RELATIONS.....	11-15
History	11-12
Definition.....	13-15
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS	15-16
A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN.....	16
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.....	16-19
Overview	16-17
Types of Non-Profit Organizations	17-18
For-Profit vs. Non-Profit Organizations	18-19
PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.....	19-21
PUBLIC RELATIONS PROCESS	21-22
RESEARCH	22-30
Overview	22-23
Secondary Research.....	23
Primary Research.....	23-27
Communication Audit	27-29
SWOT Analysis.....	29-30
PLANNING	31-39
Overview	31-32
Findings.....	32-34
Goals and Objectives	34-36
Communication Pieces	36-39

VOLUNTEERS	39-42
Overview	39-40
Volunteer Recruitment and Retention	40-42
THE NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS	42-46
IMPLEMENTATION	46-48
EVALUATION	48-52
Overview	48
Value of Evaluation	48-50
Metrics	50-52
Social Media Campaign	50-51
Letter to Rutherford Cable	51
Feature Article	51-52
Newsletter	52
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS	53
WORKS CITED	54-58
APPENDICES	59-73
Appendix A	59-61
Appendix B	62
Appendix C	63
Appendix D	64-65
Appendix E	66
Appendix F	67-68
Appendix G	69-71
Appendix H	72-73

List of Tables

Table 1: SWOT Analysis	29-30
Table 2: Goals and Objectives.....	35-36

List of Figures

Figure 1: Traditional Nonprofit Organizational Structure	7
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Introduction

A significant number of staggering statistics surround the impact that tough life situations have on young girls locally and nationally. According to figures shared in a graphic on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's website, 31% of girls admit to starving themselves or refusing to eat as a strategy to lose weight. There are 820,000 teen pregnancies each year in the United States and about half as many teen births. Furthermore, the birth rate for teens in Tennessee is 13% higher than the national average. The Tennessee Department of Children Services responds to over 37,000 reports of child abuse or neglect annually, and every month the Rutherford County district attorney's office receives 40-50 child abuse services referrals (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). These statistics and so many more point to a great need in our communities.

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch

Background

Shannon Ritchie founded G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, a 501(c)(3) faith-based nonprofit organization, in 2011. G.I.R.L.S. stands for God In Real Life Situations. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch provides young girls in the Middle Tennessee area who come from hard places, ages 9-17, with a chance to encounter God right where they are, in the midst of tough circumstances (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). After founding G.I.R.L.S. Ranch in 2011, Ritchie spent a year or so raising funds and awareness for the organization, preparing office space and planning the structure of the support groups. In 2012, Ritchie started their first support group and from there, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch began to grow (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch initially started out renting space for an office and support group from Greenhouse Ministries. Ritchie's vision, however, had always been to have a home for the girls to meet in. She says, "I think that the home itself can be kind of therapeutic..." (Ritchie). In

2013/2014, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch started renting space in the home they are in now from another local non-profit organization, Doors of Hope. In 2015, they had been renting from Doors of Hope for about two years, and had come to a point where they needed more space. Thankfully, Doors of Hope was in a position to sell and G.I.R.L.S. Ranch was able to buy and now use all of the home they are in now (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's mission states: "We are dedicated to investing in the emotional and spiritual lives of girls who come from hard places and encourage them to live to their fullest potential." Their vision statement reads: "G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is committed to providing a nonjudgmental, safe, nurturing environment where girls can take part in new life experiences in order to restructure their sense of self and make positive changes that will last a lifetime" (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). Committed staff, some with counseling degrees, and volunteers work with girls who have been through tough life situations such as grief, abuse, homelessness, and violence, and provide a safe environment in which girls can talk through their hurts and struggles, share their hopes, dreams and accomplishments, and grow in their faith in Christ (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's website states, "We believe each story has the opportunity to overcome and thrive in this world" (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). Staff members and volunteers engage girls through various programs including support groups, mentoring, camps and retreats and weekly family dinners. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's ministry allows many of the girls they meet to be a part of a positive, loving family unit for the first time and have what G.I.R.L.S. Ranch refers to as "me too" moments with other girls, recognizing that they are not alone in their struggles. The recognition that they are loved and surrounded by other girls who have experienced many of the

same hurts that they have makes a significant difference in their emotional health and empowers them to keep going when things get hard (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*).

Ritchie developed a passion for working with the demographic she serves through G.I.R.L.S. Ranch when she was a freshman in high school. She says, “God has always wired my heart to work with lower income families.” Through volunteer work and involvement at her church with inner city kids, Ritchie saw a need among this group of people and wanted to learn more and get involved in whatever ways she could (Ritchie). She says, “...I just had this desire and this interest in learning more about that culture and just the struggles and obstacles that the families...the working poor...would encounter.” Ritchie did not grow up in these circumstances, but was drawn to what life was like for them. She says, “I just created different opportunities to get to know their worldview” (Ritchie).

In light of these experiences, Ritchie went on to get degrees in both School Counseling and Clinical Psychology at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia. After graduating from college, she came to Middle Tennessee and worked as a school counselor in a Title I school for seven years. During her time as a school counselor, Ritchie had many opportunities to interact with and serve lower income families and, particularly, their children. She went above and beyond the call of duty many times in her role as a school counselor, but still wanted to do more (Ritchie).

One journey that Ritchie took while a school counselor with a young fourth grade girl who had been assaulted by four adult men in Murfreesboro changed everything. Ritchie walked with this young girl through the process of getting the proper authorities involved for about a year and a half. She says,

Walking through that with her, I realized that the way I felt burdened to live life with her outside of the school setting, that there was not an organization in town that was doing that. Yeah, she was referred to counseling, but as far as a faith-based, all female organization that could provide mentoring, support groups, tutoring and then eventually, a residential facility for her to go and to live and to stay and get healing from that trauma...[there wasn't anywhere like that for her to turn to] (Ritchie).

Sadly, Ritchie says, "...that wasn't the first time that something of that nature had happened to her...[although] this was probably the most severe account." When the case came to a close, Ritchie felt that the resources offered to this young girl were truly lacking. She says, "I felt that our community had kind of failed at providing [the help that she needed], unfortunately." The process was long and drawn out and while she was offered short-term counseling and several other services, Ritchie didn't feel like there was anyone there to truly walk with her through this process and provide long-term resources that would promote true healing (Ritchie).

Ritchie shared that this experience served as the "catalyst" for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. She says, "Through walking that journey with her and then some other girls who had experienced different forms of abuse...that is really what just pushed me out of the boat to say, "Okay, like we need to birth something, and that something is G.I.R.L.S. Ranch" (Ritchie). Ritchie's heart, passion and enthusiasm for her ministry at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is so evident and directly affects the reach and impact that she has in the community and the girls' lives that she serves.

Publics

Through interviews with Founder and Executive Director, Shannon Ritchie and Group Coordinator, Fran Holdsworth, who has since left the organization, as well as additional research and observations, I identified G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics. They are: clients (the girls that they serve), the girls' parents, employees/staff members, board of directors, volunteers, donors, corporate sponsors and other non-profit organizations in Rutherford County (Ritchie).

Girls

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch currently serves close to 20 girls a week between the ages of 9-17, as 8-10 elementary school girls attend the support group on Monday nights and 10-12 middle and high school girls attend the support group on Thursday night. The long term goal is to have enough group leaders to split the middle school and high school girls up on Thursday night so there are three support groups that meet on Monday and Thursday nights. This is important because girls connect well and have similar experiences with other girls in their same age group. Additionally, topics of discussion for support groups can be tailored and made more relevant for specific age groups when support groups are broken up in this way (Holdsworth).

The majority of girls that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch serves come from low income households. Ethnically, the groups are fairly diverse. In Fall 2017 there were more African American girls than any other ethnicity. In the past, they have had more Hispanic girls in groups. Most consistently, however, the majority of girls that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch serves are Caucasian or African American (Ritchie).

Ritchie shared from information she found that one in three girls have been abused in some way, but only one in ten of these girls tell someone about that abuse (Ritchie). Holdsworth says of the girls they serve, “There’s a lot of hurt and a lot of loss...” She goes on to explain that “...in the younger girls, it shows itself really differently than in the older girls” (Holdsworth). Abuse or a number of other things that these girls have encountered is often the root cause of why they come, but deep hurt manifesting itself through outward anger, aggression, depression, etc. is what usually brings them to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. While G.I.R.L.S. Ranch places a focus on serving girls that “come from hard places,” Holdsworth says that with the pressures of today’s

world that are placed on young girls, she feels that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is really for every girl (Holdsworth).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a referral process for girls that join support groups. Staff members do not just put up flyers around town to invite girls to come to the group; they want to make sure the girls are a good fit for the group and are committed to their personal growth to some extent. In order to create a safe, confidential space for the girls to share, heal and grow, they ask girls that are interested in coming to the group for a moderate level of commitment through their attendance. As one could imagine, girls coming in and out of the group constantly is disruptive (Ritchie).

Girls can be referred by school counselors, Child Protective Services, friends who are already coming to group, judges, churches, other professional counselors, and sometimes, parents. Any girl who comes to group (with the exception of the first few times they come) has to have a permission form, signed by their parent/guardian, on file for them to be able to attend (Ritchie).

Parents/Guardians

Another one of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics is the parents or guardians of the girls they are serving. The presence and involvement of each girls' parents or guardians within G.I.R.L.S. Ranch varies. Ritchie says there are some parents who have walked their girls up to the door with their permission slip in hand to come to group and there are other parents that she has never met (Ritchie).

While G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's primary focus as an organization is the girls they serve, Ritchie and Holdsworth also care about the parents of these girls and expressed their desire be a resource for them, as well as other parents in the community. Both Holdsworth and Ritchie shared that in

the future, they would like to offer classes for parents to come and learn more about how to connect with their daughters and relate to them by understanding more about their life stage and the types of things they are going through (Ritchie).

That being said, in light of the purpose they serve, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a confidentiality policy that all G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's employees and volunteers abide; they do not discuss anything with the girls' parents unless there is a necessary reason to do so, such as if the girl is an impending danger to herself or others. Ritchie and Holdsworth want G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to be a safe place where girls can come and share what's going on in their lives freely and heal; therefore it is important for them to set boundaries with parents and anyone else outside of the organization to ensure confidentiality (Ritchie).

Organizational Structure

The graph below (see Fig. 1) represents the typical organizational structure of a large-scale non-profit organization (Hurwit & Associates).

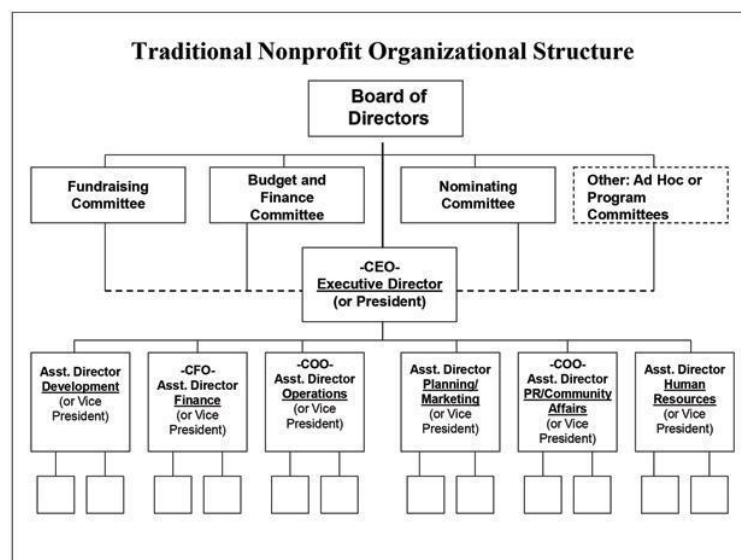


Fig. 1

Being a smaller organization, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a different organizational structure than this. An article from *Global Genes* describes the main roles within non-profit organizations that fit more closely with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's organizational structure. The article outlines four groups of people, three of which are a part of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's internal organizational structure: staff, board of directors, volunteers and consultants (Nonprofit Toolkit).

Staff

Shannon Ritchie, is the only full-time staff member at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. Fran Holdsworth was on staff part-time for the past two years, serving as the Group Coordinator for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch; she moved out of state in February 2018. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch also had another employee on staff in 2017, Courtney Bartemus, who served as their Development Director. Courtney stepped down from her position at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to stay at home with her children. (Ritchie).

Board of Directors

In addition to staff members, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a board of directors with five members, two of whom are serving as Board Secretary and Board President (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). A board of directors is "an elected panel of individuals oversee the management of the firm." The primary responsibilities of the board of directors are to appoint the officers of the firm, manage funds paid to shareholders, and oversee the affairs of the corporation (Hayes; Shanine).

Volunteers

Volunteers are another one of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics. Volunteers fill a variety of roles within the organization, including leading support groups, mentoring, serving on a committee for the Brave the Dark Relay or volunteering the day of, bringing meals for group dinners, cleaning the interior or exterior of the house, making repairs and doing yard work,

among other things. As there aren't many staff members at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, volunteers play a very important role in G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's ability to serve girls in the way they do (Holdsworth).

Donors & Corporate Sponsors

Donors are also one of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics. Donors' generosity plays a huge part in allowing G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to provide the services that they do to young girls in the community. As a non-profit organization, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch relies entirely on funds from donors, grants and foundations and corporate sponsors to serve the girls with whom they work, cover all of their overhead expenses and pay their employees (Ritchie).

In addition to general donors, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has had several corporate sponsors over the years. Corporate sponsors are larger, most often for-profit, organizations that sponsor another organization in some way. For example, Kohl's served as a corporate sponsor for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay several years ago (BRAVE the DARK). Several restaurants have also sponsored meals for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's weekly family dinners in the past, providing a meal for the girls at no charge (Ritchie).

Competitors/Other Organizations

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a distinct niche, which sets them apart. There isn't another organization exactly like them in Rutherford County. Typical competition between organizations looks very different in the non-profit sector – there is little to no competition among non-profit organizations in Rutherford County as they come together to work for the common good of the communities. While all of these organizations seek to work together for the good of those they serve, for the most part, they are in competition with each other to some extent when it comes to acquiring resources and volunteers (Ritchie). Some non-profit organizations in Rutherford County that offer similar services and/or serve the same demographics are: Endure Athletics,

Safe Haven, Doors of Hope, the Child Advocacy Center and probation officers they have met with in the past to be a referral source (Ritchie).

Public Perception

Overall, everyone I interviewed felt that the public perception of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is positive. Previous Group Coordinator Fran Holdsworth didn't live in the area while working for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, but felt that the fact that judges in the community refer girls to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, especially being a faith-based organization, is a testament to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's reputation in the community. Holdsworth also mentioned that Ritchie is a great fundraiser and networker and said that they have received a great response from members of the community who are aware of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. She said that almost everyone that they have talked to about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch wants to get involved in some way (Holdsworth).

When asked for their perspective on the public perception of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, one of the board members said that "G.I.R.L.S. Ranch needs to raise public awareness" in order to pay the bills, but expressed that it was a "delicate question" because G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has to worry about privacy and confidentiality for the girls they serve when putting their name out there. The board member goes on to note, "When G.I.R.L.S. Ranch does do fundraising, the ministry is well received because it is done in such a professional manner" (Board Member).

The fact that other organizations, counselors, judges, etc. refer girls to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and/or set up a booth to feature them at one of their events is a testament to how highly they think of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. The girls who come to group inviting their friends to come with them often is also a good sign that they like the program and it is beneficial for them. Likewise, loyal, long-term volunteers are a great testament to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the work they do, as well as to the environment for those that work and volunteer there (Holdsworth).

Thesis Statement

I have chosen to develop a public relations campaign for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, a faith-based non-profit organization located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, to help them better serve the girls with whom they work. The framework of a public relations campaign is the four step public relations process. I followed this process through the development of the campaign, beginning with an analysis of the organization to understand the organization better and identify their communication needs. Following the analysis and evaluation of the research I collected, I created four communication pieces to meet one of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's communication needs. Finally, following the creation of the communication pieces, I evaluated the campaign process and the pieces I created based on a set of evaluative metrics that I determined (Smith).

Public Relations

History

Years ago, public relations activities were carried out by rhetoricians, press agents and other promoters. Public relations materials (or at least materials identified as such) from years ago have been found from ancient India, Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven 22). Public relations had a presence in "the early days of American settlement" as well. Two colleges - Harvard College and King's College (now Columbia University) were the first to create and distribute public relations materials during this time. Harvard College put out a fundraising brochure to raise money for the school, and King's College sent out a press release about their graduation (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven 22).

In *Public Relations: the Profession and the Practice*, Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven note that, "Publicity techniques were even more prevalent at the time of the

American Revolution and all subsequent conflicts or situations when power has been threatened or when public support is needed.” The authors go on to say, “Indeed, public relations has prospered most in times of extreme pressure or crisis” (22). The first public relations campaign was constructed by Samuel Adams leading up to the American Revolutionary War to get people on his side. Adams used slogans such as “taxation without representation is tyranny” and “symbols like the Liberty Tree that were easily identifiable and aroused emotions” to enhance his message and gain favor and following (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven 22-23).

In the first few years that the United States was a country, public relations was most commonly used in politics. The Federalist Papers were said to be “history’s finest public relations job.” Women like Clara Burton, Margaret Sanger, Susan B. Anthony, Ida B. Wells and Elizabeth Cody Stanton also utilized public relations techniques with a purpose to enact social change, very similarly to the way that standard non-profit organizations utilized (and still utilize) public relations today (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven 28).

Edward Bernays, the nephew of Sigmund Freud, was the primary public relations professional in his time. Bernays is described by Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and VanLeuven as “the leading proponent of persuasion.” The authors go on to explain how Bernays perceived and how he used public relations, stating, “Bernays understood that publics could be persuaded if the message supported their values and interests. At the time, he saw public relations as being more or less synonymous with propaganda, which he defined as “the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses” (30).

Public relations has evolved over the years through various events that have taken place all over the world, however many of its uses have remained the same.

Definition

There are a number of definitions for public relations. While public relations serves specific functions within an organization, it has been somewhat difficult to define over the years with just one definition. An article from *The New York Times*, published in 2012, addressed the issue of not having a universal definition for the public relations profession. The author suggests that it may be hurting the profession some in its “clarity, draw for new entrants and/or credibility” (Elliott).

A campaign referred to as “Public Relations Defined” was started by several people within the field to form one solid definition for public relations. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) heard about the campaign and decided that it wanted to get involved. PRSA, along with several other public relations organizations, asked for definition suggestions from public relations professionals, public relations professors, public relations researchers and public relations students. They received a total of 927 responses between November 21 and December 2, 2012 and narrowed the submissions down to three finalists (Elliott). These were:

- “Public relations is the management function of researching, communicating and collaborating with publics to build mutually beneficial relationships.”
- “Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.”
- “Public relations is the strategic process of engagement between organizations and publics to achieve mutual understanding and realize goals.”

Votes were collected on which of these three finalists the same group that voted in the first round thought should win. The second definition above had the most votes, with 671 votes out of 1,447 total votes, which comes out to 46.4%” (Elliott).

Another definition of public relations, from Cutlip, Center and Broom in *Effective Public Relations* (2012) that is direct and universally accepted is, “Public relations is the management function that identifies, establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends” (Smith 3).

The primary takeaway from both of these definitions is that one of the most significant functions of public relations is managing relationships. Organizations work with other people/organizations; they need other people, so they need ways to effectively communicate with them (Hunt and Grunig 4-5). In *Public Relations Techniques*, Hunt and Grunig explain, “Organizations need *public relations*, in other words, because they have *relationships with publics* (Hunt and Grunig 5). Businesses and organizations cannot retain customers and maintain good sales numbers without establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships, and communication is such a crucial part of this. Incorporating public relations into the overall business model and approaching relationships with its publics from a public relations perspective will set an organization up for long-term success rather than just short-term success.

That being said, organizations have many different publics that have varying needs and expectations. It can be challenging for an organization to balance catering to all (or as many as possible) of these publics’ needs and wants, while keeping their own interests and goals in mind to remain a successful organization (Hunt and Grunig 5). Hunt and Grunig state, “Life for both people and organizations, therefore, is a constant process of negotiation and compromise. And communication is one of the most effective means we have to negotiate and compromise” They

go on to say, “They [publics and organizations] may not always agree or have a friendly relationship, but they do *understand* one another - and achieving *understanding* is the major objective of public relations...” (5).

Public Relations and Marketing Communications

While public relations stands alone as an independent communication tactic, it also fits into a larger group of communication tactics referred to as marketing communications. Within marketing communications, public relations is a part of the promotional mix. The other elements of the promotional mix are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and direct marketing (Phillips). All of the elements in the promotional mix are used to market a product/service or organization by effectively getting the word out to potential customers about what they have to offer, drawing new customers in, and keeping current customers engaged and satisfied.

Marketing communication “is a management function...[that] takes a long approach...[and] focuses more immediately on products and services that respond to the wants and needs of consumers” (Smith 6). Hunt and Grunig describe marketing from more of a public relations perspective stating, “Marketing is not a game to be won by being most persuasive. Rather, it is a technique for facilitating the creation and maintenance of mutually beneficial exchanges...Communication helps *both parties*, not just the buyer or seller” (365).

Integrated communication is “the conscious blending of the instruments of both public relations and marketing communication...[that] creates a comprehensive and cohesive program aimed at implementing the best possible mix of communication tools” (Smith 225). Integrated communication allows organizations to build a stronger campaign than they may otherwise have been able to while focusing their efforts solely on marketing or solely on public relations. Both marketing communications and public relations have unique focuses that better an organization’s

communication tactics overall. Whether seen as a function within marketing communications or a stand-alone communications tactic, public relations activities affect many parts of an organization and are a significant contributor to an organization's growth and success.

A Public Relations Campaign

A public relations campaign is "a systematic set of public relations activities, each with a specific and finite purpose, sustained over a length of time and dealing with objectives associated with a particular issue" (Smith 15). Public relations campaigns are implemented to effect some type of change within a business or organization. A campaign plan book includes a title page, executive summary, table of contents, statement of principles, situation analysis, strategic approach, tactical program, schedule, budget, evaluation plan and, possibly, consultant credentials and resources (Smith 310).

The tactics chosen for a public relations campaign vary depending on the organization, the organization's needs and most importantly, the organization's goals and objectives – what the organization is trying to accomplish through the campaign. Businesses and organizations will likely develop a number of different public relations campaigns over the course of their existence, tailored to their goals and objectives at the time the campaign is developed.

Non-Profit Organizations

Overview

Nonprofit organizations are groups that are tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) as "public charities" because they are formed to provide "public benefit" (What Is a 'Nonprofit'). In *Effective Public Relations*, Cutlip, Center and Broom affirm this, saying, "...it is the nonprofit sector that fills the gaps in meeting the needs of society left unattended by for-profit corporations and government agencies" (494).

There are approximately 1.6 million non-profit organizations in the United States (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven 325). According to the National Council of NonProfits, there are 30,797 registered nonprofit organizations in Tennessee (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’). Although it is difficult to get an entirely accurate estimate of the number of non-profit organizations in the United States since some non-profits do not have to file with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, it is known that the industry is very large (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven 325). The largest non-profit in the United States, United Way Worldwide, brought in \$3.93 billion in 2017 (The 100 Largest).

Types of Non-Profit Organizations

There are 29 different types of organizations that are eligible for tax exemption listed under the 501(c) tax code (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’). Chamber of Commerce and other business leagues fit into this category, along with other organizations that make similar contributions to the community. These are listed as 501(c)’s with another number following the (c) in parentheses to separate them. Traditional nonprofit organizations, listed under 501(c)(3), are unique in the fact that they are the only type of organizations that are able to give donors a tax deduction form (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’).

The National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) identifies 645 categories (NTEE Classification Codes) of non-profit organizations that fit into eight primary groups. The largest group is “human service” organizations, making up 35.5% of all charitable nonprofits (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’). This is the group of which G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is a part. Human service organizations meet a variety of needs in the community, such as “providing food and shelter, assistance in times of disaster, services for children and the elderly, and much more” (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’).

Between 1989-1994, the human services area grew the most, more than double any other type of non-profit organization (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven 326).

Other groups include “arts organizations (9.9%), education groups (17.1 percent), nonprofits focused on health - from finding cures, to providing mental health services (13 percent), community and civil rights groups (11.6 percent), religion-related organizations (6.1 percent), environmental and animal protection groups (4.5 percent), and those focused on international development and human rights (2.1 percent).” Community foundations and private foundations also fit into the category of a nonprofit organization, although private foundations are taxed differently than the others (What Is a ‘Nonprofit’).

One of a non-profit organization’s biggest focuses is making a difference, as nearby as their community or as far away as the other side of the world. The National Council of Nonprofits describes the “impact” that non-profit organizations have on society, saying, “Nonprofits embody the best spirit and values of our nation. They help millions of individuals and families daily. They protect, feed, heal, shelter, educate, and nurture our bodies and spirits. Nonprofits also give shape to our boldest dreams, highest ideals, and noblest causes. They turn our beliefs into action...” (Nonprofit Impact).

For-Profit vs. Non-Profit Organizations

Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven outline some distinct differences between for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations. The main differences between for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations are the way they spend the money they have left over after paying their bills, paying their employees, etc./breaking even, what they call that money and what their goals and mission are as an organization. A priority for for-profit organizations with the money they have left over, which they call profit, is to pay off a number of stakeholders

who have invested in the organization first. Non-profit organizations do not have shareholders to pay (The Difference Between). Non-profit organizations' first priority is to put the money they have left over, which they call "surplus" back into their organization to invest in and advance the work they are doing (324).

In terms of the organization's goals and missions, a for-profit organization's goal/mission is to "develop products and services that will make money for its owners as a way of financially rewarding them for their investment in the company" (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven 324). Alternatively, a non-profit organization's goal/mission is to support and enact some type of change and betterment in the community and/or world. Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven state, "A non-profit organization focuses on fulfilling an educational or charitable mission, recognizing that all organizations must maintain positive bottom lines to exist" (324).

Public Relations for Non-Profit Organizations

Non-profit organizations started using publicity more often and more intentionally in the early 20th century (Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven 26). Cutlip, Center and Broom give a general overview of the role of public relations within the non-profit sector, stating,

As social and economic conditions require, and as the need for public support grows, public relations helps create the public policy environment, volunteer participation, and philanthropic support crucial to the survival of charitable organizations. In other words, the role of public relations in the nonprofit sector is to establish and maintain relationships necessary to secure the organizational autonomy and resources needed to achieve their humanitarian missions (496).

Public relations plays a significant role in the success of a non-profit organization. Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, Toth and Leuven confirm this, saying, "Nonprofits have been on a public relations fast-learning curve in recent years, hiring practitioners and integrating the

communication function into their strategic plans” (326). In the changing environment in which non-profit organizations operate, Cutlip, Center and Broom note that using public relations activities for marketing purposes is becoming more common and paid advertising is now used often as a “major controlled communication tactic” among non-profit organizations (500-501).

There are a variety of public relations materials that public relations practitioners (or general employees that oversee the public relations activities of the organization) create for non-profit organizations to serve the purposes listed above. These include, but are not limited to, press releases, flyers, memos, print advertisements, social media campaigns/engagement, etc. In addition to these written materials, programming tactics are also planned within non-profit organizations to accomplish similar goals and objectives. This is all similar, if not identical, to the public relations tactics that are implemented within for-profit organizations as well.

Public relations activities look different for different types of non-profit organizations based on the organization’s needs and the amount of resources the organization has available for public relations efforts (Cutlip, Center and Broom 497). While public relations is important for all non-profit organizations to implement, Cutlip, Center and Broom suggest that it is even more important for non-profit organizations in the following areas: health care agencies, social welfare organizations, churches, educational institutions, and fine arts and performing arts groups because they depend on public support (497). Based on this category breakdown, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch fits into the category of social welfare organizations.

How G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is perceived by the public affects girls that seek out G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s services, the type of volunteers G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is able to recruit, and the amount of funding that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch receives. Public relations plays a significant role in affecting public perception – whether helpful or hurtful. As having clients, volunteers and an adequate

amount of funding are paramount to an organization's success, public relations should be highly valued within a non-profit organization.

Public Relations Process

Public relations professionals typically follow a four step process when engaging in public relations activity (Smith 13-14). There are several different terms used for the stages of this process. The terms that I chose to use are: research, planning, implementation, and evaluation (Phillips). I followed the public relations process for the development of the campaign for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. Stage one of the public relations process involves researching the organization. It is essential to understand the organization's brand and assess their current needs in order to be able create effective communication materials. Stage one of the public relations process also includes researching the organization's situation and publics (Smith 15-16).

Stage two is planning. A key part of the planning stage in the public relations process is setting goals and objectives. Another part of the planning stage is to create guidelines that would determine the effectiveness of the campaign if it were to be implemented from these goals and objectives (Smith 16). The third stage of the public relations process involves the creation of communication pieces and programming for an organization (Smith 16-17). The communication pieces I created were not sent out to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics as part of this project; however, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch may choose to send them out in the future.

Finally, after conducting research on the organization, identifying their communication needs and creating communication pieces that will meet those needs, the fourth and final stage of the public relations process, evaluation. Evaluation is a crucial part of any public relations activity. If public relations professionals neglect to evaluate their work, they miss out on the opportunity to learn from failures and/or successes that they encountered throughout the process.

Taking the time to analyze and process how effective the materials are, and what makes them so, has a direct impact on the success of future materials. The effect that the materials have on the organization, however, can only be evaluated after the organization has implemented them (Smith 17). I did not complete this stage of the process in its entirety because I only planned and created the communication pieces that I choose to enhance G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's communication, however I did determine which metrics I would use to evaluate the materials.

Research

Overview

Research is the first stage in the public relations process and arguably, the most important, as it builds a foundation for the rest of the process and the public relations campaign as a whole. In *Using Research in Public Relations: Applications to Project Management*, Broom and Dozier share that "To effect and maintain the relationships they mention in their definition of public relations, authors Cutlip, Center and Broom "see research as the "foundation of effective public relations." (5)

"Research is the controlled objective, and systematic gathering of information for the purposes of describing and understanding" (Broom and Dozier 4). According to Broom and Dozier, research helps to remove the bias of the researcher or observer and gives more accuracy and credibility to the research results (4). They say, "You should study research to learn how to *systematically* and *objectively* gather information for increasing your own knowledge of situations and to learn how to communicate this knowledge in a form persuasive to others." Public relations research as a part of the public relations process helps to establish industry standards so that others can understand the research conducted and results found (Broom and

Dozier 4). To conduct an organizational analysis to determine G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's communication needs, I gathered both secondary and primary research.

Secondary Research

I gathered secondary research to better understand the four stages of the public relations process and support the pieces I chose to develop for communication with volunteers, as well as obtain background information on public relations and non-profit organizations and how they interact. I consulted four different public relations textbooks in my research: *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*, *Effective Public Relations*, *Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice* and *Public Relations Techniques*. I also consulted two articles from an academic database, titled "Organizational Factors Affecting Volunteers: A Literature Review on Volunteer Coordination." and "Engaged or Connected? A Perspective of the Motivational Pathway of the Job Demands-Resources Model in Volunteers Working for Nonprofit Organizations," and several credible websites with information on volunteers, non-profit organizations and public relations.

Primary Research

I also gathered primary research to better understand G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and identify G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's communication needs. My first step in gathering primary research was talking with key staff members at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. I prepared an extensive list of interview questions that can be found in Appendix A and met with Executive Director and Founder, Shannon Ritchie several times in person. The purpose behind all of my questions was to get to know more about who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is and what they do, as well as who Ritchie is and how and why she started G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. I also wanted to get to learn who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics are, in detail, and how they all function within the organization, as well as how the public

perceives G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and where G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is currently in terms of public relations/marketing, among other things.

While I got a solid overview of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and answers to several of the topics listed above during my time with Ritchie, I wasn't able to get all of my interview questions answered by her, due to a lack of time and scheduling conflicts. We met several times in person and got through as much as we could and I was also able to ask her some additional questions through email, which was helpful.

After meeting with Ritchie several times, I also met with Fran Holdsworth, former Group Coordinator, to get a different perspective on these topics. I pulled questions for Holdsworth from the same list of questions that I developed for my interviews with Ritchie. Ritchie and Holdsworth had similar perspectives and answers to most of the questions, but Holdsworth had a lot to share during our time together that I had not heard yet.

After meeting with Holdsworth, I asked Ritchie for permission to reach out to board members with a short list of five interview questions that I could send out to get their perspective on some of the same things I asked Ritchie and Holdsworth about. I felt that a board member could offer a different perspective that would be helpful. I chose five of the most relevant questions from the list of interview questions that I prepared for my interviews with Shannon and Fran to send to the board member. While she was not able to release their email addresses to me, Ritchie reached out to a board member on my behalf and I received answers back to the five questions I passed along. The board member that answered the questions remains anonymous. The questions I sent through Shannon can be found in Appendix B. It was very valuable for me to get a board member's feedback on some of these things and their input further affirmed several conclusions I had reached after my interviews with Ritchie and Holdsworth.

In addition to talking with staff members and a board member at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, I made it a priority to attend several activities at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, if I was able to, to get a better sense of what they do as an organization and/or meet any other key publics to whom I was given access. The first activity I attended was their annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay in November 2017. I signed up to volunteer for this event to learn more about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and their annual fundraiser, which is a huge event for them, through observation and general conversation. I also signed up to volunteer to give back to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and support them in their mission to serve young girls in the community.

Based on my observations, I would say that the fundraiser ran fairly smoothly. There were a significant number of volunteers present before the event started, some working to finish setting up for the relay and others eating the pizza and water they provided and waiting to be taken to their posts on the trail. I was in the second group. While there were a significant number of volunteers present at the relay, many of them were young, which can sometimes affect how the work is done or how G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is represented, and were volunteering for service hours or other requirements in some way. While there is nothing wrong with this, I know that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is in need of more long-term, consistent volunteers to help with other aspects of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, so I'm sure it would be helpful if they were able to recruit more of these kinds of volunteers to help with the relay as well. The hope would be that some new volunteers helping with the Brave the Dark Relay would then become interested in learning more about volunteering at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch in other ways.

I also observed G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's volunteer coordination at the Brave the Dark Relay. Those in charge of coordinating and/or interacting directly with volunteers that night were friendly, informative and organized when it came to assigning tasks to volunteers and being

available for any questions they had. This is a great strength for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and something they could carry out in all areas of the organization by hiring someone to focus significantly on volunteers and volunteer coordination.

I also got to interact with some of the girls they serve through one of their give back opportunities (Ritchie). I got to go with the younger group of girls to another local non-profit in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, The Journey Home, to serve for the evening. The girls who attended this service project were part of the elementary school and middle school groups, ranging in age from 9-12. The girls were accompanied by Fran Holdsworth and Rachel Gills, a volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (Ritchie). Attending this service project allowed me to better understand and visualize what type of girls G.I.R.L.S. Ranch serves and observe the dynamic between the girls and staff members and volunteers.

Finally, I was able to attend a volunteer interest meeting at the G.I.R.L.S Ranch home in December 2017. The meeting was run by Ritchie and another woman who volunteers at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. Two girls attended the meeting, both in college, that were majoring in Psychology and interested in working with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch for a project and/or internship that is a part of their degree requirements. Ritchie had mentioned that there may be a few more women coming to the meeting (or at least one more), but it just ended up being the two college girls at this particular meeting.

In the meeting, Ritchie passed out several materials that helped explain and illustrate who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is and what they do. She explained her heart behind G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and how they got started, as well as how they operate, what their needs are and specifically, what the girls' internships/time with GR might look like. She then opened the floor for questions. It was great to get insight into how they run their volunteer interest meetings and observe what tactics

they use to encourage volunteers to get involved and how they assess volunteers that want to get involved to see if they are the right fit. It was also interesting to see the numbers they brought in for their volunteer interest meeting. The meeting was small and intimate, which brought a pleasant dynamic to the experience and offered more of an opportunity to get to know Ritchie and learn about the organization personally, but it really did feel like there were not that many people at the meeting (because there weren't) and fewer showed up to the meeting than were expected.

Communication Audit

For this communication audit, I analyzed my findings from the primary research I conducted. Ritchie oversees all of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's external communication efforts including social media and the creation and distribution of flyers and other informational materials. While Holdsworth served as Group Coordinator, she was the primary contact for the girls they serve, as well as their parents and others interested in G.I.R.L.S. Ranch – individuals referring girls, volunteers, donors, corporate sponsors, etc. (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch communicates with their publics through a variety of channels. Text messaging is one of the primary ways that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch communicates with its closest internal publics: the girls they serve, volunteers and staff members (Ritchie). G.I.R.L.S. Ranch uses MailChimp, a marketing automation platform, to send newsletters and emails to several of their publics (Marketing Automation). They use another similar platform called Donor Snap to communicate with donors when they send out donor specific newsletters, emails and customized thank you letters. MailChimp and Donor Snap organize G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's contacts and make it easy to craft a creative email, newsletter, etc. and send it to a specific group of people all at the same time (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch also uses social media to communicate with its publics. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch primarily uses social media to advertise its services, advertise events such as their annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, on their Facebook page, and connect with girls that come to the support groups. Snapchat is a popular social media channel among the girls and one that Ritchie and G.I.R.L.S. Ranch staff use to communicate with them (Ritchie).

When asked about their communication through social media, Ritchie says she feels that they are doing pretty well in this area. She says they post fairly often – “not every day, but weekly” (Ritchie). Holdsworth rated them a four out of ten in communication through social media, saying “I definitely know that we could do better” (Holdsworth). Holdsworth explained that Ritchie is great at posting a lot, but she feels they need to expand their reach – to increase public awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and reach more people outside of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s typical circle. In order to serve as a resource to the community to the parents of the girls they serve and parents with girls that are the same age(s) or in the same situations, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch must expand their following (Holdsworth).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch also uses flyers and other promotional or informational materials to get the word out about who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is and what they do, as well as advertise big events or volunteer opportunities. While they do hang up/hand out flyers for their annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, their usual policy for general flyers and informational or promotional communication materials is to only hand them out for a specific purpose to stakeholders (or potential stakeholders) involved, such as current volunteers, potential volunteers at an interest meeting, donors or other organizations in the area (Ritchie).

In general, Ritchie expressed that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch needs to communicate more often, with a particular focus in sending out newsletters to several of their publics (they have sent out

newsletters in the past) and communicating with donors. She also mentioned that they could strengthen the relationship working with other organizations in the area (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is also in need of a new Development Director. When asked what G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's biggest need was, one of the board members expressed that a full time Development Director was needed to "be in charge of all fundraising, marketing, and donor development." They went on to emphasize, "This is a full time job and extremely important" (Board Member). A new Development Director could be a crucial help in seeing some of these communication efforts through.

Analysis

Also as a part of the research stage, I conducted a SWOT analysis (see Table 1) of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch based on my research and observations. A SWOT analysis is a tool used to analyze the organization both internally and externally – focusing on its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Table 1: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Offer a place that is safe, welcoming and clean● How they love girls● How they accomplish their mission● Meeting and loving girls where they are at● Girls love coming and many times want to bring their friends● Provide community● Provide spiritual truths every week● Provide a place to journal about things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Raising funds● Lack of volunteers● Frequency and consistency of communication – could communicate more often through newsletters, donors and maybe even social media● Lack of funding● Size of the house doesn't offer much room for growth● Lack of staff needed for operations

<p>girls may not want to talk about – part of the healing process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate loyalty among each other and a family dynamic that some of the girls may not have in their other homes ● Communicate and engage with publics pretty well through social media ● Location – located in downtown Murfreesboro where a lot of girls (their girls or the kind of girls they want to reach) live – underprivileged/government housing 	
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer one on one individual counseling in addition to what they do now ● Someday be a residential facility where girls can come and live for an extended period of time to find healing ● Strengthen relationship with other organizations in the area and partner with them to reach more girls in the community ● Grow their volunteer base ● Increase awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch among their target market ● Start their mentoring program up again and recruit enough mentors so that every girl that wants a mentor can have one ● Split middle school and high school support groups up into two separate support groups ● Meet with parents of the girls in group and offer them some resources to understand and interact more effectively with their daughters ● Let parents of the girls in group make connections with each other – once or twice a year ● Advocate for the age groups of girls that they serve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Competing with other organizations in town that do similar things (provide support groups or resources for girls of the same demographics) for resources and volunteers ● Lack of funding – no one is currently serving in the Development Director position, which is in charge of applying for foundations and grants ● Ritchie doing all of the social media and advertising – one person running everything (overwhelming, burnout, things getting overlooked)

Planning

Overview

Another term used for the planning stage in the public relations process is strategy. In *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*, Smith explains, “Simply stated, strategy is the organization’s overall plan (93). Smith goes on to say, “Strategy has a dual focus: the action of the organization (both proactive and responsive) and the content and presentation of its messages (theme, source, content and tone)...The entire strategic process is interrelated and interdependent...” (93).

In the planning stage, goals are established for the communication efforts the organization hopes to carry out. These goals are then used to form objectives, which provide a more specific benchmark by which to determine whether the organization has met the goals established. Finally, these objectives are used to develop tactics, or specific communication pieces that the organization is going to create to achieve the specific goals and objectives set (Smith 93)

Planning is an important step in the public relations process because it is what provides the overall process and campaign with clear direction. If the organization hasn’t determined what it is trying to communicate (message) and how it is going to communicate it (communication pieces), it is going to have a hard time developing a set of communication pieces that fit together and accomplish the intended purpose.

After analyzing my interviews with Ritchie, Holdsworth and a board member, as well as reflecting on my experiences at the events I attended, I reached a conclusion regarding G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s communication needs and developed several distinct goals and objectives to guide me in the creation of the communication pieces. The end goal, overall, is for each of the

communication materials created to help G.I.R.L.S. Ranch accomplish the goals and objectives set.

From my research, I determined that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has several communication needs, including communicating more effectively and more often with their volunteers, current and potential donors and the parents of the girls that they serve, as well as getting the word out about their annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay.

Findings

Based on my findings, I chose to focus on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch communicating more effectively and more often with their volunteers. Through my research, I found overwhelming evidence for this need. Ritchie, Holdsworth and the board member all mentioned the need for more volunteers in the interviews. I also noticed a possible need for more volunteers through my observation at several activities I was able to attend. The current status of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's mentoring program is another indication that more volunteers are needed (Ritchie).

In one of the interviews with Ritchie, she identified several of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's most significant communication needs; volunteers was among these (Ritchie). Additionally, Holdsworth communicated during the interview that she thought reaching volunteers, particularly women to lead support groups and college students, was currently G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's biggest need (Holdsworth). One of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's board members also identified the need for more, consistent volunteers when asked through email what G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's biggest weakness was and/or what they felt needed to change within the organization (Board Member).

I also noticed a possible need for more volunteers through my observation at several activities that I was able to attend. As I mentioned above, I had the privilege of volunteering at

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, in November 2017. I was able to give back to the organization and help the girls they serve, as well as observe how the event was organized, how many and what demographics of volunteers they had at the event and what roles the volunteers filled.

There were a good number of volunteers at the Brave the Dark Relay, but many of them were young (high school or college) and many were doing it to fulfill service hour requirements for school or another organization or viewing it as a one-time volunteer opportunity. I didn't feel that there were many repeat or consistent, committed volunteers in attendance at the Brave the Dark Relay, which is something that Ritchie, Holdsworth and the board member all expressed that they desired for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's volunteer base in general.

Another piece of evidence pointing to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's need for more effective communication with their volunteers is their mentoring program, currently. Ritchie said that there have been times in the past that every girl has wanted a mentor, but that they didn't have enough women in the program for all of the girls to have one (Ritchie). G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's mentoring program is currently "on hold" (Ritchie). While the specific reasons for the break in the mentoring program were not given, I have to assume that a lack of women available to mentor may be one of them.

Lastly, as I previously mentioned, I attended and observed a volunteer interest meeting that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch held in December 2017 and only two college girls attended, primarily on the basis of internship/project requirements for their degree at Middle Tennessee State University. There is no way to know for sure if this sample accurately reflects the amount of women who are interested in volunteering at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, but for the sake of prospective volunteers and the time that Ritchie spent giving the background of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, what their

needs are and what roles are available to be filled, I assume that a better turnout would have been well received.

Through my research, I identified that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch primarily needs volunteers to lead support groups and be a part of their Growing in Grace Mentoring program. That being said, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has several secondary needs that they need to recruit volunteers for as well.

Goals and Objectives

As I mentioned above, I established a series of goals and objectives (see Table 2) to outline and measure the purpose and intent of the communication pieces that I created. A goal is “a short, simple statement rooted in the organization’s mission or vision...[it] acknowledges the issue and sketches out how the organization hopes to see it settled...[and] is stated in general terms and lacks measures” (Smith 97). There are three types of public relations goals: reputation management goals, relationship management goals and task management goals. Reputation management goals “deal with the identity and perception of the organization,” while relationship management goals “focus on how the organization connects with its publics.” Lastly, task management goals “are concerned with getting certain things done” (Smith 98).

Public relations practitioners establish reputation management goals when they are trying to influence people’s’ perception of the organization, either to reinforce positive perceptions or shift negative perceptions. Relationship management goals are established with the intention of establishing or maintaining an existing relationship between the organization and publics inside or outside of the organization. Finally, task management goals typically have a specific agenda and are concerned with eliciting immediate action, rather than thoughts and feelings like reputation and relationship management goals, from the organization’s publics (Smith 98)

After establishing a goal for each communication piece, I determined several specific objectives to measure the impact of the communication pieces I created. An objective is “a statement consistent with an organization’s positioning and emerging from the organization’s goals...a clear and measurable statement, written to point the way toward particular levels of awareness, acceptance or action...[it is] often established by communication managers responding to broader organization goals” (Smith 100) According to Smith, “A single goal may be the basis for several objectives” (100). The goals and objectives I established are listed below:

Table 2: Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster and maintain G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s relationship with current volunteers to keep them updated on what is going on at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, educate them on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the girls they are working with and encourage and inspire them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase awareness of what is going on at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and how to work with the girls they serve among current volunteers by 15% within 6 months after the first newsletter is sent out. To increase sentiment among current volunteers by 10% within 6 months after the first newsletter is sent out.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a relationship with Rutherford Cable and its members to compel individual women in the organization to get involved with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s mentoring program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch among its target market for potential volunteers by 10% within 6 months after the partnership is proposed. To recruit 5 women in Rutherford Cable to sign up for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s Growing in Grace Mentoring program within 6 months after the partnership is proposed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To spread awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch – who they are and what they do – and specifically, of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, among their target market to increase awareness and recruit runners (relay teams) and volunteers for the event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch among its target market for potential volunteers and runners/relay teams for the Brave the Dark Relay by 7% during the 4-8 week period that the article is featured before the relay. To have an effect on the action of readers of the <i>Murfreesboro Magazine</i> or the <i>VIP</i>

	<p><i>Magazine</i> in relation to volunteering for the Brave the Dark Relay – to recruit 5 women that have never volunteered before to sign up to volunteer for the Brave the Dark Relay after seeing the article during the 4-8 week period that the article is featured before the relay.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish and maintain relationships with current and potential volunteers by sharing interesting, eye catching posts/tweets on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch among its target market for potential volunteers by 15-20% within 6 months from the start of the social media campaign. • To increase sentiment among current volunteers by 5% within 6 months from the start of the social media campaign. • To increase the number of likes on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s Facebook page by 30, as well as the number of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s followers on Instagram by 10 and the number of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s followers on Twitter by 5 within 6 months from the start of the social media campaign.

(Smith 109).

Communication Pieces

In light of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s need to communicate more effectively and more often with current and potential volunteers, I planned to construct a social media campaign directed toward volunteers, write a letter to the president of Rutherford Cable to propose a partnership with its members for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s Growing in Grace Mentoring program, write a feature article to be offered to two local magazines, the *Murfreesboro Magazine* and the *VIP Murfreesboro* magazine and create an internal newsletter specifically for current volunteers.

While planning the communication materials I created, I took into account what G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s specific needs are for volunteers. While G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has a need for

volunteers in general, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch specifically needs more volunteers to lead support groups and serve as mentors through the Growing in Grace Mentoring program. In addition to these needs, Holdsworth also mentioned a desire she has to take advantage of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's proximity to Middle Tennessee State University and reach out to college girls. Holdsworth feels that this age group has a lot to offer and would love to see more college girls volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (Holdsworth).

Additionally, Ritchie expressed a desire to focus on communication efforts for their annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay in our first meeting before starting the project. I created several communication pieces and suggested several ideas for programming below to reach these specific groups of potential volunteers.

I feel that the best place for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to find women to lead support groups is through local church's women's ministries and college groups. I included this generally in my programming suggestions below, along with a specific suggestion to hold a mini conference at churches in the area, either for one church at a time or multiple churches together, to share who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is, what they do and how women can get involved with Christian women in the area.

To recruit women to be a part of the Growing in Grace Mentoring Program, I chose to write a letter to Carolyn Tumbleson, president of Rutherford Cable, to propose a partnership between its members and G.I.R.L.S. Ranch for the Growing in Grace Mentoring program. Rutherford Cable is a "premier leadership organization" that provides professional women in the community with networking and professional development opportunities (Rutherford Cable). Ritchie expressed that their mentoring program has a focus in education and career goals (Ritchie). I feel that Rutherford Cable is a great place to recruit women in the workforce that

would be a positive influence on these girls and be able to talk with them and guide them through education and career opportunities, as well as their goals and dreams. While Rutherford Cable is not a faith-based organization like G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, the hope is that the proposed partnership will elicit involvement from some like-minded individuals within Rutherford Cable.

I feel that the best way to reach college girls in the community who may be interested in volunteering at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is through social media. I chose to create a Facebook/Instagram post and tweet to specifically reach college girls and attract them to volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. In the programming section below, I also suggested that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch put together an informative and interactive presentation to share with college ministries at local churches and faith-based college groups on Middle Tennessee State University and Motlow Community College's campuses to get the word out to college girls about who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is, what they do and how they can get involved. Creating a similar presentation/day to connect with women's ministries at local churches, as I suggested above, would also offer opportunities to reach college girls in the area.

I chose to incorporate Ritchie's request for communication materials for the Brave the Dark Relay with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's general need for volunteers by creating a feature article to be offered to the *Murfreesboro Magazine* and *VIP Magazine* to raise awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the Brave the Dark Relay and specifically, to inform and recruit potential volunteers to help with the race. Both of these magazines are local magazines that can be picked up at various places around town (library, grocery stores, restaurants, etc.) that reach G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's target market for volunteers and participants in this relay, particularly in light of an initiative to recruit more consistent, long-term volunteers. Both of these magazines are also

focused on running content that is relevant to what is going on in the community, which fits well with an article on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the Brave the Dark Relay fits.

Finally, I chose to create an internal newsletter to help G.I.R.L.S. Ranch communicate more effectively with current volunteers. A monthly newsletter will allow G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to maintain consistent communication with volunteers. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep volunteers informed on what is going on at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, as well as educate them on serving girls at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and encourage and inspire them in their role as volunteers and as individuals. A special feature in the newsletter will also allow volunteers to get to know other volunteers in the organization better in hopes of creating a community among current volunteers (Huynh, Metzger and Winefield 9).

Volunteers

Overview

According to Huynh, Metzger and Winefield, a volunteer is “someone who willingly provides help or some kind of service to the community without receiving any monetary reward for this service (Noble 1997)” (4). As the definition explains, volunteers do work for an organization to help that organization and the people/cause it serves for no pay. An article from the National Council of Nonprofits describes volunteers as “a tremendous resource for charitable nonprofits.” The article goes on to say, “Absent volunteers, many charitable nonprofits would not be able to conduct programs, raise funds, or serve clients” (Volunteers).

The most recent data released on volunteers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics states that approximately 62.6 million people in the United States volunteered at least once for an organization between September 2014-September 2015. Individuals ages 35-44 and 45-54 were most likely to volunteer during this period, while individuals ages 20-24 were least likely to

volunteer (Volunteering). Individuals spent a median amount of 52 hours volunteering during this year. Individuals volunteered for the most amount of hours at religious organizations (33.1%), educational or youth service related (25.2%) and social or community service organizations (14.6%) (Volunteering). The number of volunteers that an organization has varies and volunteer initiatives are tailored to the amount of help an organization has (Volunteers).

Volunteers fill a variety of roles within an organization. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the most common tasks volunteers were put in charge of during this time were “collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food.” Other tasks noted were “tutoring or teaching, fundraising, engaging in general labor and coach[ing], referee[ing], or supervis[ing] sports teams” (Volunteering). Volunteers currently engage in similar tasks across a wide range of organizations.

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

According to an article from the National Council for Nonprofits, “managing volunteers is similar to managing paid staff, except that volunteers don’t expect to be compensated for their services.” The article notes, “they do expect to be treated with respect, trained (as needed), supervised, and provided with feedback, and rewarding experiences” (Volunteers). In an article titled “Organizational Factors Affecting Volunteers: A Literature Review on Volunteer Coordination”, Studer and Schnurbein further explain this concept, saying, “Volunteering is an emotional and value-based activity...and organizations are expected to actively shape organizational values and attitudes with respect to volunteering, so that they have the capacity to attract volunteers” (16)

Very similarly to paid workers, volunteers have certain expectations for the environment they work in, the tasks they perform and the people they work for and with. In order to

effectively recruit and retain volunteers, an organization's leaders must consider the factors that go into an individual's decision to volunteer (and keep volunteering) for an organization and seek to create an environment that encompasses these (Studer and Schnurbein 10).

Studer and Schnurbein share some elements of volunteer interaction that have been proven to lead to volunteer retention, stating, "Hager and Brudney (2004b) showed that recognition activities, training, professional volunteer development, screening volunteers, matching volunteers to assignments, and volunteers recruiting others one-on-one all have statistically significant positive effects...on the retention of volunteers (9).

Along with these elements, research shows that whether or not a volunteer feels like they belong to an organization plays a significant part in their desire to volunteer for a particular organization and more importantly, continue volunteering (Studer and Schnurbein 10). According to Studer and Schnurbein, "Whether or not a volunteer feels welcomed in an organization and inspired to provide a service of high quality" affects a volunteer's "motivation, willingness to continue volunteering in an organization and satisfaction in their position" (10). In order to keep volunteers and to attract new volunteers, it is important to allow individuals interested in volunteering the opportunity to get to know the organization – staff, current volunteers and the people or cause they will be serving – to provide a chance for them to "identify with the organization's mission" (Studer and Schnurbein 10).

It is important that staff members and current volunteers make new volunteers feel welcome, wanted and valued as individuals and needed and appreciated for the work they are doing. A word that is used for the presence of this within an organization is connectedness. In an article titled "Engaged or Connected? A Perspective of the Motivational Pathway of the Job Demands-Resources Model in Volunteers Working for Nonprofit Organizations", Huynh,

Metzer and Winefield confirm that connectedness within an organization is highly sought out and valued among current and potential volunteers (7).

Studer and Schnurbein suggest that one way to foster connectedness and “a sense of community” is through a volunteer newsletter, stating, “Alternatively, publicly recognizing volunteers through a volunteer newsletter supports volunteers' relational expectations and is positively linked to adequate volunteer numbers" (p. 321)” (9). While building a sense of community, a feature in the volunteer newsletter publicly recognizing certain volunteers also qualifies as a “recognition activity,” which was one of the elements of volunteer interaction that is proven to lead to volunteer retention listed above (Studer and Schnurbein 9).

Studer says, “Organizations should “build a social web that encourages volunteers to stay engaged” (15). This research, along with other research mentioned above, affirms the development of the internal newsletter I created for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s current volunteers, as well as, specifically, the column I included in the newsletter to feature a new volunteer every month. As I mentioned above, my hope is that the newsletter will function as a way of bringing volunteers together and creating “a sense of community” among volunteers centered around the common bond of serving young girls in the Murfreesboro community that come from hard places (Huynh, Metzer and Winefield 9).

The authors of both of these articles proposed a number of other tactics for managing and retaining volunteers effectively, three of which include having specific jobs within an organization and making job roles clear, having someone specific that is responsible for organizing volunteers and dividing and communicating tasks, and giving more established volunteers opportunities to get to know new volunteers and show them what to do.

The Need for Volunteers

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch currently has five volunteers who serve weekly in support groups and one volunteer per week, for fifteen weeks, that serves by bringing or sponsoring a meal for weekly family dinners. As I mentioned, Ritchie says that the Growing in Grace Mentoring program is currently “on hold,” so there are no women volunteering as mentors at the moment. In addition to these volunteers who serve regularly, up to 100 volunteers on average serve at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, every year (Ritchie).

Women ages 22+ are the primary volunteers at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, although they have some college students that volunteer as well (Holdsworth). It is important for women to be the primary volunteers at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch because G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is an organization that serves girls exclusively. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch provides a safe place for these girls to share their hurts and struggles, as well as their biggest dreams and successes. It is important and appropriate that women speak into their life in this way, rather than men.

There are a variety of ways in which women can volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. The two main roles that women can fill that involve direct interaction with the girls and have the most regular schedule are serving as a mentor and leading a support group (Holdsworth). These are G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s two greatest needs in terms of volunteers right now.

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch offers support groups on Monday and Thursday nights. Ritchie and Holdsworth both expressed that it would be helpful to have more than one leader per group to have a better ratio in leaders to the number of girls and to have more women available to talk with the girls. In addition to more women to help lead the current support groups they have, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is in need of several more women to lead a support group so they can split the middle school and high school girls up into two separate support groups to better serve the

individual age groups (Holdsworth).

In addition to support groups, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch also offers a mentoring program called the Growing In Grace Mentoring program (Ritchie). Women serving as mentors at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch are matched with a girl who has been coming to group regularly and commit to spend “extra” time with her outside of the support group. Ritchie’s hope is that mentors meet with the girl they are matched with in person four to five times a month outside of group, which comes out to be about an hour a week and communicate through text, email, etc. other times throughout the week to stay connected and keep a conversation going. Mentors are in charge of managing their relationship with the girls with whom they are matched. Ritchie’s hope is that they take true ownership of these relationships (Ritchie).

As I mentioned, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s current mentor program is education and career focused. Ritchie envisions the girls having the opportunity to attend job fairs, career fairs, campus tours if their mentor went to Middle Tennessee State University or a school in Nashville or a workplace tour at their mentor’s job nearby. Ritchie hopes that this exposure to educational institutions and workplaces will open the girls’ eyes to what is out there and inspire them to work hard and fulfill their highest potential. Ritchie says, “We just want to expose them to other life experiences” (Ritchie).

In light of this focus, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch primarily seeks out women who are college graduates for their mentoring program. Ritchie is open, however, to also letting current college students get involved in their mentoring program, depending on their interest level and maturity. She says, “I don’t want to not let people get involved just because of their age because I mentored in college and loved it...so it just depends” (Ritchie). G.I.R.L.S. Ranch asks for a year long commitment from volunteers leading a support group or mentoring (Ritchie).

In addition to leading a support group or mentoring, other ways that women can volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch are providing meals for girls before support groups on Monday and Thursday nights, chaperoning service projects, reward nights, etc., cleaning the interior and/or exterior of the home, donating supplies and food for camps, retreats or normal everyday activities, providing transportation, setting up and cleaning up group dinners and volunteering at their annual fundraiser, Brave the Dark (Holdsworth).

Men and boys can also volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. While not all board members are volunteers, there are several men on the Board of Directors for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. I would assume that all these men serve on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's board of directors because they share Ritchie's vision and heart for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and want to take an active role in whatever way they can, aside from direct interaction with the girls, to promote the organization and support in the fulfillment of its mission) (*G.I.R.L.S. Ranch*). In addition to serving on their board, men and boys can volunteer in other ways, such as making repairs, landscaping, cleaning the interior and/or exterior of the home and providing meals for the girls to eat before support groups (Ritchie).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch cares about their volunteers and desires to invest in them as individuals, as well as volunteers for the organization. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has held several volunteer interest meetings in the past to educate potential volunteers on who they are and what they do, the kind of girls that they serve, and the ways that individuals can volunteer (Holdsworth). In addition to holding interest meetings, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has also recruited potential volunteers at Middle Tennessee State University's volunteer fairs, churches, the Junior League of Murfreesboro and by word of mouth (Ritchie). Ritchie and Holdsworth both affirmed their love for and interest in anyone that wants to get involved. Ritchie says, "If you have a gift, we'd love to use it at

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch...” (Ritchie). Holdsworth echoes this, saying, “So really if you have a gift and you want to figure out how to use it, here at GR we want to [help you] do that” (Holdsworth). While G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has specific roles that need to be filled by volunteers, they are open to accepting help in a variety of different ways and are focused on drawing out any of their volunteers’ strengths that can positively impact the organization (Holdsworth).

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch needs to recruit and retain more volunteers generally because their volunteer numbers are fairly low, especially in terms of consistent volunteers. Specifically, however, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch needs to recruit and retain more volunteers to meet their most pressing needs discussed above. They also need to bring in more volunteers to help compensate for a lack of staffing. While more staff is very much needed since Holdsworth and Bartemus have both left, bringing more volunteers on board is a great way for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to spread the workload without having to expend additional resources to hire too many additional staff members immediately. Relying on volunteers may allow Ritchie the extra time needed to find the right people to bring on the team as well, which is incredibly important.

Implementation

Overview

The third stage of the public relations process is implementation. In this stage, the communication pieces that were planned earlier in the public relations process are created (Smith 13-14). As I mentioned above, I have constructed a social media campaign directed toward volunteers (Appendices D and E), written a letter to the president of Rutherford Cable to propose a partnership with its members for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s Growing in Grace Mentoring program (Appendix F), written a feature article to be offered to the *Murfreesboro Magazine* and the *VIP Magazine* (Appendix G) and created an internal newsletter for volunteers (Appendix H).

Tools

After planning what communication materials I wanted to create, I determined what software and tools were needed and got to work on them. I used Microsoft Word for the written components of the social media campaign, letter to the president of Rutherford Cable, and feature article. I also included photos that I found through Google Images and G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's main Facebook page, as well as the Facebook page that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch created for the Brave the Dark Relay where needed, to enhance these materials. I created the newsletter in Adobe InDesign and incorporated photos pulled from Google Images and these Facebook pages into the newsletter as well.

In addition to using these software programs and tools, I also used prior skills and knowledge that I have developed through courses I have taken in public relations and marketing, as well as work experience in these fields. Previous skills and knowledge influenced my ability to create these communication materials successfully for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to fulfill the goals and objectives that I determined in the planning stage.

Scheduling

In terms of scheduling public relations activity, there are four patterns of message repetition to choose between. The first pattern is continuity. According to Smith, "continuity is an approach to scheduling that presents a message at a consistent level throughout a particular period of time" (13). "Flighting (also called bursting), refers to the presentation of messages in waves, with periods of intense communication interspersed with dark periods of communication inactivity." Another pattern of message repetition is massing, which is "the bunching of various presentations of a message into a short period of time" (Smith 313).

In relation to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's overall communication with their publics and

specifically with current and potential volunteers, I would suggest that they implement yet another pattern of message repetition – the pulsing strategy, which is “a combination of [continuity and flighting], with a continuous base augmented by intermittent bursts of communication activity” (Smith 313). It is important for them to maintain some form of consistent communication with their publics to remain present and relevant. There are times, however, that circumstances call for different forms of communication and/or communicating more often to advertise for an event or recruit volunteers for a new school year.

Evaluation

Overview

The last stage in the public relations process is evaluation. Evaluation is “the systematic measurement of the outcomes of a project, program or campaign based on the extent to which stated objectives are achieved” (Smith 331).

There are two types of research used in the evaluation stage: quantitative and qualitative (Smith 340). The most common methods of quantitative research used are surveys, content analyses, cost analyses, cost-effectiveness studies, readership studies, head counts, tracking of feedback, and direct observation and monitoring of specific results.” The most common types of qualitative research methods used are interviews, focus groups and case studies (Smith 340).

Value of Evaluation

Smith points out, “Evaluation is infrequent because public relations practitioners – or rather, their bosses or clients – simply don’t recognize its value and aren’t willing to pay for it” (330). Smith goes on to point out the positive effects that evaluation can have on a campaign, explaining, “Properly built into the overall strategic plan, evaluative research can increase the effectiveness of public relations and marketing communication.” Smith goes on to say, “...it can

save time and money in future endeavors...[and] proper evaluation can enhance the prestige and role of public relations within an organization” (330).

Before evaluating the tactics that were implemented, it is important to set specific metrics to evaluate them by. Evaluation is an essential part of the public relations process because it has a direct impact on the success of future public relations campaigns/activities. If specific measures aren’t set beforehand, the organization has no basis by which to determine whether or not the campaign was successful. It is important to know whether or not the campaign was successful so that the organization can learn from its successes and failures and use this knowledge to amend tactics in the future. If the organization does not know what worked and what did not, then they are much more liable to repeat something unsuccessful (Smith).

Since the research has already been conducted and the communication materials have already been planned and created, it can be easy to feel as though it would be fine to skip the evaluation stage altogether and move on to the next campaign. It is clear, however, that the evaluation stage is an incredibly important part of the public relations process.

Objectives

An organization should not evaluate a campaign solely based on observation. The organization needs to establish criteria by which to evaluate each public relations activity they implement, individually. This criteria involves specific tools that are used to measure the effectiveness of the activity and/or the response from the group you’re trying to reach (Smith).

There are three main types of evaluative objectives: awareness objectives, acceptance objectives and action objectives (Smith 332-333). I established objectives for the goals I set for each public relations material that I created. I would be able to evaluate whether or not I met each goal based on the awareness, acceptance or action objective that I set for each one.

Metrics

There are many different metrics that can be put into place to evaluate a public relations project, program or campaign (Smith 333). Some of the most common metrics used in the evaluation for awareness objectives are media coverage and calculation of media impressions and a post-campaign awareness survey. For acceptance objectives, some of the most common used are tabulation of requests for information, post-campaign attitude/opinion surveys and post-event audience evaluation and some of the most common metrics used for action objectives are measures of results (ticket sales, attendance, memberships, donations, etc.), measures of improvement and organizational or environmental change (Smith 333).

Social Media Campaigns

Smith suggests several low-cost ways to evaluate social media engagement. These include, Google Analytics or other software that tracks views of the post(s), evaluating the number of people who have liked the organization's Facebook page, posting a question on Facebook and counting replies and putting up a poll and evaluating how people respond (Smith 351).

To evaluate the social media campaign, I would use Google Analytics to track viewers of the posts, as well as account for and record the number of likes, comments and shares or retweets on the posts G.I.R.L.S. Ranch puts out on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. I would also evaluate how many more likes G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has gained on Facebook, as well as how many followers G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has gained on Instagram and Twitter during the month to a month and a half that these posts are put out. This is a direct reflection of how many people are gaining awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and following what they do.

There are many different ways to measure online engagement, but whichever measures

are used, any engagement at all seems to be the goal. I would also evaluate the social media campaign by measuring sentiment. According to an article from Hootsuite, a platform used to schedule social media posts, sentiment “refers to the emotion behind a social media mention online.” The article goes on to say, “It’s a way to measure the tone of the conversation...Measuring sentiment will help you understand the overall feeling surrounding a particular subject, enabling you to create a broader and more complete picture of the social conversations that matter to you” (Hootsuite). There are several programs that can be used to measure sentiment. I would use Hootsuite Insights for these and future posts (Hootsuite).

Letter to Rutherford Cable

To evaluate my letter to Carolyn Tumbleson, the President of Rutherford Cable, I would measure increased awareness by sending out a survey a week or so after the letter and information has been shared to gauge how much the women in Rutherford Cable know about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and what they think of the organization. I would send Rutherford Cable with some additional informational/promotional materials on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch along with the letter, so they can get to know a little bit more about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and who they serve and share this with their members. If the partnership proposal is accepted, I would also keep up with how many women in Rutherford Cable sign up to be mentors for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s Growing in Grace Mentoring Program for the next two to four months following the start of the partnership.

Feature Article

To evaluate the feature article in the *Murfreesboro Magazine* or the *VIP Magazine*, I would calculate how many people (or the average) the magazine will be reaching through subscriptions or the issues being picked up at various locations during the month that the article is run. I would also evaluate how many people sign up to volunteer at the Brave the Dark Relay

or to be on a relay team after reading the article. I would measure this by asking those who sign up how they heard about the relay. I would continue to ask all volunteers in the future (for specific events/needs and long-term volunteers for support groups and/or the Growing in Grace Mentoring program) how they heard about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to understand and evaluate what the most effective ways to bring in new volunteers, or motivate current volunteers to volunteer for more things, have been.

Newsletter

The primary way that I would to evaluate the internal newsletter for current volunteers is to send out a survey to current volunteers after three months of receiving the monthly newsletter to gauge their thoughts and feelings on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the new newsletter, evaluate how equipped they feel to volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and serve the girls that they do, and gauge their awareness of what is going on at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (Smith 333).

Suggestions for Future Communication Programs

In addition to implementing the communication materials that I have created, I have also listed several suggestions for future communication programs that I have for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch to more effectively communicate with current and potential volunteers:

- Blog for volunteers - online training/encouragement for working with girls that come from hard places
- Training workshops for volunteers
- Partner with a local concert or conference like Compassion International does to increase awareness of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch among local women and attract volunteers for support groups, the Growing in Grace Mentoring program and other opportunities
- Hold a mini conference at churches – a few hours/a day to inform Christian women of who G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is, what they do, how they can get involved and offer training for serving girls that come from hard places. This could be all at one big conference for churches in Rutherford County (or one for Murfreesboro and one for Smyrna) or several mini conferences held at local churches individually.
- College groups and college ministries – recruit college women to volunteer at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch
- Recruit women from local church's women ministries to lead support groups

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions for Shannon and Fran

Below is the list of questions that I prepared to ask Shannon Ritchie, Founder and Executive Director of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and Fran Holdsworth, former Group Coordinator. I did not get to all of these questions during my interviews with either Shannon or Fran due to time constraints or overlapping questions.

1. How/why did you start G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? Mission/Vision? Inspiration?
2. Where do you see G.I.R.L.S. in 5 years/10 years?
3. What are some of your short-term goals? Long-term? What are you doing to meet them?
4. What are all of the different services/activities/events/programs that you provide for your clients? Any you are planning on adding short-term or long-term?
5. What is your main focus as an organization right now?
6. What medium/form do you use most in communicating with your publics currently?
7. Who would you identify as your publics? – Groups of people that are connected to/affect your organization. Who do you want to reach with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's messages?
8. What do you feel are your most significant strengths as an organization?
9. What about your weaknesses?
10. Can you identify any significant opportunities for growth? – Possibly in comparison to similar organizations in the area.
11. Same for threats?
12. What are you trying to communicate overall about your organization? Any specific examples? Do you feel that you're accomplishing that? Have you identified any problems or roadblocks?

13. You have volunteers, correct? How many currently? How does the system work – communicating with them, keeping up with them, accepting/turning away, dividing up work, confidentiality, etc. What do they do? How do you think your publics view you as an organization? What do they think of you?
14. How many clients/girls do you currently serve? What services/groups of services/programs do the girls participate in/take advantage of the most?
15. Where do you get all of the funds for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? How do you coordinate fundraising? Examples of ways you raise funds?
16. How do your publics and/or the surrounding community help or hinder how you are able to function as an organization?
17. What are some of the biggest issues/obstacles that you face as an organization?
18. What is your code of ethics for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and its constituents?
19. What does your employee structure look like?
20. Could you describe the environment at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch for those that work/volunteer there? Volunteers? Clients?
21. How do you view G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's external environment?
22. What does a typical day look like at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch?
23. What do you hear "out there" about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch?
24. Likewise, what do you hear internally about your organization?
25. What are your facilities like? Why don't you list your address on your website?
26. Why did you want to get involved with/work for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch?

27. How do you feel that the public perceives you currently as an organization? Do you feel that you are very visible to the public? Have the attitude(s) or visibility changed over time?
28. Are there any social, political or economic factors that currently affect the effectiveness of your organization?
29. What do you feel needs to change within your organization? Overall and in terms of PR/communication. How do you plan to make it happen?
30. What are your greatest needs right now as an organization?
31. Who are your competitors? The biggest? Does the nonprofit community (or at least in this area) work like that or do you all work together?
32. Who are your opponents? Supporters?
33. How much are you currently bringing in?
34. Do you feel as though your organization has been successful over the last 6 years? Now? What makes it so? Are you accomplishing your mission and vision?
35. What is your overall perception (personally or as an employee) of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch?
36. Did you do any research about starting a non-profit before developing G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? On the process of applying to be a 501(c)(3)?
37. What has changed for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch over the past 6 years?
38. What has your “track record” been as an organization over the past 6 years? Successes? Failures?
39. What are you expecting from me through this process/project?

Appendix B: Interview Questions for Board Member

The five questions that I chose to ask the board members were:

1. What do you feel are G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's strengths?
2. What do you feel are G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's weaknesses? What do you feel needs to change within G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (if anything)?
3. How do you think that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's publics view them as an organization? Do you think they are visible? What do you hear "out there" about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? (Publics include the girls they serve, volunteers, employees and the general public that is aware of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch)
4. What do you feel G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's biggest weaknesses are/what do you feel needs to change (if anything) in terms of communication – public relations and marketing?
5. What do you feel are G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's greatest needs right now?

I chose these five questions because I felt that they would have the best chance of providing me with the information I needed to confirm what G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's communication needs were and which one I should to focus on.

Appendix C: Communication Pieces

The social media campaign, letter, feature article, and newsletter created for this campaign include a mix of hypothetical content based on facts and current organizational activities and factual content based on research, knowledge and observations of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch.

Appendix D: Social Media Campaign – Instagram and Facebook

Post	Image/Visual	Timetable
Hear her story. Share yours. #mentor #mentoring #growingingrace #girls #girlsbranch #volunteer	Picture of one or more girls smiling	Anytime
We're hosting a volunteer interest meeting this Wednesday at 5 p.m. for women from local churches interested in learning more about leading support groups. #girlsbranch #supportgroups #volunteer	Graphic with flowers in the background with a transparent center overlay with the words: Volunteer Interest Meeting Women Leading Support Groups Wednesday, May 9 at 5 p.m. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch Address	Anytime
We have 2 sweet girls who would still love to be matched with a mentor for the upcoming school year. Please consider becoming a part of our mentoring program. Check out our website for more information at www.girlsbranchtn.org/mentoring . #mentor #mentoring #growingingrace #girls #girlsbranch #volunteer	Picture of middle aged woman, nicely dressed walking or talking having smoothies or ice cream with a young girl, both smiling	Mid-July
Our meal train for the month of August is now up! Please consider bringing a meal for our girls to eat together in the upcoming weeks. Find more information and sign up at www.mealtrain.com/girlsbranch . #familydinners #mealtrain #girlsbranch	Picture of a casserole or a bunch of girls sitting around the table eating dinner together	Late July
Calling all college girls! We are having a volunteer interest meeting specifically for college girls on at City Church on August 2 at 5 p.m.! We would love to help you uncover and use your unique gifts, talents and perspectives to connect with and serve our girls. To find	Picture of 2-3 college girls with several younger girls at an event	Mid-July

<p>out more about what we do, visit our website at www.girlsranchtn.org and come join us at City Church on August 2! #college #girls #girlsranch #volunteer #serve</p>		
<p>We are just a month away from our annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, and we are looking for volunteers for a variety of needs before, during and after the relay! Can you help us? Email our volunteer coordinator, Shannon Ritchie, at info@girlsranch.org to sign up! #bravethedark #relay #girlsranch</p>	<p>Picture of 5-7 women in their running gear at the finish line at New Vision Baptist Church</p>	<p>October/November</p>
<p>Interested in volunteering/getting involved at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? We need YOU! Visit our website at www.girlsranchtn.org or reach out to Shannon Ritchie at info@girlsranch.org for more information. #girlsranch #volunteer #serve</p>	<p>Picture of a bunch of girls together at one of the retreats or camps, smiling</p>	<p>Anytime</p>

Appendix E: Social Media Campaign – Twitter

Tweet	Timetable
Hear her story. Share yours. #mentor #mentoring #growingingrace #girlsbranch	Anytime
Volunteer interest meeting this Wednesday at 5 p.m. for women from local churches interested in learning more about leading support groups. #girlsbranch #supportgroups #volunteer	Anytime
We have 2 sweet girls who would still love to be matched with a mentor for the upcoming school year. Please consider becoming a part of our mentoring program. Check out our website for more information at www.girlsbranchtn.org/mentoring . #girlsbranch #supportgroups #volunteer	Mid-July
Our August meal train is now up! Please consider bringing a meal for our girls to eat together in the upcoming weeks. Find more information and sign up at www.mealtrain.com/girlsbranch . #familydinners #mealtrain #girlsbranch	Late July
College girls! Come join us on August 2 at 5 p.m. for a volunteer interest meeting to learn more about how you can use your unique gifts, talents and perspectives to serve our girls at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. #college #girls #girlsbranch #volunteer #serve	Mid-July
We're just a month away from our annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay, and we are looking for volunteers for a variety of needs! Can you help us? Tweet us @girlsbranch or email Shannon at info@girlsbranch.com to sign up! #bravethedark #relay #girlsbranch	October/November
Interested in volunteering/getting involved at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch? We need YOU! Visit our website at www.girlsbranchtn.org or reach out to Shannon Ritchie at info@girlsbranch.org for more information. #girlsbranch #volunteer #serve	Anytime

Appendix F: Letter to Carolyn Tumbleson, President of Rutherford Cable, proposing a partnership between G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and Rutherford Cable for the Growing in Grace Mentoring program



June 30, 2018

Carolyn Tumbleson, President
Rutherford Cable
P.O. Box 375
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Dear Ms. Tumbleson,

Six years ago, I started G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, a faith-based non-profit organization that provides young girls, ages 9-17, in the Middle Tennessee area who come from hard places with a chance to encounter God right where they are, in the midst of tough circumstances. We are located here in Murfreesboro and primarily serve Rutherford County. We offer support groups, camps and retreats and other new life experiences to build relationships with these girls, and to help them form connections and have “me too” moments with each other, identifying others with similar life experiences.

Our hope is that each of the connections they form and the experiences they have play an integral part in their healing process and personal growth and always point them back to Christ. We also seek to provide them with support and encouragement through these relationships and experiences as they finish school and explore the possibilities life has to offer them afterward.

One way that we do this is through our Growing in Grace Mentoring program. Our vision for this program is that girls who participate in the weekly support groups will have the extended support and care needed from a positive, trusted mentor relationship to further their growth in restructuring their sense of self on Christ. The primary focus of the mentoring relationship is to support young girls in pursuing their academic success and following their God given strengths and skills as they pursue their life goals during and after high school.

I am writing to propose a partnership between G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and Rutherford Cable for our Growing in Grace mentoring program. We are seeking out women in the workforce who want to invest in the next generation of young women. Here at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, we are committed to establishing and fostering deep, genuine relationships with our girls. The relational aspect of what we do is such an integral part of these girls' healing and growth and having older women in their lives who model positive, healthy relationships, careers and lives is so important.

We are familiar with Rutherford Cable's mentoring program and admire your desire to connect professionals just starting out with more experienced professionals, as well as the way you have structured your program.

We would love to connect women in Rutherford Cable that are interested in blending their faith with their educational and professional experience to form a bond with one of our girls and walk alongside them, supporting and encouraging them to dream big, set goals, and make plans for their futures.

Our hope and vision is that these mentoring relationships would be as long term as possible. We ask for a year long commitment through the school year from our mentors. We would love to see our girls connect with a mentor and continue to meet with them until they graduate.

I would love to meet with you in person to talk through the possibility of this partnership more and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon Ritchie

Shannon Ritchie
Founder & Executive Director, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch
615-239-8432
shannon@girlsranchtn.org

Local Non-Profit G.I.R.L.S. Ranch Seeks Volunteers for Brave the Dark Relay

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is a 501(c)(3) faith-based non-profit organization located in Murfreesboro that serves young girls ages 9-17 who come from hard places. G.I.R.L.S. stands for God In Real Life Situations. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch provides young girls who have been through tough life situations such as grief, abuse, homelessness, and violence with a chance to encounter God right where they are, in the midst of their circumstances.

Committed staff members, some with counseling degrees, and volunteers engage girls through various programs including support groups, mentoring, camps and retreats, weekly family dinners and other new life experiences. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch provides a safe environment in which girls can talk through their hurts and struggles, share their hopes, dreams and accomplishments, and grow in their faith in Christ. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's website states, "We believe each story has the opportunity to overcome and thrive in this world" (G.I.R.L.S. Ranch).

Shannon Ritchie is the Founder and Executive Director of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. Ritchie developed a passion for working with lower income families and specifically, young people, when she was a freshman in high school through volunteer work and involvement at her church working with inner city kids. Ritchie says, "God has always wired my heart to work with lower income families."

Ritchie received degrees in both School Counseling and Clinical Psychology at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia and moved to Middle Tennessee shortly after graduating. Here in Middle Tennessee Ritchie worked as a school counselor in a Title I school for 7 years. During her time as a school counselor, Ritchie had many opportunities to interact with lower income families, and specifically their children.

She went above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a school counselor. One particular journey that Ritchie embarked on in response to a traumatic event in a young fourth grade girl's life became the catalyst for the start of G.I.R.L.S. Ranch.

Ritchie says, "Walking through that with her, I realized that the way I felt burdened to live life with her outside of the school setting, that there was not an organization in town that was doing that. Yeah, she was referred to counseling, but as far as a faith-based, all female organization that could provide mentoring, support groups, tutoring and then eventually, a



Founder & Executive Director, Shannon Ritchie, previous Development Director, Cortney Bartemus and Shannon's mom, Donna Ritchie inside of the G.I.R.L.S. Ranch home with Board of Directors and Source: Brave the Dark Facebook Page

residential facility for her to go and to live and to stay and get healing from that trauma...[there wasn't anywhere like that for her to turn to.]”

Through this experience, along with others, Ritchie saw a great need for an organization like G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and rather than waiting for someone else to start one, she decided to start one herself.

Ritchie founded G.I.R.L.S. Ranch in 2011. She spent a year or so raising funds, acquiring



Girls showing off their art projects after support group
Source: G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (God In Real Life Situations) Facebook Page

meeting and office space and preparing for support groups and then started their first support group in 2012. Now, eight years later, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch has grown into an organization serving around 20 girls a week through two different support groups, weekly family dinners and a variety of other activities.

Ritchie’s heart, passion and enthusiasm for her ministry at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is so evident and directly affects the reach and impact that she has in the community and the girls’ lives that she

serves. She says, “It is such a blessing to me to be able to serve these girls each week and be a part of their lives.”

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch’s annual fundraiser, the Brave the Dark Relay is just a few weeks away and they are looking for volunteers to help with the relay! The Brave the Dark Relay is a 15-mile team relay that takes place at the Stones River Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tn. The relay calls the Murfreesboro community together to literally brave the dark {and cold} and run to raise money for the work that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch does with young girls through support groups, their Growing in Grace Mentoring program, camps and retreats and other new life experiences. Ritchie says, “[The] Brave the Dark Relay hopes to empower our community to work together to overcome the darkness our girls encounter daily...”

Relay participants are asked to form teams of two to five runners who take turns running each of the five loops. Before and after the relay, teams are invited to come by the start and finish line at New Vision Baptist Church to meet other relay teams and enjoy music and refreshments. A hydration station is set up at the start and finish line and G.I.R.L.S. Ranch provides s’mores, hot cocoa and coffee after the race. Awards will be given for the top placing teams in the relay and everyone that participates in the relay will receive an official Brave the Dark t-shirt to commemorate the night.

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch counts on volunteers every year to make the Brave the Dark Relay happen. Volunteering for the Brave the Dark Relay is an opportunity to be a part of raising



Volunteers Kelly Chestnut and Donna Ritchie getting glow sticks ready for the Brave the Dark Relay
Source: Brave the Dark Facebook page

money to help the girls that G.I.R.L.S. Ranch serves. It is also an opportunity to learn more about G.I.R.L.S. Ranch and the work that they do. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is also looking for volunteers interested in getting involved more regularly in their daily/weekly activities.

There are several different ways that individuals can volunteer at the relay. Individuals can sign up to serve on a committee to oversee the planning, execution and clean up for the relay. On the day of the relay, G.I.R.L.S. Ranch needs volunteers to help set up at the start and finish



Volunteer Bailey Redding setting up the hydration station for the Brave the Dark Relay

Source: Brave the Dark Facebook Page

line, sign relay teams in, stand at marked locations throughout the trails to direct runners, hand out water and hand out s'mores, hot cocoa and coffee after the race is over.

Individuals or businesses can also sign up to be a race sponsor prior to the relay. The individual's or business' name will be featured in all promotional materials related to the race. There will also be a banner at the relay start and finish point with sponsors names on it and sponsors will be featured on the official Brave the Dark Relay t-shirts.

The next annual Brave the Dark Relay will be held on November 18, 2018 at 6 p.m. at New Vision Baptist Church (start and finish point) and the Stones River Battlefield. G.I.R.L.S. Ranch would love for individuals and groups to consider volunteering for the Brave the Dark Relay in some way.

Please contact G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's Volunteer Coordinator, Shannon Ritchie, if you're interested in volunteering for the Brave the Dark Relay or visit G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's website and the Brave the Dark 2018 Facebook page for more information.

For more information on G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, please visit their website at www.girlsranchtn.org.

For more information on the Brave the Dark Relay, please visit the Brave the Dark 2018 Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/bravethedark/2018>.



Hope & Healing

August 2018

A Letter From Shannon:

Dear Friends,

We are so excited for all of the opportunities and experiences that this new year is going to bring for G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. This summer, all of our girls who attended support groups regularly last semester had the opportunity to come to camp with us. This is something our girls look forward to all semester. It is such a unique and valuable time, away from their daily lives, to spend time with each other and focus on their relationships with the Lord. We loved every minute we had with our girls this summer and are continuously humbled to have the opportunity to walk alongside them in this season of healing and growth. We are so proud of each of them and how far they've come.



Source: Young Women Empowered

Our support groups this semester will begin on Monday, August 13. We're so thankful and excited to continue welcoming new girls into our home each semester! One of our biggest needs right now is finding women who are interested in leading one of our support groups. Our hope long-term is to have enough leaders to be able to split our middle and high school girls up into two separate groups. In order to do this, we are in need of at least two more support group leaders. Please take a moment to pray about this and consider leading a group. Don't hesitate to reach out to me at shannon@girlsranch.org if you have any questions.

As always, we are so grateful for your continued prayers and support. Your investment in providing hope and healing for girls through G.I.R.L.S. Ranch is life changing and on behalf of our staff and our girls, we want to thank you!

Warmly,

Shannon Ritchie

Shannon Ritchie
Founder & Executive Director

Support G.I.R.L.S. Ranch through Kroger Community Rewards

Did you know that you can support G.I.R.L.S. Ranch financially just by buying groceries and gas at your local Kroger? We have partnered with Kroger through their Kroger Community Rewards program to make this possible.

Kroger has partnered with a number of local schools, churches and non-profit organizations to give back to the community, giving shoppers the opportunity to choose an organization that a percentage of every dollar they spend at Kroger will go towards.

This program also provides individuals in the community with a unique way to raise money for camps, retreats and other opportunities through schools, churches and non-profit organizations that they need help paying for.

Kroger has given away millions of dollars over the years through Kroger Community Rewards and we hope, will continue to do so for years to come.

For more information on the program or to enroll through your Kroger Plus Card, visit <https://www.kroger.com/topic/kroger-community-rewards-3>.



Source: Freebie Supply

Upcoming Events

G.I.R.L.S. Ranch's event schedule for August 2018 has not been released yet.

Follow us on this journey:



G.I.R.L.S. Ranch (God In Real Life Situations)



G.I.R.L.S. Ranch



girlsranch

“Mentoring Girls 101”

1) Ask Questions: (Ask hard questions!)

I have learned over the years that the more specific the question, the better and more effective. I think sometimes we don't want to ask the hard questions because that can get messy, but discipleship is messy.

2) Create Safety:

Each girl needs to know that you are a safe person. They need to trust you. Trusting someone takes time, especially if you're starting this relationship from scratch.

3) Pray with them:

Don't just pray for them, pray with them. There is power in prayer. There is power in praying out loud. And there is certainly power in praying with the girls.

4) Do things with them:

One really great way to build a strong relationship is to just do everyday life with them. Go see a movie, take them grocery shopping with you, go shopping together, invite them over for dinner with your family, hang out at the pool, and so on and so forth.

Read more of “Mentoring Girls 101” from Lindsee on [The Living Proof Ministries Blog](#).

We Love Our Volunteers!

Rachel Gills



Source: Pexels

Rachel lives on the North side of Murfreesboro with her husband Matt, kids, Emmie and Alex and their dog, Jack. Rachel has been volunteering with G.I.R.L.S. Ranch for seven years now. She's been with us since the very beginning! Rachel currently serves as a support leader for our elementary school girls.

When Rachel is not volunteering at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch, you can usually find her at Siegel Middle School, where she has been teaching music for five years, at home spending time with her family, at the gym or near a mountain in Tennessee hiking with her family and friends.

Fun Facts

Favorite song: “Unwritten” by Natasha Bedingfield

Favorite food: Spagehetti and meatballs

Best book you've read recently: *Fervent*

Best movie you've seen recently: *The Greatest Showman*

Favorite thing about August: “Fall is right around the corner! I look forward to cooler weather and bonfires.”

We are so grateful to have Rachel on our team at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch! She has been such a blessing to our organization and the girls we serve. We are so thankful that she has chosen to be a part of the G.I.R.L.S. Ranch family!

From Our Girls...

“I love that I can be myself at G.I.R.L.S. Ranch. My attitude has gotten much better since coming on Thursday nights. I have started opening up and stopped being so mad at everything. I've learned the important things in life....like my relationship with God!”

- 12th Grade Sweet Girl Who Was Told She Was Just Another Drop-Out But Will Be Graduating Soon

“I love G.I.R.L.S. Ranch....it's like a second home or kind of feels like my first. I feel loved here and have grown to be more open and honest. I have also learned how to be more trusting of people.”

- 6th Grade Girl Who Loves To Sing And Dream Who Has Experienced Homelessness Multiple Times

“I love coming to G.I.R.L.S. Ranch because I can tell ya'll things that I can't tell others. I love that there is a focus on God, and I've noticed that I pray more and have a better relationship with Him. Coming to group on Thursday nights also helped me control my anger.”

- 7th Grade Girl Who Is Energetic And Doesn't Meet A Stranger But Has Experienced Homelessness And Abuse