Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility at Girl Scouts of Orange County

STRATEGIC PLAN

Revised: April 2023

OUR CHARGE

VISION Statement (in process)

What are we striving for? What is our greater goal? What do we aspire to be?

Girl Scouts of Orange County create experiences and opportunities where everyone's unique and diverse identities are honored and celebrated.

MISSION Statement (in process)

What do we do to move toward our vision?
The IDEA Team leads/guides Girl Scouts of Orange County in our efforts to build on Girl Scouts' legacy of inclusiveness as we recognize and act on issues of social justice, equity, accessibility, and cross-cultural understanding that directly and indirectly influence all our work.

Understanding Key Concepts Related to Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Racial Justice

These are our working definitions intended to provide a foundation for our work. We realize that there are different interpretations for many of the terms and we encourage you to focus on the core value and message presented in each definition.

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values. It is important to note that many activists and thinkers critique diversity alone as a strategy. SOURCE: UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, "Glossary of Terms" (page 34 in 2009 Strategic Plan). Baltimore Racial Justice Action, "Our Definitions" (2018).

Equity is the differentiated, targeted treatment in order to meet the needs of those most marginalized. Equity is a process, a practice, and an outcome. Equity requires diversity and inclusion. We believe equity goes beyond diversity and inclusion and will require us to deepen our capacity to understand, communicate with and effectively engage with people, organizations, and systems across identities and cultures. Racial equity involves proactive, targeted and differentiated treatment and strategies that name racism and white supremacy explicitly; meets the needs of underrepresented people of color; eliminates racial barriers and disparities; and prioritizes processes and practices that build toward racial justice. SOURCE: Race Forward & California State University STEM VISTA Program.

Inclusion. Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power and provides everyone equal opportunities. SOURCE: OpenSource Leadership Strategies

Accessibility is when a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally integrated and equally effective manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. Accessibility includes a commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities can independently access every outward-facing and internal activity or electronic space, and the pursuit of best practices for full engagement. SOURCE: Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education Competences in Lawyers" 40 (2001). CUNY Academic Works.

Racial Justice is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial Justice [is defined] as the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond "anti-racism." It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. SOURCE: ACLU and Racial Equity Tools Glossary.

OUR APPROACH

Our IDEA-RJ work reflects who we are: an organization that is rooted in values set forth in our Girl Scout Law, including honesty, fairness, caring, courage, and respect for self and others. All of these are hallmarks of Girl Scouts' broader commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and racial justice.

Inequities and oppression are not our fault. But it is our responsibility to acknowledge and interrupt them. A foundational understanding of equity, social justice, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion builds our capacity to interrupt oppression and strengthen equity. Mastering techniques, practices, skills, and habits that strengthen our self-reflection and cross-cultural understanding interrupt oppression and strengthen equity. Despite how we have been socialized or divided, it is possible to reach one another, to listen and to change our ways of acting and being that have encouraged divides, disagreements, and disconnection. Strengthening equity by interrupting oppression benefits everyone and is a lifelong process.

In their efforts to guide individual and group development, the IDEA Team aims to create experiences and spaces where we all will experience:

1. Feeling invited into and supported throughout the activities.

2. Feeling heard and respected.

3. A deeper sense of connectedness and belonging to members of the GSOC team.

4. An increased openness, curiosity, cultural self-awareness and/or empathy for the experiences of individuals and groups different than their own; and

5. Inspiration and support for their own professional growth and learning.

Characteristics of Inclusive Culture
Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001

We strive to strengthen characteristics and practices of inclusive culture across GSOC.

- *Growth Mindset* vs. Perfectionism
- *Realistic Plans* vs. Sense of Urgency
- *Transparency* vs. Defensiveness
- *Quality* vs. Quantity
- *Open Decision-Making* vs. Paternalism
- *Power Sharing* vs. Power Hoarding
- *Open Communication* vs. Fear of Conflict
- *Willingness to Be Uncomfortable* vs. Right to Comfort
- *Complexity* vs. Either/Or Thinking
- *Embracing the New* vs. Worship of the Written Word
- *Subjectivity* vs. Objectivity
- *Community/Collaboration* vs. Individualism

Our Guidelines
Guidelines for Working Together on Issues of Social Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Racial Justice
Adapted from guidelines developed by Cathy Avila-Linn, Kristina Barger and the CSU STEM VISTA Team 2017

1. Listen, hear others and be heard. What will you need to do to be fully present, open-minded and ready to listen and share?

2. Invite, share and explore different perspectives. Remember that your views are one of many. We do not and will not always agree. We are working toward more of a both-and perspective. We encourage everyone to use "I" statements, whenever possible, as we share our lived experience.

3. Create Brave Spaces. Brave Spaces acknowledge our differences and similarities, acknowledge the challenges that many of us have when attempting to have discussion around difficult and/or sensitive topics for the purpose of learning and/or strengthening our work.

4. Practice ways of getting comfortable with being uncomfortable and focus on how we work through our discomfort. At no time will you be forced to share. Instead, you will be invited at times to share as little or

as much as you would like. We realize that some of the content may be familiar to you and some of it may be new. While aspects of these topics may be uncomfortable to hear about and address, we know our team wants and needs a safe and professional environment in which to express ourselves and learn about all things related to diversity, equity, inclusiveness, accessibility, and racial justice. We know as professionals, that change happens in those moments in which we might be uncomfortable, and with that in mind, we strive to move through our discomfort and strive for growth.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. **Strengthen** *GSOC's Foundation and Commitment to IDEA work*

2. **Support** *a Continuous Dialogue about IDEA work*

3. **Transform** *Organizational Policies, Practices and Culture to Strengthen IDEA-RJ*

4. **Utilize** *New Knowledge and Data to Inform Our Practice*

5. **Build** *an Effective IDEA Department Infrastructure to Sustain Our Commitment*

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & GOALS

1. Strengthen GSOC's Foundation and Commitment to IDEA

a. Name IDEA-RJ work as imperative to our organization, affirm and build on Girl Scouts' legacy of inclusiveness.
b. Identify and nurture IDEA champions at the staff, volunteer, board and executive leadership levels.
c. GSOC communicates a commitment to IDEA throughout the organization.
d. Support and value all stakeholders' commitments to IDEA-RJ issues in their communities (e.g., schools, neighborhoods, Orange County, etc.)
e. Design overall IDEA long term vision and goals.

2. Support a Continuous Dialogue about IDEA work

a. Provide opportunities for education, training and dialogue for individuals, departments, specialized committees/groups, and the entire GSOC staff.
b. Strengthen GSOC stakeholders' awareness, knowledge, and skills to take care to create accessible environments and experiences that ensure that everyone can fully engage including individuals with visible or known disabilities and non-obvious disabilities and/or chronic health conditions, and people of all ages and body types.
c. Create and support employee resource groups, identified by staff, to explore topics of interest.
d. Support GSOC Executive Team to strengthen their Leadership for IDEA work.
e. Relationship-building between and among stakeholders; avoid isolation of any social identity.
f. Integrating intersectionality into the scope of work at GSOC by keeping focus on People of Color, Racial Justice and those in the LGBTQ+ community.

3. Transform Organizational Policies, Practices and Culture to Strengthen IDEA

a. Support each operational area to review and analyze policies and practices related to goals, staffing/ hiring, and resources through an IDEA-RJ lens.

4

b. Support IDEA programs and activities throughout GSOC through consultation and advising through an IDEA-RJ lens and in relation to issues that impact GSOC staff and stakeholders.

c. Ensure continuous growth and development of all departments by integrating Characteristics of an Inclusive Culture identified in Our Approach and methods for Restorative Justice, Reconciliation, Acknowledging Injustice, and Conflict Transformation throughout the organization.

4. Utilize New Knowledge and Data to Inform Our Practice (all in Year 3, except a.)
   a. Collect data that exists (disaggregate and report relevant data to get a clear picture of inequities and outcome gaps)
   b. Design and implement evaluation plan (identity metrics)
   c. Review informational and institutional resources.
   d. Tell our story of organizational growth and change.

5. Build an Effective IDEA Department Infrastructure to Sustain Our Commitment
   a. Plan (vision, mission, goals, action/implementation plans), implement, and tracking accomplishments.
   b. Ensure that resources align with departmental goals (staffing, budget/finances, space, technology)
   c. Support staff team to participate in professional development related to their responsibilities and professional goals (learning and sharing with colleagues; GSUSA, etc.)

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK