



## EXTENDING THE GIRLS ON THE RUN LIFECYCLE TO INCREASE ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT



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## Executive Summary

Girls on the Run is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to “inspire girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running” (Girls on the Run, 2019). Girls on the Run serves over 200,000 girls annually across a network of local Councils serving all 50 states and Washington, D.C. The organization enlisted the Fall 2020 MPA Capstone team to conduct research and provide recommendations on how to extend the Girls on the Run lifecycle to increase alumnae engagement. Appendix A provides the comprehensive Scope of Work of the project.

To accomplish the tasks of the project and provide recommendations for extending the Girls on the Run (GOTR) lifecycle by increasing alumnae engagement, the team performed the following research:

- Conducted a comprehensive literature review;
- Analyzed current GOTR data and reports;
- Evaluated similar benchmark programs;
- Surveyed current and past participant(s) parents/guardians from 2015 to 2020; and
- Interviewed GOTR Councils.

From the above methods the team identified best practices for increasing alumnae motivation and engagement to extend the GOTR journey. The team proposes the following recommendations to extend the GOTR lifecycle to increase engagement:

### **Recommendation 1: Develop a System for Obtaining and Tracking Alumnae Data**

- It is important for GOTR Councils to directly communicate with alumnae, and to do so information can be collected using an opt-in data collection approach. In addition, we recommend an alumnae registry can be used to centrally maintain contact information, participation/membership detail, and space to note other relevant data.

### **Recommendation 2: Strengthen Connections through Communications**

- The team recommends strengthening connections through communications by creating an alumnae toolkit that would include a bank of alumnae stories, customizable language on opportunities for engagement, solicitation of alumnae feedback/input, or educational content around continuing to work on life skills, aspects of leadership, philanthropy, and financial power.
- Communication can also go out to alumnae who recently graduated from the GOTR program with information on opportunities after 8th grade.
- Engaging through technology in the form of social media, text messaging, or a GOTR app would increase the two-way communication between GOTR Councils and alumnae.

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- Communication techniques can also include marketing the benefits of GOTR so alumnae and their parents understand the benefits to continuing with the program.
- Finally, utilizing the annual conference to share resources on alumni engagement best practices across Councils through presentations and workshops.

### **Recommendation 3: Opportunities to Increase Alumnae Engagement**

- Opportunities to increase alumni engagement include developing an advisory board/committee so alumnae from around the world can join together in meaningful conversations.
- We also recommend that GOTR “bridge the gap” as a way to connect girls who are aging out of the program with opportunities after. This can be accomplished through increased parent involvement, alumnae serving as running buddies, partnerships with local high school track and cross-country teams, and fulfilling volunteer/internship requirements for high school.
- Lastly, a mentoring program would give alumnae the opportunity to stay involved with GOTR and have a meaningful impact on the girls currently in the program.

### **Recommendation 4: Increase Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Foster a Sense of Belonging**

- Survey responses indicated differences in sense of belonging across racial and ethnic groups and that parents and guardians were concerned with inclusion and equitable access for gender expansive youth, families across all socioeconomic statuses, differently abled youth, and youth in nontraditional school settings. The team recommends that GOTR implement strategies to improve diverse representation at all levels of the organization, promote inclusive language on materials, expand opportunities for differently abled youth, and those within homeschool settings.

### **Recommendation 5: Opportunities to Enhance Identity and Community**

- To enhance identity and community the team recommends GOTR create branding material for program participants to identify themselves as a GOTR alum. This could include items such as t-shirt pins, badges, and various colored shirts depending on the level of involvement.

### **Recommendation 6: Opportunities to Adapt Programming**

- In order to continue to advance and enhance programming based on the needs of the girls they serve, the team recommends administering surveys to the girls. This would allow each Council to gain valuable feedback on the types of programming the girls they serve want to participate in and assist GOTR with being responsive to the girls they serve.

## Introduction

In August of 2020, Charlotte-based international nonprofit Girls on the Run (GOTR) tasked the Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration program's capstone team with (1) identifying what motivates GOTR program alumnae to remain engaged with the organization, and (2) recommending strategies and tactics to extend the GOTR journey and increase alumnae engagement.

In response, our team has taken the following steps:

- Conducted a comprehensive literature review;
- Reviewed and analyzed both internal GOTR data and external GOTR reports;
- Performed a benchmark analysis of GOTR and comparable organizations;
- Developed, delivered, and analyzed a survey of parents and guardians of recent GOTR program participants; and
- Interviewed representatives of five individual GOTR Councils with existing alumnae initiatives.

This report is divided into four sections:

- **Methodology** - This section includes the type of research conducted, how the team collected data, and how the data was analyzed.
- **Findings** - In this section, the team discusses the findings across the following methods:
  - Literature Review
  - Internal GOTR Data
  - Benchmark Analysis
  - Parent/Guardian Survey
  - Council Interviews
- **Recommendations** - This section includes suggestions for GOTR based on research findings.
- **Discussion & Conclusion** - This section provides a summary of the research conducted and how this research can be used by GOTR, as well as limitations throughout the process.

## Methodology

The MPA team used five data collection methods to gather information on best practices and to develop recommendations, including:

- a review of relevant academic and non-academic literature;
- a review of existing GOTR reports and data;
- benchmarking to comparable organizations;
- a survey of parents/guardians of current and past participants; and
- interviews with local GOTR Councils with alumni initiatives.

A detailed explanation of each method follows.

### Literature Review

The team conducted a literature review of research on the following topics:

- Alumni Engagement
- Donation Solicitation Practices
- Volunteer Management
- Millennial Engagement

### Review and Analyze Existing GOTR Data and Reports

The team reviewed and analyzed existing GOTR data and reports, including:

- 2019 Girls on the Run Parent Survey Presentation;
- 2019 Landscape Comparison;
- Edge Research's 2019 Girls on the Run Brand and Messaging Research: Report of Survey Results;
- GOTR Capital Area 10th Anniversary Survey data; and
- Weiss Summary Report: Girls on the Run: A Longitudinal Study of Program Impact

### Benchmarking to Comparable Organizations

The team researched comparable youth nonprofit organizations to understand their alumni programs and social media engagement. The following benchmark organizations were chosen because they were girl-serving, had a federated model, and had alumni program offerings:

- Girls Who Code
- Mini Mermaids
- Marathon Kids
- Girl Scouts
- Girls, Inc.
- ZGiRLS
- Ruling Our Experiences (ROX)
- YMCA
- YWCA USA

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- Boys & Girls Club of America
- 4-H

The team collected data by studying each organization's website and social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. A table of benchmark organization information for can be found in Appendix B.

The organizations' websites provided insight into the following: the ages of participants served; when the organization was founded; if the organization has chapters locally, nationally, or internationally; if the organization uses inclusive language or has a diversity statement; if the organization has an alumni program or alumni data publicly available; the organization's mission and/or vision; and the types of programs offered.

The benchmark organizations' social media pages were examined by looking at the number of "Likes" on Facebook, number of followers on Instagram and Twitter, and number of subscribers on YouTube. Each of the organization's pages were reviewed and posts were categorized by type. The types of posts observed fall into the below main categories:

- Words of encouragement/inspirational quotes/positive affirmations;
- Profiles of group members and staff;
- Civic engagement;
- Event promotion; and
- Health and wellness.

### **Survey of Parents and Guardians**

The team administered an online survey to parents and guardians of current and previous GOTR participants. The survey was created using Qualtrics and consisted of sixteen questions, the full text of which is in Appendix C. These questions focused on participation in GOTR programs; sense of belonging in GOTR; alumnae engagement and motivation; social media; donation practices; and basic demographic information.

The survey was dispersed via email to 29,990 current and previous GOTR parents or guardians from 2015 to 2020. 1,234 respondents completed the survey between October 21st and November 3rd, 2020. A follow-up email was sent a few days before the survey closed, in order to increase responses. This gave the team a response rate of 4%. The UNC Charlotte Master of Public Administration team, working on behalf of GOTR, were identified as the sponsors of the survey. Parent and guardian email addresses were provided by GOTR Councils who volunteered to send email addresses to the MPA team after receiving an email request from GOTR International.



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The following GOTR Councils replied to the survey request and provided email addresses of parents and guardians:

- Sierras
- Kent & Muskegon Counties
- Greater Cincinnati
- Northwest Indiana
- Western Carolina
- Southwest Florida
- Michiana
- UPMC Magee
- Mid Michigan

### **GOTR Council Interviews**

To better understand the alumnae engagement issues faced by individual GOTR Councils, the team conducted virtual interviews via Zoom with the leadership of five Councils across the United States. The goal of the interviews was to gain information regarding:

- Current alumnae engagement strategies;
- Patterns that predict active alumnae engagement;
- Mentorship (organic or structured) across different stages in the GOTR lifecycle;
- Barriers to alumni engagement;
- What resources from Headquarters would be most helpful;
- How alumnae are considered in recruitment practices for coaches, volunteers, and board members;
- How alumnae are considered in fundraising efforts; and
- How information about alumni programming is communicated to alumnae, parents/families, coaches, and teachers

The interviewing team created a semi-structured interview guide found in Appendix D, which consisted of seven sections of questions. The team met with the following GOTR Council leaders in individual interviews conducted between October 22, 2020 and November 4, 2020:

- Gillian Byerly, Council Director of Girls on the Run Capital Area PA
- Mary Uran, Executive Director of Girls on the Run Twin Cities
- Regina Rankin, Program Manager of Girls on the Run Greater Cincinnati
- Erin Gorup, Program Director of Girls on the Run Puget Sound
- Tracy Ashdale, Executive Director/Chief Energy Officer of Girls on the Run Southeast Suburban PA

## Findings

In the following sections, the findings from each method are discussed by section:

- Literature Review
- Internal Reports
- Benchmark Organizations
- Parent/Guardian Survey
- Council Interviews

## Literature Review

In this section the team reviewed prior research to understand themes and best practices in alumni relationships and engagement.

### Alumni Engagement Best Practices

Much of the literature on alumni engagement examines university alumni. Osborn, Alkezweeny, and Kecskes (2015) examine how alumni move from passive to active alumni, highlighting four components that are essential in creating lasting contribution and engagement:

- **Examples** - For an individual to continue to be engaged, they must see real examples of effective impact and how an organization or the individual's contributions are making a difference.
- **Agency** - It would also benefit the organization to help alumni rediscover their personal sense of agency. Alumni need to understand and acquire knowledge for themselves as to how their personal actions can shape and change their communities and the world.
- **Community** - An important aspect in creating long-term engagement is creating a sense of community. It is essential that the alumnae get to experience a space where they feel support, friendship, and respect between each other. Individuals should want to be a part of alumni engagement because they experience a "family" with other alumni and GOTR itself.
- **Analysis** - Finally, it is important that there is an analysis created so that alumni may grow and learn from their successes and failures in a generative way.

Osborn, Alkezweeny, and Kecskes (2015) also noted the importance of creating opportunities of involvement in different areas and roles of the organization to fit alumni needs or wants. These could be leadership roles, background roles, administrative work, and many other opportunities for alumnae to learn and grow in. It is important as an organization to provide these different opportunities for alumni to be involved in the kind of difference they want to make.

Echoing the importance of creating a "family" (Osborn, Alkezweeny, & Kecskes, 2015), Williams (2020) finds creating a sense of community and lasting relationships within the church helps young adults stay engaged longer term. Several ways were found to be helpful in creating a sense of community:

- **Mentorship** - One of the ways to foster community was by creating informal mentorships between the young adults and minors of the church. This bond made the young adults want to consistently return and give back because they could visibly see the impact that they were having on someone else.

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- **Affirmations** - Another way that to continue to keep alumni engaged, specifically of the younger generation, is by providing consistent affirmations. This can be a variety of different encouragements such as awards, verbal affirmations, public recognition, and visible support. An award or recognition could be something as unassuming as a thoughtful card, or an alumna of the month. Verbal affirmations can also go a long way in encouraging alumnae to stay motivated and engaged. Telling an alumna that you are grateful for their help can make them feel appreciated and noticed.
- **Support** - Another important aspect to keeping young alumnae engaged is to show visible support. “The young adult responses reveal that showing support includes being present during activities, providing resources to get a job done, and creating a safe environment that promotes innovation. Support is important not only from leadership but from adult members as well,” (Williams, 2020, p. 82). Young adults like to feel that sense of teamwork from all aspects of the organization. It is important to make them feel like the job they are doing is not trivial, and that even the leaders of the organization find it important.
- **Service** - The importance of service to young adults was also found in the Williams (2020) case study. There were three main areas of service that were found to help motivate and engage the young adults: corporate responsibility, shared goals, and contributing to solutions. Young adults feel the need to contribute to the world while working with others towards developing solutions for the social issues that they see. Young alumnae feel a sense of social responsibility and like to have a sense of fulfilled purpose. Giving them the opportunity to realize their potential and ability to enact change can help engage them into an organization long term. One of the reasons that this case study found some of the aspects of engagement in young adults could be due to the characteristics that you find within the millennial generation.

Principles of alumnae engagement suggest the quality of the experiences can lead to a mutually beneficial lifelong relationship between alumni and the sponsoring organization. Organizations have unique opportunities to engage alumnae, thanks to their singular focus or deep commitment to specific issues. Shaindlin (2018) found several ways to increase alumnae engagement.

- **Brand Identity** - It is important for an organization to establish the idea of lifelong alumnae identity as quickly as possible to its’ involved members. Creating the alumni identity creates awareness of alumnae opportunities and nurtures the *alumnae relationship as a status*. This idea of a status relates back to the importance of affirmations (Williams, 2020) and how this status can encourage young alumnae to become more involved with an organization on a more permanent, long-term basis.
- **Experience** - Principles of alumnae engagement suggest the *quality of the experiences* can lead to a mutually beneficial lifelong relationship between alumni and the sponsoring organization.

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- **Identity** - Prepare participants for alumnae identity where it is generally most effective to introduce the idea of lifelong alumni identity very early in an organization's relationship with its community members. *Creating the alumni identity early* helps to build awareness and nurture the relationship as "alumni status is permanent" (Shaindlin, 2018).
- **Mission** - Engage alumni to *support the organization's mission*. A structured and systematic format for alumni engagement yields broader awareness and understanding of the organization's purpose, as well as visibility for its achievements, including those embodied in the work of its alumni.

### Millennial Characteristics

The millennial generation consists of many different characteristics. They have felt a sense of connectedness to people and issues around the world in a way that previous generations have not previously experienced. The importance of connections, culture and diversity, and technology have all played a major role in shaping the lives of millennials (Tourigny, 2009). The impact that these characteristics have on motivation and engagement of this generation is important to understand.

- **Connections** - Millennials are unique in that they are the first generation to grow up with technology engrained in much of their everyday lives. This has created a generation that is aware of social issues and the plights of others in a much deeper way than that of generations before them. It is something that feels much more personal to millennials since they can share stories, videos, and opinions with people not only in their communities, but around the world. There is a sense of global connectedness for this generation. According to Tourigny (2009), this manifests into how they make decisions, build relationships, and become motivated. This generation is defined by teamwork. They are less prone to being motivated by traditional top down decisions, and *more likely to be motivated by an organization that feels more like a team*.
- **Diversity** - Another large influence on the millennial generation is culture and diversity. "This is a generation that is used to being able to express themselves and having a voice, that is used to being confident, and that is used to being surrounded by diversity," (Tourigny, 2009, pp. 20-21). Having an open and welcoming community that accepts all walks of life is critical to millennials. They want to feel that they *have a community that is open to all and embraces the diversity that drives the world*. They strive to create change so that this sense of diversity is more accepted in their daily lives.
- **Technology** - This generation is also deeply attached to technology and social media. In a world where technology is constantly evolving and changing how we interact with others, the millennial generation now engages socially in a completely different context than just through conversation. The millennial generation's "comfort with technology provides them with a distinct and honed set of skills to apply in today's communities and

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workplaces” (Tourigny, 2009, p. 27). Using *technology to connect* millennials to other alumnae and to the organization can help create an engaged alumna following.

Along with innate millennial characteristics from a generational standpoint, there are characteristics that an organization can have that play a role in motivating millennials to get involved. According to Gorczyca and Hartman (2017), there are two main themes that can help an organization encourage millennial involvement.

- **Intrinsic motivation** - Millennials want to experience giving back to gain self-satisfaction and personal fulfillment. Motivation to volunteer is often “fully volitional,” which in turn creates feelings of reward and satisfaction once a job is completed. It is important for an organization to have *clear and attainable goals or missions* to give millennials a chance to feel this intrinsic motivation.
- **Program Structure** - Millennials are also attracted to organizations that have well-structured programs that they feel *enhance their skills or talents*. Having these *opportunities for growth* can motivate millennials to donate more time to the organization. It is also important to create a structure where millennials feel like they *have a voice* within the organization. An organization should be willing to take feedback and create a line of open communication.

### Donations

Turning to motivations to donate, Hladká and Hyánek (2015) look at the relationship between an individual and donating.

- **Motivations** - Economists suggest a person’s motivation for donating to a nonprofit is connected with the assumption that individuals make donations to increase the overall offer of available goods or services. Donation practices are viewed as a function of microeconomics, where each model is substantiated by a benefit and general motive.
  - The *public goods model* as the assumption that individuals make donations to increase the overall availability of goods or services, where the benefit of making donations results in altruism, a positive social feeling arising from the interaction between people and social goods.
  - The *private consumption model* suggests donors are motivated directly through an act of donation where the benefit produces an increase in social status / praise.
  - The *investment model* is an exchange value benefit where the motivation for non-profit donation results in the accumulation of human capital. Mostly associated with volunteerism.
  - Lastly, the *impure altruism model* is a combination of the aforementioned

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- models where individuals donate time, money, and resources with the benefits being indicative of the altruistic and personal benefit.

Charitable giving comes from a variety of background factors that lead to different levels of donations and engagement. According to Wastyn (2009), there are many different aspects that go into the complicated process of charitable giving, including:

- **Experience** - The objective reality that each alumna socially constructs informs his/her experience, and this allows organizations to understand the factors that make one more or less likely to become a future donor. “The key difference between non-donors and donors occurs during the internalization of their college experiences which impacts the intrapersonal decision-making process of whether or not to make a gift” (Wastyn, 2009, p.103), where organizations should work *to ensure a positive experience*.
- **Administration** - Program administrations should create and sustain various narratives associated with the college experience by *expanding the resources available to the students and helping to shift the student’s perception from an education center to a life development oasis*. This relates back to Gorczyca and Hartman (2017), in creating various avenues for growth and expanding life skills to foster engagement. Wastyn (2009) also emphasizes the need to enhance fundraising practices, especially in communicating the giving process to demonstrate the *value of a gift* to both the alumni and their spouses, *appeal to the specific experience* of the alumnus, and *appeal to the emotions* of the individuals.

A key aspect of many aspects of alumni engagement and donor motivation is social identity theory. Stephenson and Bell (2014) looked at the importance of social identity and the role that it plays on donations.

- **Social identity** - Social identity theory is the idea that individuals organize themselves into social categorizations which act as cognitive tools to create order in the social environment. The inclusion of the social construct *illuminates the connection experienced between the alumni and the institutions* which influences supportive behaviors. Supportive behaviors and senses of community is an important millennial characteristic emphasized by Tourigny (2009) and a frequent best practice for alumni engagement (Shaindlin, 2018; Osborn, Alkezweeny, & Kecskes, 2015).

### Volunteerism

People volunteer for a variety of reasons. For example, Clary and Snyder (1999) identify six functional motives for volunteering: protective, values, career, social, understanding, and

enhancement. However, people most often volunteer because they were asked (Piatak, 2016). Gutierrez and Mattis (2014) described factors that contribute to creating an engaged individual:

- **Diversity**- When looking to create more diversity in an organization, it is important to understand the different motivations of different individuals. For example, black women and girls often showcase greater empathy to others in relation to their male counterparts. This is only compounded by the religiosity of the women and girls if that aspect is present in their lives. Black women and girls have greater tendencies to volunteer if the volunteer opportunities *arise in their communities*.
- **Generations** - Older Black women often devote volunteer time when they have strong personal political or religious ties to an organization. This could be through their churches or through community centers. Creating volunteer opportunities through this lens can help organizations *attract different demographics of volunteers* to help nurture a diverse organization.

Ringuet-Riot, Cuskelly, Auld, and Zakus (2014), looked at best practices of engaged volunteers from both an individual perspective and an organizational perspective. There is one major theme for each of these perspectives.

- **Self-identification** - *Volunteers often self-identify with the leadership roles* before they have even started working within the nonprofit organization. For instance, in nonprofit sports organizations, volunteers often seek out to be placed in the positions of leadership (e.g. coaches, team managers). Organizations should ask themselves if leadership roles can be delegated to volunteers as well as how one-off volunteers can be motivated to return as a regular volunteer.
- **Organizational involvement** - Volunteers seem to have high feelings of worth and effectiveness if they feel like *the organization is putting in more work and effort than themselves*. Organizations that may not have clear or attainable missions may experience a lack of motivated volunteers if volunteers feel like they are not receiving enough recognition or seeing goals being achieved. Weak volunteer involvement can be an indication that the organization is not providing enough evidence to volunteers that goals are being met.

### Summary

Throughout this literature review, there are a few key themes that emerged. As an organization, it is important to foster a sense of community and social identity with alumnae. This can be done by personally involving and engaging alumnae and ensuring a positive experience. Shifting volunteer and engagement opportunities to personal and professional development opportunities for their alumnae can help build community and a sense of belonging. It is also important for



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Opportunities for involvement in many different communities can increase diversity. Organizations should be mindful in creating an enjoyable program experience for each participant as program participants are inclined to make monetary and non-monetary donations, based on the quality of their individual experiences. Positive, engaging experiences, a sense of community, shared values, and personal development all help build a social identity. In this sense, alumnae would identify as a GOTR participant rather than identify GOTR as a program in which they participated.

## Internal Reports

A comprehensive analysis of the internal data provided by GOTR International led to the following highlights.

### **2019 Girls on the Run Parent Survey Presentation**

The 2019 Girls on the Run Parent Survey Presentation described parent/guardian involvement and provided reasons for why their girl(s) did not continue with the program from one year to the next. Below are key highlights from this presentation:

- Sense of belonging for the girl and perception of a valuable experience has an impact on satisfaction of the GOTR Program, as well as discussion of the weekly lessons at home with the parents/guardians of the girl(s) has an impact on the overall satisfaction;
- 42% of parents are familiar with program lessons and goals. However, the net promoter score, which is the percentage of parents/guardians rating the likelihood of recommending GOTR dips among those parents who do not discuss the weekly lessons with their girls;
- There is a disconnect between the purpose of the GOTR program and the skills or lessons learned;
- The opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in lesson discussions are low for some groups: 18-34 years of age (34%), African American (31%), Household Income less than \$50K (31%), Hispanic (30%), Grade 6-8 (30%); and
- Only 27% of parents/guardians remember receiving the Grown-up Guide, and the parent/guardian is most likely to talk about lessons with their girl(s) if they came from weekly emails or printed handouts.

Much like the literature (Gorczyca & Hartman, 2017; Stephenson & Bell, 2014; Williams, 2020), this report highlights the importance of fostering a *sense of belonging*, providing a *valuable experience*, and encouraging *parent involvement*.

### **2019 Landscape Comparison**

The 2019 Landscape Comparison data gave insight on barriers the Councils face when attempting to add new GOTR sites, as well as the Councils' views on the success of their GOTR programming. Below are key highlights from the data:

- 93% of respondents reported that their Councils' GOTR program was "successful or "very successful." However, only 25% reported that their Councils' Heart & Sole program was "successful" or "very successful."
- Over 50% of respondents indicated significant barriers including: difficulty recruiting coaches/volunteers, conflicts with other out of school activities, lack of understanding about what the program entails, competing programs, school-based policies,

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transportation of girls, site fees, low girl registration, school district policies, opposition to girl-only programming.;

- There is parent/guardian interest in a “Boys on the Run” program, but less interest from Councils; and
- There have been inquiries about including gender non-binary program participants.

Overall, the Landscape Report raises questions about the target population of the programs, inclusion, and strategies to overcome the barriers faced by local Councils. Both of these issues are also reflected in the survey responses collected by the team.

### **2019 Girls on the Run Brand and Messaging Research: Report of Survey Results**

Edge Research’s (2019) *Girls on the Run Brand and Messaging Research: Report of Survey Results*, found:

- Compared to similar organizations, GOTR’s awareness, familiarity, and likelihood to enroll among parents is only surpassed by Girl Scouts;
- “Strength and independence are not strongly linked with GOTR. Specifically, independent thought, standing up for oneself, and building healthy relationships are areas where GOTR falls short. Aligning messaging and creative components to convey these factors will strengthen GOTR’s position within the competitive landscape.”
- Overwhelming majority of prospects, parents, coaches, volunteers, and donors are white.

GOTR has a strong brand identity, a helpful starting point for alumni engagement, but this should be accompanied by a positive experience, social identity, and connection to the mission (Shaindlin, 2018). There may be a need to increase diversity so that girls will feel a sense of belonging to continue with the GOTR journey. In addition, a focus on strength and independence may help with engaging Millennials to use their voice (Gorczyca & Hartman, 2017).

### **GOTR Capital Area 10th Anniversary Survey**

The GOTR Capital Area Council shared their data from their 10th Anniversary survey sent out to participants, parents, teachers, and coaches over the past nine years, which provided insight into what alumni activities, if any, participants would be interested in.

- 44% of survey respondents said they would not be interested in participating in alumni activities, including alumni newsletters, alumnae 5K, and joining a committee. Whereas 21.43% of respondents indicated they would be interested in all of the alumni activities, 18.57% responded they would be interested in receiving an alumni newsletter, and 10.71% would be interested in an Alumnae 5K.

The purpose of this survey was to gauge what activities the Capital Area’s alumni would be interested in volunteering. It illustrates that there is interest in alumni engagement and a need for alumni initiatives and programming.

**Weiss Summary Report**

- Findings from a longitudinal study of GOTR programming indicates that “Girls on the Run is effective in promoting positive youth development, including season-long and lasting change in competence, confidence, connection, character, caring, physical activity, and life skills” (p.4).
- What sets GOTR apart from other programming lies in their ability to effectively integrate running and life lessons to help girls develop and retain life skills including standing up for self and others, managing emotions, self-acceptance, positive social behaviors, making good choices, gratitude, and empowerment.

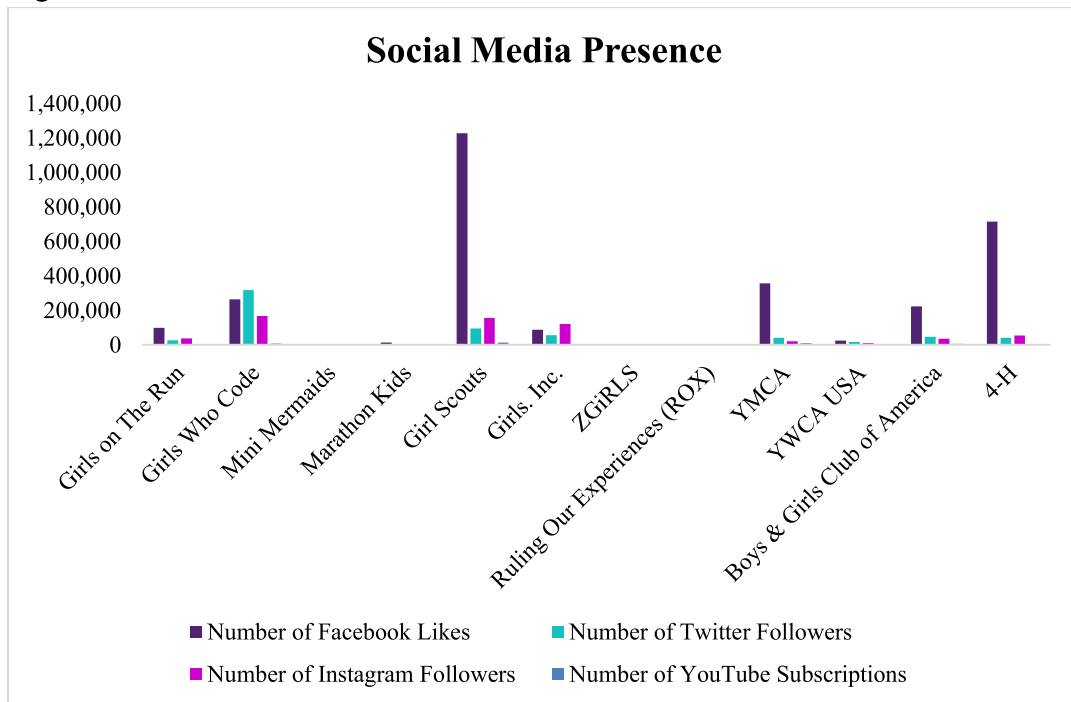
This report connects GOTR’s mission and core values to the lasting impacts on girls’ development after participation in GOTR programming. Continued focus on the mission and impact of GOTR for the girls should be central, not only when they are participating in the program, but in moving the program to a critical part of their development that girls feel a connection to. The literature (Shaindlin, 2018) highlights that engaged alumni feel connected to the organizations’ mission.

## Benchmark Organizations: Analysis of Social Media Presence and Alumni Programs

After reviewing similar organizations’ websites, social media posts, alumni programs, and publicly available alumni data the following information was gathered:

- Girl Scouts (which has existed for over 100 years) has the highest number of followers on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. However, Girls Who Code (which has only been around since 2012) has the highest number of Instagram followers;
- Many of GOTR’s social media posts are catered to adults;
- Marathon Kids uses social media to recruit coaches;
- Girl Inc. has separate LinkedIn and Facebook pages for their alumnae group;
- Boys & Girls Club has a separate Facebook pages for their alumni group;
- On social media, Girl Scouts engages with its audience by asking questions such as "What GS experience inspired you to make the world a better place" as well as promoting young adult and adult specific events (Seniors, Ambassadors, and Adults); and
- ZGiRLS utilizes SMS texting as a method of sustaining communication with its program participants. The communication consists of messages specific to the program, such as inspiration quotes, motivation, various program updates, and reminders.

Figure 1



As seen in Figure 1, Girl Scouts is the leading organization in social media followers for every platform except Twitter and Instagram. They engage their followers by encouraging them to

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publicly share their experiences and use their platforms to promote events. Girls Who Code maintains the strongest presence on Twitter and Instagram by promoting their free online programming and facilitating dialogue that challenges social norms. YouTube activity is lowest amongst all organizations.

When examining the organizations' social media profiles, the types of posts were analyzed and organized into the below main categories:

- Words of encouragement/inspirational quotes/positive affirmations;
- Profiles of group members and staff;
- Civic engagement;
- Event promotion; and
- Health and wellness.

In reviewing benchmark organizations, a few alumni initiatives stood out, including those for Boys and Girls Club, 4-H, and Girl Scouts.

### **Boys and Girls Club**

The Boys and Girls Club of America has an Alumni Hall of Fame and an Alumni & Friends network.

- The Alumni Hall of Fame recognizes top athletes, entertainers and business leaders who are alums of Boys and Girls Clubs across the country (Boys & Girls Club of America, n.d.-b). They are honored and inducted into the Hall of Fame at the organization's annual National Conference.
- The Boys and Girls Club Alumni & Friends network was founded in 2015 and now has more than 100,00 members (Boys & Girls Club of America, n.d.-c). Individuals can join the group as a current member (age 13+), former member, or supporter.
  - Alumni & Friends connects former "Club kids" to engage them with local Boys & Girls Clubs where they can make a difference, develop into future leaders through program participation, and give back to Boys & Girls Clubs (Boys & Girls Club of America, n.d.-c). Alumni & Friends also offers an academic scholarship fund.
  - The Alumni & Friends Yearbook is a searchable directory of Alumni & Friends members (Boys & Girls Club of America, n.d.-a).

### **4-H**

Joining the 4-H Alumni group gives members access to the latest 4-H content (including educational activities for kids), scholarship opportunities for youth, access to the 4-H Alumni LinkedIn group, and opportunities to network with other 4-Hers and alums in the community (4-H, 2020).

### **Girl Scouts**

Girl Scouts has its own alumnae network called the Girl Scout Network and a Lifetime Membership club. They also have a way for interested individuals to submit their own "Girl Scout Cookie" story to be featured online. Finally, Girl Scouts has its own research institute

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which measures and reports the impact of Girl Scout programming on participants, alumnae, and the country as a whole.

- The Girl Scout Network connects Girl Scout alumnae and supporters across the U.S. (Girl Scouts, n.d.). Opting into the Girl Scout Network gives members:
  - Access to a monthly newsletter which features notable alumnae achievements and profiles, career advice, and mentoring tips;
  - Invitations to Girl Scouts events (both local and national);
  - The opportunity to network with others in the alumnae community; and
  - Access to Girl Scouts merchandise and a discount to the Girl Scouts web store (Girl Scouts, n.d.).
- Girl Scouts Lifetime Membership gives members all the perks of the Girl Scout Network as well as:
  - A welcome package which includes a lifetime membership card and pin;
  - Discounts from select partners; and
  - An invitation to join an annual call for lifetime members made by the Girl Scouts' CEO (Girl Scouts of the USA, n.d.).
- The "Girl Scout Cookie story" gives supporters the opportunity to submit their own story in hopes of having it featured in the Girl Scouts' "Think Outside the Cookie Box" gallery or on the Girl Scout Blog, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram pages (Girl Scouts, n.d.).
- The Girl Scout Research Institute measures the impact of Girl Scout programming and furthers the conversation about girls and their development through published original studies.
  - The Girl Scout Research Institute published a report titled "Girl Scouting Works: The Alumnae Impact Study" in 2012. Their findings show that one in two adult women has at some point been a member of Girl Scouts (Girl Scout Research Institute, 2012).

## Parent/Guardian Survey

The results from the parent and guardian survey built upon the data collected in previous reports provided by GOTR International. The parent/guardian survey provided additional information regarding:

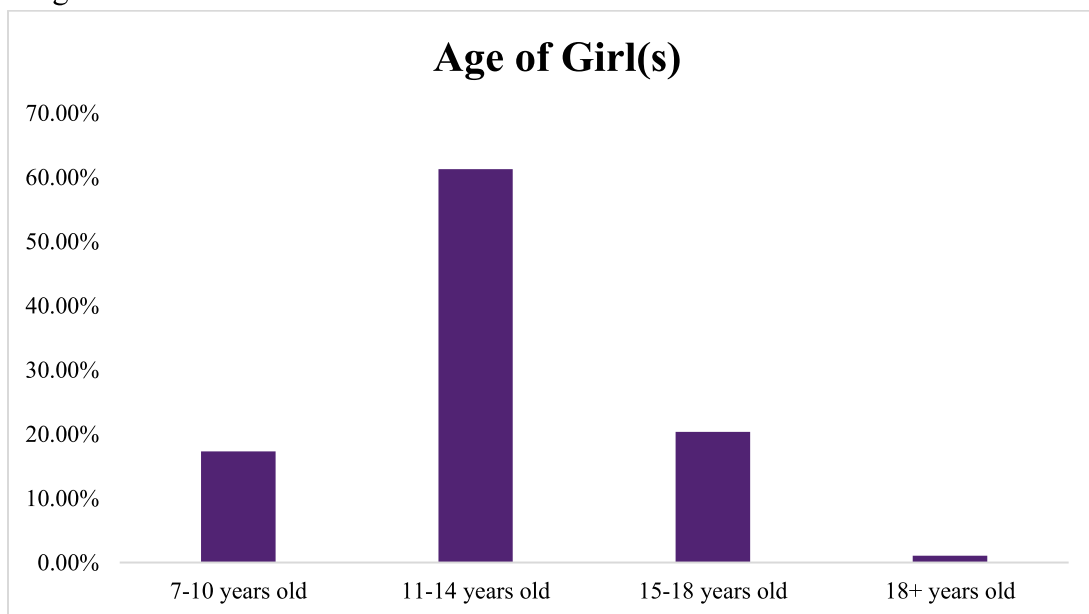
- Barriers for continuing GOTR involvement
- Awareness of existing alumnae engagement opportunities
- Alumnae interest and motivation to continue with the GOTR lifecycle
- Sense of belonging to GOTR

### Information on Survey Respondents

The parent and guardian survey results provided useful information on GOTR participation. Of the 1,234 respondents, 91.31% were past participants with only 8.69% reporting that their child is a current participant with GOTR. Further, 464 (38%) participated in GOTR for one year, 444 (36%) participated in GOTR for two years, and 323 (26%) participated for three or more years. These findings indicate that GOTR participants are only involved for a short period of time.

Additionally, 95% of respondents indicated that their girl participated in GOTR, while only 4.5% participated in the Heart & Sole program and less than 1% of respondents participated in Camp GOTR. This finding indicates that there is low enrollment in Heart & Sole and Camp GOTR, despite the finding that over 60% of respondents indicated that their girls are eligible to participate in Heart & Sole.

Figure 2



n=1,229



### **Barriers to Continuing with GOTR**

When asked if their girl would be interested in continued involvement with the organization, 56% of respondents answered “Yes,” whereas 44% responded “No”. Below are common reasons for why alumnae are not interested in continuing their GOTR journey:

- Too busy with other commitments
- Aged out
- No longer interested in running

In addition, some respondents indicated cost, programming (i.e. “same program every year,” “just didn’t really connect with the program,” and “wanted more running opportunities and felt they spend a lot of time indoors talking in groups”), change in gender identity, moved out of area and GOTR not offered in new town/state, issues with coaches, and COVID-19 (i.e. restrictions, virtual program, uncertainty) as reasons for not continuing from one year to the next.

### **Alumnae Engagement, Motivation, and Awareness**

Survey respondents were asked about their volunteer participation in GOTR activities. The survey found 16% of volunteers volunteer as a Coach, the highest amongst volunteering opportunities. While over 60% of respondents have not volunteered with GOTR, and over 70% have never been *asked* to volunteer for any GOTR activities, while respondents noted that just being asked would motivate them to stay involved with the program. In addition, 45% of respondents are not interested in volunteering with GOTR activities, with most respondents indicating time as a factor for not volunteering. In addition, the survey found 78% of respondents do not donate to GOTR.

These results indicate there could be a lack of awareness around volunteering and donating opportunities for alumnae to continue involvement in the GOTR journey. However, many respondents noted if there was a way for high school students to volunteer as assistant coaches or act as mentors for the elementary GOTR, it would be an appealing way to stay involved in GOTR when they have aged out of the program. Some of the responses are included below:

*“I would love to still be a part of this program but I’m in high school now and the program is only up to 8th grade.”*

*“Once the initial program was completed (Grades 3-5) there was no clear path for continuing. Creating individual opportunities (rather than just suggesting finding a Heart & Sole group) and promoting them at that point of transition might have helped her continue”*

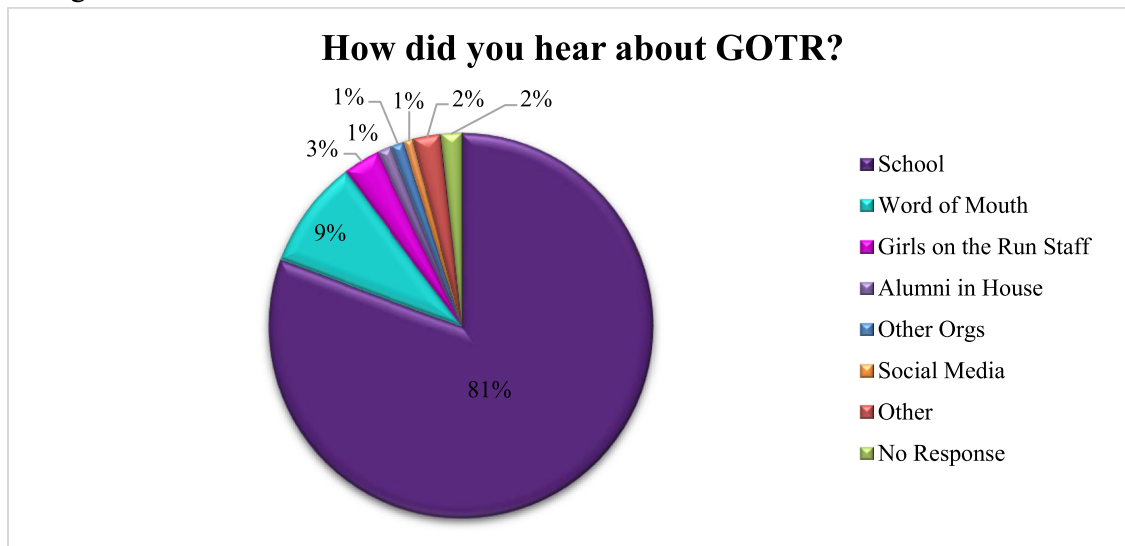
The importance of social media, particularly to the millennial generation has been widely researched and discussed. However, when survey participants were asked if anyone in their

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household follows any GOTR social media accounts, over 50% of respondents said they do not follow GOTR on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook, but they do use Social Media. In addition, very few respondents said they heard about GOTR through social media, indicating an opportunity for GOTR to promote their programs through Social Media networks.

Additionally, respondents were asked to indicate how they heard about GOTR. These results are summarized in the chart below.

Figure 3



81% of respondents indicated that they heard about GOTR through school, indicating that GOTR is well promoted within schools. Additionally, 9% of respondents indicated that they heard about GOTR through word of mouth. These results demonstrate that awareness of GOTR is mostly reliant on schools and personal communications.

### **Race/Ethnicity of Girls and Sense of Belonging**

Respondents were asked to provide the race or ethnicity of their girl(s). The results from the survey are included in the table below.

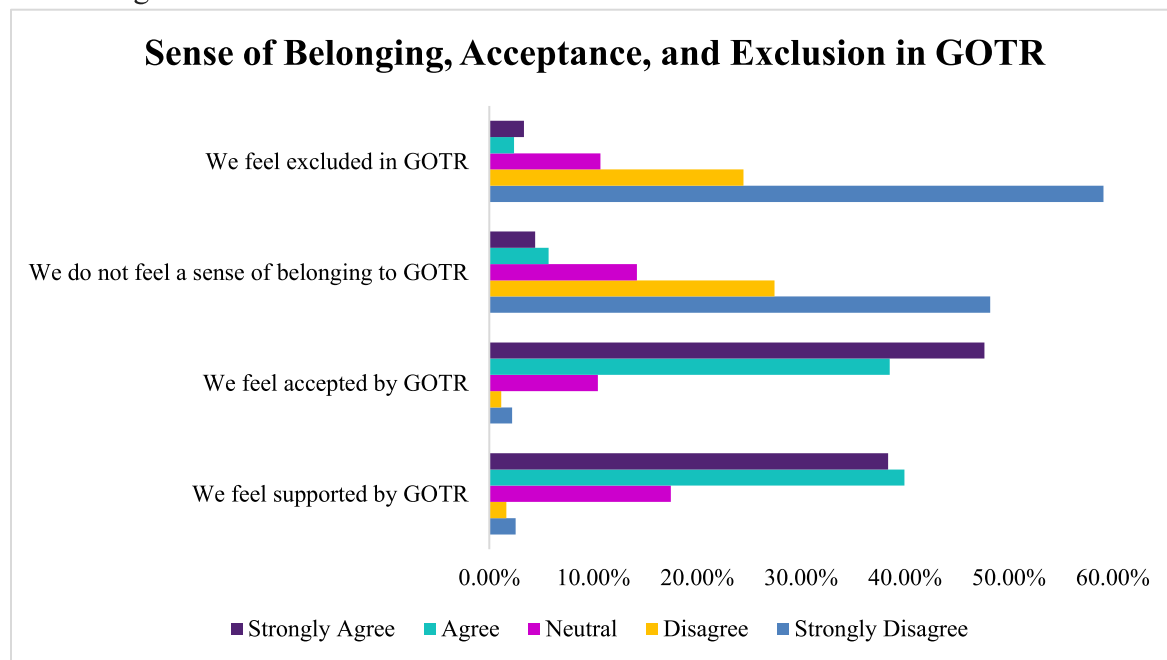
Table 1

**Race/Ethnicity of Girls**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
American Indian or Alaska Native	11	0.89%
Asian	23	1.86%
Black or African American	78	6.32%
Hispanic or Latino	69	5.59%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.08%
Prefer Not to Answer	101	8.18%
Two or More Races	119	9.64%
White	832	67.42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1234</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Of the 1,234 respondents, 67% responded that their girls were white. While this survey only included respondents from nine GOTR Councils, these results are similar to the data presented in the 2019 Parent and Caregiver survey provided by GOTR International. When asked if there are any specific programs, roles, or curriculum that would motivate the respondents girl to continue participation in GOTR as an alumna, one respondent mentioned “inclusion” and discussed how their girls were the only African Americans in two out of the three Councils they participated in. In order to further analyze sense of belonging and inclusion in GOTR, the team asked respondents to indicate how strongly their family identifies with the following statements: We feel supported by GOTR, We feel accepted by GOTR, We do not feel a sense of belonging to GOTR, and We feel excluded in GOTR. The results from these questions are included below.

Figure 4



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Overall, survey respondents indicated that they feel supported, accepted, have a sense of belonging to GOTR, and do not feel excluded. However, the team was interested in analyzing acceptance and sense of belonging by race/ethnicity. To analyze any differences in sense of belonging responses by race/ethnicity, we conducted a cross-tabulation – See Appendix E. Most respondents feel accepted across racial and ethnic groups, with 94% of Hispanic/Latina, 88% of white, 86% of Black, 78% of Asian, and 60% of American Indian/Alaska Native girls agreeing or strongly agreeing that they feel accepted feeling accepted by GOTR.

## Analysis of Council Interviews

Through the five interviews conducted, the following themes emerged from our Council interviews:

- Newsletter and Social Media Communications;
- Pathways for Alumnae Input; and
- High School-Age Roles and Recognition.

Across these themes, Councils discussed obstacles to and goals for alumni engagement. Councils' greatest obstacle to alumni engagement is struggling with transitioning meaningful communication from being between GOTR and girls' parents or family to being between GOTR and alumnae themselves, an obstacle rooted in *troubles with tracking and technology*. Councils' greatest hopes for alumnae engagement are to strengthen the pathway for alumni input on Board and Council decisions, to expand promotion of opportunities for involvement of high school-age alumnae, and to increase engagement with alumnae-focused communications efforts.

### **Organizing Newsletter and Social Media Communications**

Across Councils, interviewees expressed a need for improvement in the process of *communicating directly with alumnae*, rather than through the original family contact point. In trying to capture email addresses of alums, one Council used tables and a prize wheel at the 5K. However, this strategy limited the reach to only alums who attended the 5K, went to the table, and provided their email address, and it provided very little if any return.

At least one Council found success using an *opt-in email communication approach*. This involved sending an email out to the existing parent/family contact on file for girls following the 5K, along with a postcard home, both encouraging parents/families to opt-in to alumni communications using the girl's own email address. By the time girls reach alumnae age, this Council has found many have either already started using their own email address or will in a matter of time; accordingly, the opt-in communication remains an open option (promoted in materials and on social media) for alumnae to join whenever they do ultimately get their own email address. Compared to Councils that have tried to engage with alumnae in communications or newsletters sent to parents/family, which have seen little engagement with alumnae content if any, the Council utilizing an opt-in, direct-to-alumnae approach has seen more relative success in connection.

All Councils interviewed voiced *struggling with tracking alumnae over time*, including difficulty organizing contact information and membership records. One Council suggested this barrier of trouble tracking alumnae could be overcome by having Headquarters facilitate a unified process for soliciting alumni contact information and centrally maintain a collection of alumnae communication data across all Councils. This would also address a concern voiced that some

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GOTR alumnae, many of whom are adults, change locations over time; an alumna that relocates from her Council's area (and changes her contact address to the area of the new Council), would benefit from being included in the list of local alumna for the second Council. In receiving alumna communications from the Council she lives closest to, even when it was not where she initially participated, an alumna gets more relevant information about opportunities for engagement. Siloed, individual Council-based alumnae tracking cannot reasonably accomplish this.

Beyond process, another concern is *communication content*. Some Councils have found successful engagement through newsletters (sent quarterly), while others consistently have not, with their community preferring social media. In both forms of communication, however, concerns exist about alumnae content relevance. When content shared with alumnae does not feel relevant to them, they are less likely to engage with future content. Some Councils have more readily available alumnae-focused content, including stories of local "Girl Heroes" or "Rockstar Alums," specific volunteer needs, position openings, or upcoming events. When these local items are unavailable, however, multiple Councils face difficulty generating content alumnae find relevant, or that are rooted in GOTR curriculum but speak to a more diverse range of ages and life stages. Councils voiced that, much in the way Headquarters currently provides toolkits of digital content for other GOTR communications, it would be helpful to have *a toolkit of turnkey content Councils can adapt and include for their alumnae communications*. Potential content areas expressed include continuing to work on life skills, aspects of leadership, philanthropy (including donor education), and financial power (particularly in relation to community). It could also help to have a bank of alumnae stories, so that Councils without the bandwidth or option to find and document their own alumnae stories can still share such stories with their network.

The Councils interviewed have found more success engaging locally with alumnae (high school age and older) using Instagram than with Facebook. In either case, having common stock content adapted into both social media and email communications helps provide double coverage, so that if newsletters are "lost in the inbox," as one Council voiced concern toward, similar content is being shared on public social channels as well. Providing *adaptable alumni communications content* for both forms together would also reduce pressure on Councils' social media-managing staff members to generate separate alumnae content. Whether using emailed newsletters, social media, or both, alumnae communications engagement for GOTR Councils can be improved with resources from Headquarters that help tackle the process of tracking communication information and that help supply Councils with adaptable, alumnae-specific content.

### **Pathways for Alumnae Input**

A common theme across the interviews was interest in creating direct pathways for alumnae input to Boards of Directors and Council leadership. Some GOTR Councils have already created

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Advisory or Associate Boards or Committees, composed of GOTR alumnae. Out of the five Councils interviewed, two already had an Associate Board made up of GOTR alums, two stated that they desired to have an alumnae board/committee, and one mentioned that they had assembled an alumnae advisory board that was no longer active. All voiced common understanding of the value of listening directly to girls' voices and respecting the unique and highly relevant first-hand perspective on GOTR programming that alumnae have.

These Advisory/Associate Board/Committees primarily aim to provide insight into the GOTR girl and GOTR alumnae experience and to provide more varied perspectives (since the population of GOTR alums is more diverse than GOTR Boards). Some Councils also hope to empower or prepare alumnae Board/Committee participants to serve as GOTR brand ambassadors or program representatives in engagement with the local community, either at Council events, fundraisers, or at community functions.

An important aspect of soliciting GOTR alumnae opinions in a formal way, and using them as a guide to make policy decisions, is that it emphasizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Alumnae that Councils are currently seeing the most engagement from are often those with personal/family ties to the Council (i.e., a parent is a Coach or staff member), or whose families are affluent.

Some barriers to creating an active alumnae committee expressed by Councils were a lack of bandwidth at the Council level for getting the committee off the ground, the relatively young age of some of the Councils and their alums, and trouble organizing meetings. With collective comfort with video communication growing, utilizing a video conferencing platform for meetings could universally improve the accessibility of this process.

### **High School-Age Roles and Recognition**

Various Councils expressed either an interest in, or had already established, viable roles for high-school-aged students. These volunteers would be predominately participants who had aged out of eligibility in GOTR and Heart & Sole programs but are not yet of age to be eligible for junior coach positions.

A creative solution that at least two Councils had implemented was getting high school-age students to volunteer and help at practices as well as assist with administrative work. These programs had been called either "practice partners" or "running buddies."

Within the actual programming, Councils also expressed interest in the idea of creating pathways for mentorship between Heart & Sole girls and GOTR girls. They theorized that this would help establish further connections, which would then result in increased alumni attraction. Even when

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a girl aged out of Heart & Sole programming, she would be more likely to return to support her mentee.

Additionally, Councils expressed an interest in increased alumni recognition at the annual 5K events. At least one Council has implemented some form of recognition, either by way of a unique alumnae shirt or bib. One Council mentioned creating an alumni cheering zone where alumni could gather and support the next generation of GOTR girls.



## Recommendations

The research conducted by the MPA team led to six broad recommendations addressing alumnae data, communication, alumnae engagement, diversity, equity, inclusion, and sense of belonging, identity and community, and programming. The following recommendations are proposed for consideration by GOTR International:

### **Recommendation 1: Develop a System for Obtaining and Tracking Alumnae Data**

In order to communicate with alumnae directly, GOTR Councils require alumnae contact information. Alumnae information can be collected with relative success using an opt-in data collection approach whereby an email is sent out to the existing parent/family contact on file for girls following the 5K or season conclusion, ideally along with a postcard home, both encouraging parents/families to opt-in to alumni communications by registering with the girl's own email address. If the girl is not yet using her own email address, the family can register for alumnae communications with their email and change the email on file to the girl's later on. The opt-in communication would remain an open option (promoted in materials and on social media) for alumnae to join whenever they do ultimately get their own email address.

In collecting and storing the information, our findings suggest it would be most effective for engagement if alumnae contact information is coordinated across Councils and in a manner that alumnae can log-in and change their email or mailing address over time. As alumnae age and change locations over their lives, they would remain connected to the GOTR network. Much like the Boys and Girls Club's Alumni & Friends network, GOTR alums could sign up for the GOTR Alumnae Network to obtain the latest information about what's going on with GOTR at the national level, as well as what's happening in their area with local Councils. In addition, Boys and Girls Club also has an Alumni & Friends Yearbook, which is a searchable directory of Alumni & Friends members. This is a good networking tool for alums and another incentive for alums to opt-in to the network.

We recommend organizing a *GOTR alumnae registry*, facilitated by Headquarters, that centrally maintains contact information, participation/membership details, and space to note other relevant data. While collecting alumnae contact information can be done independently by some Councils with greater size, capacity, or bandwidth, an organization-wide registry or database that connects Councils with local alumnae, along with guidance on the process of encouraging alumnae to opt-in to communications, would prove more equitable in administration for Councils with varying levels of resources or without capacity to take on this challenge alone.

## **Recommendation 2: Strengthen Connections through Communications**

Once GOTR Councils have the data needed to communicate with alumnae, what relevant content can they send, and in what context can the content prove most engaging? These questions arose across data methods, and our recommendation for addressing alumnae communication content is comprised of the following elements:

- **Alumnae Toolkit:** Developing a toolkit of turnkey content that Councils can adapt and include in their alumnae communications. For newsletters, social media posts, or other GOTR alumnae communications, the capacity of individual Councils to produce relevant, engaging content specifically for alumnae appears to vary greatly. Taking the quarterly approach, Headquarters could support Councils by providing a default set of stock content for each quarter that any and all Councils can use in their communications, with an understanding that content can be adapted or substituted based on each individual Council's community. The toolkit could include a bank of alumnae stories, customizable language on opportunities for engagement (i.e. volunteer needs, position openings, or upcoming events), solicitation of alumnae feedback/input, or educational content around continuing to work on life skills, aspects of leadership, philanthropy (including donor education), and financial power (particularly in relation to community).
- **Communicating alumnae resources/opportunities after 8th grade:** The results from the parent and guardian survey indicated that many families do not continue involvement with GOTR because they believe their girl(s) have aged out of the program. Many parents are not aware of the ways they as parents and their girls can stay involved.
- **Engaging through technology**
  - Social media and technology are ingrained in the everyday lives of young adults. It is important to utilize technology and social media to seize an opportunity to engage with the GOTR alumnae. It is important to create an area where alumnae can enhance their "status" through social media. This could mean creating a Facebook page or Instagram account that is specifically for alumnae and highlights alumnae achievements, involvement, and friendships.
  - ZGiRLS utilizes a *text messaging* option that allows them to sustain continuous communication with its program participants. The communication consists of various messages specific to the program, such as inspiration quotes, motivation, various program updates and reminders. GOTR could use the technology to maintain communication with program participants in addition to program alumnae, and the parents/guardians of program participants. The internal GOTR data analysis found that parents/guardians often did not receive information sent home with their girls. Continuous text message communication would alleviate any miscommunication and allow parents to be up to date on programs and upcoming events, which would in turn keep their girl(s) involved.

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- GOTR could also utilize technical communication in the form of an *app*. Much like the use of texting messaging to communicate upcoming events, opportunities, and information, the 2019 Girls on the Run Parent Survey Presentation recommended the development of a GOTR app to provide information to parents and guardians of GOTR participants. This app could be used to provide information not only about lessons, but also provide information on opportunities for parents/guardians to remain involved with GOTR.
- **Marketing the benefits of GOTR:** Utilizing the results from the Weiss longitudinal study GOTR can demonstrate the lasting impact of program participation on girl's development. Survey respondents indicated that they were not interested in continuing involvement due to a lack of perceived benefits to their girls. The Weiss Summary Report provides useful information that can be used to communicate the critical part GOTR has in facilitating girl's development. Additionally, the landscape comparison and survey results indicated that competing programs are significant barriers for continued involvement and new sites. Emphasizing the benefits of participating in GOTR can help distinguish GOTR programming from similar programming.
- **Utilize Annual Conference:** The GOTR annual conference provides an opportunity to share resources on alumni engagement best practices across local Councils. While best practices and recommendations for alumnae engagement can be communicated to GOTR local Councils through the use of emails, newsletters, and social media, the GOTR annual conference provides an opportunity to share resources through presentations and workshops.

### **Recommendation 3: Opportunities to Increase Alumnae Engagement**

In order to increase alumnae engagement, the team recommends implementing the following programs:

- An **advisory board/committee**, using video conferencing for meetings would enable alumnae from across geographies to join together in meaningful conversation. A Headquarters-facilitated alumnae advisory force would also help in providing an organization-wide pathway for alumnae input, from which changes can come that benefit all Councils, even those without the capacity to organize their own alumnae committee. Girl Scouts has Girl Advisory Boards at the Council level, which promotes leadership skills and gets the girls involved in what is offered. In the literature review, Williams (2020) reinforced the idea that contributing to solutions is important to young adults. An advisory board would allow girls the chance to see their contributions to the organization, and in return continue engaging with GOTR as alumni.
  - GOTR can utilize Alumnae Advisory Boards (or the same by any other name) with *intention* to encourage participation from a diverse group of girl perspectives, including seeking diversity in age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender

expression, socioeconomic status, private versus public school experience, or any number of demographic characteristics.

- Recruitment for such groups, rather than a general call, might be best handled by connecting through coaches; as the point of contact most familiar with the girls, coaches can be asked by GOTR to identify alumnae candidates that would mutually benefit from the experience of advising their Council's Board. This experience, in turn, can serve as a pipeline for future board membership.
- **“Bridge the gap” programming** is a way to connect girls who are at the point of aging out of the program to opportunities after GOTR. One survey response noted the reason for not staying involved with GOTR was because “it was just something for elementary school - no reason to continue.” The following are recommendations for how to bridge that gap, so girls stay on a continuous journey with GOTR:
  - *Parent involvement - Making the Ask:* Research has shown that people are more likely to volunteer when they are asked to do so. There is a pressure to say “yes” to volunteer when an individual is asked by someone they know or by an organization they felt connected to (Bryant, et al., 2003). GOTR can use the connections they have already made with parents and girl(s) as participants and continue to ask them to volunteer at races and provide opportunities for donations.
  - *Alumni can serve as running buddies* - Through a running buddies program, alumnae can continue with their love for running, and stay engaged with GOTR, by continuing running with the girls currently in the program.
  - *Partnerships with local high school track and cross-country teams:* Survey results found that many girls do not continue their journey with GOTR because they have joined their middle school and high school cross country teams.
  - *Volunteer/internship requirements in high school:* Providing girl(s) the opportunity to volunteer throughout high school, and not just as junior coaches is a way for girls to engage and stay involved, especially since many may need to satisfy some high school requirements, such as National Honor Society requirements and college admissions application requirements.
- A **mentoring program** between GOTR alumni and current GOTR participants. Approximately 20% of survey respondents indicated they are interested in mentorship and helping other girls through the program by being running buddies. This mentorship would increase alumni participation by giving girls the opportunity to be a part of the program when they are in between Heart & Sole and junior coach ages. It would also be attractive to alumni who want to serve their community without the commitment of coaching a team. As Williams (2020) pointed out, mentoring would allow GOTR alumni to see the impact they are having on the girls, which would entice alumni to consistently stay involved. Girls Who Code conducts a mentorship between their college-aged alumni and current members. This allows alumni to continuously serve the organization and gives current members role models to look up to.

### **Recommendation 4: Increase Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Foster a Sense of Belonging**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are related to a sense of belonging within organizations. While most girls feel supported, accepted, and a sense of belonging with GOTR, including 94% of Hispanic/Latina and 86% of Black participants feeling accepted, survey responses also indicated that parents and guardians were concerned with inclusion and equitable access for gender expansive youth, families across all socioeconomic statuses, across racial and ethnic groups, differently abled youth, and youth in nontraditional school settings. A lack of sense of belonging, acceptance, and support within GOTR can discourage participants from continued involvement with the organization. Further, the 2019 Parent Survey Presentation identified sense of belonging as one of the most important factors in determining satisfaction with GOTR.

Based on the importance of sense of belonging, inclusion, equity, and acceptance, the team recommends that GOTR implement strategies to improve diverse representation at all levels of the organization, promote inclusive language on materials, expand opportunities for differently abled youth, and those within homeschool settings. Additionally, the team recommends the development of a sponsorship program to prevent cost as a barrier to participation in GOTR. A sponsorship program could recruit alumnae to sponsor the full cost of participation, including proper running attire, for girls to participate in GOTR, Camp GOTR, and/or Heart & Sole.

### **Recommendation 5: Opportunities to Enhance Identity and Community**

In order for GOTR to enhance their alumni engagement initiatives, the team recommends GOTR create branding material for program participants to identify themselves as GOTR alum. Shaindlin (2018) finds alumnae identity helps to create and sustain alumnae engagement as alumnae status is permanent. Branding material, commensurate with the program, can include items such as t-shirts pins, badges, various colored shirts, etc. The Boys & Girls Clubs' Alumni Hall of Fame bestows a special honor to alums who are top athletes, entertainers, and business leaders. Literature has shown that creating a sense of community and belonging helps to keep alumnae involved and engaged in a more long-term sense. It is important for young alumnae to feel a sense of safety and friendship to continue involvement.

### **Recommendation 6: Opportunities to Adapt Programming**

Results from the parent and guardian survey indicated that dissatisfaction with programming is one of the reasons girls do not continue involvement in GOTR. For example, a few felt the curriculum was repetitive or that there was too much emphasis and time spent on the lessons and not enough time running. In order to obtain feedback from participants, the team recommends administering surveys to the girls to assess satisfaction with current programming within the local Councils. These surveys would allow each Council to gain valuable feedback on the types of programming the girls they serve want to participate in. Further, this data could be reported to GOTR International through annual reports to strengthen the communication between Councils and headquarters and to guide decisions on programming. This recommendation would assist GOTR with being responsive to the girls they serve. This would also provide insight into what content current girls and alumnae would like to see in the newsletters and on social media, which in turn would increase engagement with the GOTR programs.

Additionally, using feedback from the girls to adapt programming can assist in shifting GOTR from a one-time event to a developmental milestone for girls. Providing an opportunity for the girls to shape the programming gives the girls a personal investment within GOTR. This investment can lead to continued involvement with GOTR throughout the girls' lifecycle. Further, incorporating girls in program decisions boosts independent thought and leadership skills, which were identified as important values within the branding report. These values are also closely aligned with the core values and mission of GOTR.

## Discussion & Conclusion

After conducting research consisting of a comprehensive literature review, analyzing GOTR internal data, benchmarking similar organizations, conducting a parent/guardian survey, and conducting interviews with local GOTR Councils around the country, the MPA team was able to make recommendations for extending the life cycle of the GOTR participants.

Although this study provides a foundation for advancing GOTR alumnae engagement, the report is not without limitations. First, the Councils that were interviewed and provided parent/guardian email lists self-selected, as well as the parent/guardians who responded to the survey questions. Even though the sample size was quite large, we still face the possibility of selection bias where the sample does not accurately portray the entire GOTR population of present and past participants. In addition, even with a large sample size the sample size of the survey responses only garnered a 4% response rate. Multiple follow-ups with survey respondents, parents as a proxy, and using full lists from all Councils versus samples influences response rates and representation and could have increased the response rate. However, due to the large number and variety of responses, we are confident in the content compared to the prevalence of the insights from the survey responses. Also, the limited availability of alumni data from benchmark organizations proved to be a limitation in benchmarking alumni engagement. Lastly, COVID added barriers to continuing with the GOTR programs that would not normally be an issue, but was mentioned as having an impact on girls continuing this season and next.

The Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration program's Fall 2020 capstone team was tasked this semester with (1) identifying what motivates GOTR program alumnae to remain engaged with the organization, and (2) recommending strategies and tactics to extend the GOTR journey and increase alumnae engagement. In conclusion, the findings in this report led the team to develop six recommendations to extend the GOTR journey and increase alumnae engagement, which will allow GOTR to develop a system for obtaining and tracking alumnae data; strengthen connections through communications; increase opportunities for alumni engagement; increase diversity, equity and inclusion and foster a sense of belonging; create opportunities to enhance identity and community; and create opportunities to adapt programming.

## Acknowledgments

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Karen Baker, Program Coordinator Girls on the Run UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

Stephanie McClintock, Executive Director Girls on the Run Mid Michigan





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## Appendix A: Scope of Work



Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration

### EXTENDING THE GIRLS ON THE RUN LIFECYCLE TO INCREASE ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT

#### SCOPE OF WORK

MPAD 6187 - FALL 2020

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#### Project Overview

Girls on the Run (GOTR) is a Charlotte-based international nonprofit aspiring to increase young girls' confidence, health, and happiness through an exciting, evidence-based curriculum that uses running as a vehicle for developing the "whole girl."

The flagship "Girls on the Run" program, for girls in grades 3-5, teaches important life skills with a dual focus on emotional and physical health. GOTR girls are also tasked with a community service project to enrich their neighborhood. Other programs include "Heart & Sole," which addresses the body, brain, heart, spirit and social connection for young women in grades 6-8, and "Camp GOTR," a week-long camp that gives young girls a chance to develop self-confidence and life skills in a full-immersion format. Broad goals across all three programs are for young women to recognize the power within themselves and their ability to make a difference in the world. Both "Girls on the Run" and "Heart & Sole" end with a celebratory, non-competitive 5k in which the entire community can participate.

The 501(c)(3) nonprofit operates through a federated model, with a national office providing consistent guidance and leadership for 193 local councils administering the GOTR curriculum and programming in over 12,000 locations. Each local council is its own 501(c)(3), responsible for handling internal operations and external relationships with participants, families, donors, and coaches.

Girls on the Run has contracted the Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration (MPA) Capstone class at UNC Charlotte to identify alumnae motivations for staying involved with the organization, and to develop strategies and tactics to lengthen alumnae engagement. An engaged alum, as envisioned by GOTR leadership, is one that follows and interacts with the organization through social channels, that helps bring GOTR into their own community, or that takes on a role of volunteer, coach, GOTR family member, board member, staff, donor, fundraiser, or advocate. The nine-member class, along with the support of an MPA program faculty member, is responsible for identifying what motivates GOTR program alumnae to remain engaged. The class will produce a report that recommends strategies GOTR national leadership and local councils can use to extend alumnae engagement throughout the GOTR journey.

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Project Objectives

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1. Identify alumnae motivations for engagement.
  2. Recommend strategies and tactics to extend the GOTR journey and increase alumnae engagement.
- 

Tasks

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*Conduct a Comprehensive Literature Review*

Team will collect and review relevant academic and non-academic literature, with a focus on volunteer and alumni motivation. They will then synthesize this information into a final report to present the organization with recommendations of best practices for alumnae engagement.

*Review Existing GOTR Reports*

The team would like to review the following existing GOTR reports:

- Program Landscape Survey Reports
- Parent/Guardian Engagement Study
- Current Branding Study
- Longitudinal Study

*Analyze Existing GOTR Data*

The team would like to review the following existing GOTR data:

- “How did you hear about us” data from run registration
- Stories and quotes from past alumnae (particularly “Rockstars”)

*Benchmark to Comparable Organizations*

To assess alumni motivation for nonprofit involvement, the team will conduct research to obtain data from five comparable organizations. The data will provide insight into the realities and potential opportunities for enhancement and evolution.

*Interview Local GOTR Councils with Alumni Initiatives*

The team will conduct qualitative interviews with staff of local GOTR councils with existing alumni initiatives.

*Survey Parents/Guardians*

The team will survey families of past GOTR participants to assess attitudes toward engagement.

*Submit a Preliminary Report*

The MPA Capstone students will submit an electronic version of the report to GOTR. This draft report will present:

- Findings from reviewed literature
- Analysis of existing GOTR data and reports
- Best practices from similar nonprofits
- Findings from family survey data collected
- Best practices from local council interviews
- Recommendations

# EXTENDING THE GOTR LIFECYCLE TO INCREASE ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT

## *Final Report*

The MPA Capstone team will prepare a final report, incorporating feedback on the preliminary report as possible.

## *Present Recommendations*

The team will create a presentation that summarizes the final findings and recommendations to GOTR staff as well as any other interested parties.

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### Deliverables

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - GOTR Presentation / Client Meeting: | September 8, 2020           |
| - Scope of Work:                      | September 22, 2020          |
| - Preliminary Report to GOTR:         | December 8, 2020            |
| - Project Presentation:               | December 15, 2020 at 6:30PM |
| - Final Report:                       | December 15, 2020           |

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### Limitations

Potential limitations that could arise during the planning or execution of the project include:

- The timeline of the project is limited to the fall semester, from September 8, 2020 to December 15, 2020;
- The data collected may not be representative of all GOTR alumnae; and
- Local councils maintain relationships and contact information with participants.

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### Data and Information Requested from GOTR

Below is a list of existing GOTR data and information requested in order for our team to meet project objectives, as outlined in the Scope of Work:

- Program Landscape Survey Reports
- Parent/Guardian Engagement Study
- Most recent Branding Study
- Longitudinal Study
- "How did you hear about us" data from run registration
- Stories and quotes from past alumnae (particularly "Rockstars")
- Parent email addresses of past participants
- Councils with alumni initiatives that can be contacted for interviews

---

### Approved By

*Rachel Pierson-Bonin*

Rachel Pierson-Bonin, MPA Team Liaison

*Theresa Miller*  
Theresa Miller, Chief Engagement Officer

9/16/2020

Date

9-21-2020

Date

EXTENDING THE GOTR LIFECYCLE TO INCREASE ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT

Appendix B: Benchmark Organizations Table

<i>Social Media followers, posts, and alumni program comparison between GOTR and benchmark organizations</i>											
Organization Name	Ages served	Year Founded	Where are the chapters? Local, National, International	Inclusive language or diversity statement? (Y/N)	Facebook Likes	Twitter Followers	Instagram Followers	YouTube Subscribers	Content of social media posts	Alumni Program/Data Available?	Mission/ Vision/ Programs Offered
<b>Girls on The Run</b>	9-14 (3rd-8th grade)	1996	International	Yes	98,907	26.4K	37.8K	2.27K	Posting female excellence, words of encouragement, running, "National Coffee day", posts catered to adults	No alumni data, wants to encourage alumnae involvement	We inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running.
<b>Girls Who Code</b>	K- College	2012	National	Yes	264,069	320.6K	169K	7.81K	Free online programming to engage girls, raffles to connect with the public, posts on twitter include data and demographics on women in tech, promotion of events and programming	Alumni Programs, "College loops," mentorships	Increase number of girls who code, close gender gap, project-based learning, after school programming, 7 weeks in the summer
<b>Mini Mermaids</b>	11-15	2009	International	Yes, but no inclusive language used.	2,586	632	785	N/A	Last post May 27, emotional health posts, encouraging submissions for posts, not engaging	No alumni data recorded	Self-confidence and advocacy, curriculum based on learning about self
<b>Marathon Kids</b>	"Any kid"	2009	International	Could not locate.	12,878	3,440	2,587	170	Uses social media to recruit coaches, announces expansions, posts questions to engage followers, not a lot of responses.	Building alumni data through experience stories, no published data	Promote healthier lifestyle by encouraging kids to run marathons
<b>Girl Scouts</b>	5-18	1912	International (WAGGGS)	No national diversity statement, but some Councils have their own online.	1,223,679	95.6K	156K	13.2K	Engage by asking questions such as "What GS experience inspired you to make the world a better place" as well as promoting young adult and adult specific events (Seniors, Ambassadors, and Adults)	Girl Scouts Network- Did an Alumnae impact study in 2012	"Girl Scout Leadership Experience—a collection of engaging, challenging, and fun activities like earning badges, going on awesome trips, selling cookies, exploring science, getting outdoors, and doing community service projects."
<b>Girls. Inc.</b>	6-18	1864	National (except for one location in Canada)	Yes, released "National Position Statement on Gender Identity" in 2017.	87,213	56.2K	120K	1.45K	Have a separate LinkedIn and Facebook pages for the alumnae group (which has 967 members on FB and has made 19 posts in the last month)	Girls Incorporated Alumnae- no official data found yet but do have dedicated website for Rockstar alum stories	"Our research-based programming is delivered by trained professionals who focus on the development of the whole girl, supporting, mentoring, and guiding girls in an affirming, pro-girl environment." Each location offers different programs.
<b>ZGiRLS</b>	11-16	Tax-exempt since 2014. No foundation date could be located.	National	Could not locate.	3,791	909	3,621	N/A	Social media content includes positive affirmations, invitation to join a fitness challenge, inspirational quotes and messaging, and social status updates on ZGiRLs participants.	No alumnae program identified, have reached out to organization	ZGiRLS creates a world where girls and women live with ZERO LIMITATIONS. We equip girls with the tools and perspective they need to be confident, centered, and courageous.

EXTENDING THE GOTR LIFECYCLE TO INCREASE ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT

<b>Ruling Our Experiences (ROX)</b>	Girls in grades 5-12	2006	National	No statement, but published "Girls, Diversity & The Future: A Girls' Index Impact Report" and anti-racism resources.	3,644	1,203	3,112	130	Posts include inspiration and motivational quotes, invitations to engage / subscribe to an automated inspiration text data, participant testimonials, etc.	Has an alumnae program; no data located as of yet.	Our mission is to create generations of confident girls who control their own relationships, experiences, decisions and futures.
<b>YMCA</b>	"Youth of all ages"	1844	International	Yes	355,715	40.2K	20K	8.54K	Posts focus on health and wellness (healthy recipes, flu vaccine reminders, exercise and meditation videos). Community engagement and building (asking questions to FB followers) and Sarah's music room (20 min. music class for kids).	Alumni program for YMCA retirees and spouses. "YMCA Camp Iroquois" Alumni group. No national alumni group identified.	Youth programs include: Camps, child care, education & leadership, food programs, year-round STEM programs, and swim, sports, & play.
<b>YWCA USA</b>	"Youth of all ages"	1858	International	No national statement located, but has blog posts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.	25,109	17.1K	8,785	580	Posts focus on civic engagement (reminders to register to vote and complete the Census) and social justice initiatives ("We 'Still' Deserve Safety" report, a renewed call to end the criminalization of women and girls of color).	YWCA Girls and Youth Development Alumni Follow-up Study, 2016 to Present - done by Rainbow Research on the Minneapolis YWCA. Could not locate publicly available findings.	Youth programs include: Leadership development for middle and high school-age youth, youth enrichment center, gym and fitness programs, Girl Scout sessions, and HOPE Coalition.
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club of America</b>	6-18	1860	National	Diversity statement for careers at Boys & Girls Club of America. No national diversity statement for programs located, but some Councils have their own online.	223,705	47K	35.1K	5.89K	Posts focus on profiles of Boys & Girls Club members and staff ("Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year"), and highlight grant and fundraising partnerships between Boys & Girls Club and for-profit companies.	Alumni Hall of Fame and an Alumni & Friends network.	"Providing millions of kids and teens a safe place to develop essential skills, make lasting connections, and have fun." Programs are offered based on aged and each Club's programs are crafted to meet the needs of the community. Programs include: sports and recreation, education, the arts, health and wellness, workforce readiness, and character and leadership.
<b>4-H</b>	5-21	1902	National	Yes	713,575	41.3K	54.4K	3.61K	"Proud 4-H Alum" decal for sale on FB page. Posts include profiles of "4-H Youth in Action" and Mars Base Camp 4-H STEM Challenge.	Has 4-H Alumni group network, but no alumni data found.	Offers programs in STEM and agriculture, healthy living, and civic engagement.

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## Appendix C: Parent/Guardian Survey Questions

Q1 - Is your child a current participant or past participant?

- Current/Continuing Participant
- Only Past Participant

Q2 - How many years has she participated in Girls on the Run?

- 1
- 2
- 3+

Q3 - Which of the following GOTR programs did your girl participate in?

- Girls on the Run
- Heart & Sole
- Camp GOTR

Q4 - How did you initially hear about GOTR?

Q5 - Please select how strongly your family identified with each statement.

- We feel supported by GOTR
- We feel accepted by GOTR
- We do not feel a sense of belonging to GOTR
- We feel excluded in GOTR

Q6 - As an alumna would your girl be interested in continued involvement with the organization?

- Yes
- If not, why?

Q7 - What roles or programs would your girl be interested in participating in? (Check all that apply)

- Camp GOTR (grades 3-5, seven-week summer program)
- Heart & Sole (grades 6-8)
- Running in or volunteering with the 5K
- Volunteering as a Junior Coach (in high school) or coach (adult)
- Joining the GOTR staff in the future
- Joining the GOTR Board in the future
- Recommending GOTR to other families
- Fundraising or donating to your local Council
- Volunteer with the Community Impact Project

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- Mentoring a younger GOTR participant
- GOTR (grades 3-5)

Q8 - Are there any specific programs, roles, or curriculum that would motivate your girl to continue participation in GOTR as an alumna?

Q9 - Does anyone in your household follow any GOTR accounts (local Council or GOTR International) on social media?

- Twitter
- Instagram
- Facebook
- We do not follow but have social media accounts
- We do not follow because we do not use social media

Q10 - Has anyone in your household (you or your girl/alumna) volunteered with GOTR?

- General volunteer
- 5K volunteer
- Coach
- Junior Coach
- Community Impact Project volunteer
- Board member
- Other volunteering...
- No

Q11 - Has anyone in your household been asked to volunteer as:

- General volunteer
- 5K volunteer
- Coach
- Junior Coach
- Community Impact Project volunteer
- Board member
- Other volunteering...
- No

Q12 - Would anyone in your household be interested in volunteering (or continuing to volunteer) for GOTR in any of the following roles?

- General volunteer
- 5K volunteer
- Coach
- Junior Coach
- Community Impact Project volunteer

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- Board member
- No, we are uninterested in volunteering with GOTR because...

Q13 - Does your family donate to GOTR?

- Yes
- No

Q -14 What is your girl's current age?

- 7-10 years old
- 11-14 years old
- 15-18 years old
- 18+ years old

Q15 - What is the race/ethnicity of your girl?

- American Indian or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino) – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino) – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand and Vietnam.
- Black or African American (Not Hispanic or Latino) – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic or Latino – A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Not Hispanic or Latino) – A person having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands.
- White (Not Hispanic or Latino) – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East or North Africa.
- Two or More Races – All persons who identify with more than one of the above six races.
- Prefer Not to Answer

Q16 - Did your girl participate in GOTR through an after-school program or community center?

- After school
- Community Center
- Other...

Q17 - In what city and state was your girl a member?

## Appendix D: Council Interview Guide

### **Can you describe your current alumni engagement?**

- Which of these is most popular? Most effective?
- What platforms do you engage with alumni through?
- Social media use?
- What kind of alumni events do you have, if any?
- Do you honor or recognize alumni in any way?

### **Who are your rockstar alum?** Have you noticed any characteristics of a girl's time participating in GOTR programming that seem to **predict active alumni engagement?**

### On the topic of mentorship, between alumnae and current participants, **does your Council see mentorship already taking place?**

- Is it organic, or intentionally structured?
- Would you find it helpful to increase mentorship?
- What about mentorship between Heart & Sole and GOTR girls?
- Have you had success transitioning girls from GOTR to Heart & Sole?
- How do you recruit junior coaches - is there a pathway for young alums to return as junior coaches?

### **What specific barriers do you see to greater alumni engagement?**

- What resources could HQ develop to help you with alumni engagement?

### To your knowledge, do any alumni currently work at, serve, volunteer with, or coach with your Council? **Do you actively recruit alumnae to serve as coaches, volunteers, or Board members?**

### How do you engage or solicit donors? **How are alumni considered in your fundraising efforts?**

### **How do you communicate information about alumni programming to parents/coaches/teachers?**

*Optional clarifying question, if needed: Who do you consider to be an alum? - everyone who's participated prior to the current season, including people still participating? Or only those no longer participating?*



## Appendix E: Race/Ethnicity and Sense of Belonging Cross-Tabulation Results

### Q5-1: We feel supported by GOTR

Race or Ethnicity of Girl	Strongly				Strongly Agree
	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.00%	30.00%	10.00%	20.00%	40.00%
Asian	4.35%	4.35%	17.39%	56.52%	17.39%
Black/African American	2.60%	0.00%	14.29%	37.66%	45.45%
Hispanic/Latino	0.00%	1.47%	7.35%	35.29%	55.88%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Prefer Not to Answer	7.00%	4.00%	28.00%	39.00%	22.00%
Two or More Races	1.68%	1.68%	13.45%	42.86%	40.34%
White	2.30%	1.09%	18.04%	40.07%	38.50%
Grand Total	2.53%	1.63%	17.48%	39.95%	38.40%

Question 5-1: Please select how strongly your family identifies with each statement. - We feel supported by GOTR

### Q5-2: We feel accepted by GOTR

Race or Ethnicity of Girl	Strongly				Strongly Agree
	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.00%	30.00%	10.00%	20.00%	40.00%
Asian	4.35%	0.00%	17.39%	60.87%	17.39%
Black/African American	2.60%	0.00%	11.69%	33.77%	51.95%
Hispanic/Latino	0.00%	0.00%	5.80%	30.43%	63.77%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Prefer Not to Answer	8.00%	1.00%	18.00%	44.00%	29.00%
Two or More Races	0.84%	1.68%	10.92%	38.66%	47.90%
White	1.82%	0.97%	9.56%	38.50%	49.15%
Grand Total	2.20%	1.14%	10.45%	38.53%	47.67%

Q5-2: Please select how strongly your family identifies with each statement. - We feel accepted by GOTR

### Q5-3: We do not feel a sense of belonging to GOTR

Race or Ethnicity of Girl	Strongly				Strongly Agree
	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
American Indian/Alaska Native	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%
Asian	39.13%	26.09%	21.74%	8.70%	4.35%
Black/African American	61.04%	23.38%	7.79%	2.60%	5.19%
Hispanic/Latino	59.42%	24.64%	7.25%	2.90%	5.80%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Prefer Not to Answer	31.00%	24.00%	24.00%	12.00%	9.00%
Two or More Races	51.26%	24.37%	13.45%	6.72%	4.20%
White	48.12%	28.97%	14.30%	5.09%	3.52%
Grand Total	48.20%	27.45%	14.22%	5.72%	4.41%

Q5-3: Please select how strongly your family identifies with each statement. - We do not feel a sense of belonging to GOTR

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<b>Q5-4: We feel excluded in GOTR</b>					
<b>Race or Ethnicity of Girl</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
American Indian/Alaska Native	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%	0.00%
Asian	47.83%	21.74%	21.74%	0.00%	8.70%
Black/African American	59.74%	24.68%	7.79%	1.30%	6.49%
Hispanic/Latino	66.67%	24.64%	5.80%	0.00%	2.90%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Prefer Not to Answer	48.00%	22.00%	20.00%	4.00%	6.00%
Two or More Races	57.98%	21.01%	11.76%	5.88%	3.36%
White	60.44%	25.12%	9.83%	1.94%	2.67%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>59.12%</b>	<b>24.45%</b>	<b>10.71%</b>	<b>2.37%</b>	<b>3.35%</b>

Q5-4: Please select how strongly your family identifies with each statement. - We feel excluded in GOTR