

Mississippi Valley Council 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan with Goals and Benchmarks

The Mississippi Valley Council Mission Statement - The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

This is the details Strategic Plan that includes Strategic Objectives, Council Goals and Committee Goals to reach our desired outcomes. The Board will use this detailed plan to track progress and ensure the Council is moving forward.

1. **Youth and Adult Membership Growth** – We know that Scouting makes a significant positive impact on the lives of youth and adults in our program. Scouts who were involved in our program for 5 or more years are more likely to graduate High School, graduate college, volunteer as an adult and make on average \$20,000 more a year than individuals not involved in Scouting. As a matter of financial stability to maintain our current services and program, we need to grow membership to keep the cost per Scout reasonable. Our number one priority should be to increase the number of families our council provides program. **Our first Strategic Objective is to have a 2% growth of overall membership annually.** 2014 Year-end Total Youth Membership is 2,812 (Registered Youth Goal by year – 2015-2,869; 2016-2,927; 2017-2,986; 2018-3,046; 2019-3,107)
 - a. **Increase the number of Cub Scouts recruited as measure by Tiger density. Increase Tiger Density to 25% by 2017 and maintain this yearly.** - Cub Scouting is our entry program essential to the overall health of our Council. 93.7% of active Boy Scouts started in Cub Scouts. While Mississippi Valley Council has a strong density in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, we have seen a decrease in Cub Scouting. Success is measured by the following:
 - i. **Recruit and develop a Council Membership Committee responsible for Cub Scout Fall Recruitment focused on recruiting youth and adult leadership.** This committee will have district representatives and be responsible to train unit leadership in recruiting techniques. They will be involved in the design of the recruitment approach, selection of resources, specific membership budget and assisting units directly with their recruitments.
 - ii. **Create a January recruiting drive for Packs with low membership density.** Mississippi Valley Council has decided not to recruit Cub Scouts in late spring. This was to ensure that families received a strong scouting program to increase retention. For most units this is a strong plan, and they are able to simply recruit the spring youth in the upcoming fall. However some units have are not able to gain the interest of their families in the fall and need a second recruitment to fully reach the families in their communities. We have found a strong desire from youth to join Scouting in January after their Fall Sports/Activities are completed.

- b. **Grow our Exploring membership by 10% each year.** - Our communities have defined the need for workforce development in youth as well as a focus on STEM skill development. Boy Scouts of America has had a successful workforce development program since 1950. Mississippi Valley Council is below the average density in only one market, the older youth market (14-21). In order to meet the community defined need and increase our reach into the older youth market, we will revive our Exploring Program. 2014 year-end Explorers registered is 98. Registered Explorer Goal by year – 2015 – 108; 2016 – 119; 2017 – 131; 2018 – 144; 2019 – 159.
 - i. **Increase the opportunity to participate in Exploring by having 20 total Explorer Units in 10 career fields by 2019.** As of year-end 2014 we had 12 Explorer units in 5 career fields. Almost all these units were focused on emergency services. There are several opportunities to develop additional Explorer units in a variety of fields, emphasizing STEM related fields.
 - ii. Explorer Support – With the emphasis on growing the exploring program, there is a need to create local support for these units. **Create a Council Exploring Committee to support districts with unit service, plan activities, training and other opportunities to add value to joining exploring in the Mississippi Valley Council.**
- c. **We will provide support and direction to units to ensure that they have enough volunteers and focus on key items with the volunteer time they have. This will be measured through an increase of volunteers likely to suggest others to volunteer in a yearly survey.** - The strongest retention tool in Scouting is fostering strong Scouting Units. Units are facing increasingly challenging environment to provide their youth with exciting program. Volunteerism is down across the country, both in the percentage of volunteers and the time spent volunteer per person. Millennial Generation are currently our Cub Scouting Parents, and this generation is less likely to take on formal roles when volunteering (like Cubmaster).
 - i. **Increase the number of Unit Level Volunteers by 5%.**
 - ii. **Create a training where 75% of parents learn the benefits of being involved in Scouting are for their family.**
 - iii. **Increase the number of Unit Contacts by District/Council volunteers to 95% of units receiving at least 8 a year.** Contacts are defined as anytime a District/Council volunteer has a conversation (in person, online, over phone) where they are able to help the unit. Ensure visits have support for Den Leaders to retain and promote Scouts.
 - iv. **Increase the number of Den Chiefs to an average of 1 per Pack.**
 - v. **Create a process that ensures every unit has a Program Plan that includes a Budget, Recruitment/Retention plan and Calendar.**
- d. **Develop and implement a Council Marketing Plan** - To support the efforts of growing the Scouting Program, the effect of local Public Relations and Marketing cannot be overlooked. Mississippi Valley Council will create a plan to bring higher awareness to our community of the benefits of their Scouting program.
 - i. **Increase the number of Service Hours per Scout to an average of 20 hours per year.** Create public awareness of the value of having a strong Scouting program in their community.
 - ii. **Increase communications to the public regarding the values of Scouting.**

- 2. Improvement of several Council infrastructures/processes to include greater volunteer leadership involvement.** Mississippi Valley Council has four properties utilized by its membership. In order to best utilize these resources to support the Scouting Mission, we will ensure continued improvement of the council infrastructure and increase usage of program facilities. **Evaluation by Executive Committee that the processes and volunteer involvement have upgraded.**
- a. **A Long Term Camp Plan will be created in 2015.** - This will include all stake holders of our two camp properties. This plan will focus on diversifying the camp program to increase the total program opportunities available to Scouts. It will create a vision for future physical projects at the camps as well as a maintenance plan.
 - i. **Resident Camp attendance will increase by 5%.** A focus on Boy Scout Summer camp provisional program to encourage boys to attend both camps.
 - ii. **Overall Camp attendance will increase to 2,400 campers per year (including summer camp).** Three key areas will have a separate plan for growth: Weekend Scout Camping, Outside group usage and Family Camping Opportunities.
 - b. **Increase Direct Support by 25%.** - Mississippi Valley Council has excelled in the past several years in Financial Management. However the council has been flat or decreasing in many Fund Development areas. In order for the council to grow support, program opportunities and diversify our income stream, it is critical to focus volunteer energy at Fund Development.
 - i. **Increase Friends of Scouting giving to \$250,000.** Create a baseline for Friends of Scouting which removes grants, foundations, special events and other past gifts that fit into other giving streams better. Reinstated a volunteer committee that will lead FOS campaign to end by May 30th of each year. Create a structured giving process that will support this process.
 - ii. **Solicit 20 new James E. West recipients and hold 5 cultivation events/visits of James E. West donors to give towards greater endowment gifts.**
 - iii. **Increase the net sales to \$40,000 in our Scout Shops.**
 - c. **Our Council will make changes to increase productivity and provide an appropriate Scouting image to the community.** - The Council staffing and office usage has gone through many changes since the buildings were originally designed and purchased. The current structures are hindering our council operations.
 - i. **Board adopted plan in 2015 to have our Council Offices meet functional needs of organization.**
 - ii. **Recruit a technology committee.** This committee will assist in upkeep of Council Technology as well as making expenditure suggestions.
 - iii. **Create retention plan for high performing Staff.**

- 3. Volunteer Leadership** - The greatest resource of the Mississippi Valley Council are the dedicated volunteers. The Council will take steps to engage and empower our volunteers as well as our families. **Increase the number of total volunteers to 1,500.**
- a. **Increase volunteer and family satisfaction of Council communications measured by surveyed results.** The number one issue that most organizations deal with today is effective communication. Scouting has the additional challenge of communicating to a large number of volunteers. Mississippi Valley will increase our communication effort to have more effective and transparent communications.
 - i. **Consistently send out the *Current* and increase its open rate to 33%.** *Current's* open rate is currently 29%. The *Current* is to be focused on information Unit Leaders and active families need to know.
 - ii. **Create a communication to be sent four times a year to all stakeholders (Board, Donors, Volunteers, Parents, Community Leaders) which highlights the impact Scouting is making in our communities.**
 - b. **The Council will formalize several processes that ensure volunteer/donor recognition for key items.** One of the best ways to engage and retain volunteers is to show recognition for their efforts.
 - i. **Implement a "thank you" plan for donors based on their support level.** For higher level donors this will include a call from a key volunteer.
 - ii. **Create a welcome process to new families.** Recognize families for joining Scouting and provide a communication that will help kick start their experience.
 - iii. **Create a plan that recognizes unit and scout level accomplishments at a Council level.** For example, a congratulations message to New Eagle Scout moms or announce on social media when a unit leader is trained.
 - iv. **Create a plan that helps prevent volunteer "Burn out".** Consider position term limits to allow volunteers to see new challenges.
 - c. **Increase the number of direct service leaders trained to 100%.** Every Scout deserves a trained leader. In order to ensure a quality program is it critical that we have all leaders trained.
 - d. **Update the Council Volunteer Structure.** Review the past council structures and ensure that every volunteer is on the same page with expectations of committee responsibilities.
 - i. **Create yearly goals for each Council Committee.** Have a process where council committees create yearly goals based on the execution of the Strategic Plan, JTE, and specific requests from the Council Key 3.
 - ii. **Have a written position description for every VP and council committee.**
 - iii. **Increase the involvement of several committees with increased volunteer involvement.** This is to include Budget Committee, Campership Committee, Sporting Clays Committee, and FOS Committee.