

2022-2024 GFWC CLUB MANUAL



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

"TRUE PATRIOTISM SPRINGS FROM A BELIEF IN THE DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL, FREEDOM AND EQUALITY NOT ONLY FOR AMERICANS BUT FOR ALL PEOPLE ON EARTH." — ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

In the *Preface of Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, an authoritative work edited by Thomas Ehrlich and published by Oryx Press in 2000, it is noted that "Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes."

The GFWC Civic Engagement and Outreach Community Service Program reminds GFWC members that each of us is a part of a larger society and is responsible for undertaking actions that will create a better quality of life and foster a sense of community—locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. GFWC will focus on addressing issues of public concern.

Volunteering is one of the best ways to put civic duty into action and it is often the first step in building a stronger connection to community, but there are other ways to contribute, such as advocating, fundraising or donating, and problem solving. Locally, even supporting small businesses and keeping an eye on your neighbor can play a part in improving the community. The possibilities are endless. *We advocate because there is a need, we volunteer because we are needed. Our focus continues to be addressing issues of public concern.*

Civic Engagement and Outreach are highlighted and encouraged, including Citizenship; Crime Prevention, Safety, and Disaster Preparedness; the Needy, Hungry, and Homeless; and Our Military Personnel and Veterans. Beyond these suggestions, look within your own community and to the wider world for ways to make a positive impact.



2022-2024 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

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Direct any questions regarding projects that do not involve GFWC Affiliate Organizations to the Civic Engagment and Outreach Community Service Program Chairman or GFWC Programs Department at **Programs@GFWC.org**.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION INITIATIVE: A LITTLE THANKS GOES A LONG WAY



Civic engagement is the process of connecting individuals in society with one another, to share common interests, and work for the common good. www.study.com

GFWC clubs are encouraged to focus efforts on giving thanks and advocating for the essential workers in the community. Essential workers in the community include many fields of work not only medical care providers and first responders, but also the many 911 dispatchers, teachers, civil service employees, farmers, truckers, utility workers, pharmacy providers, bank employees, delivery services, sanitation employees, and military personnel as examples. To be involved is to care about your community and working with others to make it a more positive place to live, work, and socialize.

Ways in which you can advocate for their efforts on behalf of your community:

- Present a Proclamation for "Essential Workers Week."
- Deliver food to their place of business.
- Distribute care packages the first of every month.
- Display GFWC "Essential Workers Keep Our Country Moving Forward" on car windows and mailboxes.
- Throw a neighborhood or community parade and showcase essential workers of all fields.
- Highlight an essential worker in your club's newsletter and partner with local PR to ensure that the community is aware of these individuals.
- Create signage for your Main Street to highlight the companies and/or individuals who are working to make your community a better place.





MILITARY TREE OF HONOR

A "Military Tree of Honor" was created by the GFWC Sylvania Junior Woman's Club (GA) in partnership with the public library. A white tree was erected with an American flag topper, red and blue ornaments, an Americana tree skirt, and combat boots that were worn in Afghanistan around the base. One hundred photos of living, deceased, active, or retired service members were submitted. Photos were scanned onto cardstock and labelled with the service member's name, rank, and branch.



LADIES OF LIBERTY

The Mary Stewart Woman's Club (NC) members donated various items to deployed female service members through Ladies of Liberty, part of the Soldiers' Angels organization that provides care packages to women serving overseas. Members donated snacks, medicines, personal health and hygiene items, and filled USPS military boxes to ship overseas. The first shipment was so popular, club members decided to repeat the project. Twenty-nine female service members were served by the second shipment.



TEENS IN TRANSITION

The Dover Area Woman's Club (NH) supports the Teens in Transition Program by distributing donated items throughout the year. This program is for students who are homeless and spend their nights on the street, in a car, or moving from one friend's house to another. Members collected and donated clothing, food, snacks, and personal care items to the Teen Closet at the local high school.



SAIDIE'S CUPBOARD

The Salem Woman's Service Club's (OR) program, Saidie's Cupboard, partners with local public health nurses and a teen parent program to create "family bags" of basic household items and "infant bags" for basic newborn needs such as clothing, blankets, diapers, toys, and books. The club supplies the bags whenever requested by the agencies, who then distribute them to needy families. Within the past year, 88 family bags, 15 infant bags, and 1,982 diapers were donated.



PROJECT IDEAS

Be inspired by this list of ideas of how GFWC clubs can support the Civic Engagement and Outreach Community Service Program. Find further information about organizations named here under Resources.

Remember, these are guidelines, and all projects are part of our community service under the community service program. Go outside of the norm and find a need in your community that could be specific to your club, your neighborhood, or your state.

CITIZENSHIP

- Work together with other community members or organizations to create a social media platform, such as Facebook or Twitter page, to engage the larger community on key issues, identify positive solutions, and stimulate public policy initiatives.
- Honor and celebrate patriotic holidays by hosting or volunteering for events commemorating Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day, Constitution Day, and others. Consider purchasing or printing copies of the United States Constitution for distribution. One organization that provides copies at a bulk rate is Freedom Factor.
- Work together to "Get Out the Vote!" Encourage others to register and vote, provide information about early
 voting or polling locations and times, and offer transportation if needed. Pair with another club and assist at
 the polls.
- Provide information on correctly folding a United States flag, plus the meaning and symbolism in the flag folding ceremony, to scouts, school groups, and others. The American Legion offers clear and concise instructions.
- Help an individual or a small group study for the U.S. Citizenship test.
- Collaborate with bookstores or libraries to create a prominent display of nonfiction books that commemorate Women's History Month in March, tell the "herstory" of women's suffrage.
- Collect books that celebrate women of the suffrage movement or other women and girls of historical or societal importance, including biographies, nonfiction, and historic fiction, and donate them to local schools, libraries, and programs such as the Boys and Girls Club, YWCA, and Girls, Inc.
- Visit state monuments, notable homes, and other historic sites, perhaps as part of a State or Region meeting. Collect a donation or hold a fundraiser to help support the site or its mission.
- Create a play, puppet show, or exhibit to teach young students about "Symbols of the United States," including the US flag, Uncle Sam, the Liberty Bell, the bald eagle, the Statue of Liberty, and others.
- Sponsor a Candidates Forum for town officials and/or state representatives, with club members serving as hosts and moderators. Invite media to cover the event.
- Join the Chamber of Commerce to increase brand recognition through networking and publicity. Use Chamber publications and calendars to help spread the word about club events.
- Invite a speaker from the League of Women Voters to provide information on voting rights and how to increase participation and educate voters.
- Have club members bring women's history and your club history to a meeting. Learn about the impact of your club in the community.

CRIME PREVENTION, SAFETY, AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Prevent crime and make homes and communities safer by providing information on crime prevention strategies, such as neighborhood/park watches and suspicious activity reports. For helpful information, provide a listing of non-emergency numbers or websites for your community.
- Support and thank local Police and Fire Departments for keeping the community safe. Consider making gift bags that include snacks, beverages, gift certificates, other small treats or necessities, and a handwritten thank you note. Or, provide a monthly meal and/or dessert to these first responders, with groups of club members working together.
- Spread the word about the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning in the home by providing information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including the signs and causes of poisoning, and how to prevent it. Collaborate with a local merchant to purchase carbon monoxide alarms at cost and then provide them to the elderly and/or needy.



- Sponsor CPR or first aid classes for moms' groups, childcare providers, teens, and others. Assist with the setup and help with a class that allows moms, dads, caregivers, and grandparents to attend.
- Alert parents and caregivers to the hazard of furniture tip-overs that endanger the lives of children, the disabled, and the elderly. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, someone in the U.S. is injured every 17 minutes by a furniture, TV, or appliance tip over. Create awareness through social media on how to anchor furniture or offer facts and free furniture anchors at a community-wide event.
- Warn club members and others by sharing information on Identity Theft from USA.gov, including potential victims, types of theft, warning signs, and prevention.
- Go to the National Council on Aging for information about scams against seniors that target grieving spouses, worried grandparents, and those with medical concerns. Share fact sheets with members and friends, including "The Top Ten Financial Scams Targeting Seniors," and "Eight Tips for How Seniors Can Protect Themselves from Money Scams."
- Hold a bicycle safety workshop for children during National Bicycle Safety Month in May.
- Utilize materials from the National Safety Council and other experts to educate teen drivers about the dangers of distracted driving during Distracted Driving Awareness Month in April.
- Work with first responders and your local high schools to provide motivational presentations on at-risk driving practices, such as texting and failure to use seat belts.
- Learn to stop traumatic injury bleeding, which is the leading cause of preventable death in a severely injured person. Find tools through the national awareness and training campaign, Stop the Bleed, directed by the American College of Surgeons. Sponsor a course for club and community members that offers hands-on practice to apply direct pressure, pack a wound, and use a tourniquet.
- Plan a club or community program with first responders in September, National Preparedness Month, on possible emergency situations, natural disasters, and how to be ready at home.
- Provide information to community members on how to make a Disaster Preparedness Toolkit.
- Create and provide Disaster Preparedness Toolkits to first responders that can be distributed throughout the community in a time of need.
- Coordinate efforts to provide disaster victims with monetary or in-kind donations.



THE NEEDY, HUNGRY, AND HOMELESS

- Consult your local welfare office, shelters, churches, and other community-assistance organizations to determine community needs and help provide provisions for the needy.
- Assist Habitat for Humanity by providing volunteer labor or donations such as furniture and household goods. Consider making or providing meals and/or snacks for volunteers.
- Put together a Women Build team for Habitat for Humanity and work in tandem with construction professionals and future homeowners.
- Organize a club day of service at a local food pantry by donating essential goods and sorting and organizing their shelves. Offer a few surprises, such as "Birthday Bags" filled with cake mix, a can of icing, candles, a baking pan, and a birthday card.
- Place a strong emphasis on childhood hunger and work with or establish local programs that provide weekend and summertime meals for needy children. Consider offering family nutrition tips that help parents shop for and cook healthy, affordable meals.
- Organize a winter clothing drive in the fall, collecting, sorting, and cleaning gently used coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, scarves, and gloves. Partner with a school, church, or another local agency to distribute the clothing.
- Work with your local schools to establish "closets" within the schools where clothing, shoes, backpacks, underwear, socks, outerwear, and personal hygiene items are organized and stored for distribution to children in need. Sponsor the clothes closet and stock it regularly.
- See if there is an affiliate of Family Promise or another shelter for homeless families in your area. Investigate their needs and determine if there is a project that is right for your club.



- Collect socks at a club, district, or state meeting and donate this "number one most requested item" to homeless shelters.
- Hold a collection drive for I Support the Girls, an organization that provides bras, underwear, sanitary
 napkins, and tampons to women and girls in need. Donate the items to the closest I Support the Girls
 affiliate location or a similar local nonprofit organization, so they can be distributed in your area. Work
 with the local school guidance counselors and help with "stocking the shelves with sanitary items."
- Learn about Days for Girls, an organization that provides access to menstrual care and education for girls around the world. Fundraise for a monetary donation or create sustainable menstrual care kits that provide safe, beautiful, washable, and long-lasting sanitary protection.
- Advocate for "Housing not Handcuffs," a campaign of the National Coalition for the Homeless that aims to put an end to homelessness and the criminalization of the homeless.
- Research the ground-level services in your backyard and make cards with nearby shelter information, maps, to promote the nearby shelters.
- Participate in your city's Point-in-Time Count where volunteers team-up and spread-out across the city to perform a head count of the homeless individuals.
- Partner with The Right to Shower (https://www.therighttoshower.com/) by holding a Hygiene Kit Drive, applying for grants to start a Mobile Shower Service, Pop-Up Care Village, or building a portable Handwashing Station.
- Locate and assist with a local mobile-laundry service .
- Research your local candidates. Politicians often dictate your community/city policies and funding levels.

OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL AND VETERANS

"Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifice." — Harry Truman

- Encourage members to research local or national programs that support our military. The United States
 Department of Veterans Affairs can direct you to assistance programs for those currently deployed,
 military families, and/or veterans. If your club wants to work specifically with women veterans, contact
 the Women Veterans Program Manager at your VA Medical Center or local residential living or assisted
 living manager.
- Support active military personnel with programs through the USO, such as *Wishbook*, to provide gifts of comfort food packages, phone calls home, and long-distance bedtime stories, or USO2GO Kits, which provide snacks, toiletries, and fun diversions (music and games) to troops deployed to remote areas.
- Keep military loved ones together during medical treatment by supporting the Fisher House Foundation, which builds comfort homes at military installations and VA Medical Centers around the world. Clubs can also support the Foundation's Hero Miles program, which uses donated airline miles to bring family members to the hospital bedsides of the injured, and Hotels for Heroes, which uses donated hotel points, and/or its grant program and scholarship fund.
- Create awareness about the three primary mental health concerns of military personnel and veterans: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Depression, and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Support organizations such as the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) and others that provide help.
- Create awareness about the high rate of suicide among veterans and suicide prevention programs such as the Veterans Crisis Line and S.A.V.E., a VA online training program that teaches simple preventive steps (Signs, Ask, Validate, Encourage, Expedite) that anyone can follow with those at risk.
- Consult the Suicide Prevention Coordinator at your VA Medical Center to determine what help and support your club can provide. Consider a program specifically for women veterans, who have a suicide rate that is twice that of non-veterans. If women veterans have suffered sexual trauma, they





may require personal rather than VA transportation, which can be provided with pre-paid UBER or credit cards.

- Contact local homeless shelters to ask if any current residents are veterans. If so, work with the shelter administrator to determine what additional support or resources may help these veterans become more self-sufficient.
- Donate clothing, nonperishable food items, backpacks, and other items to Stand Downs, VA events that provide necessities, health screenings, and referrals for homeless veterans. Ask for the wish list and each month provide a few items on that list. It changes per season and by the number of homeless veterans.
- Work with your VA to identify veterans who need household supplies and furniture, employment assistance, educational scholarships, or other help. Consider establishing an ongoing relationship with one or more veterans.
- Contribute to Wreaths Across America by sponsoring wreaths or volunteering at Veteran Cemeteries to place or remove wreaths.
- Contribute to the Honor Flight Network by donating, volunteering as a "Guardian" to accompany an honoree, and/or being part of a "Welcome Home" congregation. Write cards for the on "Mail Call" during the return home.
- Support the Quilts of Valor Foundation by donating fabric, quilt squares, or quilts, or by making monetary contributions or becoming a sponsor.

SUPPORT AND AID WOMEN VETERANS

Connect with women veterans to support health needs, reduce isolation and depression, and provide comfort and encouragement, with the assistance of a Women Veterans Program Manager* at your VA Medical Center. Here are specific ideas provided by a WVP Manager:

- Donate comfort and useful items such as soothing lotions and bath gels, beauty products, cozy socks and slippers, adult inspirational coloring books and colored pencils (a great favorite!), games and playing cards, and/or gift cards to salons, coffee shops, and retail and grocery stores.
- Supply beverages and snacks for the waiting area of the Veteran Women's Health Clinic, with a small group of members hosting to provide camaraderie and new contacts.
- Collect new and slightly used jewelry and hold a club social for polishing and packaging the jewelry in decorated boxes or bags for distribution at the Veteran Women's Health Clinic.
- Work with the Veterans Administration Medical Center to hold a games afternoon or painting social. Make new friends and have fun!
- Coordinate with the WVP Manager to help women veterans celebrate special moments in their lives, with gifts and thoughtful cards for new babies, family birthdays, and other meaningful occasions.

<u>*If your community does not have a WVP Manager, reach out to a local assisted residential living manager that can</u> identify those in their care who are female Veterans.

CONNECT WITH GFWC AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

CANINE COMPANIONS

- Sign Online Petition to Stand Against Service Dog Fraud. When untrained pets posing as service dogs behave badly, people who truly need assistance dogs can face added discrimination and lose access to public places, both violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. www.cci.org/news-media/latest-news/take-a-stand-against-service.html
- Promote puppy raising. Volunteers are needed to raise puppies from eight weeks to 1.5 years old, attending dog obedience classes, and socializing the puppy in public settings. Assistance is needed in getting the word out on the need for volunteers.
- Meet the Canine Companions Chapter leadership near you and see how you can work together.
- Raise funds to help place a dog with a veteran.



- Share your commitment to CC with suggested Canine Companions by using these hashtags: #giveadogajob, #WeAreIndependence, #ccivolunteer, #ccipuppy, #ccipuppyraiser, #ccigraduate #ccicanine, and #caninecompanions.
- Become familiar with the following organizations:
 - ø Assistance Dogs International, Inc. https://assistancedogsinternational.org
 - ø International Association of Assistance Dog Partners. www.iaadp.org
 - U.S. Department of Justice ADA and Americans with Disabilities Act information, resources, and updates U.S. government website (www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm) contains a vast array of resources for individuals with disabilities, including information about health, housing, education, transportation, recreation, and employment. See Commonly Asked Questions about service dogs in places of business. ADA Info Line: 800-514-0301 (voice); 800-514-0383 (TTY). Workplace Accommodation Information (www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm#subchapterI) | Public Access with an Assistance Dog Info (www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm) | Employment Equal Opportunity Commission (www.eeoc.gov)
 - Ø Children with Disabilities offers information about advocacy, education, employment, health, housing, recreation, technical assistance, and transportation covering a broad array of developmental, physical, and emotional disabilities. www.childrensdisabilities.info
 - ø Institute on Disability and Human Development is an online resource dedicated to promoting the independence, productivity, and inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of society. https://ahs.uic.edu
- Join the Canine Companions Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/CanineCompanions) and help them build their network of "likes."
- Follow Canine Companions on Twitter @ccicanine.
- Subscribe to their YouTube channel, www.YouTube.com/CanineCompanions, and their blog, Help is a Four-Legged Word, www.Blog.CCI.org.
- Sign up to receive monthly e-newsletters on Canine Companions updates and forward the emails to your friends. www.CCl.org/sign-up

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

- Support Heifer by sponsoring a Community Animal Health Workers Kit. This kit includes tools such as thermometers, stethoscopes, hoof trimmers, gloves, disinfectants, medicine for animals, and more. It also trains participants in properly caring for gift animals. Visit www.heifer.org/campaign/gfwc.html and navigate to the Health Workers Toolkit.
- Inspire students to become global citizens through Heifer's free educational and fundraising programs catered to any age group. www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/get-involved/schools/index.html

MARCH OF DIMES

 Use the March of Dimes Advocacy Toolkit to make your voice heard by contacting Members of Congress about how you feel about Maternal Health, Access to Care, and Newborn Screening. www.marchofdimes. org/materials/Advocacy-toolkit-q3-2019-v2.pd

OPERATION SMILE

- Coordinate with members, friends, and family to sew, collect, or prepare specific supplies that are needed for medical missions. www.operationsmile.org/content/community-fundraising-and-service-projects
- Sew Smile Splint arm bands to prevent a child from bending their arms and touching their face. An arm band is inserted with tongue depressors to create a simple splint. To request a copy of this pattern, or if you have any questions, please contact Operation Smile at communityrelations@operationsmile.org, or 1-888-677-6453.
- Make Smile quilts, blankets, and afghans.
- Make Smile dolls. To children that have never seen a doctor, a visit to a hospital can be scary.
- Sew hospital gowns so each child is provided their own gown.
- Go on YouTube and download videos to present at your club meeting.



ST. JUDE

- Volunteer at a St. Jude Walk/Run to End Childhood Cancer event near you by visiting www.stjude.org/ walk/run and clicking on "volunteer."
- Join us on social media @StJude and use the Hashtag #ShowYourGold to show your support.

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION SHOT@LIFE CAMPAIGN

- Encourage club members to apply for the annual Shot@Life Summit. Learn how to advocate and put it into practice in support of funding global vaccines. https://shotatlife.org/championsummit
- Utilize the Race to Erase Toolkit when meeting with state legislators. Together we can make sure that legislators know their constituents support global vaccination efforts. https://shotatlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Race-to-Erase-2018-Toolkit.pdf

UNICEF USA

- Promote Equality for Girls Program by promoting education for girls so they can become the artists, engineers, and advisors of tomorrow. www.unicefusa.org/mission/equality-girls
- Visit UNICEF's USA Action Center: Advocate to Put Children First. Enter your zip code to see the campaigns currently being promoted in your area. https://act.unicefusa.org/?_ga=2.56491243.1930969479.1592003084-1296862387.1592003084
- Create "STOP Sign" stickers to place in rest area bathrooms of highly traveled roads in your community. Include the phone number of the national hotline for survivors of human trafficking.



GFWC RESOURCES

American Legion www.legion.org

For specific information on flag folding, go to www.legion.org/flag/folding.

Consumer Product Safety Commission www.consumerreports.org

For specific information on anchoring furniture go to www.consumerreports.org/furniture/how-to-anchor-furniture-to-help-prevent-tip-overs

Days for Girls www.daysforgirls.org

Family Promise www.familypromise.org affiliates work in 43 states as a leading nonprofit addressing the issue of family homelessness. The organization is 501c3 with a 4 Star Charity navigator standing. Blankets, pillows, towels and washcloths, school snacks, and meals are appreciated donations.

Fisher House Foundation www.fisherhouse.org

Freedom Factor www.freedomfactor.org

For specific information on the cost of copies of the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence go to www.freedomfactor.org/collections/designer-pocket-constitutions/products/pocket-constitution-independence-hall.

Habitat for Humanity www.habitat.org

HOBY www.hoby.org

Honor Flight Network www.honorflight.org

I Support the Girls www.isupportthegirls.org

League of Women Voters www.lwv.org

The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) www.nami.org

For specific information on supporting military personal and veterans go to www.nami.org/Find-Support/ Veterans-and-Active-Duty.

National Council on Ageing www.ncoa.org

For specific information on scams against seniors go to www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/ scams-security.

National Safety Council www.nsc.org For specific information on distracted driving go to www.nsc.org/road-safety/safety-topics/distracted-driving.

National Women Veterans United www.nwvu.org

National Coalition for the Homeless www.nationalhomeless.org For specific information on "Housing not Handcuffs" go to www.housingnothandcuffs.org.

National Crime Prevention Council www.ncpc.org

Quilts of Valor Foundation www.qovf.org

For specific information about making quilts go to www.gov.org/make-a-gov.



The Right to Shower www.therighttoshower.com

USA GOV www.usa.gov

For specific information on identify theft go to www.usa.gov/identity-theft.

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs www.va.gov

For specific information on Stand Downs go to www.va.gov/homeless/events.asp.

USO www.uso.org

For specific information on Wishbook go to www.usowishbook.uso.org.

Wreaths Across America www.wreathsacrossamerica.org

AWARDS

GFWC recognizes State Federations for outstanding projects and clubs for creative projects in implementing effective Civic Engagement and Outreach Community Service Program projects and Affiliate Organization projects as follows:

- Certificate to one State Federation in each membership category
- \$50 award to one club in the nation for project creativity

Award winners will be determined by entries into the Award Program. Each State Federation may submit one State Award Entry and one Club Creativity Award Entry for the Civic Engagement and Outreach Community Service Program projects. Clubs do not submit entries directly to GFWC.

Refer to the Awards section of the Club Manual for more information, including the Award Entry Cover Sheet guidelines.

RESOLUTIONS

To be added after 2022 Annual Convention

