

Transcript of Web Chat: Succession Planning for Dance Organizations

December 5, 2024

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

succession planning, leadership transition, board roles, youth engagement, job rotation, emergency plan, institutional knowledge, volunteer recruitment, training materials, committee structure, board training, leadership models, organizational change, new ideas, community involvement

SPEAKERS

Katy German, Jenny Beer, Susan English, Joanna Wilkinson, Harold, Lisa Faryadi, Greg Kramer, David Smukler

Joanna Wilkinson 00:05

Hello, everyone, welcome. Thanks for joining us this evening. It's great to see everybody here. Wait just a few minutes while everybody gets in from the waiting room. Thank you all so much for coming this evening. I'm going to make sure everybody's on mute, Great.

Joanna Wilkinson 01:08

Welcome, welcome. Thanks for being here. We're going to get started. Thank you so much for coming to our webinar. It's all about succession planning for organizations. We've got a great panel to chat with you this evening, and we look forward to hearing from you at the end of the presentation as well. I just want to start with some housekeeping announcements, just to make sure we're all on the same page with everything.

Joanna Wilkinson 01:31

The first thing to know is that we are recording this presentation so it can be available to folks who are not able to join us tonight. So if you don't want a little clip of your face to be seen, you can turn off your video camera and you can turn it back on at any time. Please remain muted during the presentation if we ask you to ask a question at the end, you're free to unmute then and ask your questions. And also, there is a chat feature so you can type questions into the chat at any time or say hello to each other, etc. Speak, speak. There are live captions available for the video, so you can turn them on. Look for something that says a closed caption symbol. Look for something that says live transcript, and you should be able to see that. And while we're sharing slides, you can adjust the size of your slide if you need to, if you're not able to see clearly.

Joanna Wilkinson 02:37

So one thing before we get started is we have a lot of web chat resources and other resources that are available to the community, and we're always building more of these resources. And we've been doing these web chats periodically. Since 2018 we look to hear from you about what is a topic that's of interest to your organization in your region, and so after the presentation, probably sometime tomorrow, you'll get a survey, and if you have a request for a topic that you'd like us to work on or present on later, you can just let us know, fill out your survey.

Joanna Wilkinson 03:20

And the other thing that's really important to say is we do not charge admission for any of these online programs that we have, and the way we can keep having them is through your generosity, and if you're able to donate to CDSS, I know this is a time of year when people are really thinking about their end of year donations. We appreciate all of your donations, and you can donate at cdss.org/donate and every penny that you donate really does make a difference to bringing all of our programs to you, not only online, but in person as well.

Joanna Wilkinson 03:59

Tonight, we're talking about succession planning, and I'll say what that means in a moment. But here's the general scheme for the program. This evening, I will introduce all of our presenters, and I'll have them say hello, talk about where they're from, what organization they work with, and then each one of them will have a few minutes to talk about a different aspect of succession planning, and then we'll have time for your questions at the end, and we'll do a wrap up. So we're going to get started with that right away.

Joanna Wilkinson 04:29

So why did we choose this topic of succession planning? Well, we've heard from a number of you in the past, and this is a topic that came up over and over again that you were curious about, that your organization was struggling with. And so this type of topic, maybe it's not something that your organization is worried about or working on, but maybe you'll come back to it in the future. And so that's why this video of this recording of the presentation. And we'll be around to help you later. And this is just one of the things that can be in your toolbox as you're working with your organizations.

Joanna Wilkinson 05:09

So to just dive in, what is succession planning? What do we mean by that? Because it could mean a lot of different things. I think at heart, succession planning is all about change, and it's thinking about the leadership of your organization who is involved in that. How do we invite new people to be a part of the leadership team? How do we identify new leaders and make sure there's room for everyone and that we can hear everyone's voice and appreciate everyone who wants to participate. This is a big topic, and also I want to say out loud that, because this topic is about change emotions, get involved in that right away. And we are not attempting to say, this is the one true way that your organization needs to do anything. We're not saying, Hey, we have the right answers to every problem and every issue. What we're trying to do tonight is start a conversation and share some ideas, share some stories and experiences that folks have had as they have faced change at their organization.

Joanna Wilkinson 06:26

And so we hope that you'll take this information and see how you can apply it to your organization. It may have a different spin. You may leave this presentation with more questions than you had when you started, and that's all good, because that's what gets our conversation going. So I hope this will lead you to ask questions, share stories, and think about how these leadership changes can happen at your organization, and know that there are all kinds of leadership models that are at play, and all of them work in different ways, so we're going to hear about a bunch of different things tonight. So let's get started and meet our presenters. We have three presenters tonight, Lisa, Greg and Jenny, and I'm going to ask you each to unmute and introduce yourselves. Lisa we'll start with you.

Lisa Faryadi 07:21

Hi, everyone. My name is Lisa Faryadi. It's great to be here. I am in the Charlotte, North Carolina area, and the name of our contra community is Charlotte contra dancers. I've been dancing since 2008.

Joanna Wilkinson 07:38

Thank you. Welcome. We're glad you're here. Greg, how about you?

Greg Kramer 07:42

I'm Greg Kramer. I actually live in Kingsport, Tennessee, but our dance is in Jonesboro, Tennessee. We're part of the historic Jonesboro Dance Society. We We meet at the historic Jonesboro Visitor Center. We also meet in the Langston center in and Johnson City, who are kind of in between two, those two venues most time.

Jenny Beer 08:11

And Jenny, and I'm Jenny Beer, notice a lot of familiar faces here tonight. Thank you. I'm going to mostly talk tonight about the Germantown country dancers, which is our local English dance organization, which has a weekly dance, two monthly dances, a ball that's happening the day after tomorrow, and and several other and two demo teams. So it's a busy little place. But I also, as some of you know, started a contra dance just a couple years ago that I own all by myself, and need to open up to ownership of the group and and I run a small English dance for gentle English dance in the afternoon, which I also sort of run all by myself. And then I've been part of the Contra dance community here has other ways of organizing, and I'll bring some of those into my talk tonight or my discussion tonight. So that's a start.

Joanna Wilkinson 09:13

All right. Well, welcome to all of you. Thank you so much for being part of this. I'm going to stop sharing slides and let our presenters talk. And we're going to start with Lisa. So Lisa is going to share a little bit about her organization and talk specifically about board transitions and how they happen. So Lisa, why don't you take it away?

09:39

And so yeah, in Charlotte we have a board. Our board is comprised of five people. So within those five board positions, we have a president, vice president, secretary, Treasurer, and an at large member. And it's really been. This way for a lot of years. I don't know how many. I do know our board and

organization goes back to, I believe, the mid 90s. I first came on the board in 2015 and served for about three years, then hopped off in 2018 and then post COVID came back about nine months ago, back on the board. So now I'm currently, I'm the president of the board through a series of people kind of shifting and wanting off and needing to get off.

Joanna Wilkinson 10:32

So tell us a little bit about what your board does. There are different types of boards. Some boards are they take more of a leadership role. And some boards are what I'll just call working boards, where they actually do all of the things for the organization. They run, all of the events. Tell us what your board does. In particular,

10:55

We're very much a working board, and especially that's true post COVID And getting back started. We used to have a much bigger group. Right now, our dances aren't as big as they were before COVID And so And we've also all got a burning desire to see our dance succeed. We're all actively dancing. So all of that kind of means that we're a working board. So we do, we do a lot. We do most everything. We do our social media. We do. I do the booking. I liaison with the venue. Talk about, you know, make sure everything's good with the venue. We generally do the open and the tear down at the dances, the weekly dances. So we also we have our our dance weekend, Carolina meltdown. So we do a lot, of course, associated with that. So we're really, really busy, but I will say that we do pull in people, of course, and we have people that will get there early and stay late for us, we have a lot of committee members, not board members, but committee members when we start really getting into the thick of things for our dance weekend.

Joanna Wilkinson 12:11

So so at your organization, how do you change personnel? Do you have a particular process for leadership change. Does that happen on a regular basis? Do you have term limits? So how does that work for all of you?

12:30

We do we have, we have annual board elections every October, and that wasn't done until just this past October after COVID. So before COVID, it was more structured and everything but post COVID, we're getting back into what were our regular practices. So we have annual elections in October. It's not a situation where people are stampeding to be on the board. So we have found it most beneficial to approach people one on one. When we do that, that's where people are usually quite flattered, and they're like, Okay, well, tell me more about that. What does it entail? What would I be getting into? We also do the other things we at least once a month, we try to announce our board members and say, here are the board members. Raise your hand, board members, if you would love to. You know we'd love to have you come talk to us. If you're interested in learning about what we do, you are welcome to attend one of our board meetings. So we try to push it that way. But again, we haven't really had great success doing that, and so that's why it's worked really well to to kind of pinpoint the people that we think would be a great addition to the board. So that's kind of how that goes. As far as term limits. We have a one year term limit, but that does not mean that you cannot again serve another term. So we have board members that have been on the board. Well, not right now, but in the past, we had bought

one board member that she was on for, I think, eight years total, and that was great for our community. She was wonderful, and she was our treasure and and really a perfect person for that role.

Joanna Wilkinson 14:21

So it seems like you have this, I'm gonna say, a hybrid succession model, where people are open to approaching a board member to say, Hey, I would like to do something. I'd like to be on this committee. Maybe I want to be on the board someday, but you as board members also will talk to people and try to actively recruit folks to help. Is that correct? Yes,

14:46

That's really, yeah, that's it, exactly. And I think the thing that I personally like about approaching people is you. You want. We don't want just a warm body. I mean, that's one thing we've learned, that we have some things that are really, really nice to have in place. So what we would look for is people that have the good of the dance community in mind, not some kind of personal agenda or things that they're trying to push, but what's best? What does our community want? And how can we serve our community? People that seem to get along well with other people are really good people to have on the board, people that actually dance and, you know, ideally, are able to make it to, you know, a good chunk of our dances, versus a board member that lives, you know, in a different state, for example, which I know groups that operate like that, and they do have board members in different states. So we think about things like that. We think, can we get, hopefully, get some of the younger people that are more in touch with social media and it and how to recruit and so definitely, that's something we keep in mind. But we also know that we don't want to we don't want a huge all at once shift in the board. We need veteran, veteran dancers and their Wisp Well, those are some of the things that we think about as we think who we might approach.

Joanna Wilkinson 16:15

And when the board is thinking about who to approach. Do you discuss it as a group before you talk to a person. Or Will somebody just say, Oh, I had a preliminary conversation with so and so, and yes, they're interested. Or no, they never want to be on the board ever. Thank you. You know, how does that work? How do you do it as a group together?

16:37

We do talk about things, and I think we try to do anything like that before, like, making some kind of unilateral decision, or even approaching somebody because somebody else might have concerns. And so I think it's important for your current board to definitely communicate like, Well, what do you think? And kind of bounce that stuff back and forth. The good thing about our board is the current board typically at least four out of the five are at our weekly dances. Sometimes we're all there. And so we have lots of opportunity to talk to each other. And we do that a lot of different ways. We do. We have a text group, you know, we meet before, after a dance. We use some email, so a lot of things

Joanna Wilkinson 17:23

Great. So what are some situations where this particular model has been really successful, or are there some challenges also that you have faced, that you learned from, or something that's happening right

now that the board is chewing on in terms of personnel and leadership. Is there anything you can share with us? Lisa, you're muted. I just

Katy German 17:54

Accidentally muted you on it. My apologies.

Lisa Faryadi 17:58

That's all right. I wasn't saying anything anyways, yeah, I think overall, this model has worked well. And I tried to hit lots of organizer discussions, like when I go away at a dance week or a camp or something, I love that opportunity to kind of talk back and forth. And so one thing I think that that has served us well is having a small ish board. So I think five members. That's definitely the maps that we want. At one point we had four, and then one other person got added. I think that can be useful for like if you have an issue and you need to vote, although I will say that what we prefer is agreement and consensus and not like, Okay, well now we're going to have a vote because we just have to. But sometimes that happens and that can be useful, so that's been really good. And as I talk to other organizers, I have one friend who's on a board with, I think, 11 total board members, and he said their meetings last for hours, and there's so much discussion and it's just really hard to get anything done.

19:06

So that's really worked well. I before I came on this webinar, I talked to Dean Snipes, who's been a member of my community for many, many years and is again on our board, yay, and he's been on the board a lot through the years. And I said, Dean, can you think of any times where you know, like there were these really hard things and some big feelings, bad feelings? He said, No, I really can't. He said, It's always seemed to go pretty smoothly. But that being said, I do know that there was a time pre COVID, our board totally switched, like it just everybody was all the old guard was ready to shift off, and we had people willing to step up. So we did end up with pretty much an all new ish and and younger board, not no veteran members. And so that that didn't go so well post COVID, when we were trying to get back into the swing of things, most of those people had found other pursuits and were no longer interested. And so then we were scrambling to get a board back together. And so it's been rocky, I would say, a little bit rocky, reassembling the board and getting back to the same vibe and the same feeling that we had in previous years. So yeah, but

Joanna Wilkinson 20:27

I love how you're thinking about the idea now that not everybody should go off of the board all at once, not everybody should come on to the board all at once. So there is that moment of overlap and somebody who knows the history of the organization. So it's that important mix. You want to make sure there's room for new folks, new ideas, but you also want somebody who knows what happened before, so you're preserving both of those. So that's pretty Exactly, yeah. Well, thank you. Appreciate that. We're going to turn to Greg, who has a different model that he's going to talk about, and that is one that happens at a number of groups where one person, or maybe a very small group of people, a couple of people, start an event, start a dance series, start something and that at some point that needs to transition to more of a committee model, sharing that So Greg, do you want to talk about your organization and what has happened for you? Sure?

Greg Kramer 21:35

Historic Jonesborough Dance Society has been going on for quite a while. It was founded by David Wiley. He's the person who runs Serenity Knoll and he, he ran the show by himself. He would occasionally have people, hangers on like myself, and others who would help with things like, I'm always the roadie. You know, I'm, I'm the one transporting all the equipment and and so, you know, I had that job pretty early on. Then he's trying to develop serenity Knoll as a wedding venue, cooking school, a lot of other things. And he saw that the Contra dance was eating a lot of his time up, and he decided to kind of transfer the ownership to other people. Transition was okay. The only the only issue we had was I never could get the password for the Facebook group, and so we just had to form a new one, and and we had to create a new website. But those weren't big deals to do the the board right now we have, yes, we have seven active people. Some of them are like, we have one person who's kind of does our video and picture taking, and they want to be part of the board, but they don't. They don't want to go to board meetings. They said, Fine, you don't have to our scheduler is 16 years old and works with her mother, who is the marketing director. And so, you know, we have young people involved the, I guess the biggest thing is, is that, you know, since we had moved around venues a bunch right after COVID, trying to find cheaper locations and such, we've had to extend and go out to more venues. So in Jonesboro, we've used both the McKinney center, but mostly the jonesburg Visitor Center. But we've also have started using and we're going to split half and half with the Langston center in Johnson City. We've always had much better success with people showing up from the Johnson City crowd, and that's because a lot of students at ETSU would come over, and dillington college is much closer, and so we have seemed to have more more success there.

Joanna Wilkinson 24:32

So Greg, let me ask you something Sure. You talked in particular about a couple of things that the new committee had to learn, like the passwords on the website. Were there other things like that that as you were transitioning from one person who started the series to more of this board or committee structure, how else did that transition work? Were there some other bumps in the road that you discovered, and I'm thinking. About, you know, things like bank accounts or anything like that. How did all of that work for you, the sort of business side, and then also, how did you decide on what the new leadership model structure was going to look like?

Greg Kramer 25:19

Don't know. The decision made, David was very, very easy about working with me and and transferring over the bank account to me. I'm I'm the president, treasurer and, and there were three other people involved when we made the transition, and all three of those have left, but we have had continued to add new people to continue the work we're doing. One of the issues that we're having is is some of the younger people, either students or just out of school, have issues with is like work. They can they can't make it to our board meetings because, because now they're working, we do something a little unique here. There's a Irish or Scottish hub in Johnson City. And we actually meet there for our board meetings. And we have a once a month dance there. And it's trying to get you know people who are interested in Contra dancing. They can come to mulligans and they can they can have dinner, and we can show people how to dance. I mean, the best we can do is 12 people. But, I mean, that's that's enough to keep people going. So, you know, we trying different things, you know, to get try to get ourselves out there and and known about.

Joanna Wilkinson 26:56

So again, thinking more about the transition and the leadership. Bit. Sorry to keep you back on that topic, but how did you decide what your new board was going to look like? You gave one person where somebody said, Well, I want to be on the board, but I don't want to come to meetings. How did you decide on what the new structure would be. How many people would be on the new board? Do you have other committees, volunteers? How does that work for you all now? And how did you decide what it would look like?

Greg Kramer 27:33

This is very fluid. Now. I don't know if any decisions were made. I am president, treasurer. I'd love to hand off the presidency to someone else, because, I mean, the main job of the President in this group is simply to come up with the agenda for the board meeting. I mean, it's not a difficult job, and sign papers. And then marketing was, was picked up by Dan blank and and she takes care of the websites, takes care of the Facebook accounts, and we haven't, I think we need to follow up on our Instagram account. Then, then I have one at at general person, Kenneth. He's kind of helps around one of his jobs is that he's into the into not just contra dance and but other types of dance. And so he goes out and does other dances and tracks, tries to attract people to come to our contra dances, because most of these other groups are doing similar dances then.

Joanna Wilkinson 28:59

So I think what this is sort of saying to me is that we have organizations that are very highly organized, that have positions and numbers of board members and term limits or official things, but then there are other organizations that operate very differently, and they are a lot more fluid, and they change. And that works too. And again, there is no one right answer for an organization. It just has to meet your me needs currently, and those needs can change. And if you needed to be differently organized later, you can always do that. That's always fine to do too.

Greg Kramer 29:37

Yeah, I'm very fluid with this. I don't see assigning jobs. I want people to take a job that they're willing to do. That's like, we don't have a assistant vice president, anything like that right now. It says I have no one to fill the job. We're just, you know, we're. We're running on very loose strings right now, just having a limited number of people, but we're trying to do our best to kind of do more outreach than anything else, to again, get get new people to come. Selection of other board members comes back to an individual talking to a an active dancer. We have to do people on that. They're not doing a lot right now, but we're gonna keep on, try feeding them jobs and see if they're gonna see if they stick. I said, you know, one of them had her hours changed, and so all of a sudden she can't really attend right now, because her job hours conflict with with our board meetings. But she's also helping, like, you know, it's one of our outreach things. We're doing, a contra dance parade at Damascus Friday, and so she's designing all the things for the truck to make it look fancy, and then we'll have somebody calling. So we have stops. We'll do a quick jump off and do some calling and such. So trying to find other ways to get people interested.

Joanna Wilkinson 31:35

Well, I think this is a good moment to transition to Jenny. Jenny is going to talk a lot about job rotation within an organization. So Jenny, I'm going to hand things over to you.

Jenny Beer 31:48

Thank you. Joanna, do you want to do this with Q&A, or do you want me to just spew forth? What would you like?

Joanna Wilkinson 31:57

Why don't you get started, and I might pop in with some questions along the way. So talk about, in particular, how does job rotation work at Germantown and other things like that.

Jenny Beer 32:12

So Germantown country dancers is extraordinarily bureaucratic. We have structures for everything and everything, and every year we get more and it's probably the best functioning organization that I am part of. People actually take on jobs and they and they do their thing. It's very nice. But we also back in 2003 we redid our bylaws, and nobody except me and Sandy Rotenberg and Claude Epstein wanted to bother doing this, so we ended up spending a year and a half having a really great time redoing our bylaws. I highly recommend this to other organizations. It's a really good exercise to really think about, how do we want to structure, you know?

Jenny Beer 33:03

And obviously, like I said, we're running a number of different events. We're not just running one or two dances a month. And one of the things we thought a lot about was job rotation. And as we talked about the issue of succession, which is tonight's theme, I thought, you know, job rotation as a norm in an organization is what really that keeps, keeps an organization fresh and fluid, and gives places for new people to find a role in an organization. And it's less ageist than thinking about succession in my mind. So succession is sort of like a sub, a sub category of the larger question of, how do jobs rotate in your organization, in your gas so I'm going to, I think we should talk first about the formal things that we did in the by laws, and then there are lots of informal things that we did or didn't do that also had an effect on on how we work. So there are four categories, really, I think, if I got that right, nice.

Jenny Beer 34:07

So the first is that the bylaws state that we expect every role, and this is Board members. We have seven board members, but we also have lots of committees and tasks that are separate from board members. So people have a lot of different ways they can contribute to the organization, besides being on the board. And we expect each of those committees to have a succession plan so that they are thinking about, how do we turn over? How do we bring new people in? What do they need to know? And we did not legislate what the term limit, except for the board, what the term limits would be, because there are different needs for different kinds of tasks. And so we hope that the people who are hitting each of those aspects, like public. City, or managing, opening and closing the dance, or doing, doing the demo team, being the web manager, all of these things that they have different needs in terms of how they need to create turnover and create a knowledge. So what happens if you do this on a regular basis is that people have a much wider knowledge of the organization, because they've done this task over here, and then for another couple of years they did something else. And so they

understand how the organization works in a broader way. And you get to see over time, as people learn, they learn what it is to be a treasure. They learn what it is to run a sound board. They learn what it is to schedule musicians. These are all different skills, and the more you've done different ones of those, the more resilience your organization has if somebody leaves or if something needs to change.

Jenny Beer 35:57

The second thing we do is we have manuals, lots of manuals, exploding numbers of manuals. And so every task and every committee has an online manual that explains how to get things done in that particular side of the organization, which of course, makes it much easier to hand over the reins to someone else, because there's a lot of details that are available to them already. That's also in our bylaws that the committees and the board need to make sure that that happens.

Jenny Beer 36:26

Then the bylaws the third thing is board liaisons. Each board member is given two or three committees or tasks that they connect to so they're in touch with the people who are doing those particular things and checking in to see what they need, or checking in to say, hey, the board is about to decide something or other, and we'd like your input on it.

Jenny Beer 36:49

And then the fourth thing that I think Joanna wanted me to talk about, particularly is the nominating committee method. So those are the four formal things we have. Is the expectation of rotation, the manuals, the Board Liaison and then nominating committee. If you have voting in a small organization, you mostly get hurt feelings, right if somebody's running against somebody else and their friends don't vote for them. And if you have not, if you don't do a voting process, you just have whoever's in leadership at that moment asking their friends to come and join them in on the board or in a task. And sometimes that's good, but it can also develop cliques or have you so you don't notice some of the other people that might really be ready for a leadership role. So our nominating committee is one board member plus two other dancers or musicians in our community, and a couple, three or four months before the annual meeting, they are responsible for doing two things. As I like to say, there's a double goal. You want to make sure that all the major tasks and board positions have somebody who's going to be doing them. And you want to go down the list of your members and attenders to see if you can get a task, however small, for almost everyone on the list, there are some people that you're not going to give task to, no matter what. We won't talk about that, but mostly, you really want to find something.

Jenny Beer 38:29

And I'll just give a short little story on one of these. This is many years ago. I was on the nominating committee and we were going down the list, and I said, this person just graduated from college, doesn't have a car, doesn't come to the dance very often, but I think she's really interested, and I think we should ask her to put out the mailings, because she has friends from college. Still, they can go together and do the Xerox thing, fold things up, put them in envelopes, send them off. So the other people on the nominating committee. Said, Who is this person? I don't even know them. And I said, Well, trust me, I think this will work. So we asked her to do that. She said, Sure, that would be fun. She had a little party in her apartment. Got the mailings done. She started coming to the dance regularly because she was seen and she was asked to contribute to the organization, and she's now a major dance collar and

somebody that many of you will know, and I'm not going to name her, because she can name herself, but that's not Joanna. So just saying, so you know, you can make a little move like that, and sometimes it really get brings people in in a good way.

Jenny Beer 39:41

So the nominating committee then about three or four weeks in advance, I think, has to publish on the website and who the people that they are nominating for the board are, and we ask them to consult around so that they're asking people. Role for suggestions of who might be good for different roles. And also, you know, when it's something like President, you might ask people, would you be okay if this person was President? Do you have any hesitation? So there's sort of a sub sub Rosa consulting that goes on as well. And then people have time that they can nominate someone else to have an election if they don't like who the nominating committee has put up. As many of you would guess, most of us are so relieved somebody wants to do the work. That doesn't happen very often, but it has occasionally happened. Then CDSS board works in a similar manner, and has also had similar experiences over the time. So this is how we, once a year, make sure that we're drawing people in, that we're asking people, Hey, do you have a succession plan? What is it? Are you going to continue this year and then next year? What's going to happen? And how are you preparing for the handoff?

Joanna Wilkinson 41:02

So, Jenny, I because we are in the same dance community, I know that all of these systems were put in place, and many of them are very effective, but they're not always effective. Do you want to talk briefly about some of the things that happen differently from the way we hope they will?

Jenny Beer 41:25

Yes, let's so there are a lot of reasons why job rotation is challenging. Most of you know them already. One is just plain inertia. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. That person does an excellent job. Why would I rock the boat? Because finding someone else is going to be difficult, and they really know what they're doing. So this is the answer that I get most of the time when I ask about succession. They're like, but I love this job and I did or she's the perfect person. Why would we ask someone else? And then second, of course, it's a volunteer organization. It's not like you're their boss and you can fire them if they're not working the way they should. So you have to be really nice to these people, and kicking them out of their job is asking for hurt feelings. So hurt feelings about not being asked, or about being asked or about being pushed out or not being given access. All these things are things that I think make it hard for us in the nominating committee sometimes to say, this is your fifth year. I know you'd like to do it again, but can we give you another job? And there are aspects of our organization where once people decide they're not going to rotate, it's really hard to have that habit in that committee, in other committees where they have done it routinely. And Joanna can speak to this for the demo team, particularly, which has really been very faithful to this. It works quite well. So one of the lessons for me has been that the committee that did the bylaws really understood why job rotation was vital to the organization, but we didn't really sell it to people over and over again, and I think it's something that people have to renew their commitment to. They have to understand why it's important. They have to understand that it's nothing personal. We're not trying to kick people out of their jobs, right, but we are trying to give the organization an opportunity and a fluidity that allows new people to come in

Joanna Wilkinson 43:34

Thank you. That's really helpful. No, I appreciate that, and I think that might be...

Jenny Beer 43:39

Yeah, yeah. I think there's the other. I just remembered another story too. I when I was fairly new to Germantown country dancers, I took over the newsletter because I think I was asked to, I don't remember how that worked, and I had a computer, and I had a nice printer, and I made a nice laser printer job of the newsletter. And the woman who had been doing it for 20 years, 15 years long time, was crushed when I put the newsletter out, because hers had been typed and done xeroxing, whatever it didn't look snazzy the way my format had one done. And she I just watched her face crumple, and she said, you know, you've you're showing me up. And of course, that hadn't been my intent. I was just taking doing the newsletter and doing my thing. So all of the human relations in here are, are always delicate.

Joanna Wilkinson 44:35

Thank you. I think that's really important to remember, and that's something that we all have to be mindful of as we are thinking about, how do we bring new people in? How do we affect change? There is this emotional component to it, and people have feelings, and we have to think about that. It doesn't mean we shouldn't go forth and do what we need to do, but. We have to take care of our community as well. So thank you. I'm going to turn things over to Katy, German, Executive Director of CDSS, to talk a little bit about CDSS, because CDSS deals with success and planning as well. So Katy, thanks for joining us. Do you want me to show the slide? Or would you just like to speak?

Katy German 45:23

Oh sure, well, I mean, I can just speak. That's fine, unless people really want to look at a slide. Show of hands if you're dying to look at a slide right now. Oh, no, I sorry, Ruth, I'm sorry. You're out voted. So hi everyone. Thank you all for coming to this, this web chat. I think the fact that you are all here means that you've already kind of taken a bold first step, which is acknowledging that succession planning might be, might be important. It is so hard. It is so hard for everybody, for all of us, for all the reasons. So it's okay if it's not a comfortable area for you. The, uh, I often say that we like to think that we're rational beings that occasionally have feelings, but we're really emotional beings that occasionally have rational thought.

Katy German 46:19

And so I mean that what you're just saying about all the feelings that come up, that's a reality. It doesn't mean that we can't move forward, but it is definitely reality that we all need to be ready for. The other thing that Jenny mentioned before we got started tonight was that succession planning, the word succession has the word success in it, not to be too cheesy, but succession planning isn't about kicking anybody out the door. It's about setting the community and the organization up for ongoing success. And that work is extremely important, and it's really easy to put it off over and over again because you're just trying to get the next dance going or the next event on, but if you have the bandwidth and the energy and the people to talk with and help you work through it, it is the best way to keep all of this work that you've put into your community, to keep it going, to keep it moving forward. So we definitely, and CDSS is a large, formal organization, but we we struggle bravely and gratefully with this as well. It

is hard and it's important and good. So one of the things that we have been thinking about a lot as we're doing succession planning on the staff and on the board is, as Lisa mentioned earlier, staggering our approach.

Katy German 47:45

When I became Executive Director, there were five employees that were looking at retirement, and so I came in, and I thought, if you all leave at the same time, I will lose my mind. We can't lose all of that institutional knowledge. So I talked with each one of them, we came up with a plan to stagger that, to sequence that, so that we could focus on one position at a time and make sure that we're supporting that transition, capturing that institutional knowledge and all that and all that good stuff with the board. They moved to that model too. We have a president or an officer elect system on our board. Now it did take a bylaws change. So in 2021 when we did the last bylaws update, that's what that was part of that, and they decided to do it one at a time. So each year, the last couple years, we've had one officer shadowing and then coming on, and then the next officer shadowing and coming on.

Katy German 48:45

Oh, Dave Mason, please define staff. Thank you so much. So at CDSS, we have a board of directors that is the leadership. That's a volunteer board of directors that is about 21 people right now. I'm looking at David. David Smukler, no, he's shaking his head, 20. Whoa, crap. 19. We're at 19 right now. Great. Thanks. David Smuckler, President of the board, um. We also have paid staff, paid year round staff, and so I'm the executive director, the leader of the staff. Joanna is our director of programs, we have multiple other people who work year round. Those are the folks that actually do the operations of the organization. So it's a little bit of a split structure, but we try to work together carefully, and so both both entities have been working on succession planning and thinking ahead.

Katy German 49:38

So I'm going to talk a little bit about the staff, how we've looked at it when I came on. You know, there's this overload of information. Even a small organization, it can feel like drinking from a fire hose when someone new comes in and they're trying to take it all in. And I had binders and binders and files and everything. So one of the first things that we want that I wanted to. Start working on it took a while to get it done, but was an emergency succession plan. So that is something that's just kind of a formal you know, it didn't have a lot of the feeling of CDSS. I used a template that's available earlier emergency succession plan templates for nonprofits out there, but it just takes you through. That's the nuts and bolts. So if we're talking about those bank accounts, how to Who do you pay the rent to? Who's your contact at your facility? How do you receive donations, all of the nuts and bolts for making things going that was a really important piece for me. I wanted that to get done, not because I wanted to leave, necessarily, but because if I was incapacitated or had to leave suddenly, the next person after me would have a little bit of an easier time, kind of sorting through that. It also helps you kind of take that stress out.

Katy German 50:59

So if you work through that, before you even think about changing your officers or changing your leaving leadership, you start thinking about, what is the what are the nuts and bolts, the lights on, lights off, all of that stuff, getting that down as a as an individual or as a group as you are, that can help just

kind of take that stress out, and then you can move to the next the next level. And by the next level, I mean when you talk about capturing a broader institutional knowledge and thinking about that. And so we sorry that I'm so excited about this that I had to make notes, but now I can't read my own writing. Hang on, great, so you take care of the nuts and bolts, then you have to start thinking about, what is the what are the cultural expectations, or how you operate? And I think for I am, I am. I've been talking about CDSS, but I am involved in our local in some local dance organizing groups as well the local family dance, which is much more informal, and we don't have these structures in place, but we are trying to capture information.

Katy German 52:07

So the board, the CDSS Board, did a really, I like the way they did it, where they decided to do officer elect or position elect structure. So that means we have four officers on the board that are the president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. Those are kind of the four fundamental officers that they take care of all the business. Those are the ones that we create, that they created a formal overlap for. So when David Smukler came on his first year, he was not stepping in and being president all by himself. His first year was a shadowing year. Gaye Fifer was our president before that. And so for that whole year, gay and David worked together. And my sense of it was that David was really in sponge mode, learning, absorbing mode, the first part of the year, and over the year that transitioned, and he became more actively involved and engaged and kind of stepping into the leadership, so that by the time that our annual meeting came around and his independent leadership started, he had had a whole year to learn to ask questions of gay, to think about how things are now, how he might want to adjust things, what we need next. And it was great for gay. She's not here, but she said this to me that it helps you feel like you've been a part of the passing on, as opposed to it just being pulled from you and put on someone else's plate. I mean, it could be really jarring to be really in charge of something and then let it go. And I think that's part of part of the difficulty, David, you are on this call right now. Do you want to talk a little bit about your experience during that year, and and what was challenging and what was helpful,

David Smukler 54:07

I'd be happy to and let me just say it was a fantastic year that the opportunity to meet with Gaye Fifer weekly and and kind of talk through issues, ask questions, pay attention to details. Was was invaluable. I I loved it. And gay kept saying to me, you're you're helping me do more than I did before. And I didn't feel that way I thought I was just as as Katy said, in sponge mode, soaking it all up. But, but it was, it was really collaborative and and it did make me feel much readier when, when the time came for me to be more independent. So, yeah, it's, it's invaluable. And this. This year we have a treasurer elect, and he's incredible, and I'm delighted to be working with him as much as I've liked working with our other treasurer and I, and next year we'll have a vice president elect, and just having that happen and unfold year after year has been wonderful. I will say that for these officer positions on the CDSS board, it's an enormous commitment, because a normal board members commitment is three years, a three year term that with the option of repeating a second one. For the officers, you're committing to the whole six years right up front, the one year overlap, and then five more years, with the last one of those being overlapping with the next person. So there is a challenge there. I think our nominating committee has found it difficult to find people interested in the positions because the commitment is so large, but it's so worth it. It's so good to have that overlap.

Joanna Wilkinson 56:09

So we're have some questions in the chat, and we want to get to those in a moment, but I think one of those is pertinent. Katy or David, can you talk a little bit about the board training process, because we've talked about manuals a little bit. I think there's a question about that, and we'll talk a little bit more about that. But can you say a little bit about the CDSS board training process, which is also pretty formal, and it's a great process that all of our board members go through,

Katy German 56:43

Yeah, we have a we have a kind of several month training process for board members where they over time they meet, and they have one topic at a time, or focus at a time When they meet, and they're learning slowly how the board operates, about the committees that run and what they do. It's also a great time to talk about what is the culture of the board. How do we make decisions? How do we disagree? Because I think that the important thing to remember is that as you're bringing new people in, you're going to get new perspectives. You're going to get new ideas. Even if you think you're open to it, it's still hard sometimes. And and with the CDSS board, we actually actively try to get a variety of perspectives and people and different sizes and different organizations. So that means there will, there will be many times if we're not all on the same page, consensus is wonderful, but there will be times when we don't all agree on the best option, but we still have to operate. We still have to move forward. You still have to put your dance on you still have to pay the bills, right?

Katy German 57:54

So coming, you know, spending some time on your training, whether it's a formal meeting training, or whether it's part of that built in one to one, if you're have an overlap with your officers, but talking about, how do we what do we do when we don't agree? How do we keep things going and and sometimes that's the first time it's come up. You know, that's not the sort of conversation that everybody has on a normal basis, most of mostly, we like to avoid conflict as much as possible. But I think it's really good to talk about, this is how we operate. This is, you know, if we don't agree, we take a vote. We also have a because we have a formal staff, a paid staff and a leadership board. There's a concept on the CDSS board about the board speaking in one voice, so when, when the board is giving direction to me and to the staff, it's not 19 different voices with different opinions competing. They can talk about, they discuss. They understand that they might not all agree all the time, but they have to agree on a way to move forward. And I think that's a really important step in the process, because it's when you're just one person holding it all together. You don't have to deal with any of that. And that's another big temptation for not, not not bringing more people in, but also it's delightful. Some of the most impactful and meaningful discussions that I've been a part of at board meetings with the CDSS board have been where we don't all agree, and we're looking at things differently to be able to talk through that, to move forward and still stay focused on what is the goal? The goal is to keep the programming going. The goal is to make sure that it lasts beyond us. It helps and it's really nice to I love how the our board does training of. Um, even though it's a little bit over the top for some organization. David, what would you say?

David Smukler 1:00:05

A lot of our work happens through committees and task groups. So a lot of the training is introducing new board members to what those all are and what their options are in terms of how their board service can happen. Because there are many ways to be a board member when you have 19 people and multiple smaller groups to contribute to, so they need that orientation to understand what their options for work are. And we also have a mentorship kind of set up where you get a board buddy when you're new, so that you have someone you can turn to with questions and ask that. And even with all that, board members get to their first annual meeting and might not be sure about what they want to do or how they want to contribute, and it's ongoing. Sometimes I think board members kind of catch fire their second year or third year, and that's fine, you know. So it's different for different people, but we do try and throw lots of information at people so that they have options that they understand.

Katy German 1:01:22

And I think that the scaled down version of that, you know, if you don't have a big board and paid staff, is just, how do we operate? What is the board responsible for? What are the roles that exist within our organization? So in CDSS, there are lots of roles, but in my community, it's they're really just three roles. We have the person who's managing the band. We have the person who's actually they also line up the collar. We have the person who opens the door. And maybe there's just two roles, but we kind of rotate. So I guess my point is it's not about the number of people or how formal you are. It's about what is the purpose of that training, and it is to teach new people how things operate now and what they're responsible for, and to set expectations up front. So someone said, you know, it's really hard to rotate people off when when they didn't think that there were terms or they didn't know that terms were being enforced. But if you integrate into your training. This is a three year term. At the end of your term, we may ask you, if you want to serve again. We may not. That's not a there are many, many things that go into that decision, and it's not unnecessarily bad thing. But if you just set that expectation up front when you get to that point, it's not, it's not quite as jarring. And, you know, I think that's that goes a long way. Has gone a long way for us.

Katy German 1:02:50

I am there is, I wanted to mention the Cumberland dance week. It's not a CDSS week. Has an interesting structure too. They may not be unique. They have a governing board, a working board, all volunteer, and they every, every few years, you know, they all in their in their roles, and every few years they rotate, and everybody does a different role every few years. So they've been doing it for many years, but someone who's the program hires the staff for a few years, and then they rotate, and then that person is in charge of registration and housing for a few years. And so that's another way to do it, to kind of build in, getting different eyes on the job and eyes on the task, getting people accustomed to changing and rotating and and letting go and stepping in. That can be a nice kind of first step before you you bring in other people. And then, you know, I said this on our volunteer a while back, we did a web chat on volunteer recruitment. And the by my big thing about volunteer recruitment is nobody wants to jump on a burning ship. So if you, if you are, if you look like or you are kind of a hot mess, it's going to be really hard to invite people in. But if you, if you just kind of say, hey, this is how we operate. Here are the roles. Here are the choices. Would you like to come shadow for a while? Would you like to come? It's a lot less intimidating than I am burnout, and I need someone else to be the president. Will you do that? You know, those are two very different feeling things.

Katy German 1:04:27

And so if you can kind of get your group set up to, you know, breathing through the idea of bringing new people on and and again, you know, Jenny, you mentioned, there are people who are so good at organizing, and they've done it so well, and nobody wants anybody else to do it, and they're happy doing it, yes, and as you know, as a thank you to that person, let's, let's keep them from getting to that point of burnout, right? Let's, let's give them a pathway. To hand it off, or to have people come in so that they don't get to the point where they're completely exhausted. I know so many of you, so many people are especially getting through the pandemic. So I mean, that's really that's what motivates me a lot, too, on a local level, when we think about, oh yeah, yeah, we should document how we do that. Oh, yeah, we should, you know, maybe have a conversation about outreach and and Lisa, you said one to one, invitations are definitely, definitely the way to go. It's you run the risk of someone saying no to your face, which never feels good, and it's hard to deal with, but you have a higher chance of them saying yes when it's a one to one conversation, rather than an open Hey, we need help. So just keep that in mind as you're inviting people to come in.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:05:56

Thank you. Thank you. Katy, thank you. David smuckler, surprise you were talking tonight, too, and thank you to Lisa, Greg and Jenny for being our official presenters. There are a number of questions in the chat and a few different threads, and we'll try to hit as many of them as we can. The first one is from Karen. And a number of you have chimed in in the chat, and I appreciated that, but it was about this idea of training materials, training manuals. How do you do that? Certainly a shared document system like a Google Drive or a wiki or something like that, that everybody can see and everybody can contribute to is probably the way to go. We it Germantown and Philadelphia. We used to have private pages to our website, and we would share the link, kind of on a need to know basis. But we have just moved to Google Drive, and it's been really good, but also saying out loud this idea of procedures manuals, and one of the challenges, how do you keep them up to date? And again, this is one of the things with dealing with a volunteer group where, you know, we hope people will take it on and at the end of your term, being in charge of a committee or a particular area of the organization, the theory for us, anyway, is that you're supposed to update your procedures manual. That is the last thing you're supposed to do before you hand off to the next person. It's really easy to not do that, so part of the role of the board, I hope, is to stay on top of that and to say, hey, committee person, can you just take a review of your procedures manual, make some tweaks, change the timeline, whatever you need to do, but it takes board buy in to really keep up with that. So that's one of the challenges to keeping up with any of these manuals or procedures, documentation, anything you have, is, how do you make sure they're up to date all the time, Susan, I see you have your hand raised, but I want to make sure we're getting to some of the other threads too. One big area of questions that people have had is youth engagement, youth involvement in leadership. So this this is a big topic. A number of groups are concerned about it. I want to turn this back to you, Lisa, Greg and Jenny, have you done any work at your organizations to bring in different age groups to your board, to your leadership? Lisa, why don't you start? Yeah,

Lisa Faryadi 1:08:39

We were very intentional with these last two board positions that to identify somebody in the younger age range. So we're fortunate in Charlotte, even though we're a small community, we've tended to skew young for a while and and it's not about I mean, it's very nice feel where everybody dances with everybody, with lots of really sweet people of all ages. So with that in mind, we discussed who, who might we ask? And we have, I hear what I think you said, Katy about, yeah, we do run the risk of being turned down. And we've got a couple people that have been approached a couple times gently, just, you know, man, you would be so great on the board if you ever can fit it. And they have said kind of like, nope, nope. I'll help you out in different ways, but I can't do that, so I will say, we're we've been intentional about that, and I think that's part of it, you know. And we're fortunate. What can I I mean, we're fortunate that we have young people to ask, I don't know, what you do if you only have, like, you know, three young people at your group, and you skew to, you know, older contra dancers, not to be ageist in any way. But I know the topic here is like, how do we. Pass that baton on. How do we pass the torch on so that this thing that we love doesn't die out with us?

Joanna Wilkinson 1:10:07

That's definitely a wider topic for the community. It's one we've addressed in some presentations before, and no doubt we will circle back around to it. And that's not just about leadership, but it's attracting different groups to our events in general. So Greg, do you have something to add to this topic? What has your group done?

Greg Kramer 1:10:28

Well, I think the only people we're asking that to come on the board are young people. Again. We need, we need some new blood, as I mentioned, our scheduler is 16, so we have no problem with having young people taking on big jobs, and if they're willing to take them, and we've got a couple of young people, we're we're slowly working on, you know, they're doing a little thing right now, and then we're going to try to ask them to do some other things, and just kind of slowly get in, get him into that. Yeah, you know, you are helpful, you know, you know. And we can really use your help.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:11:16

Jenny, how about you?

Jenny Beer 1:11:19

Yeah, I love that sort of incremental, get the get them in slowly, and then they don't, then they're hooked. We have had unbelievable good fortune in Philadelphia. We have lots of young people coming in all of a sudden after the pandemic. And our trouble has been there's so many organizations that want them that we want to make sure that we're not burning them out from the start. So the Contra dance has half of their people on the board are new. But I wanted to mention something that we I was going to mention earlier it didn't, and that is that we have had lots of sort of small initiatives that have given place for young people and new people, but mostly young people to show their stuff or to learn their stuff, and then the larger organizations have taken note.

Jenny Beer 1:12:07

So for example, Rick Mohr has started a by ear only open band at my little contra dance, and we discovered that mostly people who are already good at their instrument are the ones who are have the brave, the bravery, the courage to come and play without dots. And our fiddler, Miranda Weinberg is looking at all these young people coming in, some of whom were really quite good musicians. And she started a music jam at her house, ha. And so we suddenly have new musicians playing for Scottish, for English, for Contra, for wolves, because we found a path for them. Likewise, one of those young people, we discovered what a good organizer she was, because she came to me and she said, Jenny, Judy, I want to do a Pi Day, because we had a dance on March 14, and they're all nerds, right? So I so I said, go for it. And then I didn't do anything else except support, whatever she had in mind. And people came out. They all were so creative. Several young people wrote new dances and called things, and people made pies for dessert. We just had a really fun time with it. And after that, she got really interested in helping the organization in more regular and organized ways. So I think these sort of side things that we do, the little things that we do often, are the place, the the the grounds for where people learn how to do something, and then we also notice who's good at something? Who do we want to make sure gets more experience? I could go on, but I will not.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:13:47

So it's that pipeline that I think is really key. There was another organization that I reached out to for this presentation, and they were not able to join us, but they have a few slots on their board in particular that are reserved for younger members. There was a high school age board role and a college age board role. And how they fill those I'm not sure, but they've actually created a structure around having younger folks as part of their leadership team. And I think that's really interesting model, too. And so there are lots of different things to think about with, how do we get younger folks there? But I also want to keep in mind and reiterate something Jenny said, which is, when there are not very many young people, how do we not jump on them? And, you know, get them too involved all at once, so that we sort of gently invite them, ease them in, let them do Pi Day, whatever it is, so that hopefully they will learn to love the organization and be with us forever, right? That's one of the hopes, too.

Jenny Beer 1:14:58

Well. More thing there, Joanna, and that is that the young people also looked at the calling that was happening at the main contra dance, and they said, we'd like to learn how to call but, but it's also, you know, everybody's doing their thing, and there's no room for us. Well, in fact, there really was room for them, but they saw all these competent people doing a competent job, and they didn't know that there was space for them. So as soon as they told me this, I called up the two of the callers in the main contra dance and said, Hey, your young people want to call, but they don't think you're you're open to it. And they're like, oh, wow, we're going to change that right away. So now they're all calling there, but this notion that, you know, it's everything is under control. We've got it down, and then where do the new people fit?

Katy German 1:15:45

I think I just want to jump in, because I've said this again. I say the same things over and over again. Every single generation wants creative input into these living traditions, right? So if you're serious about bringing younger people onto your board, you have to also be serious about listening and indulging

them a little bit. And this isn't theoretical. I've talked to a fair number of young leaders, up and comers, organizers who have been invited onto boards, brought up ideas and had them shot down over and over and over again, and got completely defeated and left and weren't weren't able to. They just needed the enthusiasm in space. So you know, every every community has its col traditions that it loves and clings to and wants to last forever, but at one point, those were new. And if these communities are going to last and these traditions are going to thrive, there needs to be a chance for other generations to have buy in. And it's not even just a generational thing. We are talking generations, but sometimes it's just people who haven't had a chance to be in the leadership before will have new ideas. So if you're serious about bringing new people in, you also have to be serious about giving new things a shot, even if you think that may not work or it may not be worth the effort that's that's a piece of of making sure that they stay and they feel like they're a part of the leadership.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:17:22

So another thing that was brought up in the chat is something we touched on a little bit. But Katy, you mentioned something about the emergency succession plan, and that is was definitely a long process to create all of that, and we hope to be able to share some kind of template with you on what all was involved in that. And that is, you know, if the leader of the organization, the person who knows all the bank account numbers, whatever it has to be, has an emergency and has to be away for a while, how do all things not grind to a halt? And so we at CDSS, we do have a resource section, and that can be one of our resources. And here's my lovely cat who says hello to everybody.

Katy German 1:18:10

I don't think it exists yet, but I'll, I'll work on putting a template up for folks to start. It won't be you'll look at it and probably think this is overkill. I don't need this, but it's just a starting. That's great.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:18:23

Thank you. All right, so we have time for a few more questions. Susan English, you did have your hand up before. I'm not sure if we got your question answered. Maybe we did. Great. I think you're all set. Harold, do you have a question for us? You want to unmute and say your question? Sure.

Harold 1:18:41

The group here has been running for 50 years, and on Google Drive we have lots and lots of minutes old newsletters and so on. So the history is there. I've heard a term, the bus number, how many people on your board could be hit by a bus and still have the group continue. And so what I've done to try to increase our bus number is all the logins, bank information, and all that is in an encrypted Word document on our Google Drive, and the officers, all the officers, have the password to that document so it's not just one person, and let's see. I guess that's that's about it for now. Thank you. Thank you. Great.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:19:36

All right, any other questions that we haven't gotten to or that we've missed in the chat. If you can use the raise your hand feature to ask your question. And while we're doing that, I'm going to jump back into our slides and do some wrap up stuff. The hour's getting a little late for those of us on the East Coast. Oops.

Katy German 1:20:02

All right, Susan, sorry. Susan English has her hand up again. Oh, thank you.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:20:06

Susan, do you want to unmute and save question?

Susan English 1:20:11

Sorry, um, I guess another thought in my mind is that, um, okay, where I am, we have young people coming in, and they're bringing their energy to in the their enthusiasm, which is fantastic. And then someone says, Well, you know, why don't we do this? And why don't we do that? And then for me, I have an institutional history, and I say, Oh, well, I tried that and it didn't work. I tried that and it didn't work, and of course, that's not the way to respond. So how to pass on the institutional history without squelching new ideas?

Katy German 1:20:52

That was that's been fun this year, as we had a new director of development in place, but Robin Hayden, who was our director of development for many decades and had so much institutional knowledge, has been helping us out this year. She's been wonderful, and one of the things she's done is she's been really good about saying, Okay, I did try that, and you may have more success than me. Here's what I took away from that, and here's what like if I were to do it again, here's what I would do differently, and that's a way to kind of pass on the knowledge without feeling like you're shutting it down, and then let the decision, like, give them that information, and then the decision is in their hands.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:21:38

Thank you. All right, we'll keep some of those questions coming. I'm gonna, again, go back to our slides and share some follow up. Oh, we have a another question. Let me read this for a second.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:21:58

So Kara, thank you. It's this is a return to the topic of recruiting younger folks to leadership and or just to the organization in general, and it's a good reminder to be mindful of casual conversations or things that we say about what can be off putting. And that's not just for younger folks, it's for anybody. You know, I think offhand comments are heard more often than we think they are, and it does leave people with an impression of what the organization is like, for sure.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:22:41

All right, so returning to PowerPoint here in our Q and A portion. Thank you all for your questions, and we can keep some of them coming too. We'll have a few more minutes before we close, but just before we do that, just so you know, there's going to be some follow up, we are recording this presentation, and we will have a recording with a transcript available probably early next week. But we really would appreciate your feedback, not only on this particular presentation, but just on our web chat series in general. And we want to hear from all of you, what's the next topic we should present on, and something that your group is working on, something that is of interest to you, something that's going on in your region. Please let us know. Best way to do that is by filling out our survey. And we welcome all

of your comments, your questions, and all of your support about all the things that we do at CDSS, and a reminder that this is the season for giving. So all of your donations do help us, and you can donate right on the CDSS website, another thing that we have at cdsss. Hopefully many of you know about this, but maybe not everybody does.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:23:59

If you are looking for an event to go to, or if you're an organization and you want to publicize your events, please do post them on the CDSS Community Calendar and event finder, we are working on promoting this far and wide, but one of the best things that you can do is make sure your group's events are on there, and check it out on a regular basis, because your events change. Maybe you have a new series, you have a new special event, and we want it to be a part of the calendar, so make sure to keep that up, and you'll hear more about this next year. And if you need help with posting an event, you have a question, you don't see your event, you know you've posted it, please be in touch with us. You can always get in touch with our webmaster, and the email address is on your screen. So we have other things happening at cdsss. This is the time for holiday shopping. CDSS Store is open with lots of good stuff for you to get for yourself or to give to others, and just so you know, if you send in your orders by December 18, we can get them to you by December 25 so get that holiday shopping done. I'm very much thinking about our CDSS camps for next summer, and we plan to open camp registration on or about January 15. So look at your email inboxes for more information about that coming up. We've got a great array nine camps next summer. It's very exciting.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:25:35

And our podcast series from the mic continues, and our latest episode of that series is featuring David Kaner. So listen to that. It's Mary Wesley interviewing David Kaner and sharing information. So thanks for all of that, and we'll leave you with a fun picture and a thank you from the CDSS staff. So thanks everybody for joining us this evening. We really appreciate it. Stop sharing my screen just so I can check the chat, see if there are any final questions for anybody. Great. Thank you all so much for being here and being a part of this, we hope you will keep this conversation going in your communities. You can reach out to CDSS if you want to be in touch with any of our presenters this evening, we can connect all of you, and when we post a recording of this, we'll try to post some resources or point you to some resources as well. So thanks so much for all of this, enjoy the rest of your night and have a wonderful December. Hey

Katy German 1:26:47

Everyone, thank you.

Joanna Wilkinson 1:26:51

Bye, everybody. Bye.