



Blackhawk Area Council and Rock River Council Girl Scouts: *A Campaign of Collaboration*

When the Blackhawk Area and Rock River Councils recognized how much they had in common, they had an idea: "What if we work together to acquire a new Scout Service Center that neither council could obtain on its own?"

Kinetic* was retained to conduct a Pre-campaign Study resulting in a campaign goal of \$3.5 million for capital and endowment. Said Blackhawk Area Scout Executive Don Kinney, "I can't imagine doing a campaign without Kinetic. They were able to lend his expertise and give us a realistic target. This brought us great peace of mind and gave us greater confidence."

The original plan—to purchase land and construct a building—evolved when the nonprofits located an existing facility that could be purchased and renovated for less than the cost of new construction.

At one point, Kinney remembers a potential donor being told, "We are about to ask you for a gift that is going to make you gulp." The \$250,000 solicitation was large, but due to Kinetic's guidance, it was also right on target. Not only did the donor give the full amount, but when approached later in the campaign, the family gave an additional \$250,000, qualifying them for a naming opportunity: The Tumilowicz Center for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Blackhawk Area Council, Boy Scouts of America



There were many memorable gifts extended all along the way, including a \$600,000 in-kind gift of land and a \$100,000 gift toward endowment for the ongoing maintenance of the building. One woman was so moved by the uniqueness of the project that she gave multiple gifts over the course of the campaign totaling \$200,000.

Going from an out-of-the-box innovation to a successful campaign was not easy, but it was life-changing; and it will continue to have positive ripple effects for both councils and for the many thousands of individuals and families served.

"Both councils cover 12 counties or more, from suburban Chicago area to the Mississippi River. This new service center allows our members to save a lot of commuting time," said Kinney.

Collaboration has been extremely beneficial in many ways. The new location is not only centrally located to both councils' service areas, but by sharing some administrative functions, volunteer efforts, and the cost of utilities, the service center allows both organizations to save time and money.

Now over 40,000 youth and 12,000 adults are able to make use of the new building. For families with children

in Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, having one location is a tremendous convenience.

In addition to Kinney and his team, Council President Bill Reilly of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts Council President Lisa Normoyle, as well as former Girl Scouts CEO Ruth Little, and volunteer Chair John Crone, along with Vice Chairs Jodi Deerey and Joe Licari all provided excellent support for the campaign.

Although both groups are very distinct, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts understood they shared a common history and important objectives. This is what kept them moving forward for a future of success.

A shared Scout Shop, meeting rooms, offices and more now means much greater capacity for both councils to serve boys and girls in their area. Both groups are quick to acknowledge that collaboration is not effortless, but it is worth it.

What made success possible was not focusing on their need for a building, but recognizing how beneficial a shared vision could be for everyone.

**This campaign took place prior to Hartsook becoming Kinetic in 2022.*

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