



IDEA Commission Members Overview

Created out of our commitment to Girls on the Run being a place where all people feel welcome, worthy, and empowered, the inaugural IDEA Commission is comprised of diverse staff, board and community members. The IDEA Commission will support the development of the FY21-23 IDEA strategy. Get to know more about these committed individuals by hearing from them firsthand.



Mollie Anderson, Girls on the Run Chicago, Illinois

Mollie is a queer, mid-western transplant who uses her professional and personal time to pursue her passion of helping people move their resources of time, money, and connections to further justice and equity. She is an experienced fundraiser and has helped advance the missions of the Chicago Literacy Alliance, YMCA of Metro Chicago, the ACLU of Illinois, and the University of Chicago. She is currently the Director of Development at the Girls on the Run-Chicago. She also serves as a member of the Board at Crossroads Fund and is a proud alum of their Giving Project (which you should definitely Google!). Prior to her fundraising career, she very nearly became an academic and holds an MA in Religion and American Politics from Claremont Graduate University and a BA in Religious Studies from San Diego State University.



Melida Barbosa, Girls on the Run New York, New York

Latina Girl Power has been a driving force for Melida since she can remember. At age 3, as a newly arrived immigrant she was taught to work hard and be proud. That message helped her complete Eight New York City Marathons. As the mother of a GOTR Alumni she believes in the importance of empowering girls to create their own path while prioritizing self-care and fitness. Three years ago, Melida brought that message to her students in Corona, Queens by establishing a Chapter of GOTR Heart and Sole. Melida lives in Jackson Heights, Queens with her husband Daniel and their three children, Gabriela, Cristian and Alejandro.



Kathleen Cannon, Girls on the Run Twin Cities, Minnesota

Kathleen Cannon (she/her/hers) enjoys people, problem-solving, and dreaming big. Her favorite projects involve seeking out creative ways to promote dialogue and deepen connection while honoring the complexity of the human experience. As Program Director since 2014, she has helped Girls on the Run Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul) grow to serve 5,000 girls in 2019, building a sustainable, inclusive infrastructure while leading the organization's volunteer recruitment, training and retention efforts, reimagining program delivery during COVID-19, and leading local IDEA initiatives. Before joining GOTR Twin Cities, she was the executive director of the eastern Iowa council, and previously worked as an attorney, mediator, and writer. Outside of GOTR,

you can find her chasing her husband and 3 kids around, trying to keep up with her goldendoodle, cheering for the Minnesota Lynx, and/or chatting about her new favorite podcast.



Rakesh Gopalan, Girls on the Run International, North Carolina

Rakesh currently serves on the board of Girls on the Run International and is a technology and securities lawyer, with extensive experience in complex technology and outsourcing deals, public company securities issuances and reporting requirements, private- and public-company mergers and acquisitions, and other corporate and transactional matters. He is currently co-chair of the firm's fintech practice and formerly co-chair of the firm's institutional banking practice. Rakesh is actively involved in diversity and inclusion efforts within the firm and the legal community, including through his work as a founding member and current board member of the Charlotte Asian Pacific American Bar Association and as chair of the firm's Asian Lawyers Network.



Tenika Hill, Girls on the Run Riverside, California

Tenika L. Hill has 10 years of professional and volunteer experience, having worked for and served alongside religious, charitable, community and non-profit organizations in capacity building through strategic planning, program management, and community outreach. She has a wide range of C-level administrative, communications, and marketing experience serving at various levels. She currently serves as a Founding Board Member of the Girls on the Run Riverside County chapter. Tenika holds a Bachelor and Master's degree in Business Administration. Tenika's passion for serving others is embedded in building and supporting initiatives that empower people to lead better lives and secure sustainable futures.



Rachel de Jesus, Girls on the Run Northern Arizona

Rachel K. de Jesus, M.Ed., BCBA, has given her time to Girls on the Run of Northern Arizona as a coach and site liaison since 2015, and she has served on her local board since September 2019. Raised in San Diego, she attended Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, where she now works for FUSD as a Behavior Specialist, supporting special education teachers and their students. Her graduate experience through Arizona State University, her early experience as a special education teacher, and her experience as a behavior analyst have fueled her passion for inclusivity and advocacy for children with disabilities. As an avid runner and outdoor enthusiast, she wants to share her active lifestyle with young girls by making GOTR accessible to everyone.



Elizabeth Kunz, Girls on the Run HQ, North Carolina

Liz spent the first decade of her professional life in corporate America before transitioning to the nonprofit sector in 1996. It was while working at the YMCA that Liz first learned about Girls on the Run. Its mission profoundly resonated with Liz's personal mission and she started volunteering for the organization in 2002. She joined the staff as Chief Operating Officer in 2006 and has served as CEO since 2008. Liz has presided over an incredible time of organizational growth and brings significant expertise to Girls on the Run in setting strategic direction and creating an inclusive culture of empowerment, gratitude and joyful purpose.



Hao Le, Girls on the Run Silicon Valley, California

Hao Le is the Director of Worldwide Partner Communications for Citrix. In her role, she is responsible for global strategic external and internal communications that support Citrix's partner objectives. Prior to this role, Hao led global partner enablement efforts for Citrix Networking in addition to owning executive communications for WW Partner Sales. Hao has held a variety of roles across the communications spectrum for several high-tech companies, including NetApp and Cisco. Hao is on the board for Girls on the Run Silicon Valley and is a graduate of the University of California, San Diego.



Vera Lopez, Girls on the Run Maricopa & Pinal Counties, Arizona

Vera Lopez is a professor of Justice & Social Inquiry in the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University (ASU). Most of Lopez's past research has focused on system-impacted girls. Her book *Complicated Lives: Girls, Parents, Drugs, and Juvenile Justice* was published with Rutgers University Press in 2017. Lopez's most recent research project focuses on Latina girls and sports. This new research area was inspired by Lopez's past involvement as a Board Member of the Maricopa and Pinal Counties chapter of Girls on the Run along with her own experiences as a runner and triathlete.



Sonal Modisette, Girls on the Run Puget Sound, Washington

Sonal Modisette joined GOTR Puget Sound in 2015 as a Project Coordinator, but soon became Operations Manager, sharing her knack for optimization and love of efficiency with the organization. Sonal brings enthusiasm, organization and a willingness to step in, roll up her sleeves and do whatever is needed to get the job done. She has been an integral part of GOTR Puget Sound, helping drive substantial growth in girls served with a strategic emphasis on access and inclusion of diverse populations. She is passionate about empowering girls to be strong, decisive and confident and is honored to work for an organization whose mission helps build these strengths at a critical age.



Jennifer Passey, Girls on the Run Northern Virginia

Jennifer Passey is the Director of Engagement for Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia (GOTR NOVA). Since joining GOTR NOVA in 2016, she has developed and implemented a communications and marketing strategy to make Girls on the Run a household name in the region. An issue advocacy specialist with 20 years of professional experience in Washington, D.C., and in South Asia, she served as an appointed member of the Fairfax City Planning Commission, two terms as an elected member of the Fairfax City Council, and Vice Chair of Virginia Municipal League's Environmental Quality Committee. She received her B.A. in Religious Studies and her M.A. in Political Management from The George Washington University. She lives in Fairfax, VA, with her husband and four boys.



Ivory Patten, Girls on the Run HQ, North Carolina

Ivory Patten is passionate about building healthy and equitable systems that allow for the elevation of women and young girls. As the Manager of Legal and Risk for Girls on the Run International, Ivory focuses on the strategy, administration and execution of legal, policy, compliance and risk management projects on a national scale. As Co-Chair of the IDEA Commission, Ivory brings her experiences of leadership, facilitation, meaningful collaboration and restorative justice for vulnerable and underrepresented communities, particularly to young women. She has over 10 years of experience in organizational development in various industries, including higher education and federal government. Ivory earned a M.S. in Educational Psychology (with honors) from the University of Tennessee and a B.A. in Communications from the University of South Carolina-Aiken.



Kaityre Pinder, Girls on the Run Atlanta, Georgia

Kaityre Pinder serves as GOTR Atlanta's Community Engagement and Social Media Manager. Previously, she served as a GOTR Program Manager, supporting Laureus grantee sites, community sites, and private school sites. Kaityre is a Bahamian-American from Miami, Florida. She earned her degree in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences at the University of Florida where she found her passion for providing quality experiences for underserved youth and communities. Kaityre has a strong background in positive youth development programming and developing strong team atmosphere. In the future, she aspires to create high quality youth programming experiences in the Bahamas.



Meg Pomerantz, Girls on the Run Triangle, North Carolina

Meg Pomerantz is the Executive Director of Girls on the Run of the Triangle. She served on the GOTR Triangle board of directors from 2008-2014, and volunteered on various committees from 2014-2017. Meg earned her Master's Degree in Exercise and Sport Science at UNC-CH, and her Bachelor's degree in Economics at the College of William and Mary VA. She began her academic teaching career at NC State University, and later served as the Aquatics Director and Director of the Lifetime Fitness Program at UNC-CH. Meg has taught and coached various age groups from youth sports to adult novice running and swimming programs. Meg is also a former project director in Worksite Wellness research in UNC's Gillings School of Global Public Health. Meg enjoys staying fit by swimming, biking, running and playing with her grandchildren. She lives in Durham, NC with her husband, Marty.



Elena Simpkins, Girls on the Run Southeastern Michigan

Elena Simpkins, PhD is excited to activate her Wonder Girl powers by joining the Girls on the Run (GOTR) IDEA commission. In recent years, Dr. Simpkins has flexed her Star Power as a coach with GOTR. She currently works with Eastern Michigan University athletics as a learning specialist (think academic mentor) assisting various athletes and recently joined the University of Michigan's School of Kinesiology as a lecturer. In both of her roles the components of inclusion, equity, and access are the foundation for everything she does. She's ecstatic to continue her work with GOTR on the commission and can't wait to celebrate with our first energy award.



Juliellen Simpson-Vos, Girls on the Run HQ, North Carolina

Juliellen Simpson-Vos, M.Ed, is VP, Council Development at Girls on the Run HQ where she supports councils in sustainability, strategic planning, board engagement and capacity building initiatives that ensure our network is strong and thriving. Previously, as Executive Director at Girls on the Run of the Triangle, she delighted in working collaboratively with the board and staff to serve over 2,000 girls annually and the development of strategy to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of organizational operations. Juliellen spent significant time working on statewide telehealth initiatives to increase access to services for children with special needs and also worked to create and improve NC

state childcare quality standards. She logs many miles running and hiking, while planning trips to national parks with her husband and daughter.



Megan Wolfe, Girls on the Run Snohomish County, Washington

Megan Wolfe is the executive director of Girls on the Run of Snohomish County, which she founded in 2015 after three years of volunteering for GOTR in nearby Seattle. She earned her Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Washington's Daniel J. Evan's School of Public Administration. Megan spends her free time with her family--her husband and two kids--traveling, hiking, camping, playing in lakes, and reading lots of great books. She is involved in various efforts to improve her local community.